In support of the United Nations
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2026
October 17, 2026

Theme for 2026: United for Peace and Human Rights: Safe Homes for All



"We leave no family behind, because none of us were ever meant to walk alone.

True transformation happens when we build alongside families with dignity, warmth, compassion and conviction, supported by a caring and interconnected community built to support and uplift each other through good times and not so good ones too."

– Ruth Tan, Executive Director, SCC

OUR VISION: SOUTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY FAMILY SERVICE CENTRE

Our Vision: Poverty Transformation With-In Empowered Communities

UNDERSTANDING SCC'S ANNUAL OBSERVANCE & COMMITMENT TO IDEP

SCC continues to renew our commitment on 17 October with the goals of IDEP integrally aligned as part of our SCC vision: Poverty Transformation With-in Empowered Communities. Annually, we observe this special date and period where collectively we stand in solidarity as an organisation along with others, support community-led initiatives and contribute bite-sized pieces of our works towards achieving these goals, working towards ending poverty and creating greater social mobility and equity for our members, their families, and communities.

Every year on 17 October, the world, including SCC, pauses to observe the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (IDEP)—a day that calls for collective reflection, solidarity, and action.

Safe Homes and Access to Home Ownership

This year, IDEP opens a new three-year chapter under the umbrella theme *United for Peace and Human Rights*. Its 2026 focus, *Safe Homes for All*, speaks straight to the heart of our work at SCC. The theme comes with three calls to action, which we hold up as a mirror for our own work:

1. **Make safe housing a human-rights priority:** Ensuring respect, protection and progressive fulfilment of the right to adequate housing, and giving a dignified standard of living its rightful priority in public policy and budgeting.
2. **Design policies with people experiencing poverty:** Move beyond token consultation. Involve people experiencing poverty and housing exclusion directly in co-designing, implementing and evaluating housing policies, as rights-holders and knowledge-holders.
3. **Mobilise resources for safe homes for all:** Strengthening public financing and other resources to expand access to safe, accessible and affordable housing, so that no one is left behind.

"Homelessness and inadequate housing show how quickly people lose access to basic rights when housing becomes unaffordable or inaccessible. Without a secure home, it becomes nearly impossible to exercise other rights or participate fully in society." – International committee for IDEP, 2026

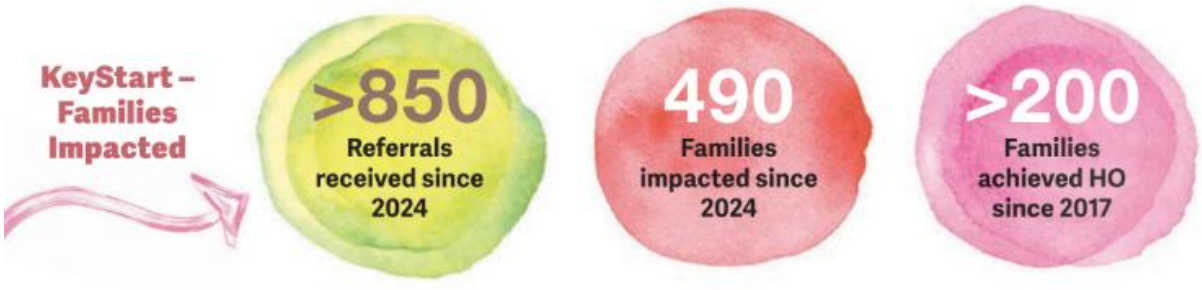
Globally, more than 2.8 billion people face some form of housing inadequacy. Singapore's story is different, and we are grateful that most families here live in safe, well-built public housing. Yet the concept note names something our members and families teach us every day: without a secure home, every other right becomes harder to hold on to.

We walk alongside families with young children in rental flats. For them, the question is rarely whether there is a roof over their heads. It is whether there is a home they can truly call their own, with room to grow, to plan for tomorrow, and to belong.

Mdm Nabilah, a member SCC has journeyed with over the past 8 years and featured in our FY25/26 Annual Report, puts her family's hope simply: *"To own my own home. Owning our own home would be the biggest achievement for us. We'd have a better living space, room to gather and celebrate with our families, and make more memories."* That is the home we hope every family can build and work towards in their lifetime.

From Rental to Roots: Home Ownership as a Social Mobility Pathway

Eight years ago, our Home Ownership Programme began as a modest, aspirational pilot. Today, KeyStart (SCC's Home Ownership flagship programme) works hand in hand with our Fresh Start Support Programme (FSSP), so our families have a more holistic and tangible pathway towards a home of their own. Since its inception in 2017, more than 200 lower income families enrolled in our Home Ownership KeyStart programme have successfully received their keys and moved into their new homes. A total of 490 families has been impacted since 2024 with more than 850 referrals received since 2024. We continue to grow our reach towards 1,000 families.



But a key is only the beginning. We have learnt that a safe home is built twice, once in brick and mortar, and once in relationships. Mdm Nabilah's journey, featured in our Annual Report, shows this:

- Social Work steadied the ground beneath her.
- The Power of Communities: a community of mothers rebuilt her confidence and sense of belonging.
- Home Ownership and Livelihood opened a tangible future for her family.
- Child Learning & Development (CLD) is now doing the same for her children.

Today, Nabilah pays it forward as a Community Connector to others around her.

In FY25/26, SCC has reached more than 640 lower income families and supported 780 children from our families. Over 226 of those families were supported through our transformation verticals of Home Ownership, Livelihood and CLD. Since 2023, 324 of our lower income families have received integrated support, meaning social work paired with at least one transformation pathway in working towards greater social mobility, in the hope of breaking intergenerational

poverty cycles. They now represent 40% of the families in our SCC Universe of about 800 families identified.

Every Family Counts: Levelling Inclusion & Bridging Gaps for Low-income Transnational Families in Singapore

Safe homes also mean stable and secure belonging. Transnational families (TF), where at least one member is a Singapore Citizen and another is neither a citizen nor a PR, are Singaporean families too, rooted here through citizenship, care and contribution. They are not a small group: such unions make up a substantial share of citizen marriages each year in Singapore, and mixed-status households are common in public rental housing. Yet having even one non-citizen member can limit the whole family's access to housing grants, social assistance and financial security. Those limits fall on citizen spouses and children as well. For many of our low-income transnational families, this mix of financial strain and immigration uncertainty can turn the family, meant to be an anchor, into a source of vulnerability. This is a shared concern for all of us, not an isolated hardship.

To deepen our understanding, The Inclusive Fund (TIF) commissioned the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE) to conduct a research study, *All Families Count: Social Mobility and Inclusion for Transnational Families in Singapore*. The 2-year study on lower-income transnational families in Singapore is now complete. We look forward to AWARE sharing its key findings more fully in January 2027 as the paper launches. Do stay tuned and watch this space.

This year, our Transnational Family Care Centre (TFCC) turns two. Developed with Pro Bono SG, it is the first Family Service Centre (FSC) in Singapore to pilot a socio-legal approach for lower-income transnational families, responding to the widening gaps they face. TFCC has shown what becomes possible when legal support and social work walk hand in hand. For these families, questions of immigration status and access to essential support can make even a familiar home feel uncertain.

WITH and BY, Not To or For: Families living in poverty as rich knowledge-holders

The 2026 call to action asks us to move from tokenistic participation to inclusive deliberation. It asks us to recognise people experiencing poverty as rights-holders and rich knowledge-holders. Seynabou M. from Senegal captures it simply: *"Everything done for me, without me, is done against me."*

This is the spirit of our Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach in SCC. We start not from what is broken or missing, but from what is already present: a mother's resilience, a resident's quiet leadership, the lived wisdom of families who have walked this road before.

As we commemorate IDEP 2026, we hold firm to our conviction that poverty is not a life sentence, but a challenge we overcome together. No single actor will build safe homes for all, SCC included. They are built by families, neighbours, like-minded partners, donors, and policymakers who choose to see one another as needed, not needy.

Looking Ahead: Ten Years of I Wish U Enough, Supporting the Community

To all our partners, supporters, families and communities, thank you for walking this journey with us. This year, I warmly invite you to respond to IDEP's call by joining a very special celebration, in support of a community-led social movement that celebrates the power of communities taking action for themselves. I Wish U Enough, the 100% community-led social movement born

in our South Central district, but now entirely led by the community itself, is now in its 10th year. Details are below. Please do come celebrate alongside the communities!

Let's leave no one behind & I Wish U Enough,



Ruth Tan

Executive Director

South Central Community Family Service Centre Ltd

For October 17th, 2026

References:

United Nations IDEP 2026: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty | United Nations

About IDEP (Honouring October 17 Annually)
The day has been commemorated since 1987 and was recognised by the United Nations in 1992. The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty promotes dialogue between people living in poverty and society at large. It recognises that people living in poverty are at the forefront of the fight against it. The 2026 theme, Safe Homes for All, is set by the International Committee for October 17. To learn more, read the Concept Note for October 17, 2026.

CALL TO ACTION:

#IWishUEnoughSG

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS!

A Simple Call to Action to support our community-led I WISH U ENOUGH - IDEP 2026

A Supportive IDEP Commitment: *I Wish U Enough 2026 Social Movement – Celebrating 10 Years of Building Stronger Communities. A 100% community-led social movement, gathering on Saturday, 14 November 2026, from 3pm to 9pm at Leng Kee Park to celebrate a decade of the Gotong Royong spirit.*

Theme: I Wish U Enough 2026 – Celebrating 10 Years!

Before neighbours showed up, Siti spent her days in silence, alone, unseen and struggling. After losing her job because of chronic knee pain, she was trying to stretch every dollar as a single mum. Then a neighbour invited her to a simple gathering, and something shifted. That spark of connection led Siti to start a home-based food business. Today, she is a proud volunteer with I Wish U Enough.

"I Wish U Enough" is a decade-long social movement of neighbours helping neighbours.

This signifies neighbours (near and far) coming together to contribute in their own ways so that everyone will have enough.

About the Event

🎉 *I Wish U Enough 2026 Social Movement – Celebrating 10 Years!*
📅 *Saturday, 14 November 2026*
⏰ *3pm to 9pm SGT*
📍 *Leng Kee Park*

For its 10th year, IWUE returns with a kampung celebration for 200 to 300 residents, families and friends:

- ***3pm – 6pm:*** *Community booths, kampung games and photobooth, with stage performances and open mic by the community, emceed by our own members*
- ***6pm – 7pm:*** *Community Rojak! Everyone tosses rojak together & sharing*
- ***7pm – 9pm:*** *Sit-down community dinner, music, and a 10 years of IWUE feature*



Every gathering says: we see you, we wish you enough.

Led by the IWUE Committee of residents and community connectors, this celebration honours the everyday heroes who believe no neighbour should go without. It is supported by SCC, Saturday Movement, The Peranakan, S17 Community Kitchen, Grassroots, People's Association and other community partners. IWUE was born in Singapore's South Central district and has been entirely community-run since 2022. It is built by people like Siti, a single mum who turned neighbourly care into a home business and now volunteers to spread that same hope.

Be Part of It

Your support does more than fill a booth or a plate. It celebrates ten years of neighbours helping neighbours, deepening communal life and it sustains a movement where no one is left behind. As Siti says: "One invite changed my life. Now, I try to do the same for others."

How to Support IWUE 2026

🏕️ ***Sponsor a booth or the stage:*** *We need about 20-30 tables for community booths and food, plus stage coverage, rain or shine. Sponsoring one of the 15 community booths would mean a lot.*

🎤 ***Sound system:*** *For performances, the emcee and speeches.*

🐵 ***Pay it forward:*** *Sponsor goodie bags, children's snacks, drinks or community Makan or contribute ingredients for the Community Rojak! You can also pay it forward by contributing your skills and interests (e.g. free haircuts).*

🤝 ***Contribute your talents and gifts:*** *Photography, videography, outreach, performances, in-kind or ingredient donations, or simply your time.*

🎉 ***Come and celebrate:*** *Bring your family and a neighbour, and join us at the kampung table.*

<u>About IWUE, a Social Movement</u>

I Wish U Enough (IWUE) is a movement started in 2017 that culminates in an annual event as part of our community's initiative to strengthen the *Gotong Royong Spirit*. This signifies neighbours (near and far) coming together to contribute in their own ways so that everyone will have enough. The movement, which is now 100% community-led and supported by other community agencies like SCC, is in its 10th year, committing to 5 key foci,

- Appreciating our community's gifts
- Connecting and celebrating communities
- Encouraging Neighbours Helping Neighbours
- Proliferating the IWUE movement
- Raising awareness of poverty

I Wish U Enough Movement continues today to culminate small acts of mutual self-help to bring about the Gotong Royong Spirit in our communities as part of collective efforts towards our commitment towards IDEP. It is led by community members and people with lived experiences or living in poverty. Come and support them!

Some background on IDEP:

The United Nations officially recognized October 17th as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty in 1992, encouraging all member states to actively promote efforts to alleviate poverty. This day provides a platform for people experiencing poverty to voice their concerns and recognizes their crucial role in combating poverty. Importantly, the chosen theme underscores the necessity for collaborative efforts to eradicate poverty and discrimination, ultimately paving the way for a sustainable future where the needs of all are met without compromising the well-being of future generations.

"October 17 shines as a ray of hope, a day to honour the millions of people enduring the silent and sustained violence of poverty. It's our chance to live up to the promise of putting the furthest behind first, to stand together with them and pledge our commitment to ensure that dignity in practice for all becomes a reality." – IDEP

References:

United Nations IDEP 2026: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty | United Nations