

MEDIA RELEASE

Social Service Summit 2018

NCSS Explores Piloting New Funding Models with Sector for Long-Term Sustainability

- *Sector will face challenges in sustainable funding as needs grow more complex*
- *Solutions lie in greater collaboration across 3P sectors and leveraging technology*
- *Two new digital initiatives launched to strengthen service delivery and facilitate collaboration between social service organisations*

SINGAPORE 24 July 2018 – More than 800 participants from the social service ecosystem, including social service professionals, corporates, donors and government leaders attended the annual **Social Service Summit** organised by the **National Council of Social Service (NCSS)** at the Fairmont Singapore today, with **Special Guest, Mr Desmond Lee**, Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister in the Ministry of National Development.

NEW FUNDING MODELS

At the top of the Summit agenda was in-depth discussion on **new funding models for long-term sustainability, with collaboration among the 3Ps central for the approach to work**. This aligns with one of the three thrusts of the Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST), a five-year roadmap launched last year, with the vision to empower every person to live with dignity in a caring and inclusive society.

In setting the context for future funding challenges, **NCSS Vice-President Ms Anita Fam** highlighted that as societal needs become more complex, the demand for social services will grow. One of the key recurring challenges identified by social service organisations is the difficulty in finding sustainable ways to fund their programmes and operations.

An enhanced ecosystem can address these challenges by attracting funding, driving better resource allocation and improving social returns. To achieve this, the funder community

needs to be bigger; funds need to be better matched to needs; and social purpose entities need to improve and sustain outcomes.

A variety of funding instruments were explored at the summit. These went beyond traditional grants, and included less commonly used instruments in Singapore, like social impact bonds, blended finance, social impact investing, loan guarantee and endowment funds.

Industry expert, Ms Chew Seow-Chien, Vice-President, Bain & Company, Southeast Asia, guided participants through some of these innovative and fit-for-purpose instruments that would help to diversify and grow funding streams, as well as information platforms that would encourage 3P (People, Private, Public) collaboration and facilitate more impactful giving.

COLLABORATION AND LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY ARE KEY

NCSS CEO, Mr Sim Gim Guan urged all stakeholders across the 3P sectors to take collective action. He said: “Building a robust and more sustainable social service eco-system requires us to work together. It is only in collaborating with one another that we can achieve bigger and more impactful outcomes than if we were to do it on our own. We should look beyond the current mode of operating to harness the expertise, resources and innovations. National Council of Social Service will share these opportunities for collaboration across the people, private and public sectors. For organisations in the sector that are already doing so, they inspire others to follow suit. We need to keep our eyes on our vision to empower every person to live with dignity in a caring and inclusive society.”

NCSS is leading new initiatives to support the sector in collaboration and leveraging technology. For example, **Project DonateNow!** was led by NCSS to encourage the sector to adopt contactless payment technologies in their fund-raising drives, to keep pace with Singapore’s move to becoming a Smart Nation. Launched three months ago, more than 70 organisations have participated in the initiative. Adopting contactless payment technologies like GrabPay, FavePay and other payment vendors for their fund-raising drives, social service organisations will benefit from reduced administration costs, better governance, tighter security and improved donation tracking.

Philanthropists are engaged through a regular platform using research insights. Community Chest, the fundraising and engagement arm of NCSS, explored venture philanthropy with

various partners to kickstart, **ELEVATE**, an initiative which aims to empower youths using the vocational skills they are trained in, to serve the less privileged communities. To play the role of mentors and facilitators, ELEVATE connected with partners in the private sector, institutes of learning and social service organisation.

NEW DIGITAL INITIATIVES LAUNCHED TO FACILITATE COLLABORATION

Two digital initiatives to facilitate collaboration and strengthen service delivery were launched at the Summit.

The **Social Service Navigator** (www.ncss.gov.sg/navigator), a one-stop online portal **developed by NCSS**, will offer information on social service programmes, schemes, and policies in Singapore, by locality, service users, organisations, and programme type. As the sector adopts an integrated and holistic approach to the varying needs of service users, it will help social service professionals find resources to support their daily work. The platform is also useful to locate potential partners, facilitate collaboration and ground-up initiatives, while working to reduce duplication of services as well as identify potential service gaps.

Mr Mohd Ali Mahmood, CEO of Singapore Muslim Women's Association (PPIS) said: "I find the Social Service Navigator a comprehensive tool for practitioners and public to identify social service programmes that are available in Singapore. I like that there are multiple search categories to locate the services we want. The locality map is also a helpful visual reference in navigating users to the agencies they are looking for. I especially find the tab which hosted the various legislation and policies very useful. Practitioners can use this as a quick guide and source of reference."

Another initiative launched was **iShine Cloud**, a **joint collaboration between Singapore Pools and NCSS**. iShine Cloud provides an integrated suite of sector-specific software via a secured cloud-based platform at charity pricing. The platform will include Microsoft Office 365, shared storage, accounting and human resource systems that users can access from their own devices.

Technology can help to improve productivity of backroom functions, freeing up staff resources that can be better optimised to meet growing and complex needs. Funding sustainability is as much about growing revenue as optimising current resources and managing costs.

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About National Council of Social Service (NCSS)

NCSS is the umbrella body for over 450-member social service organisations in Singapore. Its mission is to provide leadership and direction in enhancing the capabilities and capacity of our members, advocating for social service needs and strengthening strategic partnerships, for an effective social service ecosystem. Community Chest and Social Service Institute (SSI) are part of NCSS.

For more information, please visit www.ncss.gov.sg

About Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts

The Social Service Sector Strategic Thrusts (4ST) is a 5 year roadmap for the sector, co-developed by NCSS with stakeholders in the social service ecosystem – member organisations, service users, government, community, business leaders and civic-minded individuals. It is guided by a person-centred and holistic approach towards advancing the quality of life for individuals. The 4ST calls for active participation and collaboration so that everyone in the ecosystem plays a part to achieve a shared vision, where every person is empowered to live with dignity in a caring and inclusive society.

For more information, please visit www.ncss.gov.sg/4ST