



27 December 2021

MEDIA RELEASE

RIMA Study on Food Delivery Workers Highlights the Importance of Recognising their Diverse Needs for Appropriate Interventions

1. A recent study involving 60 food delivery workers conducted by the Centre for Research on Islamic and Malay Affairs (RIMA) found that some concerns these workers have are about their long-term prospects, amid a reduction in incentives over the years, the possibility of technology displacing them, customer and merchants' expectations, and a lack of benefits, among others. However, the lack of alternative employment options have caused them to remain in the industry. In determining the type of support they need, the study highlights the importance of recognising the diverse needs of these workers before appropriate support can be offered to them. RIMA will be discussing the findings of the study as well as possible interventions via a Facebook Live session at <https://www.facebook.com/singaporeRIMA> on **Wednesday, 29 December 2021 at 8.00pm**.
2. The session will feature the primary researcher and author of the publication, Ms Nabilah Mohammad, as well as three food delivery workers, Mr Saire Adnan, Ms Ikin Man and Mr Muhammad Asyraf Buang. It will be moderated by Sheikh Mohamad Farouq Abdul Fareez, a research analyst with RIMA. The study has been published in a report titled *Food Delivery Workers: Riding the Waves of Uncertainty* available for download at <http://bit.ly/RIMAXFDW>.

Findings of Study

3. The study, which concluded in 2020, seeks to explain how food delivery workers view their long-term employability. The research also discusses the actions that are typically taken to ensure that the workers do not descend into a cycle of adverse socio-economic outcomes when the industry, market, or consumer trends do not work in their favour.
4. The study found that there are both push and pull factors for taking up food delivery work – most notably, preference for flexibility and autonomous work arrangements, reliable payment method and monetary incentives, peer influence, as well as the ability to utilise free time and one's personal vehicle. In addition, the immediate jobs availability, and thus income, as well as the difficulty in finding permanent full-time employment were cited as reasons for doing food delivery work. This is especially relevant to those who are former offenders, were retrenched or have low educational qualifications, and found it difficult in getting re-employed.
5. The study found mixed responses from the participants when they were asked about their future in the industry. Those who have been in the industry longer have seen incentives declining over time, and hence are less optimistic about their earnings from food delivery work in the long term.

Those who took on food delivery work as an interim source of income viewed it as a short-term career prospect, while searching for more permanent employment.

6. When it comes to challenges, the participants said that they experienced difficulties in managing the expectations of customers and merchants, delays in responses from the platform management, the changing terms and conditions of incentives, and difficulties in their allocation of deliveries. Some of the concerns shared by the participants also fall under the purview of the authorities, such as the lack of flexibility and accessibility for food delivery workers including persons with disabilities, the lack of basic benefits such as medical leave, and the restriction in using personal mobility devices on footpaths.
7. The study also offers recommendations, which include the need to recognise the diverse needs of the workers, protect those who wish to remain self-employed, and support those who wish to upgrade their skills. It provides a starting point for broader initiatives to manage the challenges and opportunities of this evolving workforce.
8. **We invite members of the media and the public to join us at the live webinar on www.facebook.com/singaporeRIMA.**

END

About the Centre of Research on Islamic and Malay Affairs (RIMA)

The Centre for Research on Islamic and Malay Affairs (RIMA) is the research arm of AMP Singapore. RIMA's transformation from a research division of AMP to a full-fledged research centre in February 1998 underscored the growing emphasis on research to support the provision of services, as well as to promote intellectual discourse and discussion on issues and developments affecting the Malay and Muslim communities.

Today, RIMA's mission is to undertake strategic research aimed at providing thought leadership in contemporary Malay and Muslim affairs. Our vision is to be a centre for research excellence for the advancement of the Malay and Muslim communities. To this end, RIMA conducts research programmes in a number of key areas, which include economics, education, religion, social, leadership and civil society.