

**Civil Society Sector Workshop Report**  
**Changi Village Hotel Quad 1: 25 – 26 June 2012**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Introduction

1. IPS Prism is a platform for Singaporeans to think about the future and how we will govern ourselves in 2022. A series of seven workshops were conducted over June 2012. This is a report of the workshop featuring participants from the civil society sector.

2. At the workshop, participants were invited to form teams that convened to discuss how Singapore might evolve over the next 10 years and what the driving forces of change might be for various scenarios.<sup>1</sup>

### Method

3. All teams in the Civil Society Sector Workshop opted for the deductive approach to developing their scenarios. The scenarios were deduced from sets of driving forces that were deemed to be highly plausible in the future. By forming a matrix of these driving forces, each team produced at least four scenarios, with each scenario fleshed out by a narrative depicting the state of governance, and in some cases with hypothetical media headlines. Each team's presentation was followed by a discussion among all participants. Finally, the scenarios were put to a vote, to select the most plausible as well as challenging set.

### Driving Forces

4. Driving forces are defined as trends in the external environment that drive the plot of our scenarios, have an impact on the future and determine the outcomes. They are usually outside the immediate locus of control of one group or organisation, and would impact all the constituents in the system in one way or another.

5. The value system in Singapore provided one cluster of driving forces. Team 2 developed a set of scenarios that focused on the level of national pride as a driving force, while Team 4 focused on whether citizens would be driven by materialist or post-materialist values.

6. Economic growth provided another cluster of driving forces. Team 3 referred to the national growth strategy as one of its driving forces, with "inclusive growth" at one end of an axis, and "growth at all cost" at the other end. Team 4 used "state capitalism" and "market capitalism" to denote what the prime mover of economic growth would be a decade from now.

7. Another common theme in the driving forces was income distribution. Teams 1 and 2 built scenarios on this. Interestingly, at one end of the axis, Team 1 cited "low income disparity" with the caveat that average income would also be high in absolute terms, that is within the top 20% bracket globally on the basis of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

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1. Please refer to the Appendix for the list of participants.

8. Social integration was selected as a yet another driving force by Team 3, while Team 2 used the influence of media in its second set of scenarios. This was the first time that media has emerged in the Prism discussions.

9. The nature of the political system — an elitist single-party dominated one or an egalitarian multiparty system — was also selected by Team 1 as a driving force and Team 2 developed their first set of scenarios based on the question of what the quality of political leadership might be over the next decade.

### Winning Scenario

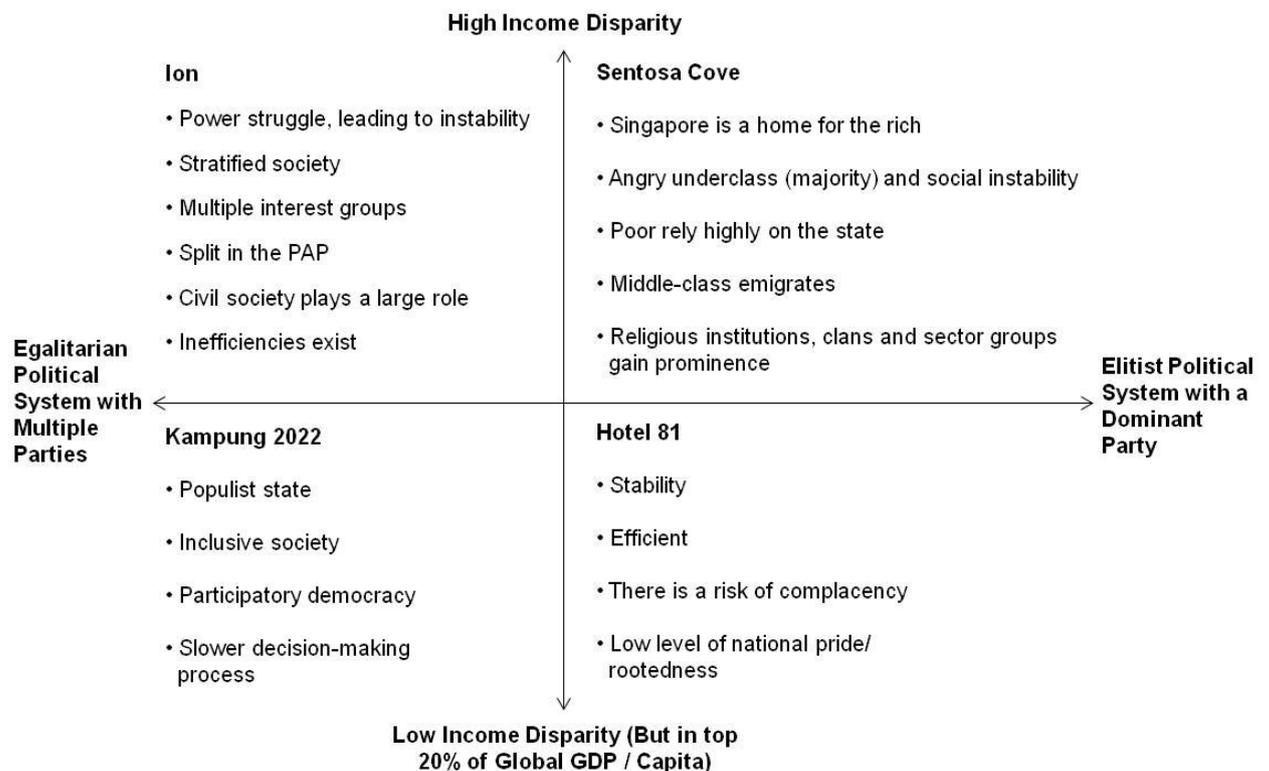
10. After a first round of voting, which resulted in a tie among four sets of scenarios, the set developed by Team 1 was selected in the run-off.

## THE SCENARIOS

### Team 1

11. Team 1 used the driving forces of income disparity and types of political systems — from an elitist system with a dominant party to an egalitarian one that has multiple parties — and created the following narratives to introduce their scenarios.

Figure 1. Team 1 Scenarios



## **Ion**

12. Sipping freshly brewed coffee while savouring a delectable blueberry pancake breakfast 56 stories above the bustling Orchard Road sidewalk, the resident within the Ion Orchard Residences is hardly bothered by the hustle and bustle on the street. This is the pinnacle of city living, where extravagance is just not enough. Below this gem of a home are luxury shops outdone only by the glitzy labels that they carry. Impeccably groomed shop assistants are on standby to serve customers the very moment they step into a shop. This is truly the realm of the rich and famous.

13. As we train our eyes lower, you will notice that Ion is more than the luxury that defines the upper levels. Like an iceberg, the luxurious facade is only a fraction of what we can see — an even larger base of shops such as Forever 21, Starbucks, New Look and even the public subway station are actually at its very core. Near the foundation of the building is the food court with stalls selling frightfully affordable meals and even a one-price store with a \$2 price tag for any item on sale. A happy situation? Hardly. The laymen gaze up in envy — so near, yet so far. This is the situation of multiple destinies in one destination, and there is a constant struggle to change one's destiny for the better.

## **Sentosa Cove**

14. Sentosa Cove, the home and playground for the wealthy, where the rich literally have an island to themselves in land-scarce Singapore. A sea divides the luxurious homes of the affluent and the shabby rental flats of the poor, and an even wider ocean of opinion separates the ruling elite from the struggling masses. Down-and-out Singaporeans beg for handouts outside the gates of the ultra-modern Parliament House and the Gurkha-guarded entrance to Sentosa Cove. Denied, they turn to god, cult figures or self-organised underground groups, ever mindful of the omnipresent political elites. Those in the middle class head for greener pastures in the long-time sleeping but now fully awakened economic giants of Indonesia, Malaysia and China. Sentosa Cove is the world's most desirable address, as the advertisement says.

15. The headlines Team 1 developed for the Sentosa Cove scenario are "Singapore needs more golf courses!", "PM: No more rental flats — work hard to keep up", "Radical consumer groups deregistered, members jailed".

## **Hotel 81**

16. Once upon a time, people lived in a very comfortable society, where all the decisions were made solely and quickly by the government. It was an efficient society and its people were comfortable with the status quo. They were relatively affluent, and the country was stable. Unemployment and school drop-out rates were low, and many students were able to successfully complete their education and obtain a degree. As they were ruled by a capable government, the people came to expect the following headline every year, "Temasek dividends to be paid out to all".

17. However, the people became complacent over time, lost their drive to improve and failed to realise that their neighbours were progressing faster than them. One day, the following headlines caught the people by surprise: “Major shipping line shifts to Port Klang from PSA port” and “Citibank sets up its regional headquarters in Iskandar”.

18. As a result of this, the government was left with no choice except to implement a series of reforms in the country. However, their ability to carry out these reforms was restricted by the human capital of the workforce, which had fallen as the workers had gotten complacent. Eventually, the level of alienation rose among the petty citizens, and the following headline was seen, “Turnout for the General Election at a record low”. The citizens had lost their sense of ownership of society, and no longer cared about how the society was functioning, leaving it in dire straits.

19. The headlines that Team 1 developed for the Hotel 81 scenario are “Survey results show that 70% of Singaporeans hold three or more citizenships” and “PM asks: Who is a true Singaporean?”.

### **Kampung 2022**

20. Once upon a time, there was a *kampung*. Everyone was poor but happy because everyone had some stake in how the *kampung* was run, and in how resources were shared among the *kampung* folk. People elected a headman who knew and was connected to them, but this did not mean that a headman had a pre-ordained right to preside over the *kampung*. He could be chosen from among a wide circle of villagers, and contestants respected the decisions of the villagers, whatever the outcome. When the village needed to make decisions, it involved everybody, as the villagers knew that if they could have the entire *kampung* on board, the chances of success would be much greater. However, sometimes these village meetings went on forever — they were long, dreary and exhausting because it was very hard to have all the villagers agree to one point of view. But, this was a price they were prepared to pay. One of the problems of having such an extensive consultation process was that decision-making could be painfully slow. The surprising thing though was that the people were prepared to act very quickly when the village was threatened.

21. It was a caring village, and no one was thrown out or fed to the crocodiles, even when they were very sick or could not make a living anymore. Sometimes, the village faced economic crises as reduced demand for their crops and goods occurred when other villages became hostile or did not wish to trade with them. In those times, the villagers were prepared to sit down to offer their ideas to save their *kampung*, and more importantly, to protect its independence. Everyone was prepared to chip in and to defend their right to a peaceful existence. The village was not as rich as its neighbours, but it was not prepared to pursue growth at all cost.

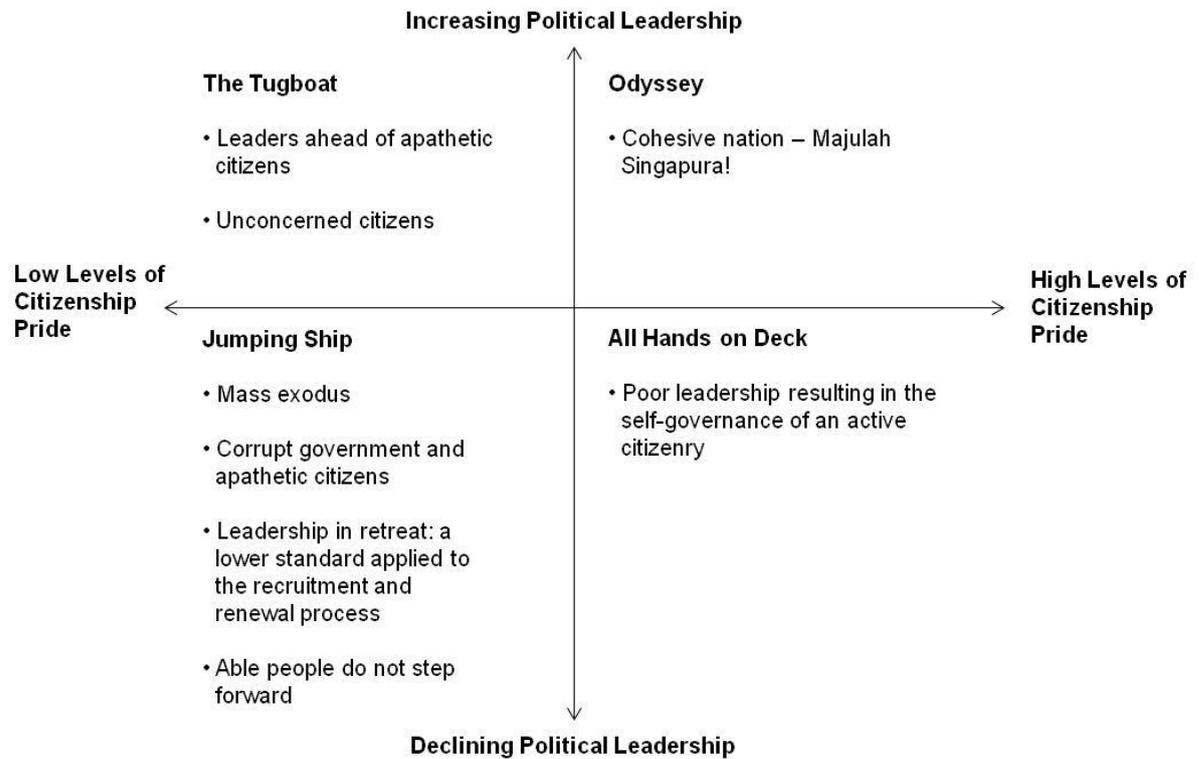
22. The headlines Team 1 developed for Kampung 2022 are: “Kampung to discuss government offer to build new road through the village”, “No decision

again on new highway”, “Kampung celebrates triumph at regional games” and “Kampung loses its top shuttler to neighbouring village”.

## Team 2

23. Team 2 produced two sets of scenarios, A and B.

Figure 2. Team 2 Set A Scenarios



## The Tugboat

24. The leaders in Singapore have started a drive to increase the level of national pride among Singaporeans. While Singapore has continued to grow rapidly, averaging 6% GDP growth per annum over the last decade, an increasing number of Singaporeans feel less committed to and less proud of their country. According to a recent IPS survey, 78% of Singaporeans said that they were only committed to Singapore if they could derive economic benefit from doing so, while 85% of respondents said that they would opt for dual citizenship once this was allowed.

25. This phenomenon is creating new problems for the Singapore government. More young Singaporean men are emigrating before the day arrives to enlist for National Service, while more overseas scholars are refusing to come back to serve their bonds. There are also fewer Singaporeans that are volunteering their time and expertise to serve the community. The People’s Association reported that volunteer participation in their grassroots activities has fallen by 60% over the past three years and they have had to hire cheap foreign labour to do much of the work previously done by volunteers.

26. Fewer Singaporeans have also come forward to serve in politics. The ruling party, which used to invite almost 1,000 candidates to their tea sessions just to select 20 new candidates to field in a general election, is now having trouble getting 100 potential candidates to turn up. The ruling party and government are considering raising the salaries of Members of Parliament, as well as waiving Certificates of Entitlement for purchases of cars and providing properties at a discounted price to future Members of Parliament to recruit more people to stand on their party ticket.

### **Odyssey: To Boldly Go Where No Man Has Gone Before**

27. Over the past two days, a group of protestors, now numbering 200 individuals including leaders from civil society, have been camped outside the gates of the Istana in support of the President's bid to get the government to reveal the size of Singapore's national reserves. Two and a half decades ago, another Singaporean President, the late Mr Ong Teng Cheong had tried to do the same but failed. The newly elected President, Mr R.S. Nathan, recently asked the government to open its books to the public and publish information on the official size of the country's reserves. The government released a statement saying that owing to accounting complexities, it would take more than six months for the Ministry of Finance to comply with President Nathan's request. This echoes the excuse given 27 years ago to President Ong when he made his request. Finance sector experts, including Professor Wan Too Thee, disputed this, saying that the Auditor-General's office has had the technological means to update the annual reserve figures on a quarterly basis since 2015. Observers have speculated that Singapore's national reserves now stand at about USD3.5 trillion. The police have not acted to clear the demonstrators from the Istana, even though it is clearly an illegal assembly. A spokesman from the Prime Minister's Office then announced the government would consider acceding to President Nathan's request.

28. The headline Team 2 developed for the Odyssey scenario is "Two hundred protestors outside the Istana refuse to budge, police uncertain what to do".

### **All Hands on Deck**

29. Ten electoral wards have been vacated within a six-month period due to deaths and resignations, two of which came from Cabinet Ministers who cited health reasons and the impossibility of managing their portfolios as a result of external demands and obstruction by their party. One of them is the Minister for the Environment, who was said to be unable to find the new landfill that has become necessary given the larger than forecasted amounts of waste generated in the past eight years. The PM has called on a civic environmentalist group to help solve the problem, and Mr Mujah Radman, Chair of the Singapore Relyah Marmad has said that his organisation would be able find an alternative site. However, Mr Radman, who is originally from Bangladesh and has recently become a permanent resident of Singapore, has fallen under investigation over allegations of falsifying the qualifications used in his application for permanent residency.

30. Political observers say that the long delay in holding the by-elections is caused by the ruling People's Action Party's inability to find enough candidates to contest these wards. They say that this is a growing problem faced by the PAP, as they can no longer offer low-risk political careers to the candidates that it wants to recruit.

31. The headline Team 2 developed for the All Hands on Deck scenario is "PM says nothing about 10 pending by-elections, insiders say the PAP cannot find enough candidates".

### **Jumping Ship**

32. The quality of political leadership has declined rapidly, with fewer talented leaders coming forward to serve in government. This has led to people of questionable character being elected to a corrupt government and an increase in cronyism and nepotism. The leaders are not in touch with the ground; they refuse to listen and are unable to connect with the public. Often, voices like those of the intelligentsia who have something to contribute are not given an opportunity to be heard. These people leave Singapore only to be replaced by foreigners who question the government even less.

33. This crucial lack of confidence in the political leadership and the exodus of Singapore's very mobile "best and the brightest" have resulted in a vicious cycle of low quality leaders and bad government.

### **Discussion**

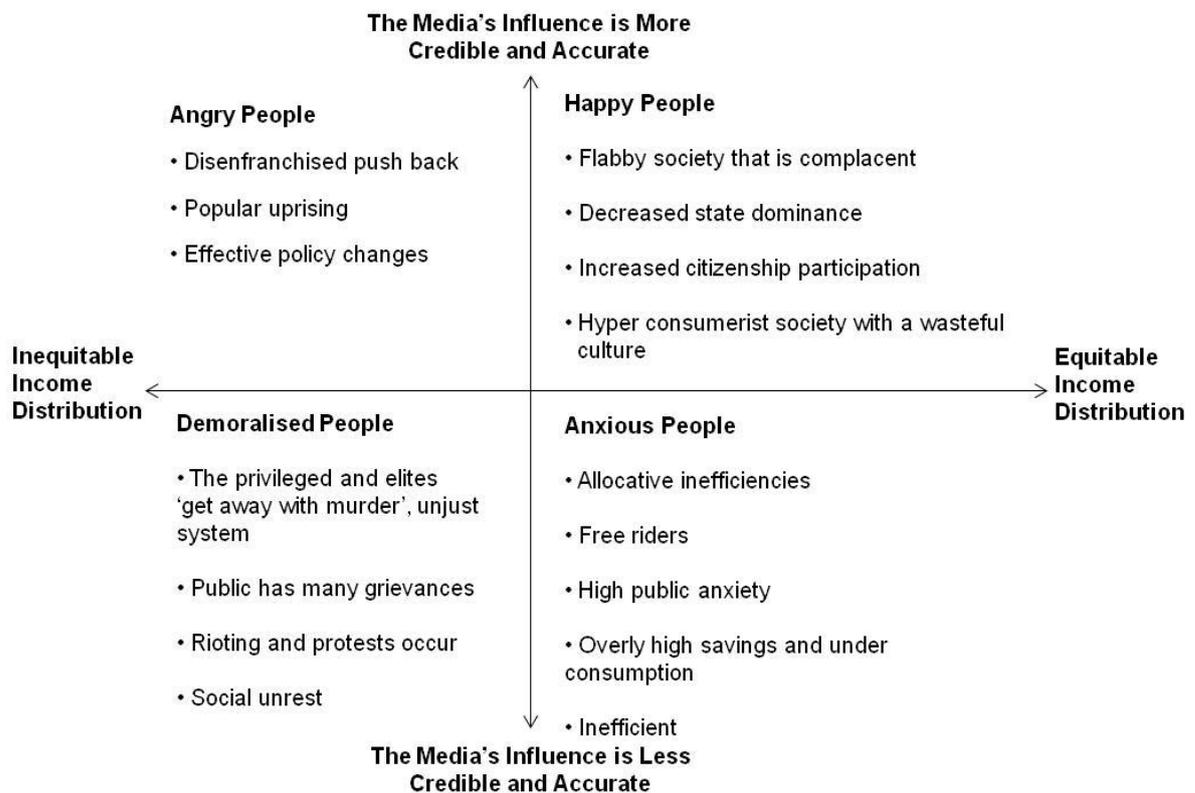
34. When asked by a participant which was the utopian scenario among the set of proposed scenarios, a member of the team clarified that it was Odyssey and added that Jumping Ship on the other hand, was the most challenging scenario. Another participant disagreed that the Jumping Ship scenario was the most challenging as it was about a country that was bound to fail; people were already opting out of it. The participant felt that the All Hands on Deck scenario was the most challenging, as people were still invested in the society and committed to solving problems faced by the society.

35. Another participant felt that both of the driving forces were derived functions, as national pride and political leadership are functions of other factors. This observation was made in comparison to the driving forces selected by Team 1, in which the driving forces seemed like primary factors. Another participant said it was also possible to argue that "income disparity" as discussed by Team 1 is a derived function.

36. A member of the team explained that the driving force of "political leadership" referred to the decline in both the quantity and quality of political leadership.

37. Team 2 produced a second set of scenarios shown below.

Figure 3. Team 2 Set B Scenarios



38. Team 2 used income distribution and the type of influence exerted by the media as driving forces in their second set of scenarios. Here, the media's varying levels of credibility influence citizens' perceptions of and responses to their situations, and in turn, the responsiveness of government. When the media is less credible and accurate, the current situation is not portrayed realistically, and citizens' concerns are not addressed. However, when the media's is credible and accurate, citizens are able to hold the government accountable and force some degree of responsiveness to their concerns.

### Angry People

39. In this situation, the high level of income inequality leads to a dissatisfied citizenry. Here, the media is more credible and accurate, and this could lead to one of two outcomes. The first is a more negative outcome, where the content in the media reflects the inequitable distribution of income in society, which results in an Arab Spring-like popular uprising. In the second, more positive outcome, while the content in the media still accurately reflects the inequitable distribution of income in society, the government is responsive to this situation. This responsive government is able to diffuse the situation by changing their policies to address the concerns of the people.

### Happy People

40. In this scenario, the income distribution is equitable and the media's influence is credible and accurate. Equitable income distribution results in a society where the state is less dominant as the majority of the citizenry hold a lot of the wealth. There is also a high level of citizenship participation in

governance. However, the downside to this scenario is a society that has the potential to become complacent and hyper- consumerist.

### Anxious People

41. Here, the state has managed to achieve relatively equitable income distribution. However, the citizenry does not believe this is so as the media's influence is neither credible nor accurate; it is not trusted. This leads to a situation where citizens are anxious and feel the need to make provision for themselves in a society that is perceived as inequitable. This results in overly high levels of saving, and under-consumption.

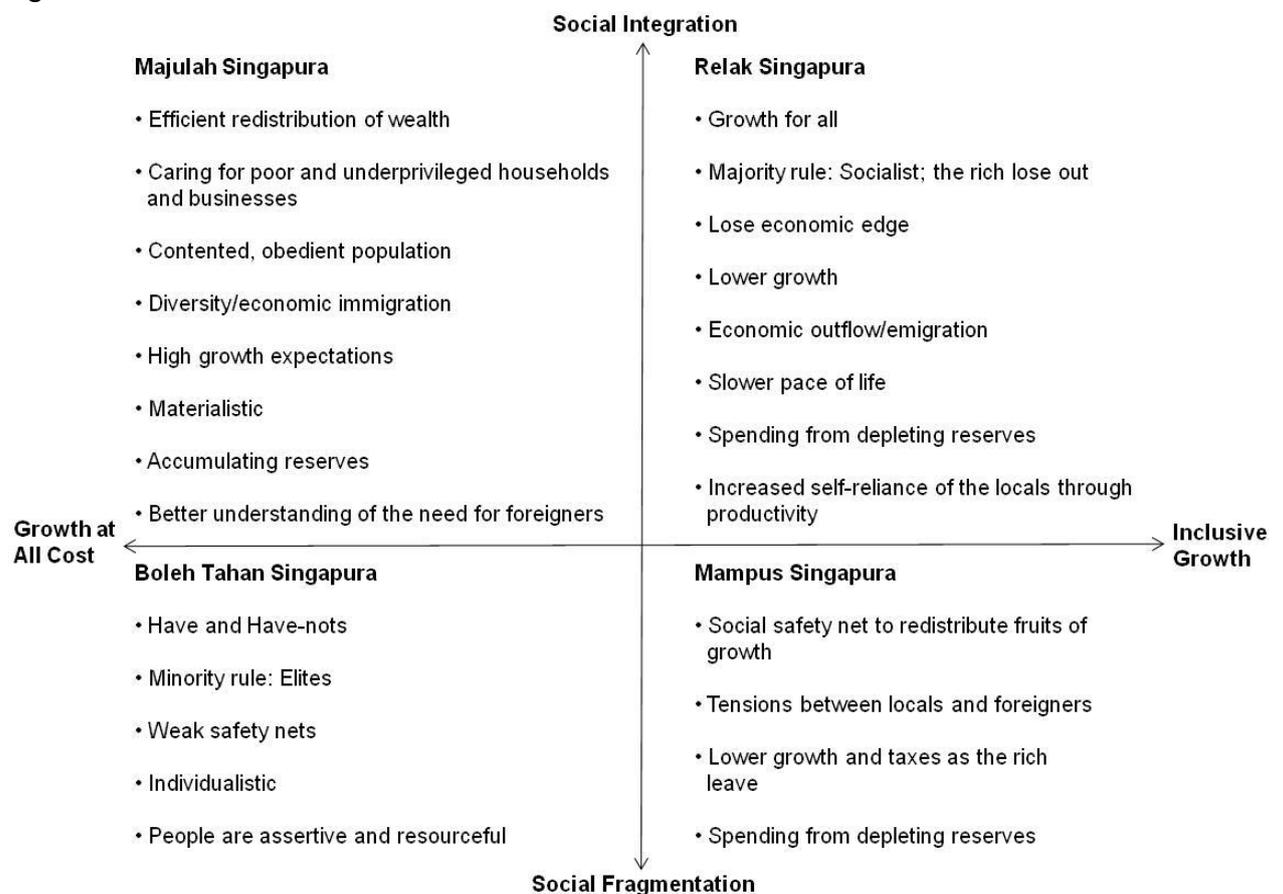
### Demoralised People

42. In this scenario, there is high income inequality in society, and the media does not accurately or credibly report events that occur. As a result, the privileged elite are able to manipulate the system at the expense of the less privileged. The concerns that these less privileged citizens have about their lives and the system remain unaddressed. This leads the majority of citizens to hold a grudge against the government and those seen as the privileged elite. This is a highly unstable situation.

### Team 3

43. Team 3 produced the scenarios below.

Figure 4. Team 3 Scenarios



## **Boleh Tahan Singapura**

44. Once upon a time in the land of Boleh Tahan, people looked out for themselves. They went out to sea, fished and planted vegetables for themselves. Life was somewhat tough as the cost of *sampans*, fishing nets and food was high. People who were in financial trouble were able to receive help from the *penghulus* (chieftains) but this help was not substantial, and they had to travel quite a distance in order to get it. The *penghulus* were the elites, who had ruled in Boleh Tahan for a long time.

45. One day, the people became angry with the *penghulus* as they were resentful about the new arrivals from neighbouring islands. These immigrants were moving to Boleh Tahan to learn how to fish before moving on, and villagers did not like this. Some aspiring *penghulus* also made their objections known privately, as the cost of living was increasing. Society eventually became divided into the haves and the have-nots, with the latter stirring fear in the hearts of existing *penghulus* by threatening to elect other aspiring *penghulus* despite the good things that the existing *penghulus* had already provided. Life continued although it was more difficult for those who were poorer, physically weaker and less able to provide for themselves.

46. The headlines Team 3 developed for this scenario are “Lions 12 versus Foreigners 12”, “Land of the few rich and many poor” and “Singapore Inc”.

## **Majulah Singapura**

47. The scenario below is a continuation of the Boleh Tahan Singapura story above. The village is called “Singapura” here.

48. Villagers rebelled as they wanted everyone who lived in the village to have land. The *penghulus* needed to strike a balance between growth and social integration in the village in order to gain the people’s acceptance of the strategy of “growth at all cost”. Growth was used to build the reserves of the village and to increase its wealth, which was then redistributed amongst the villagers in order to build a socially integrated village in which the poor and the underprivileged were cared for. The villagers were contented and they did not challenge the rule of the *penghulus*, whom they trusted and who made efforts to improve the village.

49. However, there was a shortage of skilled villagers, which necessitated an open immigration policy that allowed skilled workers from nearby villages to work in Singapura. To manage the increasing diversity in the village, the *penghulus* introduced policies that were designed to integrate the new immigrants into the village and to develop a “*kampung* spirit”.

50. This is Singapura, a village that achieves high growth at all costs but has a heart that cares for its people. Majulah Singapura!

51. The headlines Team 3 developed for the Majulah Singapura scenario are “A rich society with a heart — Singapura!”, “A rich society that cares — Singapura!” and “A heart in the oasis!”.

## **Relak Singapura**

52. Once upon a time, there was a sleepy fishing village. Life in this village was very relaxed, and its villagers would sit around every day without any worries about the future. One day, the villagers realised that this had to change — the village would need to pursue growth in order to survive. The villagers felt that it was important that no villager was left behind, and decided to pursue socialist policies. The village experienced slower growth as a result of this, but it was able to develop social safety nets for its villagers. While these safety nets cost more and the village had to spend some of its reserves on funding these programmes, the villagers did not mind as they enjoyed the better work-life balance that their socialist policies provided.

53. The headlines Team 3 developed for the Relak Singapura scenario are “Less growth, less stress!”, “Equality for all!” and “Equal pie — crumbs for all!”.

## **Mampus Singapura**

54. As Singapore approaches the release of its yearly economic indicators, the SGX Index has taken another dip in anticipation of negative news. A recession has set in again and Singapore has been ranked the lowest in the Southeast Asia region in the ABC competitiveness rankings. A record number of high net worth Singaporeans have left the country to escape the 50% tax that was imposed to cover the generous welfare policies provided by the state. The current reserves are also unable to fund these welfare policies, further worsening the problem.

55. The level of social discontent is high and unemployment rates have risen even higher, exacerbated by the withdrawal of foreign direct investment and the incompetence of local small and medium enterprises. Companies across many sectors have lamented that they are unable to attract enough staff to continue their operations, and that labour restrictions prevent them from hiring foreign workers to fill this gap. Minimum wage legislation has also raised the cost of labour and resulted in many companies shifting their manufacturing operations or regional headquarters to other Southeast Asian cities.

56. The headlines Team 3 developed for the Mampus Singapura scenario are “First in, first out!”, “Singapore while it lasts!” and “Singapore, where?”

## **Discussion**

57. A participant asked what the team meant by “growth at all cost” as opposed to “inclusive growth” as these two concepts are not necessarily mutually exclusive or polar opposites. A member of the team explained that the idea of “growth at all cost” referred to the pursuit of growth without concern for those who might be left behind. “Inclusive growth” described a situation where there was slower growth, but with greater social safety nets and state reserves being used to finance these social programmes.

58. Another participant reinforced the view that there was no reason why Singapore could not have both high growth and high levels of redistribution at the same time. For example, higher redistribution would entail higher taxes,

which would result in lower profits for companies, but this does not necessarily lead to slower growth. A participant added that “growth at all cost” need not refer to high growth, as that is determined by external factors as well. Rather, “growth at all cost” refers to the internal policy decisions that determine how a country grows.

59. The team member clarified that there is still economic growth in the “inclusive growth” situation, but that this growth is moderated and balanced by, for example, social safety nets and higher taxes. There is a greater level of income inequality between the haves and the have-nots in the “growth at all cost” situation.

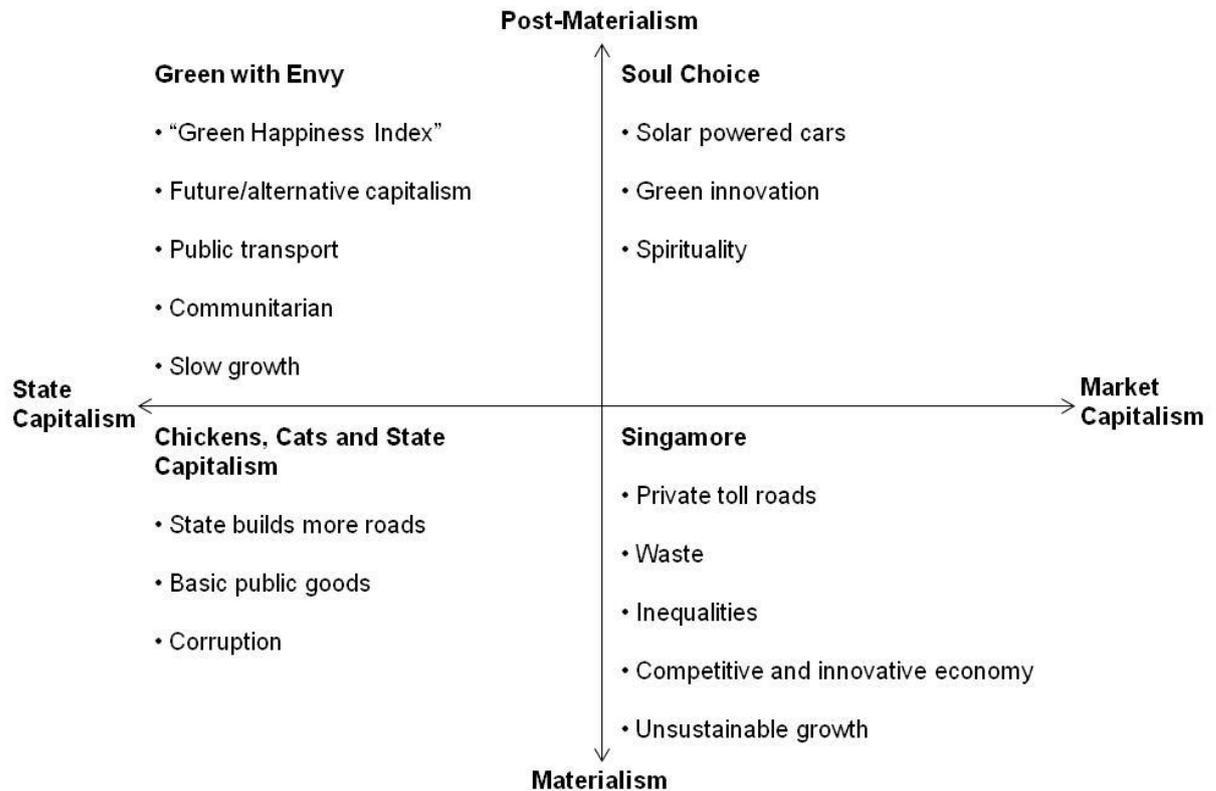
60. Another participant pointed out that “growth at all cost” refers to a situation where there is no inclusion at all, and that Team 3 is actually making that distinction between high growth and low growth when they discuss “growth at all cost” and “inclusive growth”.

61. Yet another participant said that the team is referring to the method by which a country chooses to grow, and that policies such as minimum wage legislation would perhaps be introduced in a society that pursued “inclusive growth”.

#### **Team 4**

62. Team 4 produced the scenarios below. The Chickens, Cats and State Capitalism scenario describes the current state in Singapore — a combination of state capitalism and materialism, but the other three quadrants represent situations that Singapore could potentially reach.

Figure 5. Team 4 Scenarios



### Green with Envy

63. Once upon a time, the people and government of Singapore were very proud of their clean and green city, and its high GDP. They were the envy of their neighbours and regarded themselves as the ideal global city. They continued to make their ideal city even more ideal by building more casinos, shopping malls, roads and rooftop gardens, and by planting more trees by the roadside.

64. Others aspired to Singapore’s standards of living, and so Singapore’s neighbours burnt down their forests to increase their GDP, cleared their coral reefs with dynamite to feed Singapore with enough fish, and built a nuclear plant in Batam.

65. Our proactive government realised that Singapore could not remain liveable for long, and that our lifestyles were unsustainable. As a result, strong measures were taken to truly “green” our economy. Tax incentives for green GDP, businesses and consumer patterns were introduced, and a real green budget was announced. With strong government incentives to invest money, human capital and resources to provide green development, all of Singapore’s golf courses were turned into green innovation parks and farms so that Singapore could be partially self-sufficient in food supply (chickens, pigs and vegetables). In addition, 80% of the roads in Singapore were turned into cycling paths and pedestrian walkways. Many Singaporeans found it difficult to adapt to these changes and emigrated, but fortunately, these were the ones who were consuming at a high and unsustainable level. Businesses,

investors and banks introduced real corporate social responsibility programmes with genuine social and environmental indicators to growth, as opposed to the previous method of measuring growth only through economic indicators.

66. Singapore truly became a clean and green city, and had the highest Green Happiness Index, beating even Bhutan. Its citizens lived happily ever after.

### **Soul Choice**

67. This story is about Reef Naidu, a fourteen-year-old child. He is the third child in a family of four children.

68. One day, Reef asked his father what school was like for him in the past. His father's stories of his school days turned out to be very different from his own experience. While his father had gone to a public school with 2,000 students with a national curriculum and national exams, Reef now attends a community school that is run by a local community association, which has with 150 pupils. Intrigued by this difference, Reef asked his father to tell him more about the past and what happened. His father explained that after a certain point, Singaporeans had gotten tired of the rat race, and that they had turned their backs on the stress of working life and their consumerist lifestyle. As a result, Reef's family is now living in a smaller flat that has its own water recycling unit and space to grow vegetables on the balcony.

69. As this change in attitudes was happening, Singaporeans also realised that their old economic model no longer worked for them. They saw the contradictions between the old model of state capitalism, with its "bigger is better" mentality and the new lifestyle that Singaporeans wanted. In addition, there were a few instances of corruption and abuse of power that came from state capitalism, and public opinion turned against the old model. This explains the state's withdrawal from the economy, and the rise of free enterprise (albeit on a smaller scale) and of local self-help (such as families that grow their own vegetables). Reef understands that his parents like the life they have now, as there is less pollution and less waste. There are more solar cars and bicycles, and goods are repaired and reused rather than being thrown away. At the same time, priorities and values have changed as there is now a greater sense of community identity. In fact, it is this community identity that explains the school that Reef attends, which is run for the community by community elders, and which follows a syllabus that the state has virtually no role in setting. Reef's father used to feel that this was an improvement over the school that he attended as a child; however, he is worried about high costs as it does not benefit from economies of scale, and the syllabus might be too insular. If he is unhappy enough with Reef's current school, there is also the possibility of home schooling — Reef's best friend is currently home schooled.

70. New-age hospitals have also been introduced, which provide treatment with medicines that have not been tested on animals. But Reef's father is not so sure about the effectiveness of these new treatments, as these new-age

medicines failed to cure his daughter, Ripples Naidu, when she fell sick the previous year. Eventually, she was sent to a conventional hospital, and got better. This made Reef's father question the new life and the laissez-faire landscape in Singapore, as he wondered how much the advertising of the laissez-faire idea had shaped his views.

71. Identity politics have also become more prominent, and Reef's father sometimes yearns for the old days, when there was a strong government that was able to keep tensions under control. There are also billboards everywhere selling various forms of spirituality, which Reef's father feels is both good and bad. Working hours have fallen as people devote more time to meditation, yoga and charity work — in fact, spiritual happiness and charity work are the two biggest components of the Gross Happiness Index. Overall, Reef's family is convinced that life is better now, as there is no longer a nanny state, life is less stressful and they enjoy greater freedoms.

72. The headline Team 4 developed for the Soul Choice scenario is "IPO for New Reincarnation Temple, which sets new record of \$65 billion, pipping last year's record IPO for the National Solar Car Corporation".

### **Singapore**

73. This scenario is written from the point of view of a parent in 2032 telling a child a story about life in 2022.

74. Once upon a time, in a place not too far away, there was a land called Singamore. This was a place where there were lots of technological inventions and products. *Straighter Times* announced "Singamore — the world number one yet again in technology products and consumerism; number one in the workload for white-collar workers; and number one in the number of ERP gantries per capita". Every day its citizens were exploring new technologies and queuing up to buy new goods. As boxes of new products were being delivered to stores, piles of empty boxes and discarded appliances were building up in the back alleys. People continued to work hard in the offices and competed to outwork each other, to "out own" each other. Inventors continued to develop new and technologically advanced products in order to feed the consumerism of the people. Efficiency and productivity rates were at an all time high. High-end brand names were expanding from occupying mere stores to occupying individual malls, and trees along the road were cleared in order to make way for these super brand malls and to make walkways for shoppers. Two civil society groups put up banners on opposite sides of the street. One read "No clean, no green, we're mean!", while the other read "No clean, no green, pure sheen!". In the midst of all this, there was a group of street children and their families who observed this luxury with envy and hunger. They could not remember when they had last talked to someone verbally or hugged someone.

75. And then one day, a shopper who was engrossed in surfing the internet on his mobile phone accidentally walked into an alley. A large pile of electronic rubbish fell on the shopper and knocked him unconscious. Media coverage reported the story of this shopper who was injured and

subsequently hospitalised at a seven-star private institution. He received lots of “likes” on his social media page when he wrote about his experience and flowers and fruit came in the form of apps. However, despite this outpouring of public support, he did not have a single visitor in the time that he was in hospital. This incident was discussed as a national crisis, and bloggers and online commentators all had their own views on the issue.

76. In response to this, the government started a search for new landfills that would be able to contain the waste that was produced, and product designers had to adhere to new legislation that required product packages to be safe for adults aged 18 and below. The city became cleaner, more efficient, and even more technologically advanced. Ever since then, people favoured the brands that had packaging that used more plastic in order to ensure the safety of adult customers. Living spaces became more compact as the government was forced to allocate more land to manage the vast amounts of waste generated. The poor also started to find the new opportunities that the mountains of waste provided, and the people and waste lived happily ever after.

### **Chickens, Cats and State Capitalism**

77. Mr Boon Tong Kee, Singapore’s chicken rice superhero, awakens from his cryogenic chamber to discover that Singapore society remains essentially materialistic in its outlook and behaviour. But alas! Singapore’s government has shifted to a more state capitalist economic model in order to alleviate the socio-economic costs of over liberalisation. A good idea? He is not quite sure. In any case, the state is now the central and effective provider of basic public goods and services. Thankfully, the bureaucracy remains efficient, and government-linked corporations remain somewhat competent — not fully competent however, because the MRT continues to break down a little too often. Worryingly, corruption has become rife within the government as a result of the self-regulation that used to be present in a more market capitalist economy. Stepping back from the thick of global competition, Tong Kee finds that the Singapore government has become more altruistic and benevolent in its outlook. Yet, due to concentrated state capitalism, the government still returns to the paternalism of the past, which breeds apathy, if not resentment.

78. Tong Kee is contemplating returning to his chamber when he realises that something *has* changed — Singapore now enjoys the luxury of focusing more on family issues and this has led to greater work-life balance. Overall, Singapore remains materialistic, but the excesses of capitalism are reined in, opening a greater space for the things like helping the less privileged, protecting the environment, and helping cats. In the end, Tong Kee decides to stay to experience life in this new Singapore.

## **VOTING**

79. The participants voted on the sets of scenario they felt were the most plausible and challenging. After a first round of voting which resulted in a tie

among the four teams, the set developed by Team 1 was selected in the run-off. The results of the voting are shown below.

Table 1. Voting results

Team	Number of Votes	
	First Round	Second Round
Team 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ion</li> <li>• Sentosa Cove</li> <li>• Kampung 2022</li> <li>• Hotel 81</li> </ul>	13	9
Team 2 Set A Scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Tugboat</li> <li>• Odyssey</li> <li>• All Hands on Deck</li> <li>• Jumping Ship</li> </ul>	13	3
Team 2 Set B Scenarios <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angry People</li> <li>• Happy People</li> <li>• Anxious People</li> <li>• Demoralized People</li> </ul>	0	N/A
Team 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majulah Singapura</li> <li>• Relak Singapura</li> <li>• Mampus Singapura</li> <li>• Boleh Tahan Singapura</li> </ul>	13	6
Team 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green with Envy</li> <li>• Soul Choice</li> <li>• Singamore</li> <li>• Chickens, Cats and State Capitalism</li> </ul>	13	7

## **APPENDIX: LIST OF WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS**

Mr Amrin Amin, Lawyer, Corporate, Watson, Farley & Williams Asia Practice LLP

Mr Alex Au, Webmaster and Online Commentator, Yawning Bread

Mr Cheung Ho Yeung, Vice Chairman, Leng Kee CC Youth Executive Committee

Mr Chew Kheng Chuan, Chairman, The Substation

Mr Chia Boon Tai, Owner, Perdana Consultants

Mr Choo Jin Kiat, Executive Director, O'Joy Care Services

Professor Chua Beng Huat, Honorary Chairman, Visual Arts @ Temenggong; and Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

Dr Faizal Bin Yahya, Research Fellow, Institute of Policy Studies

Dr Geh Min, Immediate Past President, Nature Society (Singapore)

Mr Raymond Goh, Senior Officer, Industrial Relations, National Trades Unions Congress

Mr Hassan Ahmad, Chief Executive, Mercy Relief

Dr Russell Heng, President, Transient Workers Count Too

Ms K Thanaletchimi, President, Healthcare Services Employee's Union, National Trades Union Congress

Ms Evelyn Lee, Inventory Planner, Purchasing, NTUC Fairprice Co-operative Limited

Ms Winifred Loh, President, Association of Women for Action & Research

Mr Malminderjit Singh, Vice President, Corporate Relations, Young Sikh Association; and Correspondent, Business Times, Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

Ms Ng Yanli, Senior Officer, Industrial Relations, United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries, National Trades Union Congress

Dr Graham Ong-Webb, Chairperson, Youth Sub-Committee and Member, Management Committee, The Eurasian Association, Singapore

Mr Saktiandi Supaat, Vice Chairman, Board of Directors, Association of Muslim Professionals

Mr Siew Kum Hong, Vice President, MARUAH (Working Group for an ASEAN Human Rights Mechanism, Singapore)

Mr Gerald Singham, Vice Chairman, Onepeople.sg

Dr Kevin Tan, Immediate Past President, Singapore Heritage Society; and Director, Equilibrium Consulting Pte Ltd; and Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore

Mr Tan Richard, General Secretary, United Workers of Electronic and Electrical Industries, National Trades Union Congress

Mr David Tay, Chairperson, Youth Committee, Young NTUC

Mr Danny Yeo, Goodwill Ambassador, World Vision Singapore and Associate Lecturer, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ngee Ann Polytechnic