

→ CHAPTER 8

# DOING OUR PART AS ONE UNITED PEOPLE



**In the previous chapters, we have set out how we will strengthen opportunities and assurance for Singaporeans. This chapter focuses on our collective strength as a society, what it means to care for one another and to be one united people.**

---

When we succeed and do well, it is tempting to recognise only our own efforts. We naturally want to be rewarded for working hard and taking responsibility for ourselves and our families. But we must remember that we often succeed because of the society we live in and the support of those around us.

We all stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. We must not become a society where people only focus on themselves, or where there is a culture of radical individualism and selfishness.

Thankfully, there are many positive examples in Singapore. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Singaporeans rallied together to help others in need — from individuals supporting vulnerable neighbours, to food and beverage outlets coordinating free meals and drinks for embattled healthcare workers.

It is clear that Singapore is strongest when we stand together — when we recognise that caring for each other is also the best way to care for ourselves, and when we develop a deep sense of kinship and trust in one another.

In particular, those who have succeeded should do their part to uplift others in society.

**We believe every citizen should know and feel that they have a stake in our society and in building our shared future.**

Together, we can:

---

▶ **Give back to our society**



▶ **Strengthen our Singaporean identity**



▶ **Take collective action towards our shared future**





# Give Back to Our Society



Everyone — the Government, individuals, businesses and communities — plays a part in caring for our fellow citizens. The more any one of us contributes, the more we all receive.



**I received assistance when I needed it, and now, I give back as a volunteer."**

*- Ms Zarina Bte Omar, Family Service Centre and Social Service Office beneficiary, Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) Care Pillar Engagement with SG Cares Community Network, 18 November 2022*



## We want to build this virtuous cycle of giving and receiving in several ways.

Singaporeans are by nature a generous people. Through our Forward SG engagements, many Singaporeans shared that they want to give back and support their fellow citizens, especially those who are doing less well. But they may not know how and where to help, other than providing occasional financial contributions.



**Besides financial contributions, we can do more to uplift our fellow citizens.**

For example, some Singaporeans will need access to networks that can help them gain and remain in stable employment. Others may need ongoing mentorship and guidance on their education and career pathways. We thus need to consider different ways to provide care and support that are more impactful to Singaporeans from less privileged backgrounds. The type of support and the period of intervention matter.



**We encourage those who have benefited and done well to give back and to exemplify the spirit of *noblesse oblige* in our society.**

To maximise the impact of their contributions, we will work with the Community Foundation of Singapore and Community Chest to introduce a new programme that better connects donors to the needs of local communities and less privileged groups over a sustained period.

For example, a donor could commit to supporting the educational needs of children from a specified number of lower-income families. The donor could provide both financial contributions as well as mentorship, internship and job opportunities to help these children build their social capital and networks, and secure good employment in the future.



**As the contributions from Singaporeans grow, we also want to ensure that our charities can manage these increased contributions prudently and professionally.**

We will strengthen charities' capabilities in managing more and larger-scale philanthropic contributions so that we help more people in need.

There are many other ways for Singaporeans to care for and support other members of society. Volunteerism is also meaningful and impactful.

- ▶ This is why the Government has developed channels like the SG Cares Volunteer Centres and SportCares, where Singaporeans can come together to care for and impact the lives of those in need. The Government also introduced Mentoring SG to create avenues for youths to benefit from mentoring, access opportunities amidst life transitions, and realise their fullest potential. We will increase the outreach and accessibility of these channels to more Singaporeans.
- ▶ Singaporeans can also contribute through community organisations, including civic organisations, neighbourhood associations, grassroots groups and co-operative societies, as well as through their own self-initiated ground-up projects. We will continue to explore more ways for Singaporeans to care for each other.



**They [SportCares] help youths realise their potential, some [youths] even become instructors and give back to the community. This creates a multiplier effect and magnifies impact. It's about imparting values and passing on legacy to future generations. I believe that sport can change lives, and I also trust that we can influence the lives of one another."**



*- Mr Lionel Li, Founder of the Li Foundation,  
Donor to the SportCares-Li Foundation  
MultiSport Programme*

Beyond the contributions of individual Singaporeans, we call on businesses to step up and give back to the community.

We have a long-standing tradition of successful business leaders stepping forward to meet the social needs of the community. From before Singapore's independence, with pioneers like Hajjah Fatimah, Govindasamy Pillai and Tan Tock Seng, right through to the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses today should continue building on this.

All businesses and employers should continually invest in their employees and staff, and provide a work environment that enables them to thrive. But we believe there is considerable scope for businesses to make social contributions beyond their organisations. They can provide internship and career opportunities to uplift those from less privileged backgrounds, or leverage their corporate capabilities to make a difference in the community.

## Pledge by Singapore Business Federation (SBF)

**SBF, which is the apex business chamber in Singapore, and the Singapore Business Federation Foundation (SBFF), will galvanise the business community in the following areas:**

**01**

Businesses to strengthen corporate volunteering efforts and provide employment-related opportunities to uplift vulnerable groups in need of assistance.

**02**

Businesses to embrace corporate donation to support community well-being and foster social inclusion.

**03**

Businesses to pursue environmental stewardship initiatives for a low carbon and climate-resilient future.



## Pledge by Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF)

**SNEF is the employer representative in Singapore's tripartite system. SNEF will work with the tripartite partners to enable employers to:**

**01**

Adopt fair hiring and employment practices so that their workers have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.

**02**

Invest in their workers to help them to be competent in their job and prepare them for future roles.

**03**

Uplift their lower-wage resident workers through the Progressive Wage Model (PWM).

**04**

Embrace flexible work arrangements (FWAs) to support their workers in better managing both their work and personal responsibilities.

**05**

Offer part-time employment opportunities for senior workers.





The National Volunteer and Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) has rolled out its new Company of Good strategy to support and recognise businesses in their journey to contribute more to society. SBF has also established an Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) Coordination Office to help businesses develop and deepen their journey of giving back to society. We hope that more businesses will heed the call and contribute more to the wider community.

## Businesses' adoption of corporate purpose framework

To date, 55 companies have adopted the corporate purpose framework, which will guide them to design their business practices and operations in ways that benefit society.

An example of a purpose-driven company is **Woh Hup (Private) Limited** (Woh Hup). The company provides construction and civil engineering services while ensuring workplace safety and skills development of employees.

- ▶ For example, Woh Hup encourages mature workers to continually learn and upskill through courses to remain relevant in the sector.
- ▶ Beyond fulfilling baseline responsibilities as a company, Woh Hup regularly holds fundraising initiatives that involve their subcontractors, clients and consultants to raise funds for charities in Singapore. So far, their philanthropic actions have raised more than \$2.3 million for 18 charities.





# Strengthen Our Singaporean Identity



---

Fostering a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility will help to strengthen our shared Singaporean identity. As a multi-racial society, we interact with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures every day.

We have enjoyed several decades of racial and religious harmony. This is no accident. It is the product of sustained effort over decades to sensitively manage the difficult issues on race, to expand our common space, and to create shared experiences and memories through school, community, and national events.

But we must have the humility to acknowledge that our multi-racialism is still a work in progress. There will always be differences between our diverse ethnic groups. But we must continue to engage one another in a spirit of respect and fellowship so that through mutual accommodation and compromise, we find ways to live harmoniously together.

Multi-racialism is not just about accepting and tolerating each other's differences. We must do more to deepen our appreciation and understanding of each other's cultures and traditions. We can do so through areas such as the arts and culture, where we can develop a greater awareness of our shared history and heritage, and better develop empathy and understanding for one another.

The Government will continue to expand spaces for more interactions between different groups. For example, we will do more to promote collaborations between our Self-Help Groups and encourage more Singaporeans to develop, organise and take part in racial harmony programmes in the community. At the personal level, we can also make conscious and deliberate steps, however small, towards understanding others better. This will enlarge the common stake we have in our future and further strengthen our shared Singaporean identity.

## Initiatives by Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

The SHGs work to uplift their respective communities, primarily through education. But the SHGs also come together to work on joint initiatives and programmes that benefit Singaporeans of all backgrounds. They include:

### BIG HEART STUDENT CARE

OPERATES IN

**30**

Primary  
Schools

**>4,600**

Students  
enrolled



Managed by the SHGs, Big Heart Student Care provides quality and affordable after-school care services for the holistic development of students of all races. Today, Big Heart Student Care operates in 30 primary schools with more than 4,600 students enrolled.

### COLLABORATIVE TUITION PROGRAMME (CTP)

The CTP has grown from 11 centres when it started in 2002 to 175 centres in 2022, with over 13,800 students from all races.

The SHGs will also organise more sessions to engage youths from diverse backgrounds and communities so they can be empowered to make a difference in areas that they feel strongly about.



# Take Collective Action Towards Our Shared Future

---

To truly become 'one united people', we must be active citizens in shaping our shared future together.

The Government will play a key role in this process. We will do so by listening, actively seeking inputs, and engaging and working closely with all stakeholders and partners. This Forward SG exercise itself is the product of the Government's partnership and co-creation process with Singaporeans from all walks of life. It builds on a rich tradition of national dialogues conducted over the years. These dialogues have strengthened the Government's engagement and partnership with Singaporeans. They have enabled the Government to better understand Singaporeans' priorities and hopes for the future, at each major milestone of our nation's development.



# Youth aspirations for Singapore's future

As part of the Forward SG exercise, we engaged youths from Post-Secondary Education Institutes (PSEIs). They envisioned Singapore to be a society where all forms of excellence are celebrated and respected within a meritocracy that is compassionate and inclusive. They wanted a Singapore where everyone plays their part to sustain our social compact and support those in need. They recommended areas where the Government, community organisations, businesses and individuals can work closer together to achieve their vision for Singapore.

For example, to uplift lower-income families, the youths recommended for:



## **Individuals to step up as community befrienders to journey with lower-income families and help improve their access to support.**

Students with the relevant knowledge could volunteer as befrienders to share financial knowledge and skills with families where needed, serve as a resource person to link families up with suitable financial literacy courses or asset-building schemes, and formulate an action plan with families towards their financial goals.



## **Businesses, such as banks, to provide more financial products and services that incentivise lower-income families to build up savings.**

These financial products could be designed to give higher rewards to families who did their part to save up, such as dollar-to-dollar matching for money put into savings accounts. Content creation companies can also share stories to highlight the skills and contributions of lower-income workers, who provide essential goods and services that keep society functioning.



## Government to increase access to social support through digital means.

For example, by enhancing the current SupportGoWhere portal with a consolidated application feature that would allow users to conveniently apply for multiple schemes through a single application.

Further details on the youths' recommendations can be found on MSF's website.



**We continue to remain open to feedback and ideas.**

We welcome more inputs so that we can continually re-examine assumptions, review current policies, and consider better solutions to advance the interests of Singapore and Singaporeans.



**We will provide more platforms for individuals and groups to contribute their views and ideas.**

In May 2023, we launched youth panels to give young people the opportunity to play an active role in co-creating and reviewing policies. The inaugural youth panels will look into financial security, careers and lifelong learning, digital well-being, and environment and sustainability. We look forward to hearing their policy recommendations.

Just as we stay open to different views and ideas, we hope that individuals and groups also understand that not all ideas can be accepted by the Government, or by other Singaporeans. In such cases, we will explain our considerations, and we may well have to agree to disagree.

There may also be instances where we have consensus on the final outcomes and objectives but differing views on the means to get there. Such differences are not so fundamental, because our ends are the same, and it is a matter of working out the best approach to take.

We will be practical and pragmatic in such situations by looking at the data and evidence, considering what works best given our current circumstances and context, and making adjustments wherever necessary.



**We want more Singaporeans to get involved in supporting their fellow citizens and shaping the character and life of the places they live in.**

It could be through looking out for an elderly neighbour who is living on their own, providing useful feedback on municipal services through the OneService app, or designing and co-creating a new playground or amenity in the neighbourhood. These are all concrete ways in which each of us can contribute.



**We recognise that there are some areas where it may be better for the Government to step back and allow more space for citizen participation.**

We will therefore introduce new ways to promote civic participation. We will also support more ground-up efforts by Singaporeans to shape and improve their communities.



**I want to use the youth panels to share my perspectives while learning from fellow panellists about various complex issues. I also hope it unites like-minded people who are passionate about various topics, willing to share their voices and are committed to working towards a common good."**

*- Mr K Srivarshni, 20, Student, Nanyang Technological University (NTU)*



# Expanding civic participation in our neighbourhoods

The People's Association (PA) Residents' Networks led a series of conversations to understand how residents can be encouraged and supported to participate more actively in the community.

## PARTICIPANTS

**>600**

Residents and community partners

## CONVERSATIONS

**80**

Small-group conversations across 19 neighbourhoods

The conversations drew participants from different walks of life: working adults, retired seniors, students, youths, parents, community leaders, experienced volunteers, as well as those with little or no volunteering history.



- ▶ Participants shared their aspirations for their local communities and the roles they were ready to play. Many desired meaningful opportunities to pursue common goals — whether it is helping the needy or tending a community garden together — to foster a stronger 'kampung spirit' or simply to connect with fellow residents in their neighbourhood.
- ▶ Some shared their personal desire to give back. Others had expertise and skills that they wanted to contribute but did not know how and where to start. Participants were conscious of the evolving needs in communities with growing numbers of elderly, as well as of the less fortunate amongst them. A good number expressed a strong sense of mission to include the excluded and help the less privileged.
- ▶ Participants shared their diverse experiences of existing community initiatives, such as 'medical escort' services to accompany elderly neighbours to their medical appointments; 'share-a-skill' workshops to teach practical skills such as hair-cutting and repairing household appliances; and 'family volunteering' where participants can contribute to the community, learn good values and bond with their parents at the same time.
- ▶ The Residents' Networks will lean in to enable and support these aspirations in practical ways. In particular, they will work on empowering new resident volunteers to take ownership and advance meaningful causes they feel strongly about. In this way, together, we will build stronger communities in our neighbourhoods.





**We will establish the Singapore Government Partnerships Office (SGPO) to take the lead in engaging and partnering Singaporeans.**

The SGPO will facilitate interactions between contributing citizens and the relevant government agencies, and strengthen partnerships to shape a better Singapore.

We hope that Singaporeans make full use of the available programmes and platforms to do their part to care for and give back to our society.

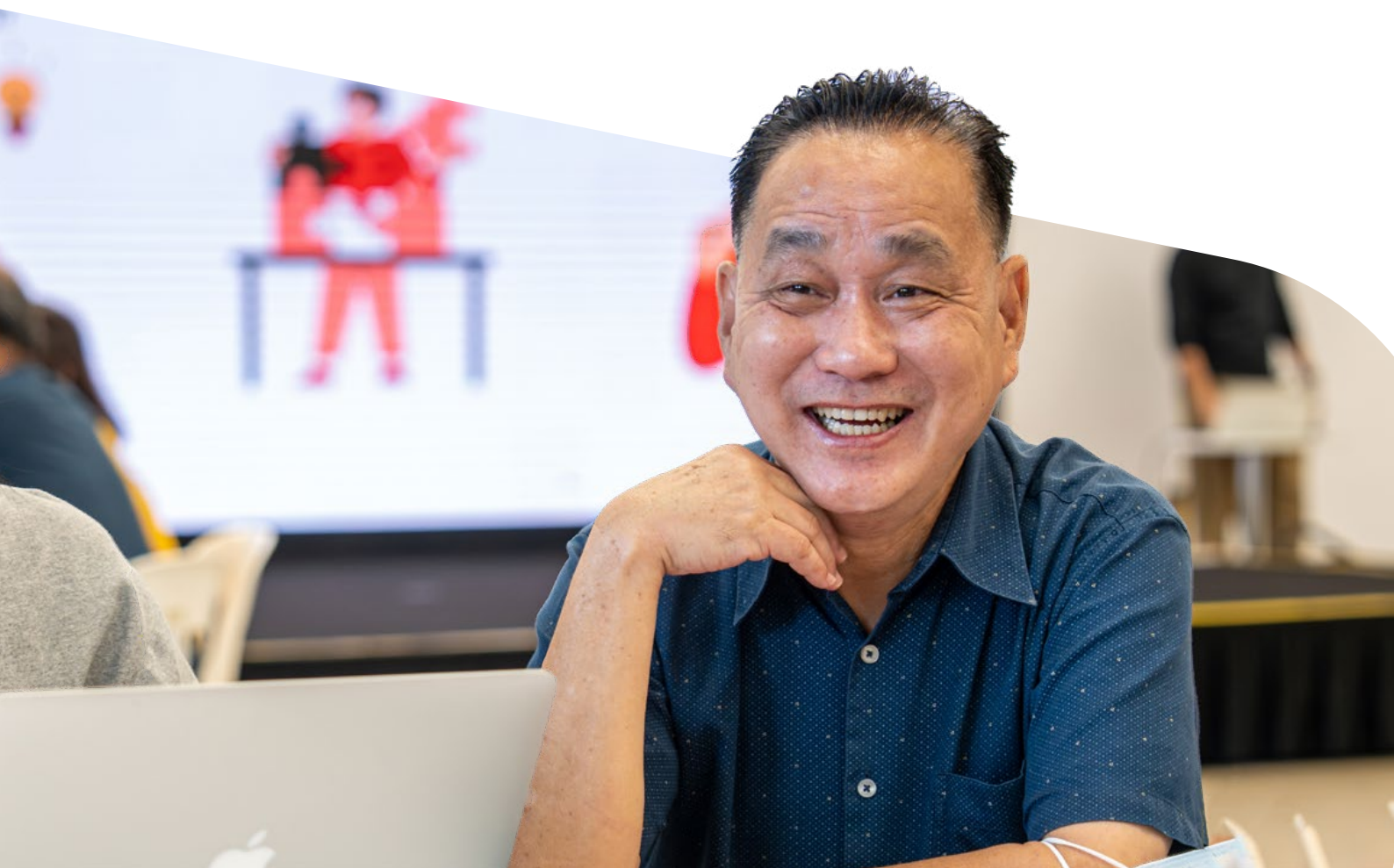
Every voice and every step counts towards strengthening our solidarity as a people. When we do our part, we will build a stronger, more resilient and more united Singapore.



**FORWARD** 

SG Cares Community Network Session  
(Ang Mo Kio and Yishun)

20 Oct 2022



# DOING OUR PART AS ONE UNITED PEOPLE IN A SNAPSHOT

---

The collective strength of our society depends on how well we care for each other, and how united we are as one people. Every one of us should know and feel that we have a stake in our society.

To facilitate Singaporeans', businesses' and the community's contributions towards our shared future, we will step up efforts in the following areas:



## Give back to our society

- ▶ We ask that Singaporeans step forward to give back to our society, especially those who have done well and benefited from the system. We can do so through financial donations, contributing our knowledge and experience, or working with community organisations.
- ▶ We will better connect donors to the needs of local communities and less privileged groups, while strengthening charities' capabilities to manage philanthropic contributions.
- ▶ We ask that businesses continually invest in their employees and staff, and provide a work environment that enables them to thrive. We also hope that businesses can do more to give back to the community.



## Strengthen our Singaporean identity

- ▶ We will continue to encourage more interactions between different groups, and expand our common ground and distinctive Singaporean identity.
- ▶ We call for Singaporeans to take conscious and deliberate steps towards appreciating, understanding and valuing other cultures and traditions.
- ▶ We ask that communities do their part to promote interactions between different groups of Singaporeans, to encourage the participation in racial harmony programmes in the community.



## Take collective action towards our shared future

- ▶ We will empower Singaporeans to take individual and collective actions to contribute to our shared future. This will be done through existing platforms and new civic participation programmes, as well as the soon-to-be established SGPO.
- ▶ We call for Singaporeans to take part in these programmes and contribute by resolving issues and challenges, together.