4ST PLAYBOOK

A self-help guide with concrete steps, examples and ideas to explore and achieve desired 4ST outcomes

Updated 13/07/2023

What is the Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST)?

The 4ST was first launched in 2017 as a five-year strategic roadmap for the sector. It presented a shared vision and directions to guide the sector in achieving the vision of "every person empowered to live with dignity in a caring and inclusive society".

Since the launch of the 4ST roadmap in 2017, larger shifts globally and within Singapore have presented challenges and opportunities for the social service sector. This prompted NCSS to convene stakeholders in 2021 to consider how the sector could respond to emerging trends and prepare for the future through the refreshed 4ST (2022-2026) roadmap.

The refreshed 4ST (2022-2026) lays out four strategic thrusts to pursue our shared vision:

Thrust 1:
Empowered and included individuals, families, and communities

Thrust 2:
Effective and impactful social purpose entities

Thrust 3:
Caring, collaborative and impactful social service ecosystem

Thrust 4:
Future-directed social service sector

Read the **4ST (2022 – 2026) report** for more details.

As a complement to the 4ST (2022-2026) report, NCSS has also curated the 4ST Playbook, which lists the concrete steps, examples and ideas that stakeholders can explore to bring the refreshed 4ST forward.

4ST Playbook

The 4ST playbook is divided into 6 main segments.
Click the boxes below to explore the corresponding playbook segments!

Empowerment & Inclusion

Practices and solutions in the sector become more person-centred

The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges

Vulnerable groups have support to make well-informed decisions on how their needs and aspirations are met

More vulnerable people are included and participate in society

Enabling People, Sector Wide Processes and Systems

SPEs serve with heart and demonstrate professionalism across all levels, backed by robust governance and strong people practices

A digitally-enabled and data-driven social service sector

Sector players take a systems approach to deliver quality, innovative & sustainable solutions and advance sector goals

Strategic Partnerships & Collaboration

SPEs collaborate across the sector and beyond to optimise resources and enhance effectiveness

Strategic and sustainable partnerships are fostered between different sectors and stakeholders for greater impact

The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges

Sustainable Resourcing

SPEs are forward thinking and practise **sustainable resourcing**

Improved diversity and sustainability of resources in the sector

Forward Planning

SPEs are **forward thinking** and practise sustainable resourcing

The social service sector is well-positioned for the future

Experimentation & Innovation

The social service sector experiments to develop quality, innovative & sustainable solutions

How to use the playbook?

Please look out for the following icons, if applicable

Introduction
Provides an overall explanation on the playbook segment, with guiding questions

Steps you can take
Shares action steps that one can take to achieve the desired outcomes

Resources Available
Lists resources including guides and programmes

Case Examples
Outlines case examples in Singapore

Ideas for Exploration
Outlines ideas practised by others, including from other sectors, locally or overseas

Empowerment and Inclusion

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OUTCOMES:

Thrust 1	Practices and solutions in the sector become more person-centred
Thrust 1	The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges
Thrust 1	Vulnerable groups have support to make well-informed decisions on how their needs and aspirations are met
Thrust 1	More vulnerable people are included and participate in society

(Click the icons above for the corresponding playbook segments)

Thrust 1 Outcome:

Practices and solutions in the sector become more person-centred

✋ Introduction

What is a person-centred approach?

- A person-centred approach recognises that an individual has the capacity to understand, articulate, and work through his or her problems and make decisions on how to overcome them.

- It also recognises that the ecosystem plays an instrumental role in supporting the individual to reach his/her goals.

Guiding questions

- To what extent have you used data and user journey mapping to understand the needs and aspirations of the individuals and families you are serving?

- What are the steps you have taken to ensure that individuals and families are able to play a role in solutioning for their challenges?

Steps you can take

For social purpose entities (SPEs)

Exploring: Starting out in this area

## When working with individuals and their families

- Understand the broad needs of the population groups through a review of the existing literature.

- Understand the specific needs and aspirations of individuals from their perspective, through the use of human-centred design thinking, user journey mapping, and measuring their Quality of Life[1].

- Partner the individual's support networks to achieve the individual's goals.

- Customise partnership for different profiles of individuals, taking into consideration their desires, family situation, social circumstances, and lifestyles.

- Create an empowering environment to make individuals and families feel involved in the process.

- Provide relevant data pertaining to services so that individuals and families can make the best decisions for themselves.

Organisational level practices

- Embed a person-centred culture within the organisation (in terms of how staff interact with one another, and managers adopting a 'coaching approach' to manage people) to effect mindset shifts.

- Send staff for training to be equipped with the skills and knowledge to implement person-centred practices (e.g., having empathy and facilitation skills to understand and engage individuals).

- Design and conduct programme evaluation to review and improve programme effectiveness. This includes output indicators for monitoring implementation, and outcomes indicators for measuring programme effectiveness.

When working with others across the sector
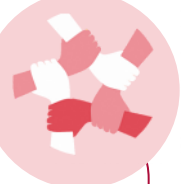
- Identify the stakeholders that can best contribute to supporting individuals and families, where necessary.

- Create a platform where best practices and failures can be shared with other organisations across the sector and other sectors.

- Centralise information on services and schemes for ease of navigation.

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[1] The WHO Quality of Life framework comprises of 6 main domains – physical, level of independence, social relationships, environment, psychological, and personal beliefs.

Steps you can take

When working with individuals and their families

- Involve individuals and their families in a shared decision-making process to achieve their goals (e.g., decide on the service to participate in, involve individuals in the design and implementation of solutions. Refer to **Empowerment Deconstructed! Guide** on how to involve users in the decision making process.).

- Enable individuals and families to opt for service components based on their preferences.

- Use technology and data to customise, deliver and provide integrated, seamless service and user experience across multiple touchpoints.

Organisational level practices

- Where needs are more complex, support should be multidisciplinary involving more than one professional, and across multiple services.

- Leaders to empower their staff to make certain decisions, where appropriate.

- Board should empower the leaders of the organisations to execute with flexibility and latitude.

- Share and learn best practices and failures with one another through networks or learning platforms.

When working with others across the sector

- Share data at a centralised platform (if available) to provide a 360 view on the individual's needs to other supporting stakeholders involved.

- Collaborate across agencies, other community partners and sectors (e.g., social care, housing, transport, employment) to meet the needs of individuals holistically.

Steps you can take

For social purpose entities (SPEs)

Excelling: Experienced and looking to strengthen in this area

Across all categories

When working with individuals and their families

Organisational level practices

When working with others across the sector

- Design collaborative care plans across service providers to manage an individual's care and support that span across different services and life stages.

- Hold ongoing joint care plan discussions with other service providers, involving the individuals and their families to ensure care is integrated across providers (if any), and goals are kept relevant.

- Appoint a dedicated group of professionals to coordinate care and support (across various transition points/types of services) or provide the necessary transition/support to the next organisation.

- Establish service standards to ensure that quality and principles of empowerment are upheld in service delivery.

- Evaluate outcomes attained by the individuals and families over a sustained period, and share the information with other partners in the ecosystem.

- Engage a pool of experienced service providers to share their experiences, as well as coach others with less experience.

- Involve donors and funders to be partners in the process to better understand the programme, as well as to value-add to the service delivery.

- Establish a joint venture/strategic alliance with one or more agencies to bid for/run joint programmes.

Steps you can take

For partners in the ecosystem:

Mindset shift
- Understand and appreciate the importance of taking a personalised approach in service delivery.

Funding support
- Introduce service and funding models, in collaboration with SPEs, to provide individuals and families greater ownership and choice.

- Provide funding for professionals that provide the continuity of support across various life stages.

- Extend resources for initiatives and structures (e.g., data platform for data sharing) that support individuals across the various life stages, or across different needs (e.g., tackling problems upstream).

- Incentivise or fund service models that demonstrate collaborative elements with other SPEs.

Data management
- Develop and implement an integrated systems and data platform for individuals and families to have access to information about themselves and available services; social care and other professionals have the right information and records to provide the right support.

- Aggregate, centralise and share data to facilitate planning and allocation of resources.

Policies and structures
- Design policies and structures that span across sectors (e.g., education, health) and life stages to provide the continuity of care and support centred around the individual.

- Set up online repository to assist matching of individuals to services/service providers, and improve individuals' access to the range of services available.

- Collaborate and work across adjacent sectors to achieve alignment of objectives.

Resources available

Guides/Tools

Quality of Life Research Series

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines Quality of Life as "individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns".[2] NCSS conducts research studies to understand how various population groups perceive their quality of life, identify areas of need and initiatives that can contribute to improving their quality of life.

Past research studies conducted by NCSS can be found here: https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research

Social Innovation Starter Kit

NCSS developed a Social Innovation Starter Kit which includes guiding principles and mindsets of human-centred design process as well as specific methods and tools to help the sector in tackling complex social challenges and embark on their own innovation journeys.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/SocialInnovationStarterKit

Empowerment Deconstructed! Guide

In 2021, NCSS developed the Empowerment Deconstructed! Guide which breaks down empowerment into practical and relatable terms. It includes a 4-step process as well as other tools that one can use to kickstart the journey in putting empowerment principles into practice.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/empowerment-deconstructed-a-guide-to-grow-empowering-practices

Empowering Seniors Resource Kit

In 2019, NCSS developed this resource kit to provide resources on empowering seniors.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/docs/default-source/ncss-publications-doc/empowering-seniors_resource_kit.pdf?sfvrsn=cc42a176_2

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[2] World Health Organization. (2012). The World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL)

NCSS Service Standards

The NCSS Service Standards aims to support agencies in attaining higher standards of service delivery across nine mutually reinforcing domains and develop better procedures to improve user outcomes. The set of standards also incorporates the principles of person-centredness, service user empowerment and collaboration.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/capability-building/consultancy-support/ncss-standards-framework/service-standards-requirements

Sector Evaluation Framework

NCSS' Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF) is an outcome measurement framework that provides a common language for the different stakeholders in the sector to measure programme outcomes and articulate impact. This is achieved by using standardised and validated outcome measures for programmes with similar objectives.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research/sector-evaluation-framework

Social Service Sector Repository

The Repository is a first-of-its-kind online database of research on the local social service sector, for NCSS members' use. It houses rigorous research done by NCSS member organisations and public service agencies, in NCSS' research domains. This Repository and research resources such as the EBSCO scholarly journal database, Research Pulse newsletter, and online dashboards can be found on NCSS's website.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research

4ST Partnership Fund Resources

This resource guide summarises key information about innovation, collaboration, and empowerment – three areas of focus for the 4ST Partnership Fund. For each of the three areas, this resource guide outlines the definitions, processes, guiding questions and resources available to support agencies in incorporating these elements in their services.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/social-service-sector-strategic-thrusts-(4st)/4stpf-resource-guide

Training to explore

Cultural Competency: Engaging with and Bridging across Differences
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCRS5491

Practising Person Centred Care Approach
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SECH5816

Develop an Individualised Care Plan
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCRS209

Person-Centred Care Approach to Dementia
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SECH6041

Design Thinking: ADEPT @ Delivering the Future
Visit Capelle Consulting for more info at
https://www.capelleconsulting.com/

🖼️ Funding available

4ST Partnership Fund

The 4ST Partnership Fund is a grant that aims to mobilise the sector to develop solutions that promote innovation, collaboration and empowerment, with the end outcome of improving the quality of life of service users - including Families, Children and Youth, Persons with Mental Health Conditions and Caregivers, amongst others. The fund supports ideas & initiatives at different stages – Seed and Grow, with funding up to 100% of total operating expenses. Apply via the submittable platform here hosted by our co-administration partner – The Majurity Trust.

go.gov.sg/4stpf

👥 Networks of support

Empowerment Learning Journey

NCSS is co-organising Learning Journeys with SSAs for SSAs to learn best practices from one another and spark collaborations on empowerment in the sector.

To find out more about how you can be involved, please write to: empowermentmovement@ncss.gov.sg

📁 Case examples

Empowering and providing choices to users

Our Lives, Our Voices

Jointly organised by Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS) and Down Syndrome Association Singapore (DSA), Our Lives, Our Voices aims to empower persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities to voice their needs and make decisions for themselves.

Through the 12-session programme, the service users would learn how to share more about their lives with others and be encouraged to step up as leaders in self-advocacy groups with support from MINDS and DSA. The programme seeks to enable the service users to be more confident and independent and empower them to find solutions or support to address challenges.

Food Pantry 2.0

Food Pantry 2.0, a project of the Food Bank Singapore Ltd, aims to make food supplies more accessible to service users in a coordinated manner. The project places vending machines with emergency food aid such as instant noodles, rice, and biscuits in the heartlands to serve users 24/7.

Service users are provided with pre-credited cards and can go to nearby vending machines to redeem food items of their choice. Compared to traditional food distribution services, service users can exercise choice in the food they redeem, rather than receiving a pre-determined list of groceries that may not suit their needs and preferences.

Voices for Hope

Voices for Hope by Dementia Singapore aims to empower persons with dementia and their caregivers to self-advocate, to promote greater acceptance and support for individuals who were coping with dementia. The 10-week programme was designed to equip service users with relevant skills and foster confidence in them to actively share their stories, their needs, and views publicly.

For more stories on Empowerment, please refer to the Empowerment Deconstructed! Guide.

Ideas for exploration

Having an integrated data system to better deliver services
Singapore: National Electronic Health Record (NEHR)

What is it?

Across different healthcare providers, the secure system gathers personal healthcare information of individuals such as medical records, prescriptions and appointments.

Only individuals authorised by healthcare professionals can access the data.

Potential benefits

- Improve health care coordination and better inform treatment decisions.

- Allow care team to deliver better and more personalised care for individuals.

- Individuals are provided with information to manage their own health, and this allowed them to be more informed and have greater control over their own health.

How does it work?

- "One Patient, One Health Record" allows the care team to deliver safer, better and more personalised care for individuals.

- Data contribution to the NEHR is voluntary for all private healthcare providers.

- Auto-inclusion and one may choose to opt out.

- Rigorous security defences designed according to industry best practices are in place to protect one's data on the NEHR.

- All healthcare professionals authorised to access the NEHR are bounded by laws and professional ethics to keep records strictly confidential.

Food for thought

How might we pull together, fuse and better leverage data to provide more person-centred solutions in the social service sector?

Find out more: https://www.ihis.com.sg/nehr/about-nehr

Allowing individuals to decide their allocated budget spending to meet their goals
United Kingdom: Personal Health Budgets

What is it?

Instead of giving funds to service providers directly, individuals will be allocated the money to decide on the areas to spend to meet their health and well-being needs, in consultation with their local healthcare team.

Potential benefits

Individuals are involved in deciding the services they would like to participate in and in turn, they can exercise greater choice and agency over their lives.

Resources may get directed to the most relevant services and may encourage higher service quality.

How does it work?

- In England, personal health budgets are offered to eligible individuals who need continuing care services.
- Individuals (or their representatives) will be central in decision-making, from setting the health and well-being goals with relevant professionals and in having the discretion on when and how to use the money, as agreed in their personal plan.

What are the ways that personal health budget can be managed?

- Notional budget: The individual will decide with their local healthcare team on how to spend their personal health budget, and their team will be responsible for holding the money and arranging the care and support.
- Third party budget: An independent trust or voluntary organisation will hold the money on behalf of the individual and spend the personal health budget in line with what has been agreed in a personalised care plan.
- Direct payment: The individual or their representative will receive the money in their bank account and will take responsibility for purchasing the agreed care and support services.

Similar models in Singapore

- SkillsFuture provides individuals with credits of at least $500 which can be used on eligible courses aimed for individual skills development.
- Similar to the personal health budget, individuals can decide how to spend the money to further their own lifelong learning journey.

Food for thought

How might we support individuals to exercise greater agency in what they do with their allocated budget so as to achieve their goals?

Creating a community of support to provide person-centred care
Australia: Circles of Support, United Kingdom: Circles Network

What is it?
Building a community of support around the individual being placed at the centre of the circle.

Potential benefits
- Right site support from service providers to the community.
- Individuals are recognised as having the capacity to be part of the service planning process.
- Leverage the strengths of the community, reduce stress on caregivers.
- Provide opportunities for individuals to develop and nurture friendships.
- Continuous care and support as an individual moves across various life stages (e.g., child to youth to adult).

How does it work?
- Individuals can choose who they want in their circles, but it would be voluntary for people to join.
- A means of providing practical advice, solving problems, and generating ideas to contribute positively to the individual's life.
- Facilitators work with individuals to understand and set their goals.
- Support varied from light touch to intense and specialised support, varying from individual to individual, based on their needs.
- Some circles are facilitated by formal organisations, but others are private arrangements between families and their friends.
- Guided by the requirements of the individual, the circle would meet periodically to review the progress made towards meeting the individual's goals.

Food for thought
How might we tap on the community around individuals to foster more community-based support?

Find out more: https://www.ric.org.au/assets/Uploads/circles-of-support/fc67c032b4/Circles-of-Support-Manual-2019.pdf

Involving the community in making decisions about allocation of budgets
Scotland: Participatory Budgeting in Health and Social Care

What is it?

A framework where the community is directly involved in making decisions about the allocation of budgets.

Potential benefits

- Exchange of ideas can help resolve issues.

- Higher motivation of the participants because they have a stake in the projects.

- Redistribute resources by increasing under-resourced persons' access and influence on resource allocation process.

- Foster informed citizenry by helping individuals express views and see how they affect policy and action.

- Approach that can potentially work well for ground-up initiatives.

How does it work?

This model attempts to move up the co-production ladder by moving from consultation to decision making and most importantly catalysing community empowerment. It requires the involvement of local people (e.g., community) who would be affected by the decision to be part of the decision-making process, thereby building capacity, creating ownership through shared responsibilities, and raising importance of community engagement.

In Scotland, the public, non-governmental partners, and volunteers with lived experience designed and facilitated a participatory budgeting event called "Mental Health & Well Being, You Decide" in 2017. Funded by public and private sectors at 50,000 GBP, a steering group co-produced the event, which included the development of a communication plan. 82 applications were received and assessed by a small independent panel comprising of community members. The shortlisted 46 were then given an opportunity to give a 3-min presentation to bid for the project at maximum GBP 1,250 each. Audience voted using a digital voting system with instant feedback, resulting in 41 projects being funded and reviewed after 6 months to measure impact and access further support if required.

Food for thought

How might we structure such a process and set aside resources to support solutions that are ground-up and decided by members in the community?

Annex - References:

Quality of Life: WHO

- https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-HIS-HSI-Rev.2012.03

Our Lives, Our Voices

- https://www.minds.org.sg/stories16-olov-april-koh/
- https://www.minds.org.sg/for-adults/self-advocacy-programme/

Food Pantry 2.0

- https://whatareyoudoing.sg/tech-and-data-maintain-privacy-for-food-aid-beneficiaries/
- https://foodbank.sg/our-big-projects/food-pantry/

Voices for Hope

- https://www.dementiahub.sg/blog/voices-for-hope-giving-a-voice-to-those-with-dementia/
- http://dementia.org.sg/voices/

National Electronic Health Record

- https://www.ihis.com.sg/nehr/about-nehr

Personal Health Budgets & Skillsfuture

- https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/help-with-health-costs/what-is-a-personal-health-budget/
- https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/credit

Circles of Support & Circles Network

- https://www.ric.org.au/assets/Uploads/circles-of-support/fc67c032b4/Circles-of-Support-Manual-2019.pdf
- https://circlesnetwork.org.uk/advocacy/

Participatory Budgeting

- https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Participatory_Budgeting_-_Health_and_Social_Care_Academy_Insight_Paper.pdf
- https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/6640

EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION

Thrust 1 Outcome:

The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges

Introduction

Guiding questions

- What are the strengths and assets that could be mobilised in a community?

- How might we identify and mobilise the strengths and assets within a community?

- How might we facilitate the sustained contributions of these strengths and assets?

What does this mean?

- Shifting from a deficit-based approach to an asset-based one in supporting individuals, families, and communities.

- Recognising that individuals, families, and communities can be contributors and change agents rather than just recipients of services.

- Closely linked to outcome: **Practices and solutions in the sector become more person-centred.**

What are the strengths and assets that can be mobilised in a community?

Personal assets

- Knowledge, skills, talents, and aspirations of individuals.
- Examples: Individual with IT skills, individual recovering from a mental health condition who can share his/her lived experience.

Associations

- Individuals with a common interest coming together in a small and informal setting, by their own choice, multiplying the individual assets that they all have.
- Examples: A youth volunteer group, a group of individuals recovering from mental health condition, ground-up movements.

Institutions

- Formally structured entities made up of professionals that can offer resources to the community.
- Examples: Government agencies, private businesses (such as shops in neighbourhoods), schools.

Place-based assets

- Spaces that can be used for interactions and connections amongst members in the community.
- Examples: Spaces in community centres, HDB void decks, libraries, parks, virtual networks.

Social assets

- Exchanges between individuals sharing their assets create connections, social networks.
- Connections take time and are built from the basis of trust and understanding of one another.
- Examples: Peer networks, relationships with family and friends.

Steps you can take

When working with individuals and their families

- Work with and encourage individuals and families to identify their strengths and assets, looking beyond deficits.

- Identify areas of opportunities/ needs that can be met by the strengths and assets offered by the individuals and families.

Organisational level practices

- Inculcate a strengths-based mindset and culture within the organisation.

- Send staff for training to equip them with the skills and knowledge to implement the practices.

- Design and conduct programme evaluation to review and improve the programme effectiveness.

When working with others across the sector

- Map out a landscape of the partners (including donors and funders) in the community and identify the assets they bring.

- Invest time, resources, and effort to build relationships and foster trust with partners in the community.

Steps you can take

When working with individuals and their families

- Involve individuals as active members in decision making.

- Connect/match the community assets to meet the needs of individuals and families.

- Use technology and data to customise, deliver and provide integrated, seamless service and user experience across multiple touchpoints.

Organisational level practices

- Help leaders adopt and model the strengths-based approach in their leadership style.

- Share and learn best practices and failures with one another through networks or learning platforms.

- Build strong community partnership to widen outreach and collaboration with other players in the sector.

When working with others across the sector

- Convene conversations across SPEs and other partners to identify and mobilise the assets within the community to address gaps (e.g., through asset mapping exercise).

- Share data readily with partners to ensure care and support for individuals and families are coordinated and person-centred.

Steps you can take

Excelling: Experienced and looking to strengthen in this area

Across all categories

When working with individuals and their families

Organisational level practices

When working with others across the sector

- In networks where individuals come together to support one another: Establish common goals to work towards, identify roles and opportunities for members in the network to contribute (e.g., share their lived experience, skillsets) and create safe spaces to hold such conversations.

- Identify and train Community Developers (individuals who may not have a formal title, but play a role in steering the community in the desired direction, based on the community's vision and purpose) to work with individuals, their families, and communities.

- Establish regular communications among the different community partners.

- Set up structures to harness collective assets at the community level on a sustained basis (e.g., through the support of Collective Impact model[1]).

- Establish service standards to ensure that quality and principles of empowerment are upheld in service delivery.

- Evaluate outcomes attained by the individuals and families over a sustained period, and share the information with other partners in the ecosystem.

- Engage a pool of experienced service providers to share their experiences, as well as coach others with less experience.

- Develop an online repository to assist matching of individuals' assets and strengths to opportunities/needs in the community.

[1] The collective impact approach recognises the importance of representation and commitment from a group of stakeholders across different backgrounds, experiences, and expertise in addressing a social issue. Informed by data and facilitated by a backbone infrastructure, all participating representatives create a shared vision and embark on various activities that are mutually reinforcing to achieve the goal.

https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact

Steps you can take

Structures and funding support

- Be involved in the networks and contribute assets in other ways beyond monetary efforts (e.g., provide knowledge, contribute skills, donate existing items they no longer use).

- Incentivise or fund models that demonstrate such principles.

- Set up and fund structures (e.g., backbone structure) and headcounts (e.g., community developers, coordinators) that can facilitate such community development efforts.

Data and outcomes management

- Aggregate, centralise and share data to facilitate mapping and mobilisation of assets.

- Recognise that such efforts may be more "organic" and takes time to achieve desired outcomes.

Resources available

Guides/Tools

Community Journey Journals (Developers, Members)

NVPC collated and pooled together resources that aim to nurture and bridge communities together. These insight pieces aim to inspire individuals with fresh perspective while providing examples on how others can nurture their communities.

https://cityofgood.sg/community-matters/community-journey-journals/

NCSS Service Standards

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https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/capability-building/consultancy-support/ncss-standards-framework/service-standards-requirements

Sector Evaluation Framework

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https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research/sector-evaluation-framework

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https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/social-service-sector-strategic-thrusts-(4st)/4stpf-resource-guide

Funding available

4ST Partnership Fund

The 4ST Partnership Fund is a grant that aims to mobilise the sector to develop solutions that promote innovation, collaboration and empowerment, with the end outcome of improving the quality of life of service users - including Families, Children and Youth, Persons with Mental Health Conditions and Caregivers, amongst others. The fund supports ideas & initiatives at different stages – Seed and Grow, with funding up to 100% of total operating expenses. Apply via the submittable platform here hosted by our co-administration partner – The Majurity Trust.

go.gov.sg/4stpf

📁 Case examples

Peer Support Specialist Programme
Involving persons with lived experience to support others in similar journeys

The Peer Support Specialist Programme was launched in 2016 by NCSS, with strong support from the Institute of Mental Health and mental health organisations. It is Singapore's first national training programme to prepare individuals for the role of Peer Support Specialists. The formal and structured training equips persons with mental health conditions with peer support skills to leverage their lived experience to support others on their recovery journeys.

Friendzone
Facilitating conversations and interactions between individuals to create new connections

Friendzone was set up in 2018 to help young people establish new connections and communities around them, including in their neighbourhoods and workplaces.

Friendzone provides both online and offline opportunities for meaningful conversations. These include facilitating small groups with conversation cards to prompt participants to share meaningful experiences, doing activities to map community assets, brainstorming actionable ideas for communities to follow up, and creating Telegram social media chats for the community to connect.

Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centre (AMKFSC)
Leveraging existing community assets to build a resilient and self-sustaining community

AMKFSC leverages a range of assets in its various programmes to ensure a more self-reliant and sustaining community. Two illustrations are provided below:

- **Personal and place-based assets:** *414 Community Hub* was created as a space for residents living around Ang Mo Kio to gather and share their gifts and assets to support other residents in their neighbourhood. There are various platforms for residents to contribute their gifts and assets. One specific platform is the Goodwill Sharing, where residents can share their skills and knowledge ranging from cooking, art and craft and IT with others in the neighbourhood. In addition, a Gift and Take shop is also a platform where residents can gift and share their pre-loved items with others who may need them. Through the process of gifting and receiving, the residents also forged connections with one another.

- **Place-based assets**: *Bakery Hearts* – AMKFSC set up a kitchen at Ang Mo Kio for women from low-income families to learn baking skills and earn supplementary income. These women can also interact and connect with one another, thereby creating their own networks of support.

Marsiling Community Link (ComLink)
Unlocking multiple assets and working across multiple partners to support vulnerable families

Launched by MSF in 2020, Marsiling Community Link (ComLink) was implemented to support disadvantaged families with complex needs. MSF partnered with various Government agencies, community, and corporate partners to transform and strengthen the support for these families.

The various partners offer different types of assets to help the families living in rental housing.

- **Associations:** ComLink partners with student volunteers from various Institutes of Higher Learning to engage families living in the area to further understand the families' needs, aspirations, and interests.
- **Place-based assets:** Creation of a ComLink programme space in Marsiling for families to access various programmes in one place such as preschool support, sports activities for students, skills upgrading and job matching services for adults.
- **Institutions**: Community partners such as Bringing Love to Every Single Soul (BLESS) and Mendaki were brought in to provide reading and numeracy programmes for preschool children.

ComLink makes use of multiple existing partners and their skills to support vulnerable families to build a strong self-sustaining community.

Community Fridge (Free Food for All)
Providing opportunities for individuals to actively give back to their community

Free Food for All provides opportunities for the community to provide food aid for those who needed it. Their Community Fridge project, organised together with Chong Pang CC Division and supported by Darul Makmur Mosque, encourages residents to store excess or unsold food in fridges placed in the community that are open 24 hours, so that the food can be taken by those who needed it. This not only helps to reduce food wastage but also supports those in the community.

This programme bridges the gap between the residents in the community and makes it easier for residents to help one another. It also makes use of the current assets in the community, including physical space as well as excess food.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Investing in individuals living in undervalued communities
United States: UpTogether

What is it?

UpTogether adopts a strengths-based approach to link individuals and families living at or below the poverty line with community support and resources so that they could increase or sustain their economic and social mobility.

Potential benefits

- Cash offers will help individuals and families to meet basic needs such as rent, food and healthcare.

- Leverage the strengths of individuals and families to support one another in the community, thereby reducing reliance on formal support services.

- Encourage "pay it forward" in the community where individuals who have benefited would support others in future.

How does it work?

The signature platform, UpTogether Community, is an online platform where individuals and families can form their social networks, share connections, stories and support each other to achieve their financial and personal goals, so that they could move up together.

UpTogether members can also receive cash offers and they are trusted to decide how best to use the money, without having to pay back. Such offers are not guaranteed and depend on the availability of funds and the families' household income.

Food for thought

How might we create platforms with resources to encourage individuals and families to support one another in the community?

Time banking: Exchanging services for time credits, rather than money
Japan: Fureai Kippu

What is it?

The system of Fureai Kippu, or "caring-relationship tickets" was established in Japan as a response to their ageing population, and a decline in traditional caregiving support. Rather than goods, the tickets/eco money could only be exchanged for services.

Potential benefits

- Leverage the assets in the community to support those in need.

- Facilitate mindset shifts that even the elderly can be contributors too.

- Encourage volunteering and caring behaviour in the community and individuals to "pay it forward".

How does it work?

The system allowed individuals to earn caring credits by caring for an elderly or those in need. These credits, which were deposited in the number of hours, could be exchanged to receive caring services by others. Individuals could decide whether to save their credits for their future when they may need help or transfer to someone else who currently needs help.

It was an agreement within the community to use time as a medium of payment. At the same time, it encouraged individuals to volunteer their time, as they could also benefit from the volunteering experience.

Food for thought

How might we mobilise the assets in the community to support one another, and at the same time not dampening the spirit of altruism?

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Asset-based Community Development
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Collective Impact
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EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION

Thrust 1 Outcome:

Vulnerable groups have support to make well-informed decisions on how their needs and aspirations are met

✋ Introduction

What does this mean?

- Vulnerable groups, and social service professionals that work with them, have **easy access to clear information and resources** to help them make decisions that meet their needs.

- **Policies, programmes and models are reframed** to facilitate vulnerable groups' decision-making.

- **Refer to other 4ST Thrust 1 outcomes** for more information on how to support the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Guiding questions

- How might we ensure that vulnerable groups and social service professionals have **easy access to clear information, advice and support** to make well-informed decisions?

- How might **policies, programmes and models** better support vulnerable groups to make well-informed decisions?

Principles in supporting vulnerable groups' decisions-making

- **Allow vulnerable groups to decide what choice(s) will best meet their needs**. Do not be overly prescriptive. Respect and implement their decisions as appropriate, even if it is not what you would prefer, since they are often best-placed to consider their circumstances.

- If you must help make decisions for them, **consider their best interests, views and beliefs, instead of your own preferences**. Use ethical frameworks to guide your decisions[1].

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[1] One example of an ethical decision-making framework was created by the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers' Professional Issues Committee:

https://nlcsw.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/Ethical_Decision_Making_Framework.pdf

Steps you can take

Exploring: Starting out in this area

When working with individuals and their families

- **Encourage vulnerable groups to make decisions**
  - Share **why** they should do so
  - Encourage them to **actively** manage services and share their experiences
  - **Build their confidence** in making small decisions first
  - Simplify decisions into bite-sized stages

- **Provide relevant and accessible information** pertaining to their options.

- **Understand the needs and aspirations of vulnerable groups** to support them in decision making.

- **Document discussions** about their decisions as appropriate and agreed to, for necessary follow-up.

Organisational level practices

- Ensure that disseminated data on the **organisation's schemes and services** is relevant and regularly updated.

- **Train and set standards for staff and volunteers** with necessary frameworks, skills and knowledge to support vulnerable groups' decision-making.

When working with others across the sector

- **Share relevant data readily** with other partners to increase information accessibility on services and schemes.

- Identify and **work with stakeholders** that can help support vulnerable groups' decision-making.

Steps you can take

Progressing: Seeking to grow in this area

## When working with individuals and their families

- **Partner with the support networks** (e.g., family, community) of vulnerable groups and **connect them with others** (e.g., volunteers, advocates) for additional support.

- **Adapt processes and resources** to provide support more effectively. For example, adjust processes to provide choices through the start-to-end of accessing services, and have decision aids to effectively share information.

- Facilitate **group decision-making**[2].

Organisational level practices

- Facilitate platforms for staff and volunteers to **share relevant best practices and learning points.**

- Regularly **review programmes, services, and organisational policies, processes and systems**, to effectively support vulnerable groups' decision-making (e.g., adopt newer models to cater to changing profiles, ensure sufficient resources to support decision-making).

When working with others across the sector
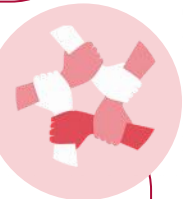
- **Maintain, join, or create networks, platforms or communication channels** to share information, best practices and learning points with other organisations within and beyond the sector.

- **Clarify roles** and tap on various parties (including community partners and volunteers) in supporting decision-making.

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[2] For example, encourage the group to escape a narrow framing of options, and use visual aids to help the group keep track of progress. For one resource on this, read https://ssir.org/articles/entry/how_groups_make_great_decisions#

Steps you can take

Excelling: Experienced and looking to strengthen in this area

## When working with individuals and their families

- **Use technology and data** to support decision-making.

- **Research and advocate for policies and models** that facilitate vulnerable groups' decision-making to decide on supports that meet their needs [3].

- **Establish support networks** amongst vulnerable groups; **foster a safe and collaborative environment** for them to share their lived experiences and knowledge to educate others (e.g., others making similar decisions, service professionals serving vulnerable groups).

Organisational level practices

- **Show impact** of supporting vulnerable groups' decision-making **to giving partners,** to encourage their resourcing of such practices.

- **Evaluate** whether vulnerable groups' decisions are well-supported and **review practices accordingly** [4].

- Involve vulnerable groups more in **important organisational decisions** (e.g., participatory budgeting, more targeted Board representation).

When working with others across the sector
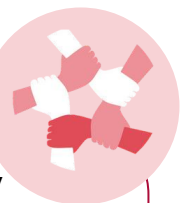
- **Develop centralised platforms** to increase information accessibility on schemes and services.

- **Advocate for models** which better support decision-making.

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[3] The WHO Quality of Life framework comprises of 6 main domains – physical, level of independence, social relationships, environment, psychological, and personal beliefs.

[4] For example, these authors developed a framework for gathering and analysing service user feedback to improve plans for integrated health and social care, including identifying expectations for outcomes that satisfied service users and on the supporting activities of their health and social care teams.
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5017127/

Steps you can take
For Partners in the Ecosystem:

Mindset shift

- **Appreciate the importance of empowering vulnerable groups** to make well-informed decisions.

- **Change how we think about vulnerable groups and other parties** in decision-making. Vulnerable groups can manage their usage of services, support each other, and teach professionals about their experiences. Other stakeholders should learn from vulnerable groups, collaborate with them, and counter biases about them.

Funding support

- **Resource initiatives, programmes, and structures** (e.g., centralised information platforms) that support vulnerable groups' decision-making.

Policies and structures

- **Design policies, structures and integrated platforms** that support vulnerable groups' decision-making (e.g. matching vulnerable groups to appropriate service providers).

- **Upskill professionals** to support and share decision-making with vulnerable groups.

- **Collect, centralise and share data and information** to facilitate better decision-making. This could include data on the services available, or the consequences of making various choices.

Resources available

To better understand decision-making principles and obligations in Singapore

Mental Capacity Act 2008

Singapore's Mental Capacity Act shares legal principles relating to persons who lack capacity to make decisions. These can guide SPEs in their actions in supporting or acting on behalf of vulnerable groups in decision-making.

https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Act/MCA2008?WholeDoc=1

To better understand vulnerable groups

NCSS' **Removing Barriers series** shares tips on how to interact with vulnerable groups.

- **Persons with Disabilities:** https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/UnderstandingPersonswithDisabilities
- **Interacting with Seniors:** https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/InteractingwithSeniors
- **Persons with Mental Health Conditions:** https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/InteractingwithPersonswithMentalHealthConditions

Information on resources and schemes

SupportGoWhere

SupportGoWhere, a partnership between GovTech, MSF and NCSS, is an online platform of schemes and services for individuals and families to find support with ease, ranging from mental health to financial support. Organisations can also use the platform to find which other organisations they could collaborate with to fill gaps or tap on synergies.

https://supportgowhere.life.gov.sg

MSF Directories

Find Social Service Offices, Family Service Centres, and other agencies providing services in the link below.

https://www.msf.gov.sg/dfcs

Enabling Guide

SG Enable's Enabling Guide connects persons with disabilities and their caregivers with relevant resources to help them make informed decisions about the schemes and services that best suit them.

https://www.enablingguide.sg/

Beyond the Label Resources

NCSS' Beyond the Label campaign has collated resources to assist Persons with Mental Health Conditions, as well as for people to address stigma against Persons with Mental Health Conditions.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/beyond-the-label/resources

Empowerment and human-centred design approaches to support decision making

Empowerment Deconstructed! Guide

In 2021, NCSS developed the Empowerment Deconstructed! Guide which breaks down the concept of empowerment into practical and relatable terms. It includes a 4-step process as well as other tools that one can use to kickstart the journey in putting empowerment principles into practice.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/empowerment-deconstructed-a-guide-to-grow-empowering-practices

Empowering Seniors Resources Kit

In 2019, NCSS developed this resource kit to provide resources on empowering seniors.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/docs/default-source/ncss-publications-doc/empowering-seniors_resource_kit.pdf?sfvrsn=cc42a176_2

Social Innovation Starter Kit

NCSS developed a Social Innovation Starter Kit which includes guiding principles and mindsets of human-centred design process as well as specific methods and tools to help the sector in tackling complex social challenges and embark on their own innovation journeys.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/SocialInnovationStarterKit

To adopt standards to better support vulnerable groups' decisions

NCSS Service Standards

The NCSS Service Standards aim to support agencies in attaining higher standards of service delivery to improve vulnerable groups' outcomes. The set of standards includes measures related to catering for vulnerable groups' preferences and needs in intervention plans, supporting vulnerable groups with information and resources to achieve their goals, ensuring that other options are shared with ineligible persons, and allowing vulnerable groups to share programme feedback.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/capability-building/consultancy-support/ncss-standards-framework/service-standards-requirements

To draw from research insights to better support vulnerable groups' decisions

Quality of Life Research Series

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines Quality of Life as "individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns". NCSS conducts research studies to understand how various population groups perceive their quality of life, identify areas of need and initiatives that can contribute to improving their quality of life. Past research studies conducted by NCSS can be found here:

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research

Social Service Sector Repository

The Repository is a first-of-its-kind online database of research on the local social service sector, for NCSS members' use. It houses rigorous research done by NCSS member organisations and public service agencies, in NCSS's research domains. This Repository and research resources such as the EBSCO scholarly journal database, Research Pulse newsletter, and online dashboards can be found on NCSS website.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research

🖼️ Training to explore

Develop an Individualised Care Plan
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCRS209

Practising Person Centred Care Approach
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SECH5816

Cultural Competency: Engaging with and Bridging across Differences
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCRS5491

👥 Networks of support

To support decision-making as part of empowerment and human-centred design practices

Empowerment Learning Journey
NCSS is co-organising Learning Journeys for SSAs to learn about best practices from one another and spark collaborations on empowerment in the sector.

To find out more about how you can be involved, please write to: empowermentmovement@ncss.gov.sg

Design for Community Action
NVPC's Design for Community Action programme aims to introduce the Human-Centred Design (Design Thinking) methodology to help communities co-create solutions for operational challenges. This programme also includes active support in the post-ideation phase to implement solutions.

https://cityofgood.sg/community-matters/community-action/design-for-community-action/

Avenue for community-based peer-learning to bridge skill gaps

NVPC Level-Up Series

NVPC's Level-Up Series enables the community to bridge skills gaps through topical masterclasses, based on their needs. Some past sessions have included opportunities to use design thinking, or to ideate and collaborate with vulnerable groups.

https://cityofgood.sg/community-matters/community-action/level-up-series

📁 Case examples

Rainbow Centre
Supporting vulnerable groups' goals to be connected and empowered in community

Rainbow Centre focuses on empowering persons with disabilities (PwDs) and supporting them to thrive in community. Their 'Connected Communities Services' aims to **help young PwDs achieve their goals and connect with their communities over a year.**

Once enrolled, vulnerable groups are **encouraged to share their aspirations** with life coaches or social workers. Family members are also **invited to be help co-create and support these goals**. Life coaches or social workers then **work with vulnerable groups** to identify their assets and relevant opportunities, and **determine the steps** to achieve these goals. They also **tap on community collaborators** to provide relevant opportunities for vulnerable groups.

My Legacy Portal
Encouraging individuals to pre-plan and record their decisions for others to fulfil

Various government agencies, including the Ministry of Health Singapore, came together to create the My Legacy portal. The portal aims to **bring together information and services to support individuals' decisions** in end-of-life, legacy-related issues.

The portal includes information such as:

- **Collating information on the options** to address various end-of-life issues

- **Advice** on how to make a lasting power of attorney, advance care plan, and advance medical directive **recording one's preferences** in future health and personal care

- **Advice** on making will and CPF nominations **for one's assets**

- Allowing individuals to store and share important documents through the secure online My Legacy vault, for **trusted persons to more easily access one's wishes**

SupportGoWhere

A one-stop online portal for vulnerable groups to access information on resources

SupportGoWhere, a partnership between GovTech, MSF, NCSS and other agencies, aims to be a **one-stop online information platform on social schemes and services**. Through SupportGoWhere, vulnerable groups and social service professionals can easily find available support for various needs. It is **accessible in English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil** where practicable. Its **Support Recommender feature** allows vulnerable groups to find recommended support for their needs.

SupportGoWhere provides vulnerable groups with **greater access to relevant, simplified information** for their decision-making. This includes information on eligibility, how to access the service, whether fees are payable, and what to expect from the service. Vulnerable groups are then **better able to decide** on services/schemes that meet their needs.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Informative decision aids to systematically support vulnerable groups' decision-making
United Kingdom: Decision aid

What is it?
To help caregivers to navigate end-of-life decisions for persons living with dementia, a team in the UK **co-produced an interactive decision aid with persons living with dementia, caregivers, practitioners and professionals.**

Potential benefits
- **Fill gaps in current information and tools**, so that vulnerable groups can better navigate difficult decisions.

- **Guide in deliberating, executing and reflecting on decisions.**

- **Provide clarity** on decisions to be made, who is responsible for deciding, and encourage shared decision-making.

How does it work?

- The decision aid **helped to guide key decisions affecting end-of-life circumstances.** E.g. affecting care and health regimes, eating and drinking, and daily well-being.

- The decision aid helped to **support caregivers to make difficult, complex decisions** for persons living with dementia, who may face reduced decision-making capacity.

- The decision aid was **co-produced with different groups with diverse insights**. The production team provided accommodations to engage various groups better. For example, persons living with mild dementia could bring a caregiver for support during workshops.

- In producing this, the team was **guided by existing theoretical frameworks**. These helped to break down various steps involved in decision-making, and the content to be produced.

- The guide was **curated to provide balanced, neutral, evidence-based information**. The decision aid used **various methods to share information more accessibly.** This includes myth-busting, stories of lived experiences, and questions for caregivers to answer.

Food for thought
- In **what areas** might decision aids be most necessary to support vulnerable groups?

- How might such decision aids be produced **with vulnerable groups?**

- How might such decision aids **provide support in a more systematic and accessible way?**

Changing people, processes and systems to support vulnerable groups' decisions
Singapore: National University Hospital (NUH)'s Year of Care programme

What is it?

NUH implemented the "Year of Care" programme for patients with diabetes **to provide support for patients' decisions about their care** and improve patient outcomes.

Potential benefits

- Lead to **better outcomes** for vulnerable groups.

- Ensure a **sustainable workload and smooth transition** for professionals concerned.

How does it work?

They achieved this through **making changes in their systems and processes, and training their staff**. For example, they:

- Provided medical test results with simple descriptions and prompts **to prepare patients to converse with healthcare professionals (HCP)** two weeks later

- **Trained HCPs** to understand the patient's personal goals, and use shared decision-making to plan next steps

- **Ensured adequate time for such conversations** by scheduling HCPs early for a sufficient period, and re-organising workflows to reduce HCP workload

- **Recorded and followed up on the plan**, including the HCP helping to link the patient with other supports and reviewing the outcomes

Food for thought

- How we might **reorientate our people, processes and systems** to support vulnerable groups' decision-making?

Machine learning to connect vulnerable groups with information about resources
United States: People Assisting the Homeless (PATH)'s LeaseUp platform

What is it?
The LeaseUp programme was launched in 2018 to **better connect vulnerable groups with housing** that meets their needs.

Potential benefits
- **Shorten waiting time and increase successful matches** of clients to resources, especially for clients who require time-sensitive help.
- Ensure vulnerable groups have **necessary support to make and implement** well-informed decisions.

How does it work?
- The programme **makes use of Amazon's machine learning technology**, Amazon Personalize, to collect and share relevant information on available housing units with case managers.
- **Case managers then assist to match the units** with those from vulnerable groups in need of housing, and **follow up** to ensure that this is a sustainable solution.
- This is paired with **outreach efforts and incentives to attract property owners** to onboard available housing on the programme.

Food for thought
- How might we **harness technology and the human touch** to support vulnerable groups' decision-making effectively?

Find out more: https://leaseupla.org/

Annex - References:

General

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- https://nlcsw.ca/sites/default/files/inline-files/Ethical_Decision_Making_Framework.pdf

Steps You Can Take

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- https://www.cmpa-acpm.ca/en/advice-publications/browse-articles/2014/helping-patients-make-informed-decisions
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Rainbow Centre

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My Legacy Portal

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SupportGoWhere

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Decision Aid

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EMPOWERMENT AND INCLUSION

Thrust 1 Outcome:

More vulnerable people are included and participate in society

✋ Introduction

What does this mean?

- More individuals, families, and communities of vulnerable groups **feel accepted and respected**, and can **participate actively in society**.

- All segments of society, including the government, employers, and the public, **adopt positive attitudes** towards vulnerable groups, and **actively seek to meaningfully partner** them.

- **Refer to the other outcomes under 4ST Thrust 1** for more information and resources on how to support decision-making of vulnerable groups; adopt a person-centred approach; and involve individuals, families, and communities to address social issues[1].

Guiding questions

- How might we **encourage the public to adopt more positive attitudes** towards vulnerable groups, and **meaningfully include** them?

- How might we **equip, support, and prepare vulnerable groups to participate** actively in society?

What is an inclusive society?

An inclusive society **embraces diversity**. It **allows everyone to feel accepted, respected and involved** in meaningful ways. Individuals living in such a society can access **information, infrastructure and facilities** and participate actively in important activities that affect how they live, work and play.

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[1] See outcomes "Vulnerable groups have support to make well-informed decisions on how their needs and aspirations are met"; "Practices and solutions in the sector become more person-centred"; & "The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges".

What are vulnerable groups?

Vulnerable groups encompass those who may **feel less included in society.** They may have fewer resources or lower ability to participate actively in society.

Those from vulnerable groups often have:

Fewer **social** opportunities to interact with others	Fewer **work** opportunities	Less ability to influence **society's decisions** (e.g., policy decisions)

Some groups could include, but are not limited to:

Persons with mental health conditions	Children from disadvantaged families	At-risk youth

Persons with low-income family backgrounds	Caregivers for Persons with Disabilities and Persons with Mental Health Conditions

Why include members of vulnerable groups and enable them to participate in society?

- By including them, they can **benefit from and contribute to** society.
- Sharing of diverse perspectives can **drive innovation.**
- It can also help everyone develop more empathy and a **closer sense of community.**

How would the journey towards greater inclusion and participation look like?

Inclusion can start from:

1	**Recognising** vulnerable groups
2	**Acknowledging** their concerns and needs
3	**Increasing their access** to social interactions, social services, participating in work and culture
4	Providing **adequate resources** to participate fully in society

It is important to recognise and address various **biases** that may favour one group over another, which could work consciously or subconsciously. Those interacting with vulnerable groups, and vulnerable groups themselves need to work together to debunk biases. Other than **changing individual attitudes**, we must also influence the **wider culture, policies, and infrastructure.**

In inclusion, we need to move away from giving everyone equal treatment that does not suit their specific needs, to giving everyone equitable treatment so that they are **equally included**, considering their unique abilities and needs.

Inclusion is a constant and evolving process. Stakeholders need to **update best practices,** as society's understanding of inclusion evolves.

Steps you can take

For social purpose entities (SPEs)

Exploring: Starting out in this area

When working with individuals and their families

- **Conduct research and seek input** from vulnerable groups on ways to include them.
- **Equip vulnerable groups** to participate in society (e.g., at work, social events).
- **Adopt practices** that encourage vulnerable groups to participate in beneficial programmes, such as incorporating inclusive language, maintaining frequent contact and offering concrete support customised to specific vulnerable groups.

Organisational level practices

- **Train leaders, staff and volunteers** with the skills to adopt inclusive and empowering practices.

When working with others across the sector

- **Learn from community partners** who have successfully facilitated inclusion of vulnerable groups.

Steps you can take

When working with individuals and their families

- **Showcase success stories** featuring vulnerable groups.
- **Embrace innovation and technology** to include vulnerable groups (e.g., open captioning on videos, speech-to-text function).

Organisational level practices

- **Establish service standards** to ensure inclusion is upheld in service delivery.
- **Enhance infrastructure** to include vulnerable persons.

When working with others across the sector
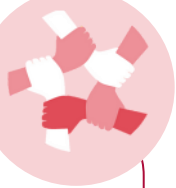
- **Encourage the public** to volunteer with vulnerable groups to reduce stigma.
- **Share** best practices and relevant data, and **collaborate** with partners within and beyond the sector to enhance inclusion.
- **Establish platforms to share** best practices and lessons learnt.

Steps you can take

Excelling: Experienced and looking to strengthen in this area

When working with individuals and their families

- Establish support networks and advocacy programmes to **facilitate vulnerable groups sharing experiences.**
- Include community participation elements in **programme and policy design.**

Organisational level practices

- **Hire vulnerable groups** in the organisation (refer to next segment on tips for employers).
- Commit resources to **update best practices.**
- **Increase accountability** e.g., adding feedback mechanisms, sharing publicly on progress, evaluating practices for improvement.

When working with others across the sector
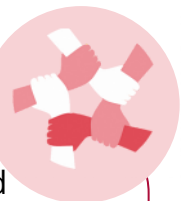
- **Advocate for greater inclusion** through educational campaigns and organisational policy changes.

Steps you can take

Practise and advocate inclusive employment policies and practices [2]

Set out **clear guidelines, guides and tools** to set expectations and educate on:

- Reducing bias in **hiring**
- Introducing **flexible work** arrangements
- Redesigning **job scope** to meet specific needs of and enable vulnerable groups to perform their best
- **Educating** to personally support vulnerable groups, whether as fellow employees or in serving clients
- **Supporting employee mental health** through counselling benefits and workplace wellness champions
- Establishing safe, accessible **feedback channels**

For partners in the ecosystem:

Mindset shift

- Better **understand and advocate** the value of social inclusion.

Funding support

- Introduce **funding models** to promote inclusion and participation of members of vulnerable groups.
- **Fund** initiatives that support vulnerable groups across various stages and needs comprehensively.

Policies and structures

- **Design inclusive products, policies and structures**. For example, design products to serve vulnerable groups, or enhance **infrastructure** to enable vulnerable persons to live, work and play in the community [3].

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[2] See for further examples: https://www.sgenable.sg/your-first-stop/training-consultancy/enabling-academy/training/employers/resources-for-employers/best-practices-in-disability-inclusive-employment

[3] For a framework that may help to consider if policies are inclusive, consider the EquiFrame framework for analysis of inclusion of vulnerable groups in health policies: https://www.hhrjournal.org/2013/08/equiframe-a-framework-for-analysis-of-the-inclusion-of-human-rights-and-vulnerable-groups-in-health-policies/

Resources available

Guides/Tools

Generic:

Sector Evaluation Framework

NCSS' Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF) is an outcome measurement framework that provides a common language for the different stakeholders in the sector to measure programme outcomes and articulate impact. This is achieved by using standardised and validated outcome measures for programmes with similar objectives.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research/sector-evaluation-framework

Global Equality Standard

The Global Equality Standard (GES), powered by EY, is one assessment framework which aims to diagnose all aspects of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. After relevant evidence is submitted and gathered, EY reviews them and recommends steps for improvement.

https://www.nationalequalitystandard.com/global-equality-standard/

Studies on Public Attitudes

NCSS conducts studies on public attitudes to understand barriers and forms of discrimination against various groups in the population.

Findings from its 2021 study on Persons with Mental Health Conditions can be found here:
https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/infographics-for-public-attitudes-towards-pmhcs

Findings from its 2019 study on Persons with Disabilities can be found here:
https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/2019-public-attitudes-study-towards-persons-with-disabilities-a

MOM's OneWorkplace.sg initiative

The Ministry of Manpower has created a OneWorkplace.sg initiative to foster workplace integration. This includes a Starter Kit for employers and access to free diagnostic assessment of companies' workplace integration practices.

https://www.mom.gov.sg/employment-practices/good-work-practices/fostering-workplace-integration

TAFEP's Guidelines and Resources

The Tripartite Alliance for Fair & Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP) provides guidelines and resources for being an exemplary employer, including on building a fair organisation and an inclusive workplace.

https://www.tal.sg/tafep/getting-started

Mental Health

Beyond the Label Resources

NCSS's Beyond the Label campaign has collated resources to assist Persons with Mental Health Conditions, as well as for those who wish to address stigma against Persons with Mental Health Conditions, whether they are youths, journalists and media professionals, or those who encounter them in everyday life.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/beyond-the-label/resources

Mental Health Toolkit for Employers

NCSS launched this toolkit in 2019 to guide employers to hire and support employees with mental health conditions in the workplace.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/MentalHealthToolkitforEmployers

Disability

SG Enable's i'mable

i'mable is a public education initiative by SG Enable that aims to encourage everyone to take positive action for disability inclusion, and commit to building a more inclusive society. As part of their initiatives, they share resources to enable others to contribute to a more inclusive Singapore.

https://www.sgenable.sg/your-first-stop/community-integration/

Resources for Employers to Pursue Disability-Inclusive Employment

SG Enable features resources for employers pursuing disability-inclusive employment, such as best practices, an app to improve awareness for inclusive employment, and relevant self-assessment tools.

https://www.sgenable.sg/your-first-stop/training-consultancy/enabling-academy/resources

Enabling Masterplan

The Enabling Masterplans guide society to work together to support and include persons with disabilities. The Enabling Masterplan 2030 contains recommendations to guide efforts to shape the future disability landscape till 2030.

- https://www.msf.gov.sg/what-we-do/enabling-masterplan/enabling-masterplan-2030/what-is-emp2030
- https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/article/Enabling-Masterplan-2030---Working-Together-Towards-An-Inclusive-Singapore

Disability-related

Caring Commuter Champion Online Training Course

See more on this free online training course, educating commuters on how to help commuters with various disabilities on public transport, at

https://caringcommuterchampion.thinkific.com/collections

Independent Travel Training for Professionals Supporting Persons with Disabilities

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SDIS211

Advanced Certificate in Supported Employment (ACSE)

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SDIS8

Working with Persons with Autism

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SDIS87

Eldercare-related

Practising Person-Centred Care Approach

Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SECH5816

Case Management for Seniors in Using Action Learning Approach

Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SECH5364

Family-related

Engaging Youth-At-Risk Through Counselling Techniques

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCYF477

Helping Family Members Cope with Issues Arising from Incarceration of a Loved One

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCYF5802

Management of Family Violence: Introduction

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCYF197

Management of Family Violence: Talking to Children & Managing Abuse-related Disclosure

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCYF5502

Safety Planning and Monitoring – A 5.5-Step Model

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCYF233

Mental Health-related

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SCRS5709

Suicide Prevention and Management for Seniors

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SECH5587

Foundations of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation and Recovery

Visit SSI for more info at

https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/#/Course?coursecode=SMTH387

Funding available

The Ministry of Manpower's Enabling Employment Credit (EEC)

The Ministry of Manpower launched the Enabling Employment Credit to provide employers with wage offsets to support the employment of persons with disabilities (PwDs).

https://www.mom.gov.sg/about-us/cos2021/enabling-our-workers

📁 Case examples

Making public spaces and facilities accessible to all

The Land Transport Authority
Inclusive public transport

The Land Transport Authority has **made public transport more accessible to different vulnerable groups** by:

- **Adjusting infrastructure** by removing physical barriers on public transport, introducing braille and embossed text for the visually impaired, and introducing visual communication tools for the deaf or hard-of-hearing.

- **Ensuring appropriate regulations** allowing various mobility devices on public transport.

- **Introducing programmes** such as priority seats, paired with prompts that can be worn by those who need a seat to highlight that they require a seat.

- **Training its staff** to help with accessibility devices and to reunite persons with dementia who are lost with their next-of-kin.

Key transport industry players and government agencies came together to form the Caring SG Commuters Committee, to further **create a culture of care** in public transport. This includes having **online training courses** to enable caring commuters; and buses featuring **educational artwork** from students from the Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore (CPAS) School sharing needs and challenges faced.

National Council of Social Service
Inclusive play for the young

NCSS, working together with other partners, introduced initiatives for children of different abilities to have **access to play**, and to **reduce stigma between children from young.**

As many existing outdoor playgrounds were not accessible for those with special needs, **at least 13 Singapore playgrounds' infrastructure were changed to be inclusive** for children with special needs. For example, having wheelchair-friendly ramps, swings, and merry-go-rounds.

NCSS **consulted multiple stakeholders**, including therapists, and children with special needs, to ensure that the playgrounds were optimally designed.

NCSS had also collaborated with the Muscular Dystrophy Association (Singapore) on the Children in Action initiative to **bring children with different abilities together** to play at these playgrounds.

📁 Case examples

Making public spaces and facilities accessible to all

HDB & People's Association
Study pods at housing estates

The Housing & Development Board, People's Association and Burztech company had launched a pilot project to **introduce work-study pods** at community spaces, in response to needs on the ground. The pilot will last until Jul 2023, and may lead to scaling up based on demand.

The pods help to **narrow the gap in resources** that may exist between different members of society to pursue economic opportunities. They create **accessible infrastructure** with sound insulation, air-conditioning and charging pods that could benefit those who need more conducive facilities for work and education. To be more inclusive, **lower-income students had been given credits** to use the pods.

Addressing stigma and promoting social inclusion of persons with mental health conditions

Beyond the Label 2.0

Beyond the Label (BTL) 2.0 is a **nation-wide movement to address stigma and promote social inclusion** of persons with mental health conditions (PMHCs).

The movement is led by NCSS and TOUCH Community Services together with over 20 other agencies to achieve joint objectives. It takes a comprehensive approach to support PMHCs, including:

- **Advocating greater support** for PMHCs, such as producing web-series and roving exhibitions to raise awareness of and reduce stigma towards pursuing mental health and well-being in workplaces, schools and homes,

- **Educating and equipping the public** to support PMHCs, such as developing resources for parents, peers and PMHC themselves; and sharing volunteer opportunities,

- **Implementing workplace adjustments** to support PMHCs, by encouraging employers to prioritise workplace wellbeing and featuring examples of inclusive employers

- **Encouraging those who need help to seek help early**. Belle, the BTL helpbot, helps to connect PMHCs with resources at any time, from any place.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Redesigning the workplace to be more inclusive towards its employees and customers
Singapore: Project Dignity's Dignity Kitchen

What is it?

Set up by a social enterprise, Dignity Kitchen **trains members of vulnerable groups, along with able-bodied individuals, to be hawkers**. It has hired more than 60% of vulnerable groups, including those with physical, mental and intellectual disabilities, or single mothers and ex-prisoners, in its Boon Keng food court.

Potential benefits

- **Strengthen corporate social purpose and leverage assets** of vulnerable groups at work.

- Challenge organisations to **innovate** to stay ahead of competition.

- **Increase workforce participation** of vulnerable groups.

How does it work?

Dignity Kitchen **modifies training** to serve vulnerable groups, even if it takes longer or needs to be delivered through different methods such as drawings and videos. It is equipped with **customised accessible infrastructure and tools**, including worktops with adjustable heights for wheelchair-users, modified equipment to prepare food one-handed, and Braille cash registers.

Dignity Kitchen has incorporated other **inclusive practices**, such as teaching customers how to order drinks using sign language from posters, or folding dollar bills differently to help blind trainees recognise the denomination. It also **customises job tasks** to individuals' specific abilities. It continues to **tap on new technology** to include vulnerable groups, such as enabling a server with an amputation to operate robots to serve food; or enabling food delivery workers to use motorised wheelchairs for delivery.

Beyond its innovative and inclusive features, Dignity Kitchen also has a **"pay it forward" feature**, which allows customers to buy meals for others in need.

Food for thought

How might organisations **redesign the workplace** to include vulnerable groups (whether as employees or customers)?

Incorporating a disability inclusion lens across all work processes
United States: Ford Foundation

What is it?

The Ford Foundation adopts various practices to **increase inclusion of persons with disabilities.**

Potential benefits

- Promote **greater inclusion and participation** of persons with disabilities.

- **Enlarge the talent pool and community** that the organisation can recruit and serve.

How does it work?

The Ford Foundation implemented practices to increase their understanding of disability and improve disability inclusion in their organisation, including:

- **Reviewing their hiring process** to include persons with disabilities;
- **Developing best practices** and ensuring that their building and events meet or exceed **accessibility standards;**
- Improving the accessibility of **grant-making processes and digital platforms;**
- Launching a U.S. Disability Rights Program to **support leaders in disability rights**, after **seeking input** from around 200 disability leaders.

Food for thought

- How might we include vulnerable groups through our **processes, infrastructure and resources**?

- How might we better **incorporate diverse perspectives** that may be missing from our organisations?

Bringing together vulnerable groups and allies to impact the issues that concern them the most
United States: Opportunity Youth United (OYUnited)

What is it?

Opportunity Youth United (OYUnited) is a youth-led national movement that **brings together youths** between the ages of 16 and 24 who seek economic opportunities, and **allies from all backgrounds.**

Potential benefits

- Promote **greater inclusion and participation** amongst vulnerable groups by **amplifying their voice** in tackling societal issues.

- **Promote collaboration** both within and beyond the sector in tackling social issues.

How does it work?

Since 2012, OYUnited aims to further a society that invests in the education and welfare of its children and youth, supports families and communities, and promotes equality and opportunities for all. To achieve these goals, OYUnited:

- **Collaborates with partners** of varying backgrounds to **devise and share holistic solutions and recommendations** with key stakeholders (such as policymakers, funders, business leaders). They collaborate on the Reconnecting Youth Campaign, which encourages politicians to increase youth opportunity in budget, policy and programme decisions.

- Fosters **greater civic engagement** amongst low-income youths and communities. **Tapping on youth perspectives and leadership**, OYUnited have identified and publicly shared immediate and broader systems change needed.

Food for thought

- How might we **tap on the insights of vulnerable groups** to address important issues?

- How might we **ally with and amplify the voices of vulnerable groups** for change?

- How might we **foster greater civic engagement** amongst vulnerable groups?

Find out more: https://oyunited.org/

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Enabling People, Sector-Wide Processes and Systems

4ST PLAYBOOK

A self-help guide with concrete steps, examples and ideas to explore and achieve desired 4ST outcomes

Updated 13/7/2023

OUTCOMES:

Thrust 2 — SPEs serve with heart and demonstrate professionalism across all levels, backed by robust governance and strong people practices

Thrust 3 — Sector players take a systems approach to deliver quality, innovative & sustainable solutions, and advance sector goals

Thrust 4 — A digitally enabled and data-driven social service sector

ENABLING PEOPLE, SECTOR-WIDE PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Thrust 2 Outcome:

SPEs serve with heart and demonstrate professionalism across all levels, backed by robust governance and strong people practices

Thrust 3 Outcome:

Sector players take a systems approach to deliver quality, innovative & sustainable solutions, and advance sector goals

Thrust 4 Outcome:

A digitally enabled and data-driven social service sector

Introduction

Guiding questions

How can we strengthen SPEs' effectiveness and impact?

- How do we ensure that SPEs have strong leadership, organisation and people capabilities and capacities?

- How do we use best practices, including data and digitalisation, to meet the needs of individuals, families, communities and the sector?

- How can we use a systems approach to implement impactful solutions for sector goals?

What does having "enabling people, sector-wide processes and systems" mean?

① Social Purpose Entities (SPEs) having strong organisational health

Organisational Health Domains
- Strategy & Leadership
- Governance
- People
- Finances
- Digitalisation
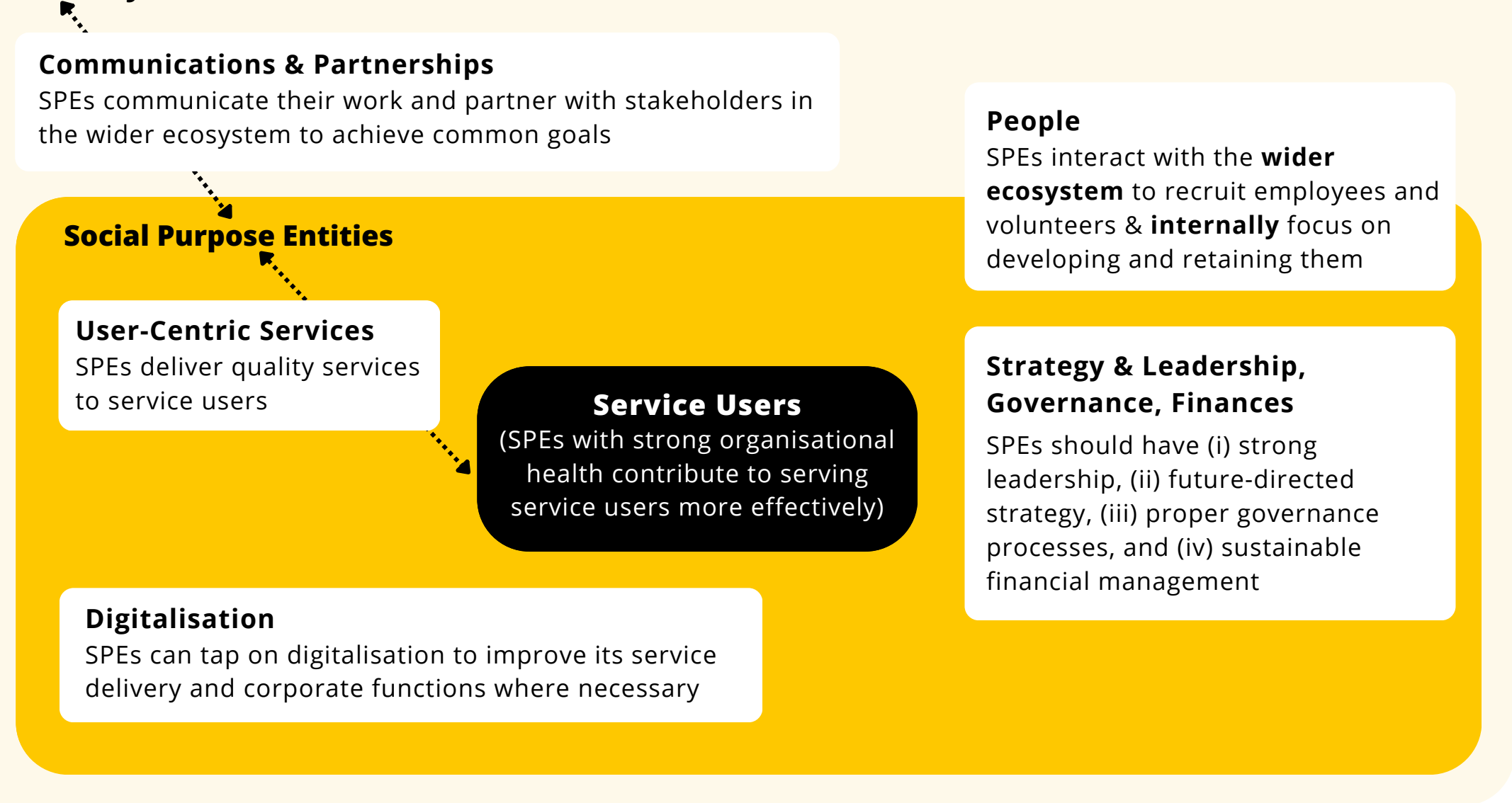- Communications & Partnerships
- User-Centric Services

To improve SPEs' effectiveness, we need to take a **holistic approach** to their organisational health.

- This involves improving on their **capability** (knowledge, skills, and aptitude to achieve organisational functions) and their **capacity** (ability to get work done, considering workload and available resources).

- SPEs should adopt **good practices, processes and systems** to optimise their strategies, operations, and manpower.

To **build strong sector manpower**, SPEs should:

- **Attract, manage, and retain** talent and volunteers well

- **Continuously equip** all levels of manpower with relevant competencies

- Align across different levels to **exercise collective leadership**

The Ecosystem (Giving partners, members of public, government and partner agencies)

Communications & Partnerships
SPEs communicate their work and partner with stakeholders in the wider ecosystem to achieve common goals

Social Purpose Entities

User-Centric Services
SPEs deliver quality services to service users

Service Users
(SPEs with strong organisational health contribute to serving service users more effectively)

Digitalisation
SPEs can tap on digitalisation to improve its service delivery and corporate functions where necessary

People
SPEs interact with the **wider ecosystem** to recruit employees and volunteers & **internally** focus on developing and retaining them

Strategy & Leadership, Governance, Finances
SPEs should have (i) strong leadership, (ii) future-directed strategy, (iii) proper governance processes, and (iv) sustainable financial management

Systems approach: Sector players take a systems approach in all that they do

② Sector players taking a **systems approach in all they do**

Taking a systems approach means:

- **Seeing the big picture and how everything is connected.** Different parts of a system, including individuals, families, communities, and organisations, affect each other. They can amplify and cancel out each other's impact in unexpected ways.

- Understanding systems **enables more effective change**, especially for complex problems that need multiple parties to effectively address. Develop your understanding through **methods** such as systems mapping, and consider **piloting** new ideas and **collaborating** to scale, when necessary.

Organisational Health

NCSS' Organisational Health Framework for Social Services (OHFSS) lists 7 domains for holistic organisational health.

Domains of Organisational Health:

Strategy & Leadership	Governance	People	Finances	Digitalisation	Communications & Partnership	User-Centric Services

Description:

Strategy & Leadership	Governance	People	Finances	Digitalisation	Communications & Partnership	User-Centric Services
Leading the organisation through strategy development and implementation, organisation structure and culture	Board's role, Board compliance & composition, and risk management	People practices, including recruiting, developing and retaining employees and volunteers	Sustainable funding, effective financial management, and process readiness to meet financial needs	Digitalisation and data strategy alignment and ability. Affects stakeholder management, service delivery, corporate and support functions, and hiring talent	External communication & branding, partnerships & alliances, community involvement, and process readiness to meet these needs	Delivery of quality services through service design, performance evaluation, and process readiness to meet service needs

Guides/Tools:

- SPEs may take the OHFSS Self-Assessment to better understand your strengths and areas of development.
- Please refer to the OHFSS and Organisational Health Guidebook for Social Services (OHGSS) to better understand how to assess and improve organisational health.

Strategy & Leadership	Governance	People	Finances	Digitalisation	Communications & Partnership	User-Centric Services
4ST Playbook on Forward Planning; Experimentation & Innovation	Handbook on Effective Non-Profit Boards	Social Service Tribe	4ST Playbook on Sustainable Resourcing	Tech-and-GO!	4ST Playbook on Strategic Partnerships & Collaboration; Empowerment & Person-centredness; Societal Inclusion	4ST Playbook on Empowerment & Person-centredness; Support for Decisions
	Board Appointment Guide for Charities	Guide on Manpower and Workforce Management for Social Service Professionals	Full Cost Recovery for Charities	Industry Digital Plan for Social Services	Collective Impact	Sector Evaluation Framework
	Enterprise Risk Management Toolkit for Charities & Institutions of a Public Charater (IPC)	Job Redesign Guide for Inclusive Employers		Charities GoDigital Kit	Colabs Toolkit	Social Innovation Starter Kit
	Code of Governance for Charities & IPCs	Mental Health Toolkit for Employers		Data Management Guide		
		Skills Framework for Social Service				
		Volunteer Resource Hub				
		Volunteer Management (VM) Maturity Matrix				
		Learning & Development Roadmap and Self-Assessment Tool				

Training to Explore

- Training offered by NCSS' Social Service Institute
- Governance for Outstanding Organisation Directors (SGOOD) programme

Strategy & Leadership	Governance	People	Finances	Digitalisation	Communications & Partnership	User-Centric Services
Strategic (Human) Thinking in the Age of AI	Strengthening Governance by Leveraging the Outward Mindset for Non-Profit Organisations			Digital Skills Guide		
Authentic Leadership Conversations						

Funding Available

- Community Capability Trust (CCT)
- Charities Capability Fund (CCF)
- Lam Soon New Horizon Grant

		Professional Capability Grant (PCG)		Please see Tech-and-Go for other grants		

Networks of Support / Programmes to Participate In:

- Organisational Health Diagnostic Scheme (OHDS)
- Social Service Summit
- Capability Circles

		Social Service Sector Career Opportunities		Open Innovation Programme		Design4Impact
		VM Networks & Programmes				

② Overview of Systems Approach including resources available

Taking a Systems Approach

Guides/Tools	
4ST Playbook on Strategic Partnerships & Collaboration; Empowerment & Person-centredness; Societal Inclusion.	Dreier, Nabarro & Nelson's paper "Systems Leadership for Sustainable Development: Strategies for Achieving Systemic Change"

Training to Explore
SIM Centre for Systems Leadership

Networks of Support/Programmes to Participate In	
Colabs Series	Singapore Together Alliances for Action

See detailed descriptions of resources below. See Guides/Tools to learn more on steps to take and case examples.

Resources available

For social purpose entities (SPEs):

Guides/Tools

General

Organisational Health Framework for Social Services (OHFSS) Self-Assessment

SPEs may take the OHFSS Self-Assessment to better understand their organisational strengths and areas of development.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/docs/default-source/ncss-publications-doc/pdfdocument/od-guidebook-self-assessment-tool.pdf

Organisational Health Guidebook

Please refer to the OHFSS and the Organisational Health Guidebook for Social Services (OHGSS) to better understand how to assess and improve your organisational health.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/capability-building

Governance

Handbook on Effective Non-Profit Boards

The National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC)'s Centre for Non-Profit Leadership (CNPL) launched a 2020 handbook on how to make non-profit boards effective. The handbook distils insights from NVPC's research to highlight key factors that contribute to effective non-profit boards and helpful tips for non-profit leaders.

https://cityofgood.sg/resources/launch-of-the-handbook-on-effective-non-profit-boards/

Board Appointment Guide for Charities

This Guide, formulated collaboratively by the Council for Board Diversity, Ernst & Young, NVPC and Singapore Institute of Directors, aims to helps Boards of Singapore charities to ensure good governance through the process of nominating and appointing Board Members. It highlights foundational and exemplary standards to form effective Boards.

https://councilforboarddiversity.sg/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Board-Appointment-Guide-for-Charities.pdf

Enterprise Risk Management Toolkit for Charities & Institutions of a Public Character (IPCs)

This toolkit by Charity Council, KPMG in Singapore and National University of Singapore's Business School sets out best practices and foundations to build effective enterprise risk management within charities & IPCs.

https://www.charities.gov.sg/PublishingImages/Resource-and-Training/Guides-Templates-Awards/Guides/Documents/Enterprise%20Risk%20Management%20Toolkit%20for%20Charities%20and%20IPCs%20(2016).PDF

Code of Governance for Charities & IPCs

The Charity Council's Code of Governance will help to guide charities and IPCs on principles and best practices in key areas of governance and management.

https://www.charities.gov.sg/Pages/Charities-and-IPCs/Manage-Your-Charity/Code-of-Governance-for-Charities-IPCs.aspx

People

Social Service Tribe

NCSS' Social Service Tribe highlights careers and job opportunities in the social service sector to increase the visibility of social service career opportunities.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-tribe

Guide on Manpower and Workforce Management for Social Service Professionals

The Guidebook on Manpower and Workforce Management for Social Service Professionals was curated to guide Social Service Agencies (SSAs) beyond COVID-19 in good practices to sustain employee well-being, enable remote working and manage manpower costs.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/docs/default-source/ncss-publications-doc/pdfdocument/guide-on-manpower-and-workforce-management.pdf

Job Redesign Guide for Inclusive Employers

SG Enable's guide shares on the process of, examples of and resources to support employers in job redesign, which can support and integrate employees with disabilities and other employees into the workplace.

https://www.sgenable.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/resources-library/sg-enable_job-redesign-guide-for-inclusive-employers.pdf

Mental Health Toolkit for Employers

NCSS launched this toolkit in 2019 to guide employers to hire and support employees with mental health conditions in the workplace.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/MentalHealthToolkitforEmployers

Skills Framework for Social Service

The Skills Framework (SFw) for Social Service is a SkillsFuture initiative, designed to promote skills mastery and lifelong learning for the Singapore workforce. Jointly developed by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG), Workforce Singapore (WSG), the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) and the National Council of Social Service (NCSS) together with industry associations, training providers and organisations, the framework provides useful information on sector information; career pathways; occupations and job roles; existing and emerging skills; and training programmes for skills upgrading and mastery.

https://www.skillsfuture.gov.sg/skills-framework/social-service

Volunteer Resource Hub

NCSS' Volunteer Resource Hub houses key volunteer management resources for SSAs, Volunteer Management Practitioners (VMPs) and stakeholders interested in engaging volunteers. It shares:
- Toolkits and guides to help SSAs and VMPs build and strengthen their volunteer management practices and capabilities
- Research studies and reports analysing volunteer management trends

https://go.gov.sg/ncssvolunteerresourcehub

Volunteer Management Maturity Matrix (VMM Matrix)

NCSS' VMM Matrix is a digital self-assessment tool that enables SSAs to identify strengths and gaps in volunteer management practices, and receive recommendations to better plan and engage volunteers strategically.

https://go.gov.sg/ncss-vm-maturity-matrix

Learning and Development Roadmap (LDR) and Self-Assessment Tool

NCSS' LDR guides the skills and competencies required of Volunteer Management Practitioners (VMPs) to effectively optimise volunteer resources. It also includes potential development pathways and learning opportunities for VMPs. In addition, there is a self-assessment tool for VMPs to identify proficiency gaps and find relevant training courses.

https://go.gov.sg/ldrpublication
https://go.gov.sg/ncssvro-ldrsat

Finances

Full Cost Recovery for Charities

The handbook on "Full Cost Recovery for Charities", published by Centre for Social Development Asia, guides charities to reflect the full costs of operations and includes a case study on how to implement Full Cost Recovery in Singapore. This is also aligned with the publication titled "Paying What It Takes" by Social Ventures Australia and Centre for Social Impact, which articulated that sufficient funding of indirect costs/overhead costs of non-profits can help create greater longer-term impact.

https://www.charities.gov.sg/PublishingImages/Resource-and-Training/Publications/Books/Documents/Handbook%203%20-%20Full%20Cost%20Recovery%20for%20Charities%20E-copy.pdf

https://www.socialventures.com.au/work/paying-what-it-takes-report/

Digitalisation

Tech-and-GO!

Tech-and-GO! is NCSS' one-stop tech hub helping SSAs and charities in their digitalisation journey. It shares:

- Guides and other resources
- Grants for both SSAs and charities
- Consultancy services
- Networks, such as a Telegram group

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/tech-and-go/

Industry Digital Plan for Social Services

This aims to provide systematic guidance on how SSAs can assess and accelerate their digitalisation, depending on their needs and digital readiness.

https://file.go.gov.sg/industry-digital-plan-for-social-services.pdf

Charities GoDigital Kit

The Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) and Commissioner of Charities launched a toolkit to encourage and guide charities in their digitalisation journey in 2020. It shares opportunities and resources for digitalisation, and a self-assessment checklist.

https://www.charities.gov.sg/PublishingImages/Resource-and-Training/Publications/Others/Documents/MCCY%20Go%20Digital%20Kit.pdf

Data Management Guide

NCSS' Data Management Guide guides SSAs and charities in handling data, with a data lifecycle approach. It provides recommended practices, resources, guides and references for doing so.

https://file.go.gov.sg/dmgss.pdf

Communications & Partnership

Collective Impact

The Collective Impact Framework is an evidence-based and disciplined form of multi-sector collaboration for complex issues. NCSS has embarked on a Collective Impact movement to equip the sector for effective collaborations leading to systemic impact. In 2021-2022, NCSS organised a Collective Impact Masterclass as a deeper dive into how to implement the approach.

The Masterclass series modules can be found here: https://go.gov.sg/collectiveimpactmasterclass

NCSS is working with SSAs on Collective Impact pilots for various complex issues. To find out more about Collective Impact and how you can be involved, please write to: collectiveimpact@ncss.gov.sg.

Colabs Toolkit

This toolkit by NVPC is a practical guide for those convening diverse stakeholders to collaborate on complex social issues. It shares NVPC's insights from their experience through their Colabs series, which can be adapted to tackle different social issues.

https://cityofgood.sg/colabs-sg/toolkit/

User-Centric Services

Sector Evaluation Framework

NCSS' Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF) is an outcome measurement framework that provides a common language for the different stakeholders in the sector to measure programme outcomes and articulate impact. This is achieved by using standardised and validated outcome measures for programmes with similar objectives.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research/sector-evaluation-framework

Social Innovation Starter Kit

NCSS developed a Social Innovation Starter Kit which includes guiding principles and mindsets of human-centred design process as well as specific methods and tools to help the sector in tackling complex social challenges and embark on their own innovation journeys.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/SocialInnovationStarterKit

Taking a System Approach

System's Leadership for Sustainable Development: Strategies for Achieving Systemic Change

This paper, written by Dreier, Nabarro & Nelson, under the Harvard Kennedy School's Corporate Responsibility Initiatives defines and shares framework and behaviours for systems leadership.

https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/mrcbg/publications/fwp/crisept2019

Training to explore

General

Training offered by NCSS' Social Service Institute

Sign up to NCSS' Social Service Institute (SSI) mailing list to receive updates:
https://form.gov.sg/62062a0f8cb95c001235e55d

- Board Development Training Courses:
  https://www.ssi.gov.sg/training/board-development/
- Management and Organisation Development Training Courses:
  https://www.ssi.gov.sg/training/management-and-organisation-development/
- Continuing Education and Training Courses:
  https://www.ssi.gov.sg/training/cet-programmes/
- Volunteer Management and Development Training Courses:
  https://www.ssi.gov.sg/training/volunteer-development-and-management/

Governance for Outstanding Organisation Directors (SGOOD) programme

The Singapore Institute of Directors offers 8 modules for directors and senior management of non-profit organisations, ranging from leadership and Board dynamics, people practices, to strategy and finances.

https://www.sid.org.sg/Web/Professional_Development/Courses/Essentials/SGOOD_Essentials.aspx

Strategy & Leadership

Strategic (Human) Thinking in the Age of AI

Visit DPI-Asia for more info at
https://www.dpi-asia.com/post/strategic-human-thinking-in-the-age-of-ai

Authentic Leadership Conversations

Visit Erevna Leadership for more info at
https://www.erevnaleadership.com/authentic-leadership-conversations.html

Digitalisation

Digital Skills Guide

To support SSAs on their digitalisation journey, NCSS released a non-exhaustive digital skills training list and shared relevant courses for the sector.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/tech-and-go/resources/digital-skills-training

Taking a Systems Approach

SIM Centre for Systems Leadership

The Centre offers various courses and programmes in systems leadership and systems thinking to participate in.

https://pd-csl.sim.edu.sg/building-your-capacity/

Funding available

General

Community Capability Trust (CCT)

The Community Capability Trust (CCT) is a Charitable Trust set up by MSF and NCSS, to develop stronger SSAs in their organisational health journey.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/community-capability-trust-(cct)/

Charities Capability Fund (CCF)

NCSS' Charities Capability Fund (CCF) aims to enhance the governance and management capabilities of charities and Institutions of a Public Character (IPCs); as well as to enhance the operational efficiency of charities and IPCs to facilitate their submission of returns via the Charity Portal. It grants provide for training courses, consultancy services, increasing use of info-communications technology, outsourcing corporate functions to share services, and for collaboration.

https://oursggrants.gov.sg/grants/ccf/instruction

Lam Soon New Horizon Grant

The Majurity Trust has launched an incubation grant in 2022 to support newer non-profits or volunteer-run groups from start-up to maturity. This includes unrestricted funding that will enable grantees to focus on organisational development, and to create space for innovation and creativity. Grantees will also receive support in community building and capacity building (e.g., networks and contacts, expertise, and guidance).

https://www.majurity.sg/funds-and-grants/newhorizon/

People

Professional Capability Grant (PCG)

NCSS' Professional Capability Grant (PCG) supports social service-related scholarships, awards, short-term local training courses/conferences and higher education programmes. The PCG provides training grants that the SSAs can tap on, to build manpower and organisational capability.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/funding-schemes-and-common-services/funding/professional-capability-grant

Digitalisation

Tech-and-Go

Please see Tech-and-Go (above) for other technology and consultancy grants for SSAs and charities.

👥 Networks of support

General

Organisational Health Diagnostic Scheme (OHDS)

NCSS' Organisational Health Diagnostic Scheme (OHDS) supports SSAs, who have attended an OHFSS workshop and completed the OHFSS self-assessment, with an appointed consultant's analysis of their organisational health and a 3-year strategy to strengthen the organisation further.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/community-capability-trust-(cct)/cct-pillars

Social Service Summit

NCSS organises the Social Service Summit annually to gather key stakeholders in the sector to learn from and dialogue with one another.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/social-service-sector-strategic-thrusts-(4st)/social-service-summit

Capability Circles

NCSS organises a series of workshops and events to raise awareness and share topical knowledge of various organisational health domains.
To find out more about capability circles and how you can be involved, please write to: organisation_development@ncss.gov.sg

People

Social Service Sector Career Opportunities

NCSS curates jobs and various leadership development programmes for social service professionals.

See https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-careers for more information.

VM Networks and Programmes
Volunteer Management Network

Volunteer Management Network (VMN) is a series of networking sessions organised by NCSS to provide Volunteer Management Practitioners (VMPs) from SSAs, corporates and public service agencies with opportunities to learn from subject-matter experts, share best practices and ignite collaborations within the social service ecosystem.

Sign up to find out more through the NCSS Volunteer Management Community Mailing List: https://go.gov.sg/ncssvro-vmcommunity

Volunteer Management Leadership Series

NCSS' Volunteer Management Leadership Series (VMLS) is a series of engagement sessions curated specially for SSAs' Board and senior leadership to support and strengthen volunteer management strategies in their agencies.

To find out more about VMLS, please write to: volunteer_resource@ncss.gov.sg

Volunteer Management Capability Development (VMCD) Consultancy Project

NCSS' VMCD Consultancy Project is a signature programme to build volunteer management capabilities. The VMCD Consultancy Project aims to help SSAs to review and enhance their VM practices.

To find out more and how you can be involved, please visit https://go.gov.sg/vmcdstories and write to: volunteer_resource@ncss.gov.sg

Digitalisation

Open Innovation Programme

The InfoComm Media Development Authority (IMDA) hosts the Open Innovation Platform. IMDA launches Innovation Calls every few months and each call comprises of a set of challenges from different problem owners in various sectors. Once the call closes, the proposals will go through a structured evaluation process based on the criteria set by the problem owners. Shortlisted finalists will then commence prototype development. The selected solution will be awarded prize monies.

https://www.openinnovation.sg/challenges
https://www.openinnovation.sg/imda

User-Centric Services

Design4Impact

A collaboration between NCSS and MOH Office for Healthcare Transformation (MOHT), Design4Impact (D4I) is an open innovation platform that brings together like-minded, public-spirited stakeholders to address some of the biggest Singapore health and social challenges. The platform started in 2020 and organises design challenges periodically.

To continue facilitating partnerships, capability building and growing a community of activated citizens, the **D4I Innovators' Ecosystem and Community of Practice** launched in May 2023 enables D4I alumni and social innovators to network, offer peer support and gain access to industry players from healthcare, social services, technology, and design sectors.

Information on Design4Impact:
https://go.gov.sg/design4impact

Click to join the Design4Impact Ecosystem:
https://go.gov.sg/ncss-social-innovation

Taking a System Approach

Colabs Series

Since 2017, NVPC has conducted 5 Colabs series to encourage cross-sector collaborations for greater social impact. The series is conducted with NVPC facilitating a process of appreciating complex ecosystems in their entirety, and of developing emergent insights which can lead to collective action.

https://cityofgood.sg/colabs-sg/

Singapore Together Alliances for Action

Since 2020, the Singapore Government has created multiple Singapore Together Alliances for Action (AfAs) to bring together cross-sector stakeholders to collaborate on significant issues impacting Singapore's future. Various AfAs include the Youth Mental Well-being Network to connect those who want to strengthen youth mental well-being and the Alliance for Action on Corporate Purpose (AfA-CP) to develop a National Framework and Blueprint on Corporate Purpose. Refer to link below to find out ways to get involved.

https://www.mccy.gov.sg/about-us/news-and-resources/press-statements/2021/feb/singaporeans-aspirations-to-co-create-a-caring-and-resilient-singapore

📁 Case examples

Systems approach: Systemic interventions to enable the sector

The Community Networks for Seniors (CNS) Initiative

Coordinating and integrating community-based services

The CNS is a partnership between the Agency for Integrated Care (AIC), Ministry of Health, and various community partners, to support seniors better. The CNS focuses on building a network of **coordinated and integrated community-based services,** complementing family-based support and integrating across sectors such as health and social service.

The CNS allows for multiple agencies to work across systems to **align towards common goals**, with CNS planners and coordinators working with other stakeholders to encourage active ageing, befriend seniors and coordinate support for seniors.

Giving.sg

Using data analytics and digitalisation to improve matching of sector resources

NVPC had previously launched Giving.sg, an integrated giving portal to help **match social service needs and resources across the sector.** It has continued to **introduce enhanced functions:**

- Its dashboards function enable charities, corporates and individuals to better **track giving goals and patterns** and adapt their sector resourcing strategies.

- Its enhanced search and save better enable users to f**ind suitable volunteer opportunities.**

- Its wishlist function allows charities to **specify necessary donations-in-kind,** on top of funds to raise.

- Its groups module encourages like-minded individuals to **form interest groups** for more targeted sharing on areas of interest.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Leveraging digitalisation and data for AI-powered response to social needs
United Kingdom: Ieso Digital Health

What is it?

Ieso, one of the largest online therapy providers in Europe, uses technology **to support clinical decisions, for quality control, and to improve efficiency.**

Potential benefits

- **Improve analysis** of how best to serve individuals, families and communities.

- **Tap on big data** that would be difficult to analyse without technology.

- **Serve more** individuals, families and communities, **in more convenient ways**, using technology.

How does it work?

Ieso provides **text-based Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) through a telehealth platform.** It brings together mental health, data and machine learning experts to tap on AI. For example, it **analyses patient transcripts** to understand the success of therapy. It also **collects data on patients' clinical outcomes,** which could **better identify the effectiveness** of various therapeutic approaches and phrases.

Given the need for mental health interventions and CBT's potential in treating mental health, Ieso aims to scale up its therapy by **providing it autonomously.** It will train AI on about 460,000 hours' worth of its therapy records for this purpose. Ieso also uses technology to provide **same-day access to treatment at any time and location**.

Food for thought

- How might we tap on technology and data sources to **increase our ability to sense and respond** to social service needs?

- How might we be aware of and solve the **limitations of current technology** (e.g. privacy concerns)?

Changing the way we work to create effective and future-ready organisations
Singapore: Open Government Products Division, Government Technology Agency of Singapore (GovTech)

What is it?

The Open Government Products (OGP) unit at GovTech has rethought its communication practices, its office design, and how it manages people, **to pivot towards an office of the future** post the COVID-19 pandemic.

Potential benefits

Tap on **leading technology and practices** to ensure a strong and effective organisation and retain talent, in spite of changes in the work environment such as hybrid work.

How does it work?

- Given a hybrid work environment, OGP uses the Discord communication platform for staff meetings, which allows them to **enter ongoing discussions live.** It also shares messages on **multiple platforms** to reach staff effectively.

- It has increased psychological safety and transparent communications for employees by encouraging **anonymous questions** to be answered openly by leadership every Friday; and **sharing key salary information** with all employees.

- OGP has **redesigned its office,** by adding sofas and standing tables for informal chats, and having computers in all meeting rooms to facilitate hybrid meetings.

- OGP **hires managers with technical backgrounds**, so that the managers can better represent their software developers, while the developers can focus more on their work.

- OGP also encourages all employees to work with a major project for the organisation's goals, and a minor project in line with personal passions. This **balances meeting organisational needs with empowering individuals** in their career goals.

Food for thought

- How might we **tap on new technologies and design our offices** to meet organisational goals, amidst changing work environment and employee expectations?

- How might we **ensure effective and transparent communication** in this new era of hybrid work?

- How can we **manage better** to concurrently meet organisational and employees' goals?

Developing supportive communities within the social service sector
United Kingdom: Skills for Care

What is it?

Skills for Care was set up to strategically **develop the England adult social care workforce**. They had worked with trade organisations, charities and the government to **develop a national workforce strategy**. In line with their goal, they also **provide support networks** for social service professionals.

Potential benefits

- Provide **informal support** for individuals facing challenges, to insulate against burnout.
- **Facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration** across the sector.

How does it work?

Skills for Care provides **varied support** for social service professionals.

- **Creating a Facebook group to connect social care managers:** The Facebook group is used by like-minded managers across England to **network, share knowledge and collaborate.**
- **Organising local networks**: Skills for Care also supports **over 145 local networks across England** for managers to share experiences and seek support. Skills for Care provides grants to **fund the costs of running** the networks. It also **links up network Chairs** in regular regional meetings to exchange insights.
- **Podcast series**: Skills for Care has a **podcast series** for managers in social care to share and learn about various best practices at their own time.

Food for thought

- How can we create **infrastructure and opportunities** for social service professionals to seek support and collaborate?
- **What goals would be most valuable** to bring like-minded stakeholders together for?

Reframing wellness programmes from a focus on "self-care" to enabling collective care
Barton, Kahn, Maitlis, Sutcliffe (2022), Harvard Business Review using examples from around the world

What is it?

To ensure workplace wellness, the authors suggest that organisations **emphasise collective care**, rather than more individualised "self-care" programmes. Taking a systems approach to consider collective culture, instead of treating mental health as an individual issue only, could create more effective interventions.

Potential benefits

Adopting a systems approach could create more effective interventions.

How does it work?

- Based on the authors' study of adventure racing teams, the group was motivated to display more empathy and work together better to address issues **when work setbacks were reframed** to distribute strain across the team. This reduced the chances of individual members becoming overwhelmed on their own.

- Based on the authors' study of a design consultancy, employees who were **encouraged to take relational pauses** to share how work was affecting them, were able to connect more honestly for their well-being and to learn from failure.

- Reframing the issue as a collective one, and having such collective care practices can help **better address the social nature of psychological health**, compared to only having individual interventions such as meditation programmes.

Food for thought

- How might we **reframe** situations and facilitate a more collaborative approach to address issues?

- How might we move beyond individualised support programmes for mental health concerns to adopt a **collective care** approach?

Using systems thinking to identify impactful interventions
United Kingdom: In Kind Direct's Human Right to Hygiene Report

What is it?

In Kind Direct (IKD) distributes in-kind donations to charitable organisations to keep people clean, safe and well. It **commissioned a systems map and report** analysing UK's hygiene poverty to further inform its strategy.

Potential benefits

- **Address complex issues** with multiple interrelated causes and systemic impact.

- **Address issues more holistically**, instead of using limited interventions that may worsen the situation.

How does it work?

- The report team **identified key potential leverage points for systemic interventions** on hygiene poverty in the systems map, informed by a literature review, IKD's current data, and 3 workshops with diverse stakeholders including charitable and corporate partners.

- For example, reducing stigma could be one effective leverage point. Stigma associated with poor hygiene often led to shame and poor mental health for persons experiencing poor hygiene. This could cause increased social withdrawal and exacerbate mental health issues in a **continuing feedback loop**, significantly lowering motivation for change. Raising awareness of hygiene poverty would help to reduce stigma.

- The team also identified that agencies should target digital exclusion, as **digital exclusion would lead to reduced access** to available supports for hygiene poverty.

Food for thought

- In what areas might we need to engage in systems thinking to **address the root causes** with more holistic solutions at key leverage points?

- How might we **bring others along** in our systems change journeys?

Annex - References:

Strong Organisation Health

- https://www.msf.gov.sg/what-we-do/odgsw/social-insights/Social-Service-Leadership
- https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/organisational-health-guidebook-for-social-services-(oghss)

Systems Approach

- https://medium.com/disruptive-design/tools-for-systems-thinkers-the-6-fundamental-concepts-of-systems-thinking-379cdac3dc6a
- https://socialworklicensemap.com/social-work-resources/theories-and-practice-models/systems-theory
- https://medium.com/@myroslavazel/feedback-loops-in-system-thinking-7ef06e2ff310
- https://ssir.org/articles/entry/complex_systems_change_starts_with_those_who_use_the_systems

The Community Networks for Seniors (CNS) Initiative

- https://www.aic.sg/caregiving/active-seniors
- https://www.moh.gov.sg/news-highlights/details/integration-of-health-and-social-services-to-support-seniors

Giving.sg

- https://cityofgood.sg/newsroom/new-and-improved-giving-sg-introduces-analytics-to-empower-singaporeans-to-give-better/

Ieso Digital Health

- https://iai.digital/2021/ieso/
- https://www.iesogroup.com/article/us-ai-tech-patent
- https://aiforgood.itu.int/how-can-ai-improve-mental-health-for-100-million-people/
- https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/12/ai-mental-health-cbt-therapy/
- https://techcrunch.com/2021/11/23/uk-based-mental-health-provider-ieso-raises-53m-armed-with-an-unprecedented-dataset/

GovTech

- https://govinsider.asia/intl-en/article/rahul-daswani-ogp-singapore-exclusive-what-itll-take-to-lead-a-public-agency-of-the-future

Skills for Care

- https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/

Reframing wellness programmes

- https://hbr.org/2022/04/stop-framing-wellness-programs-around-self-care

In Kind Direct

- https://www.thinknpc.org/organisations-weve-worked-with/in-kind-direct/
- https://www.inkinddirect.org/reports/human-right-to-hygiene
- https://www.inkinddirect.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Human-Right-to-Hygiene-FINAL-1.pdf
- https://thinknpc.kumu.io/hygiene-poverty-systems-map?token=C2Bw9zK1bLxj3Ubf

Strategic Partnerships & Collaboration

4ST PLAYBOOK

A self-help guide with concrete steps, examples and ideas to explore and achieve desired 4ST outcomes

Updated 13/07/2023

OUTCOMES:

Thrust 3 — **Strategic and sustainable partnerships are fostered between different sectors and stakeholders for greater impact**

Thrust 2 — **SPEs collaborate across the sector and beyond to optimise resources and enhance effectiveness**

Thrust 1 — **The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges**

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Thrust 3 Outcome:

Strategic and sustainable partnerships are fostered between different sectors and stakeholders for greater impact

Thrust 2 Outcome:

SPEs collaborate across the sector and beyond to optimise resources and enhance effectiveness

Thrust 1 Outcome:

The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges

(refer to Strategic Thrust 1 outcome for more details)

✋ Introduction

- At the ecosystem level, collaboration should be fostered across different sectors (e.g., social and health) and stakeholders (ranging from donors, government agencies, volunteer groups, SPEs, etc.) for greater impact.

- At the social purpose entity (SPE) level, to be effective and impactful, SPEs should collaborate across the sector and beyond to optimise resources and enhance their effectiveness.

- Refer to 4ST Thrust 1 on outcome "The ecosystem leverages the assets of individuals, families, and communities to solve social challenges" for more information on ways to involve individuals and families to address social issues.

Guiding questions:

- What complex problems could be solved more effectively and efficiently through partnerships with others?

- Who would be natural partners? What assets and resources could they bring to you? What could you offer them?

- How might we forge new partnerships or deepen existing partnerships? How might we enable these collaborations or partnerships to best succeed?

- How might we fund programmes, as well as set up the necessary structures and processes to share information and resources, to create a collaborative and sustainable ecosystem?

What is an ecosystem?

An ecosystem refers to the broader context in which an entity operates. It is made up of all the relevant players in that space (including from People, Public and Private sectors) and the environmental conditions (e.g., demographics, regulations) that affect, or have the potential to influence, the entity's impact on others.

What is a community?

A group that shares something in common, such as experiences, interests, and values. Communities can be united across geographical or socio-economic boundaries, and are linked by networks.

Why collaborate and partner with each other?

- Better able to address complex social issues holistically, and thus bring about greater benefits to the individuals, families, and communities that we serve

- Support organisations to run more efficiently and effectively (e.g., collaborate to tap on resources one may lack, or to maximise use of existing resources)

How are collaboration and partnerships defined?

- Collaboration occurs when stakeholders pool resources and share power to achieve impact beyond each of their own means. It can mean creating joint goals.

- Collaboration can range in level of integration as outlined below, which should be chosen to fit the purpose of the partnership:

Less Integrated

More Integrated

Stakeholders establishing networks to share information with each other

Case example: More than 20 organisations in Singapore formed the Migrant Worker Group to meet quarterly, share best practices and ideas with each other, and foster greater collaboration to enhance access to justice for Singapore migrant workers.

Stakeholders working together to deliver a specific programme or serve common service users

Case example: UOB partnered SG Enable, Autism Resource Centre, Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore, and SPD to promote inclusive hiring in the private sector.

Stakeholders sharing resources with each other (e.g., spaces, databases) for mutual benefit and serving users across multiple programmes (e.g., through joint case conferences).

Case example: SPEs can be co-located in accessible commercial buildings through the Urban Redevelopment Authority's Community and Sports Facilities Scheme.

This will improve accessibility for service users, help SPEs to share resources and save costs, and will also benefit commercial buildings with additional floor area.

Steps you can take

For all stakeholders

1. Establish the need and the parties to be involved

Establish the problem and the need for collaboration:

- What are the issues that would be better resolved through partnerships and collaboration?
- What is the user experience journey of the individuals facing the issue? Have we uncovered the root cause(s)?

Examine the landscape of players and identify the partners to explore for this collaboration:

- Gain a better understanding of the landscape and identify suitable partners
- Players can be of different types and sizes across the People, Public and Private sectors, and even in adjacent sectors such as health and education:
  - SSAs, social enterprises, ground-up movements and grassroots, volunteer groups, government agencies, funders, corporates, foundations, etc.
- Identify the strengths and assets that each stakeholder can bring to the table
- Identify the suitable type of relationship (e.g., short-term vs long-term) and decide how best to structure it (e.g., what new programmes, memorandums of understanding, teams and legal entities may need to be formed)

2. Invest in time, resources, and effort to make collaboration work

- Ensure there are sufficient resources and time to support the work[1]
- Get internal buy-in and alignment from Board, management and staff, and work on mindset shifts
- Build capability of staff and management:
  - Send staff for training
  - Learn from other best practices in the sector (local and overseas)
- Bring in neutral and trusted third parties to help facilitate the conversation and provide technical expertise, as necessary

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[1] See the segment on "Steps you can take – For giving partners (funders and donors)" below.

3. Commence the partnership journey
- Influence and co-opt other parties to come on board the partnership
- Set clear objectives and goals for the partnership
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities for each party:
  - If the partnership requires staff to support in the other organisation's operations - review internal job architecture to define and establish the roles of the different parties

4. Sustain and review the partnerships
- Invest in time and effort to grow and sustain the relationships
- Evaluate the outcomes:
  - Review the partnership, and adjust the goals, parties involved, roles, and responsibilities, if needed
- Be open to cease a partnership if the objective has been reached or if it does not work out (despite best efforts to make it work)

5. Consider how the partnership can benefit other parties in the ecosystem
- Consider the impact of your partnership at the systems level (e.g., the implications on other parties and connected activities, such as service users, programmes run by another SPE, government policies and the wider community)
- Share knowledge, data, and resources with other stakeholders to strengthen the existing partnership or build future collaborations:
  - Create platforms to share and network amongst sector players
  - Set up structures to facilitate data sharing and information exchange

Tips on how collaboration could meet various stakeholders' needs:

1 **Corporates** might wish to pursue social goals, in line with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals and the rise of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) reporting. SPEs could consider aligning their impact reporting to complement various corporates' reporting needs.

2 **Social purpose entities (SPEs)** serving users with complex needs could explore other support services that best suit the needs of their service users, and work with other SPEs that provide such services to best meet the user's needs.

Collaboration between SPEs and giving partners

To deepen collaboration between SPEs and giving partners (donors and funders), there needs to be a shift from a fundraising to a philanthropic mindset. This means that instead of engaging giving partners (such as donors and funders) in a purely transactional way, SPEs can shift their interactions to being more relational and longer-term in focus.

Steps you can take

- Establish ongoing, two-way platforms for communication and collaboration.

- Encourage giving partners to continue giving by keeping them closely involved in the work. This could be through sharing the impact of their contributions or providing them with opportunities to co-own the work through contributing their views and expertise.

- Establish trust-based relationships that will encourage giving partners to grant organisations flexibility in using funds to invest in underfunded areas.

- Develop appropriate impact evaluation indicators and infrastructure to measure success, demonstrate accountability and build trust.

Collaboration between SPEs and corporates/the wider community (skills-based volunteerism)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the desire for partners of the social service sector to give in other ways, including through contributing skilled services, has increased.

Steps you can take

In terms of skills-based volunteerism, stakeholders could consider the following:

- Align the needs of SPEs and the assets of corporates, through establishing the purpose of the programme and deciding other operational issues.

- Review these partnerships and iterate as they progress, to ensure that they are sustainable for the parties involved.

- Consider contributions from the wider community as well, such as professional associations. For instance, the Singapore Medical Association (SMA) partnered with the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY)'s Singapore Cares Office to grow skills-based volunteerism in the medical sector at a national level. SMA encouraged doctors and medical students to serve the community with their medical skills, and SMA worked with SG Cares Volunteer Centres to curate diverse volunteering opportunities. Such initiatives help to target key gaps in the sector in terms of skills needed and meet needs on a sustained and large-scale basis.

Steps you can take
For giving partners (donors & funders)

Giving partners play a key role in galvanising collaborations in the sector, and they could build up the capabilities of the sector by doing the following:

- Fund and review projects based on the outcomes achieved, rather than on the inputs needed.

- Consider and fund the project based on the time horizon needed before outcomes can be achieved and impact can be reported.

- Fund projects that are run by multiple SPEs coming together to address service users' needs, which may involve multiple grantees in various sectors working together, such as on social-health or social-education issues.

- Grant more pilot funding and have a bigger appetite for failure, so that grantees can have a safe space and resources to explore innovative collaborative models.

- Provide grantees with networks and expertise to collaborate with, learn from, and share knowledge with others.

- Fund projects that develop new frameworks and knowledge to equip the sector for stronger collaboration.

- Fund projects that develop products that can be shared with other sector players for mutual benefit.

- Send staff to develop skills and take up portfolios related to collaboration. E.g., skills in convening the right stakeholders in a room, designing a process that supports meaningful conversations and collaborations, and facilitating conversations between diverse stakeholders.

Resources available

📖 Guides/Tools

To understand how to better collaborate

Collective Impact

The Collective Impact framework is an evidence-based and disciplined form of multi-sector collaboration for complex issues. NCSS has embarked on a Collective Impact movement to equip the sector for effective collaborations leading to systemic impact. In 2021-2022, NCSS organised a Collective Impact Masterclass as a deeper dive into how to implement the approach.

The Masterclass series modules can be found here: https://go.gov.sg/collectiveimpactmasterclass

NCSS is working with SSAs to conduct Collective Impact pilots on various complex issues. To find out more about Collective Impact and how you can be involved, please write to: collectiveimpact@ncss.gov.sg

Colabs Tookit

This toolkit by NVPC is a practical guide for those convening diverse stakeholders to collaborate on complex social issues. It shares NVPC's insights from their experience through their Colabs series, which can be adapted to tackle different social issues.

https://cityofgood.sg/colabs-sg/toolkit/

Community Journey Journals (Developers, Members)

NVPC collated and pooled together resources that aim to nurture and bridge communities together. These insight pieces aim to inspire individuals with fresh perspective while providing examples on how others can nurture their communities.

https://cityofgood.sg/community-matters/community-journey-journals/

For SPEs to increase their capability to leverage volunteers to solve social issues

Volunteer Resource Hub
NCSS' Volunteer Resource Hub houses key volunteer management resources for SSAs, Volunteer Management Practitioners (VMPs) and stakeholders interested in engaging volunteers. It shares:

- Toolkits and guides to help SSAs and VMPs build and strengthen their volunteer management practices and capabilities.
- Research studies and reports analysing volunteer management trends

https://go.gov.sg/ncssvolunteerresourcehub

Volunteer Role Redesign Guide
NCSS's Volunteer Role Redesign Guide 2021 serves to provide a structured approach for organisations to create new volunteer roles or adapt existing ones to better fit the organisation's needs and strengthen volunteer engagement. This guide can help SPEs to review job architecture (i.e., how jobs are structured in an organisation) to establish how volunteers can complement their work, including through tapping on the skills of volunteers.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/volunteer-role-redesign-guide

To better understand existing sector stakeholders

SupportGoWhere
SupportGoWhere, a partnership between GovTech, MSF and NCSS, is an online platform of schemes and services for individuals and families to find the necessary support with ease, ranging from mental health to financial support. Organisations can also use the platform to find which other organisations they could collaborate with to fill gaps or tap on synergies.

https://supportgowhere.life.gov.sg

MSF Directories
Find Social Service Offices, Family Service Centres, and other agencies providing services in the link below.

https://www.msf.gov.sg/dfcs

To enable collaboration in research and evaluation

Volunteer Researcher Matching Service

NCSS provides a service to match SSAs who need assistance with research projects with volunteer researchers from Institutes of Higher Learning and the public sector, who can provide advice on research design, methodology or assistance with data analysis.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research

Sector Evaluation Framework

NCSS' Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF) is an outcome measurement framework that provides a common language for the different stakeholders in the sector to measure programme outcomes and articulate impact. This is achieved by using standardised and validated outcome measures for programmes with similar objectives.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research/sector-evaluation-framework

For corporates to increase their capabilities to support and be involved in the sector

Corporate Volunteerism Guide

NCSS' Corporate Volunteerism Guide 2020 was developed to provide guidance for corporates who are interested in developing and implementing service-based volunteering programmes with their organisation. The guide provides steps on getting ready for their volunteering journey, engaging their corporate staff and measuring success of their volunteering actions.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/CorporateVolunteerismGuide

Mental Health Toolkit for Employers

NCSS launched this toolkit in 2019 to guide employers to hire and support employees with mental health conditions in the workplace.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/detail-page/MentalHealthToolkitforEmployers

Resources for Employers to Pursue Disability-Inclusive Employment

SG Enable features resources for employers pursuing disability-inclusive employment, such as best practices, an app to improve awareness for inclusive employment, and relevant self-assessment tools.

https://www.sgenable.sg/your-first-stop/training-consultancy/enabling-academy/training/employers/resources-for-employers

📋 Training to explore

Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Ignite Everyone's Intelligence
This 1-day workshop by Franklin Covey Singapore is aimed at leaders who need to uncover and access untapped potential and capabilities within their teams.

To register, please go to:
https://forms.zohopublic.com/zohoone1624341499424/form/Registration formforMultipliersHowtheBestLeadersIgn1/formperma/oUTD6zfYUXSlMU rKCYWOAXqunzvxYAYYy7zRtwQQZws

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
This 2-day workshop by Franklin Covey Singapore is aimed at individuals and leaders who wish to drive organisational results through intentional self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, and collaborative relationships.

To register, please go to:
https://forms.zohopublic.com/zohoone1624341499424/form/Registration formforThe7HabitsofHighlyEffectivePeop/formperma/ob6ug76xPSOcqk6 Q64lMeyDpbxAVdLTbqrxTw2XucKo

💵 Funding available

Community Capability Trust (CCT)
The (CCT) is a Charitable Trust set up by MSF and NCSS, to develop stronger SSAs in their organisational health journey.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/community-capability-trust-(cct)

Lam Soon New Horizon Grant
The Majurity Trust has launched an incubation grant in 2022 to support newer non-profits or volunteer-run groups from start-up to maturity. This includes unrestricted funding that will enable grantees to focus on organisational development, and to create space for innovation and creativity. Grantees will also receive support in community building and capacity building (e.g., networks and contacts, expertise, and guidance).

https://www.majurity.sg/funds-and-grants/newhorizon/

👥 Networks of support

Volunteer Management Network

Volunteer Management Network is a series of networking sessions organised by NCSS to provide Volunteer Management Practitioners from SSAs, corporates and public service agencies with opportunities to learn from subject-matter experts, share best practices and ignite collaborations within the social service ecosystem.

Sign up to find out more through the NCSS Volunteer Management Community Mailing List here: https://go.gov.sg/ncssvro-vmcommunity

Social Service Summit

NCSS organises the Social Service Summit annually to gather key stakeholders in the sector to learn from and dialogue with one another.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/social-service-sector-strategic-thrusts-(4st)/social-service-summit

Design4Impact

A collaboration between NCSS and MOH Office for Healthcare Transformation (MOHT), Design4Impact (D4I) is an open innovation platform that brings together like-minded, public-spirited stakeholders to address some of the biggest Singapore health and social challenges. The platform started in 2020 and organises design challenges periodically.

To continue facilitating partnerships, capability building and growing a community of activated citizens, the D4I Innovators' Ecosystem and Community of Practice launched in May 2023 enables D4I alumni and social innovators to network, offer peer support and gain access to industry players from healthcare, social services, technology, and design sectors.

Information on Design4Impact: https://go.gov.sg/design4impact
Click to join the Design4Impact Ecosystem: https://go.gov.sg/ncss-social-innovation

Colabs Series

Since 2017, NVPC has conducted 5 Colabs series to encourage cross-sector collaborations for greater social impact. The series is conducted with NVPC facilitating a process of appreciating complex ecosystems in their entirety, and of developing emergent insights which lead to collective action.

https://cityofgood.sg/colabs-sg/

Singapore Together Alliances for Action

Since 2020, the Singapore Government created multiple Singapore Together Alliances for Action (AfAs) to bring together cross-sector stakeholders to collaborate on significant issues impacting Singapore's future. Various AfAs include the Youth Mental Well-being Network to connect those who want to strengthen youth mental well-being and the Alliance for Action on Corporate Purpose (AfA-CP) to develop a National Framework and Blueprint on Corporate Purpose. Refer to link below to find out ways to get involved.

https://www.mccy.gov.sg/about-us/news-and-resources/press-statements/2021/feb/singaporeans-aspirations-to-co-create-a-caring-and-resilient-singapore

Case examples

Engineering Good

Working with partners and the community to increase digital inclusion

Engineering Good creates a more inclusive society through engaging others to share engineering and technology solutions. Under their Computers Against COVID programme, they take in and refurbish devices donated by the public, and work with close to 200 SPEs to reach those who need these device. They also work with SPEs who serve persons with disabilities to customise assistive technology to meet the needs of service users. In addition, their annual festival, Tech For Good, brings in the community to innovate solutions to address real-life problems faced by persons with disabilities.

Community Link (ComLink) Alliance

Working with multiple agencies at the town level to better support families with children living in rental housing

MSF launched ComLink in April 2019 to provide "Comprehensive, Convenient and Coordinated (3C) support" to improve the lives of families with children living in rental housing and support them to pursue home ownership where possible. This was done through proactive outreach, closer case support, and galvanising the community to offer customised programmes and services to the families.

At each ComLink town, MSF's Social Service Office (SSO) leads a ComLink Alliance, comprising government agencies, corporates, and community partners, to pool resources and steer this effort. When ComLink was first launched in 2019, it was launched at 4 sites to provide greater support to around 1,000 families. Support programmes ranged from reading and tuition classes for kids to employment coaching for adults.

In March 2021, it was announced that MSF would be scaling ComLink nation-wide, to 21 towns over the next two years. The scale-up was expected to benefit 14,000 families with children living in rental housing across Singapore.

📁 Case examples

KK Women's and Children's Hospital and Lien Foundation's DayOne project

Working together to pilot cross-sector initiatives

KK Women's and Children's Hospital and Lien Foundation have co-funded and launched a two-year pilot to provide holistic support to caregivers of children with developmental needs from the time of the child's diagnosis. This includes having a multidisciplinary team comprising medical social workers, psychologists and paediatricians; and redesigning processes to frequently connect with and support caregivers. The programme will be assessed based on data collected, with a view to work with more community partners to scale up.

Ray of Hope

Platform to allow community members to donate directly to meet needs, fundraise or access support

Ray of Hope galvanises the community to donate to a variety of needs. They encourage the community to do so by absorbing transaction costs such that 100% of donations through their website go to service users, and by verifying service users and their needs. They also work with their networks including Family Service Centres, to refer service users who need crowdfunding support. Beyond funding support, they support service users in other ways, such as providing them assistance to be employment ready.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Large-scale collaboration to achieve greater impact at systems level
Australia: Industry Employment Initiative (IEI)

What is it?

Various Australian organisations collaborate to holistically address long-term unemployment in Australia amongst those aged 18-24 years on a large scale.

Potential benefits

Meet the needs of job seekers, companies seeking employees, government and social SPEs who want to help jobseekers become more financially independent.

How does it work?

The Industry Employment Initiative (IEI) engages companies to design employment pathways that lead to various jobs. IEI then trains jobseekers looking for jobs in hospitality, retail, and early childhood learning industries accordingly.

Various organisations bring different strengths to this partnership, with a government initiative Jobs Victoria funding the programme, Jesuit Social Services providing training and wrap-around support, and large employment partners providing feedback and hiring. Social Ventures Australia had served as an intermediary to fundraise, network with relevant partners, and increase evaluation capacity to improve the programme.

IEI encourages companies to use data on the outcomes of the programme to further develop companies' internal policies and the IEI model.

Food for thought

How might collaboration help organisations to broker and match assets and needs on a large scale to sustainably solve complex social issues? How might we facilitate more of such collaborations to bring together various assets to solve complex social issues?

Intermediaries can help to negotiate and manage skills-based volunteerism partnerships between corporates and SPEs
United States: Common Impact

What is it?

Common Impact helps to align business and social purpose by linking up and managing partnerships between corporates and SPEs.

Potential benefits

Able to provide a neutral third-party perspective and dedicated resources to manage partnerships, including helping to find suitable partners, scope projects, and manage relationships and project adjustments needed along the way.

How does it work?

Common Impact works to understand the goals of stakeholders involved and link them up to deliver each party's goals.

For example, Common Impact worked to identify technology projects that would make SPEs more efficient. At the same time, corporates could use their existing skills on these projects, while further developing the skills, network, and experience of the corporate employees.

Food for thought

How might intermediaries help to match and manage skills-based volunteerism partnerships across the sector? Who might play the role of such intermediaries?

Pursue collaborative philanthropy to encourage funders to resource addressing complex issues together
United States: The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation's Blue Meridian Partners

What is it?

Blue Meridian Partners ("Blue Meridian") aggregates capital and directs it towards advancing economic mobility among Americans who need such help.

Potential benefits

- Allow funders to share the costs of funding solutions, and the risks and successes of making such investments.

- Provide funds to scale up impactful solutions and ensure that such solutions are funded sustainably over the long-term.

How does it work?

- The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation incubated and launched Blue Meridian in 2016, leveraging off the Foundation's experience in and approach to performance-based investing.

- Blue Meridian finds solutions that show potential for impact, and sources funders to scale up such solutions through long-term investments. Blue Meridian also holds SPEs accountable for such investments through measuring their performance.

- Blue Meridian follows rigorous sourcing against selection criteria, does due diligence on the organisations they seek to fund, invests initial 1 to 2-year grants to help organisations prepare to scale, gives longer term investments of 10-12 years (approved in 2-5-year phases on meeting performance milestones), and pairs each grantee with a resource person to provide strategic counsel to the CEO and Board.

- Blue Meridian shares all its research on sourcing and due diligence with funding partners. It also shares with funding partners regular reports on investees' performance and opportunities for deeper engagement.

- As of 2022, Blue Meridian Partners garnered a capital base of over US$3 billion.

Food for thought

How might trust and accountability be built to foster collaborations amongst funders of such scale that can bring about greater impact?

Find out more: https://www.emcf.org/our-strategies/blue-meridian-partners/

Annex - References:

Facilitating various types of collaboration & examples

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- https://www.bridgespan.org/bridgespan/Images/articles/making-sense-of-nonprofit-collaborations/MakingSenseOfNonprofitCollaborations_1.pdf
- https://cityofgood.sg/colabs-sg/toolkit/
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- https://www.ura.gov.sg/Corporate/Guidelines/Circulars/dc20-01

Collaboration between SPEs and giving partners

- https://www.un.org/en/sustainable-development-goals
- https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/
- https://www.pwc.com/sk/en/environmental-social-and-corporate-governance-esg/esg-reporting.html
- https://www.rogare.net/relationship-fundraising
- https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/donor-relationship-management
- https://www.thinknpc.org/blog/rethinking-grant-making/
- https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/performance-measurement-and-improvement

Collaboration between SPEs and corporates/the wider community (skills-based volunteerism)

- https://www.straitstimes.com/business/the-rise-of-virtual-and-skills-based-volunteering-amid-pandemic
- https://www.mccy.gov.sg/about-us/news-and-resources/press-statements/2021/aug/skills-based-volunteerism-partnerships-singapore-medical-association/
- https://ssir.org/articles/entry/the_promise_of_skills_based_volunteering

Engineering Good

- https://engineeringgood.org/digital-inclusion/cac/
- https://engineeringgood.org/assistive-tech/bespoke/
- https://engineeringgood.org/assistive-tech/t4g-home/

ComLink Alliance

- https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/article/Community-Link-Expanded-To-Reach-21-Towns-And-14000-Families-Over-Next-Two-Years

KK Women's and Children's Hospital and Lien Foundation's DayOne project
- https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/parenting-education/more-mental-health-support-for-caregivers-of-children-with-developmental-needs

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- https://rayofhope.sg/about-us

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- https://www.socialventures.com.au/work/iei/

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- https://commonimpact.org/success-stories/skills-based-volunteering-in-action-team-consulting/

The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
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- https://www.forbes.com/sites/luisakroll/2016/12/07/billionaires-sergey-brin-david-tepper-join-steve-ballmer-stanley-druckenmiller-in-850-million-philanthropic-bet-to-help-nations-kids/?sh=3636b2d553e4
- https://www.bluemeridian.org/our-partners/
- https://www.bluemeridian.org/our-approach/

Sustainable Resourcing

4ST PLAYBOOK

A self-help guide with concrete steps, examples and ideas to explore and achieve desired 4ST outcomes
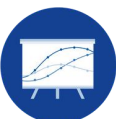
Updated 13/07/2023

OUTCOMES:

Thrust 2 — **SPEs are forward thinking and practise sustainable resourcing**

Thrust 3 — **Improved diversity and sustainability of resources in the sector**

Thrust 2 Outcome:

SPEs are forward thinking and practise sustainable resourcing

Thrust 3 Outcome:

Improved diversity and sustainability of resources in the sector
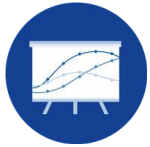
✋ Introduction

What is sustainable resourcing?

A resource-sustainable organisation, ecosystem, or sector, can consistently support and deliver its mission, making the most of the changing environments. In the social or non-profit context, it refers to the ability to fulfil a mission over the long-term.

The objective of sustainable resourcing is to reduce exposure to risk while increasing the ability to pursue strategic goals. This involves approaches that will best enable one to achieve a mission, effective planning and management, and flexibility. Besides drawing upon different ecosystems and their parts, it is also imperative to make decisions about resourcing with longer-term implications in mind, as well as to consider the importance of ethics, organisational values, and culture.

Sustainable resourcing strategies therefore examine all ways in which resources are acquired and consider how resources are used and managed optimally. The aim is for resources to work harder, for more resources to be drawn in, and for resources to get to where they are most needed, thus creating the most impact.

Guiding questions

For social purpose entities (SPEs)

In what ways are you well-equipped with financial management skills and knowledge to develop sustainable resourcing strategies?

To what extent are you looking for new ways to unlock resources to ensure financial sustainability and maximising the existing resources that you have?

To what degree are you able to measure and articulate the impact of your initiatives to funders and donors?

How are you forming 3P collaborations to augment resources?

How are you charting out volunteer strategies mapped to your strategic plans, to ensure sufficient manpower to meet growing and emerging needs?

For partners (e.g., giving partners such as donors[1] and funders , corporates) in the ecosystem

How might we work better as an ecosystem to achieve better outcomes and pursue strategic goals?

How might we ensure longevity and impact of the funding and resources used? How might we direct resources to areas of greatest need?

How might we move beyond the traditional relationships between giving partners, volunteers and SPEs, to form more strategic long-term partnerships?

[1] Donors are a subset of funders. Donors include corporates, foundations, high-net worth individuals, etc. Funders can include government entities.

Why is sustainable resourcing important?

Resilience
By exploring sustainable resourcing (e.g., diversify funding streams), SPEs are able to deliver consistent and high-quality services to service users, despite changes to external environment, future crises and/or disruptions.

Collaboration
By leveraging the skills, resources, expertise and different perspectives across the People, Public and Private sectors, issues can be better tackled together.

Attract funding
With an increased emphasis on social impact by donors and funders, SPEs that can measure and articulate impact aligned with funders' intent will build strong and lasting bonds with funders.

These partnerships will then promote stronger mutual understanding of needs, provide greater confidence to the funders that their funding is being used appropriately, and lead to the sharing of relevant monetary and non-monetary resources for the long term.

How can SPEs better manage their resources to create impactful services?

Social Programme Continuum/ Life Cycle

- Experimentation/ Innovation
- Initial Set Up
- Maintenance
- Expansion & Scaling
- Consolidation
- Closure & Transition

Questions to ask at various stages of the programme cycle:

- What type of funding model is suited for the programme, or at each stage of the programme?
- What type of corporate/funder profile may be suited to each type of programme on the continuum?
- Which programmes are "popular causes" for corporates or funders? How might we help donors and funders understand the importance of "less popular causes"?
- What synergy does it have with corporates' core business, e.g., sector, capability, skills, business networks, customers/stakeholders?
- How do we measure impact?

How can partners in the ecosystem work with SPEs?

To optimise resources and generate more social impact, we need to collaborate within and beyond the sector. Donors and funders should do social good and consider how they can play a part in resourcing the sector sustainably.

Importance of doing social good through CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) or being ESG -focused (Environmental, Social and Governance) to create value in the organisation:

> " To prosper over time, every company must not only deliver financial performance, but also show how it makes a positive contribution to society.
>
> - Laurence D. Fink
>   (Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of BlackRock) "

- There is a heightened social, governmental, and consumer attention on the broader impact of corporates. Investors and executives have also realised that a strong ESG proposition can safeguard a company's long-term success.

- There is a shift away from focusing purely on shareholder profit as the sole purpose of corporates to that of having a strong corporate purpose as well.

- A strong culture that empowers employees to do social good can help to boost employee retention, morale, and productivity. This creates a workplace that is conducive to quality work.

Steps you can take

For social purpose entities (SPEs)
Exploring: Starting out in this area

Organisational level practices

- Understand the value of corporate functions, ensure such functions are properly accounted for, and work with funders to attribute costs transparently.

- Achieve alignment and commitment between Board and Senior Management in pursuing resource sustainability.

- Have strong financial processes, where timely information is routinely used to help Board and Management make sound decisions and plan ahead.

- Align procurement processes with organisational goals.

- Ensure transparent fund-raising practices to preserve organisation's integrity and ethical standards.

- Evaluate programmes regularly to determine if they are impactful, viable, and sustainable.

When working with donors and funders

- Embed systematic evaluation of programmes and articulate their impact.

- Communicate to donors and funders on the need to support overheads as well as capability and capacity building initiatives.

- Tap on volunteers and capabilities of strategic partners to augment fundraising, communications, and marketing efforts.

Steps you can take

For social purpose entities (SPEs)
Progressing: Seeking to grow in this area

Organisational level practices

- Identify the SPE's strengths, weaknesses, and competitive advantages in developing a fundraising strategy.

- Put in place a long-term strategy plan (3, 5, 10 years) and build up sufficient reserves to cushion the organisation through slow periods/cash flow issues.

- Send staff for training or learning to build up their financial management, fundraising, communications and marketing, and entrepreneurial capabilities.

- Enhance research and evaluation capability to enable better identification and analyses of needs.

- Diversify sources of income through avenues such as programme fees, investment, fundraising, sale of goods and services.

- Optimise use of existing resources through strategic collaboration with other SPEs e.g., through demand aggregation, co-sharing of spaces, provision of shared services, pooling together of volunteers.

When working with donors and funders

- Develop funding proposals/pitches with clear articulation of goals and measurement.

- Strengthen capability to articulate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) goals of the organisation.

- Foster better understanding of donors and their requirements through a more targeted donor engagement strategy and establish an effective donor management system.

- Engage new donor pools (high-net-worth, legacy giving, family offices) to grow the funding pie.

- Explore new and innovative ways of fundraising (e.g., leveraging social media to fundraise).

- Review internal job architecture to define roles that could be best supported by donors.

Steps you can take

For social purpose entities (SPEs)
Excelling: Experienced and looking to strengthen in this area

Organisational level practices

- Dedicate resources to support social innovations to improve service delivery and operational processes.

- Explore and learn new resourcing tools and instruments from other stakeholders (locally and overseas).

- Strategise beyond funding cycles and plan funding pipeline in advance as new services or programmes take time to develop.

- Experiment and translate good ideas into concrete actions. Scale solutions that work, and find resources to sustain good practices.

When working with donors and funders

- Engage funders in the programme development, so that a common understanding on the outcomes is established across all parties at the start.

- Explore new forms of financial instruments with funders, that best meet both parties' needs to unlock/maximise resources for the sector.

- Maintain strong partnerships with donors to leverage both monetary and non-monetary resources like skills, expertise, technological tools, etc. that they can offer.

👣 Steps you can take

For giving partners (e.g., donors and funders)

> **Donors & Funders**) Corporates, Individuals, Philanthropists, Government bodies
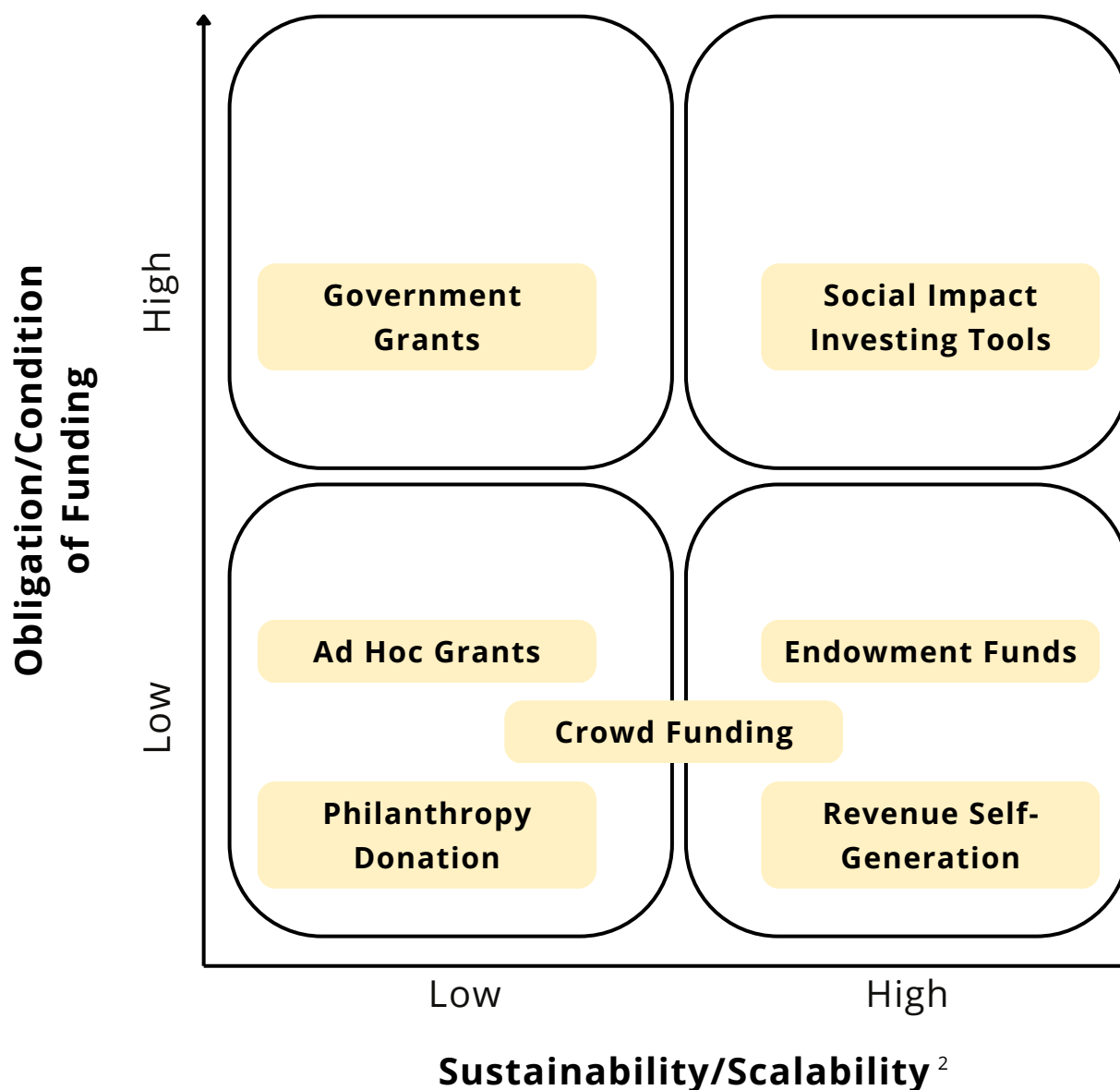
Monetary resources

- Look beyond silo-ed programme funding to invest in capability building. This helps to stretch the impact of each dollar as building stronger SPEs will lead to expansion and strengthening of service delivery in the longer run. This will ultimately benefit more service users with greater impact.

- Fund for the longer-term as the assurance will help SPEs practise resource planning for the long haul. This will lead to greater efficiencies, e.g., buying a piece of equipment for a 5-year programme vs renting it year by year. Also, outcomes of the programmes may only be observable after a period of time.

- Explore new financial instruments to unlock/maximise resources for the sector.

- Weave a giving mechanism into business models to increase opportunities for consumption-based giving at various touchpoints, e.g., providing donations on subscription-based services, donating full or partial proceeds from sales, converting loyalty points to cash donations, enabling giving within point-of-sale system.

- Create new/flexible funding pathways to resource services in a way best tailored to the needs.

- Pool together resources with other funders to maximise the impact that could be created with more resources.

- Fund SPEs based on intended outcomes, rather than just the requested line item. E.g., If SPE requests funding for an IT system, consider the outcomes derived from the system such as reduction in manpower cost or increase in productivity, rather than just the cost of the system.

Non-monetary resources

- Through volunteerism such as mentorship and board leadership, donors can form closer relationships with SPEs and scale the impact of their funding and ensure that their funding will be effectively and impactfully utilised.

- Participate in service and skills-based volunteerism to augment manpower resources for the SPE to strengthen service delivery and build capabilities e.g., technology.

- Through a hub and spoke model, associations and membership bodies can play a multiplier role by reaching out to their network and membership based on social causes.

- Share data and participate in cross-learning platforms to maximise impact through joint knowledge sharing.

- Provide spaces for co-location of non-profit community providers that could spur collaboration.

Financial instruments that stakeholders can explore together

It is important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all model and SPEs should evaluate which model best fits their organisation's mission, programmes, and funders' requirements.

Obligation/Condition of Funding

High

| Government Grants | Social Impact Investing Tools |

Low

| Ad Hoc Grants | Endowment Funds |

Crowd Funding

| Philanthropy Donation | Revenue Self-Generation |

Low — High

Sustainability/Scalability [2]

[2] Base Source: Singtel Future Makers: Thinking Outside the Box

Financial instruments

Ad Hoc Grants, Philanthropy Donations and Crowd Funding
Traditional funding methods which include:

- Government grants
- Donations from corporates, foundations, and individuals through fundraising events, mass appeals etc.

These methods may have lower financial viability as they tend to be one-off or for a limited period. It is also subject to changes in donor preferences.

With finite funding from Government grants, SPEs should continue/explore fundraising and build a strong pool of donors. In a fast-changing environment, SPEs should constantly be on the lookout for innovative fundraising methods, e.g., digital fundraising. To ensure sufficient, sustainable, diverse funding to meet changing and increasing needs, SPEs could explore the various financial instruments listed below.

Endowment Fund

Principle fund pooled for investment and subsequent investment income is used for purposes such as operations, with the original principle untouched. Endowment funds are professionally managed, as robust governance is critical for sustainability.

As the original principle is untouched, Endowment Funds are mainly recommended for SPEs who have significant savings.

Social Impact Investing Tools

Social Impact Investing enables SPEs to acquire funding from the capital market. Social programmes are packaged as investments and both social and financial returns are expected by the capital investors.

Examples include:

Social Impact Bond: SIB shares risk between the investors and government by linking bond repayments to the programme's achievements of intended social outcomes. This gives capital investors an opportunity to support social projects while earning a profit. SIBs are still in the early stages of adoption in Singapore.

Social Impact Guarantee: An SIG functions similarly to a money back guarantee – it allows a donor to ensure that their donation achieves the social impact it was meant to achieve, or the donation is returned.

Guide to determine if you are ready to create a Social Impact Bond/Guarantee:
- The outcomes are specific and measurable.
- There is strong evidence that the intervention will be successful.
- The programme can be scaled to justify the initial costs to set up the Bond.
- The risks and rewards are transparent and appropriate for each stakeholder.
- There are interested investors who are willing to pay for results.

Blended Finance: Traditional grantors and profit-seeking capital market members collaborate in financing SPEs and their programmes. SPEs can take a mixture of grant and capital funding to fund their programme. The revenue generated can then be used to pay back the capital market funding whichenables grantors to support more SPEs with the same budget. Blended Finance requires SPEs to have a revenue model.

Financial instruments

Revenue Self-Generation

Generate income through enterprising activities. The business entities should leverage the assets of service users, and/or be linked to the agencies' services or modus operandi.

Find out more about the various legal aspects of setting up social enterprises at: https://www.raise.sg/component/raise/resource/resource/16-legalese-a-legal-toolkitfor-community-organisations.html

SPES must identify and be clear of the following two objectives when looking to set up a social enterprise:

1. Achieve social outcomes;
2. Ensure financial return.

SPEs can operate in some of the following outcome areas:

No.	Outcome Areas	Description
1.	Provision of employment opportunities	Empowering the underprivileged to be independent, self-sufficient and financially sustainable.
2.	Provision of education	Providing access to academic resources, educational support and toolkits to enhance learning capabilities.
3.	Provision of skill development	Providing training and mentorship to enhance individuals' self-development, leadership and life skills.
4.	Provision of basic human needs	Providing universal access to housing, water, food, transportation, and sanitation to increase the quality of life for disadvantaged communities.
5.	Provision of economic tools and services	Enhancing access to finance, crowdfunding and e-commerce platforms
6.	Provision of healthcare/ social care products and services	Providing access to quality healthcare through products and services for disease prevention and mitigation.
7.	Provision of products and services to improve mental health well-being	Providing products and services to holistically enhance the well-being of individuals and to address social exclusion.
8.	Capacity building for organisations in the social sector	Providing social service agencies and social enterprises with technology, skills, knowledge, and training to enhance internal organisational capabilities.

More resources on this aspect can be found on raiSE's websites:

- https://www.raise.sg/component/raise/resource/resource/16-legalese-a-legal-toolkit-for-community-organisations.html
- https://www.raise.sg/component/raise/resource/resource/51-the-state-of-socialenterprise-in-singapore.html

Resources available

For social purpose entities (SPEs):

Guides/Tools

Sector Evaluation Framework

NCSS' Sector Evaluation Framework (SEF) is an outcome measurement framework that provides a common language for the different stakeholders in the sector to measure programme outcomes and articulate impact. This is achieved by using standardised and validated outcome measures for programmes with similar objectives.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-work/translational-social-research/sector-evaluation-framework

Organisational Health Framework for Social Services (OHFSS)

NCSS and MSF have, with the help of KPMG and 108 Growth Partners, designed the Organisational Health Framework for Social Services (OHFSS), which comprises seven domains: Strategy & Leadership, Governance, People, Finances, Digitalisation, Communications & Partnerships, and User-Centric Services. The OHFSS will enable SSAs to better understand their current state of organisational health, in terms of areas of strength and development across the seven key domains.

The domain on Finances will be useful for SPEs looking to strengthen their organisation's performance in Funding Sustainability, Financial Management, and Process Readiness. The Guidebook provides considerations to strengthen finances through effective utilisation of internal and external resources, establishing an effective Donor Management System and robust financial planning and management.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/capability-building

🗣️ Training to explore

Budgeting for Charities
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFIN5450

Making $ense I: An Introduction to Fund Raising
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFRE5103

Making $ense II: Fund-Raising Strategy Development
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFRE5766

Charities Accounting Standard and Its Application
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFIN5652

Internal Controls (I): An Introduction to Its Guidelines and Applications
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFIN5466

Internal Controls (II): Implementing Internal Controls for Revenue to Receivable Process, including Fund-raising
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFIN5629

Internal Controls (III): Implementing Internal Controls for Procurement to Payment Process
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFIN5630

Internal Controls (IV): General Accounting, Fixed Assets, Inventory and Human Resource Management
Visit SSI for more info at
https://iltms.ssi.gov.sg/registration/Schedule?coursecode=NFIN5468

The Governance for Outstanding Organisation Directors (SGOOD)'s modules on Financial Management and Accountability (SGD6); and Fundraising, Advocacy and Outreach (SGD7)
Visit Singapore Institute of Directors for more info at
https://www.sid.org.sg/Web/Professional_Development/Courses/Essentials/SGOOD_Essentials.aspx

Funding available

Community Capability Trust (CCT)
The CCT is a Charitable Trust set up by MSF and NCSS and is dedicated to developing stronger SSAs. It will build upon existing efforts to further support SSAs to advance and improve their capabilities and capacities holistically, to make use of resources more sustainably and deliver better service outcomes.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/community-capability-trust-(cct)

VentureForGood Grant
Funding scheme under raiSE to support social enterprises in various stages of their business. New and existing social enterprises who are starting up or expanding their operations can apply for up to $300,000 in grants.

https://www.raise.sg/ventureforgood.html

Programmes to participate in

Social Enterprise Development Fundamentals
RaiSE holds a 2-day introductory session to help aspiring and early-stage social entrepreneurs gain an understanding and practical know-how in developing their social enterprises. Participants will go through the process of Design Thinking to experience social innovation, build a social enterprise model and learn to measure and brand impact.

https://www.raise.sg/social-enterprise-development-fundamentals.html

REIMAGINE Programme
A 6-month programme designed by raiSE for SSAs to develop their social enterprise initiatives without the need to spin off a separate business entity. It is also for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to incorporate social impact strategically into their business and develop products and services to meet social needs. Participating organisations will receive seed funding of $30,000 to pilot their social enterprise initiatives and to validate their business and social impact.

https://www.raise.sg/reimagine.html

Sustainable Impact Accelerator
A collaboration between Quest Ventures and raiSE to support high potential social enterprises to scale social impact through mentorship, funding, masterclasses and networking.

https://www.questventures.com/businesses/accelerate/ sustainable-impact-accelerator/

Steps you can take

For giving partners in the ecosystem

Initiatives to support

Change for Charity Initiative

The Change for Charity initiative is launched by Community Chest to encourage Singaporeans to give through spontaneous acts. Businesses can weave giving mechanisms into their business models through the following ways:

- Subscription-based giving: Providing donation options on subscription-based services.
- Donating full/partial proceeds: Donating a percentage of revenue from sales of products or services.
- Redemption of rewards: Facilitating conversion of loyalty points or rewards into cash donations.
- Giving during payment checkout: Providing a channel/platform for small and spontaneous acts of giving to be made by individuals at the point of purchase through a round-up mechanism, or by providing the option to donate.

https://www.comchest.gov.sg/brand/change-for-charity

Community Capability Trust

The CCT is a Charitable Trust set up by MSF and NCSS and is dedicated to developing stronger SSAs. Donors are encouraged to give towards the CCT to support SSAs in their capability-building efforts.

https://www.comchest.gov.sg/brand/community-capability-trust

Possible conveners

Community Chest

Community Chest supports about 100 SSAs in Singapore, allowing them to focus on caring for the disadvantaged through over 200 critical services. The Community Chest engages the community through fundraising and volunteering so that social service users are empowered to lead a life of dignity.

https://www.comchest.gov.sg/

President's Challenge

President's Challenge represents the coming together of people from all walks of life to help the less fortunate. Through President's Challenge, corporates can donate, volunteer and/or empower lives through inclusive employment. In 2018, the Empowering for Life Fund (ELF) commenced to support vulnerable groups through skills upgrading, capacity-building, and employment.

https://www.presidentschallenge.gov.sg/

Giving.Sg

Giving.sg is a one-stop national giving platform to donate, volunteer and fundraise for over 600 registered charities in Singapore.

https://www.giving.sg

Networks of support

Company of Good

NVPC Company of Good connects organisations to do good strategically, sustainably and impactfully. Through its initiatives, like-minded organisations can learn, network and collaborate for good. Donors can understand their giving profile, explore resources and attend events by being a Company of Good.

https://www.companyofgood.sg

Volunteer Management Network

Volunteer Management Network is a series of networking sessions organised by NCSS to provide Volunteer Management Practitioners (VMPs) from SSAs, corporates and public service agencies with opportunities to learn from subject-matter experts, share best practices and ignite collaborations within the social service ecosystem.
Sign up to find out more through the NCSS Volunteer Management Community Mailing List: https://go.gov.sg/ncssvro-vmcommunity

📁 Case examples

Use of innovative financial instruments

Social Impact Guarantee (SIG) by YMCA

Donors can support three enhancements to the YMCA's youth intervention programme, Project Bridge Vocational and Soft Skills Programme (VaSSP) which reintegrates youths-at-risk into society though education or employment.

Benefits to Project
- Encourages alignment around ambitious and rigorous outcomes targets
- Enables providers to try new innovations
- Boosts charity's accountability and rigorous outcome-focused practices
- Guarantees that donor funding will have an impact

Benefits to Ecosystem
- Crowds-in new types of donors
- Shifts ecosystem towards outcomes instead of output focused
- Encourages collaboration across the People, Public and Private sectors in making positive social impact

Social Impact Bond (SIB) pilot using a Pay for Success model

Issues on improving mental health and wellbeing has been brought to the fore as a result of COVID-19. With more social enterprises developing solutions in this space, raiSE launched a mental health SIB of $0.5 million.

- This was supported by Tote Board, Johnson & Johnson and another venture philanthropic fund.
- raiSE is now working on its second SIB on Ageing and will be putting up a call for proposals.

Maybank Momentum Grant

Maybank Momentum Grant helps small charities tide through the medium-term by providing an interest-free recyclable grant equivalent to 4 months of operating expenditure capped at $150k.

By recycling the grant, it enables The Majurity Trust to channel support to more charities in need, multiplying the impact of the fund. Besides capital support, it will also provide initial capability building for charities to kickstart their transformation efforts.

📁 Case examples

Forging strong and effective partnership between SSAs and corporates

JP Morgan and New Hope Community Services

Through skills-based volunteerism, JP Morgan and New Hope Community Services (NHCS) were able to partner at a strategic level. JP Morgan not only provided tech expertise to NHCS by working on their organisation digital roadmap, they also provided IT hardware resources for distribution to the service users.

With the partnership, NHCS was able to ride on JP Morgan's resources to enhance its service delivery to service users, while having a more meaningful and sustained engagement with their stakeholders.

Changi Foundation and Metta School

Changi Foundation complemented Metta School's social competency learning programme by providing a safe, supportive, and authentic learning environment within the airport. With retail and service stores, F&B outlets, supermarkets, food courts, clinics and banks within Changi Airport, students were able to master different skills in one single location. Students developed daily living skills such as buying groceries or seeking medical attention.

Making giving a part of business functions

Procter & Gamble (P&G) Pro Bono School

P&G started the P&G Pro Bono School in June 2016 as a key pillar of the P&G APAC Beyond Borders: Pro Bono School Program. The company endeavoured to bring solutions to problems faced by NGOs by applying frameworks and expertise P&G employees utilise daily.

Since 2016, P&G's 9 Pro Bono Schools reached out to over 100 Singapore-based non-profits and social enterprises with close to 100 P&G volunteers being involved in the programme.

McDonald's Singapore

Customers at McDonald's Singapore are given the option to round up their bill via the self-order kiosks or donate via the donation boxes, where the money raised goes to Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC). McDonald's Singapore also donates 5 cents from the sale of every Happy Meal™ to RMHC Singapore. Every year, McDonald's raises over S$400,000 for RMHC.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Creation of endowment funds
Singapore Universities: NUS, NTU, SUTD, SMU, SIT & SUSS

What is it?
Endowment funds are invested by donors for certain charitable purposes. Endowment funds consist of cash, equities, bonds, and other types of securities that can generate investment income. Endowment funds are commonly seen in universities, churches, and hospitals.

Potential benefits
Through large initial fund size, high investment returns can be generated which can be used to finance the operating cost of universities.

With a separate stream of income, universities can embark on their own programmes and activities without always depending on the Government. The endowment income can be used to pay for expenditure in delivering subsidised education, provide bursaries and scholarships, fund research projects and support students' overseas internships and other programmes that enrich their learning experience.

How does it work?
Typically, the principal value of an endowment fund is kept intact, while the investment income can be used for certain purposes. The donors often restrict the purposes an endowment fund can be used for. For example, a donor may provide capital to a fund with an intent to save animals exclusively.

Autonomous Universities in Singapore raise donations to build up their endowment funds, which generate a steady stream of investment income to supplement annual Government funding, student fees, and various grants to support university expenditures. The income from the endowment fund can then be used to pay for operating expenditure of the universities.

As the principal value cannot be utilised and will be locked up in perpetuity, SPEs will need to consider having sufficient capital in hand before they look into creating endowment funds.

Food for thought
As endowment funds are typically in large amounts, how might we work with among SPEs and/or with donors to pool together sufficient monetary resources to co-own an endowment fund?

Crowd funding through innovative means
Instagram Reels

What is it?
Through the 'reels' function on Instagram, individuals can fundraise or donate to over 1.5 million NGOs.

How does it work?
When posting a 'reel' on Instagram, individuals can choose to add a NGO that they want to fundraise for to their post. Their followers will then be able to donate to the cause.

Processing fees are covered by Meta, thus all donations raised will go straight to the NGOs.

Potential benefits
This will make donations simpler and more accessible. As Instagram is a popular platform, individuals can access this tool without the need to download any other applications.

Food for thought
How might we leverage social media and other online tools to raise funds for our causes, while ensuring that transactions made are secure?

Comprehensive platform to accelerate the scale of impact investing
USA: Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN)

What is it?
GIIN is an investment network that seeks to accelerate the industry's development through focused leadership and collective action through the following:

- Facilitate knowledge exchange
- Highlight innovative investment approaches
- Build the evidence base for the industry
- Produce valuable tools and resources

How does it work?
GIIN provides the following to investors:

- Industry networks and events
- Tools and resources for Impact Measurement and Management
- Training Programmes
- Industry research, market data and publications
- Market leadership initiatives

Food for thought
How might we leverage the resources found on such global platforms to scale impact investing in Singapore?

Potential benefits
Reduces barriers to impact investment so more investors can allocate capital to fund solutions.

Find out more:
- Instagram Reels: https://www.xda-developers.com/fundraise-through-instagram-reels/
- Global Impact Investing Network: https://thegiin.org/

Annex - References:

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) & ESG-focused (Environmental, Social and Governance)

- https://cnaluxury.channelnewsasia.com/people/csr-in-singapore-177771
- https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2021/09/23/three-reasons-why-csr-and-esg-matter-to-businesses/?sh=1a0c730a39b9

Financial Instruments

- https://thepalladiumgroup.com/news/When-is-the-Right-Time-to-Use-a-Social-Impact-Bond

Social Impact Guarantee by YMCA

- https://www.ymca.org.sg/charity-offers-money-back-guarantee-for-youth-intervention-programme/
- https://trisector.org/our-project/singapore-social-impact-guarantee-enhancing-youth-support-programme/

Social Impact Bond

- https://www.raise.sg/ar2020/ceos-message.html

Maybank Momentum Grant

- https://www.majurity.sg/funds-and-grants/momentum/

Changi Foundation and Metta School

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Procter & Gamble (P&G) Pro Bono School

- https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/companies-markets/company-of-good/pg-integrating-giving-into-business-functions
- https://empact.sg/case_study/pg-pro-bono-school/

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- https://rmhc.sg/relationship-with-mcdonalds/

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- https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/knowledge/trading-investing/endowment-fund/
- https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/parliamentary-replies/20190115-university-endowment-funds/
- https://www.moe.gov.sg/news/parliamentary-replies/20190903-autonomous-universities-endowment-fund

Instagram Reels

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Global Impact Investment Network (GINN)

- https://thegiin.org/

Forward Planning

4ST PLAYBOOK

A self-help guide with concrete steps, examples and ideas to explore and achieve desired 4ST outcomes

Updated 13/07/2023

OUTCOMES:

Thrust 2 — **SPEs are forward thinking and practise sustainable resourcing**

Thrust 4 — **The social service sector is well-positioned for the future**

Thrust 2 Outcome:

SPEs are forward thinking and practise sustainable resourcing

Thrust 4 Outcome:

The social service sector is well-positioned for the future

✋ Introduction

Guiding questions

- To what extent are you prepared for the future? To what extent are you prepared for changes in the short, medium, and long term?

- To what extent do you have the capabilities, resources, and infrastructure to facilitate strategy planning in your organisation?

- How might megatrends such as technological advances, demographic shifts and economic factors affect the social service sector and your organisation?

- What actions do you need to take to minimise the threats/risks? What are some arising opportunities that you can leverage? To what extent would your existing "competitive advantage" remain strong?

- What organisational and sector-wide contingencies are in place in the event of any large-scale disruptions?

> "Rethinking is a skill set, but it's also a mindset. We already have many of the mental tools we need. We just have to remember to get them out of the shed and remove the rust.
>
> - Adam Grant (Author of Think Again)

What does it mean to be well-positioned for the future?

To be well-positioned for the future, we need to continuously learn and adapt to foreseen and unforeseen developments. Beyond meeting present needs, we plan and act for the future, so that we remain relevant and bring value to the sector. The steps to be taken under this outcome are not only at the SPE level, but also at the sector wide level. This outcome is closely linked to the Thrust 2 outcome: **SPEs are forward thinking and practise sustainable resourcing.**

The outcomes in this thrust reflect a system-centred view, where we appreciate that actions in the social service sector are carried out as a whole system, as well as in its constituent parts. This view also recognises interdependence between players, and the need for trusting relationships, enabling structures and processes to generate change across different levels. The systems thinking lens must be taken into consideration across the work we carry out in this thrust.

The main recommendation under this outcome is to enhance strategic planning in the sector to better manage future challenges.

What is strategic planning? Why is this important?

Strategic planning is the "process of determining and articulating what goals are to be achieved in the medium to long term, where the nature of the operating environment is subject to change, as well as how to reach these goals"[1].

Strategy is critical and can be a means to mobilise an organisation to move towards a desired future, as well as in guiding an organisation through challenging times.

To achieve this, organisations can:

Align different parts of an organisation to generate a sense of purpose and direction for the employees.

Make clear the priorities of an organisation and inform the organisation's resource allocation.

Determine how it relates to the external environment - guide an organisation to make the most of opportunities, manage and respond to changes and threats.

Foster a sense of identity amongst the employees when the organisation involves the staff to contribute to the process from the early phase, and actively attempts to integrate "top down" direction and "bottom up" views.

Organisation strategy planning

Steps that SPEs can take to formulate and implement the strategic plan for their organisation are as follows:

1. **Build capability and initiate the process**
   - Dedicate time and resources to strengthen SPEs' capabilities to plan for the future, and implement the action plans.
   - Ensure full commitment from Board and Management.
   - Identify a team of experienced staff to drive and facilitate the entire process.
   - Review existing information and past efforts to understand current reality.
   - Set desired goals and outcomes, and scope key strategic questions to be uncovered through the process.
   - Where relevant, consider getting external advisory support to facilitate or execute the whole process.

2. **Examine both internal and external operating environment**
   - Engage internal stakeholders (across all levels in an organisation) to obtain their views.
   - Scan the external environment for opportunities and risks.
     - Identify key trends and driving forces in the environment and assess their implications (e.g., conduct a STEEP analysis to uncover the **S**ocial, **T**echnological, **E**conomic, **E**nvironmental, **P**olitical factors).
     - Engage external stakeholders (across various stakeholder groups and across different levels in an organisation) to gather varied insights and perspectives.
   - Distil and sense-make the data to assess the implications to the organisation.
     - Organise the information into a SWOT to assess the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities and **T**hreats that the organisation faces.
   - Review/validate the organisation's mission, value proposition and roles.

3. **Formulate a strategy and define the pathways to success**
   - Identify the strategic priorities using tools such as the Organisational Health Framework of Social Services (OHFSS).
   - Develop a detailed strategy plan (objectives, key strategies, long and short-term goals), using the Theory of Change to guide the process.

4. Translate the strategy into priority actions

- Develop an implementation plan.

  - Identify parties responsible for implementation, establish timeline for implementation, and resources needed – time, money, manpower, space, etc.

  - Conduct risk assessment.

- Invest in time and resources to ensure execution takes place.

- Communicate the strategy and cascade the goals to all staff within an organisation.

- Launch the strategic initiatives required to actualise the objectives.

- Define measurement metrics to track progress.

- Provide incentives to drive implementation.

5. Monitor and review to ensure progress

- Set up the relevant governance structure and reporting mechanism (e.g., set up formal reporting channels to Board and Management to update).

- Track and monitor the outcomes and activities (e.g., using relevant dashboards to analyse the data collected).

It takes time to go through the whole strategic planning exercise and for changes to take effect. There is no fixed timeframe for organisations to go through the entire strategic planning exercise, but organisations should have annual reviews where they systematically scan the environment and monitor the progress to examine if their initiatives are leading to the desired outcomes. The process should be iterative and implementation plans can be re-scoped to respond to emerging trends.

In the whole strategic planning exercise, data plays an important role in the process to direct efforts to what might be impactful, spot gaps and anticipate future needs. It is important for organisations to strengthen the capability to capture, share, fuse, and exploit data.

The Organisational Health Guidebook for Social Services developed by NCSS outlines the key considerations and steps that SPEs can take to strengthen their organisations' performance in Strategy & Leadership[2] – from developing and implementing a strategy plan, to having effective and capable leadership, and forging a unified organisation culture.

[2] Find out more about Organisational Health Guidebook for Social Services: https://www.ncss.gov.sg/social-service-agencies/capability-building

Strategic foresight

> Strategic foresight doesn't help us figure out what to think about the future. It helps us figure out how to think about it.
>
> -J. Peter Scoblic (HBR: Learning from the Future)

One component of longer-term strategic planning involves foresight, which involves looking out at the external operating environment for potential opportunities and risks and thinking about the implications on the organisation and the sector. There are a range of tools and techniques to help organisations carry out foresight work. Some examples are horizon scanning, scenario planning, and analysis of trends and macro factors, e.g., using STEEP (Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political). An example is shown below. Technology, data, and analytics are also key enablers that facilitate this area of work.

Looking Out: Some key trends/drivers that can affect the sector in the future

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Trends/Drivers: Social

Ageing population, coupled with declining birth rates, fewer marriages and smaller family units

Implications on the sector	How might we best prepare ourselves?
• Ageing = issue of healthcare needs, which are often intertwined with social needs (e.g., financial, social isolation).	• Engage the silver generation in flexible work arrangements to support the sector's needs or involve them as volunteers to augment manpower needs.
• Reduction in working population and shrinking talent pool.	• Leverage community and grassroots support for service users.
• Lesser support within families, and this may result in great reliance on external caregiving arrangements.	• Explore remote services from other countries for specialised and niched areas.
	• Centralise temporary manpower support in an organisation and deploy to other organisations accordingly, when needed.

Trends/Drivers: Social

Young generation has different expectations and preferences

Implications on the sector	How might we best prepare ourselves?
• More interested in contributing to the sector beyond giving monetary donations; they are looking at contributions that would have a sustainable impact. • More likely to give both their time and money if they are inspired by the mission and feel engaged. • Expect greater career mobility, promotions and learning opportunities; have fundamentally different career aspirations.	• Leverage the skillsets that the young generation may have, instead of sticking to traditional ways (e.g., have them support in social media or coding work of the organisation). • Engage the future generation differently in giving (e.g., articulating the impact clearly, taking time to foster strong relationships and actively involving them in the giving process). • Find alternative and new ways to connect with future workers.

Trends/Drivers: Technological

Greater use of digital technology which allows for higher connectivity and automation

Implications on the sector	How might we best prepare ourselves?
• With the advancements in technology, individuals are finding new ways to advocate for causes close to their heart. Younger generations are using means such as livestreaming to advocate for causes, collect donations and spread awareness about certain issues.	• Explore in-trend digital mediums and channels (e.g., social media, livestreaming websites) to reach a larger audience in the giving space.
• Donors and individuals are increasingly looking for information online regarding causes to give. • Some services may need to be provided in multiple modalities, to cater to the varied needs of individuals.	• Create an online platform that facilitates interactions (enquiries, donations, volunteer applications) with the existing and potential donors and volunteers. • Enhance online services to better serve the virtual audience; services no longer need to be provided only from Singapore and can be from other parts of the world.
• Technology drives major changes to the worker's skills.	• Outsource to the private sector if the skills needed are not present in the organisation. • Equip staff in organisation with the relevant skills (skilling, reskilling, and upskilling).

Trends/Drivers: Economic

Slowing global economic growth, changing demand for new skills, unexpected economic crisis (e.g. impact due to pandemics such as COVID-19, economic downturn)

Implications on the sector	How might we best prepare ourselves?
• SPEs could potentially face funding constraints in times of economic crises as donors may reduce or cut their funding contributions. • Funders will demand more transparency and accountability for their donations.	• Diversify and find stable sources of fund to ensure financial security. • Set aside sufficient reserves in anticipation of future needs. • Invest in proper evaluation to articulate effectiveness of programmes and their impact.
• Widening income gap due to globalisation. • Potential increase in number of service users in times of an economic downturn because of job displacement or retrenchment, leading to other social issues.	• Anticipate that there may be more service users, and explore ways to best address this scale of need.

Trends/Drivers: Economic

Reduced availability of specialised manpower to keep up with growth in demand for services

Implications on the sector	How might we best prepare ourselves?
• Population and growth of workforce to remain low/flat in the foreseeable future, creating a decrease in the growth of available sector professionals.	• Anticipate that the growth rate in service users will exceed the growth rate in specialised manpower, thus necessitating an increase in productivity to address this imbalance. Options to explore may include the use of technology and volunteers.

Trends/Drivers: Environmental
Climate change has made environmental sustainability a priority in many countries

Implications on the sector
- Greater emphasis and interest in climate change, and its long-term effects in Singapore.

How might we best prepare ourselves?
- Retro-fit programmes to ensure that they are environmentally friendly.
- Buy equipment that are energy saving and part of the green procurement.

Trends/Drivers: Political
Impact from geopolitical crises (e.g., Ukraine War)

Implications on the sector
- During a crisis, certain goods and services may become scarce which could inflate the prices of such goods (e.g., increase in oil prices during the Ukraine War).

How might we best prepare ourselves?
- Find alternative sources of resources to manage increase in prices.
- Optimise or reduce existing spending.

Risk management
(including crisis preparedness)

Closely linked to strategic planning is risk management. To effectively engage in strategic planning, one needs to understand the risks they face. COVID-19 has also emphasised the importance for us to plan and be prepared for crises. The Non-profit Risk Management Centre defines risk management as "…a discipline for dealing with the possibility that some future event will cause harm. It provides strategies, techniques, and an approach to recognising and confronting any threat faced by an organisation in fulfilling its mission." Risks can be at varying levels, internal or external of the organisation, and scale as the size of organisation or sector.

Examples of risks are:

- Finance (e.g., financial crisis, investment risk)
- Personnel and administration (e.g., inadequate screening for staff and volunteers, resulting in undesirable situations such as theft)
- Information technology (e.g., improper use of data, donor data breach)
- Legal (e.g., fraud, intellectual property rights issues)
- Service delivery (e.g., inadequate quality assurance and programme monitoring)
- Uncontrolled risks (e.g., natural disasters and global pandemics)

Besides having a risk management plan in place within an organisation and having the Board and Management to oversee it, it is also important to communicate within the organisation so that all levels of staff understand the risks involved. Where relevant, staff can be sent for training to better understand and manage the risk.

Beyond having a risk management plan at an entity level, it is also critical to have a plan at the sectoral level, as some risks at an entity level may impact the sector or some risks impact the whole sector, beyond just an entity.

Call for Non-profit Risk Management (Stanford Social Innovation Review) lists the steps that organisations can take to make risk management a standard operating procedure:

Steps you can take		
Identify	Understand the context	Assess the organisation's mission, vision, and goals to fully understand and frame priorities
	Develop a timeline and set goals	Adopt a phased plan, with metrics put in place to measure success
	Perform a risk inventory	Identify risks and opportunities across all functions of the organisation
Assess & Prioritise	Create and use a risk register	Prioritise risks, assign owners, formulate responses, and set timelines for follow ups
Respond	React to Risks	React to risks proactively by researching emerging issues, mitigating threats, and piloting new initiatives to assess if they work
Monitor, Review & Improve	Evaluate the responses	Assess periodically what responses work, what can be done, and what improvements can be made
	Seek funder support	Garner funders' support to build capabilities to manage risk
	Improve the way one manages risk incrementally	After the foundation is in place, organisations can go beyond to improve effectiveness such as - having dedicated manpower to look at risk management and process improvement within an organisation, - improving data gathering and exchange processes to make better decisions, - improving financial impact modelling for the various risk scenarios

Organisations can also adopt **scenario planning**, an iterative process involving the four key steps below that can help navigate uncertainty:
- Identify key drivers
- Develop and model scenarios
- Create a portfolio of actions
- Determine key trigger points

Resources available
For social purpose entities (SPEs):

Guides/Tools

Organisational strategy planning:

Four Best Practices for Strategic Planning (Boston Consulting Group)
This article guides organisations to improve their existing practices in setting strategy.

https:/www.bcg.com/publications/2016/growth-four-best-practices-strategic-planning

Always-On Strategy (Boston Consulting Group)
This article guides organisations to make strategic planning less rigid and sequential, and more agile so as to respond to the changing conditions in the environment.

https:/www.bcg.com/publications/2017/growth-always-on-strategy

Learning from the Future (Harvard Business Review)
The article shares how leaders can go about formulating strategy in the face of uncertainty and prepare for future demands. It talks about how exploring the imagined futures helps in facilitating decision making, and the need to ingrain this process within the organisation and revisit from time to time, in view of the constantly changing world.

https://hbr.org/2020/07/learning-from-the-future

Organising for the future: Nine keys to becoming a future-ready company (McKinsey & Company)
An article that sums up nine imperatives that will differentiate future-ready organisations from the others, specifically focusing on "who we are" as an organisation, "how we operate", and "how we grow".

https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/organizing-for-the-future-nine-keys-to-becoming-a-future-ready-company

Foresight planning:

Foresight (A Glossary)
The Centre for Strategic Futures publication outlines and explains terms and concepts used by foresight practitioners.

https://www.csf.gov.sg/files/media-centre/publications/csf-csc_foresight--a-glossary.pdf

Foresight (Series)
Foresight by the Centre for Strategic Futures covers research into international megatrends and emerging issues, and the implications of these trends and issues.

https://www.csf.gov.sg/media-centre/publications/foresight-series

Tools:

External Environment Analysis (The National Council for Voluntary Organisations)
This site guides organisations to conduct external environment analysis which may have potential impact on the organisation.

https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/strategy-and-impact/strategy-and-business-planning/understanding-your-landscape-and-conditions/

Why the Social Sector Needs Scenario Planning Now (Boston Consulting Group)
An article which highlights the importance of scenario-planning exercises to identify driving forces and trends that can guide actions to prepare for the future.

https://www.bcg.com/publications/2020/why-social-sector-needs-scenario-planning

🖥️ Training to explore

Strategic (Human) Thinking in the Age of AI
Visit DPI-Asia for more info at
https://www.dpi-asia.com/post/strategic-human-thinking-in-the-age-of-ai

The Governance for Outstanding Organisation Directors (SGOOD)'s module on Strategy and Board Performance (SGD5)
Visit Singapore Institute of Directors for more info at
https://www.sid.org.sg/Web/Professional_Development/Courses/Essentials/SGOOD_Essentials.aspx

👥 Programmes to participate in

Future-Ready Society
The Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities and the Institute of Policy Studies's Future-Ready Society brings together academic research and action-oriented solutioning to partner and fund a future-ready society.

Find out more about their programmes at https://futurereadysociety.sg/

Annex - References:

Systems-perspective

- https://medium.com/disruptive-design/tools-for-systems-thinkers-the-6-fundamental-concepts-of-systems-thinking-379cdac3dc6a
- https://ssir.org/articles/entry/systems_thinking_a_view_from_the_trenches
- https://necsi.edu/system-perspective

Strategy Planning

- https://www.ncvo.org.uk/help-and-guidance/strategy-and-impact/strategy-and-business-planning/getting-started-with-strategy-and-business-planning/what-is-strategy/#/
- https://www.bcg.com/capabilities/corporate-finance-strategy/strategic-planning
- https://www.bcg.com/publications/2016/growth-four-best-practices-strategic-planning
- https://onstrategyhq.com/resources/strategic-planning-process-basics/

Theory of Change

- https://www.thinknpc.org/resource-hub/ten-steps/

Strategic Foresight

- https://www.csf.gov.sg/files/media-centre/publications/csf-csc_foresight--a-glossary.pdf
- https://hbr.org/2020/07/learning-from-the-future

Trends/Drivers

- https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/singapore-feeling-impact-rapidly-ageing-population
- https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/ageing-society-caregiving-parents-demential-elderly-health-310611
- https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesnonprofitcouncil/2021/12/27/the-future-of-giving-trends-shaping-next-gen-philanthropy/?sh=2152de311b88
- https://www.aboutamazon.sg/news/company-news/new-study-shows-shoppers-in-singapore-are-keen-to-support-local-businesses
- https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/millennials-using-livestreaming-advance-causes-close-their-hearts
- https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/08/20/how-millennials-and-gen-z-are-revolutionizing-the-philanthropic-world/?sh=6fc598f1562d
- https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/covid-19-some-charities-struggling-raise-funds-even-economy-gradually-reopens-others

Risk Management

- https://www.handsonnwnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/A-Primer-on-Risk-Management.pdf
- https://ssir.org/articles/entry/a_call_for_nonprofit_risk_management#
- https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/library/strategy-development/nonprofit-scenario-planning-during-a-crisis

Experimentation & Innovation

4ST PLAYBOOK

A self-help guide with concrete steps, examples and ideas to explore and achieve desired 4ST outcomes

Updated 13/07/2023

OUTCOMES:

Thrust 4
The social service sector experiments to develop quality, innovative & sustainable solutions

EXPERIMENTATION & INNOVATION

Thrust 4 Outcome:

The social service sector experiments to develop quality, innovative & sustainable solutions

✋ Introduction

Guiding questions

- How might we **cultivate a culture** that embraces experimentation, and accepts risk of failures to learn?
- To what extent does your organisation have **leadership commitment, capabilities, and processes** to drive innovation?
- To what extent does your organisation **share best practices** on innovation for peer and cross-sector learning?

Definition of innovations	"Innovations are things that **change the affordability, accessibility, or effectiveness** of practices or tools used for treatment, prevention, and care." - PATH.org (a global health organisation)

"A learning culture is an environment that **demonstrates and encourages individual and organizational learning**, and where both **gaining and sharing knowledge** is prioritized, valued, and rewarded." - Centre for Creative Leadership	**Definition of learning culture**

Why is there a need for experimentation & innovation?

To be future-directed, **SPEs must meet the needs of today while preparing for new challenges tomorrow**. Increasingly, giving partners also demand quantifiable impact and effective solutions. Innovation would **allow the sector to adapt with new capabilities to meet different challenges**. Various good sector practices were achieved because of those who embraced new paradigms, as a result of perseverance through failure. **Having a culture of embracing challenges, coupled with a willingness to learn from our failures, will spur us to find better solutions** today and tomorrow.

Types of innovation & desired level of impact

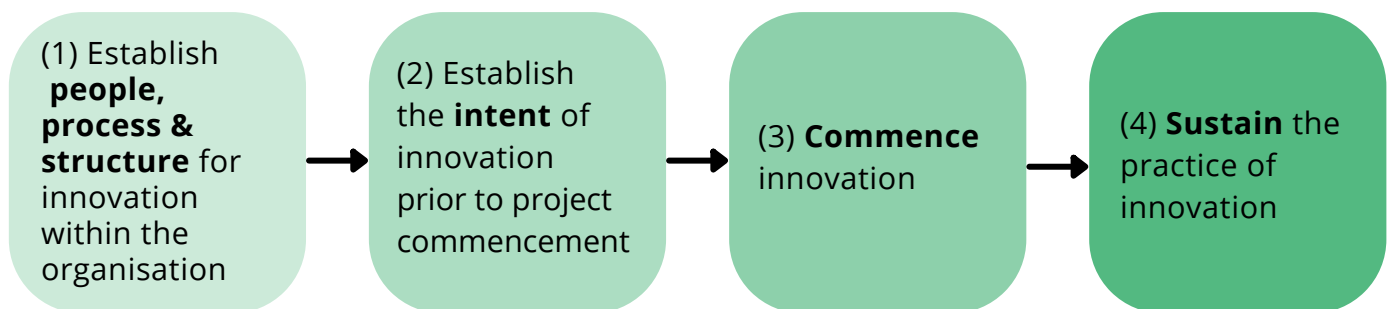**Innovation can be applied to many areas**, including

(i) service delivery approaches, (ii) organisational operating processes, and (iii) partnership models.

The intent of innovation differs according to the circumstances and needs of the organisations. Innovation can be **incremental** to keep up with latest trends, or **disruptive** as needed to meet future challenges.

Steps you can take
For social purpose entities (SPEs)
To kickstart and sustain SPE's innovation journey

| (1) Establish **people, process & structure** for innovation within the organisation | → | (2) Establish the **intent** of innovation prior to project commencement | → | (3) **Commence** innovation | → | (4) **Sustain** the practice of innovation |

1 Establish **people, process & structure** for innovation within the organisation

Gain leadership commitment & review organisation processes to advance innovation:

Obtain **buy in from the Board and Senior Management** to embark on innovation and **dedicate resources** towards experimentation.

Leaders should drive a culture of innovation and **create an environment** where staff are:
- Encouraged to **challenge existing ways** of thinking and working, and that some efforts can start small;
- Provided with **time and platforms** to experiment with new and bold approaches (e.g., sandboxes, workgroups);
- Provided with the **necessary resources** to pursue these initiatives;
- Equipped with the **relevant training** (e.g. design thinking, creative thinking, agile methodology) to practise innovation;
- Recognised for embarking on innovative projects; and
- **Comfortable** to accept failures and translate them into lessons for others.

SPEs should also **identify which areas** they would like to embark in innovation for:
- **Identify and adjust service and funding models that could be improved, put in a place a longer runway** to ascertain efficacy (as results may not be immediate), and **put in place post-pilot commitments** to ensure smooth transition to a stable state such as scaling up.

Review **organisation practices & processes** that could benefit from innovation, and implement changes that are successful.

Establish the structure to drive innovation:

SPEs could **experiment with the structure that best fits their needs and priorities, and adjust depending on circumstances.**

SPEs can reference **2 types of organisation** structure, or adopt a **hybrid approach** as outlined below:

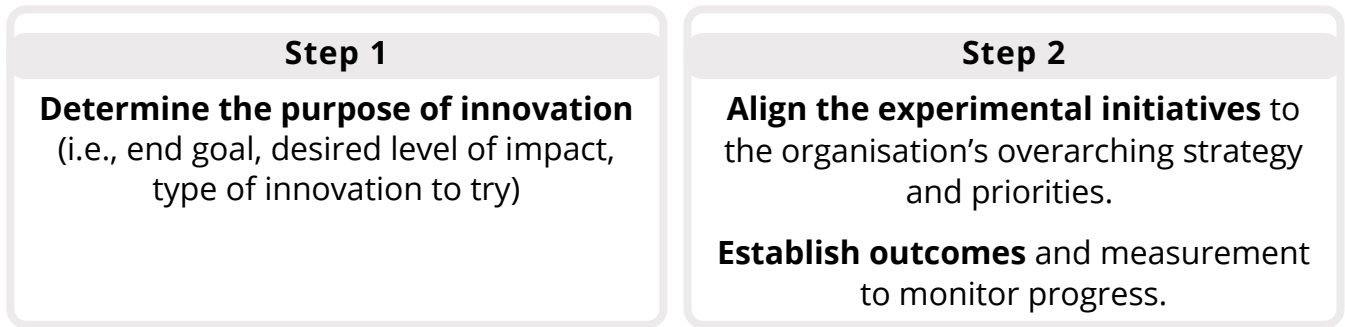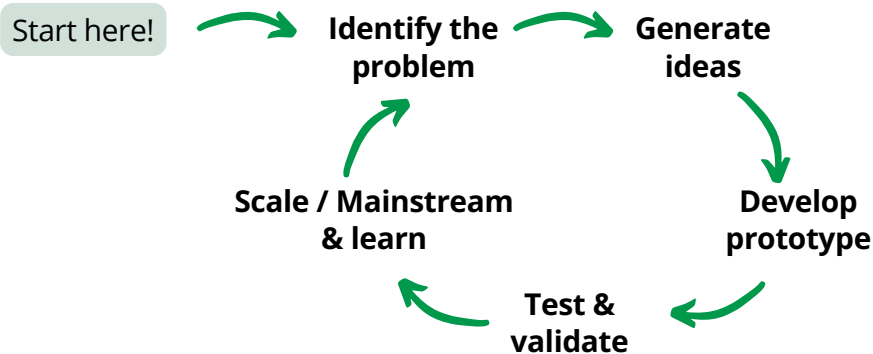| Decentralised Organisation Structure	Centralised Organisation Structure
How does it work?	
• **Each team** in the organisation is responsible for innovation. • **Bottom-up** approach where team-led innovation is prioritised. • Current employees adopt innovator roles **on top of their current responsibilities.**	• A **centralised innovation unit** is responsible for innovation. • **Top-down** approach to oversee innovation. • Employees in centralised unit are **resourced specifically** for innovation.
Benefits	
• Requires **fewer dedicated resources.** • **Lower risks** compared to a centralised innovation model.	• Typically leads to **more rapid results,** compared to decentralised models.
Challenges	
• **Lack of central coordination and support** for innovators. • Potentially creates the **need for new staff.**	• Centralised structure **might not appreciate deeply** the considerations of various functional teams. • Requires a **higher level of dedicated resources.**
Recommended first steps for this model	
• Start with **one or two departments** before expanding to the wider organisation. • **Train all employees** to innovate.	• Start small by **earmarking set resources** to achieve **specific, focused outcomes.**

2 **Establish the intent of innovation prior to project commencement**

Step 1	Step 2
Determine the purpose of innovation (i.e., end goal, desired level of impact, type of innovation to try)	**Align the experimental initiatives** to the organisation's overarching strategy and priorities. **Establish outcomes** and measurement to monitor progress.

3 **Commence innovation**

After establishing the intent and also having the right team set up (people & structure), to commence innovation, these are five steps which can be taken:

Start here! → Identify the problem → Generate ideas → Develop prototype → Test & validate → Scale / Mainstream & learn → (back to Identify the problem)

Identify the problem	Generate ideas	Develop prototype	Test & validate	Scale / mainstream & learn
Identify the root problem to address. This ties in closely with establishing the intent of innovation outlined above. Engage relevant stakeholders and consider a person-centred approach to better scope and understand the problem.	**Come up with ideas through local and overseas scanning of best practices** to address the problem. Consider co-creating with relevant stakeholders where suitable. Ideas could be but need not necessarily involve technology.	**Start building and developing** the prototype.	**Test the prototype with stakeholders,** using data to determine success. Ideas can be validated **based on factors** such as: • Desirability • Feasibility • Viability • Impact	Present the final working prototypes to key decision makers for selection. **Convert promising ideas to fully-fledged products** by securing relevant funding or allocating it a portion of your organisation's budget. **Lessons from this process can be shared to inform** the next innovation journey.

Note: The whole process should be person-centred, agile, and iterative, to respond to stakeholders' feedback and changing circumstances.

Partner others on the innovation journey

SPEs should also consider partnering with others to leverage their assets:

- Partner others to address **complex issues that cannot be done alone, or to scale.** Consider synergistic partnerships to **increase social impact,** such as with other SPEs, technology companies or corporates that share similar goals. **Clarify** objectives and each partner's role before commencing such partnerships.
- Seek out stakeholders who will invest in **high-risk** initiatives that may not necessarily succeed, or stakeholders who may be willing to invest in scaling efforts.

4 Sustain the practice of innovation

To keep the momentum going, SPEs can:

Introduce incentives and rewards	Share lessons with others
- **Reward and celebrate** innovative organisational practices and initiatives. - **Recognise good work** in staff communications, such as newsletters, and organisational-wide meetings.	**Share experience for learning** with others in the organisation and beyond. - **Create platforms and structures** to share information and network. - **Profile good examples** to raise awareness.

Note: Please also refer to the Playbook segments on "Empowerment and Inclusion" and "Enabling People, Sector-Wide Processes and Systems" to understand innovative ways to empower and include individuals, families and communities; and to develop impactful SPEs, ecosystems and the social service sector.

👣 Steps you can take
For giving partners (e.g., donors and funders)

Mindset shifts
- Recognise that **innovation takes time** and may not have immediate short-term results. Some projects **may not succeed or be viable to scale.** However, recognise and support the willingness to try and accept failures.
- Understand that **scaling may take longer than anticipated.**

Funding support
- Provide support for **higher risk** initiatives.
- **Support post-pilot commitments** to scale viable projects.
- Provide incentives that reward the **culture of innovation**.

Resources available

For social purpose entities (SPEs):

📕 Guides/Tools

Social Innovation Starter Kit
NCSS developed a Social Innovation Starter Kit which includes guiding principles and mindsets of human-centred design process as well as specific methods and tools to help the sector in tackling complex social challenges and embark on their own innovation journeys.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/press-room/publications/SocialInnovationStarterKit

NCSS' Innovation & Productivity page
NCSS has collated examples and resources on innovation on its website.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/Our-Work/Innovation-and-Productivity

🖥 Training to explore

Digital Skills Training
NCSS' Tech-and-Go! has compiled a list of necessary digital skills for SPEs to stay in pace with organisation transformation and to further digitalisation efforts. Relevant courses for the sector are also highlighted on the website below.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/tech-and-go/resources/digital-skills-training

Consultancy in Workplace Learning Framework & Certification
Visit Singapore Institute of Technology for more information at
https://www.singaporetech.edu.sg/nace/consultancy-in-workplace-learning-framework

Design Thinking: ADEPT @ Delivering the Future
Visit Capelle Consulting for more information at
https://www.capelleconsulting.com/

Critical Thinking
Visit Capelle Consulting for more information at
https://www.capelleconsulting.com/

Funding available

Community Capability Trust Open Grant
Provides funding to support innovative, collaborative and grounds-up projects that scale impact at the sector level, as well as projects that develop the SSAs' competencies to enhance productivity & ability in service delivery.

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/community-capability-trust-(cct)/cct-pillars

Enabling Lives Initiative Grant
Administered by SG Enable, the Enabling Lives Initiative (ELI) Grant aims to facilitate cross-sector partnership to leverage strengths to develop innovative, scalable and sustainable solutions for persons with disabilities.

https://eli-grant.sg/apply-for-grant

Open Innovation Programme
The InfoComm Media Development Authority (IMDA) hosts the Open Innovation Platform. IMDA launches Innovation Calls every few months and each call comprises of a set of challenges from different problem owners in various sectors. Once the call closes, the proposals will go through a structured evaluation process based on the criteria set by the problem owners. Shortlisted finalists will then commence prototype development. The selected solution will be awarded prize monies.

https://www.openinnovation.sg/challenges
https://www.openinnovation.sg/imda

Tech-and-GO!
Tech-and-GO! is NCSS' one-stop tech hub helping SSAs and charities in their digitalisation journey. It shares:
• Guides and other resources
• Grants for both SSAs and charities
• Consultancy services
• Networks, such as a Telegram group

https://www.ncss.gov.sg/our-initiatives/tech-and-go/

Lam Soon New Horizon Grant
The Majurity Trust has launched an incubation grant in 2022 to support newer non-profits or volunteer-run groups from start-up to maturity. This includes unrestricted funding that will enable grantees to focus on organisational development, and to create space for innovation and creativity. Grantees will also receive support in community building and capacity building (e.g., networks and contacts, expertise, and guidance).

https://www.majurity.sg/funds-and-grants/newhorizon/

👥 Networks of support

Design4Impact

A collaboration between NCSS and MOH Office for Healthcare Transformation (MOHT), Design4Impact (D4I) is an open innovation platform that brings together like-minded, public-spirited stakeholders to address some of the biggest Singapore health and social challenges. The platform started in 2020 and organises design challenges periodically.

To continue facilitating partnerships, capability building and growing a community of activated citizens, the **D4I Innovators' Ecosystem and Community of Practice** launched in May 2023 enables D4I alumni and social innovators to network, offer peer support and gain access to industry players from healthcare, social services, technology, and design sectors.

For more information on Design4Impact:
https://go.gov.sg/design4impact

Click to join the Design4Impact Ecosystem:
https://go.gov.sg/ncss-social-innovation

📁 Case examples

Project Keep It Real
Improving mental health of male youths using design thinking

Design4Impact (D4I) is an open innovation platform that **enables social minded innovators to come together** to use user-centred research and design thinking capabilities. Such innovators are **connected** to mentorship, resources, and networks to **co-create sustainable solutions.**

During D4I, a team of male youths serving National Service and mental health therapists discovered the **lack of effective male-targeted mental health** solutions available. The presence of mental health stigma and toxic masculinity also made it **challenging for male youths to seek help.**

Through D4I's ideation phase, the team created a 5-week programme, "Guys, Keep It Real", to promote mental and emotional well-being of male youths through **game quests and workshops** on active listening, conscious communication and meaningful conversations.

The team, Project Keep It Real, aims to promote emotional regulation among male youths and reduce stigma against such youths pursuing mental health through emotional vulnerability. At present, it is being piloted with the aim of testing the innovation for potential scaling.

Tech Able
Improving the premises' accessibility to service users

Tech Able is an integrated assistive technology space initiated by SG Enable and SPD in the Enabling Village. Tech Able **promotes the adoption of assistive technology for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to live independently,** including **loaning technology for testing** in PwDs' home, office or school environment, and providing specialist consultations on the adoption of the assistive tools.

In 2019, Tech Able **renovated the premises and enhanced the experience** for PwDs, after incorporating visitors' feedback that they would like to self-explore at their own pace. Some features include:

- An **open layout with widened walkways** and **tactile markers** to feature assistive technology equipping one for play, home, work and education, and mobility.
- **Large digital screens and directional audio** with localised sound for information to be accessible to different users.
- Braille map of the space, **co-created with persons with visual impairment.**
- **Interactive web application** to shop without having to physically visit Enabling Village.

💡 Ideas for exploration

Committing to innovate as an organisation
Singapore: Movement for the Intellectually Disabled of Singapore (MINDS)

What is it?

The social service agency, MINDS aims to advance the well-being of Persons with Intellectual Disability (PWIDs). To achieve its goals better, it practises **continual evolution** of its services, strategises to **meet needs in new and diverse ways,** and **devotes institutional resources** to evidence-based research.

Potential benefits

- **Stay relevant** in light of changing circumstances.
- **Customise interventions** to the diverse needs of clients.
- Grow influence to **positively influence sector practices.**

How does it work?

MINDS aims to **shape new paradigms to meet needs**, acknowledging the evolving landscape it operates in. To do this, it **commits to using, developing and sharing applied research and evidence-based practices** in collaboration with universities and learning centres.

I**t uses various methods to reach out to PWIDs.** This includes models that encourage independent living among PWIDs, support caregivers, and use Virtual Reality technology to enhance PWIDs' skills.

In order to communicate better with non-verbal PWIDs, MINDS staff **brainstormed and engaged in rigorous experiments** to more effectively communicate with PWID clients.

For example, MINDS staff experienced challenges in communication with PWIDs, whom they hoped would notify them before using the restroom. MINDS staff used various methods, such as encouraging signing, which worked for some clients. To further encourage communication, MINDS further developed visual aids that showed the limited restroom slots available and which PWIDs clients could use to communicate with MINDS staff.

Food for thought

- How might organisations **incorporate innovative methods into their strategies** to serve clients and stay relevant?

- How might organisations **devote resources to using, developing and sharing innovative evidence-based practices?**

Find out more: https://www.minds.org.sg/about-us/vision-and-mission/

Creating the time and space for innovation to take place
Singapore: Government Technology Agency of Singapore (GovTech)'s Hack for Public Good

What is it?

Every January, GovTech's Open Government Products Division officers **pause non-core projects to work on public problems** of interest.

Potential benefits

- Allow staff **dedicated time** to innovate.
- **Facilitate exchange of ideas** to work on areas of interest.
- Provide opportunities for staff to **learn and develop skills.**

How does it work?

Each January, officers **iteratively generate ideas, conduct user research, and prototype**, with the end goal of showcasing working prototypes by the end of the month. Prototypes with potential to create value for the public will then be converted to full-fledged products.

Products like Go.gov.sg (link shortener for public officers), Postman.gov.sg (enabling public officers to easily send mass messages to citizens), and RedeemSG (for public officers to easily create, issue and track voucher redemption) were generated and developed through the Hack for Public Good.

As part of the process, the officers **go on community learning journeys, and learn from public officers** about the nuances and challenges of their work.

Food for thought

How might we **carve out time and space** for teams to focus on innovation?

Creating platforms for diverse stakeholders to come together to innovate
United States: Hacks for Humanity

What is it?

Hacks for Humanity conducts **hackathons for participants to create innovative solutions** to local and global issues.

Potential benefits

- Quickly **create innovative ideas** to be tested by the organisation.
- Create "disruptive innovation" through a **quick burst of creativity.**
- **Leverage diverse perspectives** from different stakeholders, which can result in impactful solutions tapping on technology.
- Build a **community of individuals** for social good.

How does it work?

During the **36-hour hackathon**, individuals are randomly assigned to groups to find solutions to social problems. At the end of the hackathon, **teams pitch their products and judges reward the top 3 teams with prizes**. Unlike a 'normal' hackathon which may require 'hacking' or computer skills, Hacks for Humanity invites anyone interested in creating solutions for social good to come together. **Mentors also guide the participants** during the hackathon process, and **volunteers assist with logistics.**

'ARKHumanity' is one impactful solution created at Hacks for Humanity. ARKHumanity's system identifies specific tweets with key phrases that are often used by people at risk of self-harm. They won the 2014 Hacks for Humanity hackathon and have since launched their business, HumanityX.

Food for thought

How might we **create platforms to leverage diverse perspectives** from different stakeholders to create innovative solutions to social problems?

Supporting and scaling innovative models
United Nations: World Food Programme Innovation Accelerator

What is it?
The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) Innovation Accelerator **sources, supports and scales high-impact innovations** to achieve Zero Hunger.

Potential benefits
- Provide **capital and necessary support** for experimentation.
- **Support acceleration and scaling** of models.

How does it work?
The UNWFP provides employees, entrepreneurs and start-ups with **funding, hands-on support, and access to WFP's global operations**.
Through the Accelerator, WFP leverages digital innovation including mobile technology, artificial intelligence, big data, blockchain and new business models to transform the way vulnerable communities are served globally.

UNWFP's Innovation Hub focuses on **two main programmes** to facilitate innovation:

Sprint Programme

An **intensive six-month acceleration programme** that provides resources and funding to help innovators validate concepts and develop prototypes for implementation.

Scale-Up Enablement Programme

Supports advanced stage innovations which have already proven their concepts and are working to **optimise their reach at regional or global levels.**

Sprint Programme provides capital and mentorship to new innovative ideas on a smaller scale; and if successful, the project can be scaled up under the Scale-Up Enablement Programme.

Food for thought
- How might we **create an enabling environment** to support innovators to come up with new ideas?
- How might we **support successful pilots to scale?**

Innovative funding idea: Provision of an interest-free recyclable grant
Singapore: Maybank Momentum Grant (The Majurity Trust)

What is it?

Maybank Momentum Grant helps small charities tide through the medium-term by providing an **interest-free recyclable grant** equivalent to 4 months of operating expenditure, and capped at $150k.

Beside capital support, it also **supports capability building** for charities to kickstart transformation.

How does it work?

Maybank Momentum Grant provides capital and training support for charities to **become sustainable in the long run**. When they are able to repay the grant, Maybank then uses the returned sum to **support other small charities** facing cash flow issues.

Through the grant, the organisation Limitless was able to expand its services and provide professional mental health support to more young people.

Potential benefits

The recyclable nature of the grant enables the donor/funder to channel support to more charities to **multiply its impact.**

Food for thought

- How might we support SPEs **beyond financial support**?

- What innovative ways can funders use to support SPEs and **multiply social impact**?

Find out more: https://www.maybank2u.com.sg/en/personal/about_us/maybank-singapore/newsroom/2020/21-dec-2020.page

Innovative funding idea: Empowering service users through a different financing model
Bangladesh: Grameen Bank

What is it?

The recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2016, Grameen Bank is a micro-credit institution that makes **small long-term loans on easy terms to empower economic participation.**

It assumes that anyone can manage their own financial affairs and development given suitable conditions. 98% of Grameen Bank's borrowers are women, of which more than two-thirds have achieved poverty alleviation.

Potential benefits

Allow more people to access financial resources to raise them from poverty.

How does it work?

Conventional banks usually do not lend to individuals without assets or property. However, micro-lending organisations offer these **individuals small loans with relatively low interest rates,** while requiring **little or no collateral**.

In developing countries, **micro-lenders have a larger impact than conventional banks** in poverty alleviation. The removal of collateral provides individuals **financial resources to better their lives**. The **repayment percentag**e for such banks has been very high, emphasising the success of the models.

Food for thought

- How might we **find solutions for those who do not benefit** from current programmes?

- How might we **shift our mindsets** to explore ideas that have not been tried before and go against existing norms/assumptions?

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