

**SOCIAL
INNOVATION
IN HEALTH
INITIATIVE**

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

8-10 NOVEMBER 2023

2023 SIHI GLOBAL PARTNERS' MEETING REPORT

Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship
University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa



ABOUT THE MEETING

“I am because we are” is the essence behind the South African philosophy of Ubuntu. It highlights how an individual’s welfare interconnects with the welfare of the entire community. This communal ethos resonates with the commitment of world leaders to “leave no one behind”¹ and to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The pledge indicates that the goals must be met universally, encompassing all countries, individuals, and societal groups.

One of the targets outlined in the Agenda is to attain universal health coverage (UHC), ensuring access to safe and affordable healthcare resources. However, there are reported shortcomings in this domain—health service coverage failed to expand, leading to financial challenges for many individuals due to out-of-pocket expenses for essential health services and a lack of coverage.² Thus, the role of social innovation and research initiatives in promoting UHC is critical to achieve necessary change. If countries were to mainstream social innovation research in their health systems, they can identify novel tailored approaches that can accelerate UHC and improve policy design.

The Social Innovation in Health Initiative (SIHI) is a network of partner institutions and a community of stakeholders established in 2014 through a partnership between TDR, the Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Cape Town, the Skoll Centre at Oxford University, and the London School of Hygiene and

Tropical Medicine. SIHI strives to catalyse research to promote social innovations that transform healthcare systems. Emphasis is put on the valuable contribution social innovations could make in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and improving the well-being of communities in low- and middle-income countries. Currently, the network includes 13 SIHI hubs hosted in research institutions worldwide, dedicated to advancing community-engaged social innovation in health through research, capacity strengthening, social justice, gender equity, and advocacy.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary and shape its next decade, SIHI hosted a Global Partners’ Meeting on 8-10 November 2023. The event aimed to reflect on good practices and identify critical elements to enhance the sustainability of health-related social innovation and research initiatives. This report highlights the outcomes and action plans resulting from this participatory meeting.

¹ [UNSDG | Leave No One Behind](#)

² [Tracking universal health coverage 20w23 global monitoring report \(who.int\)](#)



MEETING OBJECTIVES

1

To **CELEBRATE** ten years of the Social Innovation in Health Initiative (SIHI),

2

COCREATE a framework of best practices to enhance the sustainability of social innovation and research initiatives,

3

and **SHAPE THE FUTURE** of Social Innovation in Health Initiative (SIHI) through collaborations.



MEETING OUTCOMES

GOOD PRACTICES AND KEY ELEMENTS TO
ENHANCE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SOCIAL
INNOVATION AND RESEARCH INITIATIVES.





1. Sustainable human resources capacity

Advancing social innovation in health requires an enabling and inspiring environment that helps innovators, researchers, and local partners reach their full potential.

Key elements include:

- ✓ **Cultivating leadership and good governance** with a foundational structure that is composed of diverse leadership, steering/advisory groups, collaborators from various fields of interests, and dedicated support staff, alongside established core activities, standard processes, and procedures.

- ✓ **Promoting a sense of purpose and unity** under a shared vision that can promote a collective drive towards innovation.

- ✓ **Fostering an organizational culture** that values inclusivity, recognition, and wellness with members of different generations who ‘walk the talk,’ feel valued, and receive fair wages.

- ✓ **Creating and expanding opportunities for personal and professional growth** through programmes like academic exchanges, internships, collaboration, cocreation initiatives and activities.

- ✓ **Encouraging youth engagement and development** by providing platforms for young innovators and researchers to contribute fresh perspectives and harness their creativity for sustainable social innovation research. This may involve mentorship programmes, youth-led projects, and integrating their voices into decision-making processes to foster a new generation of social innovation leaders and champions.



2. Sustainable financing and business models

Social innovations and research initiatives greatly benefit from strategic partnerships, collaborations, and funding. These are also important in promoting community uptake, ownership, and participation.

Successful partnership models that supported social innovations and research initiatives were:

- **Exploring diverse funding sources** from the local community, government, trust funds, regional development banks, and academia.
- **A “matchmaking” broker system** where interventions are tailored to the needs of the community.
- **Incentives for innovators** (i.e. grants and recognition) and funders (i.e. tax refunds).
- **Showing credibility through evidence-based outcomes** of innovations and local support (“put science to ideas”).

Potential directions to consider in terms of partnerships include:

- ✓ **Increasing visibility of research and social innovation initiatives** with effective branding.
- ✓ **Mainstreaming social innovation** into research institutions and health systems.
- ✓ **Integrating social innovation and research initiatives** with national health plans, universal health coverage, and Sustainable Development Goals while expanding partnerships and multidisciplinary fields beyond the health sector to drive social innovations.
- ✓ **Showcasing the impact of social innovation on health and equity by:**
 - Establishing measurable compelling performance indicators to achieve the buy-in of potential allies and financiers.
 - Centring on a storytelling approach, using social media and other digital channels to share compelling narratives that resonate with and inspire the local and global audiences.
- ✓ **Leveraging local partner support** to attract global partnerships to showcase local ownership and interest. Moreover, demonstrate strong global linkages to inspire and attract local stakeholders by highlighting the potential for international collaboration and reach.
- ✓ **Aligning social innovation and research initiatives with the strategic goals** of national policies as well as the interests of donor countries to ensure mutual benefits and secure stronger partnership support (“help countries to help you”).

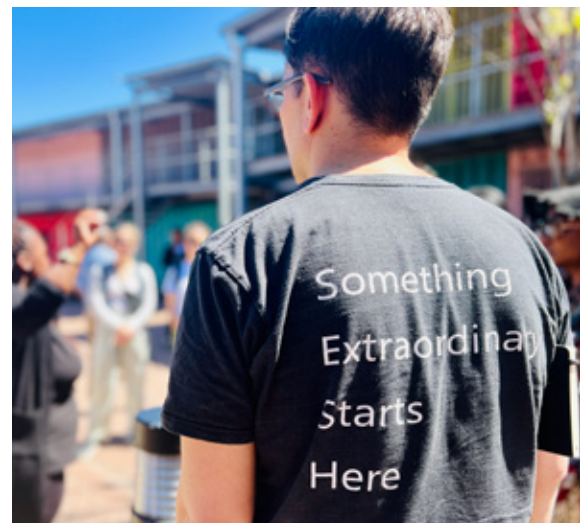


3. Ensuring equity-focused impact on vulnerable groups

SIHI's research endeavours have underscored the importance of a participatory approach, making innovations more effective and meaningful to the communities they belong to, and therefore sustainable.

Good practices to elevate equity-focused impact of social innovations include:

- ✓ **Employing a framework of intersectionality** to address local health inequities and context-specific needs better.
- ✓ **Democratizing research through a bottom-up approach** that ensures ownership, participation, and genuine input from the local people.
- ✓ **Collaboration across various levels of the health system** and with sectors including education, labour, youth, and environmental protection.
- ✓ **Advocating for the integration of innovations** into the system to create meaningful societal transformation.





4. Considering environmental impact on health

A person's environment has a profound impact on their health – the health of the ecosystem and the health of the community are inextricably linked.

Social innovations can contribute to improving environmental health through:

- ✓ **Expanding research and innovation areas** to align with the One Health approach and Sustainable Development Goals. Ecological determinants of health include climate change, food security, water sanitation, among others.
- ✓ **Recognizing indigenous peoples as stewards of the environment** and integrating their traditional knowledge into our research methods, innovations, and ways of thinking.
- ✓ **Enhancing the sustainability of social innovation** in health and research initiatives, sustainability must be viewed as holistic – involving environmental, social, and economic contexts.
- ✓ **Utilizing social innovation as a behavioural change strategy** to connect human, animal, and environmental health.





MEETING OUTCOMES

ACTION PLANS TO UNITE EFFORTS IN 2024, ENGAGING WITH COUNTRIES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO MAINSTREAM SOCIAL INNOVATION IN HEALTH SYSTEMS.





1. Collaborations to mainstream social innovation in health research in organizations and country systems

- ✓ **Announcement of the proposed establishment of the Institute of Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the University of the Philippines National Institutes of Health** in 2024/2025. Collaborating to share lessons learnt and develop a strong business plan. SIHI Secretariat to conduct strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, academic collaboration, and proactive pursuit of funding opportunities to lay the groundwork for the successful establishment of an institution for social innovation in health.

- ✓ **Assess Pan American Health Organization's (PAHO) mainstreaming of social innovation across the organization**, its support for social innovation research, and the outcome of its Innovator Exchange Programme modalities.



2. New collaborations and partnerships to advance social innovation research in low- and middle-income countries towards universal health coverage

- ✓ **Creating a new partnership with UNICEF** to launch a youth network in social innovation, collaborating with SIHI hubs and engaging SIHI fellows.

- ✓ **New collaboration with the Bertha Centre Fellow Programme** to engage and convene SIHI hubs and explore and support the establishment of new hubs in Africa.

- ✓ **SIHI Sweden to establish a PhD programme** on social innovation in collaboration with SIHI hubs.

- ✓ **Facilitating cross-hub collaboration** to enhance the SIHI Fellow Programme, develop short courses, and promote innovator collaboration, enabling the sharing of capabilities and resources to foster a collaborative learning environment.



3. Collaboration for improving SIHI visibility and branding and the value proposition for hubs

We identified two main phases – an internal phase focusing on organization introspection, followed by an external phase involving communication to the wider audience:

- ✓ **New collaboration with Valcare and Because Stories** to engage with SIHI hubs to develop a framework for impact measurement that will allow for better strategic clarity and value packaging.
- ✓ **Crafting compelling narratives using a storytelling approach** that highlights the organization's impact and commitment to health equity; and establishing an internal platform for sharing resources that actively contribute to SDGs.
- ✓ **Consultation with SIHI stakeholders** on the development of the SIHI strategic plan 2024-2029.
- ✓ **Bringing in partners through SIHI-led symposia, conferences, and engagements** (in-person or virtual).





MEETING PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY

8 NOVEMBER 2023, BOARDROOMS 1 & 2

Sharing, learning, and identifying good practices

Facilitators: Meredith del Pilar-Labarda and Arturo Ongkeko Jr.

Please note that times are displayed in SAST (South African Standard Time), which is UTC/GMT +2 hours.

09:00-09:30 | WELCOME REMARKS AND “SIHI AT A GLANCE” VIDEO

Solange Rosa: Director, Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship; John Reeder: Director, TDR; Meredith del Pilar-Labarda: Lead, Social Innovation in Health Initiative Secretariat.

09:30-10:20 | SETTING THE SCENE

Keynote Address: Envisioning the Future of Social Innovation Research in Health: A 10-Year Global Perspective (virtual) (15 minutes)

This keynote explores the future of global health social innovation research, projecting 10 years ahead. Drawing from the Bertha Centre’s 15-year journey in advancing social innovation across regions, we’ll discuss insights to guide the next decade. Specifically, we will envision the future of SIHI and strategies to engage new stakeholders and build a compelling business case for SIHI.

François Bonnici, Co-Founder of SIHI, Director, Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, Head of Foundations, World Economic Forum.

Strategic reflections and key messages to guide the event discussions (virtual) (5-7 minutes per panelist)

Each panelist will offer strategic insights to shape SIHI’s future in a changing global landscape. They will discuss their vision for SIHI ten years from now and highlight key factors to consider. They will also provide key messages for the event discussions.

Dirk Mueller, Senior Health Adviser, Global Health Research Team, Research and Evidence Division, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) United Kingdom; Teresa Soop, Senior Research Adviser, Swedish International Development Cooperation (Sida) representative; Meredith del Pilar-Labarda, SIHI Secretariat Lead, University of the Philippines, Manila.

LEARNING FROM SIHI IMPACT STORIES TO MAINSTREAM SOCIAL INNOVATION IN HEALTH IN COUNTRIES: CONVERSATIONS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS

10:20-11:00 | Disseminating social innovation research across Africa

A conversation with **Phyllis Awor** (SIHI Uganda hub Lead); **Don Mathanga** (SIHI Malawi hub Lead); **Mats Målqvist** (SIHI Sweden hub Lead); **Anniza De Wet** (Valcare Chief Impact Officer). Moderator: **Beatrice Halpaap**.

11:00-11:30 | Tea & coffee break / interactive gallery walk

11:30-12:10 | Mainstreaming social innovation in health in the Philippines

A conversation with **Eva Maria C. Cutiongco-de la Paz** (UP Manila National Institutes of Health); **Jaime C. Montoya** (Philippine Council for Health Research and Development, Department of Science and Technology); **Alberto M Ong** (SIHI Innovator, Cullion Health); **Jana Deborah Mier-Alpaño** (SIHI Philippines hub Lead); **Meredith del Pilar-Labarda** (SIHI Secretariat Lead); Moderator: **Mary Ann D. Lansang**.

12:10-12:50 | Innovator exchanges in Latin America and the Caribbean: boosting knowledge, cross-fertilization of ideas, and research

A conversation with **Magaly Blas** (Innovator in Peru); **Pablo Montoya** (Innovator in Colombia); **Maria Isabel Echavarría** (SIHI LAC hub Lead); **Luis Gabriel Cuervo** (PAHO/EIH Senior Adviser); **John Reeder** (TDR Director). Moderator: **Joseph D. Tucker**.

12:50-14:00 | LUNCH: LIGHT BUFFET AND INTERACTIVE GALLERY WALK

14:00-15:30 | WORLD CAFÉ

Identifying good practices to address the social innovation and research sustainability aspects: What have we learned? How does this relate to SIHI?

Theme 1: Sustainable human resources capacity

Theme 2: Sustainable financing and business models

Theme 3: Ensuring equity-focused impact on vulnerable groups

Theme 4: Considering environmental impact on health

15:30-16:00 | TEA AND COFFEE BREAK AND VISIT OF BERTHA CENTRE

16:00-17:00 | WORLD CAFÉ - CONTINUED

19:00 | GROUP DINNER

Grand Africa Cafe Beach,
Address: 1 Haul Road, V&A Waterfront, Granger Bay, Cape Town

THURSDAY

9 NOVEMBER 2023

Understanding good practices on specific innovations through site visits

Facilitators: Katusha de Villiers and Meredith del Pilar-Labarda

Please note that times are displayed in SAST (South African Standard Time), which is UTC/GMT +2 hours.

8:30-12:30 | VISITS OF SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

12:30-13:30 | LUNCH BUFFET AT PHILIPPI VILLAGE

13:30-14:10 | YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STORIES

A conversation with **Damilola Walker** (UNICEF Adolescent HIV Global Lead/Senior Adviser), **Joe D. Tucker** (SIHI China hub Lead), **Ogechukwu Aribodor** (SIHI Fellow), **Zixuan Zhu** (SIHI Fellow), **Bushra Razack** (Philippi Village), Moderator: **Arturo Ongkeko Jr.**

14:10-15:30 | VISIT OF PHILIPPI VILLAGE

15:30-16:30 | REFLECTIONS

Reflections on each of the four themes discussed in the World Café drawing upon insights from field visit, and setting the scene for the development of action plans and fostering collaboration on the following day.

19:00 | GROUP DINNER

Ginja Restaurant

Address: On the Waterfront Pierhead, Victoria & Alfred Waterfront, Cape Town, 8001

FRIDAY

10 NOVEMBER 2023, BOARDROOMS 1 & 2

Developing action plans and fostering collaborations: Joining efforts in engaging countries to mainstream social innovation in health, taking into consideration the learnings and good practices

Facilitators: Meredith del Pilar-Labarda and Arturo Ongkeko Jr.

Please note that times are displayed in SAST (South African Standard Time), which is UTC/GMT +2 hours.

● **9:00-9:30 | REVIEWING THE FINDINGS OF THE PAST TWO DAYS AND SETTING THE OUTLOOK FOR THE DAY**

● **9:30-11:30 | ROUND TABLE WORKING GROUPS**

Create action plans incorporating learnings and foster collaboration for SIHI agenda and social innovation mainstreaming in countries.

Tea and coffee available during the session.

● **11:30-12:30 | PLENARY**

Reviewing action plans and identifying next steps to kick them off.

● **12:30 - 12:45 | CLOSING**

12:45-13:30 | LIGHT BUFFET

● **AFTERNOON | DEPARTURE**

L PARTICIPANTS

Allen, Elizabeth: Strategic Partnerships Lead, The Global Health Network, Cape Town, South Africa

Aribodor, Ogechukwu B.: SIHI fellow, SIHI Nigeria, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria

Awor, Phyllis: Lead, SIHI Uganda Hub, Lead SIHI hub consortium Uganda/Nigeria/Ghana, Makerere University, Uganda

Barcena, Jean Francis: Communication Coordinator, SIHI Secretariat, University of the Philippines Manila

Blas, Magaly: SIHI Innovator, CEO and Founder Mamás del Río, Researcher and Associate Professor Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Peru

Bonnici, Francois*: SIHI co-founder, Director, Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, Switzerland

Cuervo, Luis Gabriel: Senior Adviser, Department of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health (EIH) AMRO/PAHO, Washington DC

Cutiongco-de la Paz, Eva Maria: Executive Director, National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila

Del Pilar-Labarda, Meredith: Lead, SIHI Secretariat, School of Health Sciences, University of the Philippines Manila

De Villiers, Katusha: Lead, SIHI South Africa Hub, Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship, University of Cape Town

De Wet, Anniza: Chief Impact Officer, Valcare, South Africa

Echavarria, Maria Isabel: Lead, SIHI Latin America and Caribbean Hub, CIDEIM, Colombia

Fourie, Tina: Creative Director, Storyteller Co-founder of Because Stories, South Africa

Halpaap, Beatrice: SIHI Co-founder and Lead for TDR, South Africa; Email: halpaapb@who.int

Lansang, Mary Ann: Professor at the University of the Philippines Manila (retired), Infectious Diseases Consultant, Philippines

Leresche, Kay: Special Adviser, Regional University Forum, South Africa

Målqvist, Mats: Lead, SIHI Sweden Hub, Uppsala University, Sweden

Mathanga, Don: Lead, SIHI Malawi Hub and SIHI Malawi/Rwanda Consortium, Kamuzu University, Malawi

Mier-Alpañó, Jana Deborah: SIHI Philippines Manager, Lead SIHI hub consortium Philippines/Indonesia/India consortium, University of the Philippines Manila

Montoya, Jaime C.: Executive Director, Philippine Council for Health Research and Development, Department of Science and Technology, Philippines

Montoya, Pablo: SIHI Innovator, El Canto del Tucán: Radio, health, and pedagogy in the Colombian Amazon, Colombia

Moodley, Gillian: Senior Project Manager, Bertha Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation, University of Cape Town

Mueller, Dirk*: Senior Health Adviser for Health Research, Health Research Team, Research and Evidence Division, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, United Kingdom

Nyström, Maria: Coordinator, SIHI Sweden, Uppsala University, Sweden

Ong, Alberto Jr.: SIHI Innovator, Culion Health, Philippines

Ongkeko, Arturo Jr.: Co-Lead, SIHI Secretariat and SIHI Philippines Hub, Research Associate, National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila

Otmani del Barrio, Mariam: TDR Scientist, Switzerland

Ramanjam, Vanessa: Programme Manager, Solution Space, University of Cape Town

Razack, Bushra: CEO, Stakeholder Engagement, Philippi Village, Philippi, Cape Town

Reeder, John: Director TDR, Switzerland

Rosa, Solange: Director, Bertha Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation, University of Cape Town

Saravia, Nancy: Director, CIDEIM, Colombia

Sixolo, Iviwe: Event Coordinator, Bertha Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation, University of Cape Town

Soop, Teresa*: Senior Research Adviser, Swedish International Development Cooperation, Sweden

Tucker, Joseph: Lead, SIHI China Hub, SESH, United Kingdom

Walker, Damilola: Senior Advisor and Global Lead, Adolescent HIV, UNICEF, USA

Zhu, Zixuan: SIHI fellow, SESH, China

(* joining virtually for part of the event)

A photograph of a woman in a pink shirt and a nurse in a white uniform sitting with a baby in a hospital room. The woman is on the left, looking towards the camera. The nurse is on the right, smiling. The baby is in the center, looking towards the camera. The background shows hospital beds and a window with green curtains.

WHAT IF

COUNTRIES MAINSTREAMED SOCIAL INNOVATION
RESEARCH IN THEIR HEALTH SYSTEMS TO
ACCELERATE UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE?



Visit the designated meeting website page where you can find all information and supporting documents for the meeting.

LEARN MORE AND CONNECT

Visit the SIHI website for more information about the initiative, innovations, and partners.



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