



## NEW CHAPTERS

### Annual Report 2022

Sometimes societal change comes at you like a plot twist. Few would have guessed that 2022 would see the fall of Section 377A, one of the most egregiously discriminatory laws in Singapore history. AWARE celebrated the repeal alongside LGBTQ+ advocates, setting our collective sights on bold new horizons: the complete eradication of discrimination (on the basis of sexual orientation, and more) at work, in schools and all other arenas of life. Meanwhile, 2022 brought another exciting surprise: Our anthology *What We Inherit*, part of our Growing Up Indian initiative, became a best-seller upon publication in July, sparking rich conversations within the Indian community and beyond. Lastly, we welcomed the government's "White Paper on Singapore Women's Development"—the product of an in-depth consultative process with individuals and groups such as ourselves—while still carving out room for constructive criticism. Today we turn the page on these triumphs, and others, and greet a fresh sheet of feminist possibility. Take up your pen and write the future with us.

Visit [aware.org.sg/report2022](https://aware.org.sg/report2022) for the full online 2022 Annual Report.

Illustration by [Lauren Cheung \(@dirtydoodies\)](#)

## **ABOUT AWARE**

AWARE (Association of Women for Action and Research) is Singapore's leading women's rights and gender-equality advocacy group. Since 1985, AWARE has worked to identify and eliminate gender-based barriers through research, advocacy, education, training and support services—including a long-running Women's Helpline and Singapore's only dedicated Sexual Assault Care Centre. AWARE's current focus areas include supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence, enabling women and men to better balance work and caregiving, improving single mothers' access to affordable housing, and combatting workplace discrimination and harassment.

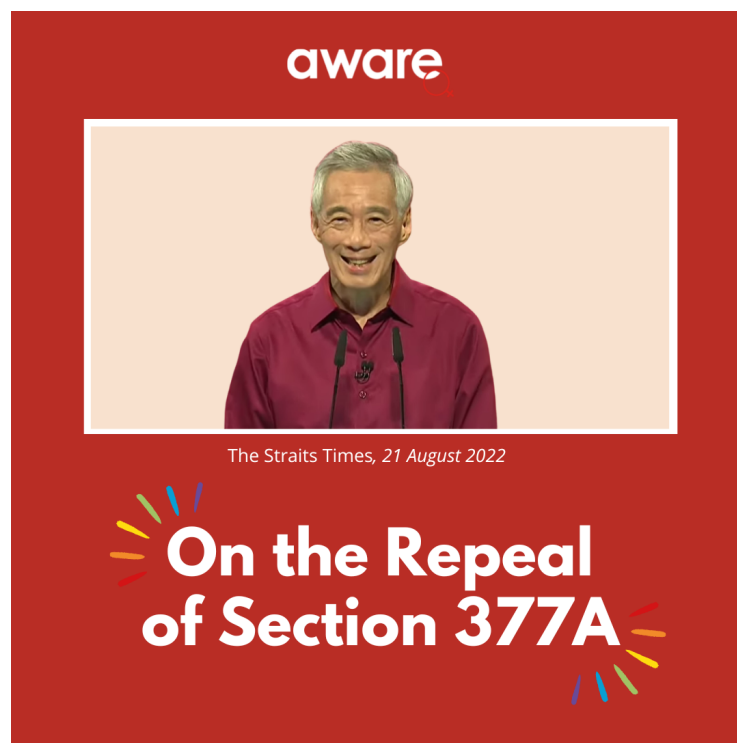
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# **Fighting Violence and Discrimination**

## **1. Advocacy on LGBTQ Rights**

### **The Repeal of Section 377A**



We celebrated Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's announcement during the 2022 National Day Rally that Section 377A of Singapore's Penal Code, which criminalised sex between consenting men, would be repealed. AWARE had for many years lent support to the steadfast efforts of groups such as Pink Dot and Sayoni to advocate for LGBTQ rights, beginning with the removal of S377A. In 2022 alone, we wrote in-depth statements critiquing the homophobic behaviour and rhetoric fomenting in Singapore, for example in a [Hwa Chong Institute sexuality education presentation](#), and at the ["Protect Singapore" Townhall](#) held in July.

While the fall of S377A represents an unprecedented leap forward, bestowing much-needed freedom and dignity upon our LGBTQ community, we remain alert to the remaining hurdles that community faces in their everyday lives, such as discrimination in the workplace and at schools.

### **Queer Violence, Queer Silence**



To raise awareness around sexual violence against LGBTQ individuals, we held the online panel discussion *Queer Violence, Queer Silence* on 28 July 2022. The event was moderated by Lee Yi Ting, a long-time AWARE volunteer and Birds & Bees facilitator. The other speakers were AWARE Executive Director Corinna Lim, Sayoni co-founder Jean Chong and Jaryl George Solomon, an educator, poet and playwright.

Around 50 people tuned into the conversation, which delved into the panellists' personal experiences with sexual assault, the prevalence of violence against LGBTQ persons in Singapore and barriers that crop up in reporting. The panellists also discussed avenues of support available to LGBTQ persons who have experienced violence, including some queer-friendly psychotherapists recommended by Sayoni. The audience was engaged throughout and expressed a keen interest in seeing more such events and advocacy efforts.

## 2. Anti-Discrimination Advocacy





Following PM Lee's 2021 announcement that Singapore would introduce its first-ever anti-discrimination legislation, we focused much of AWARE's research and advocacy muscle on examining the extent to which discrimination occurs in Singapore, and ensuring that said legislation could be as comprehensive and effective as possible.

In August 2022, we conducted a [national survey on workplace discrimination](#) in partnership with consumer research company Milieu Insight. The survey—Singapore's first comprehensive survey on discrimination at work—polled 1,000 respondents on their experiences of (i) direct discrimination, (ii) indirect discrimination and (iii) discrimination-related harassment. The findings were astounding: In the previous five years, 55% of respondents had experienced at least one form of discrimination (the most common being race, age and gender). Certain groups, including women, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and LGBTQ+ persons, were also found to be more vulnerable to discrimination at work.

The survey findings were widely covered by news outlets, including [The Straits Times](#), [TODAY](#) and [Lianhe Zaobao](#). In addition, various AWARE representatives penned op-eds and Forum letters after the survey launch to bring attention to workplace discrimination:

- [“Forum: Upcoming workplace discrimination legislation must combat under-reporting”](#), [The Straits Times](#), 15 October, 2022
- [“Time to retire age discrimination at work”](#), [The Straits Times](#), 24 October, 2022
- [“Workplace discrimination may be more common than you think. Here's why.”](#), [Southeast Asia Globe](#), 24 November, 2022

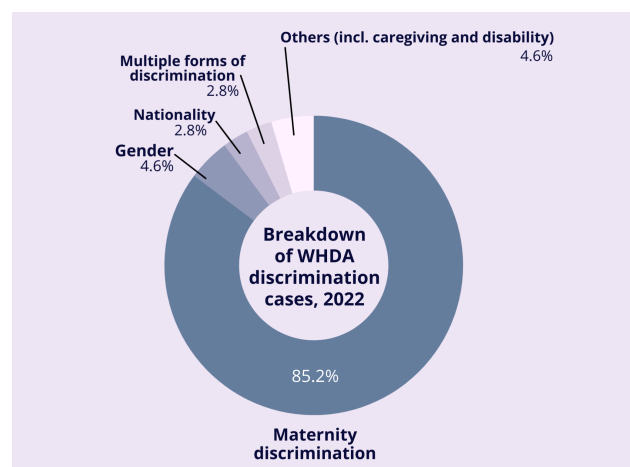
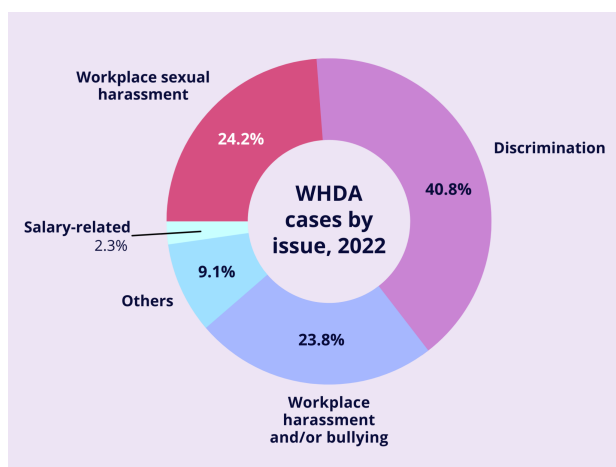
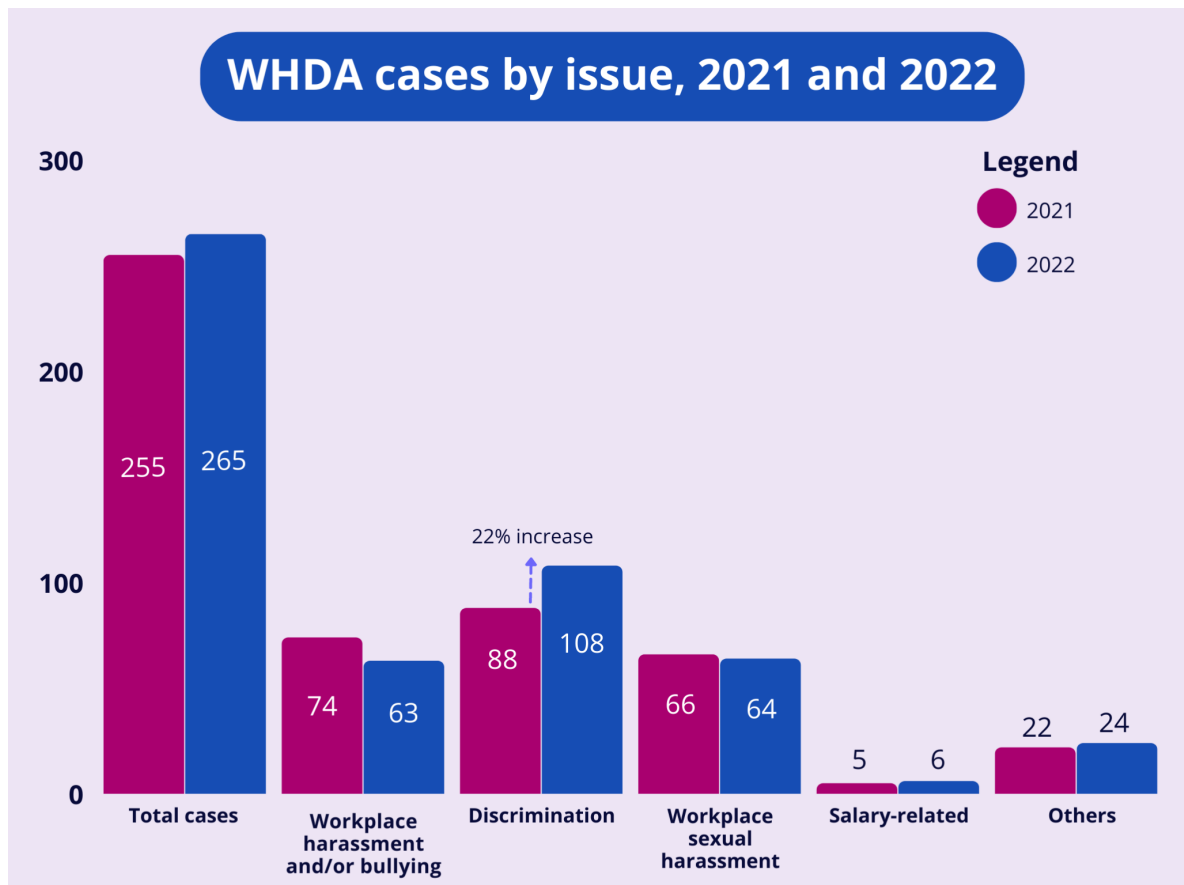
## Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory

Relatedly, our Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory (WHDA) service continued in 2022 to provide bespoke, confidential emotional and practical support to workers facing discriminatory or harassing behaviours in Singapore. This year marked the third full year of WHDA's operation since its launch in 2019.

The service attended to a total of 265 cases in 2022, up by 4% from 2021. This total encompassed:

- A 23% increase in cases related to workplace discrimination. The overwhelming majority of discrimination cases seen in 2022 (85%) involved some form of maternity discrimination.
- A 15% decrease in cases related to workplace harassment and bullying
- A 3% decrease in cases related to workplace sexual harassment

In light of the upcoming workplace fairness legislation, workplace discrimination has been in the media more often. We believe the increased media coverage on this issue may have encouraged more discrimination victims to seek support.

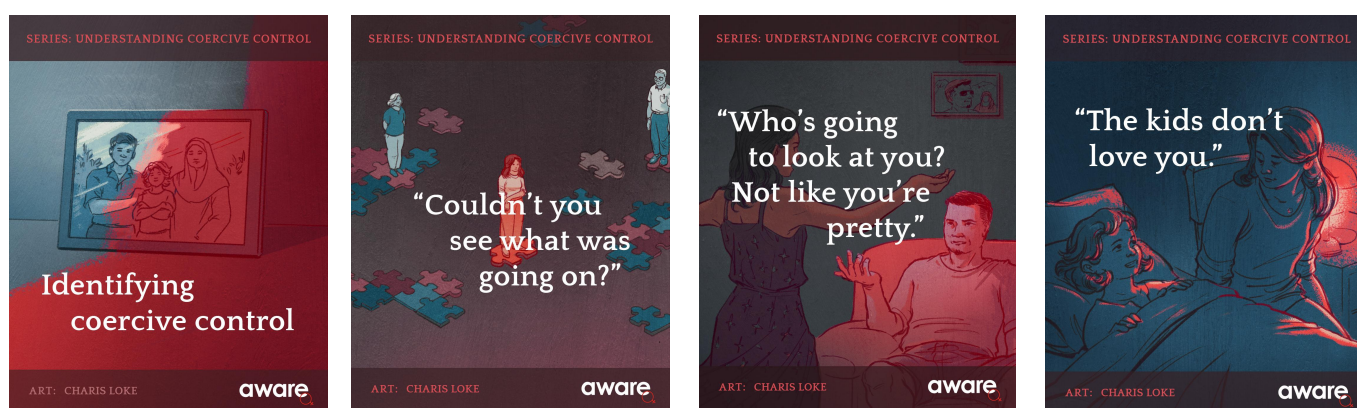


### 3. Coercive Control

In commemoration of the 2022 International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November), we collaborated with artist Charis Loke on a series of comics aimed at raising awareness around coercive control—a domestic violence framework that is as yet little understood in the Singapore context. This series comprised one primer comic (“Identifying Coercive Control”) which provided a brief overview of coercive control, as well as three narrative strips (“Couldn’t you see what was going on?”, “Who’s going to look at

you?” and “The kids don’t love you.”), loosely adapted from the experiences of coercive control survivors assisted and interviewed by AWARE.

These comics were well-received on social media, garnering more than 165,000 impressions and 17,500 engagements across platforms in three months. More meaningful than the numbers, though, were the many comments and messages we received from users—some of whom had experienced or witnessed coercive control in their own lives, and were recognising the fact for the first time. “Th[is] was hard to read. But let me tell you this is MORE common than you think,” wrote one user. Another said, “thank u so much for this series as someone still healing from an abusive relationship”.



## 4. Online Harms

Technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) remained a special area of interest to AWARE in 2022. For one, we continued our annual analysis of TFSV cases seen by our Sexual Assault Care Centre in the previous year. Of the 227 new TFSV cases in 2021, image-based sexual abuse featured in 1 in 2 cases; meanwhile, the perpetrator was someone known to the survivor in a full 189 cases. AWARE’s Shailey Hingorani also served on the Ministry of Communications and Information’s Sunlight Alliance for Action, focused on closing the digital safety gap and establishing support mechanisms for victims of online harms.

Furthermore, in August we made a submission to the Ministry of Communications and Information’s public consultation on the Enhancing Online Safety for Users in Singapore, which proposed measures to improve online safety for Singapore-based users of social media services. Apart from highlighting gaps in the proposed measures for user safety and reporting mechanisms, we made recommendations based on our experiences supporting survivors of TFSV, as well as relevant legislations and bills in countries including Australia and the United Kingdom.

Subsequently, the Online Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill was tabled and passed in Parliament. This Bill included several promising provisions aimed at closing the digital safety gap. In response to the tabling of the Bill, we published a statement reiterating some unaddressed recommendations, for example: clarifying take-down processes, requiring

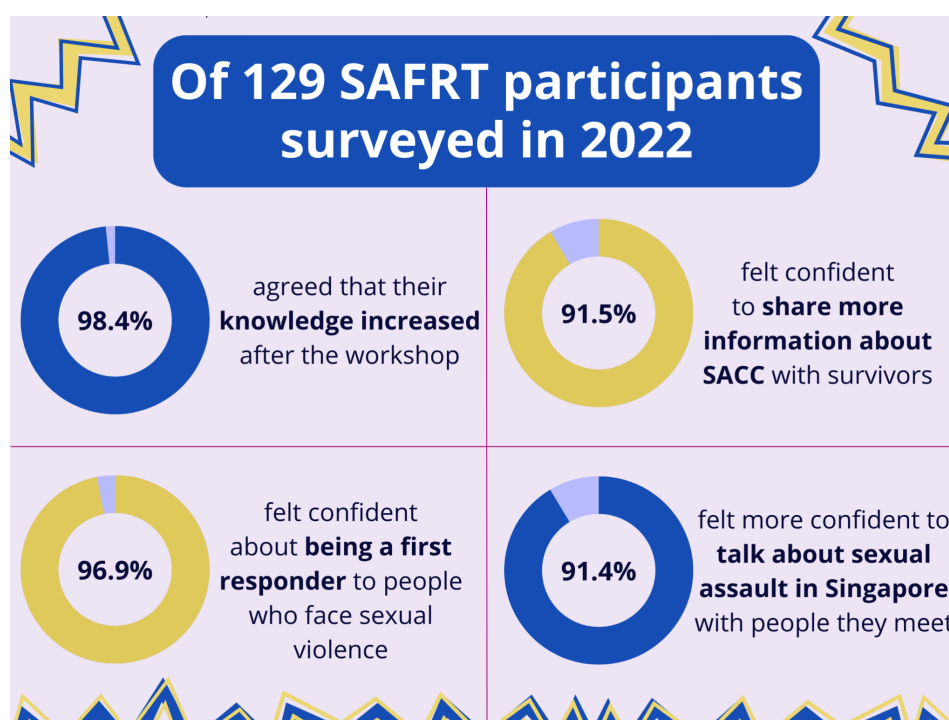
social media services to create resource centres for young users and expanding the Bill's scope of coverage to include SMS services, MMS services and direct messages. We await further developments in 2023.

## 5. Sexual Assault First Responder Training

In our fourth year of running Sexual Assault First Responder Training (SAFRT) sessions for the public, we attracted 305 participants across nine sessions. Over these in-depth sessions, participants were equipped with the skills to be effective first responders for the sexual violence survivors in their lives. As usual we received stellar feedback from attendees, who praised the “engaging” instruction and the “practical” tips covered.

*“I really, really appreciated the facilitators' delivery: how it was not too ‘serious’, but still clear and firm about the intensity of what is to be expected. As a survivor myself, I had to mentally prep myself to attend this session, but I didn't feel too distressed at the end of it. All credit goes to them.”*

- An SAFRT attendee



We also held our third run of the [Train-the-Trainer](#) programme for SAFRT in October and November. A total of 10 trainers (including members of the LGBTQ community, students working on combatting sexual violence, counsellors-to-be, a legal professional and others) were trained to deliver SAFRT to their own community groups, or co-deliver training with AWARE facilitators.

## 6. CEDAW 2022

In October 2022, AWARE submitted a shadow report as part of Singapore's periodic review for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This marked our fifth submission made to the CEDAW Committee since 2001. Participation by non-governmental bodies in the review process is encouraged by the United Nations as this provides the CEDAW review committee with supplementary information that may not have been included in government reports. AWARE's 2022 shadow report touched on several of our longstanding advocacy issues including sexual violence, migrant spouses and workplace discrimination, as well as more recent areas of focus, such as online harms.

# **Empowering Parents, Children, Families**

## **1. Single Parents' Access to Housing**

### **The S.H.E. Project**



The Support, Housing and Enablement (S.H.E.) Project was a research-based service that provided stable and decent housing, alongside a transformational support programme, to low-income families headed by single mothers.

From 2018 to 2021, with the support of a generous donor and Daughters of Tomorrow, AWARE set up four apartments across Singapore to serve as housing for 18 low-income single mothers and 21 children. Through quarterly interviews with the mothers, our research aimed to test this hypothesis: If single-mother families have access to affordable temporary housing, they build the capacity and strength to tackle issues such as permanent housing, employment and personal growth.

Our research concluded in 2022 with the release of the report [Why Stable Housing Matters: Outcomes of the S.H.E. Project for Single-Mother Families](#). Significantly, we found that having access to safe, secure housing for at least six months enabled single mothers and their children to secure permanent housing, keep gainfully employed and improve interpersonal relationships. By the end of their tenancy, eight families managed to secure and move out to public rental flats. The remaining residents moved out to rented rooms on the open market or moved in with family and friends. Two in three mothers saw improvements in their employment situations, and the residents' median monthly income rose from \$500 before entering S.H.E. to \$1,150 when the Project ended. Residents also expressed feeling safer and happier, and enjoying better relationships with their families of origin.

<p><i>"[The S.H.E. Project] was very helpful. While I was in labour and everything, and during my hospital stay, I knew that, 'OK, I come back home to this place... I don't need to bring [my baby] and our belongings all around Singapore to find a place to stay.'"</i></p> <p>- A S.H.E. Project resident</p>	<p><i>"Having someone to talk to... it just makes you at home. You just feel home. You don't even see [the apartment] as a shelter, you see it as a home, and whoever is staying there is actually part of your family. So I would say that I found a new family at the shelter."</i></p> <p>- A S.H.E. Project resident</p>
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However, further progress was hampered by challenges that the mothers faced in three key areas: housing, divorce and employment. To address them, we proposed a government programme that could, like the S.H.E. Project, provide housing and support services for unwed mothers and family violence victims for at least two years. We also recommended that the government create a Housing Development Board unit to coordinate services for families transitioning to single-parent households and allow divorced single parents to receive HDB loans and levy waivers.

Our research findings were covered by [The Straits Times](#) and [Mothership](#); AWARE's Shailey Hingorani and a former S.H.E. resident also appeared on [an episode of The Straits Times' In Your Opinion](#) podcast to talk more about the Project. In June, we invited around 30 social workers and academics to *The S.H.E. Project: Stories, Recommendations and Lessons*, a closed-door event in which we shared our findings and gained insights from the ground. Many attendees were interested in the S.H.E. model and how it differed from existing housing-related social support.

## Living in Limbo

In commemoration of the United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, we collaborated with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY SPP) to organise a panel discussion on housing, titled *Living in Limbo: Gender and housing insecurity in Singapore*.



The panel featured Jeyda Simren Sekhon Atac, research assistant in the Social Inclusion Project at LKYSPP; Liyana Dhamirah, author of *Homeless: The Untold Story of a Mother's Struggle in Crazy Rich Singapore*; and AWARE Project Executive Lee Yoke Mun. Researcher Dr Stephanie Chok moderated the discussion. Presenting both research and personal accounts of homelessness, the panellists spoke about the continuum of housing insecurity and homelessness, the many ways in which people “hide” their homelessness and why stable housing matters to women.

The 60-strong audience was enthusiastic and inspired. Some expressed interest in participating in further research and advocacy towards policies that would better support communities facing housing instability.



## 2. Needs of Low-Income Families



### Beyond the Bare Necessities

Following the release of the Minimum Income Standard (MIS) study in 2021, we held a panel discussion around the question: What is the true cost of a life well lived in Singapore?



Titled [\*Beyond the Bare Necessities: Gender & Minimum Income Standard in Singapore\*](#), the panel featured MIS researchers Teo You Yenn and Ng Kok Hoe, as well as AWARE's Executive Director Corinna Lim and moderator Ng Bee Leng, a long-time social worker. More than 90 attendees tuned in to hear the panellists explain how MIS for various household types were calculated, the impact that gender has on one's income and the challenges that single parents experience in the face of rising costs. Panellists expressed hopes for fairer allocation of government resources, enhancements in Singapore's care infrastructure and education, as well as universal wages.

### 3. Comprehensive Sexuality Education

#### Birds & Bees and other workshops



Birds & Bees is a workshop that helps parents start non-judgmental conversations with their children about sex and relationships, through case studies, role-play and facilitated discussions. In 2022, we conducted two runs of our standard three-part workshop, as well as officially launching a new condensed version, titled *Birds & Bees: The Essentials*, in October. We envisioned that the shorter time commitment would appeal to busy parents. Feedback from participants proved this to be true, with praise for the “great energy”, “openness and honesty”, “brilliant instructors”, “superb information” and the usefulness of the case studies.

We also organised *Closed Tabs, Open Conversations: Parenting in the age of online harms*, an online workshop on cyber-parenting with Dr. Anuradha Rao from Cyber Cogninz. Conducted over two sessions, the workshop highlighted major internet dangers for children and teenagers, and provided parents with useful cyber wellness tips.

All in all, around 100 parents were engaged in 2022 across these various sexuality education offerings.

To dive deeper into online harms and generate interest in the above workshop, we held a panel discussion titled *Trolls in Your Backyard: Helping your children stay safe from cyberbullying*. Moderated by AWARE Executive Director Corinna Lim, the panel featured speakers Dr. Anuradha Rao, Birds & Bees Project Director Tan Joo Hymn, parent Kevin Teo and Joanne Wong, Head of TOUCH Cyber Wellness. Speaking to about 40 audience

members, the panellists [shared several tips](#) for helping kids process and unpack cyber-bullying and other dangerous online interactions.

Apart from Birds & Bees, the year saw more international schools and organisations approaching AWARE to run comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) programmes. We ran workshops for three international schools, including one with neurodiverse children. We also delivered a workshop focusing on bystander support for a student-led programme in an international school, and one for school leavers at another school. Furthermore, we held a four-session workshop for a residential care home for disadvantaged teenagers. The programme was well-received, with overwhelmingly positive feedback from the home staff. With so many diverse workshops under our belt, we now have a rich archive of customised workshops for different audiences.

Finally, we held our very first [Comprehensive Sexuality Education Train-the-Trainer](#) (TTT) programme from October to December. Through this, four trainers were equipped with the skills and knowledge to deliver CSE workshops at international schools.

## Sex Ed, Declassified



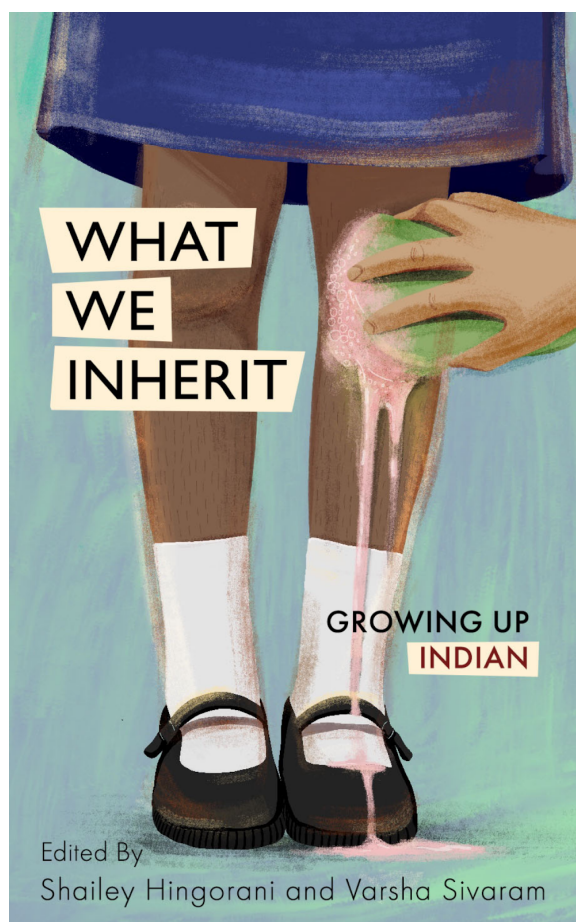
To further fill the gaps in Singapore’s sexuality education landscape, we launched [Sex Ed, Declassified](#) in July 2022: an online portal to sexuality education resources, both Singaporean and international, for users in their late teens and older. Developed by a team of staff and volunteers, Sex Ed, Declassified presents a curated list of resources—websites, YouTube channels, a podcast and more—that AWARE assessed to be trustworthy, inclusive and non-judgmental. These were divided into five sections: “Big Picture Stuff”, “Bodies & Health”, “Relationships & Sex”, “Gender & Orientation” and “Singapore Resources”.

Sex Ed, Declassified was met with excitement from the public, garnering coverage in local outlets such as [Coconuts](#) and parenting website [Honeykids](#). The website racked up more than 3,000 views by the end of the year, and related social media posts received more than 30,000 impressions. Some weeks after the launch, we held an event called *Declassify Sex Ed!*, to address in a fun, accessible manner the sexuality education topics young people

most wanted to discuss. Moderator Nicole Lim of *Something Private* podcast facilitated [a no-holds-barred conversation](#) between Aina, Elijah and Kamalini, three students and former AWARE interns, who described their own real-life experiences with sex ed. Afterwards, AWARE's Tan Joo Hymn and Dr Angela Tan of Academy of Relationships and Sex answered audience-submitted questions about sex and relationships.

# Advancing Feminist Conversations

## 1. Growing Up Indian



Growing Up Indian, a project dedicated to spotlighting Indian women's narratives, delivered AWARE some of our major triumphs in 2022.

In July we published *What We Inherit: Growing Up Indian*, an anthology of 39 personal essays and poems by mostly Indian women (and some men). *What We Inherit* was edited by AWARE's Shailey Hingorani and Varsha Sivaram, and distributed by Ethos Books, who had also distributed our previous anthologies *Perempuan* and *Growing Up Perempuan*.

*What We Inherit* was a smash hit even before publication, with a robust pre-sale performance (due in part to our successful 2021 Kickstarter campaign, as well as some generous private donors). By the end of 2022, the book had sold an incredible 1,800 copies and was about to enter its third print run. It [garnered rave reviews](#) from critics in a range of local media outlets, and from members of the public on social media and platforms such as [Goodreads](#). Many readers praised the unprecedented honesty with which the book approached race and identity, as well as the unusual agency and dignity the anthology afforded Indian voices.

<p><i>"What the stories in these anthologies have shown me is that understanding our very complexities, differences, histories and the array of struggles we endure, in fact deepens our bonds with each other."</i></p> <p>- Diana Rahim, <a href="#">ArtsEquator</a></p>	<p><i>"What We Inherit is such a precious gift. I wish I could go back in time and give it to my 12-year-old self, my 15-year-old self, my 21-year-old self."</i></p> <p>- <a href="#">@sharanvkaur</a>, Twitter</p>
<p><i>"I don't think I've ever read anything more relatable. The compilation of short stories/poems from Indian women from different walks of life has helped to verbalise and make sense of the experiences and emotions I've had growing up as an Indian woman in Singapore."</i></p> <p>- Jasveen Kaur, <a href="#">Goodreads</a></p>	<p><i>"It was such a privilege to read all the contributors' essays, stories, histories, observations and poetry — stories and words that have been missing from Singapore's literary and creative non-fiction landscape. Our literary archives are now richer."</i></p> <p>- Chye Shu Wen, <a href="#">Goodreads</a></p>
<p><i>"Poignant, diverse and delicately nuanced, the book is a rich cultural treasure trove, with each deeply personal essay offering a valuable glimpse into the lives of Indian folk in Singapore. Parsing through the ways we face adversity and find community, these stories will make you laugh, cry and feel seen like never before."</i></p> <p>- Chandreyee Ray, <a href="#">Vogue Singapore</a></p>	

We celebrated the official launch of *What We Inherit* at 10 Square in Orchard Central on 16 July. Seventy guests—among them Kickstarter backers, private donors and contributors—gathered for a stirring panel discussion with co-editor Shailey Hingorani and essayists Sarah Begum, Shobha Avadhani and Pooja Nansi (who moderated). The panellists talked about finding solidarity and joy in others' life writing, navigating multiple identities as Indian women in Singapore and harnessing the emotional power of the personal essay. Following the discussion, guests also had the opportunity to converse intimately with three other contributors—Matilda Gabrielpillai, Jaryl George Solomon and Sofia Begum—in "human library"-style sessions, curated around various themes.



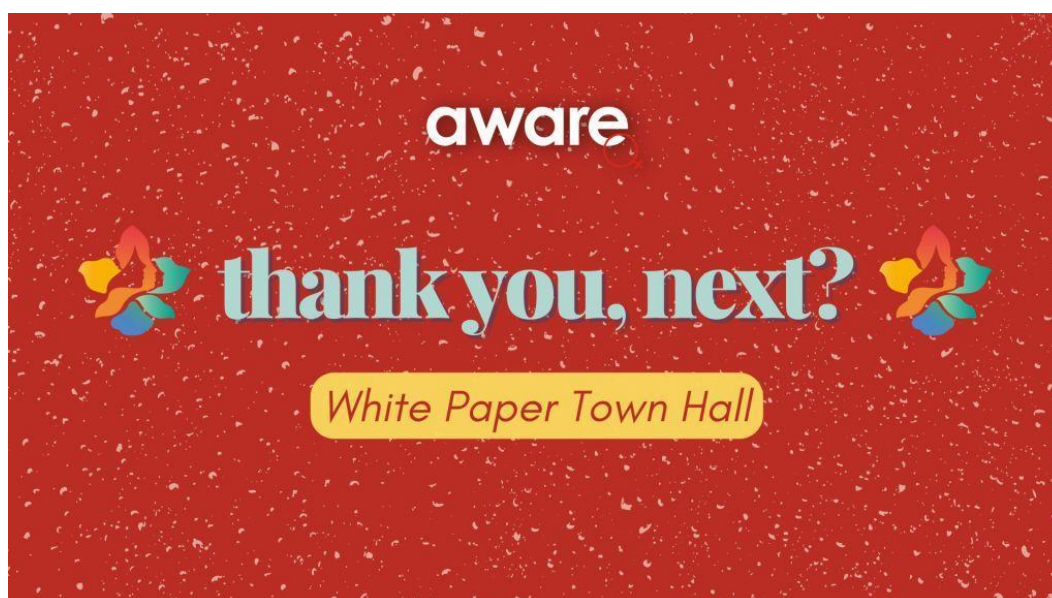
Photographs by Yee Hui @okaypotato



After the launch, other events allowed us to extend the reach of *What We Inherit* to new demographics. On 2 October, 32 guests gathered at City Book Room for an invigorating discussion with three contributors: panellists Ila and Saraniyah D/O Saravanan, and moderator Jeyda Simren Sekhon Ataç. With City Book Room typically catering to a Chinese-reading audience, the panellists naturally spoke at length about their own relationships with languages, both Indian and otherwise.

We also collaborated with The Necessary Stage on their Devising Platform showcase on 2 December 2022, during which seven artists—Haresh Sharma, Sindhura Kalidas, Ruby Jayaseelan, Nina Chabra, Pramila Pam, Ajuntha Anwari and Aditi Gopinathan—used *What We Inherit* as a springboard to explore new interdisciplinary performance styles.

## 2. Response to the White Paper



The historic “White Paper on Singapore Women’s Development” sparked a flurry of discussion in March 2022 about various gender issues in Singapore, from social egg freezing to comprehensive sexuality education. Apart from [our formal response](#), AWARE also held an informal virtual town hall on 14 April to allow partner organisations, members, donors and volunteers a space to celebrate and commiserate together. Titled [Thank You, Next?](#), the event was attended by representatives from Disabled People’s Association, Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics, Sayoni, Project X, Daughters of Tomorrow, Talk Your Heart Out and more, with a total of 60 people in attendance.

During the robust two-hour conversation, speakers named different aspects of the White Paper they found hopeful or disappointing, and weighed in on how the government might achieve the targets set out in the paper. Participants then reflected on Singapore’s journey for gender equality post-White Paper, which—all agreed—must involve the continued collaboration of civil society actors.

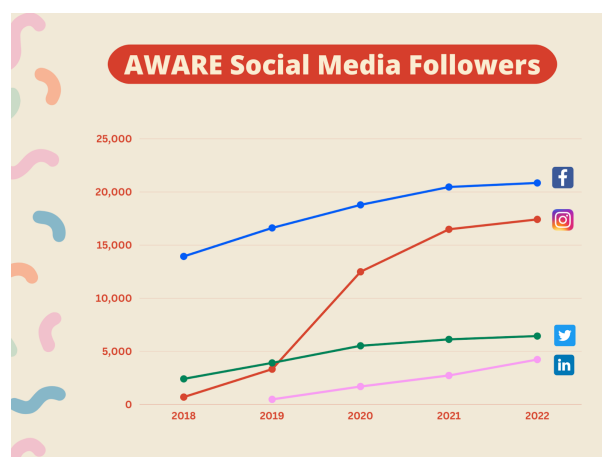
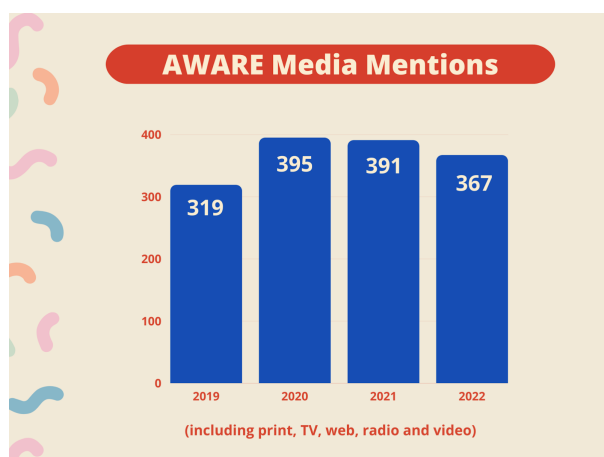
### 3. Saga at the Anthem Awards



In February, we received the thrilling news that *Saga*, our 2020-2021 limited-series narrative podcast, had won Silver in the Human & Civil Rights (Awareness – Not for Profit) category at the inaugural Anthem Awards. The Anthem Awards are presented by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences and shine a spotlight on social good and philanthropic endeavours across the globe. We were honoured to be amongst the 40 finalists in our category, which included such industry leaders as World Vision International, UN Foundation, the It Gets Better Project and NAACP. The virtual awards ceremony took place on 28 February and featured speeches from Dr. Jane Goodall, Naomi Osaka, Adam McKay, Megan Rapinoe, Trevor Noah and others. That same month, *Saga* also crossed over the 100,000 mark in all-time plays.

### 4. AWARE in the News and on Social Media

In 2022, AWARE's media presence again surpassed pre-pandemic figures. The organisation was mentioned in the media—inclusive of print, television, radio and digital media—367 times in total over the course of the year.



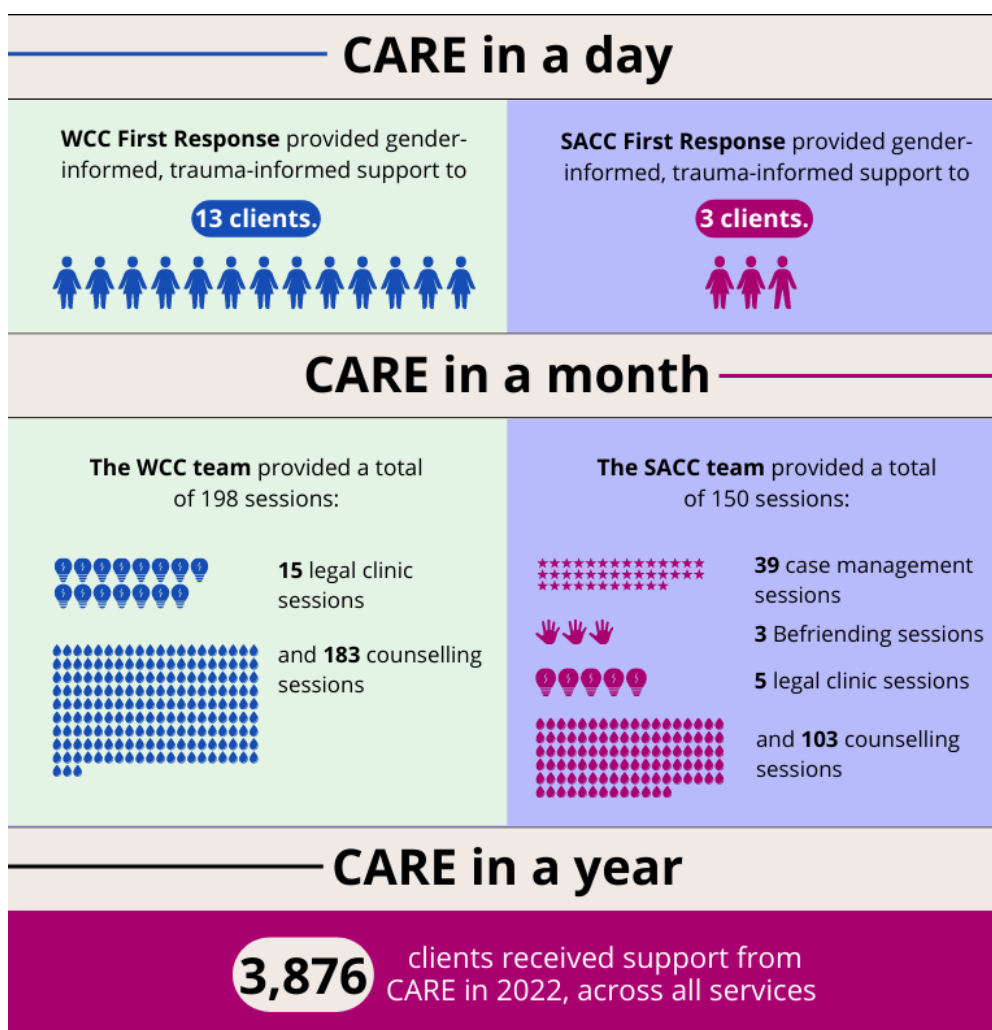
Our social media following across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn remained stable, growing to a community of nearly 49,000 in all. Although the year saw a dip in reach for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter (after a high in 2020 and 2021, likely fuelled by the COVID-19 pandemic and Singapore's General Elections), LinkedIn came in as AWARE's fastest-growing platform with a 150% increase in reach over 2021. All in all, AWARE enjoyed a social media reach of 3.6 million, heralding another year of bringing feminist discourse to diverse audiences.



# CARE

AWARE's CARE department comprises the Women's Care Centre (WCC) and the Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC). CARE is committed to building safe spaces and enabling informed decision-making for individuals facing gender-based discrimination, violence and other forms of distress. We work closely with external partners in the social service sector in Singapore, and advocate for gender- and trauma-informed practices among key stakeholders.

In 2022, CARE cumulatively supported a total of 3,876 clients across all services, averaging 75 clients per week.



## CARE's Volunteers

CARE is dedicated to fostering collaboration among people and professionals from different walks of life to support individuals in distress. In 2022, we were able to mobilise the expertise and commitment of 61 highly skilled volunteers (Helpliners and lawyers), who generously

contributed 4,122 hours of support to women and other survivors of violence. Collectively, this represented 515 days of volunteer work, strengthening our community and contributing to a society that looks out for its members.

Our volunteers come from diverse backgrounds, from social work, psychology and medicine, to public administration, law, computer science and business administration

We invest time and resources into onboarding and training our volunteers to align service provision with AWARE's values and principles. For example, in March 2022, we successfully trained and empowered 16 women to become First Responders on our Women's Helpline. Training included a compulsory, biweekly, two-month "classroom" training programme on topics such as self-awareness and values, family violence, family law, mental health, first response for survivors of sexual violence and trauma-informed first response. This training was made possible by AWARE colleagues from different departments, and also AWARE's partners from academia, social work, counselling and the legal profession.

*"I feel grateful that I am in a privileged position to listen to the stories of the amazing people in our world who demonstrate hope, empowerment and resilience. The most important part [of being a Helpliner] is to listen, empathise and journey with our callers. Hopefully a positive experience with us will provide support and a peaceful space for each person who calls in."*

- Testimonial from a 2022 Helpliner

We are immensely proud of the valuable work done by our volunteers, and extend our sincere gratitude to all who partnered with our staff this year.

## **CARE Team Restructuring**

A significant internal change in 2022 was the restructuring of the CARE team: to create service-focused verticals and a new CARE Operations and Programme (OP) horizontal, which provides operational and project-based support across both WCC and SACC service verticals. This enabled CARE to achieve greater organisational efficiency, specifically through technological enhancements and the streamlining of processes for development and long-term success. In a shift to meet increasing telecommunication and online safety needs, CARE integrated our telephony systems with Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) solutions across AWARE, and conducted a server migration to increase security of our client management system.

## **Trauma-Informed Programme**

Having heard countless survivors of violence talk about poor help-seeking experiences at different institutions in Singapore, we realised the importance of implementing consistent trauma-informed institutional processes at AWARE, beyond just trauma-informed care. That is, not only would AWARE's professionals and volunteers apply trauma-informed principles when working with clients, but the entire staff within the organisation would apply those principles when working together, in order to create an overall trauma-informed workplace.

To this end, AWARE staff across departments participated in three workshops organised by CARE, exploring how the organisation could think and act in a trauma-informed way. The key principles we committed to were safety, choice and transparency and trustworthiness. These principles will inform the way AWARE handles people-management, makes decisions and maintains a safe working environment for all moving forward.

## **1. Women's Care Centre**

WCC services were provided to 3,184 women in 2022, in the form of the Women's Helpline, online chat, counselling and legal clinic. By providing a safe and supportive space for women to access help, we were able to empower and uplift our community.

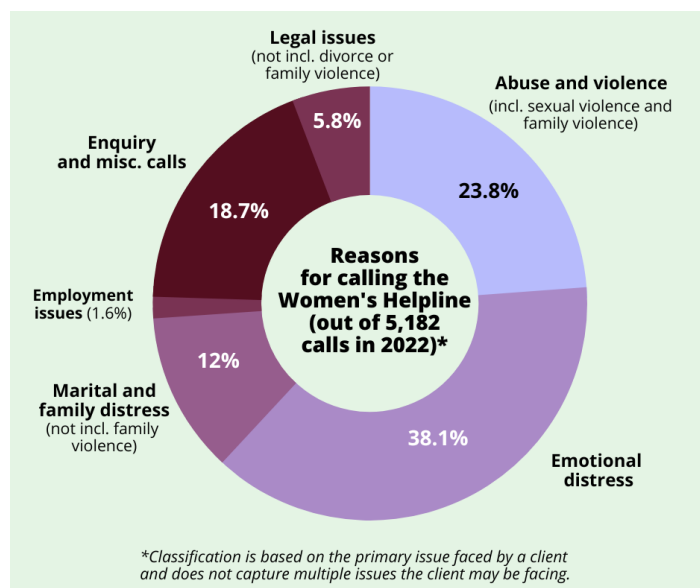
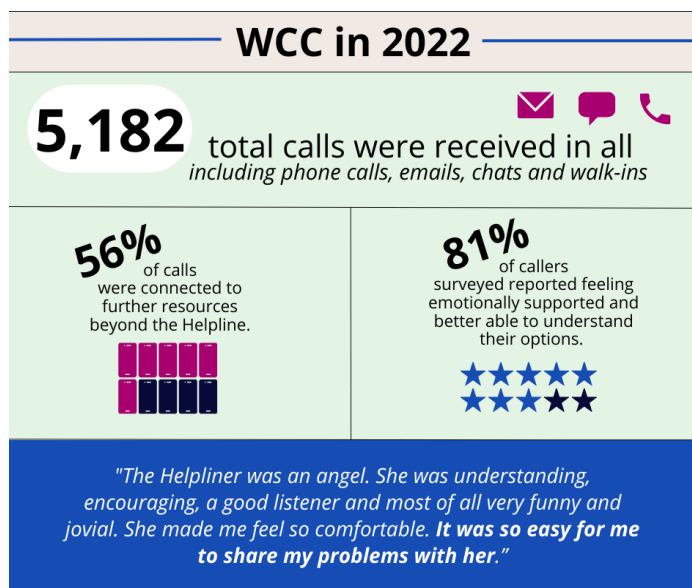
### **WCC First Response**

WCC's First Response channels include the Women's Helpline, email and our online chat service. It is the first point of contact for women reaching out for support. First Response is delivered by trained staff, consultants and volunteers from a range of professional backgrounds.

Since its inception in 1991, the Women's Helpline has enabled a diverse group of women to provide non-judgemental, empowerment-focused assistance and information. Grounded in feminist principles, the Helpline treats callers as equals, seeing women as resourceful and capable even in the most difficult and challenging situations.

Thanks to the efforts of our 36 Helpline volunteers and four Helpline Executives, we were able to provide 4,467 hours of support on the Women's Helpline throughout 2022.

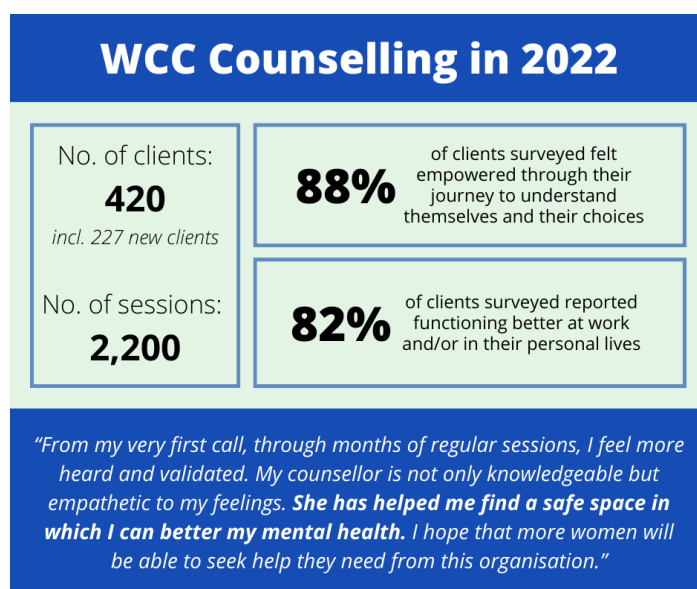
The number of calls to the Helpline fell below the anomalous peaks seen during the 2020 and 2021 pandemic period, but remained higher than calls in 2019. With the addition of national resources launched during the pandemic, and the relaxation of COVID safety measures, individuals had a wider range of resources from which to seek help in 2022. In all, 2,981 individuals reached out to us through WCC's various channels. While 76% of callers mainly reached out through the Women's Helpline, the demand for chat service remained consistent at 220 (4.2% of overall calls). This indicated a need to maintain the chat service option for clients who might not have a safe place to speak about their issues.



## WCC Services

Our Helpliners encourage callers to identify their needs, and connect them to services, such as counselling and legal clinic, that can empower them in their journey. The latter direct service channel is our second stage of service provision for those who require further support, guidance and information.

## WCC Counselling



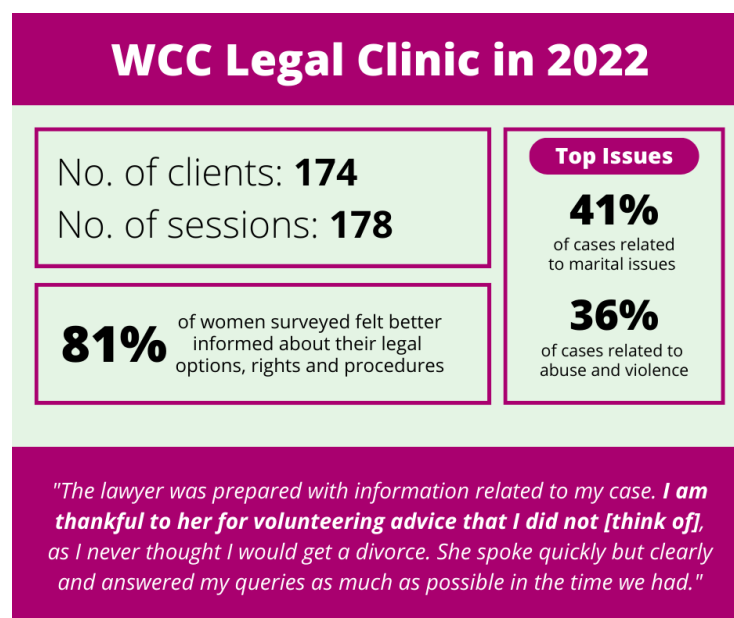
WCC's counselling service recognises that women are the experts of their own situations. Our counsellors provide non-judgemental support focused on increasing women's safety and access to resources. We enable clients to recognise the options available to them, and to build and maintain a strong and positive sense of self.

In 2022, the counselling team's main focus was stabilising its service after the movement of key counselling staff and the overall restructuring of CARE. There was also a decrease in counselling clients (by 18%) and sessions (by 22%) due to the drop in Helpline callers after COVID restrictions lifted. We conducted a monthly capacity-monitoring exercise to review the workload of counsellors following the demands of 2021. As such, we observed a reduction in burn-out rate, leading to better counsellor retention, increased ability to support new clients and better client-load management. We also successfully converted our team of long-serving volunteer counsellors into consultant positions.

Our counsellors underwent individual supervision in addition to group supervision sessions, contributing to the quality and effectiveness of the service. We also provided practicum opportunities for intern counsellors, allowing exposure to client work and to AWARE's gender-informed and trauma-informed service delivery. Lastly, we conducted inter-department sharings to update the counselling team about the full range of services within the AWARE ecosystem, and also invited external collaborators to improve our competence in niche sectors of client support.

With the relaxation of COVID restrictions, the counselling team was able to resume in-person sessions at the AWARE Centre's re-furnished counselling rooms. These sessions were primarily offered to clients who faced limited safety and privacy in their homes.

## WCC Legal Clinic



The WCC legal clinic provides free, 20-minute legal consultations to women on topics such as family and intimate partner violence, employment issues and marital issues including divorce, separation, maintenance and custody. In 2022, our legal clinic provided legal consultations via telephone and the team worked hard to mitigate any disruption to service, remaining operational throughout the pandemic.

Women who accessed the legal clinic found the sessions valuable and were greatly appreciative of the care that our volunteer lawyers took to help them understand their rights and options.

## **2. Sexual Assault Care Centre**

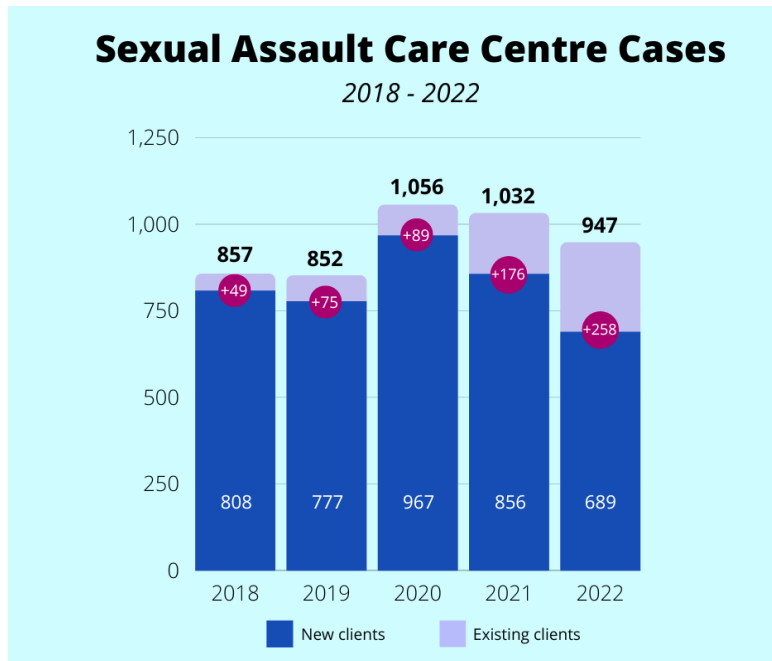
SACC continued to provide gender-informed and trauma-informed services to survivors of sexual violence in 2022, supporting close to 1,000 cases. We saw a slight dip in the overall number of cases, possibly due to the lifting of COVID restrictions and increased access to other avenues of support around Singapore. At the same time, we saw a significant jump (around 47%) in existing clients returning and/or seeking continued support from previous years.

2022 was a landmark year for governmental support for survivors of sexual violence, with the addition of sexual harassment and sexual violence as supported categories under the National Anti-Violence and Sexual Harassment Helpline. We were heartened by the increase in public awareness of sexual violence, and efforts made by the community to respond to sexual violence sensitively—partly through the skills that many have gained in AWARE's Sexual Assault First Responder Training.

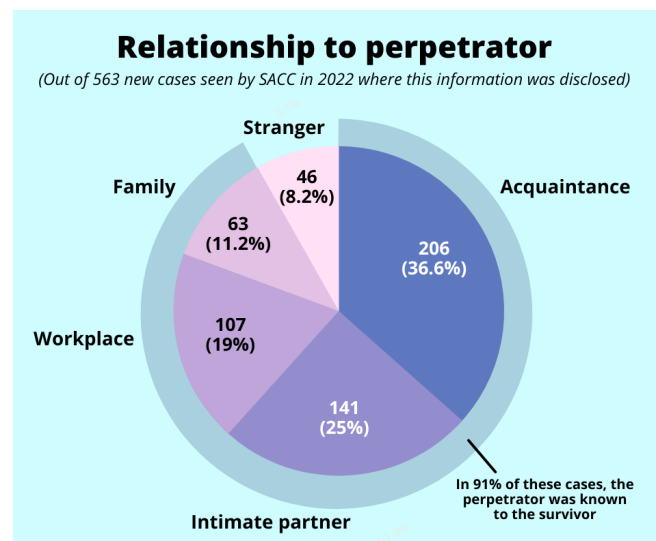
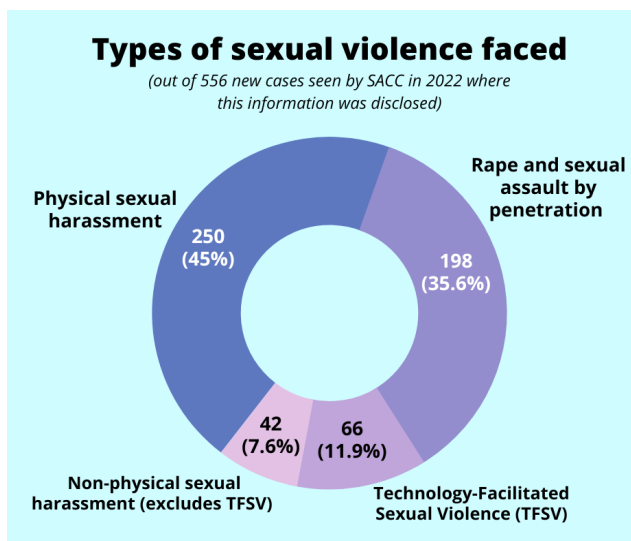
Following the launch of our triaging service model in 2021, SACC refined the model, managing our capacity more effectively by directing the appropriate level of resources to each case. The SACC team was thus better able to manage our workload and commit to the well-being of team members. We enhanced our staff support structure with skills training, team huddles and supervision, making sure our team members had the resources and tools to provide quality support. In order to ensure knowledge consistency across our team, we set up an internal information resource for staff in SACC to benefit from their colleagues' accumulated knowledge.

### **SACC Cases**

In 2022, SACC received 689 new cases, out of the total of 947 cases attended to by various SACC services.



In 9 out of 10 cases where the information was disclosed to SACC, the perpetrator was known to the survivor. The narrative that sexual assault is caused by strangers is misleading and harmful, given that most sexual assaults were perpetrated by someone who was trusted by a survivor, and had access to them.



*\*As part of our mission to provide trauma-informed care, we do not require survivors to identify perpetrators or give details about their experience as a condition for accessing services. Survivors have the choice to share or not share this information with us—while it may help us tailor support better, it is not always necessary.*

## Further Observations

- The majority of survivors attended to by SACC in 2022 were cisgender women (89.3%). Cisgender male survivors (10%) and transgender/non-binary survivors (0.7%) formed a minority of survivors we saw.
- Of the cases where the incident date was disclosed to SACC, 50% of survivors reached out for help within five weeks of the incident.
- In about 25% of cases, another person reached out to SACC on behalf of the survivor.
- Fourteen per cent of all new cases involved childhood sexual assault, i.e. the survivors were either child clients (around half) or adult clients seeking assistance for incidents that occurred in their childhoods. These survivors had various reasons for coming forward: Some sought SACC's help after a recent trauma trigger, or after learning of the existence of avenues of support; others only recognised their experiences as abuse after receiving sex education.

## SACC Services

SACC provides a range of services catered to the needs of sexual assault survivors. In 2022, the First Response team operated the SACC Helpline, WhatsApp service and email channels. Across these modes, our First Responders provided empathetic listening ears and created safe spaces for survivors to share their stories, many of them for the first time. We provided information and options such that survivors could make informed decisions about next steps.

Survivors also had a range of services to access based on their needs: They learnt about their legal rights and options through the SACC legal clinic, and were supported at the courts, police stations and hospitals by the SACC Befriending team; they received support and information for short-term coping and practical concerns through the SACC case management service, and embarked on long-term healing with SACC counsellors. Below we highlight the services provided by SACC in 2022 and their impact on the survivors who reached out to us.

### SACC Case Management in 2022

No. of clients: **142**  
No. of sessions: **322**

**95%**

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

*"The case manager was a really good listener. She made sure to touch on all the points, even those I hadn't brought up directly, and **made sure I didn't have to repeat myself**. There was a good link-up between my first call and the next. I was thankful for that."*

### SACC Counselling in 2022

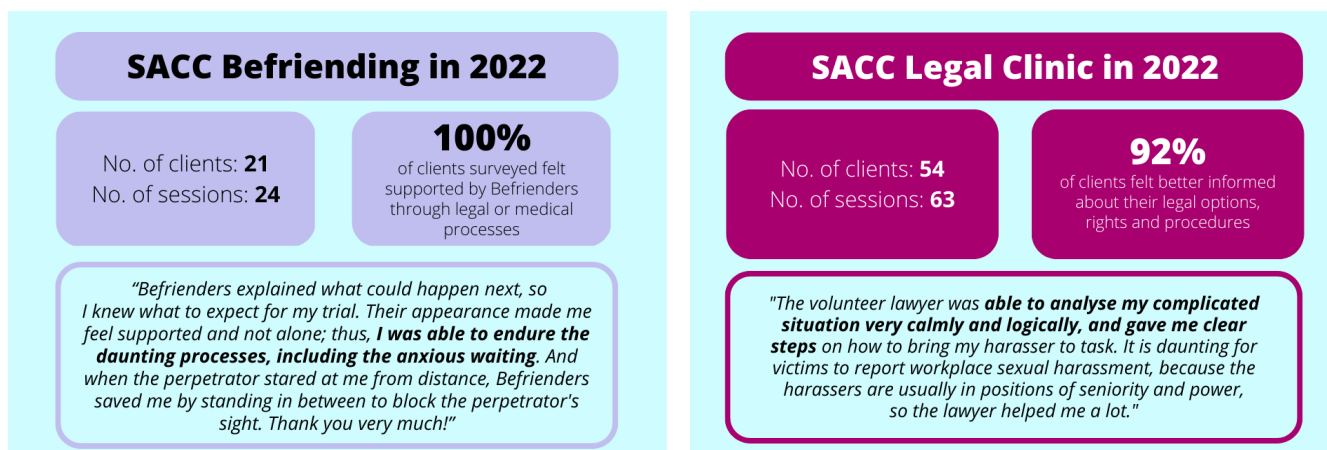
No. of clients: **171**  
No. of sessions: **1,239**

**97%**

of clients surveyed felt emotionally supported by their counsellor

*"The counsellor has been a really important part of my healing journey. She gives helpful tools or reflection questions at the end of each session. If I'm not ready to dive deeper, or there's a more pressing issue to attend to, she goes at my pace. It's difficult to talk about things that I've suppressed or avoided, so I appreciate that **she is attuned to my responses and gives me the space I need to sit with my emotions**."*





## Community and Stakeholder Engagement

### Improved Access to Trauma-Informed Justice and Support

Part of the continued mission of SACC is to advocate for greater access to justice and support from various systems with which survivors interact, such as the criminal justice system and the social service sector. In 2022 we continued SACC's case advocacy work within the criminal justice system by working with the Attorney-General's Chambers and Serious Sexual Crimes Branch.

A potential barrier to justice and support that we highlighted to various institutions was mandatory reporting in the Criminal Procedure Code. From SACC's experience, mandatory reporting might hinder help-seeking behaviour among survivors and act as a barrier for professionals to effectively carry out their duty of care towards their clients. Survivors have told SACC that they chose not to approach other professional agencies for help because they did not wish to be made to file police reports. This might have delayed their healing journeys.

We also advocated for the social service sector to build up its capacity to work with a) diverse needs and b) vulnerable groups with intersecting identities, to increase survivors' access to trauma-informed support.

### Building the Ecosystem

In a bid to continue to improve survivors' access to support in the social service sector, we ventured beyond knowledge-exchange sessions with individual social service agencies in 2022, piloting AWARE's Sexual Assault Caseworker Training (SACT) for 16 professionals from five sectors (family services, family violence, medical, mental health and education). We decided to launch this training in recognition of the fact that more institutions in Singapore were offering support services to survivors of sexual violence, but not all had, like SACC, built expertise in advocacy work and specialised service coordination.

The training helped caseworkers understand the complexities of working with survivors of sexual violence, and better navigate the relevant systems. Our model focused on gender-informed and trauma-informed support for survivors, with attention to complex case types. In our 2022 post-training survey, 100% of the professionals reporting feeling better equipped to coordinate care with and advocate for survivors of sexual violence, and also that their knowledge about institutional trauma-informed practices had increased.

*"Absolutely love the fact that we got a safe space to share tips and learn from different sectors. The trainers were inspiring, inclusive, knowledgeable, understanding and able to convey professionalism."*

- Feedback from an SACT 2022 participant

## **Support for Community Campaigns**

When Lutheran Community Care Services launched a campaign to address sexual harms and dating violence experienced by young adults in tertiary institutions, CARE organised a walkathon in East Coast Park to help raise funds. We formed a team of 10 staff members across CARE and walked a five-kilometre distance to pledge our support for this cause.

# Catalyse



The Catalyse team and audience after a "Diversity, Inclusion & You" session for a healthcare provider in 2022

Catalyse, AWARE's corporate advisory, consulting and training arm, has a two-pronged mandate:

- i. It empowers organisations to build RISE workplace cultures that are Respectful, Inclusive, Safe and Empathic for all employees.
- ii. It generates profits to support AWARE's gender equality services and programmes.

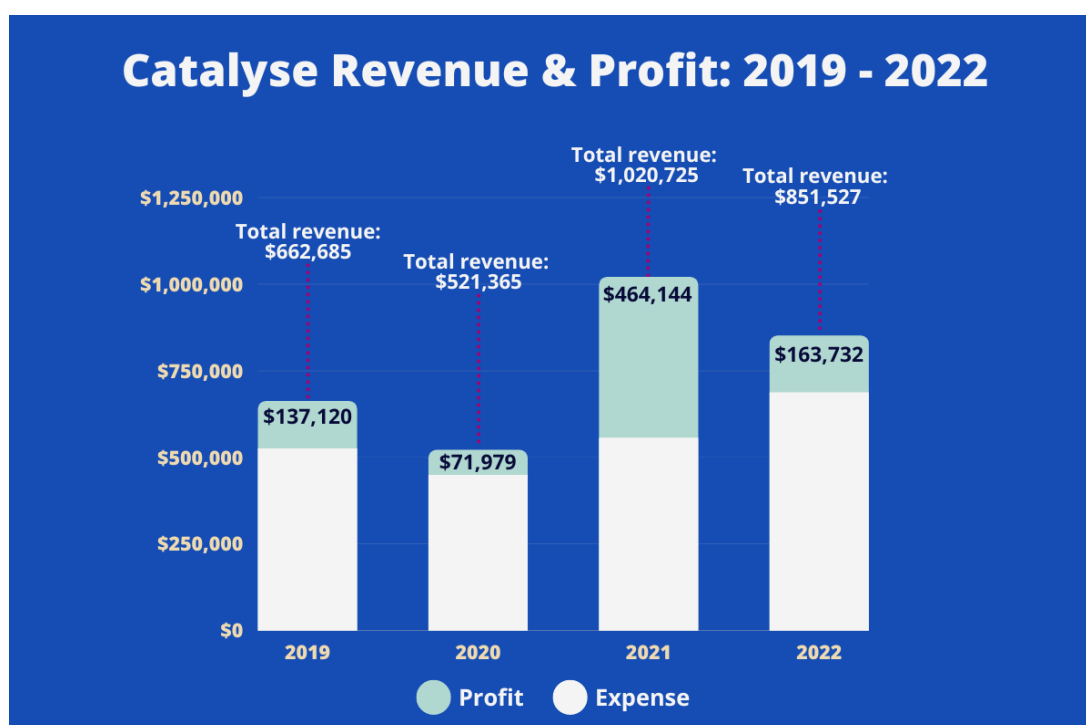
To capture our zest for a more diverse, inclusive and equal world, Catalyse devised a new model to guide our work in 2022: HEAL (Humility, Empathy and compassion, Adaptability and reflection, Listening skills). The HEAL approach has been well received across the many organisations and industries with whom Catalyse has worked.



(L-R) Catalyse's Valerie Gan, Amy Daga and Caroline Callow after an "Unconscious Bias" workshop with AmCham member representatives

2022 was a mixed year for Catalyse. While there was a sense of buoyancy at pandemic restrictions easing, fears of a global recession meant that many potential clients cut back on previously proposed roll-outs. The team weathered these changes by innovating with new pricing strategies that were more enticing.

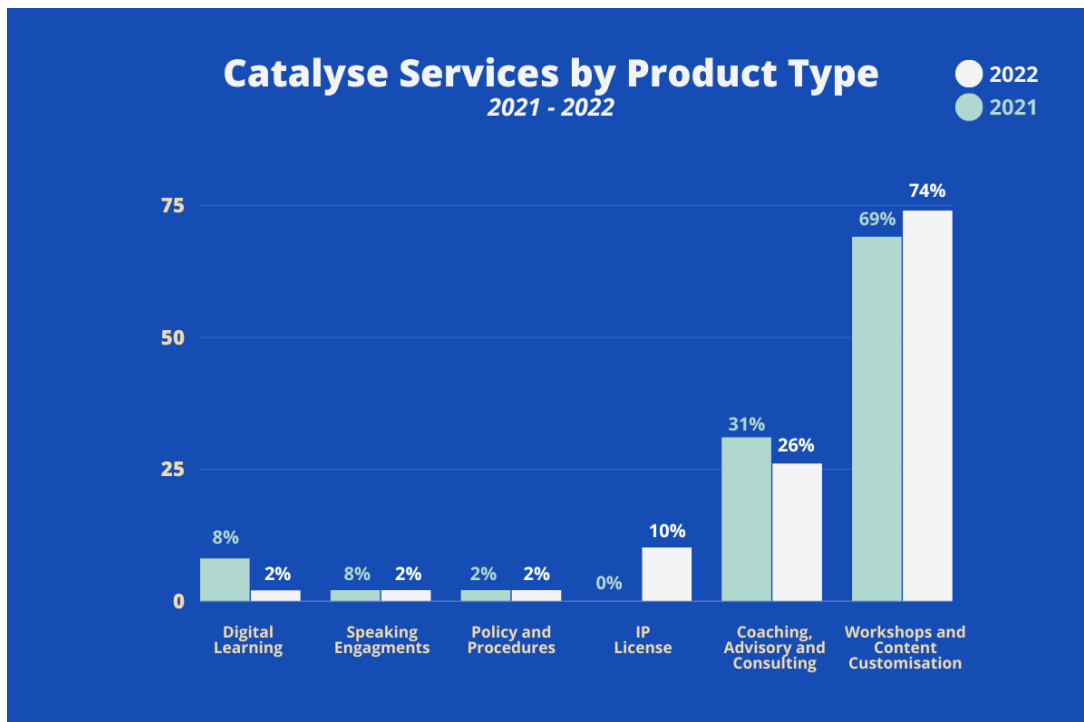
Despite a slowdown in business growth, our team was able to secure new contracts worth over \$1 million and generate a profit of more than \$160,000 in 2022. Our profit margin remained healthy at almost 20%, even with the added expense of expanding our team to build a sustainable business model.



## 1. Our Activities

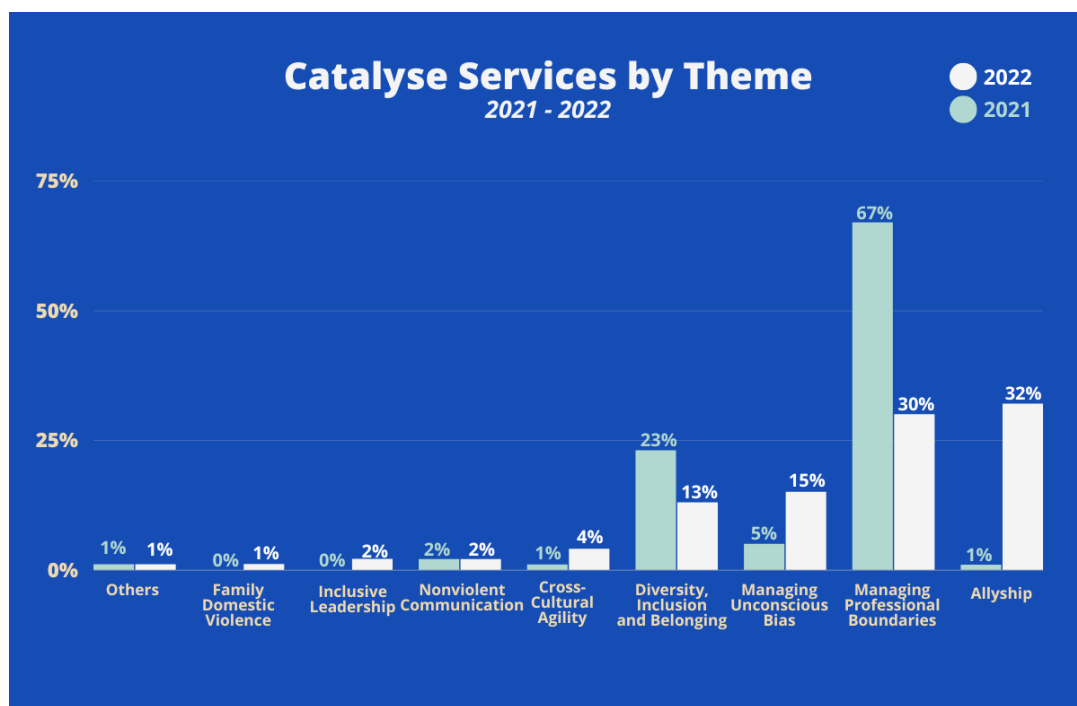
As the world gradually resumed “business as usual”, Catalyse saw a substantial increase in organisations requesting in-person workshops. Our facilitators adapted workshops to different modes as required. In 2022, we reached a total of 2,885 workshop participants.

2022 was also a year of further growth in our product offerings. Existing products were refurbished. Every workshop was refreshed and updated to be more relevant, engaging and applicable for the participants.



## 2. Our Products

In 2022, we introduced four new products: “Allyship”, “Male Allyship”, “Inclusive Leadership” and “Communicating and Negotiating with Confidence”. We also introduced a one-to-one “Anti-Harassment, Diversity and Inclusion” coaching and counselling programme. A new e-module was developed to explore how gender bias can be an obstacle to an inclusive and caring workplace. In addition, we secured and commenced a consultancy for Diversity & Inclusion benchmarking.





Special mention should be made of the Male Allyship programme we launched in 2022, in partnership with Dr Michael Kaufman, a renowned expert in this field. This programme was the first of its kind in the region, and created for a client in the financial services sector. It took a full year to develop and execute, involving detailed survey questionnaires, multiple focus group discussions, analysis, development and execution of several workshops. Determined to extend the programme's reach, we held Train-the-Trainer sessions for leaders in the institution so that they could themselves conduct additional workshops across the organisation and thereby spread the importance of male allyship for gender equality. Notably, the programme was co-facilitated by a male and female team.



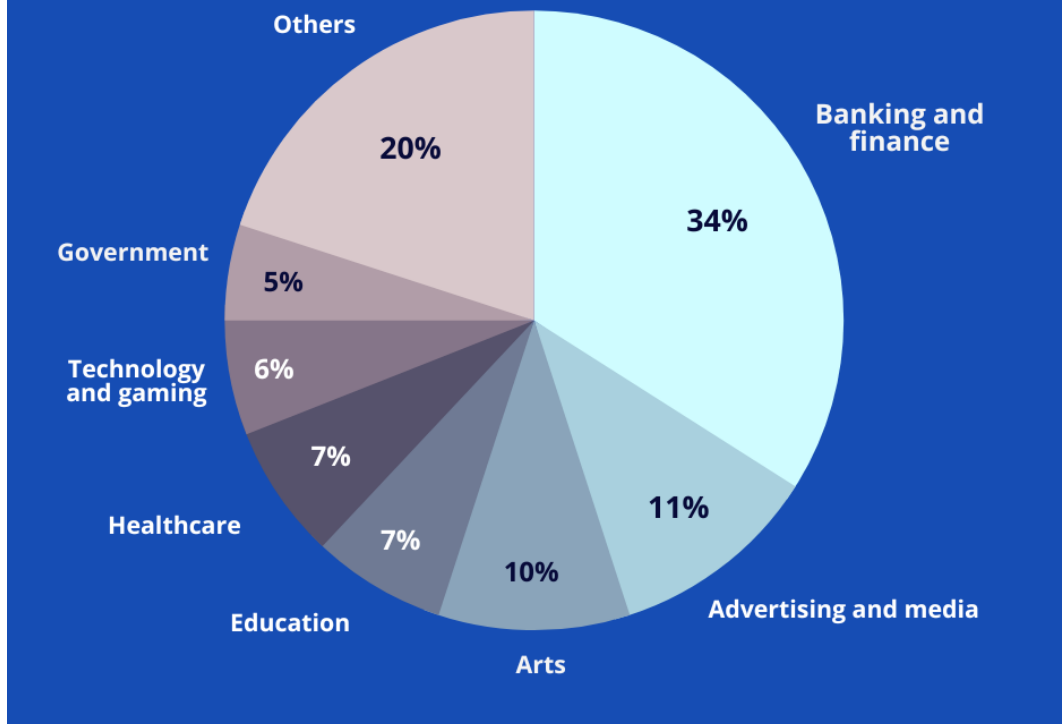
A Train-the-Trainer Male Allyship workshop by Catalyse for a global financial firm

### 3. Our Clients

In total, we had an impressive list of 50 clients in 2022, and 51% of our engagements were with repeat clients. We enjoyed a 99% satisfaction rating from participants.

The distribution of clients by industry was varied. Catalyse continued to win projects in the education, real estate, technology and arts sectors, but also expanded with some major engagements in the financial, media, hospitality, medical, shipping and logistics sectors.

## Catalyse Services by Industry, 2022



## 4. Testimonials

*"It has been an exciting and rewarding journey so far with #IAmAMaleAlly. (It has) inspired many allies... and now we have a great bunch of passionate and committed male leaders all set to evangelise and inspire more, which we believe will be a game changer."*

- Client from a global financial and banking organisation

*"We were bringing a diverse group of people into one room, dealing with the sensitivity of diversity plus inclusion and addressing the differences between members as equals, regardless of level, role or position. We would not have done this without the Catalyse team! They navigated the conversation by intentionally soliciting input from each of us, and seeking out and reinforcing unique or different perspectives, which led to great results—and all this within the intense, fun-filled, vulnerable and true-to-life three-hour session. Thank you Catalyse from all of us!"*

- Client from a global advertising and marketing company

*"Very engaging and interesting session. It broadened my view and perspective. I feel able to see something that I may have missed out previously, to think differently, not to take things for granted."*

- Client from a Singaporean healthcare provider

*"We engaged Catalyse to run a 'Managing Professional Boundaries' workshop for our team, and it was extremely helpful. Catalyse was able to discuss many nuances of inappropriate workplace behaviour in a way that drew the team together, strengthening them. It was quite impressive and my team still talks about the workshop to this day."*

- Client from an international design consultancy



## Fundraising

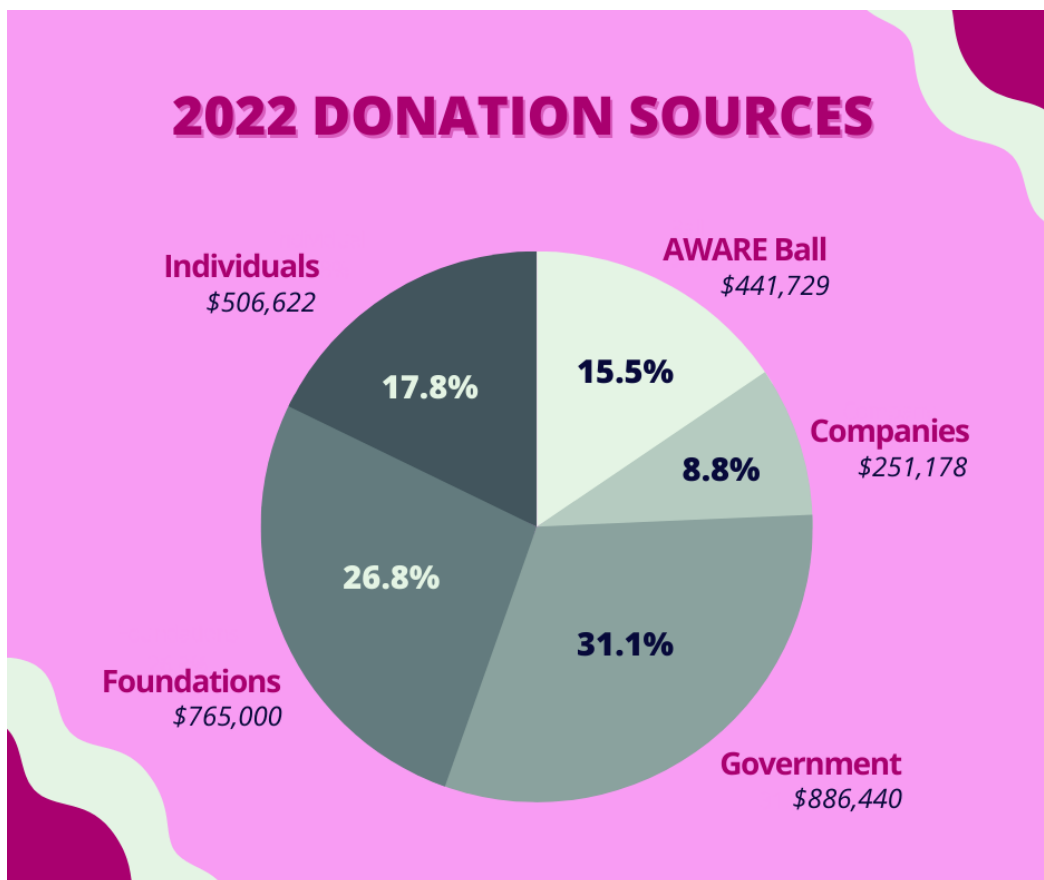
Thanks to the generous support of AWARE's community of donors, we raised a total of \$2.85 million in 2022, representing a 39% increase from the previous year. AWARE supporters responded enthusiastically to our two major fundraising initiatives for the year: the online Helpline Fund campaign and our fundraising Ball Pulau Utopia.

AWARE also received its first multi-year major legacy gift from the Diana Koh Foundation through our collaboration with the Community Foundation of Singapore. We are grateful for the warm and encouraging support of DK Foundation, which we hope will inspire other donors to make a legacy gift to support women's rights and equality.

*"AWARE is not only providing direct services to women in need of help in multiple areas, but—particularly impressively—they carry out advocacy on critical social issues to bring about a more caring and just Singapore society."*

- DK Foundation

AWARE's fundraising team is happy to report that its efforts to grow and diversify fundraising sources has paid off, as seen in this diagram.



## 1. Helpline Fund



We launched the [Helpline Fund](#) campaign in August 2022 to raise funds for AWARE's flagship Women's Helpline service, which has been running for over 30 years. Operating the Women's Helpline requires significant behind-the-scenes work, including months of intensive volunteer training, numerous staff to manage operations smoothly and infrastructure to keep multiple lines open throughout the day, even during a pandemic.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors, we were able to exceed our fundraising goal of \$250,000. We will receive an additional \$250,000 in matching funds from the Tote Board, bringing our total to an impressive \$580,000.

A big thank you to the team at [Design Bridge](#) for working with us to conceptualise the key messaging and artwork for the campaign. The success of the campaign would not have been possible without the dedication and patience of Design Bridge.

*"AWARE is one of the most well-known non-profit organisations in Singapore. And after speaking to the women working there, we now understand why. It was our pleasure to partner with the hands-on Development, Communications and leadership teams to co-create impactful campaign content for the Women's Helpline. We believe in the power of designing for good and hope that our collective message can protect this invaluable local resource."*

- Kelly Togashi, Communications Strategy Director at Design Bridge

For the campaign video, we interviewed callers about their struggles and fears, and how a call to the Helpline made a difference to their lives. One of our callers said, about their Helpline experience, “Just being a safe space for women to be listened to, I think, was a lifeline for me. And I really want this experience that I've had for as many people out there who need it”.

## 2. Pulau Utopia Ball



After three long years without an in-person ball, our 10th annual fundraising ball returned to the Shangri-La Island Ballroom on 12 November 2022. A total of 600 guests came together that night to create Pulau Utopia, an island paradise of gender equality and social justice. [Pulau Utopia raised a record \\$723,000.](#)

Part of these funds will support S.P.A.C.E (Support, Partner, and Act through Community Engagement), a new AWARE initiative that seeks to empower the community to build a more gender-equal future and to nurture the next generation of feminist leaders. The highlight of the night was the powerful stories shared by five "S.P.A.C.E. cadets", Hana Alhadad, Shaun Loh, Nisha Rai, Han Yi and Michelle Low, all of whom have faced gender inequality and are driven to make a difference.

The Ball would not have been possible without the generous support of AWARE's corporate sponsors KOP Properties Limited and Kah Motor, official partners Ppurpose, Senses AVL, Cornerstone Wines, World Scientific and Kanyeka, and all our wonderful in-kind sponsors and supporters.

[View more Ball photos here.](#) Photographs by Wesley Loh (Memphis West Pictures) and Kathleen Cheong.





### 3. Corporate and Community Partnerships

#### Corporate Donors

AWARE engaged corporate donors across March by lending our subject matter expertise to nine events organised by 14 companies—including Microsoft, PayPal, UPS and Industrial Light & Magic. Through our corporate presentation “The Future of Work is Gender Equal”, we reached more than 950 attendees across these events.



In addition, we are thankful for our corporate donors who organised their own fundraising events in partnership with AWARE and galvanised their employees to donate. Here are some of these corporate fundraisers:


<b>IWD Waterless Car Wash Fundraiser</b>	<p>Partnering with women-focused networks to celebrate International Women's Day 2022, passionate women and men across UPS, Agilent, 3M and Micron organised a waterless car wash on 11 March 2022 to raise funds for AWARE. Collectively, a total of S\$9,785 was raised for AWARE's CARE services.</p>	
<b>BEDANDBA SICS.SG</b>	<p>Through their CSR efforts, BEDANDBASICS.SG donated new furniture for the refurbishment of AWARE's counselling rooms and donated a percentage of their March proceeds to our #BreakTheBias Fund.</p>	
<p><i>“To move our world forward, we must move our culture forward. At UPS, diversity and inclusion is a cornerstone of our business— from ensuring supplier diversity and supporting minority-owned businesses to fostering a workplace where everyone is comfortable bringing their authentic selves. We’re grateful to AWARE for the opportunity to work together in raising awareness of the gender-based challenges women continue to face.”</i></p> <p>- Angela Wu, APAC Community Relations Director, The UPS Foundation</p>		

## Peer-to-peer Fundraising

Peer-to-peer fundraising (P2P) has been a rewarding way for AWARE supporters to encourage their friends, family and colleagues to donate to our cause while also celebrating personal milestones and interests.

We are grateful to our wonderful P2P fundraisers who invested their time and efforts into organising these initiatives. Some of our most successful P2P fundraisers in 2022 are as follows:

<b>Yoga for a Change</b>	<p>“As a strong supporter of underprivileged and vulnerable women and children in Singapore, we chose AWARE as our charity of choice from the months of October to December. In just three months, we raised <b>\$8,350</b>, through our not-for-profit yoga classes and programmes, for AWARE's Helpline. AWARE has been close to our heart since 2017 and is an organisation that we feel confident will put the funds to good use.”</p>	
<b>Pasar Glamour</b>	<p>Janice Koh, Pam Oei and Petrina Kow started a pre-loved clothing sale in 2017 to raise funds for vulnerable women, children and the arts. Pasar Glamour has since become an annual event. Pasar Glamour donated an incredible <b>\$105,000</b> to AWARE, HOME and Limitless in 2022 from their sale held the previous year. “We are proud to give our wholehearted support to AWARE, a vital organisation that champions the rights of women in Singapore, especially those who are deemed ‘invisible’ or living on the margins.”</p>	

<b>Postcards from Afar, by Han &amp; Kane</b>	<p>“We wanted to support AWARE’s work in any way that we could, even while we were overseas. We sent out 73 postcards—written by strangers we met during our travels—to donors of AWARE, and self-published a zine compiling these postcards. In total, we sold almost 300 copies of the zine and raised <b>\$2,848</b>. We hope this shows that anyone can start their own fundraising campaign to champion women’s rights and gender equality.”</p>	<p>With Love, Postcards From Afar</p> 
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## Special Thanks

We want to say a special thank you to all who supported us during this important year, with additional gratitude to our corporate partners and donors.



*“Women have been the cornerstone of Tolaram since our business began 75 years ago. We are honoured to continue supporting AWARE so that together, we can create a more inclusive society for all.”*

- **Haresh Aswani**, Managing Director Africa, Tolaram

# Tolaram

\$50,000 and above	\$10,000-\$49,999	\$5,000 - \$9,999
Diana Koh Foundation  The Community Foundation of Singapore – Sayang Sayang Fund  Tote Board	BHP  Claire Chiang  Haresh Aswani  Hong Leong Foundation	Ang Fung Fung  Ashish Shastry  Coleads Business Consultants Pte Ltd

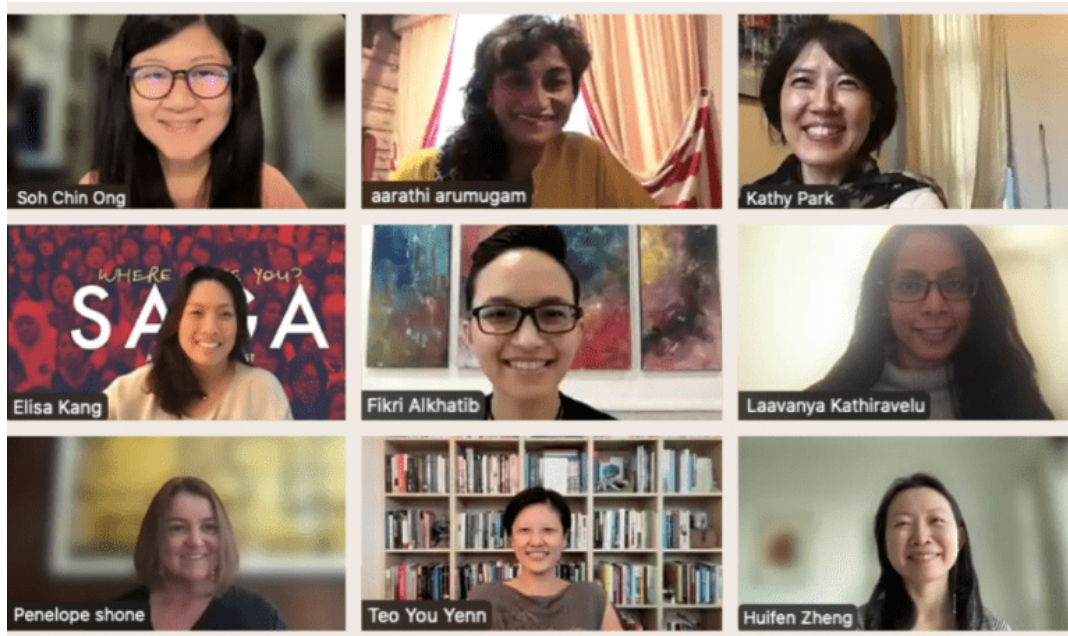
Uses Pte Ltd	In memory of Hilda Coldrey	Douglas and Christy Lee-O'Loughlin
	In memory Of Lee Eng Su	Dr. Wenjia Fang
	KOP Group of Companies	Glen Goei
	Lian Tsui Yee	Harris Zaidi
	Marquard & Bahls AG	Harpreet Singh Nehal
	Otis International Asia Pacific Pte Ltd	Joanne Flinn
	Quilt AI Pte Ltd	Joanne Theseira and Lynette Ong
	R3 Asia Pacific	Nicky Kim and William Pang
	Revival Vintage Jewels & Objects	Ong Soh Chin
	Shyn Yee Ho-Strangas	Sharon Siah
	Sriram Narayanan	Teo You Yenn
	St Patrick's Society Singapore	Tay Ee Ching
	Tan Chin Tuan Foundation	Wynthia Goh
	Tan Hui Yee	Yoga For A Change
	Tolaram	
	U.S. Embassy Singapore	

# Constituency

## 1. AWARE Membership

As of 31 December 2022, AWARE has a strong base of 660 members. Out of these, 133 signed up as new members in 2022.

## 2. Annual General Meeting



AWARE held our 37th Annual General Meeting virtually on 23 April 2022. We were thrilled to be joined by 87 AWARE members over Zoom, marking the third time that AWARE has held a virtual AGM. Ong Soh Chin was elected as the new AWARE President, succeeding Margaret Thomas, who had served as President from 2018 to 2022. Ms Ong ran unopposed for the position and was enthusiastically welcomed by Ms Thomas, who commended her “extraordinary energy, level-headed judgement and abiding passion for gender issues”.

The other elected Board members include Elisa Kang, Fikri Alkhatib, Kathy Park, Laavanya Kathiravelu, Penelope Shone, Teo You Yenn, Zheng Huifen, Aarathi Arumugam (with Margie Thomas staying on as Immediate Past President). Three members—Fikri Alkhatib, Kathy Park and Laavanya Kathiravelu—were newcomers to the AWARE Board. At 29, Fikri Alkhatib was also AWARE’s youngest-ever Board member since the organisation instituted a Board in 2010. After the AGM, long-time AWARE volunteer Ho Shyn Yee was co-opted to the Board on 10 May 2022.



The new AWARE Board features not just ethnic diversity, but age diversity, with members in their 20s and their 70s, and a range of professional experience, with individuals from academia, civil service, law and different corporate environments.

### 3. Volunteer Engagement

AWARE received 220 volunteer applications in 2022 and engaged 168 volunteers, resulting in a 76% volunteer utilisation rate. In total, volunteers gave AWARE an estimated 10,000 hours of their service and skills.

Bringing back large-scale events, like Break Free! and Pulau Utopia, in addition to small-scale social events gave us opportunities to engage our volunteer base and build relationships for volunteer growth at AWARE.

We launched a new initiative, the Feminist Club, a bi-monthly series of events exclusive to AWARE's constituents that aimed to build a stronger sense of community. Although still in its nascent stages, the Feminist Club was designed to be run by volunteers, for volunteers (and members and donors). Four Club meetings took place over 2022, with a total of 112 attendees.

We also built volunteering partnerships with student groups such as Project Parachute, a student volunteer initiative under the NUS Pro Bono Group, who are currently assisting with our Sexual Assault First Responder Training as well as developing collateral material for our Sexual Assault Care Centre.

Our volunteers inspire us with their energy and passion and we are incredibly grateful for their time, love and effort.

*"I have been with AWARE for 20 years now! I started volunteering with a desire to give back to my community and help others, because I believe we make a life by what we give.*

*Now, as a veteran volunteer, I realise that learning is something that never stops. My time at AWARE has provided me with experiences and knowledge that have deeply enriched my personal growth. Thank you for the love, AWARE!"*

- Rangini Devi Kangesan, AWARE volunteer



### 4. Break Free!

On 19 March, we held a one-day mini-festival at The Projector X to celebrate International Women's Day under the theme "Break Free!". The festival consisted of three events aimed

at promoting gender equality and empowering women. First up was a "Feminism For All" workshop, which provided attendees with a crash course in feminist history and theory. The workshop was designed to educate and inform attendees about the fundamental principles of feminism and how it relates to their daily lives. This was followed by a Trivia Night, where attendees put their knowledge of gender equality to the test. The night concluded with a charity screening of the Singaporean film *Some Women* and a conversation with the film's director, Quen Wong, along with documentary subjects. The film provided an intimate look at the lives of several transgender women in Singapore and highlighted the importance of community and support. Our IWD celebration was a great success, with positive feedback and new sign-ups for AWARE's Feminist Club.



Photographs by Yee Hui [@okaypotato](https://www.instagram.com/okaypotato)

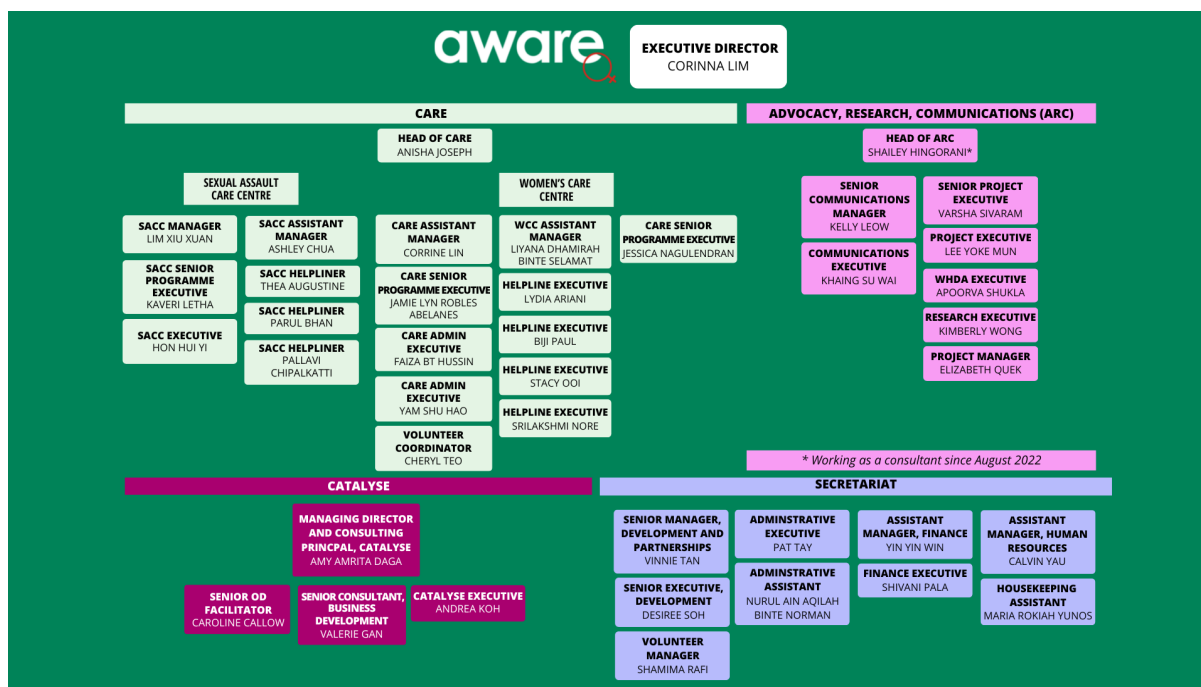
## Management and Staff





### 1. Staff Strength



In 2022, AWARE maintained capacity to meet sustained demand for its services. Staff strength was 32.4 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) as of 31 December 2022, distributed as follows:





## 2. Senior Management

<p><b>Corinna Lim,</b> <b>Executive Director</b> <b>(appointed Mar 2010)</b></p>	<p>Corinna Lim is AWARE's first Executive Director. She has championed the rights of women for close to 30 years, advocating on issues such as gender-equal workplaces, gender violence and greater support for single parents, older women and family caregivers. Prior to joining AWARE, Corinna practised law; she also founded and served as the CEO of an IT company.</p>	
<p><b>Anisha Joseph,</b> <b>Head of CARE Services</b> <b>(appointed Feb 2017)</b></p>	<p>A social worker by qualification, Anisha Joseph studied Criminology and Justice at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India and worked with the NGO Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative on prison reform. Anisha also studied "Mental Disability Law in practice" at Central European University and worked with prisoners with mental illness for her master's thesis. She has a B.Sc (Hons) Physics, and worked in Human Resources for corporations and NGOs before joining the social sector full time.</p>	

<p><b>Shailey Hingorani,</b> <b>Head of Advocacy,</b> <b>Research and</b> <b>Communications</b> <b>(appointed Jan</b> <b>2018)</b></p>	<p>Shailey Hingorani is AWARE's Head of Advocacy, Research and Communications. Previously, she worked on women's rights and child rights with the Open Society Foundations, Harvard's FXB Center for Health and Human Rights, the Indian Mission to the United Nations, Save the Children and the Bloomberg Initiative. Shailey received a Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University. She also holds M.A. and M.Phil. degrees in political science and a B.A. in Journalism. Since August 2022, Shailey has worked for AWARE as a consultant.</p>	
<p><b>Amy Amrita Daga,</b> <b>Managing Director</b> <b>and Consulting</b> <b>Principal, Catalyse</b> <b>(appointed Sept</b> <b>2021)</b></p>	<p>Amy Daga has consulted and conducted training programmes in Diversity, Inclusion &amp; Belonging, Cross-Cultural Competency, Global Leadership and Culture of Service at organisations across the globe. A gold medalist in Hotel Management for her undergraduate studies, Amy pursued her Masters in Management at the University of Essex, UK. She holds various Trainer Certifications and is a counsellor and coach qualified by the Association for Talent Development (USA). Before joining Catalyse, she headed two national award-winning programmes presented by the National Integration Council: Diversity.Inclusion.You. and Global Community Day.</p>	

# **Board**

## **1. Role of the Board**

AWARE's Board is committed to maintaining high standards of corporate governance and accountability to its stakeholders. Our stakeholders include the regulators, the clients we serve, our supporters (donors, members and volunteers), our partners, staff and the community at large.

The Board decides on the major strategic directions of AWARE, allocates financial resources, provides legal and financial oversight, reviews the performance of management, and ensures that the organisation serves its mission in accordance with its values. The Board meets every month to carry out its functions.

No Board members are remunerated for their Board services.

Read more [2022 Board Information here](#).




## **2. Our Board**

### **President: Ong Soh Chin**

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 currently pursuing a part-time postgraduate diploma in Counselling Psychology.





<p><b>1st Vice-President: Penelope Shone</b></p> <p>Penelope Shone was born in New Zealand. She has been a resident of Singapore since 1985, and an AWARE member for 20 years. Her career has unfolded in both the public and private sectors. Most recently, she led international public affairs and communications for General Electric across 150 countries. Prior to that, she 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 NGOs.</p>	
<p><b>2nd Vice-President: Elisa Kang</b></p> <p>Elisa Kang spent 13 years in wealth management advising clients on asset allocation and impact investments, before pursuing a Master's in Counselling at Monash University in 2014. From 2016-18, Elisa worked as a part-time counsellor at Singapore Management University. She began her involvement in gender justice in 2007, volunteering in a microfinance consultancy in India and an NGO fighting violence against women and trafficking in Nepal. Elisa has been involved with AWARE since 2016: as a trainer with Catalyse, a counsellor, a volunteer Helpliner and a project manager for the Women's Helpline expansion.</p>	
<p><b>Treasurer: Aarathi Arumugam</b></p> <p>Aarathi Arumugam is an entrepreneur whose career trajectory has taken her along different paths, from corporations to volunteer organisations to start-ups. 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. In 2019, she also conceptualised and executed a series of events called Kitchen Movements, to raise awareness and funds for a women's charity in Singapore. Aarathi also currently serves as Daughters Of Tomorrow's Financial Controller.</p>	

**Assistant Treasurer: Kathy Park**

Kathy Park is President at CooperVision, spearheading Asia-Pacific business for the optical company. She has worked for various companies, such as Essilor and Johnson & Johnson, with a mission of improving people's lives by improving their vision. She has played an active role in organising and advocating for women leadership at the workplace. With her experience leading a global company and serving on corporate boards, she is excited to be part of bigger changes to come in the landscape of gender equality.




**Secretary: Teo You Yenn**

Teo You Yenn has been a member and volunteer at AWARE since 2004. She is a sociologist whose research and teaching focus on poverty and inequality, governance and state-society dynamics, gender and class. She is the author of *Neoliberal Morality in Singapore: How family policies make state and society* (Routledge, 2011) and *This Is What Inequality Looks Like* (Ethos Books, 2018). She is one of the founding editors of *AcademiaSG*, a platform that promotes scholarship on Singapore and publicly engaged research.

**Board Member: Fikri Alkhatib**

Fikri Alkhatib has been an AWARE member since 2012 and has volunteered on a number of advocacy and research initiatives, including the We Can! campaign to end violence against women and the Women's Action website for SG50. She has a Masters in Sociology from Columbia University and is a former Public Service Commission scholar. Fikri recently left the civil service for a career in the non-profit sector.



<p><b>Board Member: Ho Shyn Yee</b></p> <p>Ho Shyn Yee has been a volunteer and fundraiser for AWARE since 2015, including active participation in the Annual Fundraising Ball Committee and Fundraising Board Sub-Committee. With more than 20 years of experience in the technology, travel/hospitality and advisory sectors, Shyn Yee lends her commercial acumen, agile management approaches and strategic thinking capabilities to AWARE. A strong advocate for gender equality, she has led corporate women's chapters, championing gender parity in the workplace and in leadership. Shyn Yee is also a fellow with the National Volunteer and Philanthropy Center and Alumni Advisory Member at her alma mater Singapore Management University.</p>	
<p><b>Board Member: Laavanya Kathiravelu</b></p> <p>Laavanya Kathiravelu is Associate Professor in the School of Social Sciences at Nanyang Technological University. Her research sits at the intersections of international migration, race and ethnic studies and contemporary urban diversity, particularly in Asia and the Persian Gulf. Her first book was <i>Migrant Dubai</i> (2016), which interrogated the experiences of low-wage migrant workers in the emirate of Dubai. She has also published widely on issues of race, inequality and migration in Singapore. Prior to joining NTU, she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity. She was also a Fung Fellow at Princeton University between 2015-16. Laavanya is a board member of migrant welfare organisation HOME. In 2022, she is a Fulbright Scholar based at the City University of New York.</p>	
<p><b>Board Member: Zheng Huifen</b></p> <p>Zheng Huifen has been an AWARE member since 2009 and is now a life member. She has volunteered with AWARE in various capacities, such as the legal clinic and the Fundraising Board Committee. Huifen first served on the AWARE Board as Assistant Treasurer during the 2020 - 2022 term. Apart from AWARE, Huifen was a committee member of the Humanist Society (Singapore) between 2012 and 2017. At HSS, she helped to create a safe space for people identifying as atheist, agnostic, freethinking or secular. By day Huifen is a corporate lawyer with a technology and payments focus.</p>	



#### Immediate Past President: Margaret Thomas

Margaret Thomas held senior editing positions at *The Business Times*, *The Singapore Monitor* and *TODAY*, and was in the founding team of *AsiaOne*, over her nearly three decades in the media. In 1984/85, Margaret was a founder member of AWARE. Over the last three decades, she has served on many of its committees, and has been a member of its board since 2009. In 2003 she was a founder member of Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2).



### 3. Board Committees

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 help to ensure that all activities are aligned with AWARE's vision, mission, strategies and goals.

There are eight Board Committees. Four oversee AWARE's public-facing activities: Advocacy & Research, CARE, Catalyse and Fundraising. The other four oversee matters related to AWARE's organisational strength: Audit, HR, Board Recruitment, Leadership & Governance.

<b>Advocacy &amp; Research</b> Chair: Zheng Huifen  Members: Fikri Alkhatib Teo You Yenn	<b>Audit</b> Chair: Zeng Lihui  Members: Aarathi Arumugam Soh Eng Kiau Ying Wu	<b>Board Recruitment</b> Chair: Jasmine Ng  Members: Fikri Alkhatib	<b>CARE</b> Chair: Elisa Kang  Members: Grace Cheong Ruth Chua Cindy Ng
<b>Catalyse</b> Chair: Kathy Park  Members: Laavanya Kathiravelu	<b>Fundraising</b> Chair: Ho Shyn Yee  Members: Esther Chang Zheng Huifen	<b>Human Resources</b> Chair: Jean Fung  Members: Jean Low Penelope Shone Jacqueline Wong Lillian Wong	<b>Leadership &amp; Governance</b> Chair: Penelope Shone  Members: Elisa Kang Winifred Loh Ong Soh Chin Margaret Thomas

# **Finance, Governance and Policies**

AWARE has been accorded IPC (Institution of a Public Character) status from 01/09/2022 to 31/08/2024. AWARE has a constitution as its governing instrument.

## **1. Financial Report**

AWARE ended 2022 with a surplus of \$592,019 (2021: \$337,083). It had an income of \$4,279,312 (2021: \$3,456,245) and expenses of \$3,687,293 (2021: \$3,119,162).

AWARE's total funds at the end of 2022 were \$7,177,124 (2021: \$6,585,105).

The charity has disclosed its restricted funds in its Financial Statements. See the [2022 Audited Financial Statements](#) for full information.

## **2. Statutory Information and Governance Compliance**

AWARE consistently works towards improving its transparency, governance, HR, IT and risk-management practices. To this end, we carried out the following initiatives:

1. Conducted third-party audit of AWARE's data protection and procurement and payment processes
2. Updated media engagement SOP for AWARE staff and volunteers
3. Updated AWARE social media policy
4. Developed PR crisis plan
5. Developed AWARE's "North Star"

AWARE is compliant with the Code of Governance (2017). Refer to our [Statutory Information](#) and [Governance Evaluation Checklist](#).

## **3. Policies**

### **i) Financial policies**

AWARE's financial policies require competitive quotations for fair pricing. Annual budgets are approved by the board before adoption. Payments are regulated by a payment process and in accordance with the mandate for payment.

### **ii) 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.

All board members and staff undertake to declare any situation of conflict that may arise. They abstain from decision-making in such instances, so as to allow a fair and transparent decision-making process. They are also required to make a negative affirmation annually.

### **iii) 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 on 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 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 cashflow is expected to breach the threshold.

### **iv) Loans**

AWARE does not:

1. grant any loans, donations, grants or financial assistance;
2. receive any loans for any purpose or tenure;

without the prior written approval of the board.

### **v) Other policies**

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

1. Board Roles Policy and Code of Conduct for Board Members
2. Employees' Handbook
3. Consultants Code of Conduct
4. Financial Policy and Procedures
5. Social Media Guide
6. Whistleblowing Policy
7. Data Protection Policy
8. Anti Harassment and Anti Discrimination Policy and Procedures