

## **Programme launched to help Tampines residents become more resilient**

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SINGAPORE: Residents in the Tampines GRC have a comprehensive programme to help them stay resilient in a downturn.

Called the Tampines Together Programme, it aims to make it easier for residents to find jobs and get help from various social assistance schemes.

Under the programme, residents who cannot find jobs get help to set up stalls to sell their goods at the weekend market.

Singapore's National Development Minister and MP for Tampines GRC, Mah Bow Tan, said: "(The programme focuses on) residents helping residents -- if they know of fellow residents who need help, point them in the right direction and help them to fill up a form.

"I think we have more than enough schemes already. It is now reaching out to the people and making sure that those who need the help get the help."

Meanwhile, a survey by the Institute of Policy Studies, a local think-tank, has shown that those in their prime years of between 30 and 39, and those with low household income, felt more affected by the economic downturn.

Eighty per cent of the 1000 surveyed said they would rather rely on themselves than on government assistance.

On the subject of impact on livelihood, while the majority was not affected, those in the age groups of 21 to 29 and 40 to 49 felt they were worse off on savings and income.

More of those in their 20s had adjusted marriage plans while a higher number in their 30s had adjusted plans to have children.

Survey respondents added that they could cope for eight-and-a-half months if they lose their jobs, but those aged 21 to 29 and those in the low income group had the shortest average time of being able to cope in the event of losing their jobs.

The report concluded that on the whole, there was a notable willingness to make personal sacrifices and accept pay cuts in the worst case scenario.

But the tolerance for a pay cut ranged from the lowest average of 34 per cent of previous pay for those in the low income bracket to an average of 47 per cent of previous pay for those in the high household income bracket.

Thirty-three per cent felt better off personally with the government measures but more respondents in the 20 to 29 age group felt the measures made no difference.