

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

GOING *against* THE GRAIN



aware



KEY INFORMATION

Affiliation			Registration	
1	National Council of Social Service (NCSS)	Full Member	Registered Address	Block 5, Dover Crescent #01-22, Singapore 130005
2	Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO)	Ordinary Member	Financial Year	31 December 2025

	Registration Number	Date of Registration
Registry of Societies (ROS)	188/85CAS	25 November 1985
Commissioner of Charities	1871	23 March 2005
Institution of Public Character (IPC)	000025	1 September 2024 to 31 August 2026
Unique Entity Number	S85SS0089B	1 January 2009

Governing Instrument	AWARE's Constitution, AWARE's Bye-Laws
AWARE Board	More information at aware.org.sg/about/board/
Auditors	Kreston Helmi Talib PAC
Banks	Standard Chartered Bank (Singapore) Limited, United Overseas Bank, CIMB Bank
Related Entity	Catalyse Consulting Private Limited, incorporated by way of a trust deed



ABOUT US

AWARE is Singapore's leading women's rights and gender equality organisation. We believe in the rights of all individuals, regardless of gender, to make informed and responsible choices about their lives and to have equal opportunities in civil life, whether in education, marriage, employment or sexual and reproductive rights, particularly for women.

Since our formation in 1985, we have remained dedicated to removing gender-based barriers and creating a gender-equal society free from discrimination and violence. We do so through three main pillars of change:

- **Advocacy and research:** Advancing gender equality by shaping laws, policies and public attitudes backed by research that highlights systemic inequalities and drives solutions
- **Education and training:** Empowering individuals and organisations to actively challenge gender norms, sexism and misogyny and build safer, more inclusive communities
- **Support services:** Providing direct, trauma-informed care and assistance to women and survivors through our Women's Care Centre and Sexual Assault Care Centre

AWARE is a not-for-profit organisation. We are funded by donations, grants and member subscriptions. We are also a registered charity with Institute of Public Character status (1 September 2024 to 31 August 2026), meaning that all donations to AWARE are tax-deductible.

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President's Message

Going Against the Grain

For 40 years, AWARE has gone against the grain, working to challenge the status quo and disrupt the boundaries of what gender equality can look like in Singapore. Four decades of advocacy have taught us that progress does not happen overnight—it must be patiently and persistently cultivated.

2025 marked AWARE's 40th anniversary—and our biggest harvest yet. Some of the fruits of our labour include:

- Our organisation has grown significantly since 2010. With 36 staff members, we are now the largest team AWARE has ever had.
- We supported close to 3,000 individuals through the Women's Care Centre and Sexual Assault Care Centre.
- Our continued advocacy efforts contributed to five major policy achievements.
- Our outreach and education programmes reached over 1,000 individuals in the community.
- We raised close to S\$3.2 million in grants and donations thanks to the generosity of our members, donors, volunteers and partners.
- Our digital presence also continued to grow, reaching 3.5 million views and over 49,500 followers across our social media platforms, demonstrating the power of stories and collective voices in challenging the status quo.

2025 was also a year of transition, making it the second most critical year in AWARE's history, and the most significant leadership shift since the 2009 saga. Just as autumn marks the gathering of a harvest, we ended the year on a high, with much to celebrate. It also marked the close of an extraordinary chapter, as Corinna Lim stepped down as Executive Director after 16 years of exceptional leadership. She will continue to serve as Senior Adviser at AWARE. I am deeply grateful for the AWARE she nurtured and helped build, and for the strong foundation she has laid for future leaders. I am equally delighted that Lim Shoon Yin has joined us to lead AWARE into its next chapter, building on a legacy of bold, outspoken advocacy.

As we celebrate 2025 and look ahead to the seasons to come, AWARE will continue to advocate, educate and support women in addressing labour inequality, intersectional inequality, gendered norms and gender-based violence.

Together, we will keep sowing the seeds of change.



Aarathi Arumugam

President, AWARE (2024–2026)



Outgoing Executive Director's Message

Passing the Plough

As AWARE marked 40 years in 2025, the feeling I return to most is gratitude.

It has been a real privilege to be part of this organisation's journey over the past 16 years as Executive Director, and to work alongside so many remarkable people in the cause of gender equality. Whatever progress AWARE has made has never belonged to one person. It has been shaped by the dedication of staff, volunteers, Board members, donors, corporate partners, fellow civil society groups, public sector stakeholders and the many supporters who believed this work mattered. It has also been shaped by the courage of those who turned to us for help, trusted us with their stories, and reminded us why this work must continue.

Looking back, I feel proud of how much has been built together: stronger services for women and survivors, deeper public understanding of gender inequality and violence, more informed conversations about care, work and family, and meaningful shifts in policy, practice and social norms. Much of this work has involved going against the grain—challenging long-held assumptions, speaking about issues people once preferred not to see, and insisting that things many accepted as normal were neither fair nor inevitable. Change has not always come quickly, and sometimes it has felt painfully slow. But taken over time, the direction has been clear. As Dr Martin Luther King Jr. said, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Our task is to keep helping bend it.



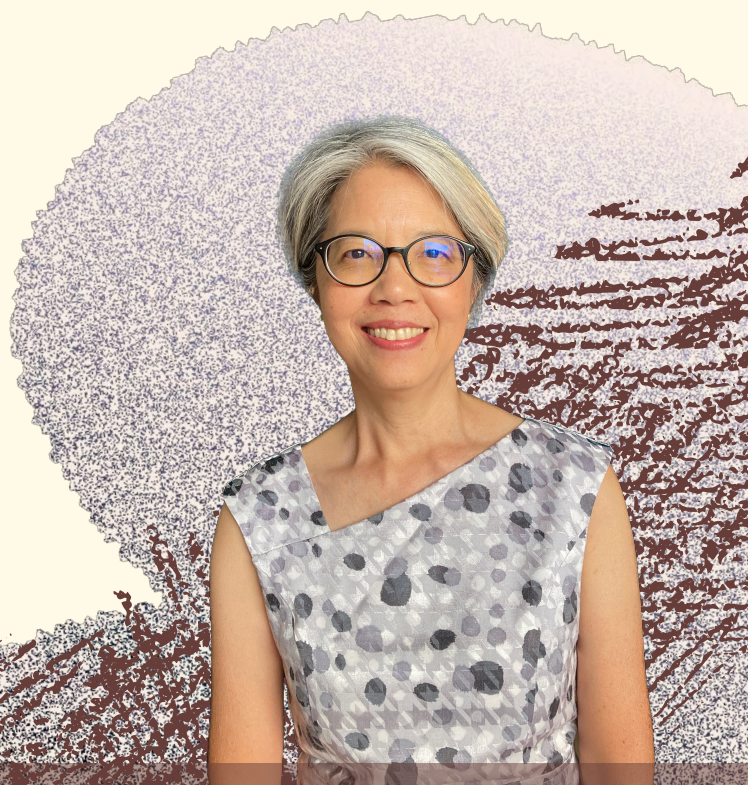
Corinna Lim

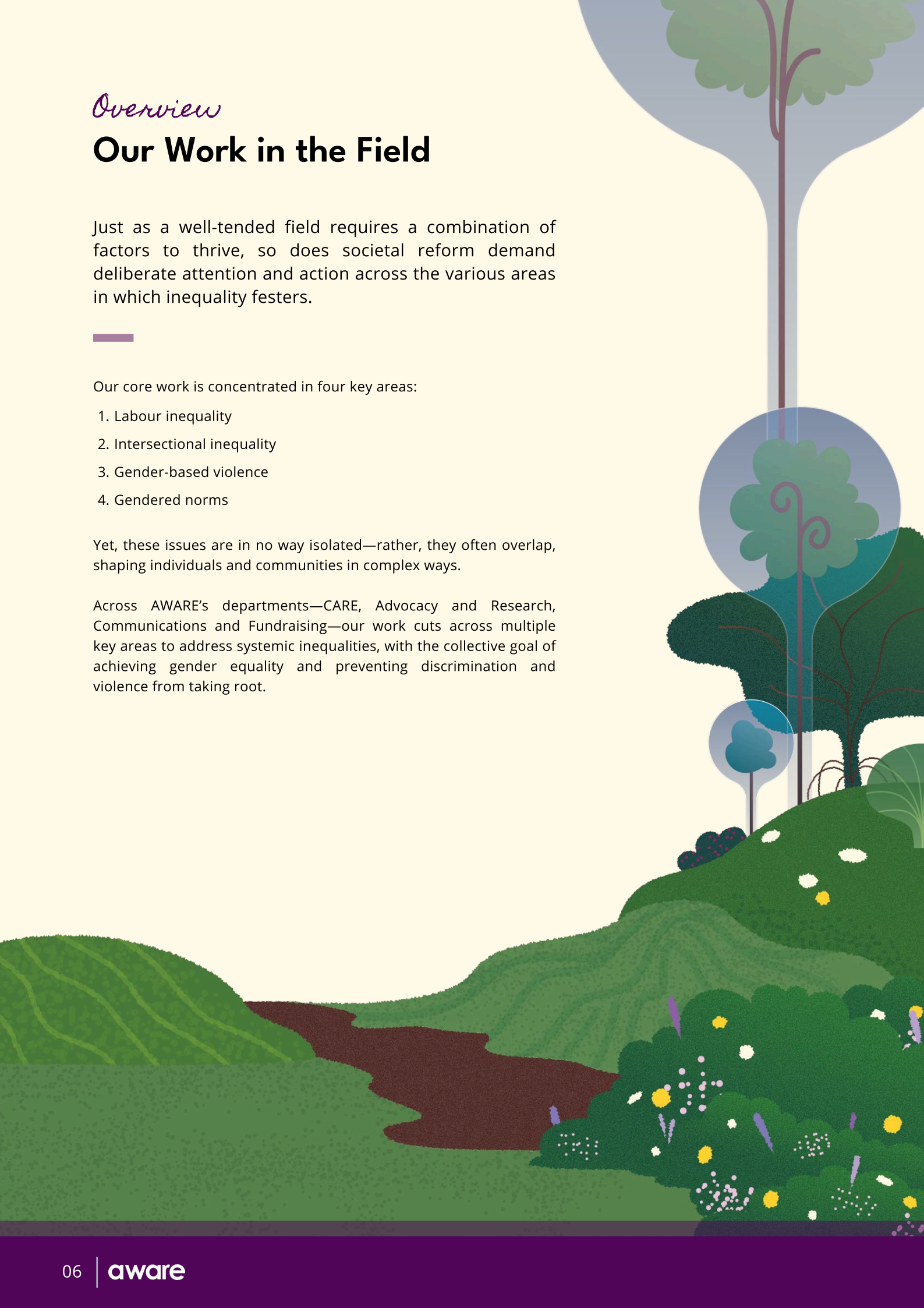
Executive Director (2010–2025)

One of my most memorable moments this year was standing on stage during the 'Past, Present, Future' segment of the Mother of All Balls. It was deeply moving to feel, in one moment, the continuity of AWARE's story across generations: those who came before us, those carrying the work now, and those who will take it forward.

As I stepped down from my role, I did so with a full heart. I am especially thankful to the mentors who guided me, challenged me and helped me grow over the years. Their generosity has meant a great deal.

There is still so much to do. Singapore is changing, through demographic shifts, technological change and climate change. These changes will bring new pressures, new risks and new questions. AWARE's work remains as necessary as ever: to listen, to respond, to advocate, and to help build a society where people of all genders can live with safety, dignity and equal opportunity.





Overview

Our Work in the Field

Just as a well-tended field requires a combination of factors to thrive, so does societal reform demand deliberate attention and action across the various areas in which inequality festers.

Our core work is concentrated in four key areas:

1. Labour inequality
2. Intersectional inequality
3. Gender-based violence
4. Gendered norms

Yet, these issues are in no way isolated—rather, they often overlap, shaping individuals and communities in complex ways.

Across AWARE's departments—CARE, Advocacy and Research, Communications and Fundraising—our work cuts across multiple key areas to address systemic inequalities, with the collective goal of achieving gender equality and preventing discrimination and violence from taking root.

Labour Inequality

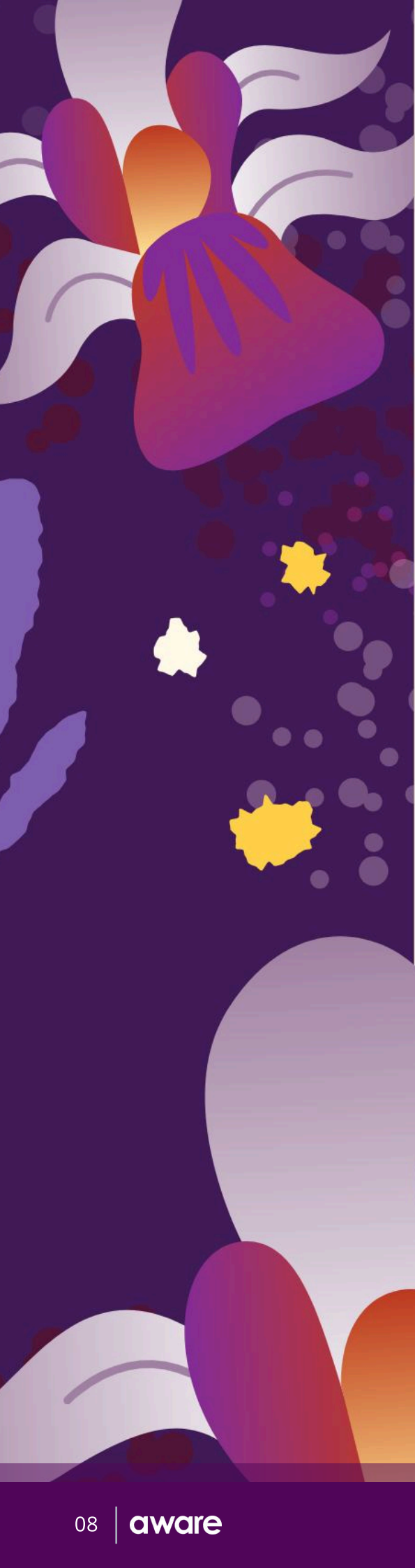
Despite some progress in narrowing the gender pay gap, structural barriers continue to limit women's opportunities at the workplace.

According to a 2024 report by the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), the adjusted gender pay gap has narrowed, but still remained at 6 per cent in 2023—across the same role, industry, education level and age. Meanwhile, the unadjusted figure for full-time resident employees was considerably more concerning at 14.3 per cent.¹ This gap speaks to the disparity in labour force participation between men and women, including the fact that women are less represented in higher management roles; are more highly represented in the type of work that often pays less because of household and caregiving responsibilities; and often face pregnancy discrimination. These reflect the unjust circumstances and unequal opportunities that women face."

At the same time, the workplace environment itself can be inhospitable, at times hostile, to female employees. Workplace sexual harassment and discrimination remain widespread. An AWARE-Ipsos survey² and Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry survey,³ both conducted in 2021, revealed similar findings: over 40 per cent of female respondents have encountered gender discrimination and some form of sexual harassment. This is despite the fact that harassment is severely underreported.

AWARE's ongoing advocacy work has resulted in significant policy achievements, including the Workplace Fairness Act (see Advocacy and Research section), while our Women's Care Centre Legal Clinic offers free legal consultations for women facing challenges, including workplace discrimination.

1. *Progress on Singapore Women's Development*, Ministry of Social and Family Development, 2024.
2. *Workplace Sexual Harassment in Singapore*, Ipsos Public Affairs for AWARE Singapore, 2021.
3. "Nearly 1 in 3 respondents face gender discrimination at work: Survey", CNA, 2021.



Intersectional Inequality

In 1989, feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term “intersectionality” to describe the unique oppressions faced by African-American women. Today, the concept is central to feminist discourse, describing how multiple forms of discrimination—including but not limited to race, gender, social class and sexuality—interact and intersect to create complex and compounded lived experiences of discrimination.

This framework is equally applicable to Singapore. Here, older women face disproportionate discrimination from employers and colleagues, and frequently shoulder the emotional and physical burden of caregiving. Single mothers remain excluded from benefits that married parents receive. Transnational spouses face housing insecurity and employment exclusion, which also translate into threats of familial separation.

The list goes on.

In short, the most marginalised and vulnerable groups are those who experience multiple overlapping forms of discrimination, and are the most at risk of falling through the cracks when it comes to access to opportunities and legal and social support. At AWARE, intersectionality informs our approach to advocacy and front-facing services. We recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to inequality; nevertheless, we strive towards a nuanced, inclusive future.

Gender-based Violence

We live in an era where teenage girls fall victim to deepfake nude photos circulated at school, with the perpetrators being none other than their own male schoolmates.

Technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) is on the rise in a hyperconnected world that has not done nearly enough to centre women's safety. In this landscape, online harm is inflicted and amplified at unprecedented speed and scale. The rise in digital abuse compounds long-standing forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence and physical sexual assault. At its core, gender-based violence is one of the most explicit manifestations of gender inequality, enabled by a patriarchal culture and inadequate accountability.

At AWARE, a dedicated CARE department supports survivors of all kinds of gender-based violence through two key services: the Women's Care Centre (WCC), which provides counselling and legal support for women in need, as well as the Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC), Singapore's only specialised service for survivors of sexual violence.

Meanwhile, a robust Advocacy and Research department fights against victim-blaming of sexual assault survivors, advocates for stronger protections against online harms and trauma-informed police-reporting processes, and sheds light on little-understood forms of abuse like coercive control.



Over 46 participants from across legal and healthcare sectors came to our Sexual Assault Casework Training.

Gendered Norms

From the moment we are born, no one escapes the invisible, insidious rules that govern almost every aspect of our private and public lives. Gendered norms permeate our homes, schools, workplaces and public spaces, dictating the way we speak, behave and present ourselves.

It is why AWARE aims to shift and rewrite these often-unquestioned narratives through a sustained communications strategy, community engagement and education, research on masculine attitudes and advocacy on the need for comprehensive sexuality education. Be it on social media or in person, our campaigns and activities consistently challenge stereotypes and expectations; foster spaces for dialogue and reflection; and empower individuals and communities to take action toward greater gender equality and inclusivity.

S.P.A.C.E (Support, Partner and Act Through Community Engagement), our dedicated department for community and volunteer engagement, also runs regular programmes and workshops to equip participants with the skills to make informed decisions for themselves and respond to gender-based violence in their communities.



An Active Bystander Training session with community-based family service centre Beautiful People, conducted by our trainers Izzaty Ishak (left) and Annette Vincent (right).

The following sections detail the work done and achievements across the various arms of AWARE in addressing these four key areas.

2025 Highlights

A Bumper Year

People impacted

>1,000 individuals
reached through community
engagement and outreach

2,943 individuals
supported through our Sexual
Assault Care Centre (SACC)
and Women's Care Centre

 **705** survivors
of sexual violence
supported through SACC

 **3,872** contacts
handled by the
Women's Helpline

Media reach

 **3.5** million
views across our social
media platforms

 **92** mentions
on mainstream media

Fundraising

 **~\$3.2** million
raised from donors and
fundraising events

Community grown

45 partners
in the community



283 volunteers
across AWARE's
programmes
contributed



10,000 hours

Policy achievements

5 major achievements
through our advocacy



- Workplace Fairness Act and Workplace Fairness (Dispute Resolution) Act
- Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act
- New Shared Parental Leave
- Increased mandatory paternity leave
- Stronger maintenance enforcement measures for wives and parents



CARE

AWARE's CARE department provides the steadiness and support that clients and survivors of gender-based violence and discrimination need in the face of distress. Comprising two key services—the Women's Care Centre and the Sexual Assault Care Centre—CARE provides a safe and supportive space for healing, reclaiming one's sense of autonomy and making informed choices.



Rooted in Care

Since our inception in 1991, CARE's work has always been anchored in empathy and trauma-informed care.

In 2025, CARE continued our commitment to provide client-centred services, while focusing on meeting staff's needs for stabilisation, capacity building and sustainability.

Operating with a stable pool of 15 full-time staff, and supported by consultants as well as volunteer helplineers and lawyers, we extended the continuum of client services beyond the helpline, legal clinic, counselling and casework management, reintroducing group work after a gap of five years and piloting two runs of support groups for survivors of sexual violence.

At the same time, we continued to review and enhance our internal work processes for greater, more coordinated work efficiency among teams in order to improve its overall service quality. We devoted significant time and resources to upskill our team in trauma-informed approaches and strengthen competency building.

Recognising the emotional and psychological demands of the work, "caring for the carers" was also a key area of focus for CARE. This emphasis was essential in ensuring the sustainability, well-being and resilience of the hearts and hands undertaking the challenging work of supporting women and survivors of sexual violence.

Yet CARE cannot do the work alone. Our dedicated volunteer community has been instrumental to our journey, and their well-being is equally important as that of staff's. We actively and intentionally engaged and supported them throughout the year, with events such as Peer Meets and the annual Volunteer Appreciation Party.

We also cannot neglect the external ecosystem, which is why we embarked on our plans to enhance the quality of support for survivors of sexual violence by building the capacity of other professionals in the social service sector who work directly or indirectly with survivors. We accomplished this through the Sexual Assault Casework Training, Community of Practice and multiple networking and consultation sessions, facilitating mutual learning and support among practitioners.

Hands in the Soil:

Supporting Clients and Survivors

Our clients at CARE are our raison d'être, which is why we are always seeking to refine and expand our range of services to meet their needs better. While the bulk of our work takes place at the Women's Care Centre and Sexual Assault Care Centre, we also reintroduced support groups in 2025.

Reviving Support Groups

"Justice, Healing and Beyond: Support Group for Sexual Violence Survivors" provided a safe space for survivors to connect with others who have had similar experiences to receive mutual support, as well as explore ways of healing and empowerment in making personal meanings of justice.

Notably, it combined peer support with psychoeducation, experience sharing, discussions around trauma, justice and resilience and experiential activities to support participants' emotional regulation, trauma recovery and overall mental well-being. These activities enabled participants to practise skills in a safe and supportive environment and share personal insights—deepening both individual and collective resilience.

The support group consisted of 10 sessions for six survivors who had gone through the criminal justice system. These took place in two rounds, the first from 30 May to 4 July 2025, and the second from 2 to 29 November 2025.

The sessions built on some of the coping and useful strategies learnt. There were opportunities to explore healing at different stages, and adapting strategies and thoughts into real life. I feel empowered in my healing journey. I've learnt to become present in the shared moments together.

-Support group participant



100%

reported improved knowledge, mental wellbeing and sense of connection to others



90%

reported a greater ability to apply what they have learnt to their everyday life

Women's Care Centre

In 2025, the Women's Care Centre (WCC) supported a total of 2,349 women through three main channels:

1. WCC Women's Helpline
2. WCC Legal Clinic
3. WCC Counselling

WCC Women's Helpline

The longest-running service of its kind in Singapore, the WCC Helpline serves as a critical nexus for women in distress. It acts as the primary gateway to AWARE's two specialised internal services, namely our pro bono legal clinics and counselling. It celebrated its 34th year of operation in 2025.

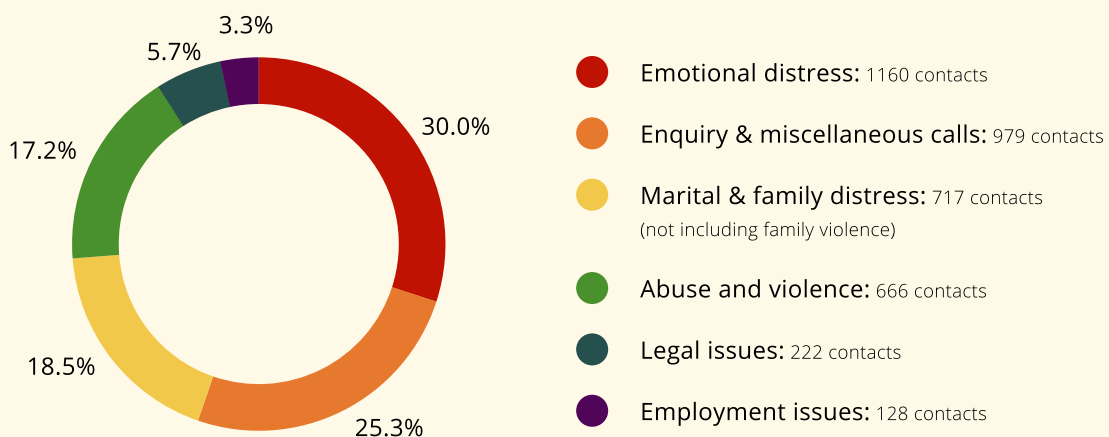
In 2025, the Women's Helpline handled a total of 3,872 contacts via call, email and the online chat service.

94%

of surveyed callers expressed satisfaction with the helpline support



Reasons for calling the helpline



In celebration of AWARE's 40 years of service to women in the country, the Helpline team also contributed to a special commemorative feature that captured the evolution of the gender landscape in Singapore. We facilitated an intergenerational dialogue between a veteran helpline from our early years and a current volunteer, sharing a unique perspective on how the challenges facing women have shifted, or even persisted, over four decades.

This storytelling initiative served as a powerful testament to our enduring legacy and the vital role the Helpline continues to play as a witness to women's lives.

WCC Legal Clinic

The WCC Legal Clinic provides legal consultations to women navigating legal matters concerning marital issues, family violence and protection.

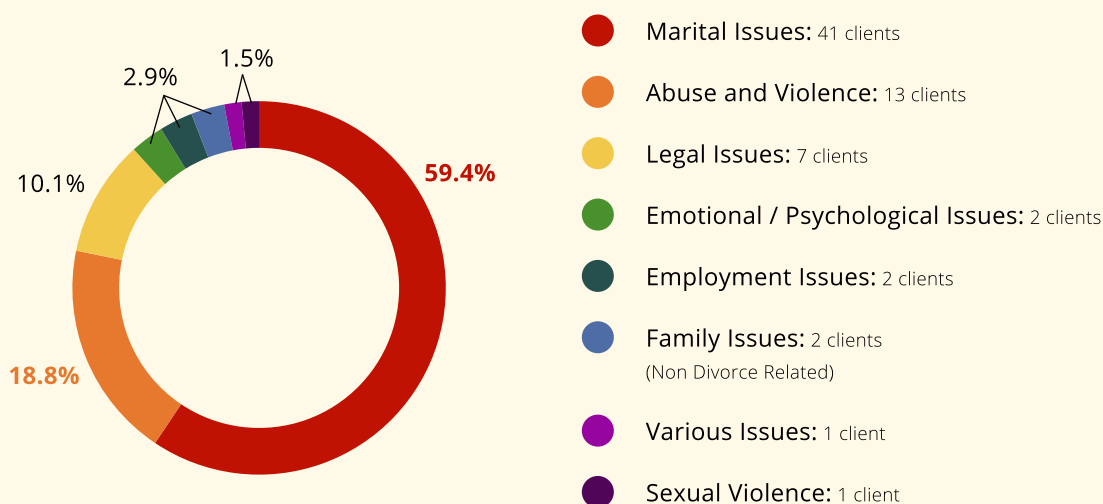
A total of 69 clients attended the legal consultation sessions in 2025.

78%

client satisfaction rate



Problem Type Split



The lawyer patiently heard my concern and guided me accordingly. She was fully prepared with answers for the questions I indicated in the request form, and could provide professional advice for other queries I had. I am grateful for that.

- WCC Legal Clinic client



59.4%

cases related to marital issues



18.8%

cases related to abuse and violence

Upon consultation with relevant stakeholders to understand their needs, we undertook significant efforts to review our Legal Clinic services. This led to the implementation of several key changes last year, including:

- Extending consultation sessions from 20 to 30 minutes per client
- Introducing the new Duty Officer (DO) role to provide IT and emotional support during the consultations with volunteer lawyers
- Recruiting and onboarding two additional volunteers for the DO role

WCC Counselling

Our counsellors supported 249 clients through 1215 counselling sessions, responding to a wide range of emotional, relational and mental health needs. The sessions supported clients to reach their goals, manage challenges and distress, and move towards better mental health and overall wellbeing.

My counselling sessions with AWARE have been a crucial support system for me when I was struggling. The sign up process was easy and I was thankful that help was available when I reached out. My counsellor always empowered me with tools for the issues we were working on and through her support, I emerged from a relatively dark time feeling a lot stronger and safer. These tools are now with me for when I go through other challenges. Thank you so much to AWARE and my counsellor!

- WCC Counselling client



249

clients

1215

sessions

98%

of clients surveyed were better able to manage and cope with their struggles and distressing situations



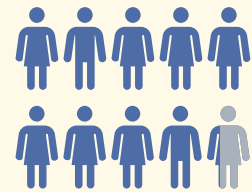
Sexual Assault Care Centre

As Singapore's only specialised service for survivors of sexual assault, the Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC) continues to be a vital source of support which offers empathetic, trauma-informed care that centres survivor autonomy.

The SACC offers four main services:

1. SACC Helpline
2. SACC Legal Clinic
3. SACC Counselling
4. SACC Case Management

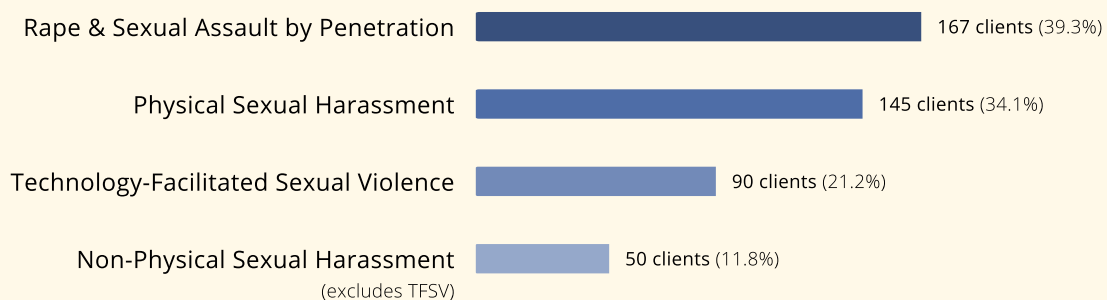
In 2025, SACC supported a total of 705 unique individuals across its services, reflecting the continued local demand for specialised, survivor-centred sexual violence support.



>90%

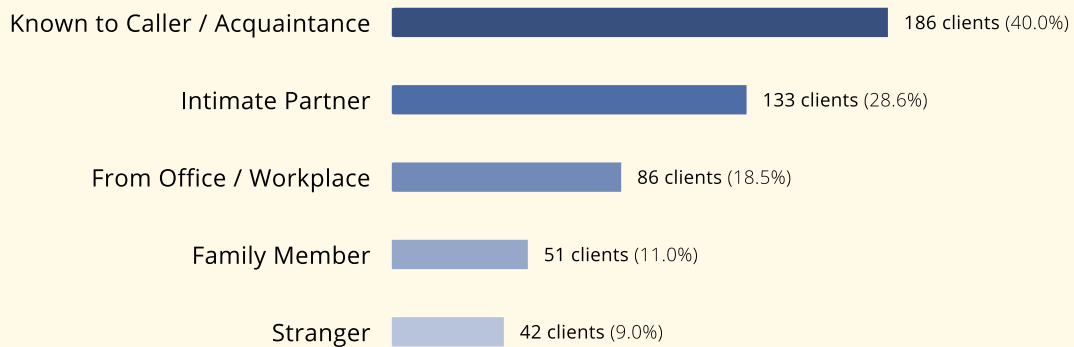
of clients surveyed were satisfied across each of the four services

Type of Sexual Violence Faced



Note that out of the 465 clients, some survivors may experience multiple forms of sexual violence, with overlapping harms that compound the trauma and complexity of recovery. Thus, the figures do not add up to 100 per cent.

Relationship to Perpetrator



Similarly, the figures do not add up to 100 per cent of 465 callers, as callers can have experienced more than one instance of sexual violence in their history, perpetrated by different individuals.

The data continues to challenge the pervasive “stranger danger” myth, as cases of sexual violence were perpetrated by individuals known to the survivor, significantly deepening the impact of the harm experienced.

SACC Helpline

The SACC Helpline provides emotional first aid to stabilise survivors, regardless of their gender, when they share their experiences. The focus is on establishing both physical and emotional safety, and empowering survivors by providing them with the appropriate resources and information for them to make informed choices.

In 2025, the SACC Helpline supported a total of 637 clients via calls, email and the online chat service.

Following the appointment of a dedicated SACC Helpline Executive in late 2024, the Helpline team expanded its capacity to provide timely, accessible and enhanced care to clients, better ensuring that survivors receive the immediate support they need.

70% 

average annual answered call rate in 2025 (up from 59% in 2024)

38% 

increase in clients from 2024

48% 

increase in number of contacts made with clients

SACC Legal Clinic

SACC Legal Clinic supported a total of 37 sexual assault survivors across 40 sessions in 2025.

The Legal Clinic has helped me see a bigger picture from a legal perspective. I felt much compassion and support during the whole process. This is very important to me at this critical time of my life. Much gratitude for AWARE and for AWARE Legal Clinic.

- SACC Legal Clinic client



90%

of clients surveyed
expressed satisfaction

SACC Counselling

The Counselling team provided a safe, confidential and non-judgemental space for clients to explore their challenges and goals after their harrowing experience of sexual assault.

We supported 114 sexual assault survivors through 571 counselling sessions, providing trauma-informed and survivor-centred care to help survivors process their experiences; build emotional resilience; regain a sense of safety and control; develop and strengthen coping strategies; and support their healing and personal growth.

My counsellor is a wonderful source of emotional support who, in a short period of time, has been able to understand painful and complex issues such as sexual assault, incest, caregiving responsibilities and relationship issues at different points in my life, and hold a safe space for me to process them.

I appreciate that she approaches things in the context of structural forces such as gender, rather than completely individualise some of the effects of my experiences. I am encouraged by her to better resource myself to navigate these better while recognising the harm that they cause for so many.

- SACC Counselling client



94%

of clients felt they
were able to function
better in different
areas of their life
including school,
work, relationships
and/or personal life

SACC Case Management

Our Case Management service provides specialised support to survivors of sexual violence, regardless of gender. It aims to stabilise survivors' symptoms and enhance their overall functioning and wellbeing, so that they can make informed choices about their lives and recovery.

A key component of the service is the provision of accompaniment and support for survivors navigating formal systems such as police stations and the courts. This ensures that survivors are not alone during these often intimidating processes, and feel supported and informed at every step of their engagement with the justice system.

I'm really grateful for the support I received. They took the time to explain the legal system to me in such a clear way that I finally felt I could understand what was happening.

My case manager also gave me a lot of emotional support, and her words really helped me feel stronger and more grounded. After speaking to them, I didn't feel so alone anymore, and that made such a difference to me. I felt safe opening up.

- SACC Case Management Client



85 ↑↑

clients
(46% increase
from 2024)

422

case management
sessions



97%

of clients surveyed
felt supported by
their case manager
and better informed
about their options

Sending to Our Own:

Empowering Staff and Volunteers

Carers deserve care too. CARE's work is inherently complex, emotionally demanding and potentially distressing. It is therefore critical for the organisation to nourish our own people by establishing clear practice parameters and a robust support structure. Only then can our care providers carry out their roles safely, effectively and sustainably.

CARE Staff

CARE devoted a significant amount of resources to upskill its respective teams in trauma-informed approaches, delivered through a range of learning platforms to strengthen professional capacity. Competency building comprises regular individual and group supervision, with focus not only on supporting clients, but also caring for the well-being of the carers under supervision.

The Case Management team also developed its Practice Guide and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual as a foundational resource for trauma-informed casework to support them in navigating the complexities of sexual violence work.



The staff and volunteer teams behind AWARE's Women's Helpline and Sexual Assault Care Centre helpline.

Volunteers

Much of CARE's work is made possible through the commitment and support of dedicated Helpline and Legal Clinic volunteers.



Total CARE volunteers **1927.5 hours**

This is why we adopted the four 'R's—recruitment, retention, regular engagement and resourcing—in our volunteer management strategy.

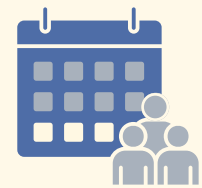
We saw great success in volunteer recruitment last year. Out of the 42 volunteers who managed the WCC Women's Helpline, 13 were new volunteers from our 56th batch—expanding the team significantly. The volunteers underwent a rigorous six-month training, consisting of nine classroom learnings and nine on-the-job training sessions, ensuring they are fully equipped to handle calls at the helpline.

It is equally important to retain the dedicated volunteers we already have. To this end, we laid the groundwork for the SACC Helpline Volunteer Programme, slated for launch in the first half of 2026. It aims to offer specialised training in helpline sexual assault support to seasoned WCC Women's Helpline volunteers so that they can support both SACC and WCC helpline calls. In a way, the programme creates a "career" progression pathway for volunteers, providing varied service opportunities and experiences for them to remain deeply engaged.

Regular engagement is also crucial to ensuring that volunteers are supported and motivated. Targeted efforts were undertaken by the helpline staff team to provide scheduled check-ins with the helpline volunteers, in addition to regular on-duty support. CARE also revamped the Annual Helpline Volunteer Survey in 2025, which saw a remarkable 92 per cent response rate. The findings provided critical insights into the volunteer experience, allowing the team to curate more impactful engagement programmes and retention strategies that align with the evolving interests of our volunteers.

Finally, in terms of resourcing, we organised a peer meet for Helpline volunteers from both WCC and SACC on 25 August, where a Senior Medical Social Worker from the Institute of Mental Health was invited to share on Singapore's national approach to mental health and illness, as well as the issues that affected women the most.

Similarly, the WCC and SACC Legal Clinic volunteers met on 14 November to strengthen engagement and knowledge building by keeping up to date with AWARE's advocacy efforts and Singapore law. AWARE's Head of Department of Advocacy and Research shared key updates on changes in family law and court processes related to sexual assault cases in her presentations.



240

total volunteer
days equivalent

58

total unique
CARE volunteers



Deepening the Care Ecosystem:

Engaging Partners and Practitioners

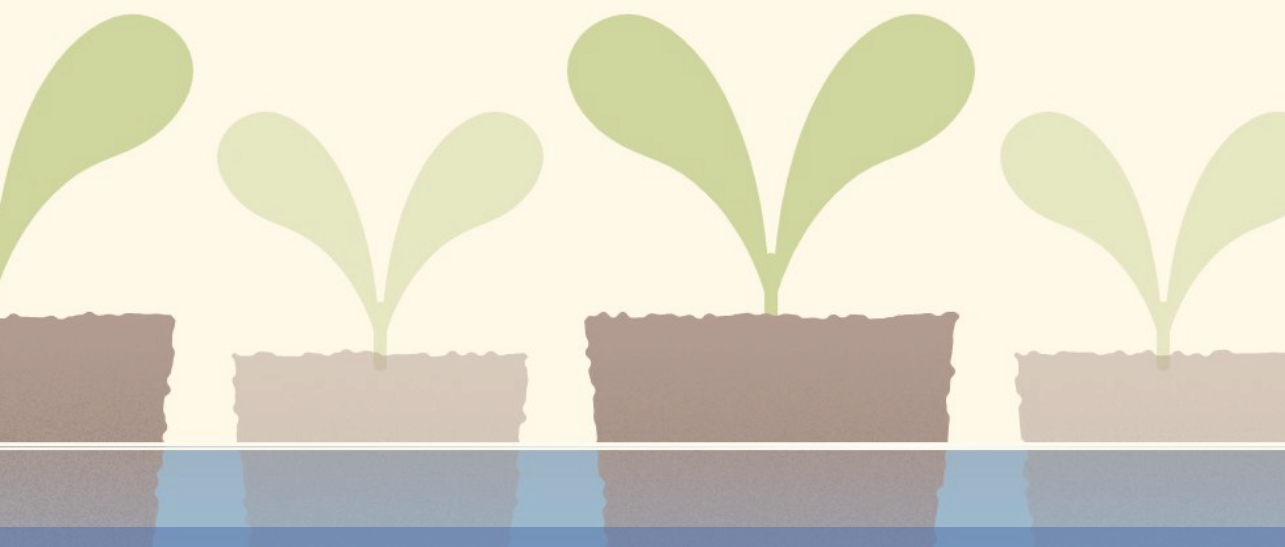
CARE continues to cultivate an ecosystem of professionals who work with sexual violence survivors, sharing our knowledge and expertise on survivor-centric, trauma-informed support and justice.

To achieve this, we strengthened strategic partnerships by collaborating with professionals across various sectors, including social services, legal services, healthcare and education. Two particularly successful collaborations in 2025 were the Community of Practice and Sexual Assault Casework Training sessions, which allowed for mutual learning opportunities via networking, targeted training and case consultations among fellow practitioners.

Community of Practice Sessions

A total of six Community of Practice (CoP) sessions were organised throughout the year to build solidarity and facilitate mutual learning among members.

Recognising the complex and multi-layered challenges involved in supporting survivors, the CoP team decided to undertake a ground-up research initiative spanning 2025 and 2026 that focuses on identifying and mapping gaps in support and interventions across sectors. Data will primarily be gathered via interviews with 20 practitioners from diverse backgrounds and formally begin in 2026.



Sexual Assault Casework Training

The Sexual Assault Casework Training (SACT) programme aimed to build the capacity of professionals by introducing trauma-informed casework practices in providing care and advocating for survivors of sexual violence. Previously known as the Sexual Assault Case Worker Training, the programme was renamed to better reflect a broader target audience beyond caseworkers, social workers and case managers to include all professionals.

The two-day workshop was conducted from 7 to 8 October 2025, witnessing a turnout of 46 participants, including 11 CARE staff. Supported by professionals from the legal and healthcare sectors, participants gained cross-sector knowledge and practical insights into survivors' journeys across systems through the sharing. The 14.5 hours worth of training were also recognised by the Singapore Association of Social Workers for use in accreditation applications or renewals.

Excellent training that hits relevant contextual, must-know knowledge across multiple sectors. This is relevant and helpful to support workers to better support survivors in their journey to access services. Highly recommended training for professionals who work with survivors and vulnerable populations.

- SACT participant



Notably, 30 per cent of SACT participants expressed interest and signed up to participate in the CoP team's research initiative. This highlights how such training and engagement programmes are effective in not only building individual capacity, but also generating interest in collective learning across projects—ultimately contributing to the creation of more trauma-informed and client-centric environments for survivors.



92%

of participants rated the training experience positively



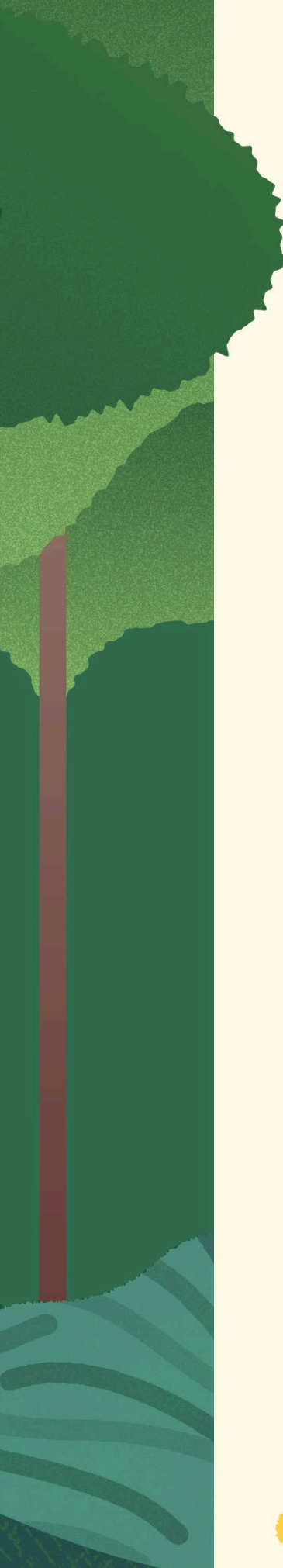
94%

would recommend the training to others

S.P.A.C.E

Through AWARE's S.P.A.C.E (Support, Partner, Act through Community Engagement) department, we engage, educate and empower communities to take collective action against gender-based violence.





Laying the Groundwork for Change

No matter the season, progress is the product of shared labour. Many hands make light work, especially when the load is heavy.

At S.P.A.C.E, we move beyond awareness to foster collective responsibility and practical intervention. Our ultimate mission is to eradicate gender-based violence by empowering individuals and communities with the skills and knowledge to take tangible action in their everyday lives.

In 2025, we continued to expand our reach, engaging more than 1,000 people, from students to social service professionals, and working with over 45 community partners through our core programmes, workshops and community outreach events.



Filling the Toolbox

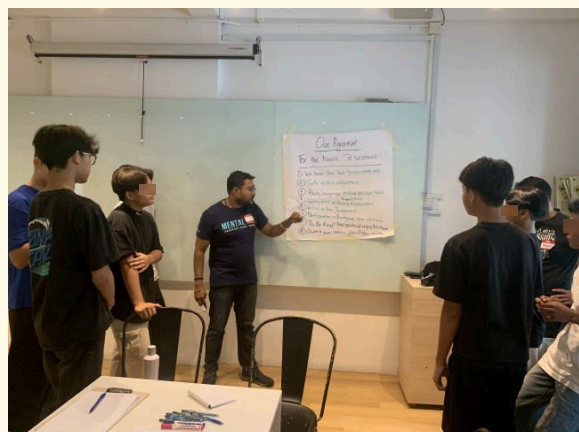
Through our core programmes and workshops, we equip individuals with the tools to respond to and prevent gender-based violence.

We scaled up our bystander intervention training programme, “Stand Up, Stay Grounded”, significantly in 2025. In particular, we tailored workshops for different audience profiles, including 130 youths from Singapore Polytechnic, volunteers at non-profit organisation Beautiful People and members of the public.

Meanwhile, demand for our Sexual Assault First Responder Training (SAFRT) remained strong, with a total turnout of 121 participants over four public runs, on top of private sessions for NUS Care Unit, public relations firm Edelman and even local kink communities. These in-person sessions were designed to familiarise participants with trauma reactions and symptoms to better support survivors’ wellbeing, with interactive, scenario-based role play sessions that allowed people to practice empathetic first responses in real time.

Our Birds & Bees workshop also delivered vital consent education to under-resourced communities and those who have experienced trauma. The programme continues to deepen both new and long-term partnerships with social service agencies—including Melrose Home (Children’s Aid Society), Methodist Welfare Services Girls’ Residence, Yong En Care Centre and Beyond Social Services—to ensure that learning is effective and grounded in the participants’ lived experiences. By facilitating multiple workshops, we build the trust and rapport necessary to create a genuine mandate for learning among participants.

Finally, we piloted our very own masculinity programme, M-Squad, which focuses on fostering critical conversations around healthy masculinity and allyship among young men. In partnership with Mental Act Community Services, we held two cycles of workshops for two residential homes: Melrose Home and Singapore Boys’ Hostel by Trybe.



M Squad, AWARE's first masculinity workshop with Mental ACT. Its co-founder Devananthan Tamilselvii (centre) worked with boys in residential homes on developing healthy masculinities.

The impact of this approach is evident in the feedback from partners like Methodist Welfare Services Girls’ Residence and Melrose Home (Children’s Aid Society). Staff reported that our workshops provided participants with the essential vocabulary to identify violence, empowering them to take the courageous first step of reporting incidents to their care workers.

Cultivating Connections

Throughout the year, we held numerous strategic outreach events to engage new and diverse organisations, bringing our total number of active community partners to 45, including SINDA, Yishun Children Society, Rice Media, Rotary Club, Workato and more.

Our efforts culminated in a landmark event for the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW). Held on 24 November 2025 at Chui Huay Lim Club, the event drew a robust turnout of 168 attendees from social service agencies, legal and healthcare sectors, as well as 18 presenting partners. It was also graced by our guest of honour Madam Halimah Yacob, Former President of the Republic of Singapore.

Themed “Strength in Solidarity: Uniting Communities to End Gender-Based Violence”, the event featured a keynote speech by Dr Emma Katz, a world-renowned expert on coercive control who joined virtually from the United Kingdom, alongside a dynamic mix of panel discussions, breakout sessions and exhibition booths.

IDEVAW 2025 explored critical yet lesser-discussed themes of coercive control, relational healing and empowerment, and trauma-informed systemic change. It created sector-wide value—94 per cent of attendees reported gaining useful content for their work, while 87 per cent made new connections with partner organisations they had not previously engaged. Post-IDEVAW 2025, we have witnessed strong interest in collaboration from various partners, including those keen to set up their own helplines and who want to facilitate deeper knowledge exchange regarding issues faced by transnational spouses, among others.



From left to right: Vanita Kaneson (Lead Court Counsellor/Deputy Director, State Courts), Ruth Ng (Principal Social Worker, AWARE Sexual Assault Care Centre), Bharathi Manogaran (then-Deputy Executive Director of AWARE) and Chloé Vialard (Advocate/Lawyer) at IDEVAW 2025.

This conference provided me with useful content in my work as a social service practitioner, increased my awareness of the different community partners and their services and provided opportunities for me to explore community collaboration.

- IDEVAW 2025 participant



This conference is a great way to add insight to the issues faced by women and is a needed spotlight on niche issues that are not widely spoken about.

- IDEVAW 2025 participant



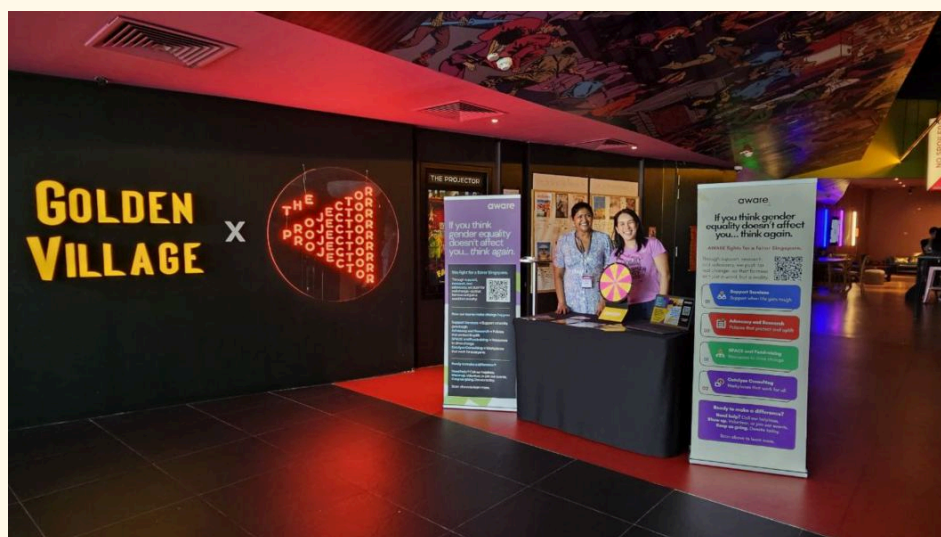
On the public engagement front, we held 10 outreach missions that reached over 600 individuals across Singapore.

For International Women's Day (IWD), we hosted booths at Boon Lay Community Club and One Punggol, in conjunction with the People's Association—our first outreach booths for IWD. We also made diverse event appearances, including our first nightlife safety event at RASA Space and panel contributions with The Projector, Samskriti Arts Festival and United World College of South East Asia (UWCSEA) East Campus.

Again, our efforts extended to the realm of masculinity, as we published the Men's Lived Experiences report with our Advocacy and Research department, contributing ground sensing data gathered through surveys we conducted at these outreach missions.



AWARE community engagement Senior Executive Izzaty Ishak (right) with volunteers boothing at a People's Association International Women's Day carnival.



Volunteer and Community Engagement Senior Manager, Shamima Rafi, with then-volunteer Lim Shoon Yin boothing at a screening of Black Box Diaries, a film about a journalist investigating her own sexual assault.

Hands on the Ground

Our work was powered by the 283 dedicated volunteers at AWARE, including 20 workshop trainers and over 30 facilitators.

We built capacity on multiple fronts, including a trauma resilience workshop in partnership with social enterprise Spark Social Ventures to help our trainers and facilitators better navigate the sensitive spaces where we deliver our workshops; parent capacity building with Beyond Social Services charity; and volunteer capacity building with Mental ACT Community Services, which offers culturally-rooted, LGBTQ+ inclusive mental health support for South Asians.

Our investment in volunteer development has directly strengthened our volunteer base, ensuring that our programmes continue to be delivered with skill and empathy. Trained facilitators now lead 60 per cent of our workshops independently, allowing core staff to focus on strategy and new partnerships. Post-training surveys also show that facilitators report a 30 per cent increase in confidence in handling challenging workshop dynamics.



Then-Deputy Executive Director Bharathi Manogaran speaking on a panel with Kalpavriksha Fine Arts Executive Director Meera Balasubramanian and Theatre Director Pei Qin Thong—on the state of violence against women in Singapore, and how art can propel awareness.



AWARE at family support service Yong-en Care Centre, teaching young girls about consent and boundaries.



An Active Bystander Training session with community-based family service centre Beautiful People, conducted by Izzaty Ishak (left).



ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH

By breaking up hardened assumptions and ideologies about gender and power, AWARE's Advocacy and Research department prepares the ground for lasting structural change.

Tilling the Land

New growth cannot take root if the conditions are not fertile. And sometimes, reform can only begin after carefully loosening and uprooting what has been deeply entrenched for generations.

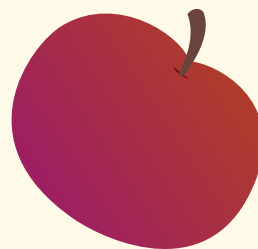
This is the work of our Advocacy and Research team: to reshape the very systems that mould us and our lived realities. We do this through persistent advocacy and rigorous research. In 2025, we secured five major advocacy wins, effecting tangible policy changes addressing workplace discrimination and online harms, as well as strengthening parenting and spousal support.

Meanwhile, our research projects sought to dig deeper into the systems that reproduce inequality. We undertook four main studies that we believe demand urgent attention in Singapore: masculinity, sexual assault survivors' experiences of police reporting, coercive control in domestic and social relationships and the realities of transnational families navigating borders and belonging. They unearthed hidden fault lines in our sociopolitical landscape, and will provide policymakers with evidence-based insights to cultivate more inclusive and equitable systems.



Fruits of Advocacy

We saw five major policy achievements in 2025, a testament to the effectiveness of our continued advocacy and contributions to gender discourse in shaping national policies affecting women and all genders.

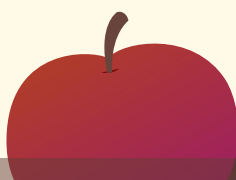


Workplace Fairness: Protecting Employees at Work

2025 saw two landmark workplace protections:

- The Workplace Fairness Act (WFA) was passed in January 2025, protecting employees against workplace discrimination on the grounds of any of the 11 protected characteristics, namely sex, age, race, religion, language, nationality, marital and pregnancy status, caregiving responsibilities, disability and mental health conditions.
- The Workplace Fairness (Dispute Resolution) Act (WFDRA) was then passed in November, protecting employees who encounter discriminatory employment decisions and providing redress for them through the Employment Claims Tribunal, a process which is shorter and less costly than usual court proceedings and disallows parties to be represented by lawyers.

These follow years of advocacy by AWARE on the need for anti-discrimination laws in Singapore, including supporting about 1,100 clients and gathering data from our Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory services which ran for almost five years (September 2019 to May 2024), conducting research, as well as advocacy through position papers and raising awareness publicly.



We also had numerous closed-door meetings with the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) in 2024 and 2025 on the WFA and the WFDRA. In 2025, we submitted a response on the dispute resolution process under the WFA during the government's consultation process, prior to the passing of the WFDRA. In response to MOM's invitation to submit recommendations on reasonable accommodations that employers should provide in the workplace and how employers should manage harassment in the workplace, we submitted three policy submissions to complement the anti-discrimination law. Our continued advocacy notably pushed the Tripartite Committee's final report to take into account some of our feedback, which we highlighted in our commentary in response in 2023, along with some remaining areas of concern.

Our work had a far-reaching impact. Our reports were cited by three Members of Parliament during the respective debates on the WFA and WFDRA. In the media, our op-eds on workplace discrimination prompted many responses, both from the government and other organisations, with one op-ed being picked up by the Singapore Law Watch.

Online Safety: Swift Takedowns

The Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act passed in November 2025 established the new Online Safety Commission (OSC), which AWARE has been calling for over several years. Survivors of online harm can go to the OSC for redress regarding 13 types of harmful online activities, including the quick takedown of offending material and rights of response.

The legislation also created six statutory torts which survivors can rely on to sue perpetrators and hold them accountable for their wrongs through civil claims for compensation. Recognising the challenges survivors may face in pursuing these civil claims, the OSC will also have the power to help survivors identify perpetrators.

This comprehensive, survivor-centric law is timely and much-needed. Technology-facilitated sexual violence has been on the rise in Singapore, and our Sexual Assault Care Centre has been regularly tracking the incidence of such abuse for AWARE's analysis and reporting.



Coercive Control: Understanding Emotional and Psychological Abuse

In December 2025, the District Court adopted “coercive control” as the defining thread of emotional and psychological abuse under the Women’s Charter.

District Judge Janice Chia held that the key question is whether behaviour amounts to domination, control and instilling fear, not merely whether it causes distress. Referring to Hansard (official record of parliamentary debates) and citing examples including withholding allowances, constant monitoring and isolating a victim, she concluded: “The common thread in these examples and illustrations is the perpetrator’s controlling behaviour over the victim through fear (whether for personal safety or likely consequences), resulting in mental or emotional harm to the victim. Such behaviour is referred to as “coercive control” in the Second Reading.”

AWARE played an important role in bringing the issue of coercive control to Parliament. We recognised that parliamentary debates recorded in Hansard around a proposed legislation can influence and shape subsequent judicial interpretation. Therefore, after the First Reading of the Bill and prior to its Second Reading, we wrote to Senior Minister of State Sun Xueling, with whom we had been in dialogue on related issues, to request that examples of coercive control be raised in Parliament. She did so during the debate.

This development must also be seen in historical context. In 1995, AWARE founding member Dr Kanwaljit Soin tabled a Family Violence Bill which recognised sexual, emotional and psychological violence. In other words, it has taken close to 30 years for emotional and psychological violence to be firmly embedded in Singapore law—a significant advocacy victory given that close to one third of Personal Protection Order cases based on family violence now solely rely on emotional and psychological violence, without physical violence.

Parenting: A Job for Two

From April 2025, Government-Paid Paternity Leave of four weeks (increased from an initial two weeks) came into effect. Shared Parental Leave of six weeks, which also came into effect and will increase to 10 weeks from April 2026, signals the government's acknowledgement that parenting is a shared responsibility.

This is an advocacy win for AWARE—for years, we have pushed for equal maternity and paternity leave through op-eds, forum letters, social media and public discussions, including an Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) lecture by our then Executive Director Corinna Lim.

Stronger Maintenance Enforcement: Relief for Wives and Single Parents

The new Maintenance Enforcement Programme, legislated in 2023, came into effect in January 2025, with the creation of the office of Maintenance Enforcement Officers (MEOs). MEOs have powers of investigation to gather evidence, conduct conciliation sessions where they can offer solutions and persuade parties to accept, and submit reports to the judge who conducts the maintenance hearings.

Again, AWARE has long advocated for better maintenance enforcement, including a separate body to enforce maintenance orders with more robust and proactive powers. Since they came into effect, these new measures have helped many women, including our own staff member Liyana Dhamirah, whose ex-husband finally back-paid a decade's worth of child support under the new maintenance regime.

Human Rights in Singapore: Highlighting Gaps to UN Member States

AWARE submitted our Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Alternative Report for UPR's review of Singapore's progress on human rights during its upcoming 52nd session in May 2026. In it, we raised the plight of transnational families and single, unwed parents, as well as highlighted gaps in legal protections against discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Together with three other women's rights organisations in Singapore, AWARE was invited by the European Union Delegation to Singapore to present our recommendations to 14 embassies during a closed-door session. Our comments were very well-received and prompted several follow-up questions and in-depth conversations after the session.

Breaking New Ground in Research

We advanced four key research projects on issues we deem pressing and in need of addressing in Singapore.

Masculinity

We conducted Singapore's first nationally representative survey of 1084 men that studied their attitudes towards gender, family and society. Our findings revealed that:

- Victim-blaming remains widespread
- Emotional repression is pervasive
- The pressures of being a breadwinner intensify emotional suppression

In addition, younger men expressed more egalitarian beliefs but reported the highest emotional strain, suggesting that their ideals often collide with entrenched social expectations.

The full report will be ready in Q2 2026.

Experience of Police Reporting by Sexual Assault Survivors

Through interviews with CARE staff and an analysis on our existing data on sexual assault survivors, we found that numerous barriers continue to persist when survivors deal with the criminal justice system.

These include encountering victim-blaming attitudes, non-trauma-informed practices, prolonged and repetitive interviews, inconsistent reporting practices across officers and stations, and lack of information around the forensic medical examination.

These findings will be shared with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Attorney General's Office in Q2 2026.

Coercive Control

Interview analysis from our ongoing study on coercive control revealed:

- Recurring patterns of abuse
- Psychological control is a core feature of abuse
- Cultural and societal norms are used to reinforce coercive control
- Barriers survivors face that often prevent them from leaving an abusive situation

Importantly, it also highlighted the critical role bystanders can play to support survivors. Preliminary findings from our study were shared during AWARE's one-day International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women conference on 24 November 2025.

The full report will be ready in Q4 2026.

Transnational Families

We completed a joint study of low-income transnational families with social service organisation South Central Community Family Service Centre which revealed the often crippling challenges the whole family faces when even one member is a foreigner. The impact ranges from:

- Inability to secure stable, affordable housing
- Prohibitive costs of education and health, resulting in a lack of education, massive debt or risks to health
- Negative effects on the security and stability of the family due to the precarious nature of a member's residency status

The full report will be ready in mid-2026.

A stylized illustration featuring several tomatoes in shades of red, pink, and purple, along with green leaves and stems. The background is a solid red color. The bottom of the image transitions into a green, textured area that resembles grass or soil.

COMMUNICATIONS

AWARE's Communications department strategically scatters the seeds of information, shaping narratives and amplifying lesser-heard voices across our public platforms to shift mindsets about gender norms, violence and inequality.



The Stories We Sow

Just as a farmer sows their seeds, we plant new ideas, messages and narratives in public discourse—in the hopes that they take root and flourish in time to come.

2025 saw our efforts yielding outsized results. It was a year of strategic success for the Communications department: we performed the best we ever had on social media in AWARE's history, amassing a total of 3.5 million views across Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook. Some posts were picked up in the mainstream media, with traditional news publications like The Straits Times and CNA mentioning us 92 times last year.

Since becoming an independent unit from the Advocacy and Research department in January 2025, we have built a content and communications strategy around five core tenets:

- Educate people on gender norms, gender-based violence, labour inequality and intersectional inequality.
- Validate the experiences of women and survivors, and platform their voices.
- Galvanise audiences and kickstart their desire for gender equality.
- Give people the language to express how they feel about gender injustice through easily shareable content.
- Serve as a common thread across AWARE and promote inter-departmental collaboration.

From calling out Law Society ex-Vice President Chia Boon Teck for his victim-blaming comments about a rape survivor, to pointing out the gender inequity in women having to pay more for their compulsory CareShield health insurance premiums than men, the narratives we craft bring AWARE's advocacy and services into public conversation.

We also helmed the commemoration of AWARE's 40th anniversary on our social media through a special campaign comprising illustrations and exclusive stories. Beyond visualising 40 years of impact, the campaign educated Singaporeans about the history of systemic gender inequality in the country—and the work that is yet to be done.

Social Media:

Where Our Messages Multiplied

2025 marked our most successful year yet on social media in AWARE's history.



3.5 million

views across Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook

660,043

views on our highest performing post



49,518

followers across Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook



13%

increase in followers on Instagram

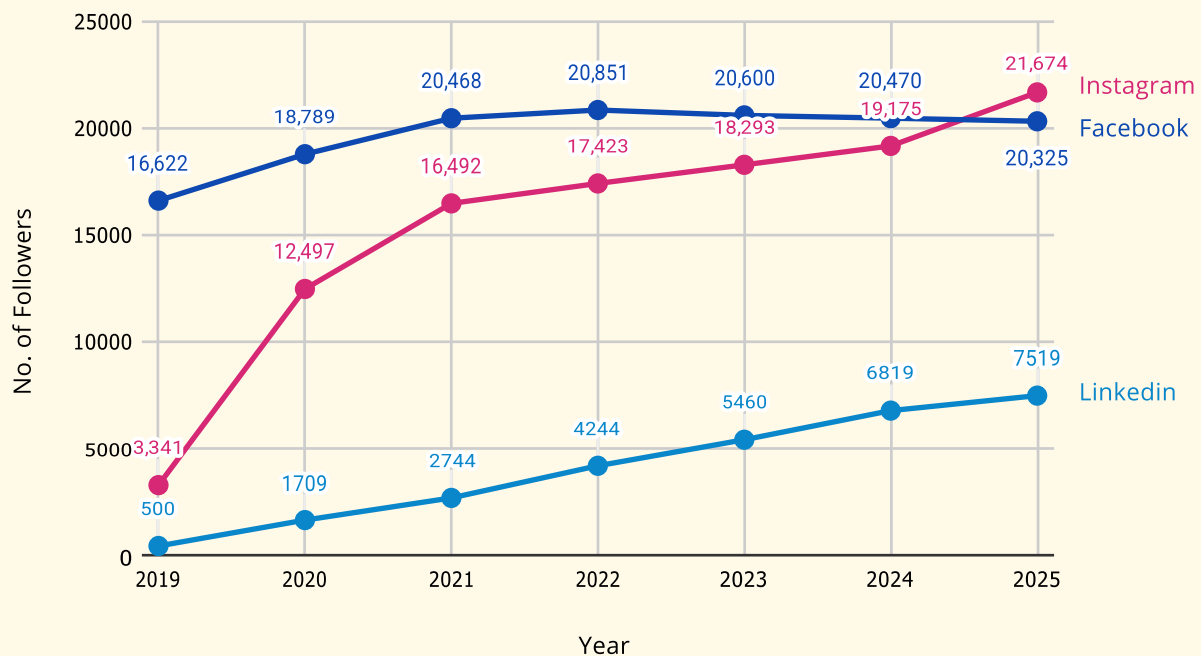
13.28%



engagement rate* achieved on our 4x4 post on Saga (highest rate on a post in 2025)

*Calculated based on the number of engagements (comments, likes, shares and saves) divided by the unique number of viewers per post.

Followers Growth on Social Media Platforms (2019—2025)

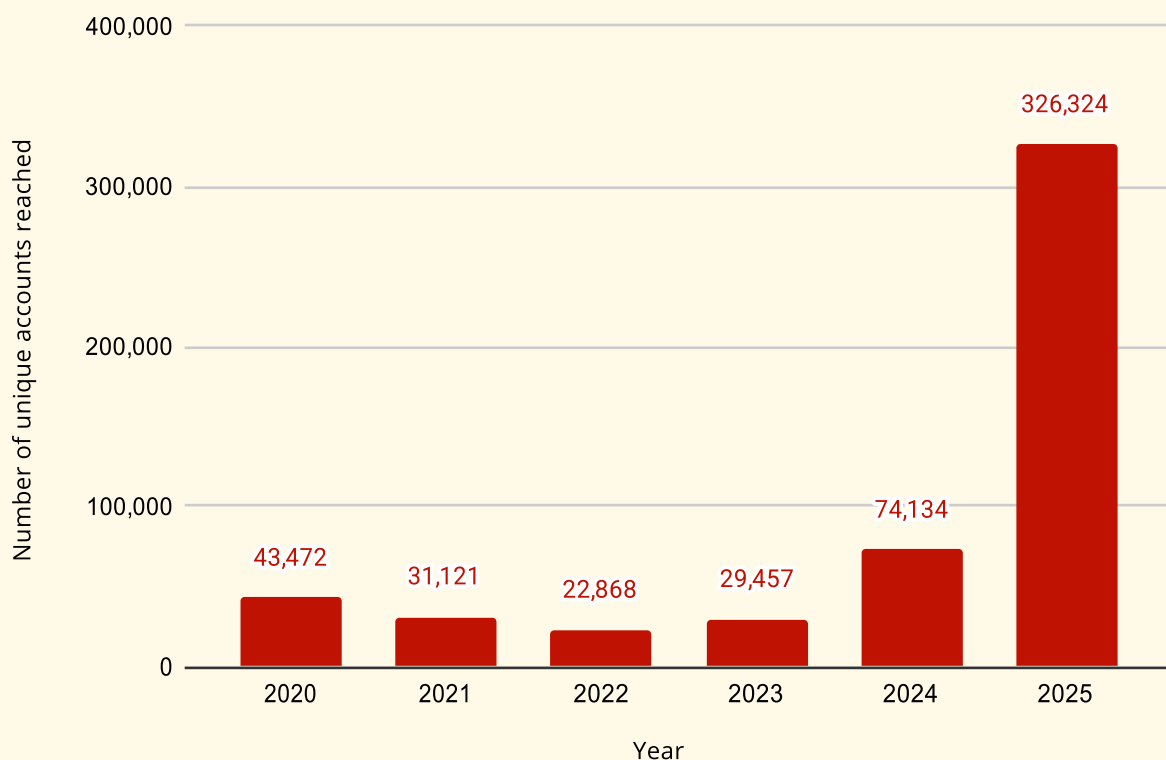


Social Media Performance

Instagram remains our fastest growing and highest performing social media platform. There, we broke our own records.

Our highest performing Instagram post of 2025 reached 326,324 unique accounts—a 340 per cent increase from 2024 and the highest viewed post on our page.

Reach of the highest performing Instagram post per year (2020—2025)



Follow us on social media:



@awaresingapore



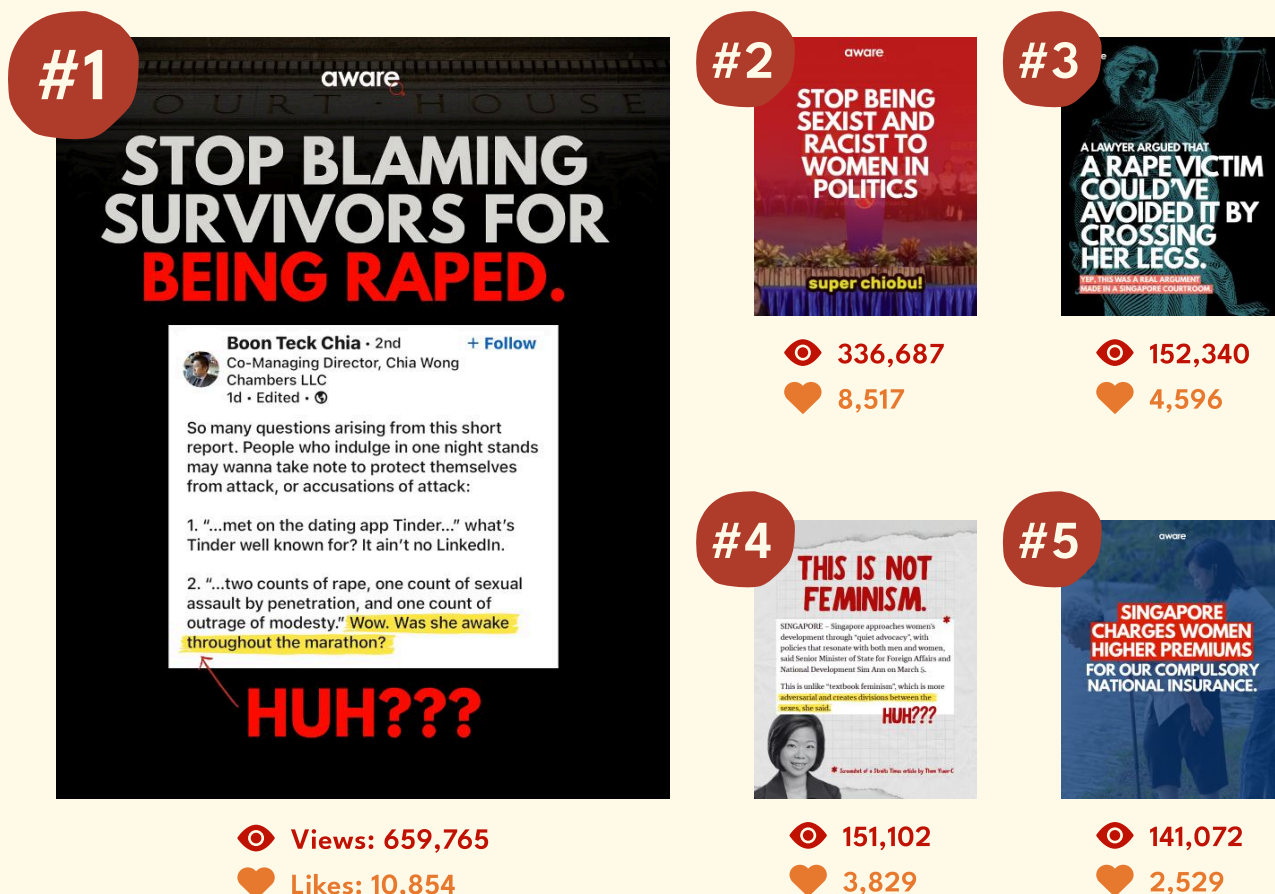
@awaresg



@awaresingapore

Our most widely viewed post in 2025 responded to public comments made by former Vice-President of the Law Society, Chia Boon Teck, that were widely criticised as victim-blaming and sparked significant public outcry.

This is consistent with a broader pattern: posts that address systemic issues and hold institutions and individuals in positions of authority accountable for discrimination or harmful conduct tend to generate the strongest engagement. In fact, such posts make up our five highest-viewed posts of 2025 (excluding 40th anniversary posts):



We also started a new Instagram account named People of AWARE—a simple way to recognise the volunteers who have quietly carried much of AWARE's work over the years by sharing their stories, including what led them to volunteer, the roles they have taken on and how they have contributed to the organisation and community. Going forward, we plan to tie this in with our volunteer appreciation night. While the account is still in its infancy, we hope that it will blossom into a steady, ever-growing living record of the people behind our work.

Mainstream Media:

News Carried by the Wind

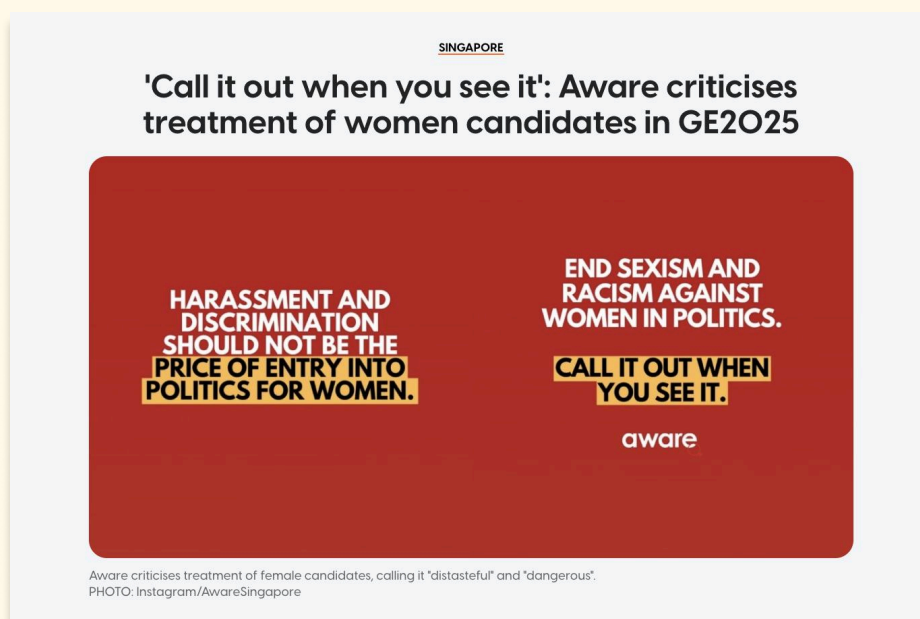
In 2025, we were mentioned 92 times in traditional news publications, including The Straits Times, CNA and Lianhe Zaobao. While many of these mentions stemmed from journalists seeking our comments and expertise on topics like sexual and family violence, we also organically drove news coverage through our own interventions.

Again, our most significant moment followed the Chia Boon Teck incident. After we swiftly published posts across our social media platforms calling out his victim-blaming attitude, and an interview with a Straits Times journalist who previously contacted us for comment, 18 articles reported on our positions.

In another instance, our Instagram post highlighting sexist and racist remarks against women candidates during the 2025 General Election was picked up by three news outlets.

Together, these demonstrate the unique position that AWARE occupies in the media: we are both a trusted expert source and newsmaker in our own right. We aim to strengthen this dual role and continue shaping public discourse through sustained engagement with mainstream media.

Another way we do so is by hosting annual media sharing sessions at the AWARE centre. On 29 July 2025, around a dozen journalists from seven publications joined us to learn more about our work across the various departments. Already, we are seeing the impact of these sessions in early 2026, with more journalists reaching out to us on the progress of our work. We look forward to holding more of these media sharing sessions in the future.



A Legacy in Full Bloom:

The Art of AWARE's 40th Anniversary

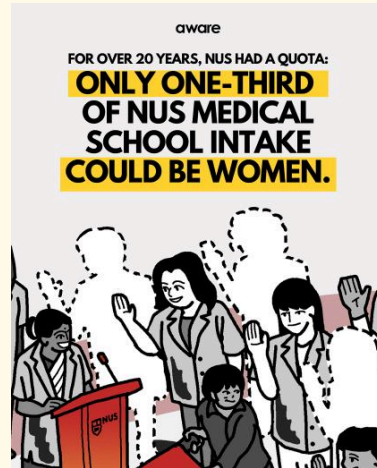
Forty years of frontline support for women and survivors.
Forty years of rigorous research.
Forty years of persistent advocacy for gender equality.

On 25 November 2025, we celebrated our 40th birthday with a special project that sought to capture the scale and magnitude of our impact within a single frame. We partnered with illustrator Chia Yu Xuan (@xuan.jipua on Instagram) to create a deliberately dense and detailed Where's Waldo-inspired world, crowded with AWARE's founding members, staff, volunteers and clients depicted in defining moments from our history.

Over the course of four months, we worked closely with Yu Xuan, providing him with archival material and information from interviews with survivors and staff. From these narratives, he constructed a tapestry of 16 interwoven stories.

Sentimental memento aside, the artwork was a chance to turn our history into an educational opportunity on Singapore's history of gender inequality. We produced 16 social media posts—one for each story featured—and shared them over several months. Snippets of the artwork were highlighted to bring each story to life and draw attention to key moments. Some of these posts exploded in popularity, garnering thousands of views and likes.

The response was overwhelming—in the best way. Many viewers were surprised at how long gender inequalities have existed in our systems and institutions. Our 40th anniversary social media campaign remains one of the team's proudest moments, as we turned a commemorative artwork into a platform for education, awareness and public dialogue.



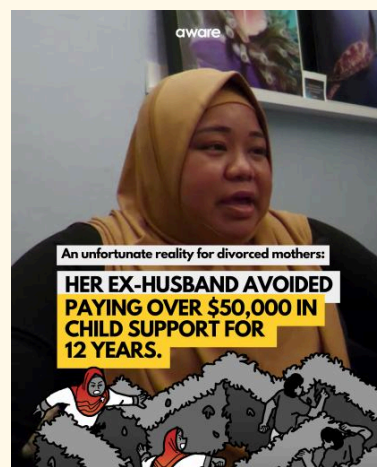
👁 287,440

❤ 2,633



👁 232,004

❤ 3,374



👁 71,256

❤ 1,362

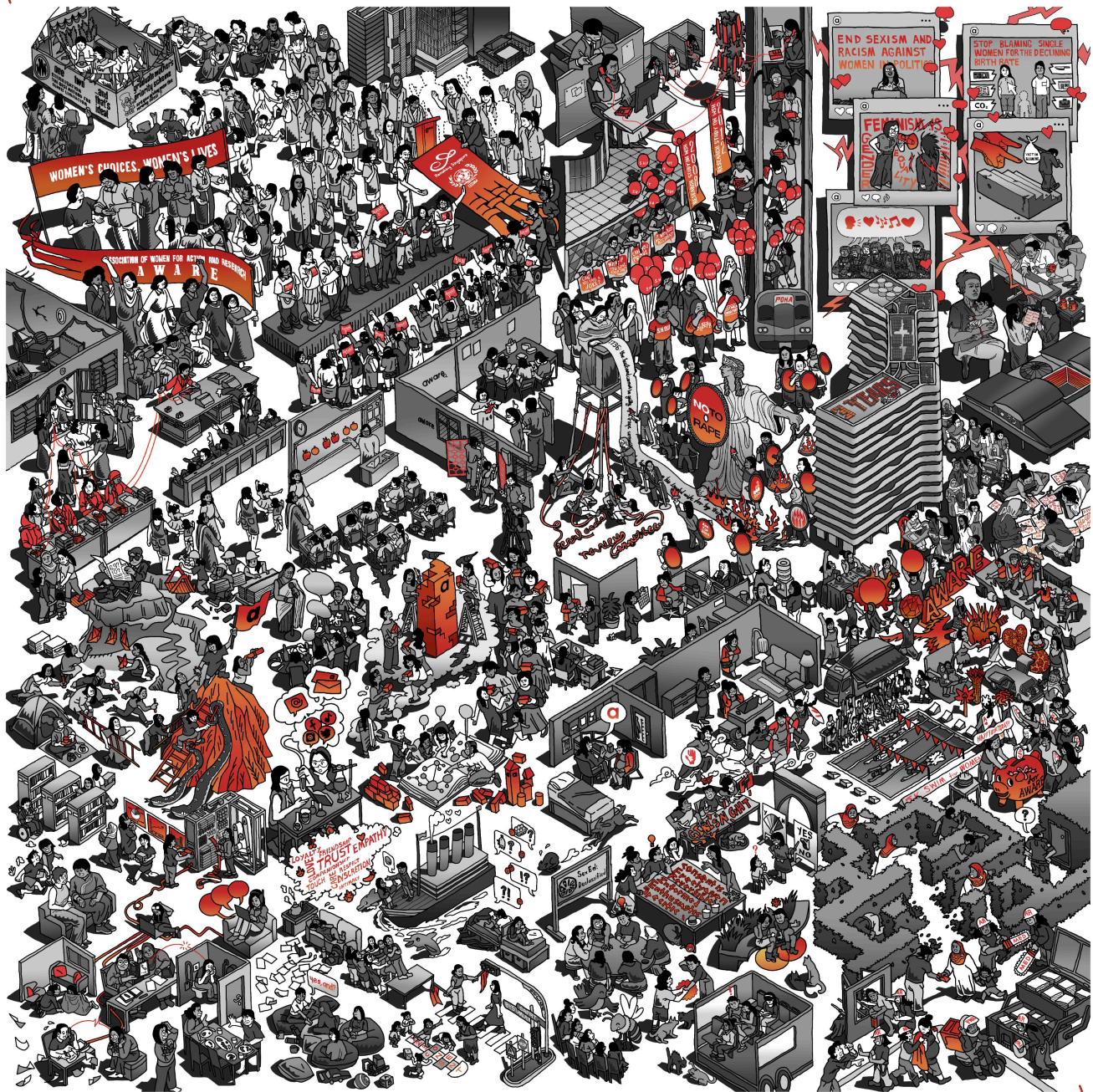
The top three most-viewed posts from our 40th anniversary social media campaign.

Top left:

Key historical moments

Top right:

Recent successes



Bottom left:

Staff features

Bottom right:

*Stories from women
and survivors*

Our masterpiece made an appearance at the Mother of All Balls, our annual fundraising event, too.

We turned eight sections into 800 physical prints to give out as door gifts. As for packaging, our fundraising team worked with Kyoto-based Musubi Furoshiki to transform the top left corner depicting our key historical moments into furoshiki, a type of reusable Japanese gift-wrapping fabric. Our staff spent days handwrapping the prints so that our biggest supporters could take home a piece of AWARE's history, literally.



That night, we also auctioned a framed one-metre by one-metre print of the full artwork, which sold for an impressive S\$2,620 (photo on the right).



aware



FUNDRAISING

Our fundraising team nurtures the environment that makes AWARE's work possible, from providing critical services for women, to supporting advocacy and research efforts, to funding public education and training.



Seeding the Future

In 2025, your generosity flourished beyond our expectations.

Because of our community of donors, AWARE surpassed our targets and hit a new milestone in 2025, raising close to S\$3.2 million and witnessing a 5 per cent increase in funds raised through our Annual Ball, AWARE's main fundraising event. Together, these achievements will go a long way in strengthening our foundation for long-term impact.

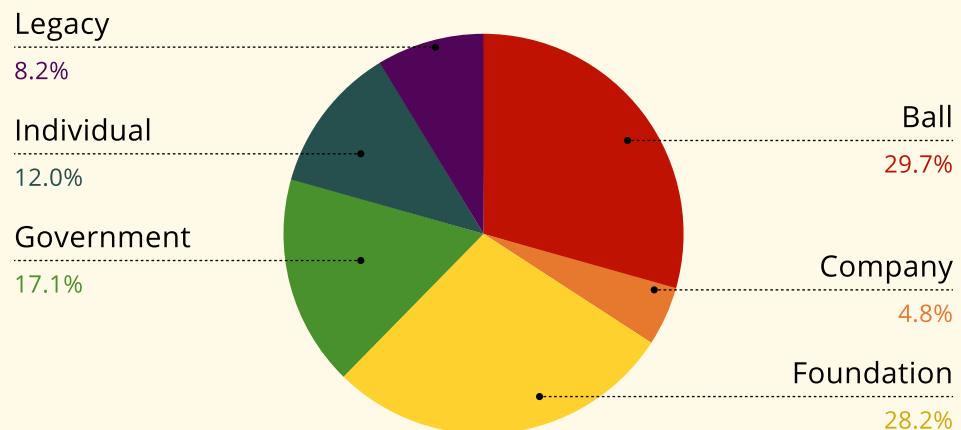
But these are more than just numbers. They are proof that we have built a strong community and network of donors who believe in a fairer, more gender-equal Singapore. This growth was intentional, with our 40th anniversary providing a timely, meaningful platform to engage long-time supporters, whose overwhelming support is a testament to sustained donor trust and shared commitment.

Your support has yielded direct and tangible impact. We provided critical services to close to 3,200 women and survivors of sexual assault through our CARE programmes, as well as saw significant policy achievements through our persistent advocacy efforts to drive systemic change and structural equality.

To sustain our work beyond the financial year, we went beyond engaging our existing donors and proactively sought to welcome new donors into the AWARE community, namely by cultivating relationships with more philanthropic foundations and long-term donors. By diversifying our funding base, we aim to ensure greater organisational stability and financial resilience in an ever-evolving funding landscape.

As AWARE enters our next chapter under new leadership, we remain committed to nurturing what has been planted so that our work for gender equality can continue to grow, season by season.

2025 Funding Sources



A Sprout of Courage: **Bystander Campaign**

Apart from sustaining our core services and advocacy work, we launched our year-end online fundraising campaign, “Community Bystander Action: Your Training, Their Protection”—a call to build a culture of shared responsibility in preventing violence.



Animation by Fira (@firamint2)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZUNfZij18A>

Family and intimate partner violence often unfolds in silence, hidden in plain sight. This campaign challenged supporters to take the first step and move past hesitation to play a direct role in creating a society where no survivor stands alone.

Through a powerful campaign video, we showed how every donation strengthens a community-wide safety net against violence, equipping more people with the skills to recognise harm, intervene safely and connect survivors to support.

Bloom, Baby, Bloom: **Mother of All Balls**

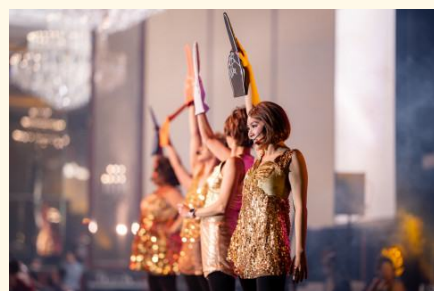
We serve women, and we serve looks.

At the Mother of All Balls, our 40th anniversary celebration, AWARE members, together with 608 guests, came dressed to the nines at Shangri-La Singapore. The evening was a bold and subversive celebration of literal and metaphorical subcultures. More significantly, it paid tribute to the powerful Mothers who have built and nurtured safe communities amidst violence and shaped AWARE into a potent force for change, enabling life to continue to blossom and thrive.

The Ball raised S\$944,480 on the night, with a matching S\$250,000 contribution from the Tote Board and government. This brought the final total to S\$1,194,480, far exceeding our goal of raising S\$1 million to create a more gender-equal Singapore.

In line with the evening's theme, the event also paid tribute to AWARE's founding mothers and celebrated its storied history. This included a heartfelt send-off for Corinna Lim, who stepped down after 16 years of dedicated leadership as Executive Director. Under her leadership, AWARE strengthened its services, sharpened its advocacy and expanded its national impact. Decked in a sapphire sequined bodysuit, with her hair sprayed a striking blue and styled into a dramatic mane, she handed the mantle to her successor, Lim Shoon Yin.

We extend our gratitude to our corporate sponsors (KOP Group of Companies and Kah Motor); our official partners (Ppurpose, Senses AVL, Cornerstone Wines and World Scientific); and the countless generous in-kind sponsors and volunteers who made this milestone event possible.



The Art of Kicking Buds

AWARE kicked off the year with a strike of strength.

On 12 January 2025, Brazilian jiu-jitsu Brown Belt Candy Heng and professional boxer Kirstie Gannaway led a first-of-its-kind self-defence seminar at Fitness and Martial Arts Singapore (FaMA). The 90-minute session equipped participants with important, practical self-defence techniques to protect themselves in the face of danger.

Supporting AWARE through our women's self-defense charity seminar was important because we want to empower women with confidence, awareness and practical skills. Beyond teaching self-defense, we are proud to contribute to a larger movement supporting women's safety and making a meaningful impact.

- Candy Heng



100%

of ticket sales were
donated to AWARE

\$2,000

donated to support
AWARE's critical work



Sticking Up for the Cause

Inspired by the iconic rallying cry during the AWARE Saga of 2009, "shut up and sit down", independent artist Tammy Tan (@lunaabnny on Instagram) launched a pride-themed sticker series referencing the historical moment and incorporating colours of the pride flag.

As someone part of the queer community, and who has also had personal brushes with people connected to that history, supporting AWARE was deeply personal to me because it allowed me to give back, in my own way, to my community and a cause I hold really close to heart.

I've always admired AWARE, not just for their unabashed championing of women's rights, but for doing so in a way that's genuinely and intentionally intersectional. Their advocacy makes it clear that they stand for all women—a stance acutely felt in our local context. The phrase I chose to feature across the stickers—"won't shut up, won't sit down"—is an embodiment of that spirit. To unflinchingly fight to give everyone a voice, even when told to "shut up and sit down".

- tammy tan



100%

of proceeds (\$200) at
Mercury Festival Singapore,
held at the same location
as the AWARE Saga, were
donated to AWARE



Thank You to Our Donors

You've helped us branch out and reach further.

Thank you for your trust and for standing with us to build a gender-equal future.

S\$50,000 and above

Diana Koh Foundation
Nicholas Hanley
The Moh Family Foundation
Tote Board
Uses Private Limited

S\$10,000–S\$49,999

Anonymous
Chew How Teck Foundation
Claire Chiang, AWARE President (1993–1994)
Corinna Lim
Doris Sohmen-Pao
Evelina Hu
Hong Leong Foundation
Hui Yee Tan
In Memory of Hilda Coldrey
Jonathan Stona
Kah Motor Co. Sdn. Bhd.
Kristine Moraes
KOP Group of Companies
Lian Tsui Yee
Lim Shoon Yin
Linklaters Singapore Pte Ltd
Margaret Thomas
Pooja Bhandari and Caesar Sengupta
Revival Vintage Jewels & Objects
Rich & Good Cake Shop Pte Ltd
Tan Chin Tuan Foundation
Teo You Yenn
Women in Energy Asia

S\$5,000–S\$9,999

Anonymous
Ang Fung Fung
Benjamin Wong
Cathy Johnson and Margaret Pan
Ching Chia
Clarence Singam
Geri Kan
Jaime Liew
Joanne Huynh
Ju-ven Neo
Kathy Teo
Lynette Ong and Joanne Theseira
Ong Soh Chin
Sapna Kewalramani
Serene Johnson
Sharon Siah
Shufen Goh
Simon and Andrea Fiquet
Stephanie Chu
Steven Luk
Surabhi Agarwal
Tina Cheong
Usha Raneer Chandradas
Wynthia Goh

We are also deeply moved to receive S\$261,515.32 from an anonymous donor who named AWARE as a beneficiary of her CPF savings. Her final gift is a powerful reminder that legacy giving can continue advancing gender equality for generations to come.

We invite supporters to consider including AWARE in your estate or CPF nominations as a lasting way to champion a fairer future.



GOVERNANCE

Like the roots of a tree, AWARE's Board is hidden from view, but nonetheless critical in providing the stability and nutrients for growth. It decides major strategic directions, allocates financial resources, provides legal and financial oversight, reviews management's performance and ensures that the organisation serves its mission in accordance with its values.



Grounded in Good Governance

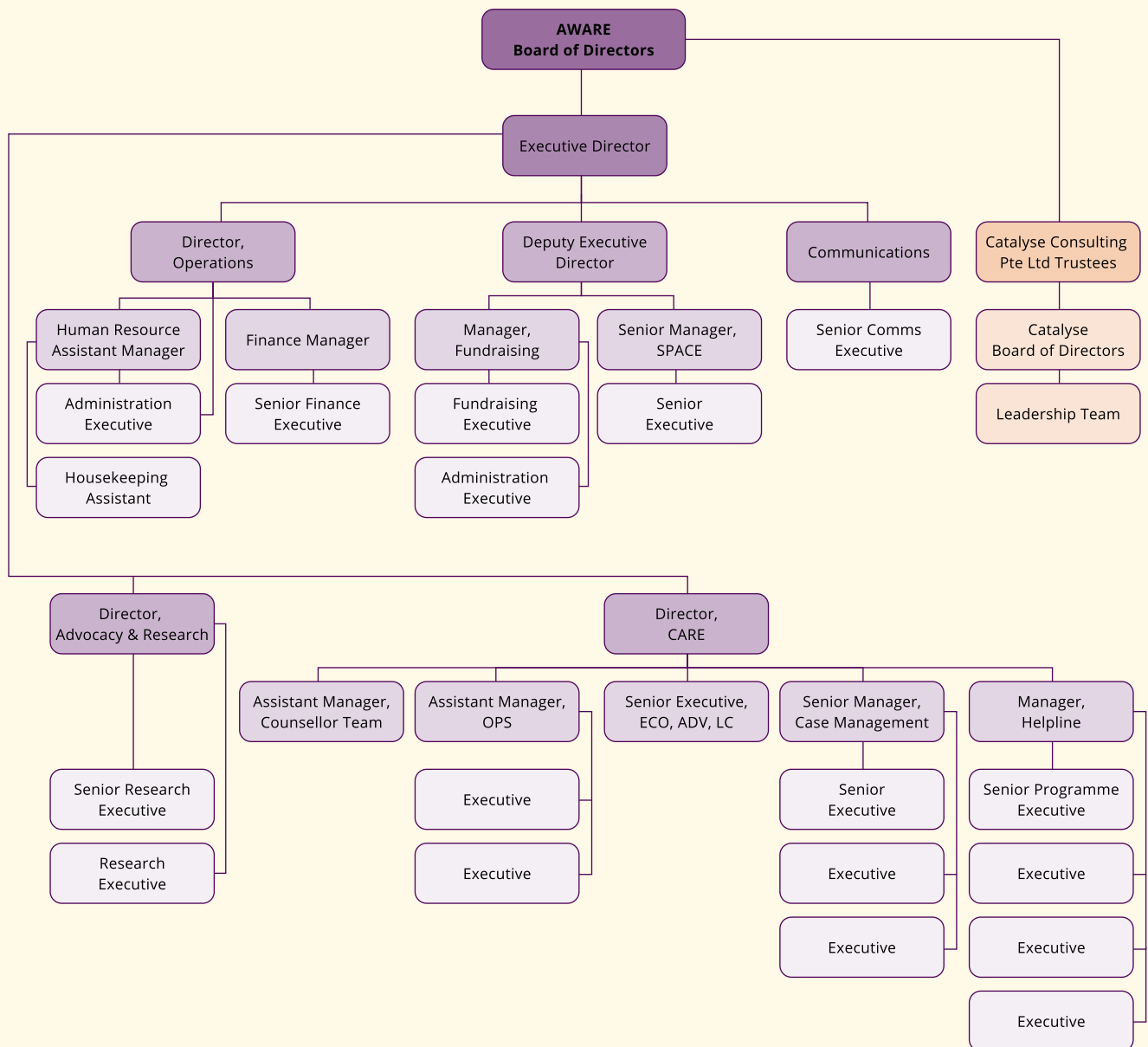
AWARE has traversed a great distance in its 40 years, but in 2025, it set for itself a refined North Star: to be an authority on gender equality and women's rights in Singapore; a challenger of the status quo with a feminist lens; and an empowerer of change that builds and mobilises a diverse and inclusive community.

This core agenda was introduced in the opening remarks of President Aarathi Arumugam, who chaired AWARE's 40th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26 April 2025. The organisation's first hybrid AGM saw an attendance of 70 members in person and online, including AWARE's Board. The Board reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining high standards of governance and accountability to its internal and external stakeholders. It set out the organisation's strategic priorities for the next three years, namely:

- Continue to be a leading expert and authority voice on gender inequality and women's rights in Singapore by strengthening advocacy and research and driving policy change
- Maintain high-quality, trauma-informed care services for women by enhancing organisational efficiency and sustainability
- Engage, educate and empower the community to champion gender inequality in their everyday lives through effective storytelling and branding, as well as building external strategic partnerships
- Prioritise staff well-being, leadership development, financial resilience and cross-departmental collaboration to drive innovation, professional growth and overall organisational effectiveness

The afternoon also saw department representatives sharing notable achievements and updates from the past year. Ms Arumugam closed the meeting by thanking members for their ongoing support as AWARE prepares for its next chapter. As of 31 December 2025, AWARE has 499 members, comprising 266 renewals and 233 new members.

Organisational Chart



Senior Leadership Team

Name	Title	Tenure
Corinna Lim (bio)	Executive Director	1 Mar 2010 – 31 Dec 2025*
Bharathi Manogaran (bio)	Deputy Executive Director	4 Oct 2024 – 31 Mar 2026
Sugidha Nithiananthan (bio)	Director, Advocacy, Research and Communications	8 Mar 2023 – Present
Caris Lim (bio)	Director, CARE	18 Jun 2024 – Present
Yasmine Tan (bio)	Director, Operations	1 Feb 2023 – Present
Cynthia Chan (bio)	Managing Director, Catalyse Consulting	9 Jun 2024 – Present

Corinna served a 16-year term as Executive Director and stepped down in 31 December 2025. Lim Shoon Yin has taken on the role since 1 January 2026.

Board of 2024–2026



Aarathi Arumugam President

Aarathi Arumugam is an accountant and an entrepreneur. She has honed her skills in business, team management, and organisational strategy through her career trajectory, which has included corporations, start-ups, non-profits and raising a family.

Since becoming a member in 2009, Aarathi has volunteered with AWARE as a trainer, educating and raising awareness about workplace sexual harassment and comprehensive sexuality education and as a Board member. Aarathi currently serves as COO for EveryChild.SG.



Joanne Theseira
1st Vice President

Joanne Theseira is a highly regarded business leader in the advertising industry. She serves as CEO of Publicis Groupe's creative agencies and Chief Growth Officer for Southeast Asia. In 2022, she was awarded Campaign's Women Leading Change Asia Pacific Business Leader Award, and the following year, she was named Southeast Asia's Agency Head of the Year.

An out business leader, Jo believes creativity is among the most powerful tools for solving real business and human problems when paired with curiosity, the courage for difficult conversations, and openness to hear the other side. She launched Égalité, her organisation's resource group for LGBTQ+ employees and allies, and volunteered for Red Dot for Pink Dot 2023 to help raise funds for the event.



Ijin Tan
2nd Vice President

Ijin is a qualified advocate and solicitor in Singapore with 20 years of experience. She specialised in dispute resolution and internal investigations at leading law firms before moving in-house to lead ethics and compliance in various MNCs across Asia Pacific markets. Ijin is a seasoned legal and compliance professional with deep expertise in regulatory engagement, risk management, and governance.

Ijin has volunteered with AWARE's SACC legal clinic since its inception in 2017. Her pro bono work includes representing clients under the Criminal Legal Aid Scheme and volunteering with the Law Society's legal clinic, reflecting her long-standing commitment to equity and access to justice.



Lihui Zeng
Treasurer

With over 15 years of experience in the financial sector, Lihui Zeng brings a wealth of knowledge in audit, financial management, compliance, and operational risk management within banking institutions.

During her tenure as an external auditor specialising in financial institutions, she honed her skills in ensuring the integrity and transparency of financial operations. Her subsequent transition into the banking sector has equipped her with in-depth knowledge on how organisations should adhere to industry standards and regulatory requirements.



Anju Patwardhan
Assistant Treasurer

Anju Patwardhan is a globally experienced Fintech Venture Investor, board director, and former banking executive. She has lived and worked in Singapore, San Francisco, and India, for nearly three decades, in senior leadership roles at Citibank, Standard Chartered Bank, and at NUS/NUHS Singapore.

She currently serves on the board of banks and Fintech companies in the US, Europe, and Saudi Arabia, and is on the global advisory group of DCI at Stanford University. She is passionate about longevity and the financial well-being of seniors, and mentoring women leaders.



Filzah Sumartono
Secretary

Filzah Sumartono (she/her) is the co-editor of *Growing Up Perempuan* and *Perempuan: Muslim Women in Singapore Speak Out*. These anthologies are a collection of essays and poems about the intricacies, contradictions, and duality of growing up as a woman in the Muslim community. Filzah is also involved in *Beyond the Hijab* and *End FGC Singapore*, which are community-led organisations that focus on minority women. She currently works as a software engineer.



Kanak Muchhal
Board Member

Kanak Muchhal has passionately worked to support and empower women and vulnerable families for the last 10 years. Kanak currently heads The Inclusive Fund (TIF) at South Central Community Family Service Centre (SCC), a local charity that supports low-income and vulnerable families. In her current role, she drives TIF's strategic direction and oversees stakeholder engagement, ecosystem building, advocacy and operations to better support transnational families who face barriers to accessing formal assistance.

While working at Daughters of Tomorrow, she oversaw the delivery of all programmes and services to increase job readiness by curating workshops and new initiatives with volunteers and partners, impacting more than 1,000 women. She believes holistic improvement in quality of life, not just income, is needed for social mobility and aspires for every woman to harness their strength, experiences, and voice to create positive changes for themselves and their families.



Penelope Shone
Board Member

Penelope Shone has been resident in Singapore since 1985, working in both public and private sectors. She led international public affairs and communications for General Electric across 150 countries, and was a managing director at Citigroup for 12 years, leading the company's public affairs, communications, and citizenship strategies across Asia Pacific. This included the supervision of 20,000 volunteers and \$18 million in annual grants to Asian NGOs. She has been an AWARE member for 20 years.



Stacey Choe
Board Member

Stacey Choe addresses philanthropic needs in Asia with over 14 years of experience in this field. She co-founded Real Impact Advisors in 2023, and was formerly the COO at Asia Philanthropy Circle, and Director at AVPN prior to that. Her expertise spans education, eldercare, gender, and more, and she has secured over US\$22 million for causes.

Stacey is a Council member of the Criticare Fund for Migrant Workers, and a 2019 Asia Foundation Development Fellow. She is currently faculty at the Wealth Management Institute, Asia Centre for Changemakers, and was former Adjunct Lecturer at Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS).



Ong Soh Chin
Immediate Past President
Presidential Term: 2022–2024

Ong Soh Chin is an editorial and PR consultant. Previously, she was Southeast Asia PR Director at Netflix, overseeing Publicity and Communications for Southeast Asia. Soh Chin has also served as Deputy Director, External Relations and Strategic Planning at the Institute of Policy Studies, as well as Asia-Pacific Editor and Speechwriter with the global editorial team at Shell.

A veteran journalist and editor who has covered the arts, entertainment, fashion, beauty, lifestyle, politics and current affairs in her career, she worked on different desks at The Straits Times, where she wrote regularly about women's rights and gender equality. She is also a qualified psychotherapist, having recently obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling Psychology as well as an MSc in Applied Psychology.

Board Members' Information

The following Board members were appointed at the AGM on 27 April 2024, including the election of the President, Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer.

Name and title	Date of appointment	Current occupation	Board positions outside of AWARE Board	Positions held in AWARE Boards since 2010
Aarathi Arumugam President	27 April 2024	COO Everychild.sg Chief Growth Officer	Catalyse Consulting	Treasurer (2020–2023)
Joanne Mae Theseira 1st Vice-President	27 April 2024	CEO Publicis Communications Singapore, and Chief Growth Officer Southeast Asia		
Tan Ijin 2nd Vice-President	27 April 2024	Compliance Director: Ecolab Asia Pacific Pte Ltd		
Filzah Sumartono Secretary	27 April 2024	Software Engineer, Singapore-ETH Centre		
Zeng Lihui Treasurer	27 April 2024	Bank Executive: OCBC		Treasurer (2012–2015)
Anju Patwardhan Assistant Treasurer	27 April 2024	Independent Non-Executive Director: On Various Bank Records		
Kanak Muchhal Board Member	27 April 2024	Head of the Inclusive Fund at South Central Community FSC		
Penelope Shone Board Member	27 April 2024	Director Orthopaedic Sports Medicine	Board Committee Member Assisi Hospice	Honorary Secretary (2018–2020), 1st VP (2020–2023)
Stacey Choe Siao Yun Board Member	27 April 2024	Managing Director: Real Impact Advisors		
Ong Soh Chin Board Member	8 September 2025	Director, Percolate Communications Director, OSC Counselling and Therapy	3rd VP, Singapore Council of Women's Organisations	President (2022–2024), Immediate Past President (2024–2025)

Role of the Board

AWARE's Board is committed to maintaining high standards of governance and accountability to its internal and external stakeholders.

The Board decides on the major strategic directions of AWARE, allocates financial resources, provides legal and financial oversight, reviews management's performance and ensures that the organisation serves its mission in accordance with its values.

The Board approves the budget for the financial year and monitors the expenditure against the budget. They regularly monitor the progress of the charity's programmes.

The roles and responsibilities of the Board can be found [here](#).
Key Board decisions made in 2025 can be found on page 74.

The Nominations Committee administers the nominations and elections process in a formal and transparent manner. The Board Recruitment process can be found [here](#).

In 2025, the Board completed the NVPC Board Pulse Check-in.

The Board meets at least once every two months to carry out its functions. There are no Board members who have served more than 10 consecutive years.

No Board members are remunerated for their services. No staff are involved in setting their own remuneration, and there are no staff serving on the Board of AWARE. There are no paid staff who are close members of the family of the Executive Head or Board Members who receive more than S\$50,000 during the year.

Board Commitees

Board Committees serve as an extension of the Board and oversee specific aspects of AWARE's work. They act as a resource for the management team and ensure that all activities are aligned with AWARE's vision, mission, strategies and goals.

Three of the committees oversee AWARE's public-facing activities: advocacy and research, CARE and fundraising. The others oversee matters related to AWARE's organisational strength: audit, human resources, technology, board recruitment and leadership and governance.

The Board Committees report to the Board half-yearly on their work plan. At the end of the term, each Board Committee also provides a summary of work completed to the Board. The Terms of Reference for the Board Committees can be found on our website.

Advocacy and Research	Audit	Board Recruitment	Fundraising
Advises on AR activities which encompass research projects and advocacy campaigns, and provide advice to the Board relating to these activities.	Provides oversight of AWARE's financial processes, and ensures accurate financial reporting and effective risk reduction.	Identifies potential candidates for election to the Board with the goal of ensuring that current and future Boards have the talent, diversity of expertise, skills and personal attributes needed to steward the organisation.	Advises on fundraising, donor engagement and partnerships, and provides advice to the Board relating to these activities.
Chair: Teo You Yenn	Chair: Sharon Siah	Chair / Board Rep: Ong Soh Chin	Chair / Board Rep: Stacey Choe
Filzah Sumartono	Li Hui Zeng	Margaret Thomas	Beh Yeong Wei
Radha Basu	Anju Patwardhan	Jasmine Ng	
Vivienne Wee	Ying Wu	Shyn Yee Ho	
Anju Patwardhan (stepped down April 2025)	Sowmya Krishnan		
	Fiona Gray		

Human Resources	CARE	Leadership and Governance	Technology
Advises on effective people management policies and practices, compensation and rewards, and talent and leadership development; and provides advice to the Board relating to these activities.	Advises on CARE activities which encompass the work of the Sexual Assault Care Center, the Women's Helpline and other CARE Services, and provides advice to the Board relating to these activities.	Oversees AWARE's sustainability, leadership development, and renewal and strategic governance issues; and provides advice to the Board relating to these activities.	Provides strategic oversight and guidance for the successful implementation and ongoing improvement of a new integrated client management system.
Chair: Jean Fung	Chair / Board Rep: Kanak Muchhal	Chair / Board Rep: Penny Shone	Chair / Board Rep: Anju Patwardhan
Penny Shone	Ijin Tan	Ong Soh Chin	Robin Rheaume
Yan Jie Jun	Cindy Ng	Winifred Loh	Shonali Krishnaswamy
Lilian Wong	Grace Cheong	Margaret Thomas	Jasmine Wong
Jacqueline Wong		Aarathi Arumugam	Edward Lowe

Related Entity

AWARE has a related entity, Catalyse Consulting Pte Ltd (CCPL), and several members of the charity's board and management also hold formal roles in relation to CCPL. They are:

- Penelope Shone – Share Trustee for AWARE in respect of CCPL shares
- Aarathi Arumugam – Board Director, CCPL
- Cynthia Chan – Managing Director, CCPL
- Corinna Lim – Advisor, CCPL

The charity maintains clear governance structures to ensure appropriate oversight and independence between AWARE and CCPL.

2025 Attendance for Board Meetings

A total of 10 Board meetings and one AGM were held during the financial year.
No Board member was absent for three consecutive Board meetings.

Board Position	Name	No. of meetings attended in 2025
President	Aarathi Arumugam	10/10
1st Vice-President	Joanne Theseira	10/10
2nd Vice-President	Tan Ijin	10/10
Secretary	Filzah Sumartono	8/10
Treasurer	Zeng Lihui	10/10
Assistant Treasurer	Anju Patwardhan	9/10
Board Member	Kanak Muchhal	10/10
Board Member	Penelope Shone	10/10
Board Member	Stacey Choe Siao Yun	7/10
Immediate Past President / Board Member	Ong Soh Chin*	7/7

* Ms Ong Soh Chin served as Immediate Past President from May 2024 to April 2025 and was co-opted as Board Member from September 2025.

Policies Adopted in 2025

For the year in review, AWARE continued to enhance internal controls and governance of the Society's mission by adhering to the principles and best practices of the 2023 Code of Governance.

Our 2025 Governance Evaluation Checklist can be found on pages 75-79.

Our 2025 Internal Controls improvements can be found on page 80.

In addition, AWARE has a range of documented policies and procedures, including but not limited to the following:

Financial Policies

AWARE has established documented financial policies and procedures in place, including procurement procedures and controls; receipting; payment procedures and controls; and financial approval matrix. Annual budgets are approved by the Board before adoption.

AWARE does not:

- Grant any loans, donations, grants or financial assistance
- Receive any loans for any purpose or tenure without the prior written approval of the Board.

Conflict of Interest

AWARE has established a Conflict of Interest policy at the Board and staff levels to assist in identifying and managing potential areas of conflict. The Board and staff are required to act at all times in the best interest of the Society. They must read, understand, and declare any conflicts at the start of their term or as they arise. Those with a conflict must abstain from related discussions, decisions and voting.

Whistleblowing

AWARE has adopted a whistleblowing policy (publicised on its website) for individuals to report misdemeanours to whistleblowing@aware.org.sg. Any employee, secondment staff, contract staff, member, volunteer, vendor, contractor or member of the general public who notices or is aware of any wrongdoings can lodge a report to the Audit Board Committee.

Volunteer Management

AWARE has internal policies and procedures in place to manage volunteers, including providing clear roles and responsibilities, as well as support in onboarding, training workshops and supervision.

Reserves

AWARE aims to maintain a reserve that is equivalent to at least 12 months of its operating expenses to ensure continuity of its services and programmes. The reserves are held in cash in either current or fixed deposit accounts, in accordance with guidelines for minimising risk and maintaining liquidity. These operational guidelines have been established and approved by the Board.

Every six months, the Board reviews the amount of reserves that are required to ensure that they are adequate. If the reserves fall below the threshold of 12 months' worth of operating expenses, Board approval will be required to utilise the remaining reserves. Management will inform the Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer at least three months before the cash flow is expected to breach the threshold.

Risk Management

AWARE reviews and updates the management, Board and the risk register periodically. Process owners review their processes, assess the adequacy of controls and implement mitigating measures where applicable. Key risks are discussed in management meetings as part of awareness, and updates are provided to the AWARE Board.

Public Image

AWARE publishes information relating to its programmes, events and activities through various social media, newsletters and other collateral. A summary of media coverage is included in the monthly management report that is provided to the AWARE Board.

Other Policies

In addition to the above, AWARE has a range of documented policies and procedures, including the following:

- Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures
- Board Roles Policy and Code of Conduct
- Consultants Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Employee Handbook
- Financial Policy and Procedures
- Grievance Policy
- PR Crisis Plan
- Social Media Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Financials

AWARE adheres to the Financial Reporting Standards (FRS), the Code of Governance for Charities and Institutions of a Public Character (Revised 2023), the Charities Act, and regulations governed by the Charity Council.

For information on the charity's major financial transactions and the purpose of the charitable assets held, please refer to the 2025 Audited Financial Statements found [here](#). The financial statements comprise the financial statements of the Society—AWARE and its subsidiary—Catalyse Consulting as at the end of the reporting period.

Financial Overview

For the year in review, AWARE reflects a significant deficit compared to a large surplus in FY2024. This change is mainly due to a non-cash accounting adjustment of S\$857,000 linked to the Catalyse business transfer. In contrast, FY2024 included a non-cash gain of S\$852,985.

The non-cash gain of S\$852,985 represents the excess of the agreed business transfer consideration (S\$857,000) over the net carrying value of the assets and liabilities transferred (S\$4,015).

These are accounting adjustments and do not impact AWARE's actual cash position or day-to-day operations.

AWARE's Total Financial Performance, including non-cash gain/loss from Catalyse

	Society 2025	Society 2024
Total Revenue	S\$3,850,453	S\$4,829,289**
Total Expense	S\$4,871,021*	S\$3,685,235
Surplus / Deficit	(S\$1,020,568)	S\$1,144,054

* 2025 Expense included a \$857K Impairment Loss on Business Transfer (non-cash)

** 2024 Revenue included a \$852K Gain Catalyse Business Transfer (non-cash)

Excluding these non-cash items, AWARE's underlying operating position shows a more moderate year-on-year change, reflecting shifts in revenue and expenses.

The deficit in 2025 was mainly due to higher expenditure. This includes planned investments as part of a three-year effort (2024–2026) to support leadership transition and succession planning for the Executive Director. There were also additional costs related to AWARE's 40th anniversary. These expenditures are largely one-off and not expected to recur annually.

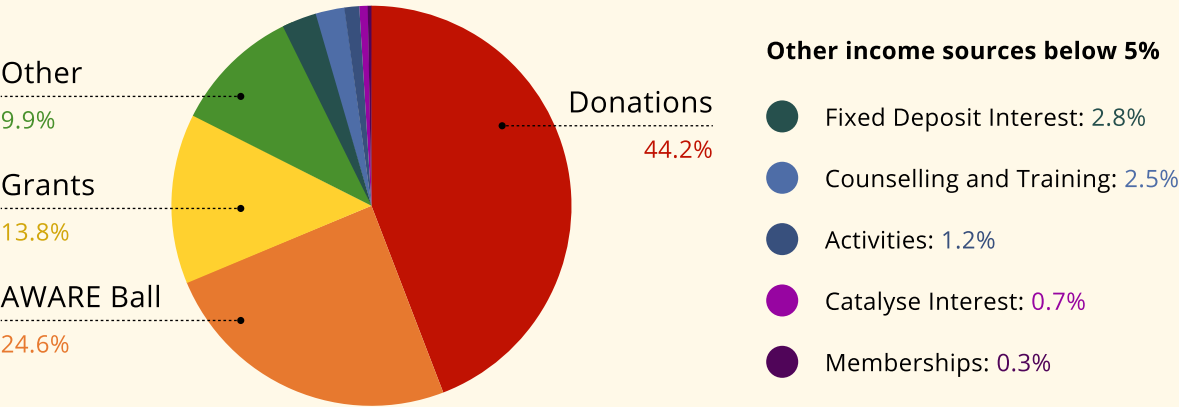
AWARE's Actual Financial Performance, excluding non-cash gain/loss from Catalyse

	Society 2025	Society 2024
Actual Revenue	S\$3,850,453	S\$3,976,304**
Actual Expense	S\$4,014,021*	S\$3,685,235
Actual Surplus / Deficit	(\$163,568)	S\$291,069

* Excludes Business Transfer Loss (non-cash)
** Excludes Business Transfer Gain (non-cash)

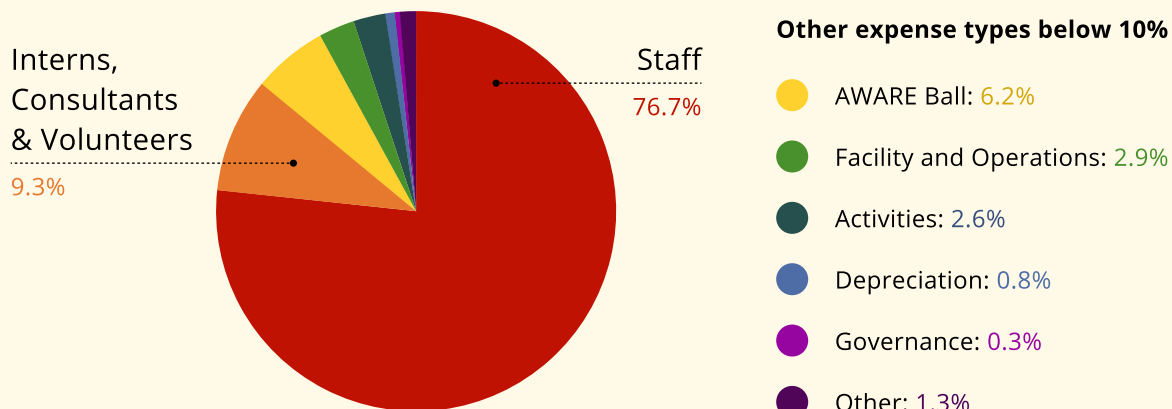
In FY2025, AWARE's revenue is primarily driven by donations (44.2%) and fundraising (24.6%), with grants (13.8%) also contributing significantly, while all other income streams each make up a relatively small share.

Revenue Source (AWARE Society)



AWARE's expenses are largely driven by people costs: staff (76.7%), interns, consultants, and volunteers (9.3%). The remaining spending is distributed across fundraising, activities, operations, and other supporting functions, each forming a much smaller proportion of total expenditure.

Expense Type (AWARE Society)



Group Overview

AWARE and Catalyse Consulting Group Performance

	Group 2025	Group 2024	AWARE 2023
Revenue	S\$4,052,036	S\$4,172,313	S\$4,136,688*
Expense	S\$4,251,729	S\$3,997,401	S\$4,084,587
Surplus / Deficit	(S\$199,693)	S\$174,912	S\$52,101

*Note: Before the spin-off, AWARE's performance included Catalyse Consulting as a department in 2023.

At the Group level (including AWARE and its subsidiary, Catalyse Consulting Pte. Ltd.), overall revenue declined, mainly due to lower income from Catalyse in a more cautious business environment. Catalyse supports AWARE's mission by helping organisations strengthen workplace fairness practices, such as anti-harassment and anti-discrimination.

Following a review of Catalyse's financial position, an impairment was recorded on amounts owed to AWARE. This is a prudent accounting adjustment to reflect the likelihood of recovery, given current operating challenges.

Group and Society's Reserves

	Group 2025	Society 2025	Society 2024
Total Funds	\$7,204,444	\$7,352,711	\$8,373,279
Total Annual Operating Expense	\$4,251,729	\$4,871,021	\$3,685,235
Reserves Ratio	1.69	1.51	2.27

Overall, AWARE maintains sufficient reserves to support ongoing operations and initiatives. At a ratio of 1.51, the Society continues to exceed its policy requirement of maintaining at least 12 months of annual operating expenditure.

The decrease in reserves is primarily driven by a non-cash impairment loss of \$857,000 in 2025's expense related to the Catalyse business transfer. FY2024 included a non-cash accounting gain of \$852,985 in funds from the same transaction, which increased reported reserves in that year. These are accounting adjustments and do not affect cash.

For more information about AWARE's reserves, please refer to page 59 of the 2025 Audited Financial Statements [here](#).

The purpose, amount and usage of restricted funds are found on pages 16, 21–32 and 42-45 of the 2025 Audited Financial Statements. There is no fixed timing to use the remaining restricted funds.

Annex

2025 Key Board Decisions

1. February

- Approved FY2024 AWARE performance bonus
- Approved new Board and management roles and responsibilities
- Approved updated board committee Terms of Reference

2. March

- Approved finance and HR policies
- Approved FY2024 Governance Evaluation Checklist
- Approved FY2025 management and admin fee allocation
- Approved AGM 2025 notice and agenda
- Approved AGM 2024 meeting minutes
- Approved fund resolutions

3. April

- Approved new Consultancy position to oversee AWARE's communications.

4. May

- Approved annual submission to the Commissioner of Charities

5. July

- Approved 2025 salary structure, salary increments and promotions
- Approved vendor list
- Revised loan terms and repayment plan
- Temporary interest-free period on promissory note

6. August

- Approved deferment of August loan repayment by Catalyse Consulting
- Approved Tech Board Committee Terms of Reference
- Approved new Executive Director
- Approved 40th AGM minutes

7. September

- Approval to co-opt Ong Soh Chin as an ordinary Board Member

8. December

- Approved 2025 AWARE Annual Wage Supplement (AWS) proposal
- Approved 2026 AWARE budget proposal
- Approved restructuring

Governance Compliance

Compliance with the Code of Governance 2023 for Charities and IPCs Governance Evaluation Checklist for AWARE (1 Jan 2025–31 Dec 2025) Tier 2

The Board and Management of AWARE are collectively responsible for ensuring compliance with the Code of Governance and all relevant laws and regulations.

SN	Call for Action	Code ID	Did the charity put this principle into action?	If you have indicated “No” or ‘Partial Compliance’, please explain.	Score
Principle 1: The charity serves its mission and achieves its objectives.					
1	Clearly state the charitable purposes (For example, vision and mission, objectives, use of resources, activities, and so on) and include the objectives in the charity's governing instrument. Publish the stated charitable purposes on platforms (For example, Charity Portal, website, social media channels, and so on) that can be easily accessed by the public.	1.1	Yes		2
2	Develop and implement strategic plans to achieve the stated charitable purposes.	1.2	Yes		2
3	Have the Board review the charity's strategic plans regularly to ensure that the charity is achieving its charitable purposes, and monitor, evaluate and report the outcome and impact of its activities.	1.3	Yes		2
4	Document the plan for building the capacity and capability of the charity and ensure that the Board monitors the progress of this plan. “Capacity” refers to a charity's infrastructure and operational resources while “capability” refers to its expertise, skills and knowledge.	1.4	Partial Compliance	People and Digital Strategy and Roadmaps implemented. Pending Competency Framework in 2026.	1
Principle 2: The charity has an effective Board and Management.					
5	The Board and Management are collectively responsible for achieving the charity's charitable purposes. The roles and responsibilities of the Board and Management should be clear and distinct.	2.1	Yes		2
6	The Board and Management should be inducted and undergo training, where necessary, and their performance reviewed regularly to ensure their effectiveness.	2.2	Yes		2
7	Document the terms of reference for the Board and each of its committees. The Board should have committees (or designated Board member(s)) to oversee the following areas*, where relevant to the charity: a. Audit b. Finance * Other areas include Programmes and Services, Fundraising, Appointment/Nomination, Human Resource, and Investment.	2.3	Yes		2
8	Ensure the Board is diverse and of an appropriate size, and has a good mix of skills, knowledge, and experience. All Board members should exercise independent judgement and act in the best interest of the charity.	2.4	Yes		2
9	Develop proper processes for leadership renewal. This includes establishing a term limit for each Board member. All Board members must submit themselves for re-nomination and reappointment, at least once every three years.	2.5	Yes		2

SN	Call for Action	Code ID	Did the charity put this principle into action?	If you have indicated "No" or 'Partial Compliance", please explain.	Score
10	Develop proper processes for leadership renewal. This includes establishing a term limit for the Treasurer (or equivalent position). For Treasurer (or equivalent position) only: a. The maximum term limit for the Treasurer (or equivalent position like a Finance Committee Chairman, or key person on the Board responsible for overseeing the finances of the charity) should be four consecutive years. If there is no Board member who oversee the finances, the Chairman will take on the role. i. After meeting the maximum term limit for the Treasurer, a Board member's reappointment to the position of Treasurer (or an equivalent position may be considered after at least a two-year break. ii. Should the Treasurer leave the position for less than two years, and when he/she is being re-appointed, the Treasurer's years of service would continue from the time he/she stepped down as Treasurer.	2.6	Yes		2
11	Ensure the Board has suitable qualifications and experience, understands its duties clearly, and performs well. a. No staff should chair the Board and staff should not comprise more than one-third of the Board.	2.7	Yes		2
12	Ensure the Management has suitable qualifications and experience, understands its duties clearly, and performs well. a. Staff must provide the Board with complete and timely information and should not vote or participate in the Board's decision-making.	2.8	Yes		2
13	The term limit for all Board members should be set at 10 consecutive years or less. Re-appointment to the Board can be considered after at least a two-year break. For all Board members: a. Should the Board member leave the Board for less than two years, and when he/she is being re-appointed, the Board member's years of service would continue from the time he/she left the Board. b. Should the charity consider it necessary to retain a particular Board member (with or without office bearers' positions) beyond the maximum term limit of 10 consecutive years, the extension should be deliberated and approved at the general meeting where the Board member is being re-appointed or re-elected to serve for the charity's term of service. (For example, a charity with a two-year term of service would conduct its election once every two years at its general meeting). c. The charity should disclose the reasons for retaining any Board member who has served on the Board for more than 10 consecutive years, as well as its succession plan, in its annual report.	2.9a 2.9b 2.9c	Yes		2
14	For Treasurer (or equivalent position) only: d. A Board member holding the Treasurer position (or equivalent position like a Finance Committee Chairman or key person on the Board responsible for overseeing the finances of the charity) must step down from the Treasurer or equivalent position after a maximum of four consecutive years. i. The Board member may continue to serve in other positions on the Board (except the Assistant Treasurer position or equivalent), not beyond the overall term limit of 10 consecutive years, unless the extension was deliberated and approved at the general meeting – refer to 2.9.b.	2.9d	Yes		2

SN	Call for Action	Code ID	Did the charity put this principle into action?	If you have indicated "No" or 'Partial Compliance', please explain.	Score
Principle 3: The charity acts responsibly, fairly and with integrity.					
15	Conduct appropriate background checks on the members of the Board and Management to ensure they are suited to work at the charity.	3.1	Yes		2
16	Document the processes for the Board and Management to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest, and the measures to deal with these conflicts of interest when they arise. a. A Board member with a conflict of interest in the matter(s) discussed should recuse himself/herself from the meeting and should not vote or take part in the decision-making during the meeting.	3.2	Yes		2
17	Ensure that no Board member is involved in setting his/her own remuneration directly or indirectly.	3.3	Yes		2
18	Ensure that no staff is involved in setting his/her own remuneration directly or indirectly.	3.3	Yes		2
19	Establish a Code of Conduct that reflects the charity's values and ethics and ensure that the Code of Conduct is applied appropriately.	3.4	Yes		2
20	Take into consideration the ESG factors when conducting the charity's activities.	3.5	Partial Compliance	AWARE incorporates ESG considerations into our activities as follows: Social: We address gender-based barriers through research, advocacy, education, training, and support services. As a progressive employer, we have achieved 8/10 Tripartite Standards for fair and inclusive practices. Governance: We maintain strong governance with transparent reporting, ethical standards, and compliance with the Charities Code of Governance. Environmental: We have initiated basic environmental efforts, including recycling and reducing paper through digital processes.	1
Principle 4: The charity is well-managed and plans for the future.					
21	Implement and regularly review key policies and procedures to ensure that they continue to support the charity's objectives. a. Ensure the Board approves the annual budget for the charity's plans and regularly reviews and monitors its income and expenditures (For example, financial assistance, matching grants, donations by board members to the charity, funding, staff costs and so on).	4.1a	Yes		2

SN	Call for Action	Code ID	Did the charity put this principle into action?	If you have indicated "No" or "Partial Compliance", please explain.	Score
22	Implement and regularly review key policies and procedures to ensure that they continue to support the charity's objectives. b. Implement appropriate internal controls to manage and monitor the charity's funds and resources. This includes key processes such as: i. Revenue and receipting policies and procedures; ii. Procurement and payment policies and procedures; and iii. System for the delegation of authority and limits of approval.	4.1b	Yes		2
23	Seek the Board's approval for any loans, donations, grants, or financial assistance provided by the charity which are not part of the core charitable programmes listed in its policy. (For example, loans to employees/subsidiaries, grants or financial assistance to business entities).	4.2	Yes		2
24	Regularly identify and review the key risks that the charity is exposed to and refer to the charity's processes to manage these risks.	4.3	Yes		2
25	Set internal policies for the charity on the following areas and regularly review them: a. Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT); b. Board strategies, functions, and responsibilities; c. Employment practices; d. Volunteer management; e. Finances; f. Information Technology (IT) including data privacy management and cyber-security; g. Investment (obtain advice from qualified professional advisors if this is deemed necessary by the Board); h. Service or quality standards; and i. Other key areas such as fund-raising and data protection.	4.4	Partial Compliance	Policies for b, c, d, e, f, h and i are in place. a. AML/CFT policy and Grievance Policy were implemented in 2025. b. Financial policy and approval matrix were updated in 2025. To develop a review schedule in 2026 for all key policies.	1
26	The charity's audit committee or equivalent should be confident that the charity's operational policies and procedures (including IT processes) are effective in managing the key risks of the charity.	4.5	Partial Compliance	Many operational policies and procedures are in place, per Code 4.4. An IT internal review was completed in 2025. New IT processes developed.	1
27	The charity should also measure the impact of its activities, review external risk factors and their likelihood of occurrence, and respond to key risks for the sustainability of the charity.	4.6	Yes		2
Principle 5: The charity is accountable and transparent.					
28	Disclose or submit the necessary documents (such as Annual Report, Financial Statements, GEC, and so on) in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act, its Regulations, and other frameworks (For example, Charity Transparency Framework and so on).	5.1	Yes		2
29	Generally, Board members should not receive remuneration for their services to the Board. Where the charity's governing instrument expressly permits remuneration or benefits to the Board members for their services, the charity should provide reasons for allowing remuneration or benefits and disclose in its annual report the exact remuneration and benefits received by each Board member.	5.2	Yes		2
30	The charity should disclose the following in its annual report: a. Number of Board meetings in the year; and b. Each Board member's attendance.	5.3	Yes		2

SN	Call for Action	Code ID	Did the charity put this principle into action?	If you have indicated "No" or "Partial Compliance", please explain.	Score
31	The charity should disclose in its annual report the total annual remuneration (including any remuneration received in the charity's subsidiaries) for each of its three highest-paid staff, who each receives remuneration exceeding \$100,000, in incremental bands of \$100,000. Should any of the three highest-paid staff serve on the Board of the charity, this should also be disclosed. If none of its staff receives more than \$100,000 in annual remuneration each, the charity should disclose this fact.	5.4	Yes		2
32	The charity should disclose in its annual report the number of paid staff who are close members of the family of the Executive Head or Board members, and whose remuneration exceeds \$50,000 during the year. The annual remuneration of such staff should be listed in incremental bands of \$100,000. If none of its staff is a close member of the family of the Executive Head or Board members and receives more than \$50,000 in annual remuneration, the charity should disclose this fact.	5.5	Yes		2
33	Implement clear reporting structures so that the Board, Management, and staff can access all relevant information, advice, and resources to conduct their roles effectively. a. Record relevant discussions, dissenting views and decisions in the minutes of general and Board meetings. Circulate the minutes of these meetings to the Board as soon as practicable.	5.6a	Yes		2
34	Implement clear reporting structures so that the Board, Management, and staff can access all relevant information, advice, and resources to conduct their roles effectively. a. The Board meetings should have an appropriate quorum of at least half of the Board, if a quorum is not stated in the charity's governing instrument.	5.6b	Yes		2
35	Implement a whistle-blowing policy for any person to raise concerns about possible wrongdoings within the charity and ensure such concerns are independently investigated and follow-up action taken as appropriate.	5.7	Yes		2
Principle 6: The charity communicates actively to instil public confidence.					
36	Develop and implement strategies for regular communication with the charity's stakeholders and the public (For example, focus on the charity's branding and overall message, raise awareness of its cause to maintain or increase public support, show appreciation to supporters, and so on).	6.1	Yes		2
37	Listen to the views of the charity's stakeholders and the public and respond constructively.	6.2	Yes		2
38	Implement a media communication policy to help the Board and Management build positive relationships with the media and the public.	6.3	Yes		2
Total Score out of 76					72 95%

Declaration

Name	Filzah Sumartono	Contact	Office: 6779 7137	Email	filzah0402@gmail.com	Designation	Secretary, AWARE Board
☒ I declare that my charity's/ IPC's Governing Board has approved this Governance Evaluation Checklist and authorised me to submit on its behalf. All information given by me in this checklist submission is true to the best of my knowledge and I have not wilfully suppressed any material fact. The full responsibility for providing accurate and updated checklist information will rest with my charity's / IPC's governing Board.							

Internal Controls

For the year in review, AWARE continued to work towards internal controls and governance of the Society's mission. To this end, we carried out the following initiatives:

A. Governance and Oversight

1. Board Pulse Survey completed
2. Annual Organisational Health Framework Sector Survey completed
3. New Board and Management Roles
4. New Governance Protocol for Circles
5. Updated Financial Approval Matrix
6. New AML/CFT policy implemented

B. HR and Finance Management

1. New Consultation Protocol for Finance and HR (ensures cross-functional review before decisions)
2. New Recruitment User Guide implemented
3. New Grievance Policy implemented
4. New Employee Engagement Survey by NCSS
5. Senior Leadership Team development
6. New circles for Values and Wellbeing
7. Training Bond Policy updated
8. Entertainment Expense Guidelines updated

C. IT and Data Management

1. New Laptop Management Checklist
2. Review of IT setup

D. Facility Management

1. New Facility Management Checklist



The visuals depicted on the cover and within are inspired by the solarpunk movement—one that envisions an optimistic and sustainable future, where nature and community bloom in tandem. For four decades, AWARE has understood gender equality in the same terms: not a policy outcome to be delivered from above, but a living thing that takes hold when communities are given the conditions to imagine and insist on better.



aware

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