

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**  
**Singapore's Fourth and Fifth Periodic Report**  
**Annex A & B**

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## Annex A

### RECENT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS ADDRESSING CHILDREN ISSUES

Cluster of Rights	Focus Area	Engagement Platforms	Range of representation
<b>Civil rights and freedoms</b>	1. Creating conditions for cyber wellness and safety	<p>Public consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Protection from Harassment Bill</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry of Law and the Ministry of Home Affairs consulted extensively with stakeholders such as AWARE, the Singapore Children's Society, the Coalition Against Bullying for Children and Youth, and lawyers who have represented victims of harassment.</p> <p>Some of these proposals were discussed at a conference organised by the Institute of Policy Studies in November 2013.</p> <p>Focus Group Discussions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better Internet Campaigns</li> <li>- Co-creating a Better and Happier Internet as part of SGFuture</li> <li>- Discussion with parents and interested individuals on media literacy and cyber wellness issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs)</li> <li>- Parents of school-going children</li> <li>- Youths</li> <li>- Teachers</li> <li>- Industry experts</li> <li>- Legal professionals</li> <li>- Educators</li> <li>- Social workers</li> <li>- Civic leaders</li> </ul>
<b>Violence against children</b>	2. Enhancing protection of women and children	<p>Public consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women's Charter (Amendment) Bill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women's groups</li> <li>- Families for Life Council, Law Society of Singapore</li> <li>- VWOs and public sector agencies that work with families on protection of women and girls</li> <li>- Heads of crisis shelters</li> </ul>
<b>Family environment and alternative</b>	3. Improving outcomes for children in	<p>Regular networking sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improvements to service delivery and programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chairpersons of Management Committees and</li> </ul>

<b>care arrangements</b>	alternative care placements	to meet changing needs of children in care	Heads of Children and Young Persons homes
<b>Disability, Basic health and welfare</b>	4. Extending educational provisions to children with special needs and disabilities	Public consultation - Third edition of the Enabling Master Plan <sup>1</sup> (beyond 2016)	- Special education schools - Persons with disabilities, their families and caregivers - Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs) in the disability sector
<b>Education, leisure and cultural activities</b>	5. Raising the quality of early childhood care and education	Public consultation - Introduction of a harmonised regulatory framework for kindergartens and child care centres	- Child care centre and kindergarten operators - Early childhood professionals - Parents/ general public - Early childhood industry partners
<b>Basic health and welfare; Special protection measures</b>	6. Facilitating pro-social youth development	Survey - Youth Perception Survey on drugs and Singapore's anti-drug policies  Targeted Consultation - Convened a multi-agency Task Force on Youths and Drugs, which commissioned a research study to solicit feedback on Preventive Drug Education efforts from youths - Established the Committee Against Youth Drug Abuse, comprising government, community and youth representatives, to continue monitoring the youth drug abuse situation - Established the Police-Central Narcotics Bureau-MSF-School (PCSM) Liaison Framework, which facilitates discussion	- General youth population - Students under 18 years old - Out-of-school youths between 13 to 18 years old - Youth-at-risk from 12 and 21 years old (in relation to NYGR) - Advisers appointed to inform the Youth Court on considerations which may affect the treatment of any child or young person; or orders that may be made regarding the child or young person brought before the Youth Court - VWOs - National Council of Social Service and MSF

<sup>1</sup> Refer to the Singapore's Initial report to the Initial Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

		<p>among stakeholders on strategic and operational issues concerning youth crime and drugs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Committee on Youth Guidance and Rehabilitation (NYGR) is also regularly updated on the youth crime and drug abuse situation by the Ministry of Home Affairs.</li> </ul> <p>Focus Group Discussions on National Youth Work Competency Framework.</p> <p>Engagement Sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Placement and rehabilitation options for children and youth Court-cases</li> </ul>	
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## **Annex B**

### **GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Coordination and National Plan of Action (Article 4)**

1. Planning and coordination at a national level are conducted through various inter-agency workgroups and committees, such as:
  - (i) The Inter-Ministry Workgroup on Child Protection (IWCP), which is chaired by Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), comprises representatives from government agencies, statutory boards and social service agencies. The IWCP sets the strategic policy direction for service planning and development in child protection, as well as defines the roles and responsibilities of various partners.
  - (ii) The Central Youth Guidance Office (CYGO) was established in 2010 and comprised staff from MSF, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Ministry of Education (MOE). CYGO co-ordinates early intervention strategies to prevent youth at-risk, from 12 to 21 years old, from committing offences and address systemic gaps.

#### **Dissemination and awareness-raising (Articles 42 and 44(6))**

2. Initiatives to disseminate the key messages of CRC include:
  - (i) “Celebrating Children” in 2011 which involved roving exhibitions at shopping malls, community libraries and other places frequented by children;
  - (ii) A series of hip hop dance engagement sessions in 2012 for children;
  - (iii) 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN Children’s Forum in 2012 where Singapore brought together 36 child delegates from ASEAN member states and the People’s Republic of China to discuss the principles under the CRC.
  - (iv) A series of storybooks, ‘*Is that Rainbowsaurus So Different from Us? and other stories*’ by local award-winning children’s author Emily Lim. The storybooks series was commissioned by MSF in 2013 to bring to life the four general principles of UNCRC<sup>2</sup>.
  - (v) The UNCRC Logo Design Competition and a Creative Arts Competition was organised to celebrate Singapore’s 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since accession to the Convention.
  - (vi) A collaborative mural were created by over 100 children, youth and adults, as part of a collaboration with South East Asian Games 2015. This, in addition to some of the top entries from the Creative Arts Competition, formed an art exhibition that continues to rove island-wide to raise awareness about the UNCRC.
  - (vii) UNCRC storytelling sessions, standees, and exhibition at Singapore Children’s Society (SCS)’s annual Walk for Our Children 2015.

#### **Training (Article 3(3))**

##### *Training of teachers*

3. The core curriculum for student teachers at the National Institute of Education (NIE) covers Ethos and Ethics for Teachers, Teachers’ Creed and The Desired Outcomes of Education. A key feature of these frameworks is the emphasis of teachers’ moral and ethical commitment to the rights of children. These are covered through compulsory courses and programme components such as a core course on the Social Context of Teaching and Learning, Meranti Project and Beginning

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on the storybooks can be found at:  
<https://www.msf.gov.sg/publications/Pages/United-Nations-Convention-on-the-Rights-of-the-Child-UNCRC.aspx>

Teachers Orientation Programme. In addition, NIE offers the following elective courses which cover some aspects of children's rights:

- (i) Basic Counselling Skills for Teachers in Initial Training Programme
- (ii) Introduction to Counselling Psychology
- (iii) Youths at-risk: From the Classroom to the Courtroom

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

### **Non-discrimination (Article 2)**

4. Under the Care and Share Movement, one of the events was a first-ever inclusive mass beach picnic involving children and youths with special needs, their families and the public.
5. Since 2013, the Purple Parade is held annually to support inclusion and celebrate the abilities of persons with disabilities. Participants from the public, private and people sectors came together at the parade to show solidarity for persons with disabilities. In 2015, the Purple Parade broke the Singapore Book of Records with 3,000 people donning purple spectacles together in support for inclusiveness.
6. Other public campaigns, such as the Disability Awareness Campaign in 2015 and "We Are Able! – Enhancing Possibilities, Celebrating Abilities" Campaign, are described in Singapore's Initial Report to the CRPD<sup>3</sup>.
7. In addition, a public education campaign 'See the True Me' was launched in June 2016 to build an inclusive mindset amongst the citizens where persons with disabilities are acknowledged for their abilities, viewed as active contributors to the society and accepted for who they are.

## CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM

### **Access to appropriate information (Article 17)**

8. There are measures to ensure quality broadcasts for children and protect them from injurious material. Such measures include the Media Development Authority's (MDA) Programme Advisory Committees, and classifications by MDA under the Films Act. In addition, parental locks or access with a unique PIN are required for subscription television services with more mature programmes or R21 (Restricted 21) content. For scheduled television and radio programming, mature content is scheduled at timeslots that are less accessible to children.
9. MDA also introduced age classification for video games in April 2008. MDA's VideoGames Classification system has two ratings - M18 (Mature 18) and Age Advisory "Suitable for 16 & Above". The game rated as M18 can only be sold to persons aged 18 years and above. "Suitable for 16 & Above", is an advisory rating with retailers being encouraged to exercise responsibility and not sell such titles to those below 16 years.

### *Internet*

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<sup>3</sup> See Article 8 of CRPD/C/SGP/1:p.35-36.

10. Online content services that target the Singapore market, such as those provided by Apple, Google and Netflix, carry local age ratings, consumer advice, and access controls on their services to aid parental guidance and protect the young from inadvertent access to mature content. For content services offering more mature content, such content is locked by default and can only be accessed with a PIN determined by the subscriber. Internet access service providers are also required to inform and offer optional Internet filtering services to individuals subscribing to their Internet broadband services. By the end of 2016, they would also need to offer a free trial of their Internet filtering service to new subscribers.

#### *Library services*

11. Library services for children are provided by the National Library Board's (NLB) 3 regional and 24 public libraries. The library's collections are constantly updated with local and overseas children works. For instance, the TumbleBook Library provides a collection of over 1,000 animated talking picture books that are popular among children, and that are accessible at all libraries and from home.
12. In April 2014, NLB launched its first Early Literacy Library (ELL), housed at Jurong Regional Library. The ELL provides resources such as educational aids and toys, and programmes that assist parents and educators to engage young children into reading. The curated Early Literacy collection is also available at the upgraded Sembawang Public Library and Pasir Ris Public Library.
13. In May 2014, NLB launched two additional mini-Mobile Library buses to bring books and reading programmes to the kindergartens and childcare centres in public housing estates. The 7.5-metre-long vehicles can serve up to 12 users at a time. Librarians manning these mini-Mobile Libraries also organise activities such as story-telling, arts and craft for the young readers. These complement a larger mobile library commissioned in September 2016 to serve students with special-needs or disabilities at their schools, as these students may normally find it difficult to visit public libraries on their own.

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**

### **Torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including corporal punishment (Articles 37(a) and 28, para.2)**

#### *Research agenda on violence against children*

14. The workgroup on Development of a Child Protection Research Agenda was set up under the Inter-Ministry Workgroup on Child Protection (IWCP) to identify research priorities and develop a research agenda on child protection. Priority research areas were identified through a multi-stage process:
  - (i) review of available literature,
  - (ii) development and administration of surveys,
  - (iii) analysis of survey responses,
  - (iv) consultation with selected professionals and experts, and
  - (v) finalisation of research agenda.

15. Over 350 professionals from social service, education, legal and law enforcement, health, and academic sectors and over 20 parents, foster parents and children responded to the survey and two focus group discussions were held with participants from the professional fields. The themes which emerged formed the priority areas for the National Child Protection Research Agenda for 2015-2019. They are:
- (i) Risk and protective factors relating to child maltreatment,
  - (ii) Design and evaluation of child protection or child welfare practices and interventions,
  - (iii) Tracking of child protection or child welfare outcomes,
  - (iv) Systemic issues relating to the child protection or child welfare services, and
  - (v) Views and experiences of service users in the child protection or child welfare sector.

**Physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims (Article 39)**

16. Specialised psychological programmes to address trauma in child victims include:
- (i) Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - an evidence-based treatment designed to help child victims and their non-offending parents/caregivers learn new skills to therapeutically process traumatic memories and develop effective coping and safety skills.
  - (ii) Combined Parent-Child Cognitive Behavioural Therapy - a treatment model designed to help child victims heal from their abusive experiences, empower parents to effectively parent their children in a non-coercive manner, and strengthen parent-child relationships.
  - (iii) Positive Psychotherapy Group – a specialised treatment programmes for intra-familial adult perpetrators of sexual abuse and adolescent sex offenders, targeted to develop the essential skills, knowledge, and awareness needed to change their sexual offending behaviour to prevent re-offending.

## **FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ALTERNATIVE CARE**

### **Family environment and parental guidance (Article 5) and Parental Responsibilities (Article 18)**

#### *Leave Schemes*

17. To better support working parents and encourage shared parental responsibility, leave schemes were enhanced and new schemes introduced.
- (i) From 2017, the 16-week *Government-Paid Maternity Leave (GPML)* scheme was extended to unwed working mothers. For the first two children, the first eight weeks are employer-paid, and the last eight weeks are funded by the Government. For third and subsequent children, the full 16 weeks are Government-paid. The Government-paid portion is capped at S\$10,000 (US\$7,350) per four weeks.
  - (ii) From January 2015, the *Government-Paid Paternity Leave (GPPL)* scheme introduced in 2013 was increased from 1 to 2 weeks on a voluntary basis. The second week was made mandatory from January 2017. The leave is Government-paid capped at S\$2,500 (US\$1,840) per week.
  - (iii) From July 2017, the 1-week of *Shared Parental Leave (SPL)* introduced in 2013 is increased to 4 weeks and extended to adoptive fathers. SPL allows a mother to share part



of her maternity leave (or adoption leave) with her spouse and is fully Government-paid, capped at S\$2,500 (US\$1,840) per week.

- (iv) *Paid childcare leave* was introduced in 2004 and enhanced in 2013 to allow working parents to spend more quality time with their children. Working parents with at least one Singapore Citizen child under the age of 7 years are eligible for 6 days of paid childcare leave per parent every year. The first three days are employer-paid, and the last three days are Government-paid (capped at S\$500 (US\$370) per day). Working parents with at least one Singapore Citizen child aged 7-12 years are eligible for 2 days of Government-paid childcare leave per parent per year (capped at S\$500 (US\$370) per day). Working parents with at least one child under the age of two years are eligible for an additional six days of unpaid infant care leave per parent each year.
- (v) From July 2017, *Adoption leave*, which was introduced in 2004 was increased to 12 weeks. For the first two children, the first 4 weeks are employer-paid, and the last 8 weeks are Government-paid. For third and subsequent children, the full 12 weeks are Government-paid. The Government-paid portion is capped at S\$10,000 (US\$7,350) per 4 weeks

#### *Divorced families*

- 18. To enhance the parenting capabilities of separated parents, the following schemes were introduced:
  - (i) The *Child-Inclusive Mediation and Counselling scheme*, introduced in 2015 to empower parents to continue positive parenting and restore cooperation within the family after the divorce. It involves consultation sessions with the children by a trained court counsellor and therapeutic feedback conversations and mediation thereafter with their parents.
  - (ii) The *Parenting Coordination scheme*, introduced in 2016, is a child-focused, post-order or post-separation dispute resolution process designed to provide practical assistance to parents in co-parenting, carrying out the Court-ordered parenting plan, and resolving parenting issues such as child access arrangements.
- 19. There are new pre- and post- divorce support programme run by the Divorced Support Specialist Agencies include 'Parenting Pact Programme' and 'Children in Between'. They are specially designed to provide psycho-education to parents on the needs of their children, reducing the acrimony between the parents and developing the children's resilience despite their parents' divorce or separation.

## **DISABILITY, BASIC HEALTH AND WELFARE**

### **Social security (Article 26)**

- 20. The ComCare assistance programmes administered by a network of 24 Social Service SSOs established island-wide<sup>4</sup> and include:
  - (i) *ComCare Assistance for Children - ComCare Student Care Subsidies* provides monthly fee subsidies for children aged between 7 and 14 years from lower-income families to attend student care centres while their parents are at work. These subsidies are also available to special needs students attending Special Student Care Centres.

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<sup>4</sup> Except for ComCare assistance for children which is administered at licensed child care centres, registered student care centres or eligible kindergartens.

- (ii) *ComCare Short- to Medium- Term Assistance* is targeted at low-income families and individuals who are temporarily unable to work (e.g. due to illness and care-giving responsibilities), unemployed or earning a low income and need temporary financial support.
- (iii) *ComCare Long Term Assistance* (also known as the Public Assistance scheme), is targeted at the most needy who are unable to work due to old age, illness or disability, have limited or no means of income, and have little or no family support. The support given includes monthly cash assistance, free medical treatment in polyclinics and government/restructured hospitals and access to government-funded social services such as befriending services. Recipients may also receive additional assistance for recurring healthcare or hygiene needs, or one-off purchases of essential items. Since 1 July 2016, a one- person household received a higher quantum of cash assistance of \$500 (US\$370) per month. Larger households and households with children also receive more cash assistance.

### **Standard of living (Article 27, para.1-3)**

21. To better support workers and elderly in lower-income families, such that the needs of children in vulnerable families are met, the Government introduced a variety of schemes including:

#### Workfare<sup>5</sup>

- (i) *Workfare Income Supplement Scheme (WIS)* provides an income supplement to help lower-wage workers meet daily expenses and a CPF top-up to help boost their retirement savings. WIS payouts can amount to around 30% of a low-wage worker's annual income.
- (ii) *Workfare Training Support Scheme*, provides training subsidies and grants to encourage lower-wage workers to upgrade their skills and employability, in order to find higher value-added and better paying jobs; and
- (iii) *Workfare Transport Concession Scheme*, helps to defray transportation costs faced of lower-wage workers who depend on public transport for work, and to enables them to pursue better job and training opportunities further away from their homes.

## **EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Rest, play, leisure, recreation and cultural and artistic activities (Article 31)**

#### *Grants and Bursaries for Arts and Cultural Programmes*

22. Many of the groups the Government support have programmes targeted at children and youth. These include:
- (i) Singapore Youth Chinese Orchestra and Singapore National Youth Orchestra, run by the Singapore Chinese Orchestra and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra respectively.
  - (ii) Kids' Philharmonic@SG, a non-profit organisation which provides opportunities for children aged 4 to 16 years to perform together as an orchestra at public concerts.
  - (iii) Young People's Performing Arts Ensemble, a Mandarin children's theatre group specialising in cross-talk and Chinese drama.
  - (iv) I-Theatre, whose work focuses on theatre for children and young people.

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<sup>5</sup> Workfare provides support to the bottom 20% to 30% of workers aged 35 years and above, as well as persons with disabilities aged 13 years and above.

- (v) The Finger Players and Paper Monkey, two groups that create puppetry-infused theatre for children.
  - (vi) Singapore Repertory Theatre's Little Company, a company producing quality plays for children ages 2 to 12 years and Singapore Repertory Theatre's Young Company, a two-year educational and performing platform for 16 to 25 year-olds.
  - (vii) W!ld Rice's Young and W!ld training programme, targeted at young people ranging from 17 to 32 years of age.
  - (viii) Pandemonium Theatre's musical theatre workshop and playwriting programme, Triple Threats and Play Right respectively, which all target teenagers and young adults.
  - (ix) Singapore Drama Education Association, which promotes the use of drama for education through training programmes for arts educators and the biennial "Celebrate Drama" festival.
  - (x) Frontier Danceland, which engages emerging youth dancers through its PULSE Programme, a year-long programme designed to nurture talented young dancers through rigorous weekly contemporary dance training.
  - (xi) Odyssey Dance Theatre's Arts4youths division, which provides dance enrichment programmes.
  - (xii) Arts Fission, which presents an annual Young People Environmental Dance-Theatre Production which provides opportunities for children to experience a professionally staged production where they perform alongside the company's professional dancers.
  - (xiii) O School Ltd, which organises Super 24, a dance competition that aims to bring together dance interest groups from across all levels.
  - (xiv) The Royal Dance Off, which organises contemporary dance programmes for youths.
  - (xv) Singapore Dance Theatre, which performs a children's ballet at least once a year targeting pre-primary and lower primary students. The company also provides pre-professional training for youth aged between 10-19, through the Ballet Associates Course and the Scholars.
23. Beyond the arts sphere, the Youth Expedition Project grant supports to youth from educational institutions and registered organisations to embark on Service-Learning projects that involve communities in ASEAN, China, India and Singapore. In addition, NYC administers the Singapore Youth Awards, which seek to recognise outstanding contributions made to society by youth and inspire other young people to greater achievements.

*Programmes by the National Heritage Board (NHB) for Children and Youth*

24. One of NHB's new heritage education programme is Singapore's Little Treasures (SLT), which is dedicated to early learning in museums and organised in partnership with the ECDA. SLT consists of heritage lessons in school and museum visits for pre-schoolers to learn about Singapore's multi-cultural heritage through specially curated artefacts inspired by the National Museum of Singapore's collection. These artefacts are packaged in mobile "trunks" and come with teaching aids and ideas to support educators in creating learning experiences in their classrooms.
25. Since 2014, NHB has been working with pre-school educators on Innovation Guidance Projects in the National Museum of Singapore and our three Heritage Institutions - namely, Indian Heritage Centre, Malay Heritage Centre and Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall. For 2016, the Education & Community Outreach Division will venture into the Peranakan Museum to explore multiple ways for early learners to investigate Singapore's rich multicultural roots.
26. NHB also launched the Heritage Explorers Programme in 2016 which enables primary school students to experience first-hand what it is like to be a curator, historian, designer, educator and ambassador. The programme aims to raise awareness of personal, community and national

heritage amongst primary school students through creative role-playing, with a focus on creating enjoyable heritage experiences for our young. It complements the learning of Social Studies, National Education, and CCE in schools, while also emphasizing school-parent partnership, and greater parent-child bonding.

27. NHB's Heritage Centres have also developed several programmes aimed at fostering greater youth engagement in the heritage sector. For example, the Sun Yat Sen Nanyang Memorial Hall (SYSNMH) trains secondary school students to provide guided tours to members of the public. Through this programme, they will learn presentation skills and guiding skills for the public.
28. The Heritage Conservation Centre also conducts guided tours of its conservation and storage facilities for youths from secondary schools, junior colleges and polytechnic. These tours provide the youths with an insight into career opportunities in the heritage and culture sector.
29. ECO runs Heritage on the Move, a community engagement programme that brings exhibitions on Singapore's multi-cultural heritage to the community. Each exhibition is made modular to travel to different public spaces such as schools, libraries, community events and shopping malls throughout the year. Currently there are more than 10 travelling exhibition titles that provide opportunities to learn about Singapore's heritage.
30. Children with disabilities or special needs and youths at risk are not left behind as there are programmes designed with the interest and capability of these children in mind. Through the heritage programmes, NHB aims to enhance social skills and provide quality educational experiences through conversations inspired by objects from the museums. Examples of some of the programmes offered under HeritageCares includes a guided tour of the Jubilee Walk in 2015, which brings the children and their families through various sites in the Civic District which is of historical importance in Singapore, using the Family Time Activity Sheet and a workshop titled *Festival Through Stamps!* which showcases the festivals celebrated by the different diverse communities in Singapore through the use of stamps.

## **SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES**

### **Sale, trafficking and abduction (Article 35)**

31. The four outcomes under the National Approach launched by the Inter-agency Taskforce on Trafficking-in-Persons are:
- (i) *Prevention*: A public that is aware of TIP crimes and actively takes steps to prevent, combat and suppress TIP; government officials and stakeholders who are well-trained, competent and professional in identifying and dealing with TIP cases.
  - (ii) *Prosecution*: An effective end-to-end criminal justice response to TIP crimes, involving comprehensive investigations and prosecution of all offenders who may be involved in trafficking or the exploitation of victims.
  - (iii) *Protection*: An appropriate victim care and support framework that looks after the needs of all victims of trafficking.
  - (iv) *Partnership*: A strong ecosystem comprising both domestic and international stakeholders to put forth a whole-of-Singapore response against TIP