

THE SERVEBETTER STORY



SP Nathan, a Director at Servebetter, attended a two days WIAL Foundations of Action Learning workshop at Kuala Lumpur in 2015 on his own initiative. He was curious about the AL process and had a burning question on 'how well can Action Learning help NGOs solve problems?' Nathan's greatest discovery about Action Learning was that it is a tool that emphasizes live experiences by providing actionable solutions instead of the traditional methodology of classroom learning.

From this point on, more Servebetter volunteers were exposed to Action Learning. They have gone on to actively participate in WIAL Malaysia's AL Community of Practice gatherings. Servebetter is a social enterprise, dedicated to supporting and facilitating the use of enterprises to empower individuals and NGOs.

In 2017, Servebetter applied for the Better world Fund to assist more NGOs in capacity building, especially with tools like Action Learning to improve their service delivery.

2017 WIAL Better Fund for Servebetter

The following is a summary of the WIAL Better World Fund projects carried out by Servebetter and WIAL Malaysia from June 2017 to February 2018, under two categories:

1. NGOs Leadership Development through Action Learning Coaching & Certifications.

This is to develop and empower the NGO leaders on leadership capacity building and team problem solving skills.

1.1 Foundations of Action Learning coaching for seven individual from seven NGO organizations recommended by Servebetter in June 2017 and January 2018.

The participants are as follows:

- i. Ms Suganthy - Malaysian Community & Education Foundation
- ii. Ms Sujitra - Hindu Sangam Samskhaaraa Solidarity Malaysia
- iii. Mr Arulananthan - Montfort Boy Town
- iv. Mr Kandasamy - Athma Foundation
- v. Dr Rama - Sultan Idris Shah Foundation
- vi. Mitch Yusmar Yusuf - SEED Foundation
- vii. Andrew Pang - Always for People

1.2 Certification for Action Learning Coaches Workshops (CALC)

Two participants from the Foundations of Action Learning attended the CALC Workshops:

- i. Mr Arulananthan – Montfort Boys Town
- ii. Dr Rama – Sultan Idris Shah Foundation

2. Action Learning Coaching with the Leaders of The Montfort Boys Town, Shah Alam, Malaysia

Montfort provides academically and financially challenged youths the opportunity to equip themselves with the right skills and guides them in recognising their talents. This is done by providing practical vocational training and quality living skills which serve to, empower them with the confidence to live a successful and positive life.



As part of the programme in character formation, Montfort youths undergo a disciplines schedule of work, study, and play. Emphasis is given to leadership training in the course of their formation. The youths are also involved in the running of the Home. A Prefect system of management and reporting ensures that Montfort is a place managed for the Youth, by the Youth, and with the Youth.

2.1 Action Learning and Team Problem Solving on 11 September 2017

Fourteen heads of departments from the various training skills at Montfort were introduced to Action Learning, asking questions and reflections in problem solving.

2.2 The Everest in Me and Action Learning on 26th & 27 February 2018 at Montfort Boys Town

The Montfort Boys Town found the one day workshop in September 2017 beneficial, leading Brother Robin to personally request that Servebetter conduct another two days of action Learning workshop for all the Montfort Heads of Departments.

Although WIAL Malaysia has fully utilised the WIAL Better World Fund, we decided to run this as one of our community CSR contributions.

Action Learning Coaches Pro-Bono Hours



True to the spirit of the Better world Fund, it has benefitted forty four (44) NGO leaders, volunteers, counsellors, trainers, administrators, and social workers in learning about the action Learning process and the application of the power of questions in their daily operations.

Our deep gratitude to the following AL coaches for their resourceful contribution of time and professional expertise in ensuring the success of this WIAL Better World Fund Project:

Testimonials

Mr SP Nathan - Servebetter

NGOs in Malaysia are generally divided into two main categories:- the large NGOs with a good structure with sufficient manpower and good funding support, and the smaller NGO- led by founder members driven to solve some burning community issue, usually facing capacity and funding problems.

Both these NGOs face problems of differing nature which needs quick and actionable solutions that preserves staff harmony without knocking anyone's egos.

The design of the Action Learning process for problem solving enables people in the NGOs to discuss issues and challenges in a structured way. NGOs have at last found a tool that not only generates acceptable solutions but also helps the team work together by creating great bonds.

NGO leaders who have attended the WIAL courses have greatly benefitted from the workshop and are appreciative to WIAL FSG and WIAL Malaysia for giving them this opportunity.

Arulanathan - Montfort Boy Town

As for me -' sky is the limit' for learning. Many years of working with different job scopes and employers has taught me valuable lessons to learn. Along the way, 'Action Learning' program that I attended gave a new learning experience which can be put to practice at work place as well.

The AL Foundations gave the basis and CALC 1 and 2 gave serious practical sessions with great input and valuable comments from the facilitators - Mr Isa and Mr William. The group exercise gave me better interaction with fellow participants and their valuable sharing.

I have learnt that the more I put into practice it becomes easy to handle some of the questioning technique. As I frequently handle enquiries on disciplinary issues among students, the many questioning techniques have helped me finalize reports easily.

I am happy that I took part in the Action Learning program and am grateful and thankful to Mr William and Mr Isa. A great learning program.

-Arul.S.-

Mitch Yusmar Yusof - SEED Foundation

I recently attended a workshop like other... a workshop that taught me the power of questions, the openness of friendship, and the acceptance of differences.

My goal for the workshop was to do everything I was asked to do which means taking myself out of my comfort circle and I did.



What I discovered was a workshop that creates and maintains a physical, social, and emotionally safe learning environment. The interactions and conversations allow me to gauge and decide what will work in our organization following the process given.

I am glad I experienced and stretch my level of comfort.

Mitch Yusmar Yusof

*Executive Director, Pertubuhan Pembangunan Kebajikan dan Persekitaran Positif Malaysia(SEED), No 69, jln Tiong Nam, 50350 Kuala Lumpur.
Website:<http://seedfoundation.com.my/>*



Andrew Pang - Always for People

I'd like to share my experience and appreciation for this course on several different fronts:

1. The quality and Proficiency of the Trainers

A great program requires a couple of great presenters to bring out the best of learning outcomes. Isa and William were masterful and the timely interventions compound the programs efficacy.

I felt there was an aura of mutual trust and respect bilaterally shared amongst us, the participants with the both of you.

2. Learning about Action Learning

ALs principles were expounded clearly and I felt we grasped them quite comfortably.

When each of us took turns to be the problem presenter, I immediately noticed I wasn't constrained by structure and the ease of ALs process made what seemed to be honest reflecting come through naturally.

I'm of the opinion that were so because of the AL coaches competence.

3.How could AL help my work?

AL would help my work as a social entrepreneur in a big way as my work involves honest, authentic and purposeful conversations. I'm hoping one day I'll get the good fortune to become an AL Coach.

-Andrew Pang-

Final Appreciation

Servebetter and WIAL Malaysia would like to thank Shannon Banks and the WIAL FSG Committee for the 2017 WIAL Better Fund. Your help and support have enriched the following people throughout this WIAL Better Fund Project journey:

- Forty four (44) individuals from the various NGOs in Malaysia.
- Thousands of people under the care and leadership of these forty four (44) individuals.
- One SALC, one PALC, two CALCs and two Action Learning Coaches in their personal coaching and community development.

/published2018