Fair Employment Foundation

2023 In Review
Overview of 2023

It gives me great pleasure to share with you Fair Employment Foundation’s 2023 Annual Report. I am proud of the Fair team for responding to challenging market conditions with great agility, creativity, and resourcefulness. I would like to highlight our incredible progress and impact at Fair Employment Foundation and at our subsidiary entities in the last year.

At Fair Employment Foundation, we doubled down on employer support by updating and improving our information resources: the Fair Hiring & Managing Guide and the Get Answers page on the Fair Employment Agency website. All of our Get Answers content for employers is now available in Chinese, making our helpful materials more accessible to local employers than ever before. We also revived our in-person Fair Hiring and Managing Sessions to raise public awareness in partnership with companies.

At Fair Employment Agency, we placed 813 domestic workers into jobs debt-free in Hong Kong, bringing our total to 8,324 placements since we started in 2014. This means we have saved workers nearly USD 6 million in recruitment debt to date. At Fair Training Center, we successfully renewed our TESDA government accreditation, which qualifies us to carry out training and assessment for NCII (National Certificate II) domestic work. We also trained 271 domestic workers for NCII certification and/or for life skills in 2023. Finally, at Honest Jobs, we completed our allocation of funds from our investor, Working Capital Fund, investing a total of USD 250K in two mission-aligned ethical recruitment agencies: Pinkcollar in Malaysia and Goodhire in Singapore.

We celebrate these important achievements and are grateful for the support of all our partners and donors who make this impact possible. Yet, there is still much work to be done! Global warming is destabilizing livelihoods in many developing countries, leading millions of people to make risky migration decisions in search of work. At the same time, demographic shifts in advanced economies mean lower birth rates, rapidly aging societies, and structural labor shortages. We see ethical recruitment as an opportunity and a solution. Now more than ever, we need to stay focused on facilitating the safe access of cross-border livelihoods.

We enter 2024 filled with determination, optimism, and renewed commitment to our mission. In the year ahead, we will:

- Help more local employers and bridge the eldercare service gap in Hong Kong.
- Expand our life skills training beyond domestic work to reach migrant workers in other industries who are likewise vulnerable to forced labor situations.
- Advocate for the education of employers pre-hiring and preparation of workers pre-migration.
- Capitalize on synergies across our network of ethical recruitment partners to drive market change in Asia.
- Elevate the care economy conversation and its intersection with gender equality, human rights, and financial inclusion.

Again, we want to thank our staff, board members, funders, companies, partner NGOs, volunteers, and community ambassadors for being with us through the journey. We thank our workers and employers, too, for the privilege of serving them to show the world that there is a better way through responsible recruitment.

Best,

Vivian Gee
CEO, Fair Employment Foundation

* TESDA: Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) is the government agency tasked to manage and supervise technical education and skills development in the Philippines
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Who We Are

Fair Employment Foundation is a registered charity in Hong Kong, with impact and reach across the Asia region. It is the parent organization of Fair Employment Agency, Fair Training Center, and Honest Jobs, market-driven solutions operating as social enterprises to drive system change.

Our Vision

We believe in the power of transparent and inclusive labor markets and migration ecosystems that are unlocking economic gains for both sending and receiving countries. We envision a world where safe migration and ethical recruitment are the norm rather than the exception.

Our Mission

Our mission is to prevent forced labor and, ultimately, create better outcomes for both workers and employers. Fair achieves its mission by setting the market standard for high quality training and the responsible hiring of migrant and/or vulnerable workers.

Fair Employment Foundation

Parent entity and registered charity that incubates market solutions, while focusing on stakeholder engagement, public education, and awareness raising.

Fair Training Center

Government accredited training center that prepares migrant workers for successful overseas employment with an emphasis on life skills.

Fair Employment Agency

Social enterprise and ethical recruitment agency that places migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong without charging fees to workers.

Honest Jobs

Impact fund that invests in and provides peer/network support to mission-aligned enterprises.
## Our Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change below shows how we make our impact collectively at Fair.

### Activities

- Training and recruiting migrant workers ethically
- Providing high-quality and responsible matching services to employers
- Educating employers on ethical hiring and managing practices
- Investing in and growing ethical recruitment agencies; Growing the network of mission-aligned organization in Asia
- Collaborating with other stakeholders to drive policy shifts and business practices

### Outputs

- Workers properly trained and placed in safe and stable jobs free from recruitment-related debt
- More employers using ethical agencies to hire workers
- High satisfaction rates among employers and workers
- High worker retention levels
- A growing number of employment agencies and companies recruiting workers ethically

### Outcomes

- Increased awareness of, demand for, and access to ethical recruitment and training
- Stable, safe, and decent employment opportunities
- Reduction or elimination of worker recruitment-related debt, increased income levels, and successful migration journeys
- Employers benefiting from low worker turnover and increased productivity

### Impact

- An informed, professionalised, transparent and ethical recruitment industry for migrant labor
- Eradication of forced labour of migrant workers
- Better migration outcomes for workers and employers
Our Reach

Hong Kong
Fair Employment Foundation, Fair Employment Agency, and Honest Jobs

Manila
Fair Training Center

Kuala Lumpur
Pinkcollar

Singapore
Goodhire

Fair Entities
Fair (Honest Jobs) Investees
Established in 2014, Fair Employment Foundation (FEF) builds market solutions to prevent forced labor conditions for migrant workers, and make the market work better for workers and employers across Asia.

FEF is the parent entity of Fair Employment Agency, Fair Training Center, and Honest Jobs.

In addition to coordinating and aligning the Fair group’s strategy, FEF also engages stakeholders, including international organizations and the public sector, to drive systemic change. FEF raises public awareness by educating employers on the benefits of responsible hiring and managing practices.
FEF created a 6-minute Fair introduction video to show how Fair’s different entities work synergistically to address the issue of forced labor.

FEF doubled down on employer support, completing a full refresh of our public information resources: the Fair Hiring and Managing Guide and Get Answers.

100% Get Answers articles for employers translated into Chinese

175+ Participants in our Fair Hiring and Managing Sessions, in partnership with TMF Group, the US Consulate in Hong Kong, DLA Piper, CLSA, HKEX, Bloomberg, and Total Loyalty Company.

We surveyed participants with the following results:

- 83% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the content and session delivery were effective.
- 87% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they learned something new and/or relevant from the session.
- 80% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed feeling empowered to share or act on what they had learned.

Finally, Fair was featured on a variety of platforms in 2023:

- International Organisation on Migration (IOM) Best Practice Guide for Employers of Migrant Workers in the Care Sector in Hong Kong
- AVPN and UN Women-organized Care Economy Forum
- Business Profile published on The Care Economy Knowledge Hub
- ReThink Conference, the largest sustainability and impact related event in Hong Kong, attended by 6,000 participant.
In addition to highlighting the importance of human rights, we are finding new ways to frame the issue and share about the relevance of our work to donors and other stakeholders.

Ethical recruitment is good for workers, good for employers, and good for labor markets. We make labor markets fair, inclusive, competitive, and vibrant.

When we create safe, accessible, and legal pathways for employing migrant labor, we can address structural labor shortages caused by demographic shifts while solving for global economic disparities.

Fair is focused on the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:
Established in 2014, Fair Employment Agency (FEA) is a nonprofit social enterprise. We are an employment agency that is driving the industry towards ethical standards for hiring and managing migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong. We never charge placement fees to workers. At the same time, we provide transparent pricing and high quality service to employers, responsibly matching them with workers who meet their household and family care needs.
In 2023, we transitioned to a new General Manager, Jasmine Lam has been with FEA since 2017, and is highly experienced having led the Processing Team and serving as Branch Manager prior to taking up her current role as General Manager. Also, we are proud to announce a new sending country partner agency: MRH Global.

813 workers placed into safe jobs debt-free
8,324 workers placed since inception (2014-2023)
91% of employers would recommend FEA to a friend
98% of workers are satisfied with FEA services
98% worker retention rate after 3 months of employment vs. industry average of 60-70%

Fair Employment Agency
Find out more by selecting the options below

What We Do  Highlights  Learnings

I really can’t say how terrific our experience has been with your agency and your colleagues. [Our helper] was a perfect match for our family.”

The FEA sets a gold standard for hiring a helper in Hong Kong. It was our first time hiring a helper and they made the process seamless and answered all of our questions.”

FEA Employers
FEA had an especially difficult year in 2023 because the "new normal" post-pandemic in Hong Kong has resulted in a slower hiring market for domestic workers.

We are observing a rise in recruitment-related fees charged to workers, so there is still much work that needs to be done in making responsible recruitment the norm! Also, given the slow economic recovery in Hong Kong, we decided to close the Tsuen Wan branch office in August 2023. The upside is that having all staff at the Sheung Wan head office has helped increase team cohesion and enhance collaboration. Stable staffing continues to be a challenge in a difficult industry like ours. We are continuing to find the right balance between offering flexibility to our staff while maintaining strong business results. We are proud to have weathered the uncertain market conditions in 2023, and will continue to improve internal efficiencies and invest in staff professional development.
Established in November 2016, Fair Training Center (FTC) is a government-accredited training center based in the Philippines. Our program has been deemed the “gold standard” for pre-migration training by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the Philippines. In addition to preparing workers for their jobs as professionals, we also equip them with life skills to ensure a successful migration journey and to avoid forced labor situations. Our life skills training for workers includes professionalism, communicating well with employers, financial management, adapting to new environments and cultures, dealing with homesickness, parenting from abroad, and understanding your rights and your labor contract.
FTC successfully renewed its certification this year from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in the Philippines. All training centers have been undergoing this process, but FTC was the first domestic work-focused training center to be re-certified in Muntiparlastapat district. Our renewal allows us to continue training workers to pass the National Certificate II (NCII) in domestic work, a requirement for those going overseas.

Also, FTC’s life skills program is gaining traction. This year, we partnered with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Stella Maris to develop a life skills training program to help fishers, who are among the most vulnerable workers exposed to abuse while working at sea. The three “train the trainer” workshops we organized in 2023 impacts hundreds of fishers who pass through Stella Maris Centers nationwide on a continuous basis. The success of the program also indicates a high value and demand for our life skills training for workers deployed in other industries beyond domestic work.

I realize that there are still kind people who have a heart and are willing to help me to achieve my goals, help open my mind to be strong and to have confidence.”

FTC Trainee
The TESDA accreditation process took over seven months, which resulted in a long hiatus for our NCII domestic work training in 2023. Fortunately, this gave FTC the opportunity to prepare migrant workers in other fields through industry specific life skills training. Another learning is that worker abscondments specifically in Malaysia have been increasing due to the offer of higher paying jobs upon arrival. This has led FTC to strengthen its life skills training content for workers to emphasize professionalism as well as the risks and legal consequences of abscondment.
Honest Jobs provides flexible investment funding, mentorship, and advisory support to local enterprises doing work similar to Fair Employment Agency.

This results in an ecosystem of mission-aligned partner agencies that are collectively driving the market towards ethical standards for migrant labor recruitment across the Asia region.
Honest Jobs

Find out more by selecting the options below

What We Do  Highlights  Learnings

389 workers placed ethically by Honest Jobs investees
USD 250K total capital invested into two ethical recruitment agencies

Honest Jobs completed its allocation of investments from the Working Capital Fund, bringing our amount of invested funding to a total USD 250,000 in two investees: Pinkcollar in Malaysia and Goodhire in Singapore.

The funds invested are helping Pinkcollar and Goodhire to accelerate their growth and market impact. In 2023, Pinkcollar, as an active member of The Association of Employment Agencies Malaysia (PAPA), spearheaded the revision of PAPA's mission statement to include “responsible recruitment”. This demonstrates the influential role that our investees play in driving industry change.

Honest Jobs also made its first annual loan repayment to the Working Capital Fund. We are demonstrating over time that the investments we have made in ethical recruitment solutions in other geographies will be market viable.

Zenna Law
Co-founder, Pinkcollar

Sophia Aliza Jamal
Co-founder, Pinkcollar

Jude Lee
Founder, Goodhire

Fair Employment Foundation | 2023 In Review
Honest Jobs

Find out more by selecting the options below

What We Do  Highlights  Learnings

We have learned over the last two years that ethical recruitment enterprises are few in number and still at an early stage of development by impact investment capital standards. Investors who are focused on catalytic, impact-first investments are also few in number. As a result, we decided to pause the fundraising of further investment capital for Honest Jobs while we focus on helping our current investees to be successful in their respective markets.

This will give us some time to evaluate the investments made and how we might restructure our impact investment initiative in the future to make our approach more sustainable and scalable. Should we restart our fundraising efforts for Honest Jobs in the future, we may revisit our funding model to ensure that our management costs will be covered. For example, we may want to consider a nonprofit entity with an evergreen fund that can make recyclable loans that would allow us to tap philanthropic funding.

We may also want to expand our scope to include ethical recruitment enterprises in the broader care economy or in adjacent industries where migrant labor is deployed and where we have training experience. We are optimistic that Fair’s direct operational experience in ethical recruitment will attract more impact-focused partners to drive market change regionally and globally in the future.
Looking Ahead

Year 2023 was focused on pivoting our approach and operations under a new “normal.” In the year ahead, we will continue to facilitate safe access to cross-border livelihoods for more migrant workers by implementing new strategies for greater impact and driving system level change through the following priority areas.

Find out how we will prioritize driving system level change through by selecting the levels below

- Private Sector Collaboration
- Promoting the Care Economy
- Helping More Indonesian Workers
- Life Skills Training
- Government Collaboration

Private Sector Collaboration
We are aiming to engage more companies to eliminate exploitative recruitment practices leading to abuse or mistreatment of workers. This means partnering with companies in training workers and awareness raising through more Fair Hiring and Managing Sessions.
Financial Summary

Donations*  
- Total: US$608,067
  - 97% Corporate Philanthropy
  - 3% Individual Giving

Expenditures*  
- Total: US$713,837
  - 12.8% Fundraising
  - 7.7% Employer Education & Support
  - 7.5% Program Management
  - 17.3 Administration/
    Overhead & Operating Costs

* Based on unaudited 2023 financials
Our Donors and Supporters

We are grateful for the support and commitment of our donors who make our work and vision of a future without forced labor possible. Fair would not be where we are today without them.

We would like to thank the following companies/organizations and individuals for their financial support, expertise, time, and in-kind contributions:

- Allen & Overy
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- Herbert Smith Freehills
- Oldham, Li & Nie
- PJS Law
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- Grace Wong
- Canute Dalmasse
- Matthew Hosford and Staci Ford
- Andrew Tilton
- Betty Ng
- Alice Gee
- Steve Doane

We look forward to the continued support from our donors, supporters, and partners to enable even greater impact in the year ahead.
Our Team

Fair Management Team
Vivian Gee, Fair Group Chief Executive Officer
Aimee Gloria, Fair Training Center Executive Director
Jasmine Lam, Fair Employment Agency General Manager

Fair Employment Foundation
Tammy Baltz
Kimberley Cole (resigned in 2023)
Mathew Gollop
Jennifer Meehan
Joanne Oswin
Lynnette Sarno
Oliver Welch

Fair Employment Agency
Tammy Baltz
Lidia Garcia
Mathew Gollop
Sam Lau
Blums Pineda (joined in 2023)

Fair Training Center
Gershwin Abesamis
Maria Raquel Chavez
Jennifer Meehan
Joanne Oswin
Glenn Laigo

Honest Jobs
Tammy Baltz
Jennifer Meehan
Joanne Oswin
Daniel Viederman