

# TO BUILD AND MOULD A COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE THROUGH 4 STRATEGIC FOCUS

## DEVELOPING FAITH & LIVING ISLAM

### STRATEGY

Revitalising our Islamic learning programme

Running Islamic learning programmes remains our core service. The challenge is to keep the programmes relevant to the community and fulfil their needs. We should make learning Islam simple and interesting; guide the participants to apply what they have learnt to keep Islam alive in the midst of this modern secular society.

### HOW

1. Run customised programmes for different sectors of the community
  - Children
  - Teens / Young people
  - Adults
  - Senior citizens
  - Non-Malay-speaking

While the general contents of Islamic knowledge does not change, we must customise the learning programmes to the needs of different groups by providing the right amount of content and using the right approach. Different sectors of the community have different learning needs and styles.

The way a child learns is different from an experienced adult. Hence Islam as a way of living must be taught such that participants can relate to and apply in their daily living. We have reviewed and revised our part-time madrasah programme for children and youths and will continue to revise the weekly and modular classes for adults. We will also cater to the needs of the non-Malay speaking participants to learn Islam either in English or their mother tongue.

2. Implement Singapore Islamic Education System - a Muis initiative

MUIS introduced SIES in Dec 2004 with the Teens and Kids aLIVE programmes and will expand programmes for youth and adults in the coming years. The programme is designed for the needs of Singaporean Muslims. We will replace our part-time madrasah programmes with SIES gradually.

3. Encouraging home-based basic Islamic learning services with our partners

To reach out to Muslims who are unable to frequent the mosque, we will work with neighbourhood qaryah and volunteers to run home-based Islamic learning such as Quranic literacy and basic Islam.

4. Equip mosque participants with
  - skills to convey and guide family members and friends on Islam
  - Islamic life values, ethics and civilisation

One of the challenges of Islamic dakwah and education is to disseminate the knowledge to the widest audience possible. We will leverage on the participants of our programmes to be agents (dai) in disseminating knowledge and guiding their family members and close friends. We hope that they will internalise Islamic values and ethics and engage the society confidently.

## **MOULDING CHARACTER**

### **STRATEGY 1**

Making mosque youth-friendly

The Malay-Muslim community has the largest composition of youth compared to other races in Singapore. They are an asset that must be developed to the fullest potential. We will focus on shaping their religious life and moulding their character and self-esteem to be proud of being true practicing Muslims.

### **HOW**

1. Provide space and opportunities for youths to manage mosque programmes

We will attract more young people and tap their youthful, vibrant energy to manage new initiatives and projects to benefit themselves and the whole community.

2. Provide after-school facilities and programmes

We hope school students will find their way to the mosque to fill up their after-school hours in useful activities.

3. Develop youth mentors and be-frienders

We will form and develop a group of mentors and be-frienders to reach out and connect with the young people, in and out of mosque. They will also be guiding angels for the young facing life challenges.

4. Reach out to youths through our partners

By networking and working in partnership with external institutions and organisations, we will engage out-of-mosque youths.

5. Develop a satellite Youth Services Centre

Our long-term strategy is to develop and run a satellite centre at a strategic location to serve the needs of youth. This is to extend a helping hand and listening ear to youths who are still shy or afraid to come to the mosque to seek help and guidance.

## STRATEGY 2

### Building successful families

Family is the basic unit that determines the success of an individual, community and nation. We must encourage strong family bonding and promote family living.

#### HOW

1. Provide family-friendly concepts in mosque programmes and facilities

One of the challenges for parents to frequent the mosque is finding child minders at home. We want to make it convenient for families to take part in mosque activities together. We will provide facilities such as child-minding services and family-friendly facilities and organise more integrated programmes where family members can attend separate programmes suitable for their age and needs but run concurrently.

2. Run developmental/self-help programmes with our partners for
  - Families in need
  - Young families/couples

Together with our partners, we will run suitable programmes to help needy families and young couples to develop their children to the fullest potential and instil strong family bonding and support system.

3. Develop family mentors and support groups

There are many families seeking assistance and support. By having a group of volunteer family mentors and support groups, we hope to provide a lending hand to these families.

4. Develop **Famili Makmur** into a full-pledged family life institution

Our Famili Makmur launched in Sep 2003 will be developed fully into an important institution to promote family living.

## STRATEGY 3

### Encouraging civic-consciousness and ownership of society's challenges

The community faces ever growing and changing challenges in today's modern living. It is not just the role of the institutions to manage these challenges. The people have to take ownership of the challenges and be active *socio-preneurs* to organise community programmes.

#### HOW

1. Encourage formation of community self-help and social development interest groups

We hope to interest more people to form social development interest groups and pursue their common interests and support one another such as parents support group, youth adventure groups and healthy living clubs.

2. Encourage spirit of community volunteerism

We will encourage more volunteers to come forward and help us run our programmes and social development initiatives. We will also encourage Muslims to volunteer their services to the wider society to develop *social capital*.

## **ENHANCING COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

### **STRATEGY 1**

Making mosque community-friendly

Mosque is not only a house of worship but one of the key institutions in nation building, promoting racial harmony and understanding in a plural society like Singapore's. To do this effectively, we have to open up our mosque to all regardless of race, language or religion to allow them to appreciate Islam better and to build mutual confidence in each other.

#### **HOW**

1. Strengthen network between mosque and *qaryah* groups and mosque stakeholders

Neighbourhood Qaryah groups are key partners to help us reach out to the community. We will run joint programmes to enhance Islamic living and develop strong family and community bonding. Our stakeholders help make the mosque vibrant. We will listen to them often to get valuable feedback and ideas to improve our programmes and services.

2. Develop mosque ambassadors group

Our activists are our ambassadors. They will speak on our behalf in public and gather feedback to help us appreciate the community's aspiration.

3. Provide facilities and services friendly to senior citizens

Senior citizens are rich in experience and wisdom. We hope to attract them to contribute to the community through the mosque.

4. Enhance services to non-Malay speaking Muslims

We will make the mosque friendlier and more accessible to the non-Malay speaking Muslims through programmes and services conducted in English and other common languages.

### **STRATEGY 2**

Learning Islam for all

Islam and learning Islam is not limited only to Muslims. Non-Muslims also have the right to know Islam and the mosque must provide them with the means.

#### **HOW**

Set up an Islamic Information Centre to

- enhance understanding of Islam to non-Muslims
- disseminate information on Islam through media and info-comm technology
- link customers with Islamic institutions

Through the Centre, we will run short programmes to promote better understanding of Islam for all. It will leverage on the advancement of info-comm technology and the media to disseminate information on Islam.

### **STRATEGY 3**

#### Networking with the public

We are part of the nation and want to be a node in the national grid. The wider society needs to know more about us and Muslims in general and share aspirations as a nation. We have to step out of the mosque more often to extend a hand of friendship to all.

#### **HOW**

1. Develop partnership and sharing of resources with external institutions

We will work together with other institutions to organise programmes that benefits the wider community as part of developing *social capital*. We will channel our mosque congregation to the wealth of services and programmes offered by the many external institutions and benefit by participating in them.

2. Branding of MDM and organise public outreach programmes

We will organise more outreach programmes in public to let the wider community know more of us.

3. Making MDM a landmark and icon to Yishun community

MDM should be a landmark and icon in our neighbourhood that is the pride of all.

Our brand for mosque – ***Mosque without borders***

The mosque's physical borders should not be a hindrance in reaching out and contributing to all. Everyone should be able to benefit from the mosque, a clear message on Islam being a mercy to mankind.

Our brand for mosque community – ***Living Islam***

The mosque community should live Islam and project the true image of Islam and its beauty.

## **BUILDING OUR CAPACITY**

### **STRATEGY 1**

Shaping a learning culture

Islam promotes learning from the cradle to the grave. The mosque should take a lead in promoting this culture.

#### **HOW**

1. Develop life-long learning culture among the mosque community

Our mosque staff and activists should continue to learn and upgrade their knowledge and skills to serve the community better.

2. Sharing of knowledge and expertise in and out of mosque

There is much to learn and share from the expertise in the society. Sharing knowledge and experience will enrich us.

3. English competency for mosque *asatizah*

Our *asatizah* are the key personnel running our programmes. They must be versatile and keep abreast with changes in society. Proficiency in English helps them to communicate and serve the community more effectively.

4. Spiritual strengthening among mosque community

A healthy soul will lead to healthy body and mind.

## **STRATEGY 2**

Maximise resources

The mosque has limited resources but it can be optimised and utilised to the full.

### **HOW**

1. Participation in Muis/Mosques Shared Services Centre and Mosque Cluster system for greater economies of scale

We will work with MUIS and other mosques in these new initiatives to pool resources and enjoy greater economies of scale.

2. Optimise use of mosque facilities, space and resources

Our building and facilities are million-dollar assets that must be utilised to the full so that the community will get the best return of their (spiritual) investments.

3. Transparency and prudence in funds management and utilisation respectively

We have to stretch every dollar contributed by the community to the maximum and remain transparent in how it is spent.

4. Attract talent and expertise to serve the mosque

We have to attract the many talents and expertise to serve the mosque and community. They are our community's assets.

## **STRATEGY 3**

### **Journey towards excellence**

Islam encourages excellence in all our endeavours to gain the blessings and mercy of Allah. It is not just the end product that is important, but the effort itself in the journey towards excellence. We hope Darul Makmur will be an exemplary mosque, the pride of our community.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Full implementation of Mosque Excellence System

MES is a management tool developed by Muis to assist us manage the mosque better. We will implement it to improve our system towards organisational excellence.