

**10<sup>th</sup> MALAYSIA STATISTICS CONFERENCE 2023**  
**Looking Beyond GDP: Toward Social Well-being and**  
**Environmental Sustainability**

26<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Sasana Kijang, Bank Negara Malaysia

**SUB-THEME: STATISTICAL INNOVATION IN MEASURING SOCIAL WELL-  
BEING AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**AN INTRODUCTION TO VOLUNTEERISM AND TIME BANK  
SYSTEM IN MALAYSIA**

Dr Norshamshida binti Razak  
Yasmin binti Ramli  
Institute of Labour Market Information and Analysis

**Abstract:**

As part of the recommendations put forth in the National Strategic Development Plan on Ageing Population – Inclusion and Employment of Malaysia's Ageing Population, it was proposed that Time Banking be introduced to spur participation in volunteerism. Time Banking represents a complementary currency-like system which acts as an incentive for citizens to volunteer their time. Time Banking utilises the number of hours volunteered as a currency can be used later, to facilitate access to goods and services. This is a policy-oriented research. The findings from this study will provide information on a comprehensive profile based on the demographic variables for participating young and senior citizens who have the potential to participate in the volunteer banking scheme after retirement, factors, issues, and problems that can influence the implementation of Time Banking, a suitable mechanism to facilitate the scheme, and way forward for the Implementation of Time Bank Volunteering Schemes for Senior Citizens in Malaysia.

Keywords: Volunteerism, Time Banking

**1. Introduction:**

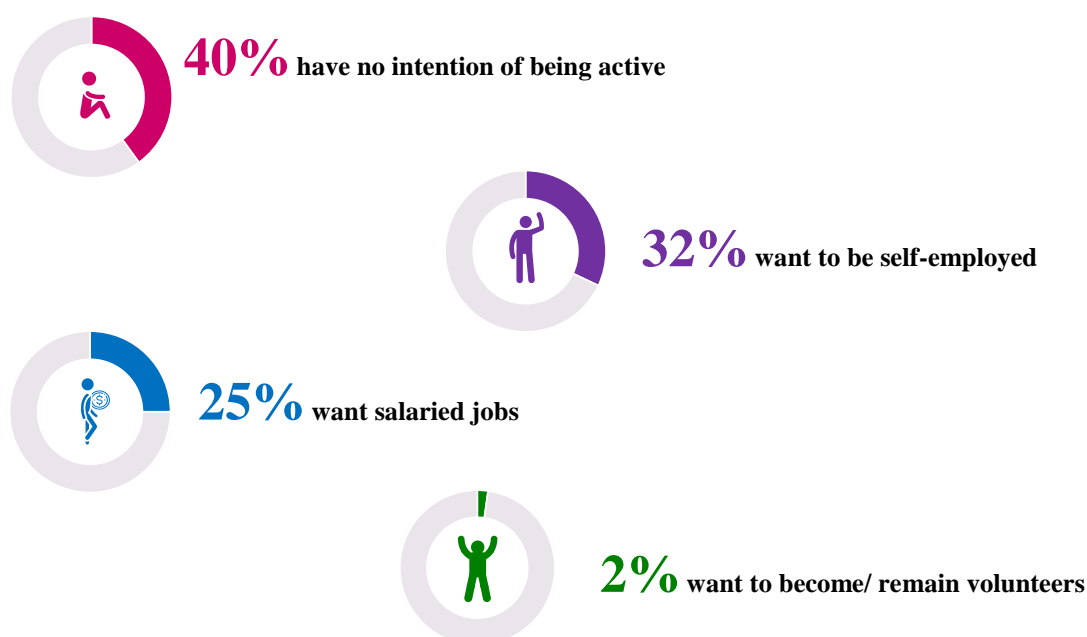
The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines volunteer work as "activities performed willing and without pay to produce goods or provide services for others outside the volunteer's household or family." Under ILO's definition, two methods of volunteering are included: formal and informal volunteering. Formal volunteering also known as organisation-based volunteering is the act of volunteering with a formal establishment to an organised group or institution with a well-defined social structure, role, and function. Informal volunteering also known as direct volunteering is the act of volunteering outside the domain of organised group or charitable organisations – including extending help to neighbours e.g., childcare. In a 1991 research paper titled Older volunteers: A discussion of the Minnesota senior study by L.R. Fischer et. al., a third form of volunteerism called Personal Volunteering was proposed which is the act of volunteering to help extended family members. However, for the purpose of

consistency with ILO nomenclature, only the first two forms of volunteerism were considered.

### Volunteerism in Malaysia

For the study the National Strategic Plan on Ageing Population – Inclusion and Employment of Malaysia's Ageing Population (2018), a survey was conducted to assess senior citizens' appetite towards unpaid work and volunteerism. The study showed that only 2% of those aged 40 years old and above were interested in volunteering.

Figure 1: Future work preferences for those aged 40 years old and above



The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To provide comprehensive profiles based on the demographic variables for participating younger and senior citizens who have the potential to participate in volunteer banking scheme to facilitate post retirement old age requirements;
- ii. To identify and analyse factors, issues, and problems that can influence the implementation of the Time Bank volunteering scheme;
- iii. To propose suitable mechanism (centralised, regional town-based) to facilitate these schemes including the process to register, record, and validate transactions, recruitment team for participating volunteers and onboarding entities providing senior citizen services for users, NGO partners, as well as businesses which may both provide and accept time credits as payment; and
- iv. To identify the feasibility implications and propose the way forward of the Implementation of Time Bank Volunteering Schemes for Senior Citizens in Malaysia.

## 2. Methodology:

The research methodology describes the steps taken to achieve representative, quantifiable, and actionable information to understand the preferences and behaviour of the target population with respect to volunteering, the willingness and appetite of businesses in accepting Time Bank credits, and the Time Bank mechanisms employed abroad as a basis to implement the proposed Malaysian Time Bank Scheme.

## Research outline

The basis of the project revolves around a handful of vital research areas. These areas need to be delved into in detail and exhaustively explored to identify the mechanisms that should be in place to successfully implement a Time Bank Scheme that is both attractive to potential volunteers and businesses. Nine key questions were identified to guide research efforts:










- 1  What would be the geographic coverage of the time bank scheme?
- 2  What type of currency shall be traded that is easy to administer and track?
- 3  Who would be eligible to participate in the scheme? All Malaysians? or those above a certain age?
- 4  How will volunteers, organisations, and businesses interact within this scheme?
- 5  Who can administer the time bank scheme efficiently and effectively?
- 6  How can the scheme be funded sustainably to reduce burden on government expenses?
- 7  What redemption offers are both attractive to volunteers and sustainable for businesses?
- 8  What are the rewards and benefits to businesses and participating organisations?
- 9  What limitations should be imposed on redemptions, if any?












Figure 2.1: Guiding research questions

The size of the survey sample is determined in three main steps:

- i. Determine the population size of the target groups by state, young persons aged 18 years old and above, young adults aged between 25 and 39 years old, mature adults aged 40 – 59 years old and senior citizens aged 60 years old and above;
- ii. Apply an estimated volunteering rate; and
- iii. Apply an appropriate sampling rate by benchmarking against other national level surveys to obtain the sample size.

### 3. Result:

Synthesising input received from the survey, international benchmarking, focus group discussions, and meetings with project stakeholders, recommendations were provided that form the structure of the scheme based on 11 key elements.

Key elements	Options			
 <b>Time Banking model</b>	One-to-one	One-to-many	Many-to-many	
 <b>Traded currency</b>	Hour-for-hour time credit		Varied credits / hour	
 <b>Geographic coverage</b>	District	State	National	International
 <b>Eligibility criteria</b>	Open to all ages	18 years and above	60 years and above	
 <b>Platform host</b>	Government (Non-profit)	Government (For-profit)	PPP	Private (Non-profit)
 <b>Funding mechanism</b>	Government-funded	PPP	Privately-funded	
 <b>Registration process</b>	Online only	Online and offline	Offline only	
 <b>Redemption eligibility</b>	No specific criteria	Limited to specific age	Limited to specific hours	
 <b>Redemption mix</b>	Service-in-kind	Goods	Discount coupons	Cash or cash equivalent
 <b>Redemption transferability</b>	Non-transferable		Transferable among members	
 <b>Redemption expiration date</b>	No expiry date		Limit to specific criteria	

## Details of each element are as follows:

Due to security reasons, members of the Time Bank scheme shall be restricted to Malaysian citizens only to ease conducting of background checks. Time Bank processes and procedures.

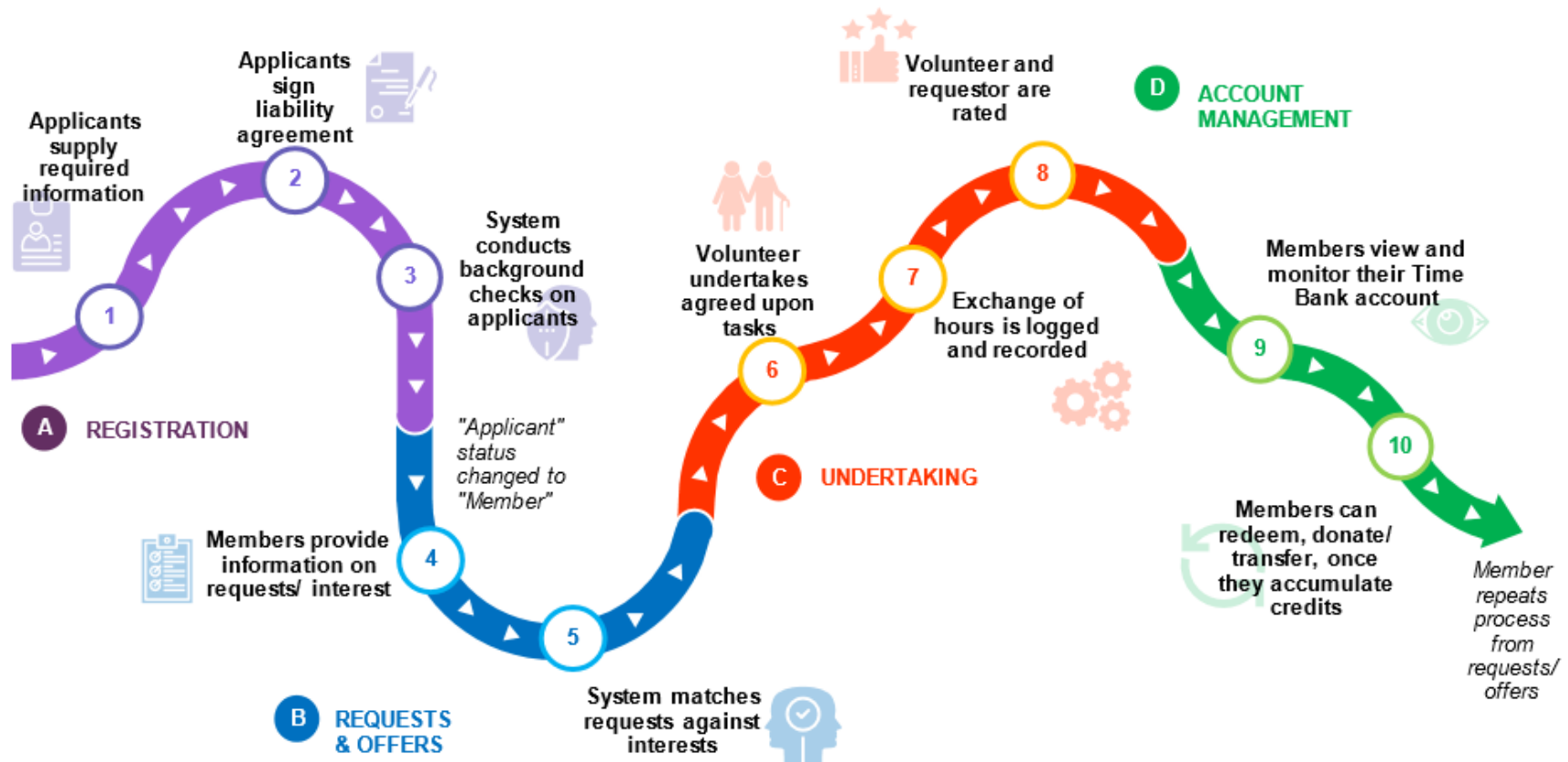
ELEMENT	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	OPTION 4
<b>Time banking model</b>	<b>One-to-one</b> Transactions only between individuals	<b>One-to-many</b> Transactions between individuals and organisations	<b>Many-to-many</b> Transactions only between organisations	
<b>Traded currency</b>	<b>Hour-for-hour</b> One hour of volunteering equals one-time credit	<b>Varied</b> Varied credits based on the tasks performed		
<b>Geographic coverage</b>	<b>District</b> Limited to persons in a small community	<b>State</b> Credits earned / exchanged within the same state	<b>National</b> Credits earned / exchanged domestically only	<b>International</b> Credits can be earned / exchanged abroad
<b>Age eligibility criteria</b>	<b>Open to all ages</b> Open to all Malaysians regardless of age	<b>Aged 18 and over</b> Only open to adults aged 18 years old and above	<b>Aged 60 and over</b> Only open to senior citizens aged 60 years old and above	
<b>Platform host</b>	<b>Government (non-profit)</b> Managed by a non-profit Govt. entity	<b>Government (for-profit)</b> Managed by a profit-driven Govt. entity	<b>Public-Private Partnership</b> Managed by a public-private partnership	<b>Private (non-profit)</b> Managed by a private non-profit entity
<b>Funding mechanism</b>	<b>Government</b> Government to bear all costs including start-up and operations	<b>Public-Private</b> Government to provide initial funding – operations funded privately	<b>Private</b> All funds are privately collected / generated by the host	
<b>Registration process</b>	<b>Online only</b> Registrations can only be done via mobile or computer apps	<b>On- and offline</b> Registrations can be done in dedicated centres or online	<b>Offline only</b> Registrations can only be done in physical centres	
<b>Redemption eligibility</b>	<b>No limitations</b> Members can redeem credits earned at any point in time	<b>Limited by age</b> Redemption only when member has reached a certain age	<b>Limited by hours</b> Redemption only after accumulating a minimum number of hours	
<b>Redemption mix</b>	<b>Service-in-kind</b> Credits can be used to redeem services / help from other volunteers	<b>Discount coupons</b> Credits can be exchanged for discount coupons for necessities	<b>Cash or similar</b> Credits can be exchanged for a pre-determined cash value	
<b>Redemption transferability</b>	<b>Non-transferable</b> Credits earned may only be redeemed by the person that volunteered	<b>Transferable</b> Credits earned can be transferred between members regardless of volunteer status		
<b>Redemption expiration</b>	<b>No expiry date</b> Credits earned will not expire and can be used at any point in the future	<b>Limited duration</b> Credits earned may expire upon a certain time e.g., one year		

# 10<sup>th</sup> MALAYSIA STATISTICS CONFERENCE 2023

## Looking Beyond GDP: Toward Social Well-being and Environmental Sustainability

26<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Sasana Kijang, Bank Negara Malaysia

### The Overview of Time Bank Journey in Malaysia:



**10<sup>th</sup> MALAYSIA STATISTICS CONFERENCE 2023**  
**Looking Beyond GDP: Toward Social Well-being and**  
**Environmental Sustainability**

26<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Sasana Kijang, Bank Negara Malaysia

**4. Discussion and Conclusion:**

With the structure now in place, the next step will be to launch a pilot project to help test the validity, appetite and applicability of the scheme and how it affects the behaviour of volunteers and non-volunteers alike. At the end of the pilot, a committee shall decide whether there is a convincing argument for the introduction of the Scheme. Only then will a phased, national roll-out be considered. Given the parameters outlined for the proposed scheme, it is the hope of the Government that volunteerism in Malaysia will increase and provide a strong foundation towards the goal of increasing and strengthening community-based initiatives.

**References:**

- ILMIA (2018). *National Strategic Plan on Ageing Population – Inclusion and Employment of Malaysia's Ageing Population*.
- ILMIA (2019). *Feasibility Study: The Implementation of Time Bank Volunteering Schemes for Senior Citizens in Malaysia*.
- International Labor Organisation (2019). *Forms of work and labour force statistics conceptual frameworks, the ILO*. <https://ilostat.ilo.org/resources/methods/forms-of-work/>.

**NOTE: THE REQUIRED NUMBER OF PAGES FOR PAPER IS SIX PAGES**