

Conversations on Singapore Women's Development SCWO's Report



Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
2. ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM AND RESOURCES.....	6
2.1 Conversations with SCWO Members	6
I. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development #1 - 31 October 2020.....	6
II. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development #2 - 19 December 2020.....	6
III. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development #3 - 16 January 2021.....	6
IV. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development: Forging Consensus, Forming Connections - 8 May 2021	6
V. Cited Sources	6
2.2 SCWO & Member Organisations' Initiatives	7
2.3 BoardAgender's Recommendations.....	7
<i>PART I – Conversations with SCWO Members</i>	8
3. VIEWS\FEEDBACK\DISCUSSIONS (FROM SCWO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS).....	9
3.1 INGRAINED SOCIETAL VALUES ON GENDER NORMS	9
3.2 UNEQUAL OPPORTUNITIES	10
3.3 PROTECTION AND SAFETY OF WOMEN.....	12
3.4 FINANCIAL INSECURITY	15
4. RECOMMENDATIONS.....	17
4.1 HOME	17
4.2 SCHOOLS.....	17
4.3 WORKPLACES	17
4.4 COMMUNITY.....	18
<i>PART II – SCWO & Member Organisations' Initiatives</i>	19
5. SCWO AND MEMBER ORGANISATIONS' ON-GOING INITIATIVES AND FUTURE PLANS.....	20
5.1 HOME	20
5.2 SCHOOLS.....	22
5.3 WORKPLACES	25
5.4 COMMUNITY.....	29
<i>PART III – BoardAgender's Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development.....</i>	34
1. INTRODUCTION.....	35
2. WHERE ARE WE AT NOW	35

3. BARRIERS TO PROGRESS IN SINGAPORE.....	35
4. WHAT HAS WORKED TO INCREASE GENDER DIVERSITY ON BOARDS IN OTHER MARKETS?	36
5. BOARDAGENDER'S RECOMMENDATIONS.....	37
5.1 PIPELINE.....	38
5.2 PROCESS	39
5.3 PRINCIPLES	39
5.4 PARTNERSHIPS	40
6. CONCLUSION.....	41
<i>Appendix A – Recommendations</i>	<i>42</i>
<i>Appendix B – Contributors</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Appendix C – About BoardAgender.....</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>Appendix D - BoardAgender's Thought Leadership</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>PART IV – Celebrating the achievements of Singapore women: A proposal by the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations.....</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>PART V – Conclusion of SCWO's Report.....</i>	<i>57</i>
CONCLUSION OF REPORT	58
APPENDIX I.....	59

Conversations on Singapore's Women Development SCWO's Report

1. INTRODUCTION

As Singapore embarks on the nationwide review on women's issues to bring about mindset change, and changes to Singapore's cultural value system to achieve gender equality, the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) has been one of the organisations leading the "Conversations on Singapore Women's Development" to identify issues and gather recommendations on issues concerning women in Singapore.

SCWO is the national coordinating body of women's organisations in Singapore and has more than 60 Member Organisations, representing over 600,000 women in Singapore. Together with our members, SCWO seeks to promote the ideals of 'Equal Space, Equal Voice, and Equal Worth' for women.

SCWO provides opportunities, platforms, and services that empower and support women across the various stages of lives to fulfil their fullest potential, from programmes that inspire and educate younger women and girls, to targeting older women through our advocacy work to raise awareness on the gendered phenomenon of ageing, and even advancing more women into senior leadership positions and boardrooms in Singapore. SCWO also empowers and supports disadvantaged women by providing temporary refuge for women and children who are survivors of family violence, and equips women with the knowledge pertaining to their marital rights via free legal consultations on Family Law.

Since October 2020, SCWO has organised 4 conversation sessions with our member organisations and members of the public to acquire feedback and insights on the issues affecting women in Singapore, and the policy changes they wish to see to better support and empower women in Singapore. Apart from addressing the issues women and girls in Singapore face across their different life and career stages, this report also aims to provide recommendations to better support women as Singapore continues to work towards gender equality, and highlights the women development work SCWO and our member organisations have and will be embarking on to further empower and support women in Singapore.

This report comprises of 4 main parts.

Part I contains a summary of the engagement platforms and resources SCWO has utilised to craft this report, mainly conversation sessions with our member organisations to bring forward their views, feedback and recommendations they have on the development of women in Singapore.

Part II highlights the ongoing initiatives and future plans that SCWO and our member organisations have to continue to promote and improve the status of women in Singapore in all fields. Wholesale descriptions of initiatives by SCWO and Members Organisations can be found in Appendix I.

Part III encompasses BoardAgender's submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development. As an initiative of SCWO, it reports the progress and barriers faced by female directors and business leaders in Singapore, and recommendations on how these challenges can be addressed.

Part IV shows a proposal by SCWO to celebrate the "Year of Celebrating SG Women". This proposal calls for the dedicating or naming of public spaces, including gardens and roads to honour Singapore women to reflect the central role that Singapore women have played in our society and nation. The proposal further suggests to feature women who have made significant contributions such as women from the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF).

The report ends with a final conclusion in **Part V**.

2. ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM AND RESOURCES

2.1 Conversations with SCWO Members

To date, SCWO has engaged over 300 participants from more than 60 organisations across various sectors and industries over the 4 conversation sessions.

The 4 conversations sessions and its focus are as follows:

I. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development #1 - 31 October 2020

The SCWO Board and 2 Board Representatives from SCWO Member Organisations were invited to attend this conversation. About 50 participants attended this session and the conversation focused on 4 domains - home, schools, workplaces, and the community.

II. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development #2 - 19 December 2020

The second conversation was opened to members of the SCWO Member Organisations and community partners of SCWO. It was attended by about 40 participants and the session was centered around 2 of the domains - community and workplaces.

III. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development #3 - 16 January 2021

The third conversation was also opened to members of the SCWO Member Organisations and community partners of SCWO. It was attended by about 40 participants and the session was centered around 2 of the domains - home and workplaces.

IV. Conversations on Singapore Women's Development: Forging Consensus, Forming Connections - 8 May 2021

This is a follow-up conversation where SCWO members and citizens were invited to come together to identify top issues and recommendations based on feedback raised in earlier conversations, to delve deeper into what more can be done, and chart the next steps forward. About 170 participants attended this session and the topic of discussion were (1) Mindset shifts in society, (2) Enhanced protection of women against (i) hurt and sexual offences and (ii) family violence, and (3) Better support for vulnerable families/ women.

V. Cited Sources

Relevant statistics and data were derived from online sources, which include news articles and published studies, from recent years. These sources are used to support participants' input and feedback from the SCWO-held conversations

2.2 SCWO & Member Organisations' Initiatives

Apart from gathering the feedback and recommendations from member organisations on aspirations and concerns regarding Singapore women, SCWO also conducted a survey to gather members' current initiatives and future plans to showcase the efforts and contributions of SCWO and the members to tackle gender inequality and to empower women in our community. Some of the initiatives are outlined in Part II of the report and all returns from member organisations are reflected in the Appendix I at the end of this report.

2.3 BoardAgender's Recommendations

BoardAgender is an initiative of the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) dedicated to advancing more women into senior leadership roles and boardrooms in Singapore. In contribution to the 'Conversations on Singapore Women's Development', BoardAgender has produced its own report. This report "BoardAgender's Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development" is based upon BoardAgender's observations and the perspectives of current company directors and aspiring women directors from two dialogue sessions that they had with senior women in management and also existing directors, both male and female. It summarises BoardAgender's views on the current situation, current barriers to progress in Singapore, what has worked well to increase gender diversity in other markets, and recommendations on what can be done to improve the number of female board directors in Singapore.

PART I – Conversations with SCWO Members

3. VIEWS\FEEDBACK\DISCUSSIONS (FROM SCWO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS)

The 'Conversation on Singapore Women's Development' focused on the issues women face in 4 main domains — home, schools, workplaces and the community. Based on the feedback gathered from the conversations, SCWO has identified 4 main themes that cut across the 4 domains. The themes are (1) Ingrained Societal Values on Gender Norms, (2) Protection and Safety of Women, (3) Unequal Opportunities, and (4) Financial Insecurity.

3.1 INGRAINED SOCIETAL VALUES ON GENDER NORMS

The underlying problem is that what Singaporean society perceives of men and women, from norms to inherent roles, translates into all aspects of daily life.¹ However, gender equality cannot operate on a fundamentally flawed foundation, that is the entrenched societal values on gender roles and norms in Singapore.

3.1.1 Ingrained Societal Values on Gender Norms at Home

The deeply-rooted notion of gender roles remains evident in Singapore's patriarchal society — a woman is responsible for household duties, from taking care of their children, husbands and the elderly, to cleaning and cooking. Most men in the household do not take up the slack of these duties.² In fact, men and children have come to view a woman's household duties as a given, instead of expressing gratitude for the women in the house. The jobs of caregiving and completing household chores, such as cooking and cleaning, often go undervalued. In this sense, women's careers fall secondary.³ Due to these values ingrained in both men and women, many women often find themselves struggling to balance work-home dynamics, as both require the vigour and labour of full-time occupations. Role modelling by parents allows children to learn the importance of valuing and respecting men and women equally. It will be very difficult for younger generations to grow progressively, if behaviour at home remains conservative and patriarchal.

3.1.2 Ingrained Societal Values on Gender Norms in Schools

Traditional values about how young girls and boys should behave are commonly passed around in educational discourse. Gender roles, which include the notions that young girls should behave gentle and well-mannered, whereas boys can express dominance and aggression, are ingrained into young minds. Role-modelling by teachers is extremely important as they have the ability to train and influence young minds. An increase in female role models in educational settings will likely benefit young boys and girls. However, there appears to be a persisting problem that young boys' misogynistic behaviours are constantly

¹Nabilah Awang and Janice Lim, "The Big Read: Gender Equality in Singapore Remains Elusive Amid Entrenched Attitudes About Women's Roles," CNA, last modified June 15, 2021, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/the-big-read-singapore-gender-equality-women-roles-13193956>.

²Awang and Lim, "The Big Read."

³Ibid.

excused to a 'boys will be boys' mindset, likely resulting in them taking these values into the adult world and passing them into the following generation. This would leave society stuck in an endless cycle of gender inequality. There needs to be a combination of syllabi alteration and teachers to check their own blind spots, in order for there to be an attitude shift in Singapore's young minds.

3.1.3 Ingrained Societal Values on Gender Norms in Workplaces

Women must also wrestle with workplace discrimination. Many women are often made uncomfortable by their male peers and seniors' innuendos, but they struggle to address these issues.⁴ This is primarily because Singapore law and workplace bylaws and/or policies do not specifically list out and define what constitutes workplace harassment. Moreover, workplace sexism may also appear in less-identifiable manners. As fixed notions that women should be "nice and amicable" and not speak out, get passed around generations, there appears to be a lack of confidence in women at the workplace.⁵ This has led to a lack of women in leadership positions. As a matter of fact, female co-workers find themselves constantly needing to prove their skills and intelligence, especially in male-dominated fields.⁶ Ultimately, Singaporean society has firmly established the way men and women should behave as well as their prescribed roles, which have filtered into the workplace.

3.1.4 Ingrained Societal Values on Gender Norms in the Community

Gender inequality undeniably manifests in the community. As societal values largely favour men over women, issues regarding sexual objectification and violence put women at a disadvantage. Women are often first blamed when allegations of sexual assault are revealed, with both men and women asking questions that display victim-blaming behaviour, or women accused of falsely accusing their sexual assaulters.⁷ This is a combination of normalised discomfort and internalised shame that women experience.⁸ Societal attitudes that constantly refuel male dominance results in men believing they are superior to women, exacerbating issues of sexual violence and 'power' abuse. Due to insufficient channels of female support, less women will speak out and seek help.

3.2 UNEQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

One factor that results in gender inequality is the unequal opportunities that affect women at the different stages of their lives. Women are faced with unequal opportunities at homes, schools, workplaces and even in the community at large.

⁴Awang and Lim, "The Big Read."

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

3.2.1 Unequal Opportunities at Home

The traditional view that women are responsible to meet the burgeoning caregiving and household responsibilities in the family remains widespread in Singapore. The division of labour between males and females in most households in Singapore is unequal because women are seen as the main caregivers of the family where in addition to women's paid labour, they also have to take on a second shift of unpaid work at home that includes household chores, childcare, and/or eldercare. As a result, women often have to choose between their families and career goals. The view that caregiving disproportionately falls on women's shoulders not only perpetuates gender inequality, but will also impact women physically, financially, and emotionally.

3.2.2 Unequal Opportunities in Schools

The way in which unequal opportunities are manifested in educational settings is through the sheer unequal representation of what young girls and boys are working towards in life. Entrenched gender norms or stereotypes are subtly and subconsciously worked into the education system. Arguably, the curriculum presented in schools as well as the mode of teaching said curriculum can contribute to gender bias (i.e., the fact that girls are made to be caregivers and boys to be future breadwinners). Students will inevitably take gender biased concepts with them into the real world if they engage with these false notions on a daily, educational basis.

In higher education, while the proportion of women pursuing degrees in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) has been increasing in recent years, it does not translate to the percentage of women who join the workforce in related areas.⁹ This highlights the magnitude of the extent to which gender can dictate the educational field students pursue; notably, girls are generally discouraged from pursuing STEM. In fact, it was found that 36% of parents of children under the age of 18 ranked science and technology as the most desirable career for boys, as compared to 28% for girls.¹⁰

3.2.3 Unequal Opportunities in Workplaces

Due to women's family-related responsibilities, they choose to leave the workforce to focus on their home lives. These career breaks limit women's ability to progress in their careers. More importantly, however, it is an even greater challenge for women re-entering the workforce. This is because hiring managers perceive women with caregiving responsibilities as less committed to their work. Therefore, companies are reluctant to hire women with caregiving responsibilities and those who are out of the workforce for a significant period of time. Also, many women who choose to return to the workforce tend to switch to flexible time positions or the informal sector because it enables them to juggle their family responsibilities.

⁹CHERYL TAN, "More Women Pursuing Degrees in Stem Fields: MOE," The Straits Times, last modified February 16, 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/more-women-pursuing-degrees-in-stem-fields-moe>.

¹⁰TAN, "More Women Pursuing Degrees in Stem Fields: MOE."

Furthermore, gender stereotyping in STEM results in girls not being aware of the opportunities in STEM and hence, do not pursue careers in related areas. This results in sub-conscious occupational segregation by gender, and the gender imbalance in certain industries and sectors contributes to the gender wage gap, bringing about gender inequality.

3.2.4 Unequal Opportunities in the Community

The gender gap in unpaid care has significant implications on women's ability to actively participate in the labour market and the type of employment as women are the predominant providers of informal care for the family. The impact of this inequality will be worse for women from low-income families, single mothers, divorcees, and the elderly. Women already face barriers in employment and job security because of gender stereotypes and caregiving responsibilities but these women will face more financial and emotional stressors. Furthermore, coupled with ageism, the limited opportunities in the workplaces, and the lack of resources and networks, these women may be even more disadvantaged and face greater discrimination.

3.3 PROTECTION AND SAFETY OF WOMEN

Violence against women is still prevalent in Singapore today and remains a high concern - family violence cases, voyeurism cases, and psychological and emotional abuse cases have all increased in recent years. ^{[11][12]}

3.3.1 Protection and Safety of Women at Home

In light of COVID-19 related stay-at-home orders, there has been an increase in reported cases of violence at home and intensified violence against women.¹³ The Singapore police force revealed that there were 5,135 family violence cases reported in 2020.¹⁴ In an effort to promote victim protection by encouraging victims to speak out, this was the first time the police have released any figures regarding family violence. Nevertheless, the number and proportion of Personal Protection Orders (PPO) filed since 2011 has largely consisted of females, indicative of a long-standing problem. 74-77% of PPOs are filed by women, which is a stark contrast to the 23-26% of PPOs filed by men.¹⁵ As circuit breaker measures were put in place,

¹¹Pei Ting Wong, "The Big Read: Singapore's Voyeurism Problem – What's Wrong with Men, or the World?," CNA, last modified April 30, 2019, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/singapore-voyeurism-problem-spy-cam-sex-harassment-monica-baey-11487244>

¹²Janice Lim, "The Big Read: Some Men Just Don't Get It — More Awareness but Abuse of Women in S'pore Still a Problem," CNA, last modified April 2, 2019, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/abuse-women-psychological-physical-singapore-harm-men-gender-11399120>.

¹³MALAVIKA MENON, "Women Victims of Violence Offered Help from New Singapore Website," The Straits Times, last modified November 30, 2020, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/women-victims-of-violence-offered-help-from-new-singapore-website>.

¹⁴WONG SHIYING, "5,135 Family Violence Cases Reported in 2020 As Police Release Figures for First Time," The Straits Times, last modified January 21, 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/police-release-figures-on-family-violence-offences-for-first-time-5135-reports-made-in>.

¹⁵Ministry of Social and Family Development, "Violence: Applications of Personal Protection Order (PPO)/Expedited Order (EO)/Domestic Exclusion Order (DEO) | Ministry of Social and Family Development," Ministry of Social and Family Development, last modified May 7, 2021, [https://www.msf.gov.sg/research-and-data/Research-and-Statistics/Pages/Violence-Applications-of-Personal-Protection-Order-\(PPO\)Expedited-Order-\(EO\)Domestic-Exclusion-Order-\(DEO\).aspx](https://www.msf.gov.sg/research-and-data/Research-and-Statistics/Pages/Violence-Applications-of-Personal-Protection-Order-(PPO)Expedited-Order-(EO)Domestic-Exclusion-Order-(DEO).aspx).

women who were already undergoing physical and/or emotional abuse were left even more confined than before.

Furthermore, there appears to be an unaddressed problem of older women suffering in silence as cases of family violence continue to increase. Incidents of mental and physical violence against women above the age of 50 often go significantly under-reported.¹⁶ This is particularly because older women are more physically vulnerable and financially dependent, meaning they are less likely to come forward. There is also a lack of trust and communication between authorities and older women due to language barriers. As these stay-at-home measures continue to indirectly shed light on cases of family violence that are often relegated into the dark, it is important for authorities to demonstrate support and understanding for women to feel safe and come forward.

According to SCWO's Maintenance Support Central, there have been 252 applications of Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (EMO) applications filed between January 2018 and May 2021. In reality, the magnitude of cases would be much greater due to the fact that some clients may not want to re-enforce after several attempts and that EMOs are a draining and time-consuming process that many clients cannot afford. The increase in number of EMOs filed in recent years, compounded by a 29% rate of EMO refilling demonstrates the need for more effective systems in strengthening the maintenance enforcement regime. These measures would include ensuring respondents do not default, and that evasive defaulting parties are found and charged, so that applicants need not have to constantly reapply for EMOs.

3.3.2 Protection and Safety of Women at Schools

Sexual misconduct, in particular, is alarming in school settings. Between 2015 and 2019, institutes of higher learning alone have handled 172 reported cases of sexual misconduct.¹⁷ The underlying issue lies in the higher institutions' lack of strict disciplinary process for offenders and a victim support system. A review on sexual misbehaviour at the National University of Singapore (NUS) revealed that at least 12 perpetrators would have been expelled had the revised sanctions been previously put in place as a deterrent.¹⁸ Beyond this, sex-related penalties issued by the Singapore courts have been trivial – academic potential can ultimately reduce defendants' sentence by a significant amount. The law should not justify egregious crimes of molestation, assault, up-skirting, voyeurism, child grooming, etc. on the grounds of educational achievements and qualifications. In addition, it is vital to take into consideration unreported and/or undisclosed cases of sexual misconduct between minors and primary or secondary education faculty. Ultimately, only when the courts impose proportionate punishments as deterrence can there be true safety and protection against sex-related crimes for women in Singapore.

¹⁶Lianne Chia, "The 'invisible Problem' of Family Violence: Older Women Who Suffer in Silence," CNA, last modified December 23, 2020, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/domestic-violence-older-women-elderly-ppo-9436852>.

¹⁷YUEN SIN, "Parliament: 172 Cases of Sexual Misconduct Handled by Unis, Polys and ITE over Past Five Years," The Straits Times, last modified November 3, 2020, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/politics/parliament-172-cases-of-sexual-misconduct-handled-by-universities-polytechnics>.

¹⁸Michael Yong, "12 NUS Students Would Have Been Expelled if New, Tougher Sanctions for Sexual Misconduct Were in Place," CNA, last modified February 4, 2021, <https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/nus-sexual-misconduct-students-expelled-committee-monica-baey-11613506>.

3.3.3 Protection and Safety of Women at Workplaces

A November 2020 survey showed that in the past five years, two in five workers in Singapore have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace but only three in ten survivors of sexual misconduct filed official reports against their perpetrators.¹⁹ This was the first and only nationally representative survey, regarding workplace sexual misbehaviour, ever conducted in Singapore. Prior to this study, the protection and safety of women at workplaces were ultimately in the hands of the courts. Yet, cases of sexual harassment and/or assault would go unreported, if not under-reported. Even when cases were reported, perpetrators faced minimal consequences. This is due to the blurred lines and gaps in understanding of what comprises sexual harassment, which indicates that workplace sexual misbehaviour is a prevalent but unrecognised issue.

More importantly, however, is the unsatisfactory measures Singaporean workplaces have taken to prevent and battle workplace sexual misconduct. There is presently neither legislation enacted to inform employers of the protective and preventive measures they must legally follow, nor policies in place to educate employees of their workers' rights. To further protect the employees, there should be a national legislation for better protection across all job sectors through anti-harassment training programs and grievance handling methods.

3.3.4 Protection and Safety of Women in the Community

Uncertainty of the protection and safety of young girls and women have reached an alarming condition in the digital age. While Singapore has created a relatively safe public environment for women, they are much more prone to sexual abuse on the internet. From 2016 to 2019, cases of technology-facilitated sexual violence rose from 47 to 140.²⁰ The fundamental issue lies in the narrative that young girls and women are easily exploitable.²¹ These online experiences can translate into real-life, altering the way sexes interact for the worse as inappropriate behaviour online continues to normalise discourse that objectifies and sexualises women.

The anonymity of the internet, coupled with the fact that children may be unaware of the accessibility of their personal information online also puts young girls at a disadvantage. In Singapore, of the 85% of minors that have social media presence, 16% engaged in online sexual interactions and 12% have conversed and met up with strangers from the internet.²²

Pervasive issues of online sexual abuse, which includes child grooming, sexualising, stalking, revenge pornography, sending or receiving unsolicited intimate messages, etc., have

¹⁹Ipsos, "AWARE-Ipsos survey reveals high prevalence of workplace sexual harassment in Singapore," last modified January 18, 2021, <https://www.ipsos.com/en-sg/aware-ipsos-survey-reveals-high-prevalence-workplace-sexual-harassment-singapore>.

²⁰AWARE, "AWARE's Sexual Assault Care Centre Saw 140 Cases of Technology-facilitated Sexual Violence in 2019, the Most Ever in One Year," AWARE, last modified December 18, 2020, https://www.aware.org.sg/2020/12/awares-sexual-assault-care-centre-saw-140-cases-of-technology-facilitated-sexual-violence-in-2019-the-most-ever-in-one-year/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=awares-sexual-assault-care-centre-saw-140-cases-of-technology-facilitated-sexual-violence-in-2019-the-most-ever-in-one-year.

²¹AMELIA TENG, "New Initiative Seeks to Keep Women Safe from Online Dangers," The Straits Times, last modified March 9, 2021, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/new-initiative-seeks-to-keep-women-safe-from-online-dangers>.

²²Daniel Burgess, "1 in 5 Children Involved in Online Sexual Behaviours: Survey," The Straits Times, last modified July 2, 2019, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/most-children-exposed-to-online-dangers-survey>.

indicated the gap in digital safety and thus the need for increased attention and awareness to cyber safety. A report revealed that 52% of sex-related crimes go unreported, with 'embarrassment' cited as the main reason that victims do not report cases of sexual abuse.²³ As important as it is to educate young girls and women of their digital safety, there should be harsher punishments put in place for online perpetrators.

3.4 FINANCIAL INSECURITY

Women in Singapore often feel financially insecure due to a combination of the economic nuances at workplaces as well as community and home-centric experiences. The issue seems to stem from an inherently patriarchal society that places men at a standing of greater significance than women, which limits women's ability to reach their full financial potential.

3.4.1 Financial Insecurity at Home

In Singapore, women often take up the role of caregiving for their children and their elder family members due to traditional and cultural notions that caregiving is a woman's duty.²⁴ Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, when all household members were present at home during circuit breaker, women bore the brunt of household duties and caregiving. Yet, caregiving remains an undervalued responsibility that places external burdens and financial risks for women. A 2018 study found that only about 4% of women feel financially secure, whereas 58.9% of women cited familial duties as the primary reason for leaving the workforce.²⁵ By extension, women who gave up their careers for caregiving suffered a 63% loss of personal income, or an average annual loss of S\$56,877.²⁶ Even women who can depend on their spouses for some levels of financial security are at threat, in the case of divorce, abuse of financial power, etc.

3.4.2 Financial Insecurity in Schools

In promoting financial literacy, young girls can be made aware of a lifestyle whereby they have several routes and options. By learning the importance of having career goals and being economically independent, women will less likely be left in situations of financial insecurity. Education systems can equip young girls with the notions that they do not have to rely on their future husbands for money, and more importantly, what they can do with their own finances in case they give up their careers for caregiving – creating budgets, investing early, securing income in retirement accounts, etc. This not only protects them from spousal and familial financial abuse but also teaches financial capability, which would promote confidence among women in the long-term.

²³Miren Gonzalez, "Report: A quarter of Singaporean women have been sexually harassed with more than half unreported," The Independent Singapore News, last modified August 1, 2019, <https://theindependent.sg/report-a-quarter-of-singaporean-women-have-been-sexually-harassed-with-more-than-half-unreported/>.

²⁴Navene Elangovan, "Female Caregivers Face Inadequate Finances in Retirement: Study," TODAYonline, last modified September 19, 2019, <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/female-caregivers-face-inadequate-finances-their-retirement-finds-study>.

²⁵AWARE, "MAKE CARE COUNT," Womens Rights - AWARE Singapore, last modified September 19, 2019, <https://www.aware.org.sg/wp-content/uploads/AWARE-Make-Care-Count-Report-19-9-19.pdf>.

²⁶AWARE, "MAKE CARE COUNT."

3.4.3 Financial Insecurity in Workplaces

Persisting gender pay gaps, across workplaces, continue to exacerbate financial insecurities. The gap between the median pay of men and women has shifted in recent years, but male workers continue to make more than their female counterparts on the same job and with similar qualifications.²⁷ Even though the employment rates among women have increased over time, high levels of occupational segregation persist as women continue to hold lower-paying jobs.²⁸ In fact, women are over-represented in lower-paying jobs as income growth favours men.²⁹ However, this existing wage gap fails to justify the fact that women typically face greater external duties than men, from caregiving responsibilities to maternal leave to parental leave.

Furthermore, there is a lack of retirement adequacy for women. Central Provident Fund (CPF) data revealed that women have not been able to achieve the Basic Retirement Sum as easily as men – in 2018, 67% of men achieved the basic retirement sum compared to the mere 56% of women who did.³⁰ Financial insecurity due to caregiving duties and parental leave, coupled with the wage gap, severely jeopardises women's retirement savings.

3.4.4 Financial Insecurity in the Community

Women are disadvantaged when it comes to larger medical bills, only contributing to their pre-existing financial burdens. The financial burdens do not justify the fact that women have to pay higher premiums for insurance.³¹ As such, the economic inequity across genders widens after medical and health insurance expenses.

There is also a lack of financial support for vulnerable groups within the female community, which includes single mothers, single divorced women, low-educated (elderly women), etc. These groups are even more underrepresented than the average woman and thus face greater financial insecurity. This is due to a lack of community interest groups and courses that would allow more women to develop vital work and life skills, from digital competency to financial literacy.

²⁷ Janice Lim, "MOM's First Nationwide Study Shows Gap Growing Slightly Between Median Wages of Men and Women," TODAYonline, last modified January 10, 2020, <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/first-nationwide-study-gender-wage-difference-manpower-ministry-shows-gap-has-widened>.

²⁸ JOANNA SEOW, "Adjusted Gender Pay Gap Narrows over More Than a Decade," The Straits Times, last modified January 10, 2020, <https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/manpower/adjusted-gender-pay-gap-narrows-over-more-than-a-decade>.

²⁹ SEOW, "Adjusted Gender Pay Gap Narrows over More Than a Decade."

³⁰ AWARE, "Emerging Stronger Together - A Call for Inclusive Long-term Recovery," Womens Rights - AWARE Singapore, last modified January 8, 2021, <https://www.aware.org.sg/wp-content/uploads/A-Call-for-Inclusive-Long-term-Recovery-AWAREs-submission-for-the-2021-National-Budget.pdf>.

³¹ Central Provident Fund Board, "Why Women Pay Higher CareShield Life Premiums," Are You Ready?, last modified July 22, 2018, <https://www.areyouready.gov.sg/YourInfoHub/Pages/News-Why-women-pay-higher-CareShield-Life-premiums-SUT20180722.aspx>.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 HOME

1. Mandate the removal of men from their homes into a shelter that provides support services such as mandatory counselling or therapy for men when a Personal Protection Order has been made against them;
2. Encourage men to take up caregiving responsibilities to support their women and ensure equal division of labour in the household;
3. Ensure that the eligibility of services to women should not be conditional on whether they are married or single. Women should receive the same level of support from government regardless of their marital status;
4. Greater support structures in place to support women in their decision making as women should have the choice to make their own decisions regarding their careers, marriage and childbirth, and not be weighed down or feel guilty about their decision because of societal views;
5. Better support for family caregivers by increasing awareness and accessibility of caregiver support networks and resources, as well as respite care services to prevent caregiver(s) burnout;
6. To enhance the safety net of caregivers and stay-at-home mothers, CPF policies should be reviewed and allow husbands to contribute CPF funds to their spouses.

4.2 SCHOOLS

1. Mandate online safety education for girls in schools;
2. Educate girls in financial literacy at school, which will include topics such as budgeting, savings, compound interest, insurance and investments;
3. Educate boys in school about healthy relationships, masculinity ideals and gender norms;
4. Inform parents about gender equality and to recognise and be mindful of their unconscious biases;
5. Increase female role models, who rose to their position from low-income households, to build young girls' aspirations especially in male dominated industries like STEM;
6. Curriculum alterations (i.e., more integration of gender studies or 'feminism' to social studies or humanities classes, focus on the importance of respect);
7. Train teachers to have the necessary skills and knowledge to educate students on topics on gender or to use gender-neutral language.

4.3 WORKPLACES

1. Reduce stereotyping in career fields and professions (i.e. when mentioning a secretary, it seems to imply that they have to be female);
2. Replace current job requirement policies with more gender-neutral concepts;
3. Establish micro-financing and mentoring for women-led businesses, particularly for women of disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds to advocate for female entrepreneurship;
4. Provide women with opportunities of leadership and networks to provide career guidance, which will further develop female talents;

5. Increase subsidies for women to take up leadership courses to prepare them for leadership roles (e.g., grooming for senior or board positions);
6. Represent and recognise women in male-dominated professions (i.e., medicine and dentistry);
7. Mandate economic policies for women who must decide between career or family and to ensure financial adequacy in later years;
 - a. Strengthen Human Resources policies that encourage firms to hire women back to work (re-employment and retraining packages to re-enter the workforce);
 - b. Integrate flexible work arrangements into normal work arrangements for women (e.g., remote working);
 - c. Increase level of paternity leave for a more balanced family life;
 - d. Convert childcare leave to family care leave.
8. Increase transparency in promotion and pay scale;
9. Define workplace policies, sanctions and channels of reporting to manage workplace harassment, and employee-experienced domestic violence;
10. Introduce talent and development strategies and invest in the programs from local financial institutions, particularly in lower and mid-career levels.

4.4 COMMUNITY

1. Introduce legislation mandating that both public and private sector organisations have written domestic violence response policies, and that all employers provide domestic violence response training for their employees;
2. Provide unemployed women with monetary compensation and/or CPF contribution for the unpaid care work towards the care of family members such as children and/or the elderly;
3. Provide education and awareness on 'rights,' for the public through a nation-wide campaign on the related laws, resources and support available for victims of domestic violence, which includes medical, legal, financial, psychological, etc.;
4. Establish media guidelines co-developed with regulatory and industry bodies to promote responsible and gender-sensitive reporting of violence and/or harassment against young girls and women;
5. Provide training to use the best universal practices when reporting on crimes against young girls and women through a Code of Practice model;
6. Create a nation-wide campaign of active bystander prevention for the public to have the skills and confidence to interrupt and prevent situations of violence;
7. Provide unemployed women with online guidelines co-developed with social media and technology companies to enhance protections for young girls and women from technology-facilitated harassment, abuse or violence;
8. Increase dialogues between invested parties to create awareness around the topic—government agencies, community organisations and the non-profit community;
9. Present community-based support networks for vulnerable women in underrepresented groups—single mothers, divorcees and from low-income families, caregivers.

PART II – SCWO & Member Organisations' Initiatives

5. SCWO AND MEMBER ORGANISATIONS' ON-GOING INITIATIVES AND FUTURE PLANS

SCWO and our member organisations have been working towards gender equality and tackling issues women face in Singapore. Ultimately, there needs to be a collaborative effort that involves the community and the civil society to shift mindsets and policies in order for there to be true change. It takes a whole community approach to tackle gender inequality and to empower and develop women in the society.

By showcasing notable present and future initiatives of SCWO and Member Organisations, it emphasizes that the civil societies have been and will continue to promote and improve the status of women in Singapore in all fields. Wholesale descriptions of initiatives by SCWO and Members Organisations can be found in the Appendix.

5.1 HOME

SCWO

I. Star Shelter

Star Shelter (SS) provides a safe temporary refuge for women and their children who are victims of family violence regardless of race, language, creed or religion, and takes a holistic approach to help residents heal from the trauma of abuse and rebuild their life, free from violence.

SS provides all residents with basic needs such as safe and secure housing, clothing and food, and practical needs such as financial assistance, childcare arrangements, and job matching. Residents' psychological needs are also met through individual and group therapy. Furthermore, the shelter conducts programmes to help meet resident's self-fulfilment needs which includes programmes for personal and career development. Additionally, SCWO is also part of the Inter Agency Task Force on Family Violence and the Family Violence Working Group.

SS is exploring an earlier intervention approach where instead of intervening only when cases have escalated to a high level of danger and risk, professional interventions step in earlier during the lower risk stage using principles of Restorative Justice and Practice.

A key benefit to intervene at an earlier lower/moderate risk stage is to be able to involve perpetrators to work safely together with the survivors, professionals and other stakeholders of the family to stop the violence. Other members of the family often are also impacted by the violence such as children, grandparents, relatives and even close friends. Giving each of them a voice is pertinent in restoring peace in the family.

Member Organisations

I. Association of Women for Action & Research (AWARE)

The Birds & Bees workshop by AWARE encourages parents to start open conversations at home and helps parents start and sustain important conversations with their children about sex, in a non-judgmental way. This workshop introduces crucial information about consent, personal boundaries, and safety to children, as well as to have open conversations about the difference between respectful healthy relationships, and abusive, unhealthy relationships.

AWARE's recent research projects have included studies of the situation and needs of low-income women, migrant spouses, migrant domestic workers who are caregivers, and female caregivers of older persons. Furthermore, AWARE has a limited-run shelter project (2 years) where AWARE provides housing and support for women in distress.

II. United Women Singapore (UWS)

UWS is part of the Inter Agency Task Force on Family Violence and in December 2019, UWS launched a report with IPSOS titled, "Challenge the Apathy: Shedding Light on Domestic Abuse in Singapore" where 300 Singaporeans were surveyed on their perceptions of domestic abuse. It was found that 10% of the participants have faced family violence and in a separate local study, an estimated 72% of female participants are not likely to report it. With these numbers, there is a high probability of females suffering in silence and therefore, a spillover effect at the workplace affecting employees' productivity, absenteeism, workplace safety and environment.

III. NTUC Women and Family Unit (WAF)

NTUC Women and Family Unit (WAF) is part of the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and represents the voice for working women and families. NTUC supports the aspirations of working women through the promotion and enhancement of employment opportunities as well as work-life initiatives. Presently, NTUC's WAF unit works on providing regular and free advisory clinics for NTUC members who are employers of Migrant Domestic Workers (MDW). This service allows NTUC members to seek advice on matters regarding the employment of their MDWs and is organised by WAF in partnership with the Centre for Domestic Employees (CDE). These advisory clinics will serve as a platform for members to better understand their responsibilities as an employer so they can build a strong rapport with their MDWs.

IV. P&G AMA #WeSeeEqual

P&G AMA #WeSeeEqual uses its voice in advertising to spark conversations about gender bias and motivate change. P&G introduced 'Share the Care', a new parental leave policy to support women at home. Under the new 'Share the Care' program, all new parents will be entitled to a minimum of 8 weeks' fully paid leave, with an additional 6 weeks' recovery leave for birth mothers. Paternity & Secondary Caregivers will now be entitled to 8 weeks of paid leave and it can be taken flexibly over a period of 18 months. With such policies, P&G AMA #WeSeeEqual hopes to support employees in critical stages of life and reflect their commitment to gender equality.

5.2 SCHOOLS

SCWO

I. Project Awesome: Dare to Dream by Singapore Women's Hall of Fame

Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF) is Singapore's premier award for women who have made, or are making, an impact on our nation. Project Awesome: Dare to Dream (May 2021 – May 2022) is a multi-pronged programme to inspire young Singaporeans, and especially girls, to dream big, aim high, and live to their fullest potential.

This is being done by bringing to schoolchildren the stories of the Awesome Women of Singapore, that is, the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame honourees. Many of these women had to break through traditional and cultural barriers to achieve their dreams. Learning about these women will inspire young Singaporeans to pursue their passions no matter what obstacles they may face. Schools will have access to a range of educational materials/resources that will help teachers use the stories of the Awesome women to instil in students important core values and personal skills. The resources have been developed in line with the Character and Citizenship Education curricula. The following Project Awesome resources will be made available:

1. Story-based Activities for Kindergarten students and Customised Lesson Plans for Upper Primary, Lower Secondary, and ITE students: The lesson plans are based on the core values, social and emotional competencies, and active citizenry exhibited by the Awesome women. Through the stories of the Awesome women, students will explore ideas of their own identity, relationships, and choices. Each lesson plan is half an hour long and promises classroom lessons that use process-based approaches including: cognitive development, consideration, experiential, modified values clarification, and storytelling. The lesson plans will be interactive and include instructional strategies such as: cooperative learning, group work, role playing, and self-reflection. The lesson plans can be used during Social Studies or CCE classes.
2. Workshops for Upper Primary and Lower Secondary students: The workshops will take participants on a journey of self-discovery as they make choices around identity and relationships by using a story tree. Each workshop is two hours long and will make use of storytelling and gamification techniques. The choices made by participants will be matched to stories of the Awesome women who might have made similar choices. Through this journey, participants will learn more about the Awesome women and their contributions to Singapore. They will realise that they too can pursue their passions, achieve their dreams, and contribute to their community and society.
3. Thematic Exhibitions and Talks: The main content will be posters with profiles of the Hall of Fame women selected for the exhibition, with an introductory panel giving an overview of their contributions and achievements. Quizzes and other interactive elements are an option that will encourage students to engage more fully with the exhibition. There are 7 different themes for the exhibition: (1) Action & Adventure (2) Caring & Sharing (3) Challenging Norms (4) Building & Leading (5) Being Creative (6)

Stepping up for STEM and (7) The Lives of Women. Talks by someone in the Hall of Fame or by other inspiring personalities and role models can be arranged.

Project Awesome is currently collaborating with Republic Polytechnic and SOTA, who will help Project Awesome gain a wider reach to the youths, to inspire them with the stories of the Awesome Women from the book. SOTA has done up 2 videos – Tan Yoon Yin and Lee Choo Neo as well as attractive printables that will be uploaded as an additional resource. Republic Polytechnic will be driving a social media campaign, and have come up with various creative ideas to engage our target audience and inspire youths to 'Find the Awesome in You'.

Project Awesome will continue to refine the teaching aids and resources offered to schools, to grow the number of schools and educational institutions participating in the project, and to expand the network of community partners. The long-term goal is to develop Project Awesome into a well-established programme in schools, and possible as a social enterprise. Their five-year plan is to have 50% of the students participate in at least 1 Project Awesome activity. Assuming that there are roughly 160,000 students in upper primary and lower secondary, Project Awesome aims for at least 10% of these students to have taken part in at least 1 activity in their pilot year. As such, through the Project Awesome aforementioned resources (lesson plans, thematic exhibitions, talks, and workshops) and the collaborations with student groups, they hope to reach 16,000 students during their pilot year.

II. Inspiring Girls

Inspiring Girls, an SCWO initiative, aims to connect young girls between the ages of 11 and 17 to successful role models in hopes of empowering them with the belief that they too can achieve their ambitions. The initiative hopes to expose schooling aged girls to a wide array of career possibilities through female role models from all backgrounds.

SCWO will leverage the Inspiring Girls HQ's online campaigns and resources to reach out to the local community. In the next 2 years, SCWO aims to raise the Inspiring Girls (Singapore) profile to corporates, parents, and schools, and to build content for the Inspiring Girls Singapore website as a future resource pitstop for both students and educators. By providing video clips featuring inspiring women leaders from different fields and occupations, this will allow all girls with access to the internet to connect with female role models online.

III. Character and Citizenship Education

A tripartite project among SCWO, United Women Singapore, and Singapore University of Social Sciences, this collaboration is looking into co-creating a programme to incorporate into the Character and Citizenship Education in secondary schools in Singapore, and focusing on the topics of understanding gender equality, safety and well-being.

The programme is a multipronged approach that aims to educate secondary students on understanding gender norms and its impact on them and society. In addition, to inculcate a value system that will guide them in making responsible decisions for themselves and the community. They will also be educated about family violence and its impact.

Member Organisations

I. 100 Women in Finance

100 Women in Finance host events for school aged girls to enable them to understand the different types of roles available if they choose to pursue a career in finance and also have an impact committee that goes into schools and universities to encourage girls to pursue finance.

In the coming years, 100 Women in Finance aims to roll out GirlForce, an initiative that supports underprivileged girls from diverse backgrounds to gain access to careers in the finance sector. This will also help to build a pipeline of girls entering the industry.

II. Financial Women's Association (Singapore)

Financial Women's Association (FWA) will be lobbying to co-develop a financial literacy program with SG Gov to teach children, especially girls, to have life skills to apply, and not be dependent on others such as their spouse, and to educate them on the importance of retirement planning. This will help build financial literacy, and ensure that they will not fall into debt or poverty in the future. The future goal is for the financial literacy programme to be part of the current Character and Citizenship education, as well as to further build up a knowledge base on financial literacy such as digital assets and cryptocurrency.

III. P&G AMA #WeSeeEqual

P&G has partnered with the National University of Singapore (NUS) to help female students explore an interdisciplinary career in Product Supply. This is done so through webinars featuring P&G women in leadership, ex-interns and real business cases. P&G also aims to continue to partner with IHLs to connect female students with P&G leaders to share their experiences. P&G is also interested in working to create a more equal world – with equal voice and equal representation for all individuals – including a special focus on girls in STEM. Additionally, P&G is also keen on brand partnerships (e.g Whisper) to ensure sanitary pads are accessible.

IV. United Women Singapore (UWS)

In 2014, United Women Singapore launched the Girls2Pioneers programme. It is UWS' signature outreach programme, which encourages girls aged 10-18 years to take up STEM subjects in school and builds the pipeline of future women leaders in STEM. The programme reaches out to roughly 2500 girls per year (over 4500 girls pre COVID times) and includes proprietary research conducted, online or digital platform events, webinars, talks and mentoring programmes. A scholarship programme is planned to launch in 2022: UWS \$stepUp Financial Literacy Programme. The UWS \$stepUp programme aims to educate young girls, aged 12-16 years old, about the importance of financial literacy, saving, responsible consumption and financial Independence. The programme launches in Q4 , 2021.

V. International Women's Forum (IWF) Singapore

In 2014, the International Women's Forum (IWF) Singapore Education Grant was established for women between the ages of 17-35 who are currently pursuing diplomas or degrees in Institutes of Higher Learning in Singapore. The grant was established in an effort to nurture the future generations of women who may wrestle with financial constraints and/or women who did not have the opportunity to attend university before they joined the workforce – students are selected based on their grit, character and their contributions to others. Presently, 98 young women represented from 13 Institutes of Higher Learning in Singapore have benefitted from the IWF education grant.

5.3 WORKPLACES

SCWO

I. BoardAgender

BoardAgender, an initiative of SCWO, is dedicated to advancing more women into senior leadership roles and boardrooms in Singapore. BoardAgender launched the inaugural Mentoring Programme for Aspiring Women Directors 2021 to introduce aspiring and “next-generation” female directors in Singapore to experienced director-mentors.

Through the programme, mentees will gain access to experienced directors who will provide guidance and support, build mentees’ confidence and help deepen their peer networks, achieving their professional developmental goals.

BoardAgender aims to take in a new cohort for the mentoring programme annually, and to provide mentees with the opportunity to develop their skills to become future mentors themselves so that they may “pay it forward” to another generation of aspiring board directors.

Member Organisations

I. Mums@Work

Mums@Work primarily works with mothers who are trying to balance their work and family, and also work with employers who are keen to hire and train them. This is done through:

- Hiring events specifically for back-to-work mothers
- Training events for employers to guide them to managing flexi-workers and back-to-work female hires
- Partnering with employers to engage Mum-entrepreneurs as vendors during bazaars held at workplaces
- Partnering with organisations for hiring campaigns to design reintegration programmes and returnships for women

Also, for now till August 2022, Mums@Work is championing against ageism and has events lined up in partnership with firms to encourage hiring practices that do not discriminate against gender and age.

II. United Women Singapore (UWS)

UWS has developed the GenSafe (Gender Safe) Workplaces - a programme for organisations in the private sector to create a more supportive work environment for survivors of domestic violence. Launched on 1 October 2020, the programme will help organisations implement a comprehensive plan to increase its awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on their workforce, spot the signs of employees suffering in silence, equip key personnel with the skills to respond to them and to ensure a safe, productive and supportive workplace environment for all.

The plan is to further develop the programme and increase outreach. In January 2021, UWS launched the GenSafe Workplaces – Specialist Series where industry leaders and experts were featured to help private sector organisations examine the impacts of domestic violence on the workplace and learn from on how to create a safe and secure environment for their workforce. Topics covered were (1) Creating a Workplace Safety Plan & Threat Assessment Policy (2) Management of Domestic Violence Perpetrators in the Workplace (3) Respectful Workplaces: Sexual Harassment Training & Prevention (4) Bystander to Allyship in the Workplace (5) Supporting & Managing Employees Impacted by Domestic Violence.

In Q4 2021, UWS plan to publish an Informational Handbook which will contain model policies and strategies for private sector organisations to adopt and create their own domestic violence workplace policy that works for their organisation and its people.

III. 100 Women in Finance

100 Women in Finance are heavily advocating for women to take on roles in investment teams and have been organised specific initiatives to encourage talented women to develop their visibility and build their reputations. The goal is to increase the visibility of women in investment roles and increase the capital allocated to them, and 100 Women in Finance is working on getting industry partners to sign a pledge that they will work internally to make a demographic change within their organisation to assist the industry move towards this goal.

IV. Financial Women's Association (Singapore)

FWA has been making positive strides towards gender equality in the workplaces through the following initiatives:

- Mentoring programme for mid-career women aspiring to become future leaders at their workplaces
- A symposium to be held in August 2021 with 50 C managers in banking and finance to have a conversation about gender inequality at the workplaces
- Financial literacy research study that has been submitted to MSF

V. Association of Women for Action & Research (AWARE)

AWARE has the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory which is a service for people who have experienced workplace harassment and discrimination. AWARE's corporate training arm, Catalyse Consulting, also offers a range of programmes to build respectful, inclusive, safe and emphatic workplaces for people to truly maximise their potential.

VI. PrimeTime Business and Professional Women's Association

Since the very beginning, PrimeTime has committed to supporting business and professional women to thrive both professionally and personally. PrimeTime has done so through the following initiatives:

- Mentoring conversations around career development, professional advancement and different areas of professional experience with a Buddy-Mentor, who is another PrimeTime fellow Member.
- Life-Coaching unlocks sources of creativity and productivity, through helping women identify beliefs, feelings and perspectives that may be limiting their performance. This improves outlook as it gives women the actionable tools necessary for becoming unstuck and creating a more meaningful life and successful career.
- The Leadership Programme is crafted with a goal to support women in achieving their leadership aspirations. The programme encourages women to explore their unique leadership styles, which will help them navigate leadership obstacles by improving self-awareness, enhancing executive presence and developing strategic thinking skills.

VII. NTUC Women and Family Unit (WAF)

NTUC WAF focuses on supporting women's career and livelihood choices through programmes and initiatives such as:

- Reimagine Career Fairs that feature job opportunities offered by progressive employers including jobs with flexible work arrangements and in-community jobs.
- Passion to Profit Initiative that helps women explore alternative forms of livelihoods by transforming their hobbies, skills, or talents into viable money-making ventures.
- Promoting progressive workplace practices to unionised companies.

NTUC WAF will be conducting more studies and further research to promote and improve gender equality in the workplace, so that women can access and enjoy equal opportunities at work. WAF will continue its partnership with the PAP Women's Wing to conduct sensing and feedback gathering through online surveys and social media polls.

VIII. Federation of Business and Professional Women (Singapore)

The Federation of Business and Professional Women works toward women's empowerment through personal development of members. The organisation works with other BPW clubs in Singapore and globally. The federation currently engages in young business and professional women's activities to strengthen skills and provide personal growth for young women in the workforce.

IX. P&G AMA #WeSeeEqual

P&G is committed to spending a cumulative total of \$200 million US dollars by deliberately working with women-owned businesses across the Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa (AMA) region, by 2025. The company will continue to voice in forums such as #WeSeeEqual to drive discussion and action on the issues that matter.

5.4 COMMUNITY

SCWO

I. Maintenance Support Central (MSC)

Maintenance Support Central (MSC) is a multi-service drop-in centre in SCWO that provides support and assistance through various services to empower financially abused women with knowledge about their legal and marital rights, and to provide them with all rounded support.

The services provided by MSC are:

- Video-link services for clients to file for Fresh Fresh Maintenance Application and Enforcement of Maintenance Orders. Clients are also given the support and legal guidance to understand the procedure
- Legal clinics twice a month giving free Family and Syariah Law legal advice to those who are unable to afford basic legal services
- Talks to educate the public and social service professionals on family law matters
- Counselling services and guidance for individuals to rebuild their lives and encourage them towards independence and self confidence
- Information helpline to provide contact details of community partners and inform callers on appropriate services to seek help from

In the coming years, MSC aims to have legal guidance and information for clients readily available and understandable to the public, and ensure that clients can understand their basic legal rights without consulting a lawyer. Additionally, MSC hopes to develop and extend its counselling services to include marital counselling to address marital issues in a restorative manner, and elements of psychoeducation, counselling and group work to build healthy and strong relationships between parties and children.

II. Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SHWF)

SHWF recognises the achievements and contributions of women over the years, records for posterity their stories, and shares these stories widely so as to inspire people, and especially young Singaporeans, to believe in themselves, to dream big and to want to make those dreams come true.

In partnership with the National Museum of Singapore, SHWF launched in 2018 a series of The Lives of Women Exhibition to tell the story of women and their changing roles and status in Singapore over the years. Till date, SHWF has 2 installations and the final installation of The Lives of Women series will look ahead and offer a glimpse of what women's lives in Singapore might be like in 2050.

SHWF also regularly organises Heritage Walk: "Walking in the Footsteps of our Foremothers" that take participants through the Bras Basah-Bugis Precinct where a number of landmark buildings associated with the honourees of the Hall of Fame are located.

SHWF's future goal is to continue to raise SHWF's public profile, build a network of partners (educational institutions, heritage organisations, corporations, other civil society groups, and

others), and expand the publicity and marketing reach. SWHF also hopes to further publications based on SWHF and The Lives of Women exhibition.

III. SCWO Ageing Taskforce & Singapore Alliance for Women in Ageing (SAWA)

The SCWO Ageing Taskforce, spearheaded by SCWO, and alongside National Trades Union Congress Women & Family Unit (NTUC WAF), People's Association Women's Integration Network Council (PA WIN), Persatuan Pemudi Islam Singapura (PPIS), Singapore Women's Association (SWA), Women Empowered for Work and Mothering (WEWAM), and Society for WINGS aims to bring to light the gendered phenomenon of ageing and aims to advance the working concerning ageing and aged women in Singapore by conducting research studies on the most vulnerable population of aged women in Singapore. The taskforce will continue to be a vehicle for all SCWO Member Organisations to provide their issues concerning ageing matters and will reflect the voices of them.

In addition, the Singapore Alliance for Women in Ageing (SAWA), an alliance between SCWO, Association of Women for Action & Research (AWARE), PPIS and Tsao Foundation, focuses on promoting the independence, care, participation, dignity and self-fulfilment of older women and has been actively looking into ways to improve the status of older women through research, conversations with Members of Parliament and engaging family caregivers of older person. SAWA will also be submitting a gender equality report of its own.

IV. A.C.T Against Violence

In November 2020, SCWO launched the A.C.T Against Violence Website - a one-stop information and help site regarding all forms of violence against women of all ages. This includes violence against elderly, children, intimate partners, as well as vulnerable adults such as those who may be physically or mentally incapacitated. The website also aims to be a platform that can help to (1) increase awareness of the various types of violence against women, (2) connect to people who will need the information, and (3) advise on how to best take precautions against violence.

SCWO strives to make A.C.T Against Violence the go-to website for victims, professionals and the wider community who needs information and help on all forms of violence against women, and will do so by constantly updating and upgrading the website.

V. Women's Register

Women's Register (WR) is a SCWO initiative that provides women aged 18 and above with a platform for networking, inspiration, community engagement and education. It enables women to gain new connections in both the social and professional arenas, support and guidance from other empowered women, and to be involved in the community. WR aims to target women from age 18-25 specifically in the future to allow younger women and students to gain exposure to different career options, to organise workshops to enable them to gain new skills, as well as to form meaningful relationships to empower and lead one another.

VI. In Her Stride

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women annually, SCWO organises the In Her Stride series aimed at educating and increasing awareness on the important issues of violence against women in Singapore. Launched in 2018, SCWO engages community partner and stakeholders, professionals, and the wider community to work together to eliminate violence against women in Singapore.

For this year's In Her Stride, SCWO will be holding a short film competition for students from Institutes of Higher Learning and will focus in 3 main topics (1) Bullying and/or Cyberbullying, (2) Any forms of Harassment (verbal, physical, emotional, and/or technology-facilitated), and (3) Violence in Relationships (domestic, family, dating etc). This competition aims to involve the youths in the conversation on violence against women and will be a form of advocacy to bring about public awareness on these topics. SCWO will continue to stride towards ending violence against women by engaging different communities through the annual In Her Stride event.

VII. Public Spaces Dedicating or Naming Proposal

The Ministry of Social and Family Development has declared 2021 the year to 'come together to celebrate the achievements of women' and to 'co-create and catalyse solutions that will shift societal mindsets. In light of this, SCWO has proposed the following initiative: Dedicate a public space to Singapore women to honour our women for their contributions in nation building. SCWO, together with the Government agencies and community partners will work together to develop this space that serves as a symbolic and active pursuit of elevating women's position in the country.

Public spaces can also include gardens and roads. Naming, dedicating or renaming public spaces (e.g., roads, buildings, streets, etc.) is a traditionally accepted way of recognising one's achievements. We can look at featuring them after women in the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF). SCWO nominates the following 10 Hall of Fame women for commemoration, to which certain Singaporean spaces should be named after:

1. Chan Choy Siong
2. Shirin Fozdar
3. Elizabeth Choy
4. Checha Davies
5. Che Zahara Noor Mohd
6. Ruth Wong
7. Ann Wee
8. Hajjah Fatimah
9. Agnes Joachim
10. Georgette Chen

There are, reportedly, about 540 roads in Singapore named after men and only about 40 named after women. In fact, as far as SCWO can determine, only 3 roads are named after women in recognition of their achievements or contributions to Singapore.

SCWO hopes that the literal acknowledgment of women's contributions, through dedicating a public space to Singapore women, naming or renaming Singapore's roads and gardens/spaces, would shine through Singaporean society figuratively. This would shift the pre-existing notions that place men on a pedestal (i.e., the fact that men matter more than women, and that only men built and shaped Singapore, and that women played and should continue to play a secondary role in society). The extensive details surrounding the reasoning, procedures and ultimate aims of this initiative can be found in Part IV of this report.

Member Organisations

I. Mums@Work

Mums@Work organises networking events for Mum-entrepreneurs, women that run businesses from home, and are supporting their kids at the same time. Mums@Work also hosts training events, such as the annual "Singapore: 40-over-40 Inspiring Women" Campaign that aims to speak up against ageism and gender biases, and prove that age is just a number and women in their later years can do amazing things.

II. United Women Singapore (UWS)

UWS has been working towards gender equality in the community through the following initiatives:

- **Gender Equality Impact Awards (GEIA)**
UWS organises their annual Gender Equality Impact Awards (GEIA) to recognise organisations, men, women, and youth in Singapore who have championed initiatives to advance gender equality and empowerment of women in the workplace and/or community. These awards are either in-person or virtual, and attract widespread nominations from a large number of private sector organisations in Singapore. It is usually accompanied by a fire-side chat and/or a panel discussion on gender diversity issues by industry leaders.
- **Discussion Groups (UWS Discussions)**
By engaging the member and volunteer base of the organisation, UWS conduct periodic discussion groups on topics related to the unpaid care work burden on women, increasing women representation in STEM industries, the confidence gap faced by women and more. These discussions help identify the issues faced by women in the workplace and society and give direction to our advocacy, programming and research efforts.
- **Distinguished Speaker Series (DSS) and Dialogues with Diplomats (DWD) — Advocacy events**
The DSS is a virtual event series featuring business leaders, thought leaders sharing their views and experiences on women in leadership roles, male allyship and other topics related to gender equality and women's empowerment. The DWD is a virtual event series featuring the women diplomatic leaders in Singapore sharing their rich cultural and leadership experiences with the women and girls

- UWS Boys Empowered programme

This programme aims to create a future wherein boys are able to maintain healthy relationships, reach their fullest potential and contribute proactively to the community. By engaging with boys between 12 and 16 years old of all socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, the programme will provide young boys with the skills and confidence to safely prevent or interrupt violence in the community and empower them to be allies for gender equality. This is a mixed medium programme consisting of a Social Media Campaign titled #STRENGTH WITHOUT VIOLENCE, Group Workshops and a yearly Community Summit.

III. NTUC Women and Family Unit (WAF)

To support women in the community, NTUC's Women and Family Unit (WAF) together with Punggol Shore Constituency launched the "Women Supporting Women Mentorship Programme". NTUC women leaders with their professional experience as well as deep knowledge of worker issues volunteer as mentors to provide guidance in professional and personal development to women in Punggol Shore.

IV. International Women's Forum (IWF) Singapore

IWF Singapore's aspiration is to impact the lives of beneficiaries beyond financial support. To this end, IWF established a mentorship program in collaboration with Young Women's Leadership Connection (YWLC). This mentorship program allows IWF to continue helping young women navigate through their career choices. IWF Singapore hopes that its efforts help widen the perspectives of young women in Singapore, emboldening them to be ambitious in their endeavours.

V. People's Association – Women's Integration Network (PA WIN) Council

PA WIN will roll out initiatives to provide better support for caregivers of elderly persons. The Council will work with agencies, grassroots organisations and community partners to run programmes on better caregiving skills and self-care and facilitate the formation of support networks for caregivers of the elderly for a start. The Council hopes in the long term, to strengthen the community-based support networks for caregivers to better address their needs and encourage active community volunteerism with more partners and residents contributing to the initiative.

PART III – BoardAgender's Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development

26 August 2021

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

BoardAgender is delighted to have been allowed to share our ideas and suggestions to the Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development on how to increase the number of women on boards in Singapore.

Numerous academic and practitioner reports have demonstrated the business and social benefits of having greater gender diversity on boards. We, as BoardAgender, have been a significant contributor to increasing the awareness of boards and businesses in Singapore as to the importance of having more women on our boards. However, whilst progress has taken place, we believe that much more can be done.

This paper is based upon our observations and the perspectives of current company directors and aspiring women directors. It summarises our views on where we are now, current barriers to progress in Singapore, what has worked well to increase gender diversity in other markets, and our recommendations on what can be done to improve the number of female board directors in Singapore.

2. WHERE ARE WE AT NOW

Over the past addition, the mindset of directors and senior leaders towards gender diversity has improved, with many more people aware of the importance of diversity for business and society.

However, despite companies in Singapore having proportionately higher numbers of women in C-suite roles, progress in the boardroom has been slower than in other markets such as Australia. In addition, progress has been inconsistent between companies and sectors.

3. BARRIERS TO PROGRESS IN SINGAPORE

Most Singapore directors and business leaders individually acknowledge that greater gender diversity is essential for business and society. However, we believe that there is collective inertia to make the change a reality, a lack of joint accountability for achieving targets and making progress, and a gap between the narrative and action.

We consider that the board succession planning and board appointment processes of many companies are often too informal. Further, a lack of a female director pipeline is still used as an excuse for not appointing women to boards, leading to those women on boards being potentially over-boarded. We feel that implementing the amended 9-year rule for director independence was a missed opportunity to ensure that companies renewed their boards' directors.

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

Finally, an overfocus on proving that board diversity is good for business performance (which tends to focus on shareholder value) without considering the longer-term social benefits (i.e., stakeholder value) can deter progress. This situation is particularly so during the current business environment when businesses are under pressure. The current climate may be an opportune time for companies to bring new skills and ideas into their boardrooms.

4. WHAT HAS WORKED TO INCREASE GENDER DIVERSITY ON BOARDS IN OTHER MARKETS?

Australia has successfully increased the number of women on its listed company boards without using quotas. As highlighted in a recent report by the University of Queensland, [Towards Board Gender Parity: Lessons from the Past – Direction for the Future](#), in collaboration with the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) and the Australian Gender Equality Council, despite lagging most of the Western world on statistics surrounding workplace gender equality, Australia has been one of only three countries to achieve greater than 30 % of its top listed companies being women. This progress was made over ten years, using an ecosystem approach involving collaboration between multiple partners.

Two significant initiatives which supported its progress were the ASX Corporate Government Council Principles and recommendations concerning reporting on diversity and the AICD Chair's Mentoring Program. This success of the latter program guided BoardAgender to establish its own Mentoring Programme for Aspiring Women Directors, which we launched in July 2021.

Australia's efforts were a result of the collaboration of several direct and indirect influencers. The direct influencers were the ASX Corporate Government Principles and Recommendations, the AICD, investors and investor representative bodies, the 30% Club Australia and individual chair champions. Indirect influencers included the media, advocacy organisations for greater gender diversity such as Chief Executive Women and Champions of Change, executive search firms, and research, with the support of the government through targets for government boards, as well as efforts by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency and the Federal Sex Discrimination Commission. However, it is notable that in Singapore, some of the equivalent organisations have not been actively advocating for greater gender diversity on boards to date.

Other markets which have made progress in different ways are the UK, Hong Kong and requirements in California. Hong Kong and California have taken a different route to the UK as both markets seek to push for more women on boards through legislation.

- UK - Through progressively increasing targets since 2011, by early 2021, none of the FTSE 350 listed companies had all-male boards. 36.2% of board seats of the FTSE100, 33.2% of FTSE 250 and 34.3% across the FTSE350 board seats were held by women.

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

For financial services firms, female representation on boards is currently at 32%, having increased 39% since 2016, according to think tank New Financial. More recently, the Financial Conduct Authority is expected to finalise new rules by the end of 2021, requiring companies to have at least 40% women and one non-White director in their boardrooms. If these goals are not met, companies will need to explain if they fall short. In addition, they will be expected to publish data on the diversity of senior management.

- Hong Kong - To date, Hong Kong has not had as much progress on increasing women on its boards as Singapore. However, progressive legislation has been proposed as a part of the new environment, social and governance (ESG) rules put forth by Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing (HKEX). If legislated, these will require all new listing candidates to have at least one woman on their boards when going public. Existing listed entities will be given a three-year window to comply. Under the proposal, failure to comply could attract a range of penalties from a public reprimand to denial of access to fundraising facilities, training, suspension of trading and a delisting.
- California - Over the past three years, California has doubled the number of female directors on its publicly traded companies' boards by requiring traded companies in the state to have at least one, two or three women on their boards, depending on their size by the end of 2021. Companies that don't comply potentially face monetary penalties.

Whilst we understand that the types of companies listed on the stock exchanges in these markets differ from those in Singapore, we believe that there are lessons that Singapore can learn from the success of these initiatives in these markets.

5. BOARDAGENDER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

BoardAgender believes that increasing the number of women on its boards in Singapore will require more concerted effort and a more collaborative ecosystem approach, as highlighted in our 2018 report, [20 by 2020: Gender Diversity on Singapore Boards – A Path to Action](#).

Parties who will need to be involved including the government and government agencies; companies; regulators (including SGX and MAS); the Singapore Institute of Directors (SID) and other director organisations; institutional investors and advisory groups; women's groups; executive search firms; the media; universities and education providers; current directors and aspiring women directors.

We believe that more concerted efforts will need to be made across the following four areas (4Ps) by all organisations in Singapore - companies, statutory boards and not-for-profits:

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

5.1 PIPELINE

We believe many women in Singapore who have the right technical skills and experiences to add value in the boardroom are open to stepping up into board roles. They, however, need additional support to build the trusted relationships and expertise in board dynamics to support them being appointed to and being successful in these roles. We can support aspiring female directors who are close to board-ready by:

- Mentoring by current directors - Increasing opportunities for sponsorship and mentoring by existing company chairs and directors of aspiring women directors, similar to BoardAgender's current programme.
- Structured networking - Increasing opportunities for structured networking between current directors and aspiring women directors on matters including corporate governance industry topics.
- Non-technical training - Expanding training directors beyond technical training to non-technical training such as board dynamics as part of continuous board education for directors.
- Board observers - Bringing in aspiring/near-ready female board directors as observers at board meetings to immerse them into the board environment.
- Register of board-ready women - Publishing a readily available list of board-ready women with details on how they can add value to companies. A centralised board matching service for aspiring female directors to be set up.

We also consider that it is crucial to building a sustainable pipeline of next-generation board-ready women. Women should start to prepare to be board-ready early in their careers and build networks and soft skills in board dynamics. Suggested initiatives include:

- Gender diversity disclosures - Requiring all companies over a specific size (say > 100 people) to disclose gender pipeline information to the government, similar to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency in Australia. This will support increasing awareness of all companies about their female leadership pipelines.
- Start board exposure when young - Encouraging younger women to take up committee and board work starting at university (such as student unions) and continuing whilst at work.
- Encourage aspiring female directors to step up - Awarding scholarships to aspiring women directors to financially support them to do director training.

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

5.2 PROCESS

Many directors and aspiring directors believe that the process of appointing directors by many companies is relatively opaque. Initiatives to strengthen the processes around the appointment of directors which the nominating committees (or equivalent) of organisations should implement include:

- Having at least one female director on the nominating committee.
- Ensuring that the slate of potential director candidates considered includes at least one woman candidate.
- Appointing aspiring women to be board advisors, particularly those in adjacent industries or with technology skills, to SMEs to build relationships and board competency.
- Reviewing board assessment processes to critically review the assessment of the diversity of board skill sets.

5.3 PRINCIPLES

We believe that Singapore companies must continue to enhance their corporate governance. Greater external disclosure supports this. Our government and regulators play an essential role in ensuring that all organisations make sustainable progress in this area. We recommend the following are implemented to support increasing diversity on our boards:

- Require all companies to have at least one woman on all listed company boards by 2025.
- Require increased transparency of board succession and appointment processes through greater disclosure in annual reports.
- Require companies to determine board diversity targets for women and disclose them in annual reports.
- Require companies to disclose their board skills matrixes in their annual reports, including the actions they plan to take to meet their skill needs.
- Require companies to disclose how board and senior management compensation aligns to gender diversity.
- Encourage companies to reduce the maximum time directors spend on boards to 6 years.

Further, our advocacy efforts must continue, including having:

- Investor groups to step up and actively raise questions on listed companies' lack of gender diversity on boards.
- SID to increase advocacy for more women on boards, proposing targets for companies.

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

Finally, we should have an environment where we reward organisations that have made progress at increasing the gender diversity on their boards:

- Implement a 'board diversity ratings' system to guide stakeholders, similar to sustainability ratings.
- Include board diversity as a recommended ESG criteria used when financial institutions structure financial products for organisations.

5.4 PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that more collaboration amongst various ecosystem partners is necessary to accelerate women's progress onto boards.

Firstly, we believe that the government can plan a more significant role in increasing oversight over various initiatives which support increasing diversity on boards. This could include:

- Establishing a framework and guidelines on how board diversity aligns with the broader gender issues and pipeline and supports business and societal objectives, linking up all ecosystem partners.
- Together with the GLCs/TLCs, the government can take the lead and set an example by putting more women on their boards, executive committees, task forces and working groups.

Secondly, there is a need to increase stakeholder collaboration, as piecemeal initiatives won't move the bar quickly or be sustainable. These include:

- Forming government-supported working groups to recommend and support getting more women on boards in the following areas:
 - Investors groups.
 - PEs and investment bankers (which supporting IPOs).
 - Executive search firms.
- Building greater alignment of efforts to increase women on boards and family businesses/SME community/related industry chambers.
- Establishing an umbrella women's organisation for senior women (leveraging current associations), bringing together senior directors and C-suite women leaders.

Submission to Panel for Conversations on Singapore Women's Development August 2021

Finally, it is essential to enhance communication, celebrate our progress and bring all players along:

- Appoint high profile and prominent leaders to consistently champion board diversity at the government and the Chair level. This could be a role for, say, one to two years.
- Profile more success stories of younger women who have stepped onto boards and how they have contributed. It is vital to change the narrative that being a director is just a retirement job.
- Increase the frequency of reporting on the progress of new women on listed boards to quarterly, from every six months.
- Be bolder to 'shame' listed companies that don't have women directors.
- Continue to encourage and share research on the benefits of board diversity and governance best practices.

Further details on the stakeholders who should be involved can be found in Appendix A.

6. CONCLUSION

Increasing the number of women on boards in Singapore requires all of us to recognise the importance and benefit of greater board diversity to our society, our organisations and our people.

Increased gender diversity on boards is not just good for business - it is good for everyone, in line with greater sustainability. In particular, women should up their game, companies must open up, and the government and regulators should up the ante.

Making progress won't be easy. However, we believe that our roadmap of recommendations will pave the way to accelerating progress in increasing the number of women on Singapore's boards in the coming decade to achieve its target of 30% women on boards well ahead of 2030.

Appendix A – Recommendations

Appendix A – Recommendations

	Govt and Govt agencies	Companies	Regulators (SGX and MAS including CBD)	SID and other director organisations	Institutional investors and advisory groups	Women's groups such as BoardAgender	Executive search firms	Current directors	Media	Universities and education providers	Aspiring women directors
Pipeline of women											
1. <u>Mentoring by current directors</u> - Increasing opportunities for sponsorship and mentoring by existing company chairs and directors of aspiring women directors, similar to BoardAgender's current programme.		X		D		D		X			X
2. <u>Structured networking</u> - Increasing opportunities for structured networking between current directors and aspiring women directors on matters including corporate governance industry topics.		X		D		D		X			X
3. <u>Non-technical training</u> - Expanding training directors beyond technical training to non-technical training such as board dynamics as part of continuous board education for directors.				D						D	X
4. <u>Board observers</u> - Bringing in aspiring/near-ready female board directors as observers at board meetings to immerse them into the board environment.		D						D			X
5. <u>Register of board-ready women</u> - Publishing a readily available list of board-ready women with details on how they can add value to companies.				D		D					X
6. <u>Gender diversity disclosures</u> - Requiring all companies over a specific size (say > 100 people) to disclose gender pipeline information to the government, similar to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency in Australia. This will support		X	D								

Appendix A – Recommendations

increasing awareness of all companies about their female leadership pipelines.											
7. <u>Start board exposure when young</u> - Encouraging younger women to take up committee and board work starting at university (such as student unions) and continuing whilst they are at work.		D				X				D	X
8. <u>Encourage aspiring female directors to step up</u> - Awarding scholarships to aspiring women directors to financially support them to do director training.	X			D						D	X
Process											
1. Having at least one female director on the nominating committee.		D	D					D			
2. Ensuring that the slate of potential director candidates considered includes at least one woman candidate.		D	D					D			
3. Appointing aspiring women to be board advisors, particularly those in adjacent industries or with technology skills, to SMEs to build relationships and board competency.		D						D			X
4. Reviewing board assessment processes to critically review the assessment of the diversity of board skill sets.		D	X					D			
Principles											
1. Require all companies to have at least one woman on all listed company boards by 2025.			D								
2. Require increased transparency of board succession and appointment processes through greater disclosure in annual reports.		D	D					D			
3. Require companies to determine board diversity targets for women and disclose them in annual reports.			D	D		X					
4. Require companies to disclose their board skills matrixes in their annual reports, including the actions they plan to take to meet their skill needs.		X	D								

Appendix A – Recommendations

5. Require companies to disclose how board and senior management compensation aligns to gender diversity.		X	D								
6. Encourage companies to reduce the maximum time directors spend on boards to 6 years.			D								
7. Investor groups to step up and actively raise questions on listed companies' lack of gender diversity on boards.					D						
8. SID to increase advocacy for more women on boards, proposing targets for companies.				D							
9. Implement a 'board diversity ratings' system to guide stakeholders, similar to sustainability ratings.	D		D								
10. Include board diversity as a recommended ESG criteria used when financial institutions structure financial products for organisations.	D		D								
Partnerships											
1. Establishing a framework and guidelines on how board diversity aligns with the broader gender issues and pipeline and supports business and societal objectives, linking up all ecosystem partners.	D										
2. Together with the GLCs/TLCs, the government can take the lead and set an example by putting more women on their boards, executive committees, task forces and working groups.	D	D									
3. Forming government-supported working groups to recommend and support getting more women on boards in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investors groups. PEs and investment bankers (which supporting IPOs). Executive search firms. 	D			D	D		D				
4. Building greater alignment of efforts to increase women on boards and family businesses/SME community/related industry chambers.		D		D							

Appendix A – Recommendations

5. Establishing an umbrella women's organisation for senior women (leveraging current associations), bringing together senior directors and C-suite women leaders.	D					D		X			X
6. Appoint high profile and prominent leaders to consistently champion board diversity at the government and the Chairman level. This could be a role for, say, one to two years.	D		D	D							
7. Profile more success stories of younger women who have stepped onto boards and how they have contributed. It is vital to change the narrative that being a director is just a retirement job.				D		D			D		X
8. Increase the frequency of reporting on the progress of new women on listed boards to quarterly, from every six months.			D						X		
9. Be bolder to 'shame' listed companies that don't have women directors.	D		D						X		
10. Continue to encourage and share research on the benefits of board diversity and governance best practices.			D			D	D		D	D	

Appendix B – Contributors

Board/Agender Committee

Georgette Tan* – Chairperson,
Board/Agender; President, United Women
Singapore

Junie Foo – Methodist Welfare Services,
CEO

Shai Ganu – Managing Director and Global
Leader, Willis Towers Watson's Executive

Troy Han – Senior Consultant, Deloitte
Risk Advisory

Ho Giau Pik – Managing Director, United
Overseas Bank

Sweeney Lachman – Head of Research,
Longlead Capital Partners

Karen Loon* – Independent Director, Pictet
& Cie (Asia) Ltd; Former Partner at PwC
Singapore

Joy Tan – Partner, WongPartnership LLP

* Submission authors

Directors (Mentors)

Philip Forrest – Chairperson, Readymix
Holdings International; Independent
Director, Voyager Estate (Singapore);
Independent Director, Gemstar Technology
Asia Pte Ltd; Director, Honorary Treasurer,
Australian-ASEAN Chamber of Commerce;
Chair of Business Advisory Committee,
James Cook University; Member of
Governing Council, Singapore Institute of
Directors

Kuan Li Li – Independent Director,
Capitaland Retail China Trust; Independent
Director, Salvia Investment Pte Ltd; Audit
Committee and Nominating Committee
Board Member, RH Petrogas Limited;
Advisory Council Member, WWF

Aspiring Directors

Dr. Jovina Ang – Managing Director,
Communicatio

Cheryl Chen – Director, Corporate
Responsibility & Sustainability, Asia Pacific
S&P Global

Lim Qing Ru – Partner, True Global
Ventures 4 Plus

Lou Dela Pena – Former Chief Executive
Officer, Publicis Communications Singapore

Hsien-Hsien Lei – Chief Executive Officer,
American Chamber of Commerce

Sharanjit Leyl – Former Presenter and
Producer, BBC News

Helen Lim – Global Trading & Supplu
Operations Manager, Royal Dutch Shell

Shai Ganu – Managing Director and Global Leader, Willis Towers Watson's Executive

Shee Tse Koon – Group Executive & Country Head, Singapore, DBS Bank

Moses Song – Group Chief Executive Office and Group Chief Investment Officer, ARA Asset Management Limited

Joy Tan – Partner, WongPartnership LLP

Daniel Teo – Senior Advisor, Singapore Consultancy Pte Ltd; Chairperson; Industrial & Services Co-operative Society Ltd; Independent Director, Prudential Assurance Company Singapore

Wan Mei Kit – Independent Director, Prudential Assurance Company Singapore

Till Vestring – Advisory Partner, Bain & Company SE Asia; Independent Director, Delaware International; Independent Director, Advance Micro Foundry Pte Ltd; Independent Director, Keppel Corporation Limited; Independent Director, Inchcape plc

Raen Lim – Group Vice President, South Asia & Korea, Splunk

Ellyn Tan – Managing Director, Corporate Finance, FTI Consulting (Singapore)

Wily Wan – Associate General Counsel, Mobile and Connectivity, Facebook Singapore Pte Ltd

For further questions, please contact:
Georgette Tan
Chair, BoardAgender
georgette.tan@uws.org.sg

Appendix C – About BoardAgender

BoardAgender is an initiative of the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) dedicated to advancing more women into senior leadership roles and boardrooms in Singapore. BoardAgender was established in March 2011 after a group of like-minded women identified the need for an organisation that would focus on increasing the awareness of gender balanced boards and businesses in Singapore. Our aims are endorsed by the Ministry of Social and Family Development in Singapore.

Our Vision

We envision a Singapore which has high performing boards resulting from diverse representation, including appropriate gender balance.

Our Mission

We aspire to run innovative and impactful programmes towards education, advocacy to pursue the following goals:

- Create positive and measurable change in the number of women on boards in Singapore.
- Increase organisational awareness of the benefits of gender balanced business.
- Work with stakeholders and allies including government, regulators, directors, businesses, investors, professional groups, academics and media to identify areas for effective collaboration.
- Support the transition of women into leadership positions and board roles.
- Facilitate networking opportunities for senior female professionals.
- Be a credible independent resource on board gender diversity issues in Singapore.

Appendix D - BoardAgender's Thought Leadership

- [20 by 2020: Gender Diversity on Singapore Boards – A Path to Action](#) - Together with the Human Capital Leadership Institute (HCLI), BoardAgender's ground-breaking report—the first of its kind in Singapore—reviewed the board diversity landscape in Singapore and why it is different to the rest of the world. Conversations with key decision-makers in the industry provided an in-depth analysis beyond the benefits and statistics of female directors on boards. We addressed the reasons behind the slow progress and offered strategic solutions that organisations could adopt to diversify their boards faster. Aspiring female directors were also be empowered with practical suggestions to realise their career aspirations.
- [Singapore Board Diversity Report 2014: The Diversity Dividend](#) - Undertaken with The Centre for Governance, Institutions and Organisations (CGIO).
- [Singapore Board Diversity Report 2013: Time for Women to Rise](#) - Report by BoardAgender, along with the CGIO and supported by UBS and SGX.
- [Singapore Board Diversity Report 2012: The Female Factor](#) - Report by BoardAgender, along with the CGIO and supported by UBS and SGX.
- [Singapore Board Diversity Report: Gender Diversity in SGX-Listed Companies](#) - Report by BoardAgender together with CGIO issued in 2011.

PART IV – Celebrating the achievements of Singapore women:

**A proposal by the Singapore Council of
Women's Organisations**

Celebrating the achievements of Singapore women A proposal by the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations

The Ministry of Social and Family Development has declared 2021 the Year of Celebrating SG Women. It invites Singaporeans to 'come together to celebrate the achievements of women', and it also calls for people to 'co-create and catalyse solutions that will shift societal mindsets.

We have a proposal that will both celebrate what women have done for Singapore and help to shift societal mindsets: Dedicate a public space to Singapore women collectively or individually to honour our women for their contributions in nation building. SCWO, together with the Government agencies and community partners will work together to develop this space that serves as a symbolic and active pursuit of elevating women's position in the country.

Public spaces could also include gardens and roads. We can also look at featuring them after women in the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame (SWHF). Naming a road (or a building or a place) is a universally accepted way of acknowledging that person's accomplishments. In 2009, for instance, it was decided that a road should be named after the Dutch economist Albert Winsemius in recognition of his contributions to Singapore, and so we now have Albert Winsemius Lane in the Clementi area.

It would be fitting in 2021, as we celebrate SG women and put together policies to establish gender equality as a fundamental value, to honour the women who have made the most significant contributions to Singapore by naming roads and/or gardens and other places after them.

SHIFTING SOCIETAL MINDSETS

This visible and physically permanent acknowledgement of women's contributions would help to shift the societal mindset that men matter more than women, that it was just men who built and shaped Singapore, that women played and should continue to play a secondary role in society.

Having roads and places named after our outstanding women would be a powerful reminder, especially to young Singaporeans, of the pioneering role that women played in many aspects of life in Singapore.

Women, for example, founded the first schools for girls and later they transformed teacher and social worker training in Singapore. They campaigned passionately for better laws to protect women and children, and this led to landmark legislation in 1961 that put Singapore well ahead of many developed countries. Women were pioneering artists, horticulturists, botanists, doctors, nurses, choreographers, musicians, entrepreneurs, athletes, lawyers, and so much more.

THE GENDER GAP IN ROAD NAMES

There are, reportedly, some 540 roads in Singapore named after men, but only about 40 named after women.

Half of these 40 roads are named after British royalty, such as Elizabeth Drive (Queen Elizabeth II), Margaret Drive (Princess Margaret), and Empress Place/Road (Queen Victoria).

Of the rest, the majority are named after the wives or other female relatives of early local businessmen or colonial British administrators. Examples are Eng Neo Road/Avenue (Mdm Tan Eng Neo, wife of businessman Gaw Boon Chan) and Joan Road (Joan, daughter of Sir Andrew Caldecott, Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements in the 1930s).

As far as we can determine, only three roads are named after women in recognition of their achievements or contributions to Singapore society. These are:

- Jalan Hajjah (Mdm Hajjah owned land in the area and built the original Kampung Siglap Mosque)
- Elliot Road/Walk (Dr Patricia Ruth Elliot, a physician who worked at St Andrews Orthopaedic Hospital)
- Blackmore Drive (Australian missionary Sophia Blackmore, the founder of Methodist Girls' School).

There are many more women who have contributed in significant ways to Singapore's development. We have 167 women in the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame. Many if not all of them deserve to be commemorated by having roads or gardens and other places named after them.

We propose that a commitment be made this year to name an initial 10 roads or spaces after Hall of Fame women, with more to be considered in the future.

THE FIRST 10 WOMEN FOR COMMEMORATION

The Street and Building Names Board's guidelines are that generally the names of persons should not be used in naming new streets. But it adds that it will consider naming new streets or places after outstanding persons who have made significant contributions to Singapore in the area of economics, the arts, sports, education, or politics.

The first 10 Hall of Fame women we recommend for commemoration have done exactly that. These are the 10 women:

1. Chan Choy Siong
2. Shirin Fozdar
3. Elizabeth Choy
4. Checha Davies
5. Che Zahara Noor Mohd
6. Ruth Wong
7. Ann Wee
8. Hajjah Fatimah
9. Agnes Joachim
10. Georgette Chen

The first five – Chan Choy Siong, Shirin Fozdar, Elizabeth Choy, Checha Davies, Zahara Noor Mohd – were activists in the 1950s who worked hard to get a ban on polygamy and better laws to protect women and children. Chan Choy Siong was a politician with the PAP, and the other four women were founder members of the Singapore Council of Women. Elizabeth Choy was also a war hero. Ruth Wong was an educator who transformed teacher training in Singapore, and Ann Wee was a social worker who became an educator and revamped social worker education and training in Singapore. Hajjah Fatimah was a businesswoman and philanthropist in 18th-19th century Singapore, and founded the mosque named after her. Agnes Joachim was the first woman in the world to breed a hybrid orchid (which is named after her and is Singapore's national flower), while Georgette Chen was a trailblazing artist who was part of the group that established the Nanyang style of painting.

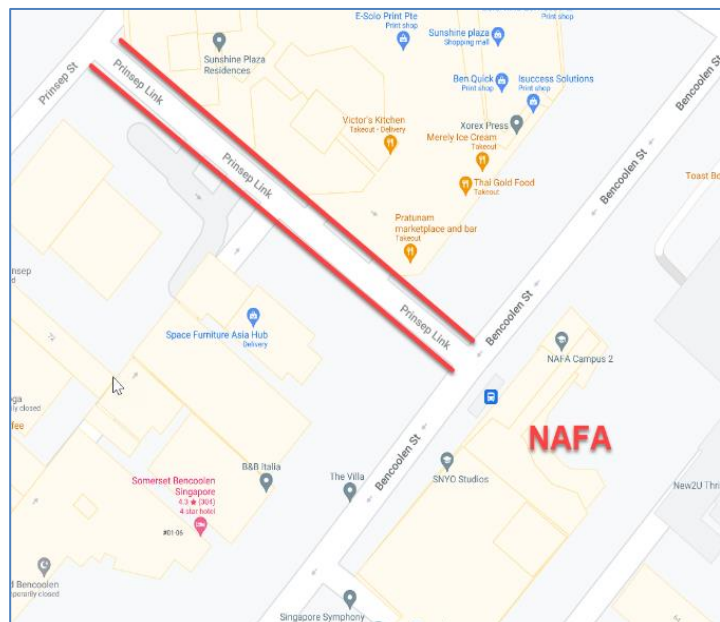
WHICH ROADS?

The Street and Building Names Board (SBNB) says names of streets should only be changed under special circumstances, such as when a road is affected by redevelopment in the area. Redevelopment is a constant in Singapore, so there may well be opportunities for the names of some roads to be changed to that of a Hall of Fame woman. The Urban Redevelopment Authority would be in a position to offer some guidance on the scope for this.

A major consideration for the SBNB is that any road renaming should not affect the history of the area or require numerous changes of addresses of homes and buildings. The Board also says that street names should reflect the location and surrounding environment and retain the heritage of the area.

Given these considerations, one street that could be considered for renaming is Prinsep Link. It links Prinsep Street to the stretch of Bencoolen Street where NAFA (Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts) is situated. NAFA was where Georgette Chen was a teacher from 1954 until 1980, and where she and other artists shaped the Nanyang style of painting.

Arguably, Prinsep Link could be renamed Georgette Chen Walk/Way/Lane. This would certainly reflect the location and heritage of the area. There do not appear to be homes or commercial buildings with Prinsep Link as their address, so no or little inconvenience would be caused.



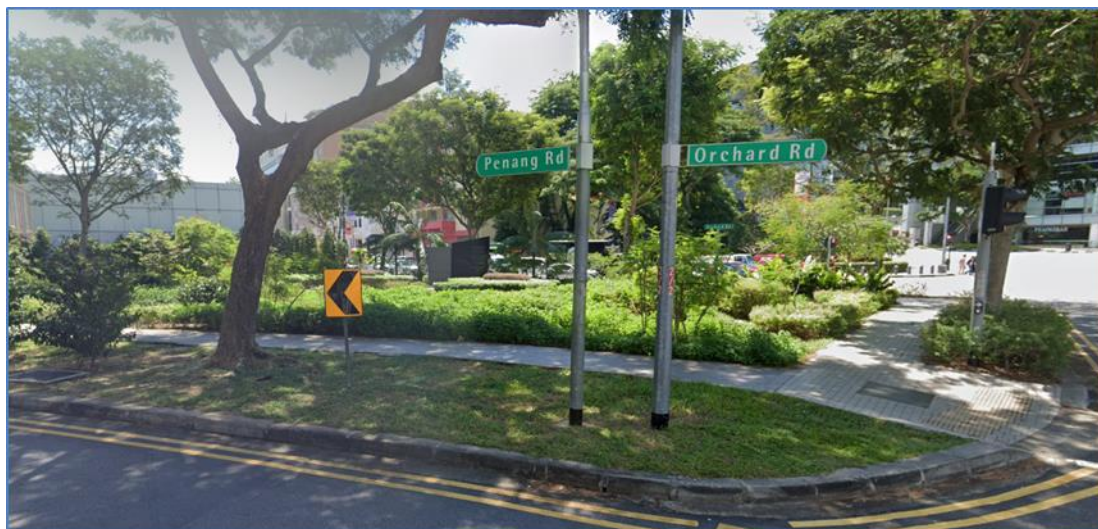
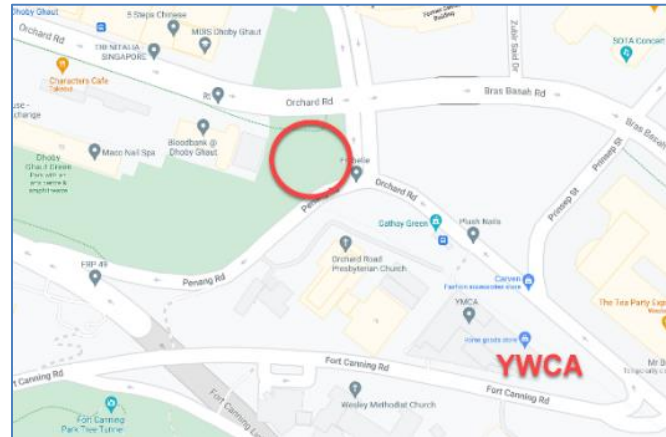
If it proves a challenge to find existing streets that can be renamed after women, then we should look at the new streets that are being, or will be, created as the HDB builds new estates or new neighbourhoods in existing estates. There will be plenty of scope to consider naming some of these new streets after our outstanding women.

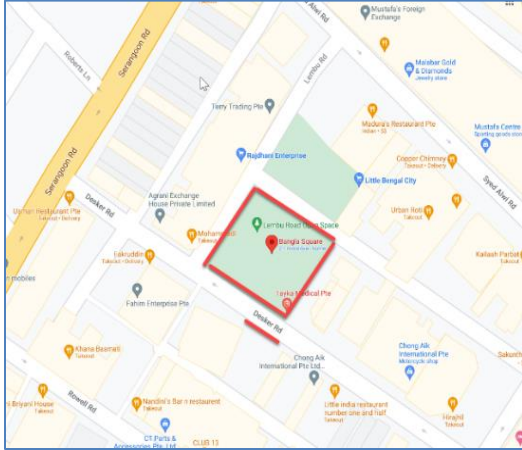
GARDENS AND GREEN SPACES

An alternative to naming roads after the Hall of Fame women is to name gardens and green spaces, or parts of these, after them. It would be particularly fitting to commemorate our foremothers by dedicating restful and nurturing green spaces around the city to them.

For example, there is an open space alongside Penang Road called Dhoby Ghaut Green. One corner of this Green, at the junction of Penang Road and Orchard Road, is a landscaped area that could be called the Checha Davies Garden.

Checha Davies, apart from being involved with the Singapore Council of Women, was instrumental in the development of the YWCA hostel for women which is just round the corner, next to the Presbyterian Church. The hostel is today a no-frills hotel.





Similarly, along Desker Road there is a small park that appears to be named Bangla Square. That space could be landscaped and renamed Che Zahara Square, because from the late 1940s to the early 1960s Che Zahara ran a home for destitute women and children in Desker Road.

There are many other such green spots and open places about the city, and certainly in the existing and upcoming HDB estates, that could be turned into attractively landscaped gardens named after some of the awesome women of Singapore.

CONSULTATION AND CO-CREATION

We have proposed to dedicate or name public spaces to honour Singapore women. We have also identified 1 road and 2 green spaces that could be named after women. With the support of MSF, we will invite SCWO member organisations and members of the public to suggest other roads and green spaces to honour our women.

These suggestions can be considered by a working group comprising representatives from SCWO, the Singapore Women's Hall of Fame, MSF, MND, SBNB, NParks, NHB and a list of proposed naming or renaming of streets and spaces drawn up for the appropriate approvals.

Establishing these physical landmarks that commemorate our most outstanding women would be a wonderful way of wrapping up 2021 as the landmark year for women and for gender equality in Singapore.

PART V – Conclusion of SCWO's Report

CONCLUSION OF REPORT

Singapore's focus on women's issues gained momentum last year when the Government announced that it will conduct a review of issues affecting women, and with 2021 declared as the Year of Celebrating SG Women, it is great that there is a platform for women and even men to have open conversations on the issues SG women face and the changes they wish to see. However, to bring about mindset change and to deal with the ingrained social values and gender roles that have impacted women in the home, schools, workplace and community, it takes a whole community approach to tackle gender inequality. Men need to be actively involved in this process and to support women at every life stage and decision that they make as well. When men join in conversations like these, they get to hear and appreciate what a woman- a colleague, wife, mother or daughter is up against so he can do his part to build an equal world too.

This report encapsulates the consensus among the participants of SCWO's conversations about women's development in Singapore. SCWO has been advocating, empowering and voicing for women for over 40 years, and the organisation hopes that the Singaporean government will consider the included points and recommendations. SCWO believes that with collaboration between the government and the people, Singapore can work towards making the ideals of 'Equal Space, Equal Voice, and Equal Worth' for women in Singapore a reality.

APPENDIX I

SCWO sent a Google Form to our member organisations, asking for their inputs on their present and future initiatives that contribute to promoting gender equality in Singapore. The responses from member organisations, in alphabetical order, are included relatively verbatim in this appendix.

1. Association of Women for Action & Research (AWARE)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

We were set up in 1985 to work for gender equality, so we work with everyone because everyone's commitment is needed if we are to bring about gender equality.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

Too many to list. We are producing our own report that we will be submitting to the Government ahead of the White Paper.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Recent research projects have included studies of the situation and needs of low-income women, migrant spouses, migrant domestic workers who are caregivers, women who are caregivers to elderly relatives. We also have a limited-run shelter (2 years) project where we provide housing and support for women in distress.

II. SCHOOLS

We used to have the Comprehensive Sexuality Education workshop that we ran in some schools as a pilot project. This was roughly in 2007-2008. We now run it as a Birds and Bees workshop for parents.

III. WORKPLACES

Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Advisory, a service for people who have experienced workplace harassment/discrimination. Our corporate training arm, Catalyse Consulting, offers a range of programmes.

IV. COMMUNITY

Too many to list. Key current programmes and services include a range of support services for women in distress (Helpline, Counselling, Support Groups, Legal Clinic) and the Sexual Assault Care Centre. There is also Sexual Assault First responder Training workshop.

2. Association of Women Doctors Singapore

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

The Association of Women Doctors (Singapore) (both medical and dental) aims to enhance the professional development and well-being of its members in the medical and dental profession by providing a social platform for networking and communication.

The society serves as a voice for women's health issues and an advocate for the advancement of women in practice.

The society serves to provide information on career guidance and mentoring, and is also active in organising seminars, forums and workshops relating to health concerns, particularly those pertaining to women and families.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

- Work life balance with parenthood, burnout. Combining parenthood/ taking care of aging parents and work is a challenge.
- Perhaps more paternity leave for a more balanced family life
- Gender gap in medicine is actually a gap in respect. Women in medicine/ dentistry at times not accorded the respect they deserve, not only from colleagues but from patients.
- More women in board positions if they are deserving

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Planning to do a fundraiser next year for Star Shelter. Previously planned for this year but COVID pandemic situation doesn't permit it. Hopefully next year will be better.

II. COMMUNITY

Going to launch an AWDS book "All About Eve: Your Women's Health Questions Answered"

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

We are starting a mentorship program for both medical and dental school for undergraduates.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

We are starting a mentorship program for both medical and dental school for undergraduates by 2021.

3. Baha'i Office for the Advancement of Women

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Neighbourhood / Grassroots

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

More opportunity for the Advancement of Women

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

We have study groups & devotional.

II. COMMUNITY

We conduct classes/seminars.

Future Initiatives (Short Term, Next 2 Years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

To have a support group in the community.

II. COMMUNITY

Create more small group discussions on gender equality.

4. Breastfeeding Mothers' Support Group (Singapore)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Supporting the community of breastfeeding mothers and the support system. Our partners are: IBFAN, ABAS, Babes, and Clarity.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

Increase of maternity and paternity length.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Free-of-charge support from BMSG breastfeeding counsellors, workshops for returning to work.

II. WORKPLACES

More support for breastfeeding mothers returning to work, Engaging workplaces with providing a safe and comfortable nursing room for mothers

III. COMMUNITY

Free-of-charge support from BMSG breastfeeding counsellors, workshops for returning to work.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

More workshops for family nuclear to support mum's decision to breastfeed.

II. SCHOOLS

Book tour to school on breastfeeding (children's book written by BMSG).

III. WORKPLACES

BMSG Work Kit for organisations to support breastfeeding mothers, workshops for returning mothers, continued support on breastfeeding.

IV. COMMUNITY

More breastfeeding counsellors to support the growing needs for mums.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Continuing to build a close-knit community for breastfeeding mums and peer support from the counsellors.

II. WORKPLACES

Consultancy services for workplaces to better equip and educate on the breastfeeding landscape in Singapore.

III. COMMUNITY

Consultancy services for shopping centres to better equip and educate on the breastfeeding landscape in Singapore, working closely with community centres, polyclinics and hospitals to support breastfeeding mums during their appointments.

5. Federation of Business and Professional Women (Singapore)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Women's empowerment through personal development of members. We are working with other BPW clubs in Singapore and globally.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

Greater economic value placed on home duties so that they can become more evenly divided between genders.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

Young Business & Professional Women's activities to strengthen skills and provide personal growth for young women in the workforce.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

These are done under our affiliates.

II. WORKPLACES

Support for young BPWs.

6. Financial Women's Association (Singapore)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Women in the financial sector and related to finance such as Fintech/Digital payments/legal supporting financial institutions

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

1) Equal pay 2) To put in a talent and development strategy and invest in the programs especially in local financial institutions (which is completely lacking) especially in lower and mid career levels.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

None. We integrate this topic under work-life balance into our events.

II. SCHOOLS

We will be lobbying to co-develop a financial literacy program with SG Gov to teach children especially girls to have life skills to apply and not fall into ignorance and be dependent on others, especially their spouse for retirement planning. More important not to fall into debt or poverty.

III. WORKPLACES

1) Mentoring program for mid-career women aspiring to become future leaders 2) A symposium held this year with 50 C level managers in banking and finance to speak about gender inequality in August. 3) A Financial literacy research was conducted recently whereby the report has been submitted to MSF and received positive response.

IV. COMMUNITY

We actively support through events by collaborating with NTUC BFSU and other associations such as CAIA, CFA, SFA, SVCA and Blockchain association.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

We aim to collaborate on a financial literacy program to be installed into the current CCE segment.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

To build programs to help build up confidence to apply their knowledge in life decisions.

II. SCHOOLS

We aim to build up a knowledge base on financial literacy such as digital assets and cryptocurrency.

III. WORKPLACES

We aim to build up a knowledge base on financial literacy such as digital assets and cryptocurrency.

IV. COMMUNITY

We aim to build up a knowledge base on financial literacy such as digital assets and cryptocurrency.

7. Mums@Work

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

We work primarily with mothers trying to balance work and family and we work with EMPLOYERS who are keen to hire them or train them.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

Flexible Work Arrangements to be part of the NORMAL work arrangement allowed for women (AFTER covid restrictions are limited). Stronger HR policies that encourage firms to hire women back to work (after a career break)

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

Not much at the moment, although our founder conducts an average of 5-7 talks per year at Career Events for Secondary schools. In addition, she also partners MOE to develop ECG career plans for youths in Singapore.

II. WORKPLACES

- Hiring events (specifically for back-to-work mothers)
- Training events (FOR employers - to guide them to managing flexi-workers and managing back-to-work female hires)
- Partnered with employers to engage Mum-entrepreneurs as vendors (We do this specifically via bazaars held at workplaces)
- Hiring campaigns for firms (We partner the organisations) to design reintegration programmes and REturnships for women only

III. COMMUNITY

- Networking events for MUM-entrepreneurs (Women that run businesses from home, to support their kids at the same time)
- Training events (for women only: specifically for career transitioners, back to work)

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

Reskilling, returnships and more back-to-work programmes. Also, we are championing against ageism—so, we have a few events lined up, in partnership with firms to encourage hiring practices that do not discriminate against gender and Age (lined up from now till August 2022).

II. COMMUNITY

Similar to above—but engaging more of community projects and linking them up with workplaces projects.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. COMMUNITY

Mentioned earlier—with continuation of our "Singapore: 40-over-40. Inspiring Women" campaign on a yearly basis

8. NTUC Women and Family Unit (WAF)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

NTUC Women and Family Unit (WAF) is part of the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) and represents the voice for working women and families. We support the aspirations of working women through the promotion and enhancement of employment opportunities as well as work-life initiatives.

We aim to achieve better wages, welfare and work prospects for working women by working with the stakeholders and partners in the Labour Movement ecosystem. They include tripartite partners and the 59 affiliated unions, 5 affiliated associations, 12 social enterprises, 6 related organisations as well as a growing ecosystem of U Associates and enterprise partners.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

NTUC has continued to contribute towards women's development in Singapore over the decades by actively championing the improvement of status of women in the workforce and increasing women's participation in the workforce.

While there are achievements and progress made as reflected by the upward trends in our female labour force participation rates yearly and rising educational profiles of women, there remains gaps in creating progressive and safe workplaces for women in Singapore.

We recommend a 3-prong approach to better support working women:

- a. Enable Real Choice-Making
 - Remove caregiving barriers and redistribution of caregiving responsibilities
 - There is an urgent need to grow the elderly caregiving ecosystem due to the rapid aging population which is immature when compared to the childcare ecosystem. In particular, home care and respite care services are in need as the majority of caregiving burden still falls on women.
 - Provide strong career choices through redesigned, in-community and micro jobs that cater to women's caregiving needs
 - Employers should be encouraged to include recruiting and retaining women employees as one of the job redesign outcomes. By redesigning the roles, job scopes and work hours, employers can tap on the female talent pool more effectively. Women who have left the workforce due to caregiving needs will also be able to access these redesigned job opportunities to return to work.
- b. Scale-up and Expand Protection

- Create safety nets for women's livelihoods and strengthening protection at workplaces
 - Existing tripartite advisories and guidelines serve to outline progressive workplace practices but are not mandatory for employers to comply. To ensure adequate protection against discrimination and harassment at the workplace, employers should be obligated to formalise relevant policies, reporting and investigation procedures.
 - There is a rising trend for women to go into freelancing and entrepreneurship as alternative livelihood options in order to manage their caregiving responsibilities. The economic impact of the current global pandemic has also driven more women to start their own home-based businesses. In the absence of the traditional employment contract, there needs to be safety nets to protect their interests and rights.
- c. Maximize and Discover Potential
- Professionalizing occupations and helping women workers to progress in their careers
 - Occupational segregation by gender and the "motherhood penalty" contribute to the gender wage gap. Dedicated efforts to help women enter growth sectors (eg. STEM) and taking on jobs with better wages and work prospects will help in tackling the gender wage gap.
 - Sectors that have a high proportion of female workforce will need to be transformed and professionalised with clear skills development and progression pathways to help women earn higher wages.
- Empowering women to become leaders
 - Growing the pool of board ready women leaders is essential to achieve our board diversity goal and developing women in mid to senior level management for leadership can be complemented through mentoring.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Many women shoulder caregiving responsibilities and they often face challenges managing the demands of work and family. Live-in domestic help has become a necessity for many working women, with at least one in five Singaporean families hiring a Migrant Domestic Worker (MDW). With this growing trend, a harmonious employer-employee relationship is important so that MDWs can have a good working environment and employers can have reliable help for their homes.

Regular free advisory clinics for NTUC members to seek advice on matters regarding the employment of their MDWs are organised by WAF in partnership with the Centre for Domestic Employees (CDE). These advisory clinics will serve as a platform for members to better

understand their responsibilities as an employer so they can build a strong rapport with their MDWs.

II. WORKPLACES

The regressive effects of the pandemic shined the light on women who continue to play multiple roles and shoulder a disproportionate burden of household and parenting duties which impact their mental well-being as well as work performance.

WAF programmes focuses on minimizing the impact of the pandemic on women's jobs and livelihoods:

- Passion to Profit (P2P) Initiative

WAF started the P2P initiative to help women explore alternative forms of livelihood by transforming their hobbies, skills, or talents into viable money-making ventures. Through the initiative, women are introduced to e-commerce entrepreneurship, freelancing and gig opportunities. In March 2021, WAF announced the initiative together with a partnership with the Textile and Fashion Industry Training Centre (Taf.tc) to train 100 women on sewing skills and to operate their own home-based alteration business.

- ReImagine Career Fair

WAF kickstarted the 2021 International Women's Day celebrations with the unveiling of 9 reimagined occupation outfits designed by local designers in a special ReImagine Fashion Showcase. These occupations include unconventional careers with good career progressions and prospects to inspire women to be bold in their career choices. The fashion exhibition has since been brought to the communities at Oasis Terraces in Punggol, Our Tampines Hub and will be held at Marymount Community Centre and Telok Blangah Community Centre in the next few months.

Women-focused career fairs are organised alongside the exhibition featuring job opportunities offered by progressive employers. These include jobs with flexible work arrangements and in-community jobs. The employers participating in these career fairs are required to have adopted relevant Tripartite Standards and or provide formalised policies that support women's caregiving needs.

- Progressive & Safe Workplaces for Women

WAF promotes the adoption of progressive workplace practices by working in close partnership with unions and company management. As working from home becomes the new normal in the pandemic, new challenges have emerged for both employers and employees on work-life harmony.

Supporting Work-Life Harmony

WAF and tripartite partners through the Alliance for Action on Work-Life Harmony (AfA-WLH) seeks to bring together diverse people from different sectors to co-create and co-deliver ideas and solutions on work-life harmony. Stakeholders under the AfA-WLH will: i) Develop and drive WLH initiatives that help groups sustain and enhance WL practices and ii) Development of sector-specific Communities of Practice (CoPs), tools and resources to support groups facing greater challenges in implementing FWAs and Work-Life practices.

Union leaders from the NTUC Women's Committee are appointed as Work-Life Ambassadors (WLAs) to further propagate WLH best practices. The tripartite partners also launched the Tripartite Standard on Work-Life Harmony earlier in the year.

Protection Against Workplace Harassment

In addition to handling different employment disputes which include harassment and abuse, unions encourage employers to implement formal policies to prevent and manage workplace harassment. WAF offers training to equip women union leaders with the knowledge and skills to ensure adequate protection from harassment and support for victims of domestic violence and abuse are being provided to workers.

III. COMMUNITY

To support women in the community, WAF together with Punggol Shore Constituency launched the "Women Supporting Women Mentorship Programme". NTUC women leaders with their professional experience as well as deep knowledge of worker issues volunteer as mentors to provide guidance in professional and personal development to women in Punggol Shore.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

To help women to access and enjoy equal opportunities at work, WAF will embark on research for the purpose of promoting and improving gender equality in the workplace. WAF has partnered the PAP Women's Wing to conduct sensing and feedback gathering through online surveys and social media polls.

9. PrimeTime Business and Professional Women's Association

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Our vision is simple yet powerful. We believe that one day all women will reach their highest potential. We trust women leaders' distinctive ability to create a positive impact on their communities and societies and we are sure that having more women in senior roles will ultimately benefit everyone, and lead to a more equal and sustainable world.

Since the very beginning we have been committed to supporting business and professional women to thrive both professionally and personally. With so many nationalities represented within our membership, we take great pride in the diversity of our members. Like Singapore, PrimeTime is a rich melting pot. Our members come from a wide spectrum of corporate and professional organisations and have different experiences in terms of cultural background, professional industry, personal interests, ages and life stages.

In the past 24 years, we have developed a safe and supportive space for business and professional women to connect, collaborate and contribute. We recognize that our journey is not finished yet and we want to continue working with passion to inspire action, drive a meaningful change in our community and advance women in leadership.

We acknowledge that enhancing gender equality in the workplace requires that women stand confident in their true potential and are armed with tools they need in order to seek equal pay, better work life balance, equitable hiring practices, leadership roles and strict measures against harassment.

Our work at PrimeTime supports professional women in ways that would help lessen the gender gap that exists. Our Programmes and Special Interest Group events are tailored towards providing women:

- The skills and learnings relevant to their personal development and growth.
- Crafted workshops to bring them a step closer to fulfilling their professional aspirations.
- A community where they can share, learn and contribute.

We believe that empowering women helps them make choices which better serve their career and life paths.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

We would like to go back to the former rules for LOCs as the new ones, that have been in place from May onward, will have unintended effects mainly on women. For educated, professional couples, LOCs means a better opportunity for "trailing spouses", who are still mostly women to continue to grow professionally and personally, to contribute, to maintain their careers – and stay

sane! It is becoming more important than ever for families to arrange their lives around two working parents, and many will decide against Singapore if one of the parties cannot work. And for those that still feel compelled to take the offer in Singapore, it will disproportionately hurt women when they do not have realistic access to the job market. Attracting foreign talent meant also ensuring spouses would be taken care of, and that is why the LOC was initially introduced. Singapore has a unique opportunity to be the location of choice for MNCs especially now that Hong Kong is becoming less attractive.

A second consideration is that countries with higher diversity of talents have higher innovation rates. And innovation drives the health of an economy. Also, international working women with a diverse cultural and experience background can contribute to the society not only from a financial perspective, but also in building specific capabilities and soft skills that will benefit the whole community.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

- Mentoring (4th edition)
 - The program is geared to educate, inspire and empower women across different generations with the core values, attitudes and skills that are the foundation of quality leadership. It comprises mentoring conversations around career development, professional advancement and different areas of professional experience with a Buddy-Mentor, who is another PrimeTime fellow Member.
- Life Coaching (3rd edition)
 - This program dramatically improves outlook by unlocking sources of creativity and productivity. It helps identify beliefs, feelings and perspectives that might be limiting performance. It gives women the actionable tools necessary for becoming unstuck and creating a more meaningful life and successful career.
- Leadership Programme (An upcoming programme)
 - This programme is being crafted with a mission of supporting women in achieving their leadership aspirations. It will encourage them to explore their unique leadership style and help them navigate leadership challenges by improving self-awareness, enhancing executive presence and developing strategic thinking skills. All qualities that are critical when you want to reach senior levels within the corporate space.

II. COMMUNITY

- The Flagship 2ND Thursday Event
 - Held each month, since the foundations of PrimeTime, this event welcomes global thought leaders and speakers to share their insights on topics most relevant to our membership and the world at large. We as a community thoroughly enjoy joining in conversation whilst questioning stereotypes, shifting mindsets and enabling positive change.
- Special Interest Group Events (12 groups at the moment)
 - These events focus on areas closest to the professional and personal lives of women such as Finance, Marketing, Motherhood, Human Resources & Careers. They serve our community by delivering engaging, inspirational and interactive content which encourages reinvention, enables skill development and supports lifelong learning.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. COMMUNITY

- Special Interest Group Events (12 groups at the moment)
 - At PrimeTime we carefully monitor our events and programmes in order to adapt them and serve our members better. We expect to be delivering the same kind of initiatives in the next two years —for sure the 2nd Thursday and SIG events — even if we may replace some of the topics within a programme to align better with the external circumstances and the specific requests coming from our members to support them stay relevant in the marketplace.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. COMMUNITY

- Special Interest Group Events (12 groups at the moment)
 - With a similar logic, in the longer term (five years from now) we believe that 2nd Thursday and the events offered by the Special Interest Group will stay in our portfolio, but we are flexible and we may decide to create new programmes and add initiatives based on the emerging trends and needs.

10. P&G AMA #WeSeeEqual

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Through our Brands, our People and Network, we leverage our voice in advertising to spark conversations about gender bias and motivate change. Our brand campaigns have contributed to spark a debate on gender bias. We're also a part of the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) #SeeHer movement to reflect accurate portrayals of women and girls in advertising and media.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

1. Formal education needs to work on eradicating ingrained stereotypes of women and reinforce that both genders are to be treated equally and with respect.
2. We need to normalize spreading household responsibilities between both genders and do away with stigmas. This could be done through the use of nationwide campaigns.
3. Governments should encourage more companies to make HR policies gender neutral or family friendly. They should also have visible and diverse role models that encourage women to stay and excel in the workforce.
4. Higher percentage of women leave the workforce at a younger age in comparison to men and oftentimes it is due to household commitments. The government, for its part, can implement economic incentives for women to remain in the workplace. It can also promote skills development for women working in lower-growth sectors or lower-paid roles to protect their employment and income prospects.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

- P&G introduced 'Share the Care', a new parental leave policy. Under its new 'Share the Care' program, all new parents will be entitled to a minimum of 8 weeks' fully paid leave, with an additional 6 weeks' recovery leave for birth mothers. Paternity & Secondary Caregivers will now be entitled to 8 weeks of paid leave and it can be taken flexibly over a period of 18 months. With such policies, we hope to support employees in this critical life stage change and reflect our commitment to gender equality.

II. SCHOOLS

- P&G has partnered with NUS to help female students explore an interdisciplinary career in Product Supply through webinars featuring our women in leadership, ex-interns and real business cases.

III. WORKPLACES

1. In P&G, we have dramatically improved how we nurture and support women across levels through our #WeSeeEqual Program which we treat like any other business initiative with defined KPIs and progress which is regularly reviewed by the leadership team.
2. We are proud that we have reached 50-50 representation at the Manager level in Singapore and we are making strong progress towards our goal to achieve 50-50 representation at the Leadership level as well.
3. We have also held a coaching and mentoring program focusing on top 100 women (accelerator program). Each and every member of the Executive Board is involved as a mentor.

IV. COMMUNITY

- We have recently completed our second run of the Women Entrepreneurs Development Program (WEDP) to empower women. Through this program, we were able to provide training to 23 female entrepreneurs to help them further develop their capabilities and help them grow their businesses. Through such programs, we hope to have a ripple effect to impact these women business' employees, clients, professional networks and communities.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

- Through our Brands, our People and Network, we aim to continue leveraging our voice in advertising to spark conversations about gender bias and motivate change.

II. SCHOOLS

- We will continue to partner with IHLs to connect female students with P&G leaders to share their experiences. P&G is also interested in working to create a more equal world – with equal voice and equal representation for all individuals – including a special focus

on girls in STEM. Additionally, we are also keen on brand partnerships (e.g Whisper) to ensure sanitary pads are accessible.

III. WORKPLACES

- We are committed to achieving a 50-50 gender balance across the leadership level. We will continue to host our #WeSeeEqual Summit to challenge the current discourse and commit to the actions needed for progress.

IV. COMMUNITY

- We are committed to deliberate working with women-owned businesses. We are committed to achieving a 50-50 gender balance across the leadership level. We will keep using the voice of our company in forums such as our #WeSeeEqual Summit to drive discussion and action on the issues that matter.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

- Through our Brands, our People and Network, we aim to continue leveraging our voice in advertising to spark conversations about gender bias and motivate change.

II. SCHOOLS

- Through our Brands, our People and Network, we aim to continue leveraging our voice in advertising to spark conversations about gender bias and motivate change.

III. WORKPLACES

- We will continue to host our #WeSeeEqual Summit to challenge the current discourse and commit to the actions needed for progress. We will continue to use the GEM (Gender Equality Measure) to evaluate and measure our progress.

IV. COMMUNITY

- P&G is committed to spending a cumulative total of \$200 million US dollars by deliberately working with women-owned businesses across the Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa region, by 2025. We will keep using the voice of our company in forums such as our #WeSeeEqual Summit to drive discussion and action on the issues that matter.

10. Singapore Association of Administrative Professionals (SAAP)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Provide a platform for administrative professionals to come together to learn at affordable cost, enhance their professional status, and to network.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

Less stereotyping. In our Association/industry, mentions of secretaries seem to imply that they have to be female.

11. Society for Wings

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Our mission is to help women aged 40 and above live and age well. We work C3A, KKH, TMC, Tsao

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

1. More support for women in caregiving e.g., sponsored courses on well-being, time-off or leave for self-care, social credits and 2. Mentorship programme for women in corporate positions e.g., grooming for senior/board positions.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Programmes like Confinement Nanny; Toddler Care.

II. SCHOOLS

Reading programme to the underprivileged

III. WORKPLACES

Financial & Estate Planning; Mental resilience in the workplace.

IV. COMMUNITY

Programmes on mental and emotional wellness; Employable skills like Confinement Nanny; Toddler Care; Learning to start an on-line business.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Programmes to help them re-enter the workforce, programmes which equip women with employable skills, link-up with placement agencies.

II. SCHOOLS

Mentoring young girls.

III. WORKPLACES

More courses/programmes on being financially independent, estate planning, transitioning to new careers.

IV. COMMUNITY

Programmes on digital literacy, more courses on importance of financial independence and estate planning, courses on thriving in the gig economy, rolling out more programmes which equip women with employable skills, support networks based on special interests.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

Support networks with coaches and/or counsellors to help them deal with issues they face and navigate the workplace, gig economy, etc.

II. SCHOOLS

Increase mentoring opportunities.

III. WORKPLACES

Set up an informal network pairing older women with younger ones which includes coaching, sharing of knowledge.

IV. COMMUNITY

Set up more support networks based on special interest groups with interactions with professionals.

12. United Women Singapore

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

United Women Singapore's primary focus is the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment through programmes and partnerships with the support of public and private sectors.

Our Girl 2 Pioneers STEM programme encourages girls to take up careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), focusing especially on girls in Singapore between the ages of 10 and 18, through day camps, field trips, talks/webinars and activities designed to stimulate their interest in STEM subjects and fields. For this programme, we work with local primary and secondary schools, family services centres, shelters, community centres, religious schools and the home-schooled community.

As part of our Anti-violence initiatives (AVIs), we have 2 programmes - (i) GenSafe Workplaces, which targets corporates and advocates for personnel policies to support domestic violence survivors in the workplace and (ii) Boys Empowered, which is targeted at boys aged 13-18 to teach them positive masculinity ideals and to appreciate the value of women in their lives and society.

We currently work with government agencies such as the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Social and Family Development, diplomatic community such as the High Commission of Canada, the US embassy, the European Union consular office, chambers of commerce such as Singapore International Chamber of Commerce, American Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, community partners such as Star Shelter, Casa Raudha, Zonta Club, PPIS, and educational institutions such as Nanyang Technological University, Yale-NUS, ITE College West, Nanyang Girls School and private sector organisations such as Corteva, Citrix, DBS, Citibank, BlackRock, Goldman Sachs, Johnson & Johnson, STMicroelectronics, 3M, etc.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

1. Introduce legislation mandating that both public and private sector organisations have a written domestic violence response policy for employees who may be victims of domestic violence and that all employers provide domestic violence response training for their employees.
2. Mandate the removal of men from their homes into a shelter that provides support services such as mandatory counselling or therapy for men when a Personal Protection Order has been made against them.
3. Provide rights education and awareness for the public through a nation-wide campaign on the related laws and resources available for victims of domestic violence which includes medical, legal, financial, psychological, etc.

4. Create a nation-wide campaign of active bystander prevention for the public to have the skills and confidence to interrupt and prevent situations of violence.
5. Mandate online safety education for girls in schools.
6. Educating boys in school about healthy relationships, masculinity ideals and gender norms.
7. Media guidelines co-developed with regulatory and industry bodies to promote responsible and gender-sensitive reporting of violence and/or harassment against girls and women and provide training to use international best practices when reporting on crimes against girls and women through a model Code of Practice.
8. Online guidelines co-developed with social media and technology companies to develop enhanced protections for girls and women from technology-facilitated harassment, abuse or violence and solutions to curb all manners of abusive behaviours and actions online particularly against girls and women. More dialogues between invested parties to create awareness around the topic - government agencies, community organisations and the non-profit community.
9. Provide micro-financing and mentoring for women-led businesses particularly for girls and women of disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds to advocate for female entrepreneurship.
10. Mandate financial literacy for girls in schools which will include topics such as budgeting, savings, compound interest, insurance and investments.
11. Women who are unemployed receive monetary compensation and/or CPF contribution for the unpaid care work towards the care of family members such as children and/or aged seniors.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. HOME

We had undertaken a joint research project with Ipsos this year to explore the unpaid work burden on women by measuring the attitudes and perceptions of women and men in Singapore on caregiving and household responsibilities. The research findings once again highlighted the unequal caregiving burden on women and their higher stress levels due to their responsibilities compared to men, especially when they start a family.

We hope that some of the recommendations from the report - such as the need for changing mindsets towards the traditional roles of men and women, 'defeminising' unpaid care work, encouraging organisations to normalise the availing of flexible work arrangements by men and more recognition for the value of women in the society - would be converted into actionable policies and campaigns by the Government and other agencies of power.

II. SCHOOLS

Girls2Pioneers – UWS runs the Girls2Pioneers (G2P) STEM programme to inspire young girls to pursue STEM higher education and careers. UWS works with schools to provide a first-hand experience for girls to learn more about the different sub fields in STEM. We also connect students with female leaders from STEM related organisations to learn more about their career journeys and experiences working in STEM.

The G2P programme was launched in 2014 and over 26,000 girls have participated in the programme since then. Each year the G2P programme engages schoolgirls aged 10 years to 16 years old. In addition to girls in the local schools, both primary and secondary, the programme also reaches out to girls from shelters, lower income households (through community service organisations), the home-schooled community, international schools, and religious schools.

The G2P programme consists of interactive workshops, field trips to STEM organisations, school talks and Mentorship. Since 2020, UWS has also accelerated its digital strategy, launching the STEM@Home series for online learning. We conduct zoom webinars and workshops to ensure STEM learning remains accessible for girls even with the current restrictions.

III. WORKPLACES

Our Research

In December 2019, we launched a report in collaboration with IPSOS titled, “Challenge the Apathy: Shedding Light on Domestic Abuse in Singapore” where we surveyed 300 Singaporeans on their perceptions of domestic abuse. Our study showed that 10% of the participants have faced family violence and in a separate local study, an estimated 72% of female participants are not likely to report it. With these numbers, there is a high probability of females suffering in silence and therefore, a spillover effect at the workplace affecting employees’ productivity, absenteeism, workplace safety and environment.

MSF & MHA Task Force on Family Violence

In April 2020, UWS was invited to take part in the Task Force on Family Violence co-chaired by Ms Sun Xueling, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs and Associate Professor Dr Faishal Ibrahim, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Social and Family Development in and we will be leading focus group discussions with NGOs and government agencies to study the challenges faced by various groups experiencing violence and identify ways in which the government could work hand-in-hand with community partners to empower victims and perpetrators to break the cycle of violence.

We believe that for lasting cultural and societal change there must be a multifaceted approach undertaken to prevent violence such as working with government agencies, the private sector, changing cultural norms with our younger generation in schools and through public education.

Aligning with the objectives of the Task Force on Family Violence, we developed a programme for organisations in the private sector to create a safe and more supportive work environment for survivors of domestic violence.

GenSafe (Gender Safe) Workplaces

Our role as an organization is to advocate for workplace policies that protect the rights of victims of violence and prevent them from losing or leaving their jobs due to the spillover effect of domestic violence at the workplace. Economic security is a critical component of safety for victims of violence. The survivor's ability to maintain her employment can greatly enhance her ability to leave the situation of violence and start her psychological and emotional recovery.

Our programme, which was launched on 1 October 2020 with a foundational workshop based on the 3R Framework, will help organisations implement a comprehensive plan to increase its awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on their workforce, spot the signs of employees suffering in silence, equip key personnel with the skills to respond to them and to ensure a safe, productive and supportive workplace environment for all.

The programme is very well received and we have had great reviews on the workshop from the participating companies, both in Singapore and the region. UWS is also part of the multi-ministerial TaskForce on Family Violence with MHA and MSF since 2020. As such, we would like to focus on amplifying its objectives and mission of the prevention of domestic violence and its ramifications within the community. Our plan is to further develop the programme and increase the outreach to various organisations in Singapore and overseas.

In January 2021, we launched the GenSafe Workplaces – Specialist Series where we feature industry leaders and experts to help private sector organisations examine the impacts of domestic violence on the workplace and learn from on how to create a safe and secure environment for their workforce. Topics covered were (1) Creating a Workplace Safety Plan & Threat Assessment Policy (2) Management of Domestic Violence Perpetrators in the Workplace (3) Respectful Workplaces: Sexual Harassment Training & Prevention (4) Bystander to Allyship in the Workplace (5) Supporting & Managing Employees Impacted by Domestic Violence.

In Q4 2021, we plan to publish an Informational Handbook which will contain model policies and strategies for private sector organisations to adopt and create their own domestic violence workplace policy that works for their organisation and its people.

Gender Equality Impact Awards (GEIA)

As part of our advocacy, we organise our annual Gender Equality Impact Awards (GEIA) to recognise organisations, men, women, and youth in Singapore who have championed initiatives to advance gender equality and empowerment of women in the workplace and/or community. These awards are either in-person or virtual, and attract widespread nominations from a large number of private sector organisations in Singapore. It is usually accompanied by a fire-side chat and/or a panel discussion on gender diversity issues by industry leaders.

Discussion Groups (UWS Discussions)

By engaging the member and volunteer base of the organisation, we conduct periodic discussion groups on topics related to the unpaid care work burden on women, increasing women representation in STEM industries, the confidence gap faced by women and more. These

discussions help identify the issues faced by women in the workplace and society and give direction to our advocacy, programming and research efforts.

Distinguished Speaker Series (DSS) and Dialogues with Diplomats (DWD) - Advocacy events

The DSS is a virtual event series featuring business leaders, thought leaders sharing their views and experiences on women in leadership roles, male allyship and other topics related to gender equality and women's empowerment. The DWD is a virtual event series featuring the women diplomatic leaders in Singapore sharing their rich cultural and leadership experiences with the women and girls among our target audience.

IV. COMMUNITY

As an organisation we aim to move the needle on gender equality and women's empowerment through our advocacy and awareness creation efforts. As such we do not work directly with beneficiaries in the community but with community partners who provide direct services to women in the community.

In the last year, we have raised funds for other women's organisations/shelters that support and give temporary shelter to women and children affected by domestic violence.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

In the next 2 years, we intend to:

- Roll out mentorship program for girls/young women - Q3 2021
- Pilot and subsequently roll out financial literacy programme for girls/young women - Q3 2021
- Develop GirlsEmpowered - to complement BoysEmpowered - roll out to schools in 2022. To also include a self-defence module.
- Launch a FinTech programme for young women - 2022
- Launch HandyGirls to equip girls with Do-it-Yourself technical skills - 2022
- Collaborate with Grassroots and Community constituencies to customise STEMpower to cater for girls from Low-income households - pilot in Q3, 2021, scale up in 2022.

UWS Girls2Pioneers Programme: Launched in 2014, Girls2Pioneers is UWS signature outreach programme that encourages girls aged 10-18 years to take up STEM subjects in school, and builds the pipeline of future women leaders in STEM. Programme reaches out to approx 2500 girls per year (over 4500 girls pre Covid) and includes proprietary research conducted; online/digital platform; events, webinars and talks and mentoring programme. A scholarship programme is planned to launch in 2022.

UWS \$tepUp Financial Literacy Programme: The UWS \$tepUp programme focuses on educating young girls, aged 12-16 years old, about the importance of financial literacy, saving, responsible consumption and financial Independence. The programme launches in Q4 , 2021.

II. WORKPLACES

We intend to launch a certification programme for GenSafe Workplaces—2022 to incentivise adoption of the programme by more corporates and SMEs.

III. COMMUNITY

UWS Boys Empowered programme: This programme creates a future where boys are able to have healthy relationships, reach their fullest potential and contribute proactively to the community. The programme aims to engage with boys between 12 and 16 years old of all socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds to provide them with the skills and confidence to safely prevent or interrupt violence in the community and empower them to be allies for gender equality. This is a mixed medium programme consisting of a Social Media Campaign titled #STRENGTH WITHOUT VIOLENCE, Group Workshops and a yearly Community Summit.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

In the next 5 years, we intend to:

- Develop scholarship programme for STEMpower - 2023
- Launch fund to empower young female tech-entrepreneurs - launch in 2023
- Launch Pipeline Programme - internships, job shadowing, traineeships for STEMpower—mentees and scholarship recipients—to prepare them for their first job.
- Develop regional partnerships to roll out STEMpower program outside Singapore/ in ASEAN

13. Women's International Shipping and Trading Association (Singapore)

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

To provide networking and learning opportunities for women in the maritime and trading industries.

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

More subsidies for women to take up leadership courses specifically targeted at them to prepare them for leadership roles.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

We work with our corporate members to hold joint events, which have been networking events, seminars/webinars, charity outreach.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

We hope to roll out a mentorship program, more webinars (on leadership skills) and networking events

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. WORKPLACES

We hope to grow our mentorship programme into an international one if possible. We also hope to have more members travel to WISTA International events once travel is possible. We hope to increase the diversity in the C-Suite of maritime and trading companies in Singapore.

14. 100 Women in Finance

What is the primary focus of your organisation, and the segment of the community you work with? Who are the partners that you are working with?

Increase participation of women in financial services firms

What are some policy changes or recommendations your organisation would like to see for the development of women in Singapore?

Higher level of paternity leave.

Present Initiatives: We would like to ask for your contribution on the present initiatives that your organisation has been taking on to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

We have an impact committee that goes into schools and universities and tries to encourage girls into careers in finance

II. WORKPLACES

We are heavily advocating for women to take roles in investment teams. We speak with asset managers around the world and encourage visibility for their female talent. We have specific initiatives for their talented women to develop their visibility and build their reputations.

III. COMMUNITY

We host events for school aged girls to help them to understand the different types of roles that they might be able to do if they chose to pursue a career in finance.

Future Initiatives (Short-term, next 2 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 2 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

We have a program in the Cayman Islands called GirlForce that we are looking to roll out in Singapore. It is an initiative to support underprivileged girls and support girls from diverse backgrounds to gain access to careers in finance.

II. WORKPLACES

We are working on getting industry partners to sign a pledge that they will work internally to make demographic change within their organisation which will assist the industry to move in that direction.

III. COMMUNITY

Our community outreach is aimed at girls and university students to build the pipeline of girls entering the industry.

Future Initiatives (Long-term, next 5 years): We would like to ask for your contribution on the future initiatives that your organisation will be rolling out in the next 5 years to help promote gender equality in Singapore.

I. SCHOOLS

Further developing the initiatives that we have outlined. To make GirlForce a solid part of the financial services industry offering in Singapore and that financial services organisations take graduates from universities and our initiatives as their talent.

II. WORKPLACES

Increase the visibility of women in investment roles and increase the capital that is allocated to them.



EQUAL SPACE, EQUAL VOICE, EQUAL WORTH

- END OF REPORT -