

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 18 SEPTEMBER 2021, 1215 PM**

## **SCWO proposes to name public spaces after Singapore women to honour their contributions in its report following the Conversations on Singapore Women's Development**

**Singapore, 18 Sept Saturday 2021** – The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) has released their Report following their Conversations on Singapore Women's Development sessions.

### **Public Spaces Naming Proposal**

The SCWO proposes the naming of public spaces, including gardens and roads to reflect the central role that all Singapore women have played in our society and nation. In the proposal, possible public spaces are also identified. The proposal further suggests to feature women who have made significant contributions such as women from the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF). It would be fitting in 2021, as we celebrate SG women and put together policies, to honour our Singapore women for their contributions to Singapore by dedicating or naming public spaces after them.

### **Conversations on Singapore Women's Development – Report and Recommendations**

The SCWO held a total of three Conversations on Singapore Women's Development sessions as well as an additional follow up session that was jointly organised with the Ministry of Social and Family Development. More than 300 people, from over 60 organisations across various sectors and industries, took part in these sessions, which were held between October 2020 and May 2021. The report has separated the responses from the Conversations into issues that women face across the four domains - workplaces, homes, in the community and schools.

The report also highlights potential solutions to these issues that were brought up during the conversation sessions. These include solutions like encouraging men to take up caregiving responsibilities in the home to support their wives; mandating online safety education for girls in schools; replacing current job requirement policies with more gender-neutral concepts; and presenting community-based support networks for vulnerable women in underrepresented groups.

One key point that was brought up in multiple conversation sessions was the importance of men as allies and critical contributors in our move towards women's development. This has shown that there is overwhelming support for men's involvement and that Singapore women believe that it is just as important that we include men in these discussions.

## **Member Organisations' support to women at every life stage**

Aside from the SCWO, many member organisations have also initiated programmes aimed at supporting women in all the four domains mentioned above. For example, NTUC's Women and Family Unit – a long-time member of the SCWO – is running programmes like Passion to Profit, ReImagine Career Fair, and Progressive & Safe Workplaces for Women. Meanwhile, the People's Association – Women's Integration Network (PA WIN) Council has plans to work with agencies, grassroots organisations, and community partners to run programmes that will provide better support for caregivers of elderly persons.

On top of these, there are numerous other programmes run by SCWO's many member organisations following a consensus that, as organisations that represent Singapore women, they should be at the forefront when it comes to women supporting women. All of their initiatives are also in line with SCWO's aim to support women at every life stage – from young to at work, at schools, and at homes.

## **Improve women's representation on Boards – BoardAgender's report**

In SCWO, BoardAgender is one of the signature initiatives driving strong thought leadership on women and women leaders. As part of the report, they had their own submission to the panel, which covered their views on where Singapore is now, current barriers to progress, what has worked well in other markets, as well as their recommendations on what can be done to further support having more women on boards.

Based on their findings, BoardAgender recommended a more concerted effort and a more collaborative ecosystem approach. This includes building a sustainable pipeline of next-generation board-ready women as well as supporting our current group of board-ready women directors. They also recommended a stronger nomination process be implemented by nomination committees, one with more transparent guidelines and criteria, alongside other suggestions to improve the board-level leadership environment.

SCWO believes that with collaboration between the government and the people, Singapore can work towards making the ideals of 'Equal Space, Equal Voice, and Equal Worth' for Singapore women a reality.

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*Attached: "Conversations on Singapore Women's Development" - SCWO's Report*

## About SCWO

The **Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO)** is the national coordinating body of women's organisations in Singapore. We have more than 50 Member Organisations representing over 500,000 women in Singapore. Together with our members, we seek to promote the ideals of '**Equal Space, Equal Voice and Equal Worth**' for women in Singapore.

**Equal Space:** SCWO believes men and women in Singapore should have equal space in the **home, institution, workplace and community**. Women should be able to **live in a safe space**, without having to fear about being discriminated against, or fear of violence and threats to their safety

**Equal Voice:** SCWO believes that women should have the **right to speak** about issues affecting them and be **equally represented** in leadership positions. Women, regardless of their social status, marital status, and jobs, should be **equally heard**

**Equal Worth:** SCWO believes that all women should be **equally recognised** for their contributions to society and **be respected and treated equally**. Women should be **equally compensated** for work of equal value as their male counterparts. Disadvantaged women such as single mothers and migrant spouses should have **equal rights and be given the same benefits** as other mothers

SCWO provides opportunities, platforms and services that empower and support women across the various stages of life to fulfil their fullest potential, from programmes that inspire and educate younger women and girls such as the Women's Register and Inspiring Girls, to those targeting older women through advocacy work by the **SCWO Ageing Taskforce** which aims to raise awareness on the gendered phenomenon of ageing.

The **Women's Register (WR)** is a platform for networking, inspiration, community engagement and education that allow young women to learn, support and receive guidance from other women in the community. Public Education and Outreach to schools and organisations are done actively through the **Inspiring Girls** programme, by connecting young girls with empowering female role models and introducing them to the full variety of careers, and through the **Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF)**. SWHF recognises and celebrates the outstanding contributions of women in Singapore across all field of endeavours. **BoardAgender** is dedicated to advancing more women into senior leadership roles and boardrooms in Singapore.

**Maintenance Support Central (MSC)** empowers women with knowledge pertaining to their marital rights and provides them with all-round support by partnering with the public and private organisations to provide services such as free legal consultations on Family Law, and public education talks. **Star Shelter** aims to provide a safe temporary refuge for women and their children who are survivors of family violence regardless of race, language, creed, or religion, empower them to manage and take responsibility for their lives, and assist them in rebuilding their lives free from violence.

SCWO strives to empower women holistically, to support women at every life and career stage and this is achieved by the close collaboration and cooperation with the SCWO's member organisations, as well as the public, private and people sectors to co-create solutions to empower women in Singapore.

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