

**DELIVERED SPEECH BY MS LOW YEN LING,  
CHAIRMAN OF MAYORS' COMMITTEE AND MAYOR OF SOUTH WEST  
DISTRICT, AT THE LAUNCH OF CDC VOUCHERS SCHEME TRANCHE 2  
ON MONDAY, 25 JANUARY 2021 AT 4.30PM, BEDOK CC**

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A very good afternoon

Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat

And of course, a very good afternoon to the Fellow Mayors - Mayor Denise Phua, Mayor Desmond Choo, Mayor Alex Yam and Mayor Fahmi Aliman

And a very good afternoon to Mr Yeo Hiang Meng,  
President of FMAS

Mr Lim Hock Yu, CED of PA

And to all our District Councillors and to all our friends who are attending this event via Zoom,

Ladies and Gentlemen, a very good afternoon again.

1. On behalf of the five Mayors, Happy 2021 to everyone. And I want to echo DPM Heng's warm welcome to everyone for joining us today at the Launch of the \$20 million CDC Vouchers Scheme (Tranche 2).

2. Like what DPM has shared with us earlier in his remarks, when Singapore was hit by COVID-19 last year, one of the first things that the five Mayors and the CDCs did, we came together via zoom during the Circuit Breaker to plan to see how we could quickly develop and roll out the CDC Vouchers Scheme in June. The scheme aimed to help vulnerable residents defray household expenses, and at the same time, revitalise the business of merchants and hawkers in the heartlands. And earlier, you heard from some of our shopkeepers and hawkers how the programme has helped them boost their businesses in a very tangible way.

3. Even though the use of CDC vouchers ended on 31 Dec last year, we continue to receive positive feedback from the ground about the scheme. Many like the gentlemen shop owners in the video hoped that there will be a second tranche.

4. For example, Mr Sekar Jayaprakash appreciated how the vouchers brought more customers to his stall. In fact, Mr Sekar said and I quote him, “We have fewer customers because more people are staying at home even after circuit breaker. The CDC Vouchers Scheme benefitted both the residents and small businesses. It helped vulnerable residents reduce some daily expenses and also gave stallholders like us more business.”

5. Sharing that same sentiment is Mr Abu Bakar, owner of King Omar Restaurant. Due to Covid-19, his business dropped by 40% and he mentioned is the first time that it dropped that significantly and drastically in eight years. And despite the difficulties, he was determined and sought to maintain the restaurant’s high food quality as well as the jobs for his employees. He shared with us that he was grateful for how the CDC vouchers boosted his business in this difficult time. To him, he shared that the scheme was like a “silver lining” in the dark crisis, helping the community and small businesses during the pandemic. He was also glad to be part of the initiative to help the identified families.

6. The five Mayors and the CDC teams as well as the Merchant Associations and all the participating stall owners and merchants were all very encouraged by the favourable response, demand and support for the first tranche of the \$20 million CDC Vouchers Scheme. As a result of that, the Mayors together, we decided to extend it for the second time with a second tranche of \$20 million. Although the COVID situation has improved but we also observed that lives and businesses are still struggling the impact of COVID-19. We recognize the need for continued efforts to uplift and support affected residents and our heartland businesses. Tranche 2 will offer the same support as the first round, focused at reducing the cost of living for vulnerable residents and also bringing more customers to heartland shops. The five Mayors hope that this can also be an opportune time for shopkeepers and also our stallholders to gain new and loyal customers in their vicinity. I think all of us are very inspired by what the stallholder earlier mentioned that he observed that one of the customers used the CDC vouchers to buy food to donate to the elderly to pay forward. So we hope that we can hear more stories about that and like that the scheme will also play a role in energising community connections, like those between neighborhood shops and residents in the estate.

7. Just as before in Tranche 1, the voucher collection for Tranche 2 will be rolled out progressively to facilitate and also to ensure safe distancing. Households who qualify for the scheme will receive letters informing them of

where and when to collect their CDC vouchers. The vouchers are worth \$50 and presented in denominations of \$2.

8. The list of participating hawkers and local merchants will be available on the CDC website as well as the respective Community Clubs. Merchants on board this particular programme will display a decal in their shopfront for easy identification. The vouchers will be valid till 30 September 2021.

9. The Mayors and I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to DPM Heng for giving a budget to the CDCs last year during his Budget statement so that we could create and curate this when the Circuit Breaker hit. We also want to use the occasion to thank our wonderful partners Mr Yeo and FMAS as well as People's Association and our Grassroots Organisations, our hardworking colleagues in the CO, in the Community Club, the various Merchant Associations supporting this very meaningful initiatives, the 8,100 merchants and hawkers, and we hope to welcome more, for their unwavering support for CDC Vouchers Scheme.

10. As we support each other through this challenging period, we are building a caring and resilient community. We will overcome the hard times with our united Spirit and emerge stronger together! The five Mayors would like to wish everyone a Happy Lunar New Year. Stay safe, stay well and we hope that you will give the second tranche of the CDC Vouchers Scheme similar strong support like the Tranche 1.

11. Thank You.