

ILLUSTRATION BY ELENA MAY

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Sustaining Safe(r) Space for Our Feminist Future



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REFLECTIONS FOR THE YEAR

Angela M. Kuga Thas
Co-Founding Partner-Director

As KRYSS Network, we have always identified as a feminist and human rights organisation, and therefore an organisation that practices feminist and human rights values and principles. So when we were asked what exactly were these values and principles and if all of us as KRYSS Network team members understood these the same way, we realised we had made assumptions that we were all on the same page on what those values and principles meant. With funds from Luminate for coaching support, we set aside the necessary time to work through our cultural and values framework and together we landed on ACHOO – Accountability, Courage, Happiness, Ownership, and Openness. The one-year coaching process only strengthened my conviction about the need to be more conscious of, even examine, our language and how we spoke of our organisational culture and values, and more so, how we spoke about freedom of opinion and expression; how we expressed the gendered differential impacts on unequal access to this freedom; and the need to promote and protect this right equally for all.

Language became more prominent as we participated in the strategic planning session of a larger network of civil society organisations (CSOs) working on freedom of opinion and expression. It was difficult for me to just accept things as they are when within that strategic planning, the way we worked and what we worked on as KRYSS Network was merely dismissed as “strategy” and could not be part of the primary level of focus in the framework for the network’s strategic plan. Articulating myself clearly does not come easily for me, especially when what I want to say goes against all that others believe is the right way or the only way to do things. It often feels that there is no space to say what I want to say and so taking time made me feel even more guilty about struggling with my articulation. As part of this larger network of CSOs working on freedom of opinion and expression, it was always a struggle to put my finger on why I felt that the usual way of using an issues-approach to strategic planning was not the ideal. Yet, I am someone who has worked for various organisations and has been part of networks regionally and globally.

Through them, I have also observed how networks can suffer severe rifts within and fall apart. By the year's end, I realised that a network will only survive well if everyone focused on strategy in their approach to strategic planning. The approach on identifying issues certainly surfaces our expertise and may even separate us into smaller networks of working together, but we would still remain in silos, with possibly some issues enjoying more weightage in terms of attention and priority for funding. For me, the emergent project on shaping public support for freedom of opinion and expression for the network demonstrated that our focus on strategy helped us to know how best to pool our strengths, understand how we can play a more substantive role to each other's work and as part of the network, create that more conducive space to work more closely, and to optimise the use of our skills and knowledge within the network.

As I thought more and more of our strategy-centric approach, one consultant who worked with us on developing our organisational strategic plan helped remind me that we are very much focused on behavioural and cultural change, even as we focus on advancing the human rights issues of freedom of opinion and expression with a gender lens. This alone explained the emphasis on strategy in the work we do in a context like Malaysia, "the how" of what we hoped to achieve in the social change we seek. Looking back, it was a relief to know that this clarity sat with us from 2018.

When we started, we knew that having a strong communication strategy would help drive us to achieving our mission and vision. So I was happy to note that in 2022, communication remains a strongly supported component of our work by our funders. "The how" is also evident from our financial figures with 2022 showing us still heavily invested in knowledge-building, but parallel to that was a growing emphasis on both the amplification of voice and collective action. The two combined represented 50 per cent of the work, and I trust that our work emphasis on these two strategies will strengthen even further in 2023.

Serene Lim

Co-founding Partner-Director

Our work at KRYSS Network has a renewed sense of purpose following the birth of my daughter. I suddenly wished I had the superpower to get rid of all the suffering, sadness, and injustice in the world so that she can grow up to be her true self without fear. More crucially, I found myself rethinking my identity as a woman, and what does it mean to live the feminist life as a mother and as a mirror-role for my daughter. The world is definitely not short on parenting advice. In fact, I was overwhelmed with information and parenting advice. I found myself in a position where I had to recalibrate my sense of self while having to make a plethora of decisions for the tiny human i.e. her name, breastmilk or formula milk, co-sleeping or cot, day care or nanny, and so much more. More than ever, I felt judged and I struggled to reconcile my sense of self and motherhood.

Amidst all that, being part of KRYSS Network has been a comforting anchor – strong enough to hold me as I drift and shift direction with the wind, but not too tight until it breaks or sinks me. It was a safe space where I was able to embrace my vulnerability and all other big feelings without judgment. Creating a safe space for difficult conversations has always been a priority within KRYSS Network. This is reflected when we put our heads together to develop our cultural and values framework - Accountability, Courage, Happiness, Ownership, and Openness. Relevant to this is the value of courage, where we speak of prioritising vulnerability as essential in fostering understanding and a testament of true courage. It is through this that we break free from judgment, shame, and fear, and be our most authentic selves. It takes courage to admit one's shortcomings, inner shame and fear, the safe space we built within the team has supported me through this difficult transition in life.

Safe spaces allow us to practice collective care so that we can continue to grow through difficult, uneasy, and necessary conversations that challenge our presumptions and worldview. Episode 10 of our GOSSIP podcast on call-out and cancel culture was one of the many initiatives by KRYSS Network to hold difficult conversations and explore the nuances of cancel culture within the sexual harassment context - an issue that I had grappled with for a while. I learned that the binary categorisation of cancel culture as “feminist” or “non-feminist” or to describe cancel culture as either bad or good is not helpful as human beings are complex and it is important to contextualise it against the power dynamics in which it operates.

Our work on online gender-based violence has also led us to examine the role of social media algorithms in enabling/curtailing freedom of opinion and expression, especially for women and gender non-conforming persons. Our research “The Hidden Codes that Shape Our Expression: Understanding How Social Media Algorithms Obstruct Feminist Expression and How Malaysian Women Navigate the Challenges” looks at algorithmic interference in our freedom of expression. While social media has broken down the barriers to expression, the platforms have the ultimate power in determining “who should be heard” and “what should you read” through an algorithm logic that is imbued with capitalistic and patriarchal ideologies that jointly reinforce oppression against women and gender non-conforming persons.

The launch of our online gender-based violence toolkit was another highlight of 2022. After three consultations and workshops and countless rounds of editing, we finally felt confident enough to publish it. We started developing the toolkit in 2020 and even after two years of work, some part of me still felt quite not ready to publicly release it. Upon reflection, the sense of incompleteness I felt was symptomatic of a larger issue of the culture of impunity and failure of institutional remedy for survivors. When approached by survivors, we often have to prepare them that they may not receive effective remedies from both law enforcement and social media platforms, and in some cases, the very real possibility of escalation of violence. We were careful in grounding the toolkit in the lived realities of girls, women, and gender non-conforming persons. This means being painfully aware that the justice system may not be accessible to all and police officers can be perpetrators of violence and hence further re-traumatise the survivors.

Altogether, identifying solutions to eliminate OGBV remains challenging and elusive. The systemic and widespread gender-based inequalities often mean we have to look at everything and at times, we face stagnation in our discussions.

Despite that, I find strength and vitality in the small pockets of initiatives by individuals, including the filing of legal action against the police by a survivor who was harassed online as a result of the leak of her police report on her sexual assault. Even though 2022 was extremely challenging for me, I find happiness in the work that we do at KRYSS Network, including the simple things of checking in during every weekly meeting, food hunting, and taking psychology tests together.

Jane Law

Communication and Multimedia Officer

2022 marks my third time writing an annual reflection for KRYSS Network and each year I take the time to define what the year was like for me. This year was a year of many changes and adaptations, especially as the Project Coordinator for one of our core areas of work, Berani Soal – our Virtual Workshop Roadshow series.

As the world slowly opened up after the pandemic, many of our activities and meetings transitioned from virtual to physical, including our workshops. Joining KRYSS Network in 2020 during the peak of the pandemic, I was more familiar with organising and coordinating online events. The gradual switch forced me to change the way I worked and challenged what I knew before. I had to adjust the methodology of our workshops, syllabus, and promotion strategy, which, to me, was like walking into a completely new field.

Despite the advances in digitalisation, I learned the hard way that many still value physical sessions due to the uniquely human connection and tangible experience that cannot be replicated virtually. Things that I have taken for granted when it comes to workshop training - reading body language, picking up on non-verbal cues, and forming deeper emotional connections with others – are actually what makes a workshop immersive, enriching, and most importantly, impactful, and this is something digital platforms are still not able to match.

My time at KRYSS Network is certainly one that gives me the space to explore my work creatively – an aspect that I appreciate very much. This year, I did a post penning my thoughts on the short film “Saya Juga Anak Malaysia”, which talks about the struggles of children born abroad to Malaysian women, to support Family Frontier’s campaign for equal citizenship rights. To raise more awareness about the importance of data security and the far-reaching implications of our data being compromised, we did a post following the case of MySejahtera being sold to a private entity. A further highlight was the creation of a short comic that articulated not only the importance of internet access in our lives but the need for such access to be substantial and meaningful that would enrich and benefit the lives of peoples in Malaysia.

I also thoroughly enjoyed curating and coordinating this year's much more extensive 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. Centering on "women's voices", we featured 14 diverse women's stories and their demands for a gender equal Malaysia, which was aptly as the 15th General Elections were happening at that time. I was very happy working with illustrator Elena who was able to capture my ideas. I believe it was her beautiful visuals that have enhanced our messaging which women have resonated with. The intention behind this year's campaign was to emulate this quote that we wrote in our introductory campaign post, "Women's voices have always been here. The problem isn't that women are afraid to speak but rather were you listening when they were speaking?" And at KRYSS Network, our commitment in amplifying these voices continues with our annual KRYSSX16Days campaign.

There were a few rough lessons here and there for me in 2022 but there was also more room for me to grow with KRYSS Network and I hope the room continues to expand for the years to come.

Nisa Rawi

Research and Documentation Officer

This year has been both great and sad. Things were starting to open up again and we finally moved into the long-awaited office. We saw more of each other this year than we did for the whole two years during the pandemic, no thanks to the Movement Control Orders. It is also the year we got to see more of our colleagues from different organisations and initiatives - finally synergizing together. This was also my last year with KRYSS Network, or at least for a while.

SEAFAM continued for another year and more new organisations joined the coalition. This round of SEAFAM consisted of more webinars and discussions and we got to take part in Jakarta Feminist's Feminist Festival 2022. Our very own Angela was part of a panel, sharing her knowledge on how organisations can apply for funds. We also learned about the history of feminism in the Philippines, a session led by our partner, Gantala Press.

This is also the year we developed a feminist dictionary - each country (Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines) had consultants and focus group discussions with not only the SEAFAM members but also folks who share the same passion in advocating to the wider network. It's a refreshing experience when you try something new with others, who more or less are in the same boat as you. The significance of language use when it comes to advocacy is the first thing people tend to forget in the day and age of the internet. The creation of this community-based dictionary is one way to help advocates avoid jargon and destroy the view that feminism is for a certain class.

GOSSIP, our podcast series, is still going strong, and our Virtual Workshop Roadshow was a success in its first run. We managed to continue the project for another year (more and more opportunities, yay!). This is also the year we finally release our long-awaited resource toolkit to assist survivors of OGBV, after multiple consultations with various marginalised and vulnerable communities for whom the toolkit was designed.

This has definitely been a good year for KRYSS Network as we are expanding the team, with more people to work with and more people to connect with. Without all the work and lessons I learned at KRYSS Network, I would not be here today.

I owe it to the team for how much I have grown in comparison to when I first started. Even a year ago, I would not recognise myself as I have grown so much with KRYSS. Throughout my tenure, the team has been nothing but supportive of each other; we were always able to share our thoughts and feelings. No ideas were pushed away and it was always participatory. KRYSS did not feel like “just a job”, but definitely like a piece of me.

KRYSS Network will always be home to me and I am excited to see how my colleagues will embark on this journey. KRYSS Network is deserving of all the big and amazing things that are in store for the team and I look forward to it.

Jananie Chandrarao

Intern (March - June 2022)

Research and Documentation Officer (October 2022 - Present)

Never in my life, had I thought I would be working at a not-for-profit non-governmental organisation (NGO). Growing up, I always wanted to get involved in the mental health field and I still do. However, recent events have felt like a sign from the Universe to follow a path previously unknown to me i.e. into activism for gender equality and to put my dreams of working in the mental health field on a momentary pause. That is how I stumbled upon KRYSS Network and it has been one of the most important life-altering decisions I have made so far.

What I love most about KRYSS Network is how I was able to take up space. I was asked for my opinion when I remained quiet and I have been allowed to ask questions that could be considered stupid. I took up space because I was given the space to take up; I was able to be myself unapologetically. The non-hierarchical culture present was very conducive to growth instead of being one of the many interns who often feared the wrath of their superiors. I could communicate openly about my thoughts and feelings while knowing that my thoughts and views can be challenged and the best way to go about it is to have open and honest conversations. My process when it comes to doing work was respected and supported. As a team, everyone understood that we had our own ways of completing tasks efficiently and stepped up to support one another in the areas we lacked expertise/skills/knowledge. Most importantly, the tasks assigned to me as an intern were done with the intention of allowing me to learn.

Fortunately, I got to work with KRYSS Network for a little longer than I initially anticipated after I was recruited as the Research and Documentation Officer. Within the month of joining, I volunteered to take up the role of a research assistant for the research on Gendered Disinformation targeted at women political candidates. This fieldwork research had been one of the most eye-opening projects that were tasked to me to date. Being a research assistant meant pushing many boundaries and limitations I have set for myself and having meaningful conversations with women political candidates on their lived realities.

This opportunity really presented me with an in-depth understanding of how online gender-based violence (OGBV) impacted people on the ground compared to when I was monitoring and documenting cases online. It also helped me refine my interview and networking skills, as well as increased my expertise on the topic of gendered disinformation. This also led to me presenting the preliminary findings of the research at the Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) Malaysia alongside many civil society organisations, academics, and media personnel. Following this, I was also proudly part of the team that had launched an OGBV Resource Toolkit to support survivors and their allies better during incidents of OGBV. I helped organize, host as well as provide technical support for the whole launch.

The most valuable lesson working at KRYSS Network taught me was that feminism is a process. We often view things in black and white, not allowing space for shades of grey. But the process of being a feminist was often grey, filled with so much learning, unlearning, introspection, observation and often challenging our own beliefs. And I am looking forward to more of it.

Lam Shin Yee

Intern (June - October 2022)

These three months have passed by so fast! It definitely was a fulfilling internship, I have learned a lot, and everyone is so nice to work with. I would say KRYSS Network really delivered on being a safe space, I definitely felt safe and comfortable enough to speak up without fear of being judged, and this feeling has only increased as I got closer to the team. At first, I was a bit quiet during meetings, that's because I was a bit confused about what was happening, but I did know I could speak if I wanted to.

I mostly did documentation work, and it could get a bit draining at times, especially on the attacks against Family Frontiers, where hate comments of a similar narrative are being echoed again and again on the issue of gender-discriminatory citizenship laws against women to confer their citizenship to their children. However, this scenario precisely illustrates that some kinds of mindsets are just so deeply ingrained, and much effort is needed to change them even in the slightest. I'm very new to this, but I think part of not-for-profit work is also about not being able to see the results immediately; and that what we reap may not be proportionate to what we sow. It is a long-term process, but we just have to start somewhere.

I also assisted with media monitoring on OGBV-related news and court cases. Sometimes, there weren't many updates on news portals; other times it could feel like going down a rabbit hole, where I just read an article and then another, by clicking on the 'read more' or 'related news' button.

I was really lucky to be able to hop on to the gendered disinformation research work during the 15th General Election (GE15), and the 16 days of activism campaign. My role as an intern was mainly to support both Jananie and Jane, who were the respective leads in the two projects.

On GE15 monitoring, we looked at the gendered disinformation targeted at women political candidates. One thing I had to constantly keep in mind is to differentiate between constructive criticism (or even mean comments that are not gender-based) and OGBV. I also had the opportunity to join Jananie in interviewing Amira from MUDA, which was an enlightening experience.

Support from the team has been great, and feedback and advice I received was so useful. Everyone was so patient with me, which I'm really grateful for. Sometimes, just sitting in and listening to what everyone had to say during meetings is interesting, because I get to look at things from different perspectives. They are also very accommodating and I can openly discuss with the team when a deadline is too tight or when I had problems carrying out a task.

My main takeaway is to always keep an open mind and be flexible, something that I struggle with. This can be in relation to timings and deadlines, as we have to accommodate everyone's schedule, including mine (thank you all for that); and it can also be for the work done, where sometimes things have to be constantly updated to reflect the changes and evolution of society, for example, templates and terms.

I was worried about doing an internship, a fear I had mainly from watching too many TV shows that love exaggerating about hardships of being an intern. But now, I am proud to say I completed my internship and I am really glad I did it with KRYSS Network.

Thank you everyone!

OUR HERSTORY

Since its inception, we have always envisioned KRYSS Network to be a feminist learning organisation where power is equalised, and everyone can participate and express their opinions safely. In 2022, with the guidance from a coach, we put our heads together to define and name our cultural and values framework collectively. It started with multiple conversations and reflections on our internal process, what gives us meaning, and what we value most within the team. Finally, we nailed it all down to “ACHOO” – Accountability, Courage, Happiness, Ownership, and Openness. The ACHOO cultural and values framework is not a set of aspirational values but rather it is derivative of what is already in practice and embedded within the team. We are better able to define our organisational culture and articulate what makes us a wonderful blend of flavour. The improved clarity on our cultural and values framework has already started to guide us in our day-to-day operations and interactions, and across a variety of work domains—from what we expect from one another, the recruitment of new team members, to the way we engage with communities at risk and the larger Malaysian society and in designing our programme.

We also developed our 3-year organisational strategic plan, through which we are better able to articulate our goals and metrics of success under our three core strategies. The refinement of our 3-year strategic plan again shows that our work focuses on behavioral and cultural change, from amplification of voices to advocacy that influences power holders. We remain convinced that violations of human rights, whether by state or non-state actors, are symptoms of underlying patriarchal ideologies that express themselves through harmful practices and discriminatory laws and policies. Therefore, to transform society means challenging the very structure that shapes our worldview and our perceptions of those who are not like us, and how power is distributed in society.

We were also excited to grow our podcast series “GOSSIP” and expand our “Virtual Workshop Roadshow” to cover a wider range of topics concerning gender equality and feminism. The continuation of our podcast series and virtual workshop roadshow since 2021 is particularly meaningful as this speaks to the value and relevance of both core activities to our strategic plan and programme.

The work on behavioral and cultural change is not a one-time event but requires a sustained process and constant mindful practices which are tied to the longer term struggle of our human rights movement in Malaysia

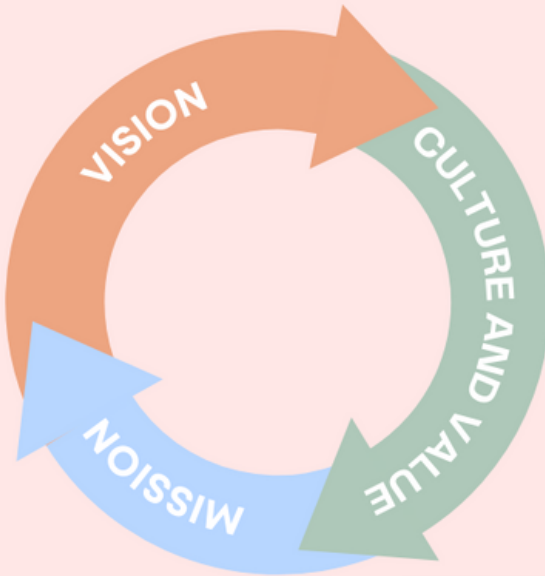
Having started our documentation and monitoring of online gender-based violence in 2020, this year we expanded our scope to better understand gendered disinformation during the 15th general election. While false and harmful narratives against women and gender non-conforming persons are not new, the ease of coordination and propagation facilitated by digital technologies have challenged the way we understand gendered disinformation and its intersection with everyday sexism and online gender-based violence.

2022 was also a year of sad goodbyes and joyful hellos. Our team went through changes as we bade farewell to our Research and Documentation Officer, Nisa, and two members of our Peer Accountability Committee, Melissa and Dorian. They had been with us since the beginning and together we envisioned and imagined a different feminist organisation. Even with their departure, their presence within KRYSS Network remained as their contributions are already deeply embedded within the DNA of the organisation. We also welcomed Jananie as our new Research and Documentation Officer, and Mei and Thency as new members to our Peer Accountability Committee.

OUR VISION AND MISSION

KRYSS envisions a world where all peoples, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age or any other status, are aware of and able to fully exercise their freedom of opinion and expression, public participation and bodily autonomy that are premised on gender equality, non-discrimination and feminist principles.

We work towards increasing the individual and collective agency of all, but especially of women, young women and gender non-conforming persons, in the full exercise of their freedom of opinion and expression through conscious strategy development that is supported by evidence-based knowledge, networking and advocacy; and guided by feminist and human rights principles of upholding dignity, equality, diversity, respect and choice.



- Accountability
- Courage
- Happiness
- Ownership
- Openness

OUR CULTURAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

Introducing our cultural and values framework – ACHOO: Accountability, Courage, Happiness, Ownership, and Openness. The ACHOO framework guides us to be more intentional in our day-to-day interaction within the team and in the way we advocate for freedom of opinion and expression from an intersectional gender lens.

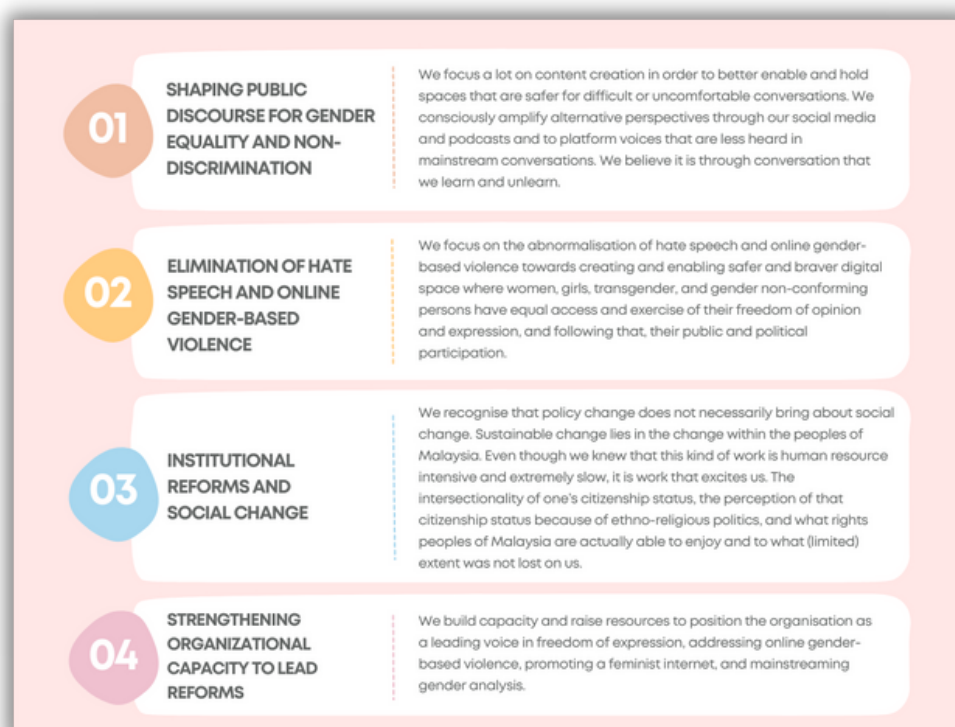


STRATEGY PLAN TOWARDS OUR VISION AND MISSION

In 2022, we reviewed and deepened our strategic plan by envisioning our metrics of success for our programme and synergising our goals with our work for the next three years. Our three-year strategic plan continues to adopt our earlier intersectional and inclusive strategies toward ensuring that:

- Safer and braver spaces are enabled and sustained;
- Marginalised and dissenting voices are visible and amplified, and;
- People, especially women, girls, and gender non-conforming persons, claim their right to freedom of opinion and expression.

In 2022, in addition to our three primary strategies, we also identified a fourth strategy as essential to the growth of KRYSS Network:



OUR WORK AND THEMATIC THREADS OF 2022

We are thankful for the continued institutional support from Access Now and Luminate (through East-West Management Institute) that has sustained our core work around mainstreaming gender analysis in public discourse, evidence-based advocacy on online gender-based violence, and outreach through the creation of safer spaces for young students. In 2022, we also undertook the following projects:

1. A second feminist internet research, supported by the Association for Progressive Communications' Feminist Internet Research Network (2021-2022)
2. A second SEAFAM (2021-2022) under CFLI ASEAN, through the Jakarta Feminist Association
3. Internet freedom in Sabah and Sarawak, supported by the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) (2022-2023)
4. Gendered disinformation research during the 15th General Election, supported by Luminate (2022-2023)
5. Research on corporate accountability in the technology sector using the Ranking Digital Rights methodology, supported by US Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) through Digital Asia Hub (2022-2023)

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

2022 was a crucial year for KRYSS Network as we spent a lot of time aligning our purpose, values, and strategic approach. More often than not, human rights work is associated with legal reforms and direct actions i.e. protest, rapid responses to police arrest etc; while process-oriented work i.e. narrative-building, space-holding etc. remains largely devalued and invisible. These processes, however, embed our culture and values in the way we work, and so have reaffirmed the value of our work and given us the language to better define who we are, what we stand for, and to reflect on the impact that we strive to achieve towards a freer and more equal society. This means being better able to prioritise our work, collaborations, and how we access funding opportunities that are relevant to our vision and mission and important to our constituents. It also means having to say no to opportunities so that we are better able to focus on existing commitments and care for ourselves and our team members.

It was a breath of fresh air to host two in-person workshops on developing a feminist dictionary for Malaysian feminists/women and on online gender-based violence in our office and to be able to have open and honest conversations within these safe spaces. We continued to see our role to enable and sustain a safer and braver space where marginalised and dissenting voices are visible and amplified, especially those belonging to women, girls, and gender non-confirming persons.

OGBV resource toolkit: Making available actionable guides and knowledge to survivors/those at risk of OGBV

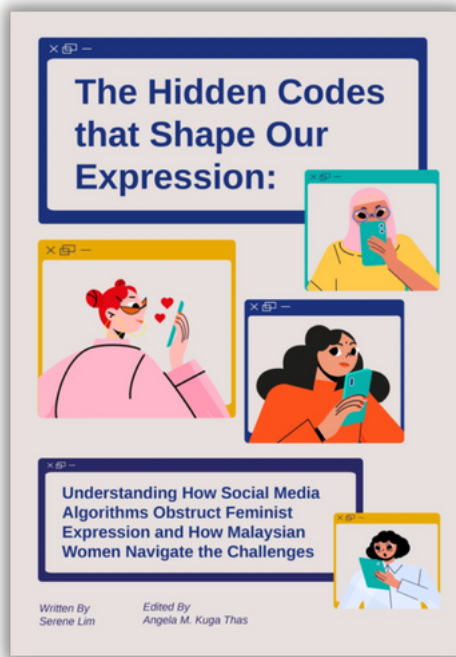


After two years of planning and drafting, through an online event in December, we finally launched our online gender-based violence (OGBV) resource toolkit using an animation video explaining what is OGBV. In this toolkit, we unpack OGBV and provide explanations to assist readers in identifying the ever-evolving forms of OGBV. We also talk about steps survivors can take when they are facing or are at risk of online gender-based violence, including first responses, available redress, and relevant legislations, resources for emotional and mental health support, guides in reporting to police.

Through the sharing of actionable guides and knowledge, we hope this will better enable the creation and sustenance of safer and braver spaces for women, girls, and gender non-conforming persons to exercise their right to freedom of expression and public participation.

As part of the curation process, we also organised three workshops with the LGBTQ communities, refugee women, and Malaysian women who faced discrimination in conferring their citizenship to their children, to better understand their needs in responding to violence and hate online. Moving forward, the organisation will focus on disseminating the knowledge from the toolkit in various formats and the national language; 2) to review the usefulness of the toolkit to the community i.e. including, accessibility, ease of use, the usefulness of contents, accessibility of language, etc.

Research on social media algorithms and feminist expression: Surfacing algorithmic interference to freedom of expression



We published a short research titled “The Hidden Codes that Shape Our Expression: Understanding How Social Media Algorithms Obstruct Feminist Expression and How Malaysian Women Navigate the Challenges”. This research contributes towards our improved understanding of the barriers and biases resulting from algorithms in women’s access to freedom of opinion and expression and examines women’s resiliency and how they navigate these algorithms that are inherently limiting to create the much-needed space for women and gender non-conforming persons to speak out, to be heard, and to, in effect, occupy digital spaces.

While online gender-based violence is rooted in gender-based discrimination that takes place in every facet of society, such forms of violence might be facilitated in particular ways by the algorithm and design of social media platforms. The design of social media is not neutral but is prototyped, and developed to invite and shape participation toward particular ends, including what is not permitted and the policing of objectionable content and behaviour. However, what is not permitted and the objectionable content and behaviour that is policed, are not necessarily to promote and protect human rights. We argue that algorithmic interference in freedom of expression can drive polarisation, reinforce existing disparities and discriminatory practices, and has a larger societal concern over manipulations of the distribution of information.

16 days of activism against gender-based violence: Amplifying demands of change to Members of Parliament



From 25th November 2022 to 10th December 2022, we launched our annual 16 days of activism against gender-based violence campaign, #KRYSSX16Days on our social media platforms. We highlighted the stories of 14 women from various fields and communities on their experience of gender-based violence, women's rights issues, and their accessibility to their right to expression and opinion. We collaborated with 14 women and Ellen May Saini Jeffery, our illustrator to curate the stories of these women who stand for gender equality, equal rights for refugees, trans women, women with disability, and Orang Asli, and sexual and reproductive rights and climate justice issue. Along with their stories, we also amplified their demand to their Members of Parliament on what they could do to address issues that disproportionately affect women, girls, and gender-non-conforming persons. Their full stories can be found on our social media platforms.

GOSSIP – Making gender analysis relatable to current issues



Following the launch of our podcast series “GOSSIP” in 2021, we managed to produce four episodes in the year 2022 on the following topics:

- Episode 07: Gender-Responsive Budgeting
- Episode 08: Internet Access From A Gender Lens
- Episode 09: Riding Social Media Algorithms
- Episode 10: Fighting Sexual Harassment – Call Out or Cancel Culture

In 2022, we delved into the issue of gender-responsive budgeting as women’s rights groups made headway with the government following the previous government’s commitment to table a gender-responsive budget for B40 households in 2023. We also unpacked meaningful internet access from a gender lens and argued that an intersectional approach to internet access is essential to bridge the existing digital divide, and how internet access is a human right should be equally enjoyed by all.

As part of our dissemination strategy for our research, we further questioned the influence of social media algorithms that shaped gender norms and public discourse and how these algorithms play a role in perpetuating or encouraging online gender-based violence against women and gender non-conforming persons. Our last episode interrogates cancel culture against the history, context, and power relations in which it is defined, and its effectiveness to bring about the necessary discourse and accountability of power.

Public education campaigns through Digital Content

1. Social Media Campaign



We had 2 public education campaigns through social media in the year 2022. The first campaign was based on our 2021 research 'Power X Expression X Violence: A Research on Women's Freedom of Expression on Social Media in Malaysia' that examines the power dynamics of various forms of expression and the intersecting identities of women; how our current understanding and practice of freedom of expression on social media has allowed online gender-based violence to grow with impunity and to the extent of normalising the violence.

The second campaign looked at meaningful internet access from a gender lens, following our policy brief in 2021 on 'Internet Access as a Human Right'. Despite the statement from our former Minister of Communications and Multimedia on how internet access should be a human right, the discourse around internet access and the digital divide remains rigidly confined to the issues of infrastructure and devices. The public education campaign encourages us to rethink internet access as not just mere physical access but how it is used and experienced in a meaningful and beneficial way by all.

2. Educational Video

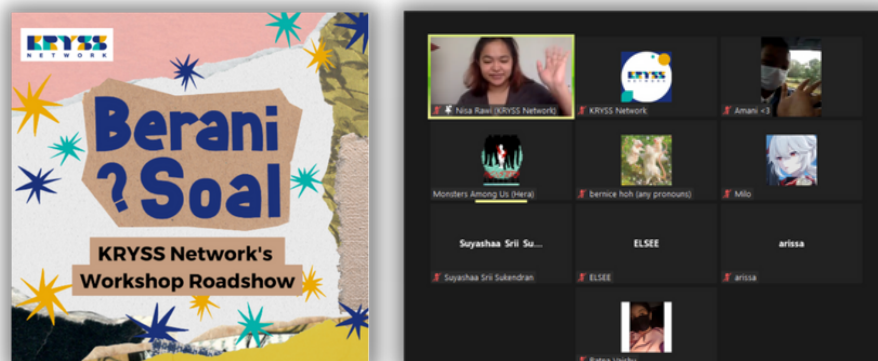


We created two digital videos to unpack issues related to online gender-based violence in the Malay language. The first video titled “Kenapa kita perlu minta izin di ruang digital?” redefines the concept of consent in digital spaces through an everyday example to encourage relatability among people on the issues concerned. Despite the general perception that the internet is a public space, our data online is personal and private, and therefore consent must be actively sought and not presumed given.



The second video titled “Mengenai Kekerasan Berasaskan Gender Dalam Talian” explains the type and pattern of OGBV and its impact on survivors. The video is created as part of our dissemination and diversification strategy for the OGBV resource toolkit to broaden the information to a wider audience on different platforms

Virtual Workshop Roadshow (VWR): Berani Soal – Creating Safer and Braver Spaces for Discourse



In 2022, we rebranded and expanded our Virtual Workshop Roadshow (VWR) to “Berani Soal”, with the intention to encourage students to ask questions that were deemed taboo, politically incorrect, shameful, or outside of social/discursive norms. We believe that it is important to hold safe(r) and brave(r) spaces where young people can be open and be vulnerable without judgment, and to discuss topics that can be deemed sensitive and complex in nature. We conducted 7 different workshops as follows:

No.	Organisations	Participants	Topics
1	Seek to Speak	51 girls	Understanding Power
2	Monsters Among Us	17 girls	Online Gender-Based Violence
3	Kita Selamat	12 girls, 1 boy	Online Gender-Based Violence
4	Empathy for Youths	7 girls	Online Gender-Based Violence
5	Sunway Gender Equality Club	10 women, 4 men	Understanding Gender Equality
6	MMU Amnesty Club	18 women, 5 men	Unpacking Misogyny in Malaysia
7	Women:Girls	50 girls	Online Gender-Based Violence

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge and give our warmest thanks to those who supported us in different ways, as funders, as collaborators, as resource persons, as allies, as fellow human rights defenders, and as friends. We are especially appreciative of those who would readily work with us or who are keen to work with us because of how we work and believe in the work that we do. Your faith and trust in us were what sustained us this far.

FINANCIAL

We managed a total of MYR 600,583 for the year with the following breakdown of how funds were used to support our strategic approaches:

KNOWLEDGE – MYR264,193 or about 42 per cent

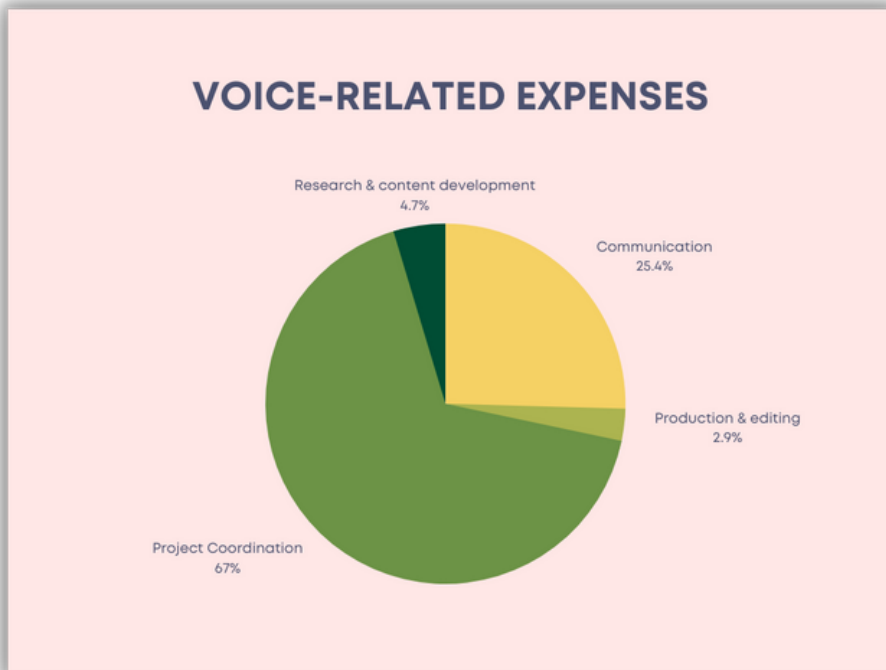
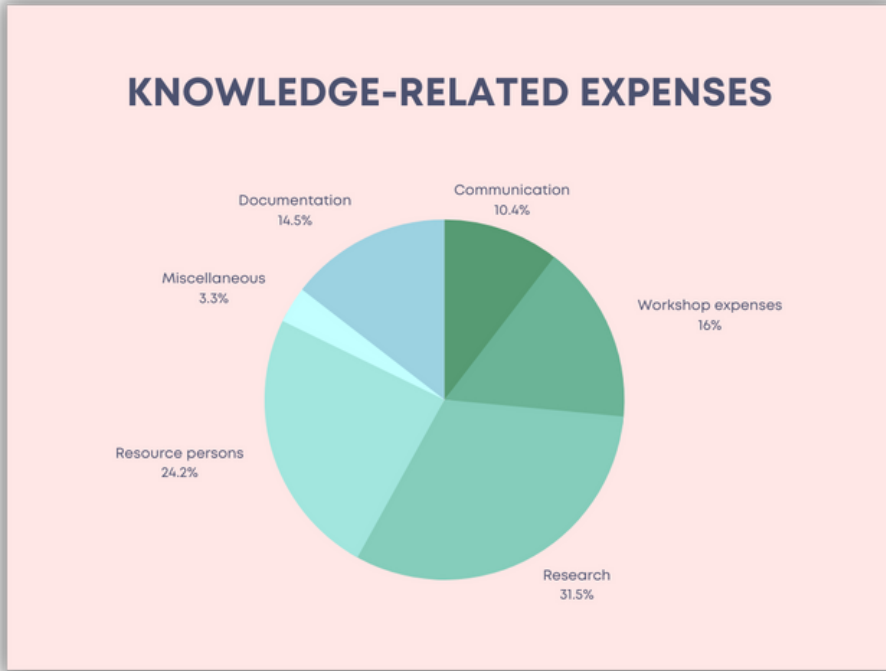
VOICE – MYR73,538 or about 13 per cent

COLLECTIVE ACTION – MYR72,619 or about 13 per cent

OPERATIONS – MYR148,266 or about 27 per cent



STRATEGIC AREA EXPENSES FOR 2022





BRIEF SNAPSHOTS OF THE YEAR



Team retreat in Ipoh, Perak for all four team members (Angela, Jananie, Jane and Serene) and three of our Peer Accountability Committee members (Dorian, Jamie, and Mei), in October 2022.





Workshop on social media algorithms and freedom of expression, at our office, 11 June 2022.



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