

Asset-Based Community Development

SU:SS
SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Playbook for the Social Sector

April 2026

SG Cares

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Foreword

Professor Ang Hak Seng

**Director, Centre of Excellence for Social Good (CESG),
Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS)**

The Singapore social sector is experiencing significant trends and traditional community engagement strategies must contend with the new priorities and pressures from limited resources, lack of continuity in initiatives and rising citizen expectations.

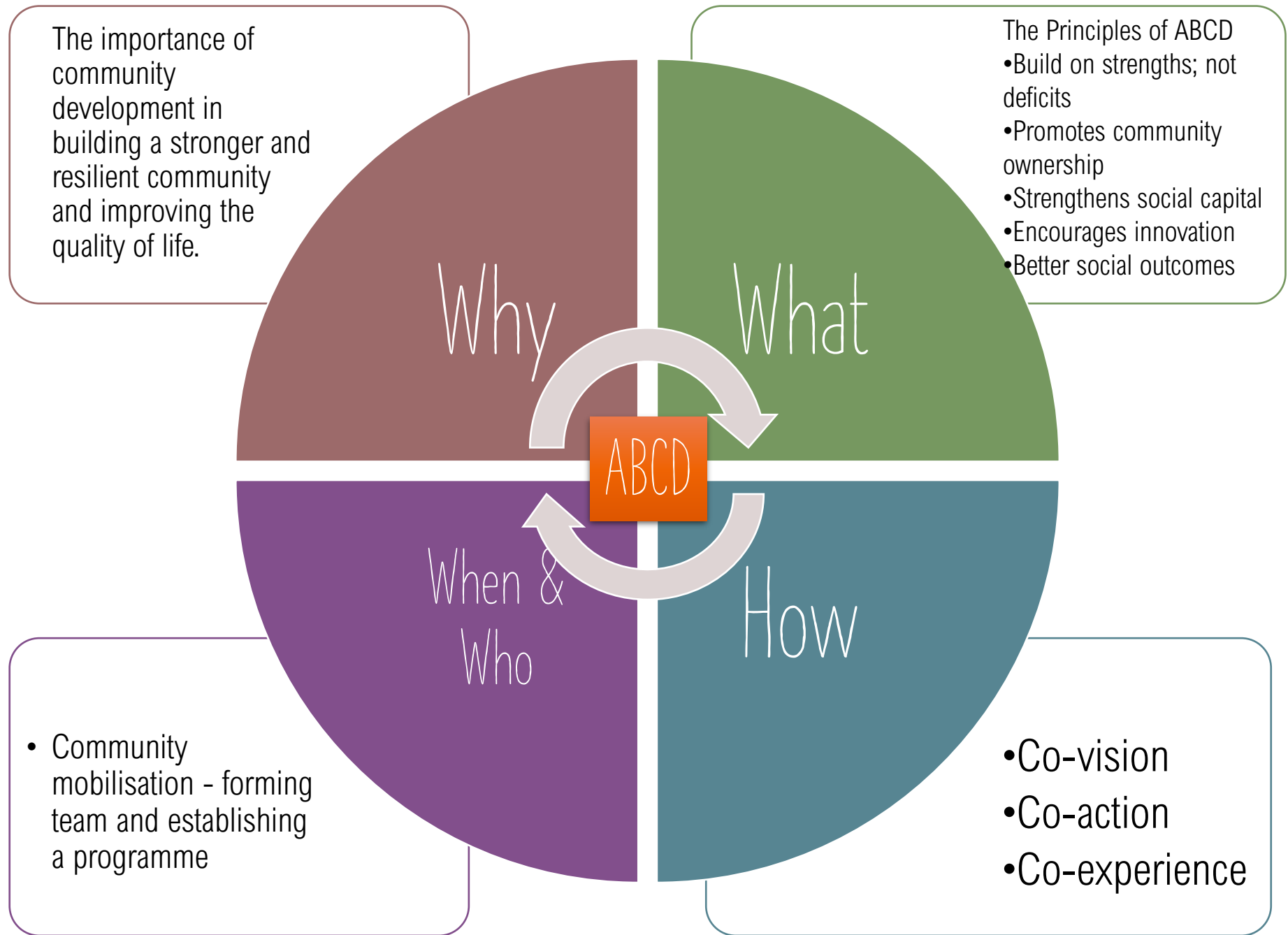
The Singapore-specific asset-based community development (ABCD) approach, leverages on the strengths and potentials of community assets towards a unified direction, whilst attune to national context and operational realities.

The Centre of Excellence for Social Good (CESG) is pleased to present this ABCD Playbook. I encourage Social Services Agencies (SSAs) and SG Cares Volunteer Centres (VCs) to use this playbook as a self-help resource guide in your community building effort. CESG will continue to support the capability building of the social sector through training and consultancy support.

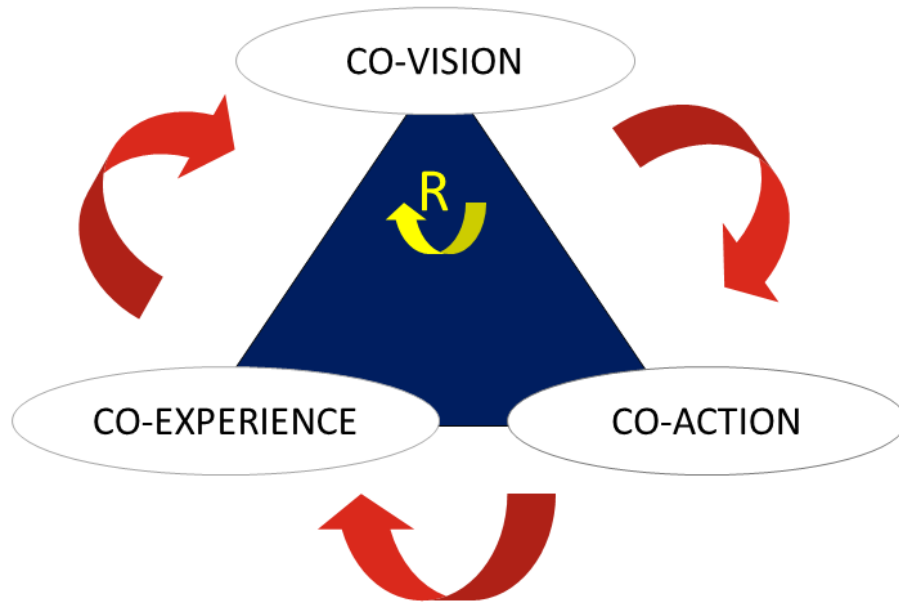
Objective

This playbook aims to serve as a self-help guide for non-profit organizations (including social service agencies and volunteer centres) to explore guided steps towards achieving the desired organizational and social outcomes.

The ABCD Framework



The How – ABCD Process



Co-Vision

Co-vision is the process of developing a shared vision for the community, a vision that is collectively shaped and widely accepted. This process is divided into two key stages: Community Ground Sensing and Community Co-Visioning.

Co-action

Co-action refers to the process of transforming a shared community vision into a concrete action plan that enables residents to work together meaningfully. This stage is divided into two key phases: community asset mapping and community mobilisation.

Co-learning

Co-learning refers to the collective reflection and learning process from the outcomes of a completed project. This phase ensures that experiences are retained, and future initiatives can benefit from accumulated knowledge. The primary tool employed during this phase is the After-Action Review (AAR).

*Case Study – SG Cares
VC@Serangoon's
Senior Safe Stride
Circle*

This case study is contributed by SG Cares VC@Geylang, Serangoon, operated by Care Community Services Society.

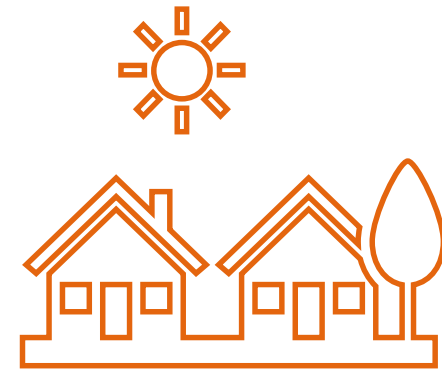
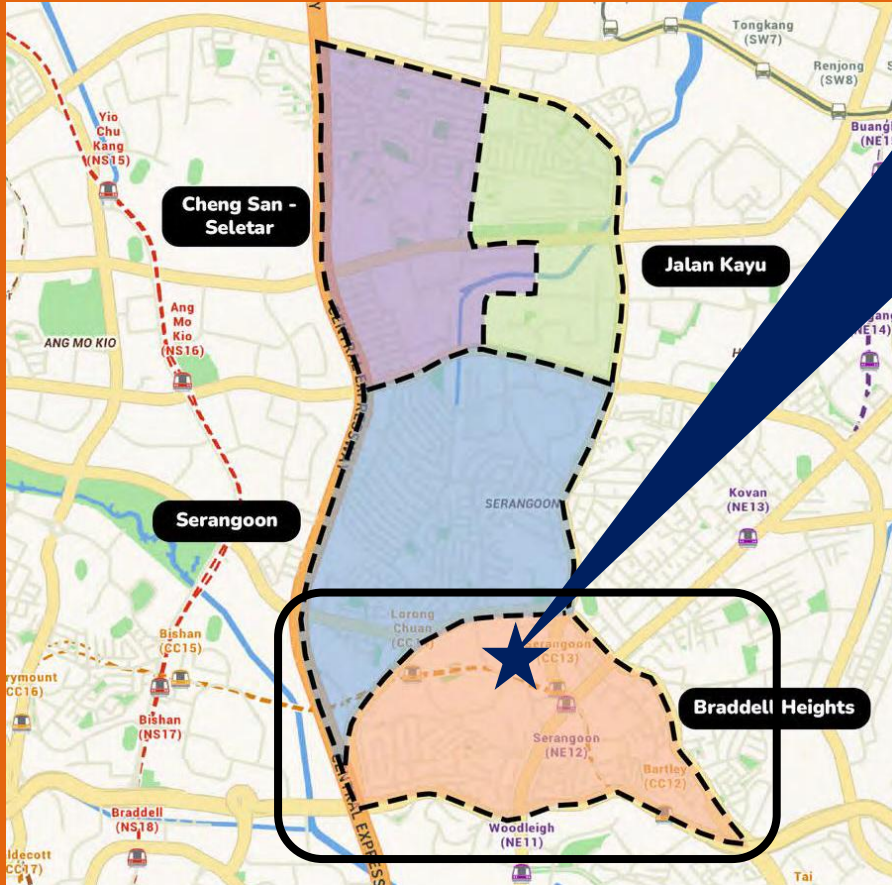


care community
services society
singapore



Cares
Volunteer Centre
@Geylang, Serangoon

Addressing Serangoon Town's Community Needs



The Silver Generation Office (SGO), through their Preventive Health Visits, identified a critical need in Braddell Heights Zone F, where many seniors with fall risks and past fall history were withdrawing from outdoor activities due to fear and isolation. This was flagged out to SG Cares VC @ Serangoon when they were checking in on critical needs of Serangoon.

Recognising that a traditional top-down approach would not suffice, the VC sought community-based solutions and partners.

The VC responded by developing the Safe Stride Circle – a community-led initiative grounded in Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) principles. The VC designed the framework and convened partners including People's Association (PA), Changi General Hospital, neighbourhood Active Ageing Centres (AACs), and local networks to form a strong support ecosystem. What began as SGO's identification of the issue has now evolved into an innovative, collaborative solution led by VC @ Serangoon to strengthen senior safety, confidence, and community ties.

The *common vision* was to tackle one of Singapore's most pressing ageing challenges – the social withdrawal and isolation of seniors – through sustainable, community-owned solutions that re-integrate them into their neighbourhoods and build lasting support networks.

Addressing Serangoon Town's Community Needs

While fall-prevention programmes already existed, SGO's data in Braddell Heights Zone F revealed a deeper issue: seniors were avoiding outdoor activities altogether, creating a cycle of deconditioning, isolation, and heightened vulnerability. This recognition shaped a vision for a programme that would go beyond fall prevention, draw on community assets, and create enduring connections.

From this shared understanding, the Safe Stride Circle was born – a community-led initiative pairing isolated seniors with trained local volunteers, addressing both immediate safety and the deeper need for social reintegration, while laying the foundation for a resilient, neighbourly support ecosystem.



Community Sensing: Understanding Seniors' Needs

Designing a Senior-Friendly Survey

Our survey is being meticulously designed with understanding of common psychological, physical and other barriers for seniors, helping to identify critical deterrents to walking and participation in active ageing activities among Singaporean seniors. It also integrates elements of risk education and awareness-raising.

Survey Features:

Short and concise format for ease of response, respecting seniors' time and attention spans.

Available in multiple languages (English, Mandarin, Malay, Tamil) to ensure inclusivity and accessibility.

Utilises simple checkbox and rating-based questions for straightforward data collection.

Includes an integrated conversion strategy to channel interested seniors toward sustained engagement with the Safe Stride Circle program.

Key Focus:

Understanding the influential 'push' and 'pull' factors that motivate or deter seniors from leaving their homes and engaging in physical activities, tailored to the Singaporean context.



Key Root Causes to be Explored:

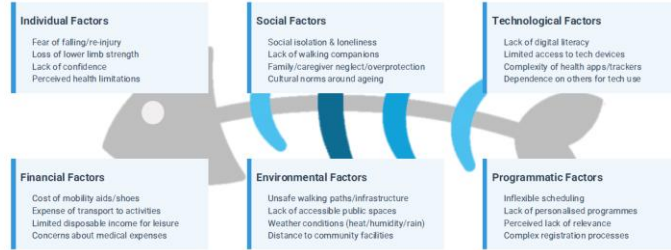
- Fear of falling/re-injury, leading to anxiety and activity avoidance.
- Psychological factors deterring walking including feeling disconnected/social isolation and lack of suitable walking companions or community support.
- Perceived lack of personalised support addressing individual mobility limitations or health concerns.

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The VC strategically deployed three core ABCD tools to transform community challenges into asset-driven solutions:

Root Cause Analysis: Fishbone Diagram (Senior-Centric)

This fishbone diagram visualizes and categorises the root causes of Singaporean seniors' disengagement from walking and physical activities, focusing on their unique challenges and perspectives, including technological, social, and financial factors.



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Community Sensing via Senior-Friendly Survey:

Multi-language, checkbox-based tool designed for immediate conversion strategy.

Purpose: Identify 'push' and 'pull' factors while educating seniors about risks and benefits.

How it leads to action: Real-time onboarding of interested seniors, direct referrals to AACs, and data-driven programme customisation based on identified deterrents and motivators.

Understanding Root Causes - Fishbone Diagram (Senior-Centric):

Categorised root causes of senior withdrawal across six domains (Individual, Social, Technological, Financial, Environmental, Programmatic factors), shaped from survey findings and partners' input.

Purpose: Move beyond symptoms to identify systemic intervention points.

How it leads to action: Targeted solutions addressing high-impact causes - pairing isolated seniors with community volunteers (Social), providing tech-free engagement (Technological), and creating accessible programmes (Financial/Environmental).

Community Asset Mapping | Braddell Heights Zone F

Leveraging Local Assets

Our asset mapping identified key community resources and their influence levels, using visual cues to represent relationship strength and resource capacity.

Key Partners:

- Braddell Heights CO/CCC/CCMC/People's Association (PA)
- Lead AAC: PCF Sparkle Care AAC @ Braddell Heights / PCF Sparkle Care Senior Care Centre @ Braddell Heights
- Walking aid sponsor: Pharmex (Yeap Medical)
- Training/expert partners: NHG, CGH Health Champion Programme, Wangers, SCDF, Silver Ribbon
- SGO as supporting partner
- NHG for future support (rollout in Mar 2026)
- [Future] Seniors - ASSETS - & residents in Braddell Heights



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Community Mobilisation - Findings-to-Action Framework:

Each tool generates specific, actionable intelligence that directly informs programme design, partner selection, and intervention strategies, ensuring community-owned solutions emerge from community-identified assets and needs rather than imposed external models.

Photo contributed by CCSS

The Safe Stride Circle programme mobilises three key stakeholder groups through strategic alignment around the shared goal of combating senior isolation:

Equip yourself with life-saving skills: Join our CPR-AED certification course

Why?

- Heart attack cases have risen by 55% over the last decade in Singapore from 2011 to 2021. (National Heart Centre Singapore, 2024)
- They are projected to nearly triple by 2050! (National University Health System Cluster, 2025)

HURRY!

SCAN HERE
Join Us NOW!

District	Venue	Date
Southwest	Yuhua CC, MPH	07 Sept 2025
Northeast	Buangkok CC, Function Hall 1	13 Sept 2025
Northwest	New Siong Central CC, Function Room 2	21 Sept 2025
Central	Jalan Besar CC, MPH	27 Sept 2025
Southeast	Bedok CC, MPH	28 Sept 2025

Time: 9.30am - 1.30pm

Limited to first 110 applicants per CC



COMMUNITY HEALTH CHAMPION WORKSHOP

Be the Change in Community Health!
Learn, share, and inspire.

The Circle of Care @ South East volunteer training programme empowers volunteers and staff with the health knowledge to lead and create positive change in the community.

LEARN PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO:

- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Mental Wellbeing
- Chronic Disease Management

SIGN UP NOW

23, 30 Aug & 6 Sep 2025
9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
chan.khai.hsien@singhealth.com.sg

Joo Chiat Community Club
405 Joo Chiat Rd
Singapore 427633

<https://for.sg/community-health-champion-workshop>



CCSS care community services society singapore SG Cares Volunteer Centre Singapore

Join us as a Walking Buddy for Safe Stride Circle @ Braddell Heights

Play a part in supporting and raising awareness of fall prevention efforts for seniors in the community, and in turn improve their mobility confidence and quality of life!



Who can volunteer?

- Volunteers aged 18 and above are welcome.
- No prior experience needed, training will be provided.

All onboarded volunteers will be required to attend the following, as preparation for the role:

- Basic First Aid and CPR certification
- Training in basic senior care
- Training in walking support and guided exercises

Your role

- Provide guidance and walking support to seniors
- Assist in administering surveys with seniors to assess their fall prevention knowledge and awareness of community resources

Duration of volunteer programme:
Aug/Sep 2025 to June 2026

Area of service:
Serangoon Town, Braddell Heights Zone F (Block 301-319)

Interested? Sign up here!

SCAN HERE
for.sg

For Q & A, select Walking Aid & Senior Walking Buddy.

For enquiries, please email serangoon_vc@ccsscsg.org

*Case Study – SG Cares
VC@Sembawang's
Application of Asset-Based
Community Development in
Sembawang Zone 4*

This case study is contributed by SG Cares
VC@Sembawang, operated by Blossom Seeds Limited



Blossom Seeds
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Cares
Volunteer Centre
@Sembawang



Addressing Sembawang Town's Community Needs

Two cases of undiscovered senior deaths in Sembawang were reported because of isolation.

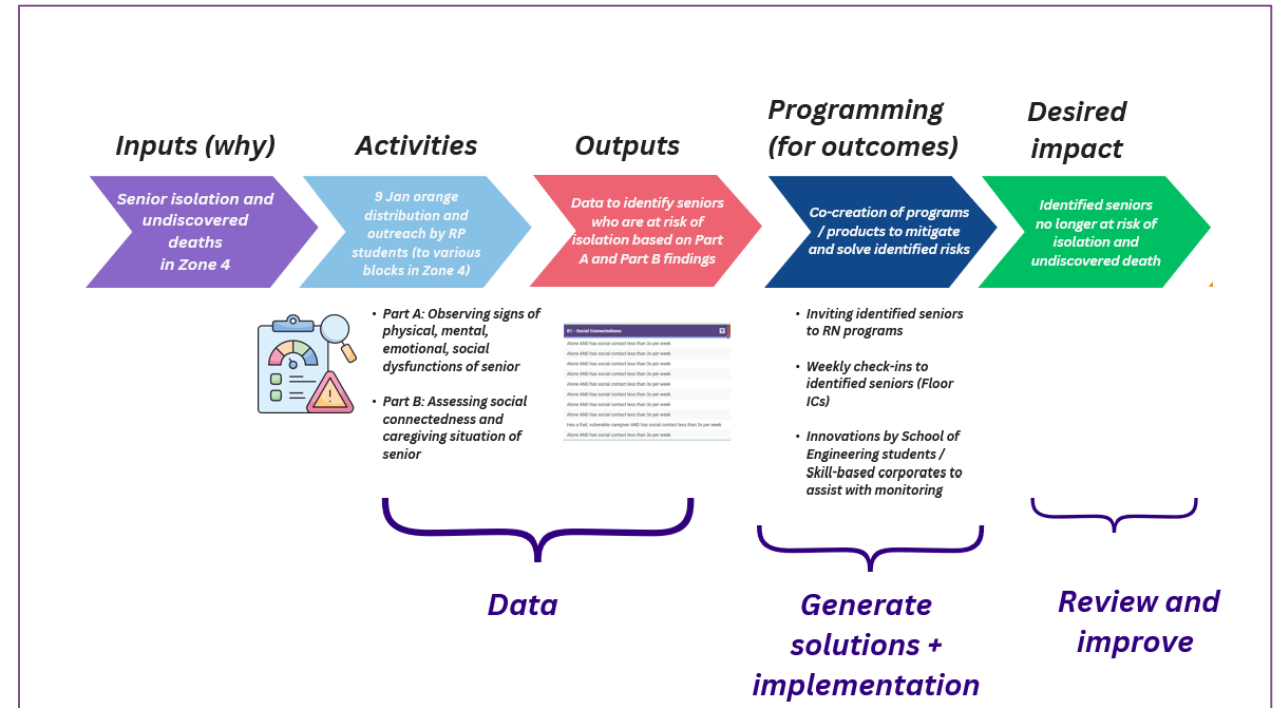
As Singapore's population rapidly aged, VC@Sembawang felt the importance to lay the groundwork in mitigating the issue of senior isolation and undiscovered deaths while also mitigating the healthcare system from becoming overwhelmed.

In addressing this situation, the VC desired a community project to identify seniors at risk of isolation, and to reduce such cases of undiscovered deaths.

Addressing Sembawang Town's Community Needs

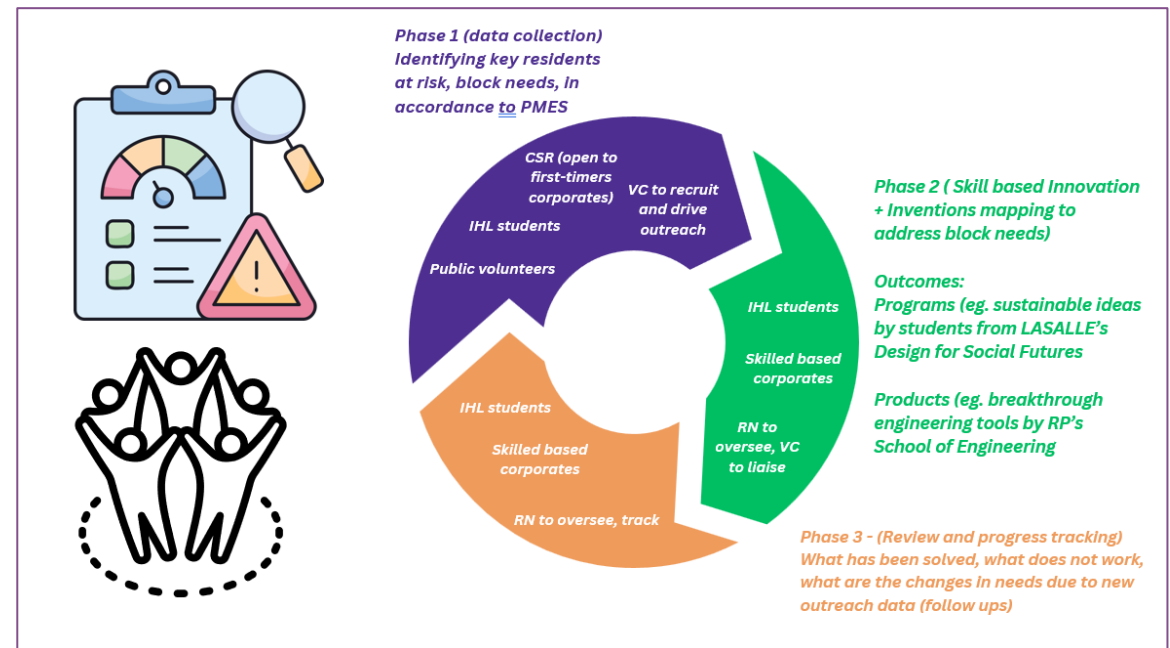


- VC@Sembawang worked closely with partners of all types, such as corporates, SSAs, IHLs and members of the public. By networking, collaborating and exercising asset mapping, they were able to identify and map important resources to support the project at different phases and the respective activities.
- Having identified their desired impact, they understood the need to co-create programs and initiatives to tackle the situation of isolated senior at hand. Through engaging partners in the outreach and befriending events, the VC was able to sense the ground and gather important data.



Mobilising the Community Assets

- VC@Sembawang also activated the strategy through the recent RP Orange Distribution event to seniors of the Sembawang community in Feb 2026.
- Recognising the block needs at EC Zone 4, they recruited volunteers from Republic Polytechnic, RN/grassroots, corporate companies to outreach via a designed google form that was able to help them identify physical, mental, emotional and social needs of the residents, understand how severe the situations were, as well as how socially connected they were.
- In the next phase of work, the Republic Polytechnic students will be engaged in innovative co-solutioning with the data collected. This will also bring about potential learning for students as they apply design thinking skills to real life situations. Students will reflect on the implementations and improve the programme along the way.



Learning points

Understanding the community's needs and assets is paramount for an effective mobilization and leverage of community resources.

Long-term meaningful partnership can be built by recognizing the aspirations and strengths of stakeholders and establishing clear and intentional roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the process.

The involvement of Residents' Network (RN) is key to the sustainability of the community building work while VC's role will evolve from facilitation to support in terms of volunteering resources and coordination.

Photo contributed by BSL



Acknowledgement

- Special thanks to the following SSAs for their contributions to the Asset-Based Community Development Playbook



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