

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

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



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



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



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

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

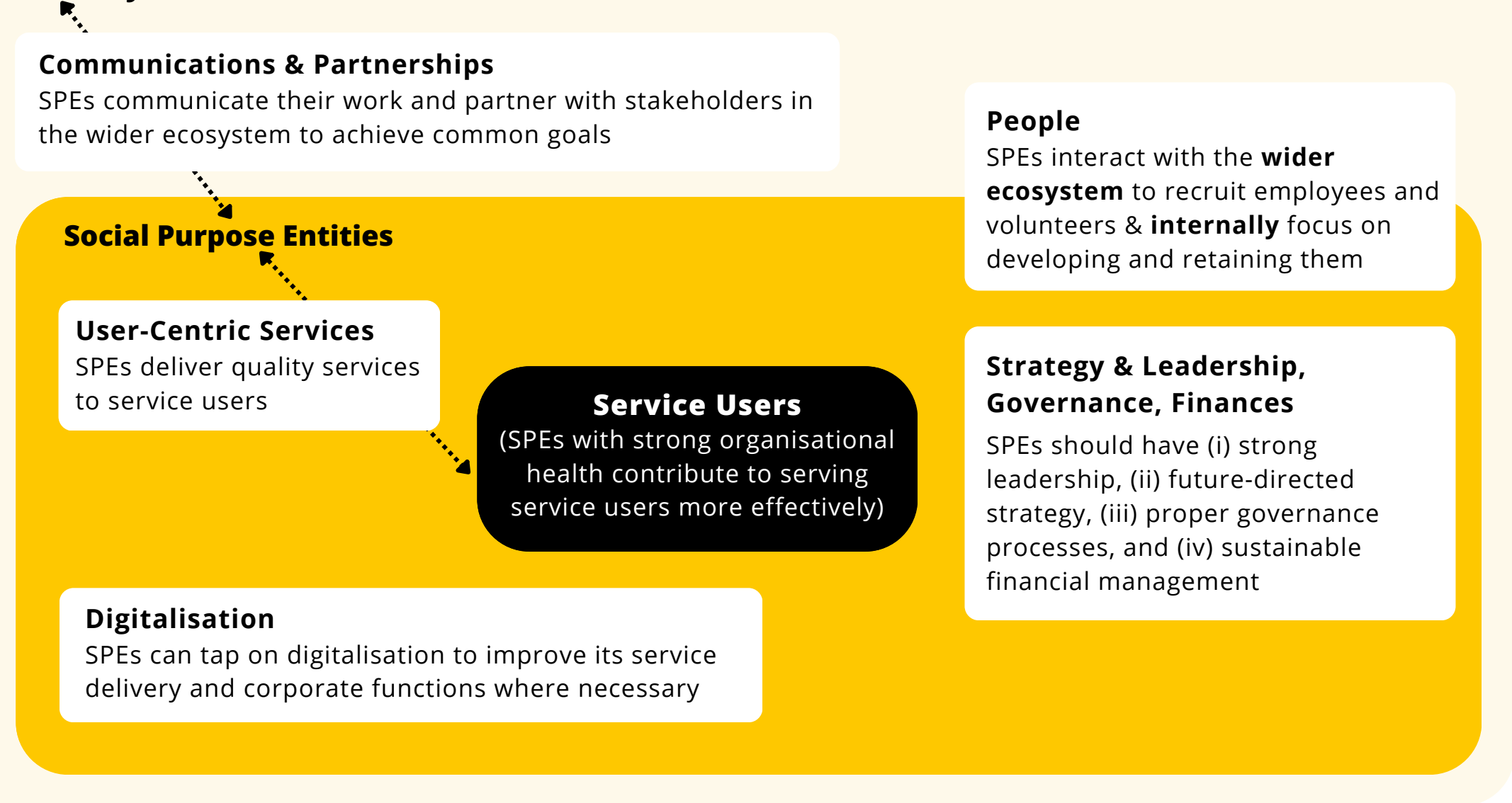
To improve SPEs' effectiveness, we need to take a **holistic approach** to their organisational health.

- 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)



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:						
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:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">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.						
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		Industry Digital Plan for Social Services		
	Enterprise Risk Management Toolkit for Charities & Institutions of a Public Charater (IPC)	Job Redesign Guide for Inclusive Employers	Full Cost Recovery for Charities	Charities GoDigital Kit		Collective Impact
		Mental Health Toolkit for Employers		Data Management Guide	Colabs Toolkit	
	Code of Governance for Charities & IPCs	Skills Framework for Social Service				
		Volunteer Resource Hub				
		Volunteer Management (VM) Maturity Matrix				
		Learning & Development Roadmap and Self-Assessment Tool				
Training to Explore						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Training offered by NCSS’ Social Service Institute			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Governance for Outstanding Organisation Directors (SGOOD) programme			
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						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community Capability Trust (CCT)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Charities Capability Fund (CCF)		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lam Soon New Horizon Grant		
		Professional Capability Grant (PCG)		Please see Tech-and-Go for other grants		
Networks of Support / Programmes to Participate In:						
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organisational Health Diagnostic Scheme (OHDS)			<ul style="list-style-type: none">Social Service Summit		<ul style="list-style-type: none">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 help 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](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>

Governance

Strengthening Governance by Leveraging the Outward Mindset for Non-Profit Organisations

Visit Arbinger Institute for more information at <https://arbingersea.com/ccf-2days/>

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-\(cct\)/](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](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](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 **find 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-\(oghss\)](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>