

Project Hear Me Out  
Group 7-21  
Multi-year

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## **Section 1: Overview**

### **A. Area of Concern**

In Singapore, 6 in 1000 babies are born with varying degrees of hearing loss. Additionally, age-related hearing loss is on the rise and about 50% of those aged 80 and above are expected to have hearing loss by 2030. This problem is further compounded by Singapore's ageing population in which 18% of the population will be above 65 by 2030.

We conducted a focus group discussion with deaf staff members of the Singapore Association for the Deaf, in which we found out that they had faced many problems, especially discrimination and lack of understanding, in their daily lives. Additionally, we conducted a survey with more than 200 responses, in which we found out that only 12% know the correct term to address those with hearing loss, and only 10.7% have ever rendered assistance to the deaf.

Our needs analysis shows that people are unaware of and hence do not actively respond to the needs of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing community because the needs of this community are not easily observable. The Deaf hence face multiple difficulties in their daily lives such as communication, situational awareness, and discrimination, which point to a general lack of acceptance among the Singaporean public.

### **B. Challenges Identified**

As shown from our needs analysis, the Singaporean public does not embrace the Deaf community as a part of the wider society, leading to difficulties in seeking and remaining in employment and a general lack of help rendered towards the Deaf in their daily lives.

Additionally, the Singapore Association for the Deaf receives limited government funding yet requires a significant amount to run its daily operations and services for the Deaf. In FY16/17, SADeaf spent a total of S\$3,636,000 yet only received S\$3,406,000, of which only S\$1,988,000 came from government funding. More noticeably, the amount received in donations has steadily decreased from S\$1,616,000 in FY14/15 to S\$536,000 in FY16/17.

### **C. Underlying Problem**

Given that there is a lack of awareness, understanding and empathy towards the Deaf and Hard-of-hearing community in Singapore, which leads to difficulties in integrating the deaf into mainstream society, how might we build on past and present initiatives to create greater awareness and seek wider public support for this community in the year 2018 and beyond?

#### **D. Plan of Action**

Shown in the table below is our initial plan of action which we had drawn up in March. We had planned quite a number of initiatives, with a focus placed on raising awareness since that was the main problem we had identified during our needs analysis.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
Jan-Feb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recruitment of extended core</li> <li>● Conceptualisation</li> </ul>
Mar-Apr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Needs analysis</li> <li>● Cookie sale</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Carnival</li> <li>● Complete brochure translation</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Street sales</li> <li>● Roadshows</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Door-to-door visits</li> <li>● Car wash</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cookie sale</li> </ul>

### **Section 2: Implementation**

#### **A. Actions and Outcomes**

Our actual implementation differed from our original plan of action because there were many issues we had faced in the course of planning our events. One main problem was that we were unable to get a venue for our carnival and subsequently our roadshows, even after contacting more than 20 CCs, public libraries, and shopping malls. We hence needed to improvise in order to still meet our objectives despite the various difficulties we faced.

Date	Action	Objectives
Jan-Mar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recruitment of extended core</li> <li>● Conceptualisation</li> <li>● Needs analysis               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Survey (200 responses)</li> <li>○ Focus group discussion (21/3 at SADeaf)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	-
Termly	Cookie sales (2/3, 25/5, 6/7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase visibility of project</li> <li>● Share about our cause to students</li> <li>● Raise funds for SADeaf</li> </ul> Raised \$850 and reached 1000 people	Fundraising, awareness
May	Translation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● SADeaf materials translated into Chinese, Malay, and Tamil and then sent back to SADeaf after vetting from teachers</li> <li>● Reach wider, non-English speaking audiences</li> </ul>	Awareness
June	Street sales <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sell merchandise to public</li> <li>● Distribute SADeaf materials to donors</li> </ul> Raised more than \$1500 and reached 3000 people	Fundraising, awareness
July	Sign language course (7/7 at SADeaf) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learnt basic sign language taught by deaf instructor, increasing appreciation for deaf culture</li> </ul> Door-to-door visits (7-8/7 at Mountbatten) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Visiting HDB estates to share with residents about our cause</li> <li>● Distribution of awareness materials</li> </ul> Exhibition (11-13/7, HCI) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Showcase of materials in Kong Chian Library</li> <li>● Sharing about our cause and SADeaf to visiting students</li> </ul> Reached 800 people	Awareness, interaction
August	Car wash (4/8, Tampines)	Awareness,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers wore earplugs while washing cars to experience the Deaf world</li> </ul> <p>YFC bazaar (10/8, Asia Square)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sold merchandise and shared about our cause to members of the public</li> </ul> <p>Deaf artist workshop (11/8, HCI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students learnt from a deaf artist who shared his story of overcoming challenges as a Deaf person</li> </ul> <p>Interview series</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with Deaf people to provide insights of what it is like to be deaf</li> <li>• Encourage viewers to be more embracing of the deaf around us</li> </ul> <p>Awareness talk (13/8, Citi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organised a talk by SADeaf staff to Citi employees to share about deaf culture as well as correct misconceptions</li> </ul> <p>Reached 1200 people and raised \$250</p>	<p>fundraising, interaction</p>
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**Section 3: Project Outcomes**

**A. Accomplishments**

We have raised \$2,650 for SADeaf through our various fundraising activities and other miscellaneous donations. In addition, we mobilised 50 participants for our street sales, sign language workshop, car wash, and art workshop. We further reached 7,000 more members of the public who learned more about our cause through our street sales, exhibitions, and social media campaigns. The translated versions of the awareness materials will also be able to reach a much wider audience than before, though it is difficult to quantify. On Instagram, we have 723 followers and also 244 likes on our Facebook page.

**B. Reflections**

In the process of educating others on the difficulties that the Deaf face in their daily lives, we ourselves have gained a better understanding of these difficulties. This understanding has helped us appreciate how lucky we are that we are born without disability. In addition, we were deeply impacted by the never-say-die attitude of the Deaf people whom we have met along the way. It has encouraged us to be brave in the face of adversity and toil to overcome challenges.

To us, our project has been generally successful in that we were able to improve on the previous group's achievements, raising more money and reaching more people. However, there is still much room for improvement in terms of volunteer mobilisation, in which we had faced much difficulty since many people had already volunteered their time with other groups. We will advise the future Project Hear Me Out team to start recruiting volunteers earlier so that they will not have to beg their friends to join in.

### **C. Scope of Impact**

#### Community:

Members of the public learnt more about the difficulties which the Deaf face in their daily lives through our awareness initiatives. It is hoped that the public now better understand the Deaf and will be more willing to help when necessary. Furthermore, through their participation in helping our cause through our initiatives, it is hoped that the volunteers which we had mobilised will be more open to embracing the Deaf and integrating them into the mainstream society.

#### Resolution of AOC/UP:

We identified a lack of understanding among the Singaporean public as the main cause of marginalisation of the Deaf community. To address that, we placed our focus on raising awareness. While our outreach of 5,000 people is a small number, we hope that it will be a stepping stone to greater acceptance of the Deaf within our society.

## References

1. Financial Information. (2018). Retrieved August 13, 2018, from <https://sadeaf.org.sg/about-us/financial-information/>
2. Introduction. (2018). Retrieved August 13, 2018, from <https://sadeaf.org.sg/about-deafness/introduction/>