



# Creating Social Change through a Co-operative

Reflections from starting Singapore's first co-operative for social changemakers



**Vincent Ng**  
General Manager  
A Good Space Co-operative





## Meet Evelyn, she's a changemaker!



Evelyn Khoo  
Founder, Aphasia SG



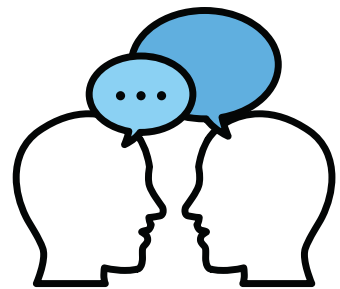
# These initiatives create meaningful impact for the people Evelyn cares about but she faces 3 challenges...

**Evelyn Khoo**  
Founder, Aphasia SG



## Easy to start, difficult to sustain

- Grants don't cover manpower
- Volunteer engagement is difficult
- Accessing key influencers takes time
- Burnt out from operations



## Little time to learn and network across sectors



## Alone, it is difficult to contribute to systemic change





## Other changemakers like Evelyn also encounter these issues...

### **Daniel Tay**

Community Project  
Director, Kampung  
Bishan



### **Louis Puah**

Founder, Crater



### **Abhishek Bajaj**

Founder, 6th Sense



### **Chua Ningpei**

Founder, IamInvisible





# A Good Space was incorporated as Singapore's first co-operative for social changemakers on 31 March 2020 and we do 3 things for our members



Mutual Aid

Sustain



Cross-Sector Learning

Grow



Organize multi-sector collectives to create change for complex issues

Amplify



## Some of our changemaker members:

**34**

Members

**15**

Social Issues &  
Communities



**Lily Goh**  
ExtraOrdinary Horizons  
Deaf Advocate



**Adrian Tan**  
SG Assist  
Seniors & Caregiving



**Evelyn Khoo**  
Aphasia SG  
Differently-Abled



**M. Ibnur Rashad**  
GUILD  
Environment



**Michael Cheng**  
Playback Theatre  
Arts & Theatre



**Louis Puah**  
Praxium  
Education



**Anthea Ong**  
Fmr NMP  
Multiple Issues



**Sherman Ho**  
Happiness Initiative  
Mental Wellness



**Lee Zhong Han**  
We Tell Stories  
Multiple Issues



**T. Ranga**  
Beyond Social Services  
Low-Income

## The six founding members decided to register AGS as a co-op for three key reasons

1

We wanted it to be a neutral 'third space' for civic action owned by the citizens

2

We wanted members to contribute to the activities of the co-operative

3

We wanted to be intentional about having a business model to be financially sustainable



Anthea



Melissa



Vincent



Abhishek



Tines



Evelyn

## Singapore has 84 co-operatives according to the latest figures from the Registrar of Co-operative Societies

Categories	Number of co-ops
Consumer and services	62
Credit	22



## Reflection Point 1

What relationship do we want to have with our members?





## Reflection Point 2

Diversity - a strength and weakness



Our members starting a soup kitchen that ran for 1 month, serving 100 bowls of soup daily

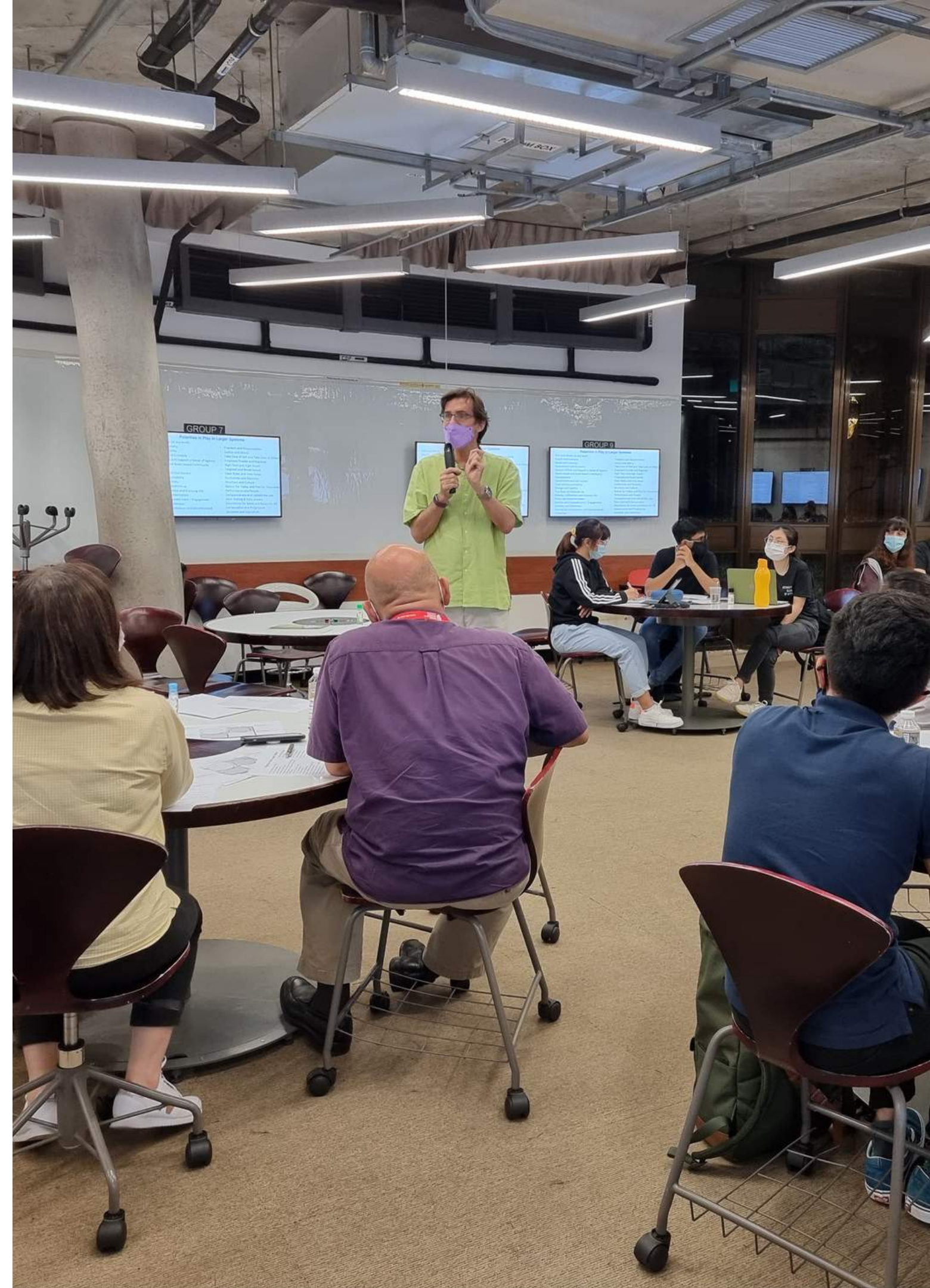


Multi-sector collective listening to each other and ideating for solutions to do together



## Reflection Point 3

Finding a viable business model





**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,  
committed, citizens can change the world.  
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.**

Margaret Mead





# Connect

Interested in...

- Bouncing ideas about co-ops?
- Joining us as a member?
- Supporting our members?

Let's have coffee, I'd love to learn from you!

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