



Gender Equality for Generations

Annual Report 2019



The World Economic Forum's recent [Global Gender Gap Report](#) estimates that gender parity won't be obtained for almost a century. At AWARE, we refuse to wait that long. In 2019, we worked to ensure a better life for all generations of women: from the 90-year-old ageing at home to the 60-year-old caring for her; the 40-year-old juggling work and care to the 10-year-old learning about consent. Let's envision a world without gender-based barriers, and make it happen here and now.

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A Message from our President and Executive Director

Welcome to AWARE's Annual Report 2019.

In AWARE's mission to help bring about a more equal society, much of our work calls for persistence and patience. It can take years of steady effort to persuade policymakers to review and to change laws and policies. And it can take just as long to shape programmes that truly connect with the public, that meet social needs and that change lives.

2019 was in many ways a breakthrough year. We saw significant legal and policy changes that we had been calling for for a long time. We also made good progress on our key projects. For example, in May 2019, Parliament outlawed marital rape and decriminalised attempted suicide, changes which we had been campaigning for. And then, in September, the Government said that it would welcome applications for HDB flats from single parents. This was what our campaign #asinglelove was all about.

We also launched our Sexual Assault First Responder Training programme to the public for the first time. The very positive response delighted us. Close to 700 members of the public attended the 4.5-hour workshops and learned how to provide support for sexual assault survivors.

More encouraging news: We were able to grow our S.H.E. Project, which provides housing for single mothers and helps them find work. We started the project with one flat housing three families. By the end of 2019, we had four flats housing 10 families.

On the research front, we launched an important new report, "Make Care Count". This is an in-depth look at the situation of family caregivers, most of whom are women. This report supports our campaign to secure policy changes that will better address their needs.

Last year was also the 10th anniversary of the AWARE Saga—the surprise takeover of AWARE in March 2009 by a group of faith-based women. A few weeks later, in May, we regained control of our organisation at a tumultuous EGM. We celebrated the 10th anniversary of the AWARE Saga in May 2019 with an emotional party at the AWARE Centre.

We were spurred by the saga to professionalise our operations. And today, AWARE has an amazing team of researchers, advocates, counsellors, case workers, trainers and communicators. The staff work with many passionate members and volunteers, donors and organisational partners. With this growing community, we were able to achieve another breakthrough last year. We raised a record \$600,000 at our annual ball, which is the most money that we have ever raised in a single event.

AWARE is now 35 years old. There is much to be proud of and to celebrate. But there is still lots to do. Together, we will press on, breaking through the barriers for a more equal and just society.

- **Margaret Thomas** (President) and **Corinna Lim** (Executive Director)

ADVOCACY SUCCESSES



Legal and Policy Changes

Penal Code

In May 2019, Parliament passed the Criminal Law Reform Bill. The CLRB introduced groundbreaking reforms, including the removal of marital immunity for rape (after decades of campaigning and advocacy by AWARE and other groups) and the decriminalisation of suicide (which we had advocated since 2013, with a paper calling for reforms published in 2016).

AWARE had previously contributed to the public consultation on the amendments. Several of our recommendations—for example, making the definitions of rape and sexual assault more gender-neutral—were reflected in the Bill.

Protection from Harassment Act

The year also brought changes to the Protection from Harassment Act (POHA), which will extend to cover intimate partners (including same-sex partners) from January 2020. In our experience with sexual assault survivors, the process of filing for court orders under POHA was costly, tedious and discouraging. The proposed formation of a special POHA court—to exclusively hear POHA-related matters, both civil and criminal—would hopefully make applying and obtaining POHA orders more straightforward. We had also advocated for breaches to Protections Orders to be made arrestable, and were glad to see this change.

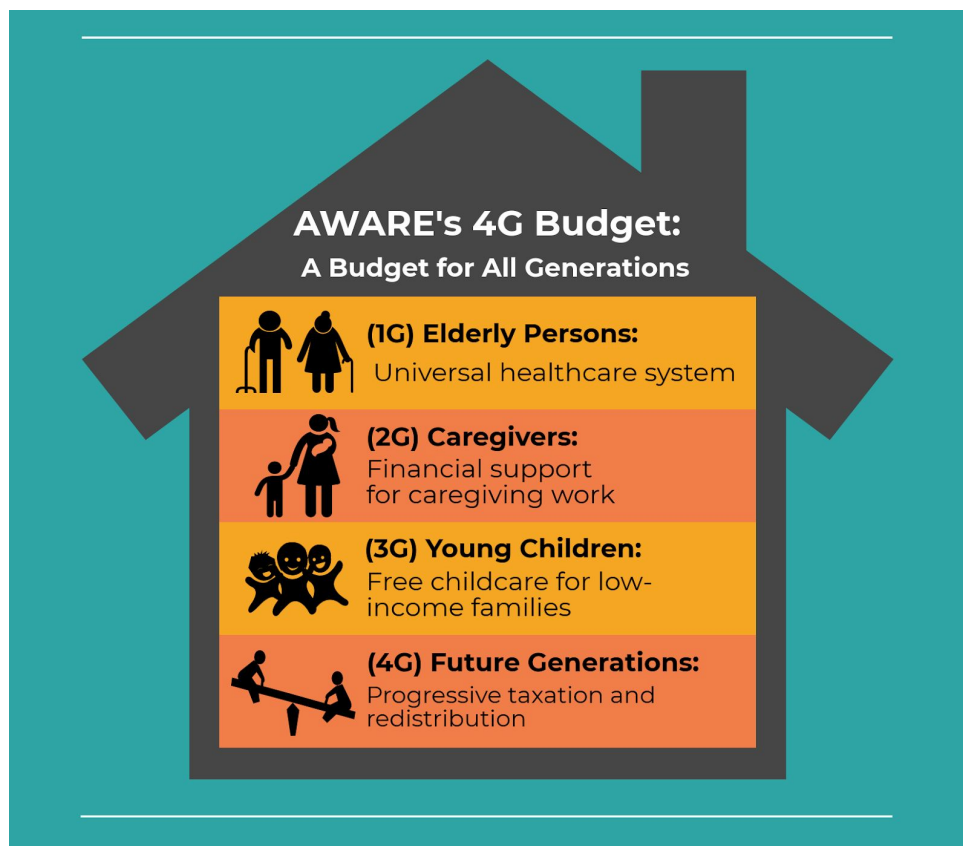
Rental housing

In September 2019, the Ministry of National Development announced that the Housing Board website would explicitly state that single unmarried parents can apply for purchase or rental of public housing and that HDB would also carry out a comprehensive review of its interactions with single parents seeking housing. This is yet another win in AWARE's advocacy for single parents, bringing us closer to inclusive housing policies.

Childcare

In 2019—the year after AWARE published research on low-income mothers' challenges with balancing work and care—childcare was made more affordable in Singapore. The maximum additional subsidy that lower-income families (with gross monthly income below \$3,000) can qualify for will be increased from \$400 to \$467. This is on top of the \$300 basic subsidy for which families, regardless of income, can qualify. We hope to see childcare becoming automatically free for lower-income families in the future.

Home Caregiving Grant



In previous submissions to the national Budget, AWARE had consistently advocated for the introduction of a caregiver allowance. As women in Singapore carry out vast and unequal amounts of unpaid care labour, a caregiver allowance would afford them both symbolic recognition and material compensation for out-of-pocket expenses, boosting their financial security. We were therefore excited about the recent introduction of the Home Caregiving

Grant, which gives care recipients the option of entitling the means-tested monthly payment to their caregiver.

Parliamentary work

AWARE's advocacy and research team continued to work closely with Members of Parliament (MPs) in 2019, such as Nominated Member of Parliament Anthea Ong, to advance our advocacy goals and raise pertinent gender angles at parliamentary debates. We continued to file Parliamentary Questions through MPs, which yielded important data points for our ongoing research projects, and also worked with MPs on parliamentary speeches. Meanwhile, we cheered MP Louis Ng on when, in a September adjournment motion, he spotlighted the housing challenges faced by single unwed parents and their children.

Research on Eldercare

“Make Care Count”



In September 2019, we launched our latest research report, “Make Care Count”. “Make Care Count” was the product of 22 qualitative interviews with family caregivers, and sharing sessions with 22 academics, healthcare professionals, caregiver support networks and home- and community-based care service providers. We also discussed our findings with

policy-makers from the Ministries of Manpower, Health and Social and Family Development, National Council of Social Service, the NTUC Women’s Committee and Agency for Integrated Care (who invited AWARE to share the findings with their long-term care team).

We ran the social media campaign #MakeCareCount, featuring the stories of four Singaporean caregivers of older persons. This campaign achieved approximately 58,000 impressions on Facebook, 17,000 on Instagram and 825,000 on Twitter.



Illustration by Joy Ho

Comments on #MakeCareCount:

Responses to #MakeCareCount

“ My dad... perceives caregiving as a duty to be done without fuss. He doesn't want to hear abt the costs or how difficult it is. **It's gd that there are now studies on eldercare.** At least our generation knows what it really entails.”

- @bimbo_observes, Twitter

Responses to #MakeCareCount

“ Caregiving is an issue that is only going to become more prevalent over the next decade. I wish I had sought more help & resources when caring for my grandma. **V happy to see @awarenews kick off this campaign!**”

- @ChyeTLatte, Twitter

Responses to #MakeCareCount

“ Singapore needs universal health care. Unacceptable for families to be burdened with the cost of healthcare like the US is... **Wish there was a fundamental change to the system.**”

- @DarthLauraLou, Twitter

To launch “Make Care Count”, we held a press conference with a panel including eldercare researcher Dr Rahul Malhotra from Duke-NUS, as well as caregiver Kris Foo. Following the conference, the report’s findings were widely covered by major news outlets.



AWARE's September 2019 press conference to launch the report "Make Care Count"

Photograph by Kasper Paraskakis Narayan

Finally, we organised a special public event in October 2019: **Make Care Count... in the National Budget**. At this event, 50 or so individuals learned more about our research and heard from a panel featuring NMP Anthea Ong, economist Dr Joanne Yoong, Kris Foo and former AWARE president Kanwaljit Soin. Issues raised by the audience and speakers included the recognition and remuneration of caregiving as a form of employment or civic duty, the diminished performance of caregiving employees who lack flexible work arrangements, and the economic loss suffered by employers due to caregiving-related turnover. Attendees then generated a grassroots eldercare "policy wishlist", which we incorporated into our 10th Budget Submission in January 2020.

About that submission, Dr Yoong said, "The strength of these recommendations lies in AWARE's commitment to combining careful research with a participatory process that strives to engage all stakeholders in this critical national conversation."

At the end of 2019, we embarked on our follow-up research project, on foreign domestic workers—sparked by the fact that half of the caregivers interviewed for "Make Care Count" employed a domestic worker to help with eldercare.

Community events

Throughout 2019, we organised several community engagement events on the subject of ageing and caregiving. One was **Engaging Ageing**, a discussion session for women worried about ageing. Another event focused on the transnational aspect of eldercare, with panelists from SMU, TWC2 and HOME. In collaboration with speakers from CNPLaw LLP, Lee & Lee,

Special Needs Trust Co. and the Institute of Financial Literacy, we also held two caregiver training sessions: on wills, and on the legal hurdles associated with eldercare.

JP Morgan and Daughters of Tomorrow collaboration

2019 saw the successful conclusion of our two-year project with JP Morgan and Daughters of Tomorrow, which started with the aim of placing low-income women into professional eldercare jobs.

Over the course of the project, AWARE and DOT identified several structural barriers that were preventing us from placing as many women as targeted. DOT also noticed that women were generally more drawn to jobs in childcare, as those afforded hours that better complemented their own childcare needs, and they could draw on their personal experiences as mothers. The project's placement aims were then adjusted to include childcare, while the overall focus shifted towards advocating directly to employers and the industry at large. In total, 35 women were trained and placed as healthcare assistants or patient care associates, while another 35 were placed and trained in the childcare sector.

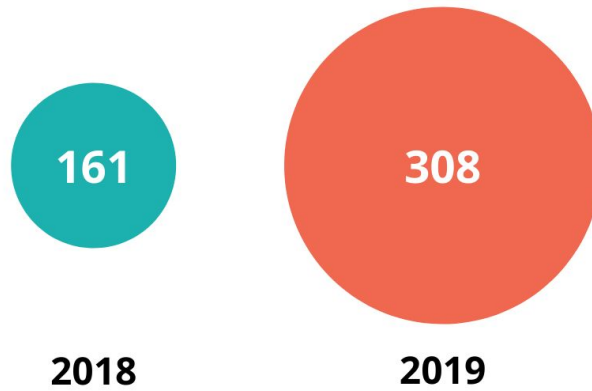
The key challenges facing both sectors, which became our key advocacy points, were: slow hiring rates (up to three months); low wages (around \$1,400/month); conflicts between shift hours and care responsibilities; as well as misconceptions about Long Term Visit Pass (LTVP) holder quotas and about wearing hijabs in healthcare. Consequently, our programme reduced hiring process to about two weeks for smaller eldercare operators; clarified misunderstandings about LTVP holders and headgear (resulting in modified hijabs being permitted at some organisations); and led some eldercare employers to adopt Core and Stable scheduling and flexible work arrangements.

Our biggest advocacy achievement was a July industry dialogue session that brought together more than 50 participants, including eldercare operators, social impact entrepreneurs, innovators and investors, community builders, AIC, MOM, MSF representatives and healthcare practitioners. After we brainstormed sustainable manpower solutions, a "care force" of eight individuals agreed to work together with DOT towards those solutions.

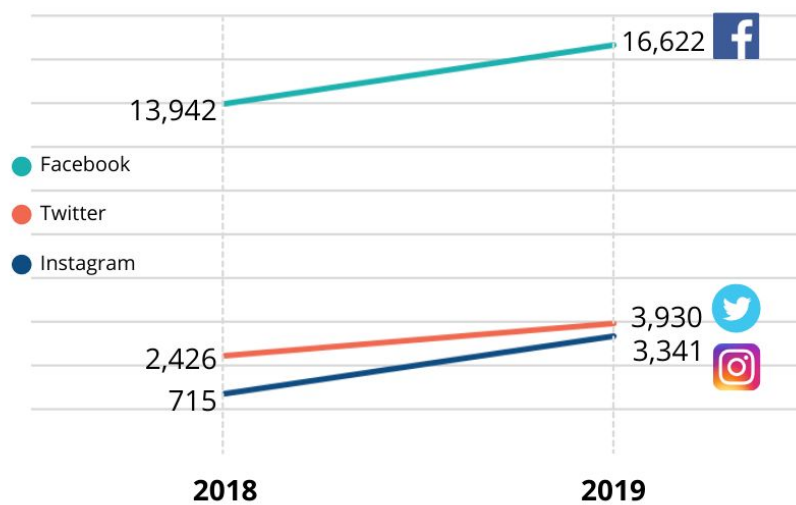
AWARE in the Media

AWARE received a lot of media coverage throughout 2019, almost doubling the number of media mentions from 2018. While most of this coverage came from mainstream local outlets (e.g. The Straits Times, Channel NewsAsia, TODAY and The New Paper), we were mentioned in some international outlets as well, including [The New York Times](#).

Media Mentions



Social Media Followers



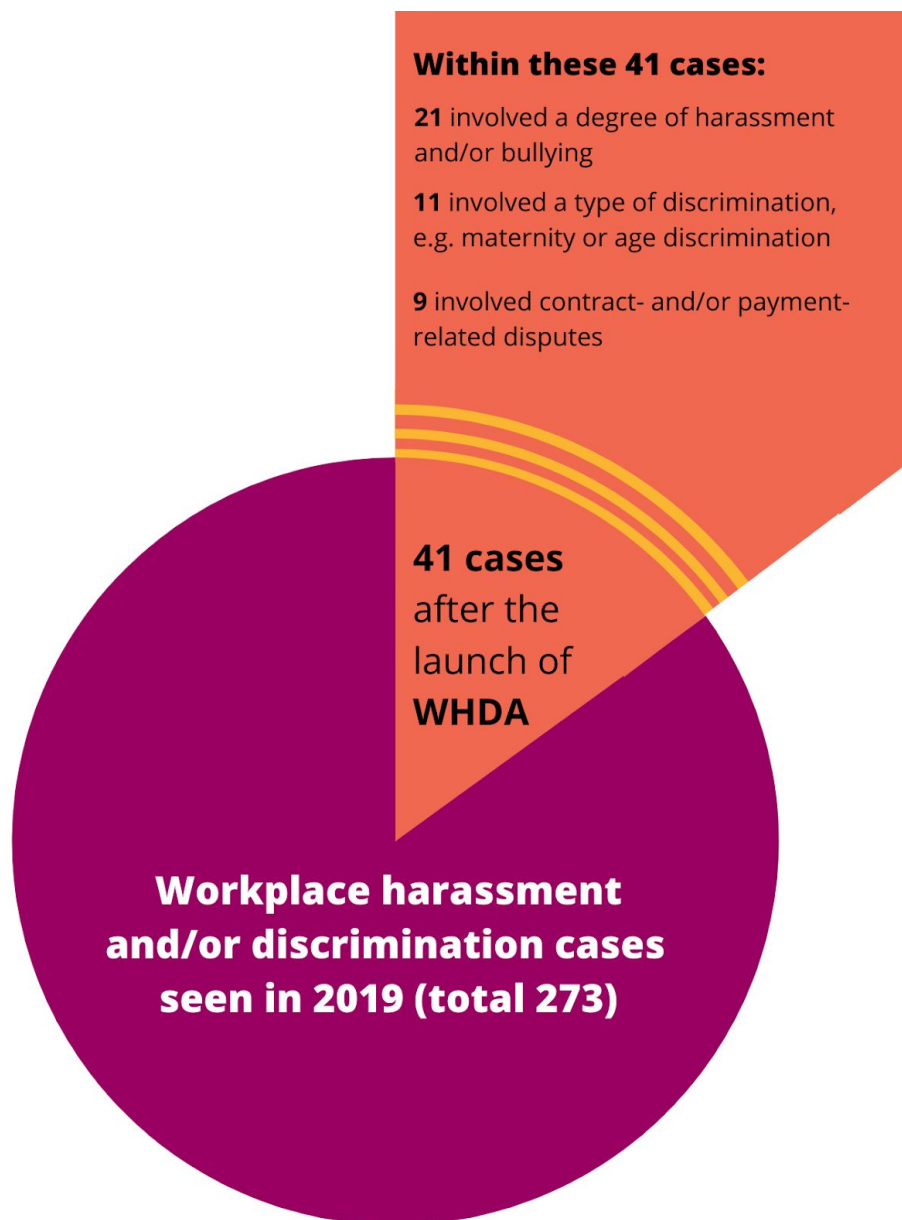
On social media, we grew our communities across our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms, more than quadrupling our followers on Instagram. Our posts received high levels of engagement across platforms, sparking important conversations about a diverse range of issues.

EXPANDED SERVICES AND TRAINING

Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory

AWARE launched the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory in September 2019. WHDA is the first service in Singapore to provide bespoke, confidential emotional support and practical advice to workers (union and non-union) facing discriminatory or harassing behaviours. Solutions explored by our advisor may include meeting with a client's HR, engaging the Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices or filing a mediation request with the Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management.

In total, AWARE saw 273 cases of workplace harassment and discrimination in 2019. Of those, 41 came after the launch of WHDA (i.e. from 25 September to 31 December 2019).



In November 2019, we collaborated with students from LASALLE College of the Arts' Puttnam School of Film & Animation on a [video](#) commercial promoting WHDA.

"When I found myself facing pregnancy discrimination at my workplace, I went online and looked for help. All I could find were expensive lawyers and I didn't feel they would understand my case. When I came across AWARE's WHDA, it seemed too good to be true: a special place, almost tailor-made for my situation. I sent an email and an advisor immediately gave me a call. I felt so relieved to be able to explain my situation to her, and felt completely heard. For my appointment at AWARE, she prepared everything upfront and was knowledgeable about my rights in relation to my employment contract. She also assured me that she would be there for me along the way to fight for an outcome that would satisfy me. After that, she gave advice on how I should draft emails, and supported me via phone and email. It took two months for my dispute to be resolved with my employer. I was so relieved! I could not have done this without WHDA. Thank you for all your support."

WHDA client

"THE MANAGER SCREAMS VULGARITIES AT MY COWORKER DURING TEAM MEETINGS."

Just because you weren't the target of abuse doesn't mean you can't speak up about it.

Unsure of what to do when you face discrimination and/or harassment? Call AWARE's Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory at 6950 9191 (Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm) or email whda@aware.org.sg

"MY BOSS SAID, 'NICE DRESS. HOPE TO SEE IT IN MY DREAMS TONIGHT.'"

Sexual harassment comes in various forms, including verbal comments that make you feel uncomfortable.

Unsure of what to do when you face discrimination and/or harassment? Call AWARE's Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory at 6950 9191 (Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm) or email whda@aware.org.sg

"SHE SAID, 'YOU'RE TOO UGLY TO REPRESENT US AT THAT CONFERENCE.'"

Insulting language, put-downs and belittling words and actions may constitute workplace bullying.

Unsure of what to do when you face discrimination and/or harassment? Call AWARE's Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory at 6950 9191 (Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm) or email whda@aware.org.sg

Birds & Bees



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. AWARE's goal in offering Birds & Bees is for parents to realise the importance of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), and impart knowledge and skills to their children beyond the limitations of Singapore's formal education system. We hope that these conversations, when begun early, become an "upstream" way to prevent sexual violence in the long run.

Content for Birds & Bees was developed in Q4 of 2018, with pilots held in November and December that year. In 2019, four official sessions were held. All in all, a total of 80 participants (mostly parents, but also aunts, older siblings, teachers, students and others) have attended Birds & Bees.



The average rating from 62 surveyed participants (excluding the first pilot) was close to "excellent". They commended the facilitators for creating a safe space for difficult topics, with

engaging, balanced and informative content. Three in four surveyed stated that they would attend a follow-up workshop, naming topics such as peer pressure, cultural/religious sensitivities, gender stereotypes and LGBTQ issues as areas they wished to cover.

In late 2019, we secured a grant from the Health Promotion Board. With this grant, we can embark on a secondary version of Birds & Bees in 2020, involving both parents and children. We are also working on expanding our pool of trainers.

Meanwhile, our CSE workshops for international schools are ongoing. In June 2019, we conducted a revamped workshop that prompted students to discuss consent and gender in greater depth. This workshop was later fine-tuned in February 2020. More than half of the students in both series of workshops rated the workshop “excellent”.



Facilitator Tan Joo Hymn conducts a Birds & Bees workshop in April 2019

Support, Housing and Enablement (S.H.E.) Project



S.H.E. Project residents getting creative for an activity at the shelter



Families co-exist at the S.H.E. Project apartments

The Support, Housing and Enablement (S.H.E.) Project is a research-based service that provides stable, decent housing and transformational support programmes for low-income families headed by single mothers. S.H.E. allows AWARE to conduct longitudinal qualitative research, identifying the barriers to home ownership for single mothers and examining whether housing stability has an impact on other aspects of their lives (such as personal growth, work, financial situation and interpersonal relationships).

Through the S.H.E. Project, we aim to enable our residents to:

- stabilise their living conditions;
- build their confidence and capacity;
- build a path towards financial independence; and
- find long-term accommodation after their tenancy ends.

In 2019, S.H.E. Project expanded to a total of four apartments (from only one in 2018). The project currently houses 10 families, with a total of 13 children between them. With their newfound housing stability, residents have achieved success in various aspects of their lives:

- Employment: Seven of 10 resident mothers either received a promotion at work, shifted into a higher-paying job or transitioned into part-time or full-time work after not working for a period of time.
- Community: Five residents were invited to speak and share their experiences at training workshops and job fairs, and/or were also quoted in the press. Four residents graduated from Daughters of Tomorrow's Confidence Curriculum for employment preparation, and three are in different stages of DOT's Financial Literacy Programme.

- Children’s education: One preschooler managed to start special needs educational support, while another preschooler was able to receive childcare in spite of immigration status. A PSLE student scored well and qualified for the Express stream, while a secondary school student was successfully promoted to the next grade despite a challenging family situation.
- Housing: One resident with a 4-year-old child managed to get approval from HDB’s Public Rental Scheme, despite her unwed status, and her being below the minimum rental age.

These successes are tremendous, considering that these single mothers have to juggle caregiving, work and legal trouble without much support from partners or their families. The S.H.E. Project team celebrated their achievements at a year-end party organised with Visa.



“I moved in here because I lived in a toxic environment that wasn’t good for me or my son. My child was not able to play or be free and messy. Since moving here, my relationship with my mother is better. Every day, my mom video-calls me and we meet up for lunch.”

S.H.E. Project resident

Breaking cycle with the help of Aware's SHE Project

By Fiona* SHE@Tampines

Being married for 15 years in an unhappy marriage, with no respect and physical and verbal abuse towards me and my daughter, it's been never easy: lots of fights unstopable tears day to day accumulating pain, hatred, and all of this could have stopped many years ago if only I had someone to turn to. I was alone. I was scared and no place to go to.

I am not to sure if I would have break

the cycle of this abuse this year 2019 if not for amazing woman who have stepped in and offered me and my daughter a place to stay, and when I came to know that it's a house my soul was rejoicing, it felt amazing.

Lets talk about "Moving In" and I would say WOW it was the most difficult part in my life (packing, surgery, transporting, settling school) all this now is behind me. I am finally breathing. I am finally with peace in my mind and soul.

I have met two great single mothers with little daughters whom we sharing house with slowly getting to know each other. I like the fact that we do things together like cleaning the house, cooking, watching tv, and watching little ones playing.

I want to say a big thank you to the Donor, Hemy, Elizabeth Qstek, Mdm. Zubaidah, Subha, Safiah. And everyone from Big Love & Aware, She Project, Daughter Of Tomorrow. You are all an amazing and I am bowing down to say a Big Thank You to everyone who make this possible.



Plants that Fiona brought over that welcome the families and visitors.

This issue:

Breaking cycle with the help of Aware's SHE Project
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My beginning after the turmoil - A Poem
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Welcome Bukit Batok & Tampines Families!
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CARE SERVICES: Creating Access to Resources and Empowerment

Women's Care Centre

AWARE's Women's Care Centre (WCC) provides gender-informed and trauma-informed support to women in distress through its Women's Helpline, legal clinic, counselling and support group services. WCC supported more than 3,000 women in 2019. Our support is provided in two main ways: through the Helpline, and through face-to-face interactions.

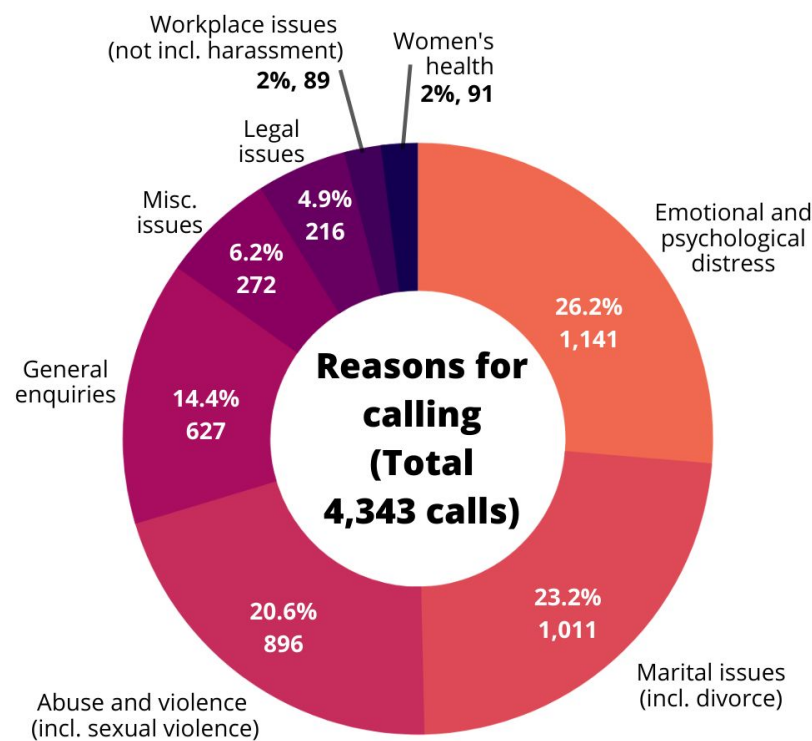
Out of those who contacted us via the Women's Helpline in 2019, 18% (584 of 3,257) went on to access face-to-face support from our legal clinic and counselling services.

I. Women's Helpline

The Women's Helpline is the main point of contact for all WCC services. The Helpline provides encouragement and information to women going through distressing or uncertain times in their lives. It's a crucial link for those who are unable to meet professionals in person, or who need interim support. Trained volunteers and staff provide the service, which is free and available in the four main languages of Singapore (English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil).

Change in Helpline timings, outreach efforts and continued support from our dedicated volunteer Helpliners in 2019 resulted in 4,343 incoming calls in total, a 7% increase in the number of calls over the previous year.

- We provided Helpline support to 26 calls in Malay (double the figure in 2018) and 14 calls in Tamil.
- Eight in 10 callers were provided with information and/or connected to various resources pertaining to their situation.
- Eight in 10 callers surveyed said that they felt better informed and/or emotionally supported after calling in.
- One in 10 calls were made by someone on behalf of the person in need to seek information and support.



**Based on the primary issue faced by callers, without reflecting that callers may have been facing multiple issues.*

Helpline - 2019 at a glance:

We improved access to our service. Based on call traffic data, we changed our Helpline timing to 10 am – 6 pm (Mondays to Fridays) to optimise the Helpline hours. This added three hours of Helpline operations per day. Missed calls decreased by 15% after our timings changed. Finally, we introduced an online call-back form so that those seeking support can schedule a call with us at a time that suits them.

We implemented stricter data protection policies with our team and volunteers. These guide us through the necessary steps to ensure that everyone's data is kept as secure as possible and in line with Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) guidelines.

We updated our confidentiality and safeguarding processes. This gives volunteers clear direction on what steps to take should they have concerns about a caller's safety or the safety of a vulnerable child or adult.

Here is what one of our callers said of her experience:

“

"I called the Helpline while facing continuous threats [to my baby and me] from my husband. The phone call changed my life. The person whom I talked to really believed me and understood my situation. This gave me so much confidence to start working towards saving my baby and myself. She also helped me [to understand] my rights against family violence and threats. Now I am in a better position, with legal protection for my baby and myself, and safer from my husband's abuse. AWARE showed us unconditional acceptance and support. Thank you so much for changing me from a meek and helpless person to a strong and courageous person who can handle difficulties in life and protect my daughter."

Helpline Recruitment

We continued our Helpline recruitment and training programme, providing four months of classroom-based and practical training to 13 new Helpline volunteers. Our trainees gained awareness about issues such as family violence, sexual assault, trauma, divorce, Syariah law, supporting LGBTQ women, mental health, workplace harassment and more.

Here is what some of our trainees said:

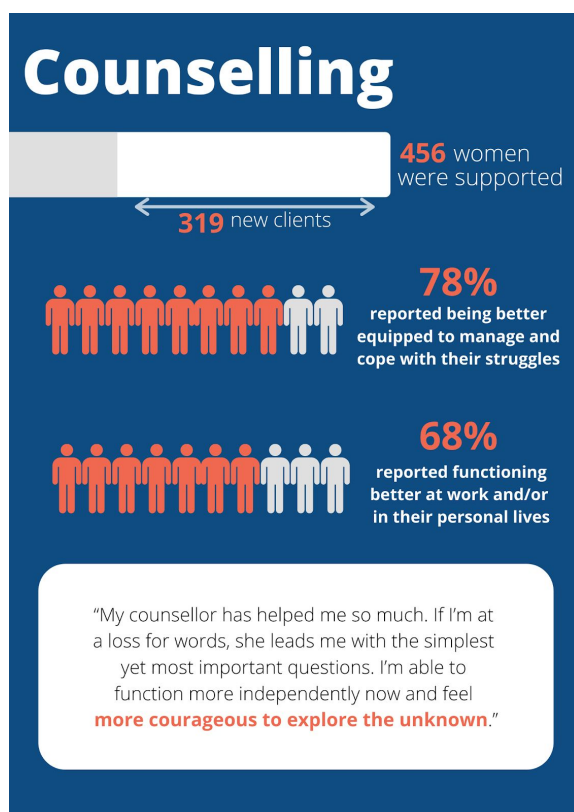
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“The Helpline training was some of the most interesting, inspiring and useful training I have had in my 20+-year career! It outlined the history of AWARE and the wide range of advocacy running alongside the Women's Helpline, and set the scene for understanding some of the social and family pressures faced by women in Singapore.”

“

“The training covered everything: from how to respond to calls from women who have been sexually assaulted or who are feeling suicidal, to understanding the differences between Syariah and civil divorce laws. Learning counselling skills enabled me to respond to women empathetically. Sitting in on a mentor allowed me to hear first-hand from a range of callers. The mentors and support staff are approachable, knowledgeable and encouraging. They gave me the confidence to take calls on my own.”

II. Face-to-face support



Women's Care Centre Counselling

AWARE's counselling service recognises that women are the experts of their own situations. Our counsellors focus on increasing women's safety and access to resources, while building their sense of self. In order to promote ease of access to support services, we continued to keep our counselling fees affordable in 2019. The counselling service has seen an increase of 9% in new clients since 2018.

Legal Clinic

265 clients in 2019
238 clients in 2018
10% increase

90%
of women felt empowered to make informed decisions after attending our legal clinic

1 in 2
received support relating to marital issues (divorce, maintenance, separation, etc.)

"The lawyer and AWARE team **made me feel dignified and acknowledged**, highlighting my right to ask questions. An abusive spouse convinces someone that they are not worthy of a healthy life or the respect of others. I felt respected and validated at the legal clinic, which has not happened for quite some time.
Good things are possible!"

Women’s Care Centre Legal Clinic
Our free legal clinic guides women through their legal options, so they can make informed choices about situations such as divorce and violence. In 2019, we established a new volunteer structure after recognising that legal issues are often accompanied by emotional, practical and financial challenges. Accordingly, a client who comes for our legal clinic can now expect support from a volunteer lawyer who provides legal guidance, as well as another trained volunteer who provides emotional support and information about additional community resources.

Women's Care Support Groups

22 women attended in total, building connections and support for each other.

100%
of participants in the **Divorce Support Group** felt safe in sharing their struggles with the group and able to better understand and cope with their emotions

"Through the support group, **I learned that I am not alone.** No doubt divorce is tough, but I will take time to heal, love myself and slowly move on."

100%
of participants in the **Power to Change Support Group** felt safe and supported in understanding their emotions and making sense of struggles caused by low self-esteem

"The support group was well-structured to educate participants to better understand themselves. At the end of the course, **I was in a better position for coping and moving on.**"

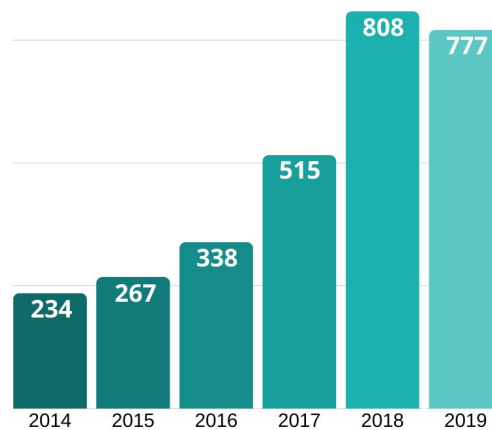
Women’s Care Centre Support Groups
Our support groups foster empowerment through the sharing of similar experiences within a safe and caring environment. In 2019 we held three support groups: two Divorce support groups and one Power to Change support group (for women with struggles related to their self-esteem).

*Feedback percentages are based on clients who gave feedback.

Sexual Assault Care Centre

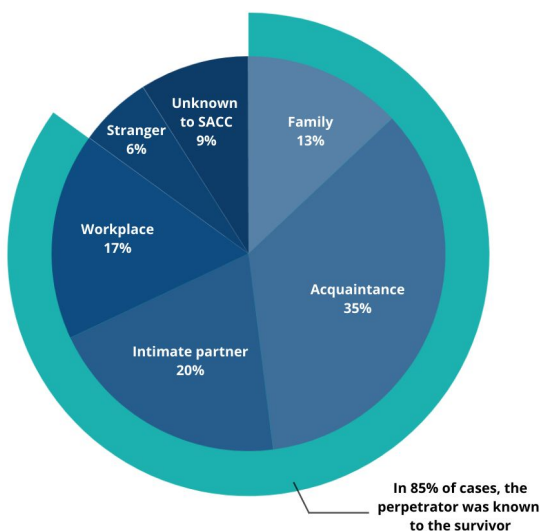
Sexual Assault Care Centre (SACC) continues to be Singapore’s only dedicated support centre for survivors of sexual assault. When survivors reach out through our SACC Helpline, WhatsApp, email or walk-in services, we offer gender- and trauma-informed assistance and help them make informed decisions about next steps.

Sexual Assault Care Centre total cases

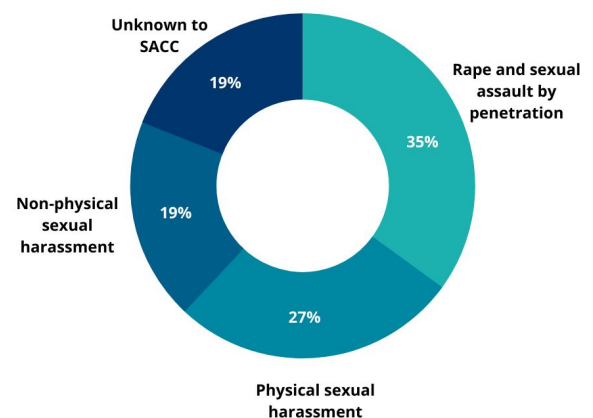


While there was a slight decrease in the number of cases seen by SACC in 2019 from the previous year, the caseload continued to be high at 777 cases. The increases in 2018 and 2019 were driven by the #MeToo movement, which seems to have ushered in a new normal for SACC.

Relationship to perpetrator (out of 777 cases)



Type of sexual violence faced (out of 777 cases)



Other statistics

- In 94% of cases seen by SACC, the survivor was female.
- Where the time of assault was known to SACC, 50% reached out to SACC within five months of the assault.
- 17% of the total cases constituted childhood sexual abuse cases.
- For 1 in 4 cases, someone else (most often a family member or friend) reached out to SACC on behalf of the survivor.

SERVICES AND FEEDBACK

Every case is assigned a case manager who provides practical and emotional support to clients and connects them to face-to-face services, like our legal clinic, befriending service (i.e. accompaniment to police, hospitals and courts) and counselling. Holistic support helps survivors regain power and control and facilitate recovery from trauma



Better Access to Justice

SACC continued our efforts to improve survivors' experiences within the criminal justice system by working with the Attorney General Chambers, the Serious Sexual Crimes Branch and the Law Society of Singapore (LSS). We also led the Family Violence Working Group (FVWG) for the Clementi cluster, and provided input to the Ministry of Social and Family Development for their landscape review of support services available for trauma survivors.

For an event entitled **Balancing Accused's Rights with Complainant's Rights in Sexual Assault Trials**, we worked closely with LSS to develop training for defence lawyers performing cross-examination of sexual assault survivors. With 100 defence lawyers present, LSS launched their best practices toolkit on the cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses. We co-delivered the training, which included a live demonstration of a cross-examination.

Better Access to Support

SACC also collaborated with organisations and community members to ensure that sexual assault survivors in various communities have better access to support services. We provided input to various organisations, including National University of Singapore as it set up its new Victim Care Unit, and Sport Singapore as it produced posters encouraging survivors to come forward.

In June, we organised a panel discussion called [Hidden in Plain Sight](#) about the impact of child sexual abuse. After the public event, we held a closed-door discussion among social service organisations working with children, to address the challenges of child sexual abuse cases and better understand how we could work together.

Recognising that sexual assault is a matter of physical and mental health, at the end of 2019, SACC organised a small group meeting with medical professionals to exchange knowledge and discuss potential areas for collaboration.

Taking CARE: Supporting Each Other

In 2019, the 87-strong team of dedicated WCC and SACC volunteers (including helpline, lawyers and counsellors, from all walks of life) provided a total of 6,917.5 hours of support (equivalent to 865 working days) to women in Singapore.

We also made it our mission to build a trauma-informed organisation and work harder to prioritise self-care among staff and volunteers.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community Champions



“As an artist passionate about social justice, working with AWARE’s research team was an extremely rewarding experience. Many social justice warriors are afraid to use comedy as a vehicle for raising public awareness, dismissing it as not serious enough for important social issues, but not AWARE. They are so well-versed in issues of gender equality that they can write long essays or tweets, and work with comedians to translate pressing issues into easily digestible nuggets of information.”

Sharul Channa

Comedian and writer-star of Crazy Poor Sita (based on AWARE’s research on low-income women). Sharul performed the show to approximately 2,000 audience members in 2019, and earned a Straits Times Life! Theatre Award nomination for best actress.



“*This is What Happens to Pretty Girls*, a play by Ken Kwek commissioned by Pangdemonium, gave voice to sexual assault survivors. With the endorsement of and collaboration with AWARE’s Aim For Zero campaign, we made an even bigger noise on behalf of the survivors, to help them not only say ‘me too’, but also ‘no more!’”

Tracie and Adrian Pang

Artistic Directors of Pangdemonium Theatre Company. Tracie directed and Adrian starred in This is What Happens to Pretty Girls, which ran in April and May 2019. The play was described by The Straits Times as “raw, powerful stuff – one that will leave audiences shaken”.



“I wonder why it’s taken me this long to be involved with AWARE. Since participating in the #MakeCareCount campaign, I have come to understand better how the team at AWARE works, and their dedication to the issues that we women face today. My interaction with each member has been positive and supportive. I wish for growth in the membership of AWARE, that more women will be reached out to, and that the Singapore government will continue to be supportive of AWARE’s programmes.”

Kris Foo

A caregiver and face of #MakeCareCount. Kris took part in the press conference to launch our “Make Care Count” report, and spoke at the subsequent public panel event



“Our voice is the most powerful tool that we have. We must not stay silent about the things that matter. *Our Grandfather Story* is honoured to have provided a space for survivors to share their stories of resilience and courage. We affirm the efforts of Aim For Zero in building a culture of support.”

Amrit Kaur Jastol

Senior Content Development Strategist, Our Grandfather Story. In 2019, OGS worked with AWARE’s Sexual Assault Care Centre and Aim For Zero spokespersons on a widely viewed video on sexual assault myths, as well as two episodes of its Something Private podcast with AWARE’s Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory.

Apa Itu Activist?



In November 2019, AWARE (with Yale-NUS student group Community for Advocacy & Political Education and other members of civil society) led the organisation of the third chapter of Apa Itu Activist? a Civil Society Forum for Action and Advocacy. This year's conference brought together more than 200 students, activists, artists, social sector workers, academics, writers, journalists and regular citizens.

The conference aimed to take stock of civil society in Singapore, and develop practices to facilitate meaningful change. It was also a chance for activists from a variety of causes to learn from each other. Divided into morning and afternoon sessions, attendees discussed how the political environment of Singapore has changed over the years, the importance of survivor-centric solutions to abuse, the constraints of our civil society space and much more. Speakers and participants welcomed the chance to hash things out in an open forum. During breaks, a zine-making booth and a "free speech corner" kept attendees' hands and minds active.

The enthusiastic response from the conference speakers, participants and volunteers affirmed the need to foster open spaces and networks, in our efforts to build a just and equal society.

Takeaways from Apa Itu Activist?

Takeaways from Apa Itu Activist?

“ The government should be **leading to serve its citizens**. It cannot be authoritarian if we aim for a functioning democracy. There cannot be blind faith in the government, with too much fear of its unwavering power.”

Takeaways from Apa Itu Activist?

“ Singapore's activism scene is vibrant... but it is still limited. While activists are amazing people, **you don't need to be a superhero to become one**. Sharing expertise and making connections is crucial to further movements.”

Takeaways from Apa Itu Activist?

“ New friends, new knowledge on **the history of activism in Singapore**, learning how people carry out their various forms of activism, and [other] issues I might not have been familiar with before!”

Other Community-Building

1. In conjunction with International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 October), AWARE led a coalition of civil society groups in organising the Stand Together Festival, an event series centred on the themes of inequality and poverty. Stand Together Festival partnered with online publication Rice Media, which published seven articles on those themes, introducing a new audience to topics such as homelessness, eldercare and chronic debt.
2. On 16 November, we organised Write Forum, a letter-writing workshop by Dana Lam and Constance Singam, both former presidents of AWARE. The workshop was attended by more than 20 activists, students, researchers and interested members of the public, who learned techniques for persuasive writing to advocate for policy and social change.
3. Two of our former Power Fund grantees successfully registered their organisations in 2019—thereby obtaining important legal recognition. That brings the number of registered Power Fund grantees to six, out of the nine total.

“

“Working on Stand Together Festival was invaluable for us in that it allowed us to connect with a wide network of NGOs, academics, and community-based organisations, tapping into years of research and community engagement to tell the stories of Singaporeans who are often too easy to ignore.”

Julian Wong, Managing Editor, *Rice Media*

CATALYSE CONSULTING



As AWARE’s corporate consulting and training arm, Catalyse Consulting is an important extension of AWARE’s efforts towards gender equality in the workplace—where, in 2019, 61% of women in Singapore spent a majority of their waking hours. Catalyse works with companies and institutes of higher learning (IHLs) to create inclusive workplaces, free from harassment and discrimination.

In 2019, Catalyse expanded our service and product offerings to include new:

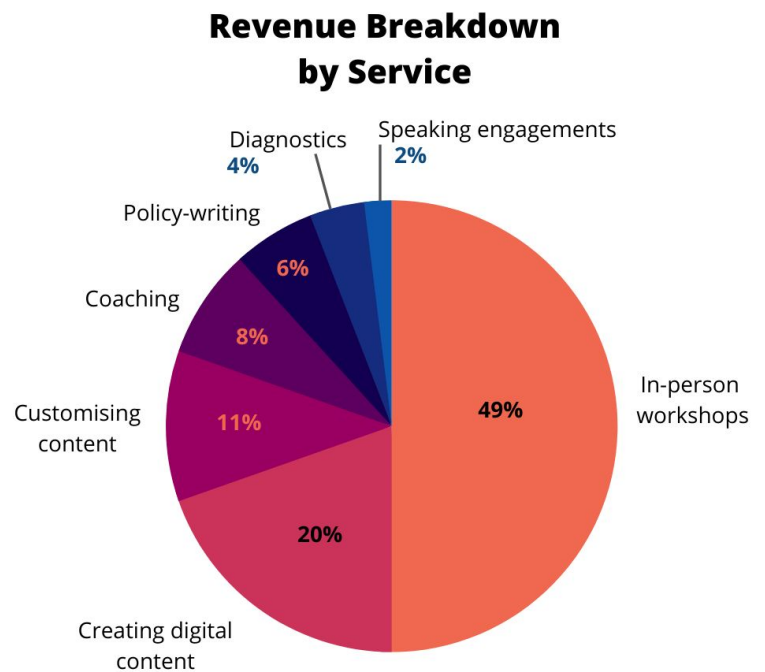
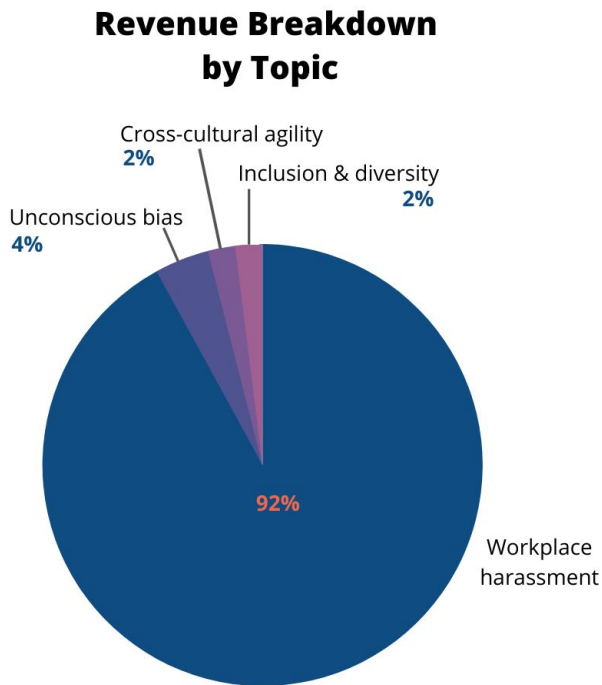
- Workshops (on how to effectively receive and manage workplace harassment complaints)
- Topics (understanding how culture influences harassment tendencies)
- Delivery formats (facilitated circles, one-on-one coaching for managing professional boundaries, e-learning programmes)

As a result:

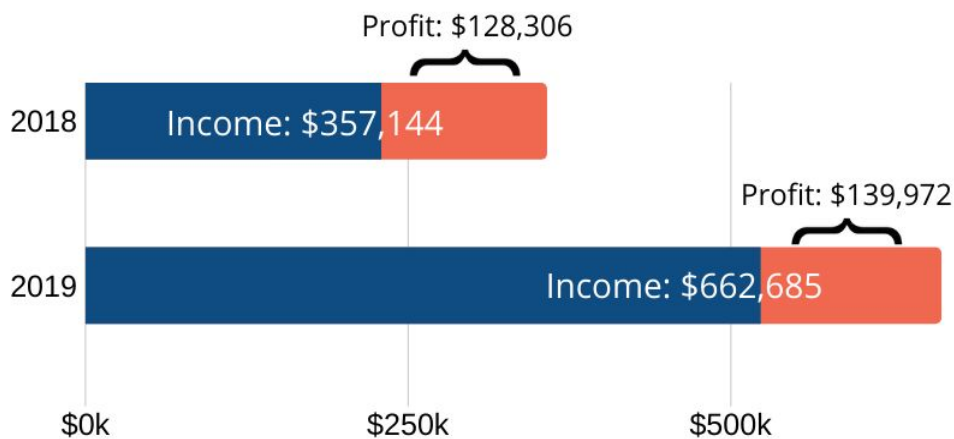
- The anti-harassment policies and procedures we drafted applied to more than 15,000 people
- More than 3,000 people heard our messages of inclusion, diversity and unconscious bias when we spoke at events
- 3,395 people attended our workshops on “Managing Professional Boundaries”, “Cross-Cultural Agility”, “Inclusion & Diversity” and “Unconscious Bias”

The tech industry was the largest contributor of revenue in 2019, followed by finance (which topped the list in 2018) and IHLs. The growth of IHLs as a bigger part of our business in 2019 was particularly noteworthy.

“Managing Professional Boundaries” remained our most in-demand topic, representing just over 90% of revenue. Overall, workshops netted around 50% of our 2019 revenue (as in 2018, when they were also the majority revenue generator).



All in all, our achievements and growth in 2019 indicate that clients regard Catalyse as a well-rounded anti-harassment expert, capable of offering a wide variety of interventions, from organisational diagnostics to training and coaching, policy reviews and writing, and creating e-learning programmes.



Catalyse Consulting Earnings

Catalyse seeks to generate profits to support AWARE’s activities. Over the last two years, Catalyse has generated profit exceeding \$100,000 per year. Compared to 2018, profit gains in 2019 were modest; this was due to our decision to invest in increasing team size, as well as skill level, capacity building and an independent office space. Thus we established the foundations for sustainable growth.

Testimonials

Client Testimonial

“ I want to thank you for one of the most entertaining and effective talks I have attended on Workplace Harassment... **You delivered the talk with aplomb!**”

- **Janet Lim**
Senior Group Manager, Human Resource,
Katoen Natie

Client Testimonial

“ We had an enjoyable and pleasant experience partnering with Catalyse Consulting for our company’s Respectful Workplace initiative. Excellent facilitator who led the workshop discussions (on a potentially sensitive topic) **with professionalism and grace.**”

- **Jane Teo**
AVP, Human Resources Group,
Planning Department, Asia Pacific Division, **SMBC**

Client Testimonial

“ The workshop hit the perfect tone, providing an interactive setting in which the attendees learned from the wealth of knowledge and experience that the team brought to the table... **With multiple attendees requesting that we scale this workshop to a broader audience,** we look forward to further opportunities to work with Catalyse!”

- **Abhisvara Sinha**
Strategy Analyst, **Accenture Strategy**

AIM FOR ZERO

[Aim For Zero](#) is AWARE's two-year national campaign pressing for zero tolerance for all forms of sexual violence. In the first year of its existence, Aim For Zero saw incredible energy and enthusiasm from a growing community of supporters.

Sexual Assault First Responder Training

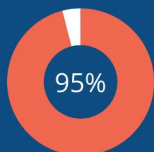
Supportive and non-judgmental first response after an incident of sexual violence encourages survivors to reach out for further support. Prior to 2019, AWARE's Sexual Assault Care Centre had developed a unique Sexual Assault First Responder Training (SAFRT) to equip individuals from all walks of life with the skills and knowledge to be effective first responders for the survivors they knew. SACC conducted workshops upon request with social sector professionals, educators, students and other interested parties.

Under the Aim For Zero campaign, SACC began to conduct public editions of SAFRT in 2019. Community partners such as SGRainbow, Beyond Social Services, soft/WALL/studs and NUS Tembusu College also collaborated with us to organise SAFRT for their communities.

Altogether, these training sessions saw 691 participants in 2019, a 550% increase from 2018. Of these, 438 (63%) went on to pass a post-training evaluation, thereby joining a special community of skilled first responders called the SAFER Network.

Sexual Assault First Responder Training

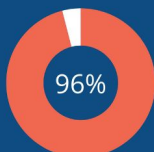
Of the 560 participants who gave feedback:*



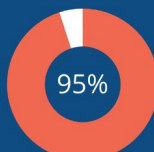
felt more confident to be a first responder to sexual assault survivors



indicated that their knowledge had increased after the training



felt more confident to talk about SACC with survivors



felt more confident to talk about sexual assault in Singapore with people they knew or met

*81% of total SAFRT participants in 2019

Takeaways from Sexual Assault First Responder Training

“ It was good, very insightful, **honest and open** with sharing. The instructor was very knowledgeable about this field.”

Takeaways from Sexual Assault First Responder Training

“ [The trainer] was excellent. She went at a good pace and covered all ground needed. I felt very included in the conversation, and felt that **I could make a difference** in the lives of sexual assault survivors.”

Takeaways from Sexual Assault First Responder Training

“ You **changed my life**, and changed how I'll be thinking about spreading awareness about supporting sexual assault survivors, self-care and consent.”

Beyond SAFRT, SACC also conducted Sexual Assault Awareness Trainings with groups of medical practitioners, including 67 nursing students from the University of Glasgow Singapore at the Singapore Institute of Technology.

Community Partnerships

Since the launch of Aim For Zero in November 2018, SACC has received a huge increase in requests (one every two days!) from organisations and individuals looking to gather information, collaborate or raise awareness about sexual violence in Singapore.

Several organisations and passionate individuals [partnered with us](#) to organise events, have AWARE representatives speak on panels and generally support our public education work.

- In March, we held the event Hashtags, Harassment and Hope: the State of Gender Relations in Singapore, hosted by Twitter. We partnered with research company Ipsos to present their new survey on gender relations in Singapore.
- Aim For Zero spokespersons participated in the exhibition *Don't Tell Me How to Dress* to address victim-blaming attitudes faced by sexual assault survivors who disclose their experiences. This exhibition was part of a larger campaign by Cindy Bishop, host of *Asia's Next Top Model*.
- SACC representatives took part in a range of post-show discussions with local theatre productions. The highest-profile of these productions was Pangdemonium's hit play *This is What Happens to Pretty Girls*, based in part upon interviews playwright Ken Kwek conducted with SACC staff and clients. Other production partners include *The Women Before Me* by Zee Wong, *Goddesses of Words* by Grace Kalaiselvi and *Kotor* by -wright Assembly.
- In June, together with Youth, Adult survivors & Kin In Need (YAKIN), we organised a well-attended dialogue session called Hidden in Plain Sight on child sexual abuse.

This featured a reading from the book *Survivors* by Eirliani Abdul Rahman and Daniel Fung.



AWARE's Shailey Hingorani (far left) on the Hashtags, Harassment and Hope Panel at Twitter



SACC's Anisha Joseph (far left) and Aim For Zero survivor Pam (second from left) at the launch of the exhibit Don't Tell Me How to Dress

Aim For Zero in the Media

To build the capacity of our Aim For Zero spokespersons, we organised training sessions on storytelling and the media so that they became better equipped to share their experiences through interviews on different platforms. Our spokespersons were featured in 10 articles, videos and podcast episodes over the course of the year, including the following:

- Local media platform [Dayre](#) ran a wide-reaching article on SACC collaborator Gia Lim, entitled "[Getting doxxed at 16 changed my life](#)".
- Spokesperson Dani shared her experience of workplace sexual harassment [in a video](#) that received 842,000 views across AWARE's social media platforms.
- We worked with local media company [Our Grandfather Story](#) on a number of videos and podcast interviews on sexual violence. Among them was an episode of their series *Can Ask Meh?* called "[Survivors Of Sexual Violence](#)", which featured three Aim For Zero spokespersons and has to date garnered close to 300,000 views.

Spotlight on Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence

In November 2019, AWARE released new data on the cases seen by SACC in 2017 and 2018 involving technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV). Such cases include incidents of sexual voyeurism (e.g. upskirting), cyber-harassment, the non-consensual distribution of intimate images and more. The statistics were presented at the event Taking Ctrl, Finding Alt 2019 on 25 November 2019—commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and the one-year anniversary of the Aim For Zero campaign.



Left to right: Lim Xiu Xuan (Senior Case Manager, SACC), Priscilla Chia (litigator and SACC volunteer lawyer), Monica Baey (advocate for sexual violence survivors), Amber Hawkes (Head of Safety Policy, APAC at Facebook), Benny Bong (counsellor and Society against Family Violence president). Photograph by Kasper Paraskakis Narayan

TFSV was in the news frequently over the course of 2019, due to a number of high-profile cases—most notably, that of Monica Baey, who was non-consensually filmed while showering in her National University of Singapore dormitory. In addition to highlighting the prevalence of TFSV in Singapore, Taking Ctrl, Finding Alt also featured a panel discussion on the challenges faced by TFSV survivors and the recourse available to them. Recognising that tackling TFSV involves mobilising many different stakeholders, AWARE also launched [a contest](#) to encourage the community to devise innovative new projects addressing image-based sexual violence.

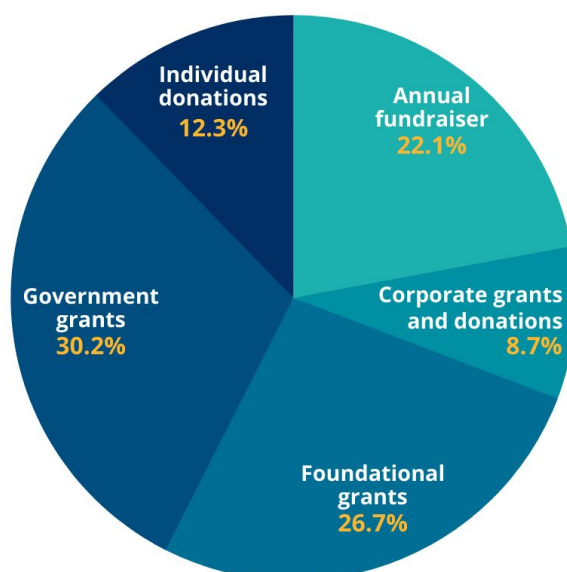
FUNDRAISING AND CONSTITUENCY

2019 was an excellent year for AWARE’s fundraising. Thanks to our strong base of regular and new supporters, AWARE raised \$2.8 million to continue our growth as the leading women’s rights organisation in Singapore.

The total amount in 2019 was 46% greater than in 2018. Excluding the amount from the government’s Care & Share matching fund, the total amount raised in 2019 was 49% more than in 2018.

	2019	2018	% INCREASE
Total Amount Raised	\$2.8 M	\$1.9 M	46%
Total Amount Raised excluding Care & Share	\$2.1M	\$1.4M	49%

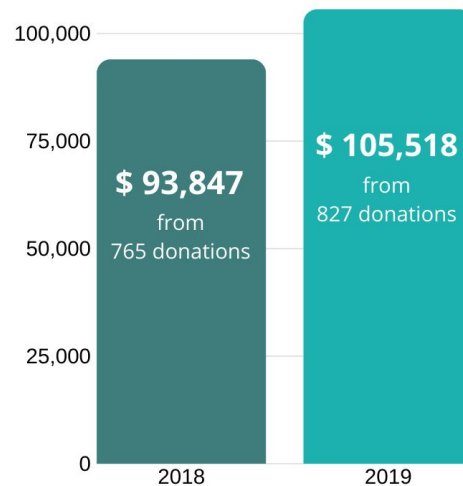
Funding sources in 2019 (total amount raised: \$2.8 million)



Individual Gifts

Individual giving through donation platform Giving.sg saw a 12.4% increase in the sum of donations and 8.1% increase in the number of donations from 2018 to 2019.

Total individual donations



The Time Traveller's Ball

On 2 November 2019, AWARE went “back to the future”, celebrating past victories and future hopes at our annual fundraising gala. With 500-odd attendees clad in retro-futuristic costumes, we raised over \$625,000—the largest sum AWARE has ever raised through a single event—for our long-standing research and advocacy work. We also handed out our annual AWARE Awards to three incredible women: sociologist Teo You Yenn (“Woman of Insight”), sexual harassment survivor Monica Baey (“Woman of Courage”) and Homeless author Liyana Dhamirah (“Woman of Resilience”).



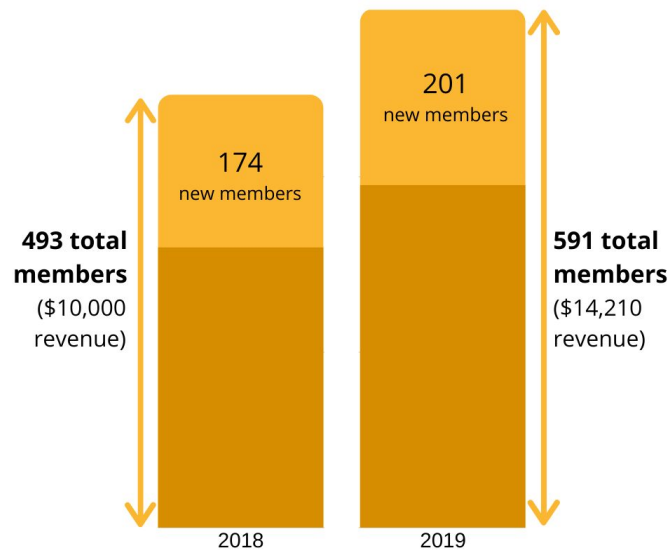
Photographs by Studiokel Photography

AWARE Members and Volunteers

Membership

AWARE membership increased by 20% in 2019, with the number of new members increasing by 16%.

Membership



Our Amazing Allies

Since our inception in 1985, our dedicated and talented team of volunteers has been the beating heart of AWARE. From our hardworking young interns who support our staff, to our committed volunteer Helpliners and lawyers pulling shifts on the Women's Helpline and legal clinic, to the experts serving on various sub-committees: Every volunteer's contribution is crucial to AWARE. Without our community, we would never have been able to achieve all that we have for women in Singapore.



Photographs by Angela Mae Macasinag

Highlights from our 2019 Volunteer Appreciation Party:

<https://youtu.be/xnEH6aUHuu4>

Thank you to all AWARE Supporters!

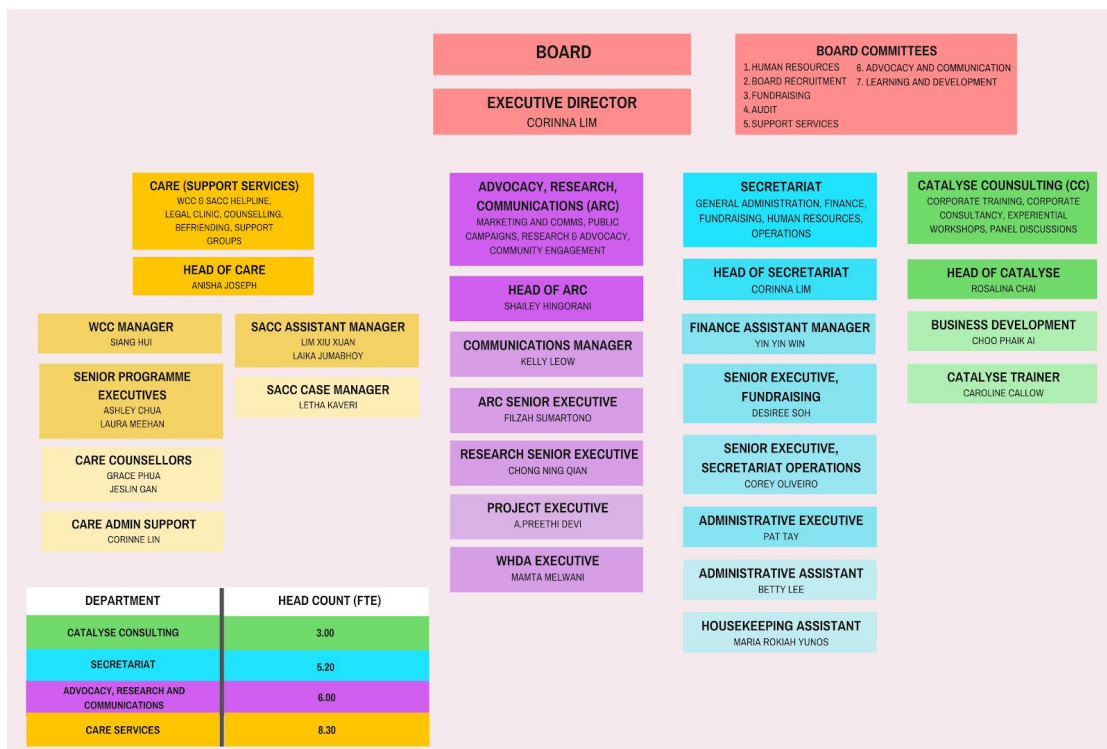
A special thank you to the donors listed below, with additional gratitude to our Corporate Friends of AWARE, Twitter Asia Pacific Pte. Ltd. and Expedia Group.

\$50,000 and above	\$10,000 - \$49,999	\$5,000 - \$9,999
Community Chest Care and Share Fund Chen Su Lan Trust Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple Uses Private Limited Tote Board Lee Foundation ICAP (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. Pooja Bhandari and Caesar Sengupta	Chew How Teck Foundation Tan Ean Kiam Foundation Sajni Gill Pasar Glamour (Janice Koh, Pam Oei and Petrina Kow) Asia Professional Speakers Singapore Corinna Lim Bengawan Solo Pte Ltd George Nast Hong Leong Foundation	Orthopaedic Sports Medicine Pte Ltd Teh Hooi Ling Zheng Huifen Damaris Meyer Dana Lam and Teo Teck Weng Wynthia Goh Margaret Thomas Li Yirong Robert Ludwig Valerie Gan and Thomas Joseph Garry Glen Goei Coleads Business Consultants Pte Ltd Wang Lay Yiam Influence Solutions Pte Ltd Lian Tsui Yee Women's International Tennis Singapore The Silent Foundation Limited Stefanie Yuen Thio

STAFF AND BOARD



In 2019, AWARE continued to grow in strength and capacity to meet the growing demand for its services. Staff strength grew from 19.1 to 22.5 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent). As of 31 December 2019, the staff strength was distributed as follows:



In 2019, AWARE also engaged approximately 25 unique paid consultants on retainer, project or short-term bases.

Senior Management



Corinna Lim, *Executive Director*

Corinna Lim is the first Executive Director of AWARE. Prior to taking on that role in 2010, Corinna practised law for more than 10 years in Allen & Gledhill, Khattar Wong & Partners and Koh Ong & Partners. She was also co-founder and CEO of a technology business that services the legal industry. Corinna has a Masters in Public Administration from Columbia University and is a Fulbright scholar.

Anisha Joseph, *Head of CARE Services*

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.



Shailey Hingorani, *Head of Advocacy, Research and Communications*

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.



Roslina Chai, *Managing Director,*
Catalyse Consulting

Roslina Chai works with senior leadership teams on strategy, innovation and high-stakes communication as a coach, consultant and facilitator. Roslina has built and nurtured teams in three continents, in the corporate, SME and public sectors. Her industry expertise includes private equity, Formula 1 technology, F&B and executive education. Roslina holds degrees in law, arts and commerce from the University of Canterbury, and is completing a doctorate with École des Ponts.



Corporate Governance

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 almost every month to carry out its functions.

Read more [2019 Board Information](https://aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-Board-Information-28-April-2020.pdf) at aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-Board-Information-28-April-2020.pdf

Our Board



Margaret Thomas
President

Margaret Thomas has held senior editing positions at *The Business Times*, *The Singapore Monitor* and *TODAY*, and was in the founding team of *AsiaOne*. 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).



Jasmine Ng
1st Vice-President

Jasmine Ng is a filmmaker and educator who has executive-produced and directed award-winning shorts, feature films and international broadcast work. She is President of SAMPP, the Singapore Association for Motion Picture Professionals. Jasmine has also conceptualised many cross-disciplinary works for social causes, including civic awareness projects such as IPS PRISM for the Institute of Policy Studies, and the *BOTH SIDES, NOW* installation project, which explored death and dying with the support of Lien Foundation.



Valerie Gan Garry
2nd Vice-President

Valerie Gan Garry worked in the telecommunication industry for over 10 years, holding various sales and leadership positions. She is actively involved with AWARE's fundraising events, and project-managed the renovation of the AWARE Centre. Now a full-time mother, Valerie's vision of gender equality is strengthened by her supportive husband. They want their little girl to be given an equal opportunity to achieve whatever she wants in life.



Jean Low
Treasurer

Jean is currently CEO of 1880, a private club focused on building community. Previously, she was Director of Finance at United World College of South East Asia, CFO at Mapletree Greater China Commercial Trust and Head of Risk Management at Mapletree Investments. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales. An AWARE member since 2009 and board member since 2016, she cares deeply about education, social justice and gender equality.



Wynthia Goh
Assistant Treasurer

Wynthia Goh is Head of NEXT Digital at NCS. Previously, she was Head of Omnichannel at NTUC Enterprise, and before that led regional digital teams for Nokia, eBay, Avaya, SAP and Aviva, with roles in product management, business development, venture investment, digital strategy and marketing. Wynthia has a master's in Public Policy from the State University of New York and is a Fulbright Scholar. An AWARE member since 2009, Wynthia is also on the Women in Fintech subcommittee of the Singapore Fintech Association.



Penny Shone
Secretary

Born in New Zealand, Penny Shone 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 communications for General Electric. 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.



Kay Omar
Board Member

Kay Omar is a Practicum and Supervision Manager in a private school, specialising in the Master in Counselling (Advanced). Previously, she worked for 12 years as a wedding planner. Kay started volunteering with AWARE in 2014 as a helpline. She has also been volunteering with LGBT community organisation Oogachaga since 2012, co-facilitating a women's support group and helping to manage the 2017 Oogachaga Charity Gala, among other activities.



Ong Soh Chin
Board Member

Ong Soh Chin is Deputy Director, External Relations and Strategic Planning at the Institute of Policy Studies. She was formerly 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 previously worked on different desks at *The Straits Times*, where she wrote regularly about gender equality.



Elisa Kang
Board Member

Elisa Kang has 13 years of international experience in the wealth management industry and has been an advisor and counsellor to individuals, families and family offices, on strategic asset allocation, family business dynamics and legacy issues. Elisa was a part-time counsellor at the SMU Mrs Wong Kwok Leung Student Counselling Centre, and a part-time trainer for Catalyse Consulting. Elisa has been volunteering and working with AWARE since 2016, and project-managed the Women's Helpline expansion in 2018.



Teh Hooi Ling
Immediate Past President

Teh Hooi Ling spent 22 years at *The Business Times* writing award-winning investment columns, later compiled into the best-selling *Show Me the Money* book series. She left SPH in 2013 and co-founded an asset management firm. In 2017, she set up her own no-management fee fund, Inclusif Value Fund. Hooi Ling became secretary of AWARE's board in 2014 and president in 2016. She also sits on the board of Kampung Senang Charity and Education Foundation, as honorary secretary then vice president.

Financials, Governance and Policies

Financial Report

AWARE ended 2019 with a surplus of \$934,983 (2018: \$301,261). It had an income of \$3,638,409 (2018: \$2,514,307) and expenses of \$2,703,426 (2018: \$2,213,046).

AWARE's total funds at the end of 2019 were \$4,925,389 (2018: \$3,990,406).

See the 2019 [Audited Financial Statements](https://aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-Audited-Financial-Statements.pdf) (aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2019-Audited-Financial-Statements.pdf) for full information.

Statutory Information and Governance Compliance

AWARE consistently works towards improving its governance, transparency and risk-management practices. To this end, in 2019, we worked on the following matters:

1. Reviewing and strengthening our procedures on privacy and data management
2. Enhancing our feedback procedure for CARE services
3. Strengthening our recruitment and performance appraisal processes
4. Streamlining our processes on recording donations
5. Migrating to a cloud-based accounting system to enable management to have more timely access to accounts.

AWARE is compliant with the Code of Governance (2017). Refer to our [Statutory Information](https://aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Statutory-Information-for-AWARE-2019-1.pdf) (aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Statutory-Information-for-AWARE-2019-1.pdf) and [Governance Evaluation Checklist](https://aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Governance-Checklist-2019-FINAL-18-March.pdf) (aware.org.sg/report2019/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Governance-Checklist-2019-FINAL-18-March.pdf)

Policies

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.

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.

Reserves

AWARE aims to maintain a reserve that is equivalent 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.

Loans

AWARE does not:

- a) grant any loans, donations, grants or financial assistance;
 - b) receive any loans for any purpose or tenure;
- without the prior written approval of the board.

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. Volunteering Guide
7. Whistleblowing Policy
8. Data Protection Policy