



INSIGHTS FROM WHOLENESS & JUSTICE

FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY-DECEMBER 2022

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ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

CAISO established the Wholeness & Justice Programme in 2020 to expand access by diverse LGBTQI+ people in Trinidad & Tobago to wholeness, justice, and social services. The Programme is committed to responding to violations of LGBTQI+ community members with an emphasis on trans, non-binary, gender-non-conforming, and intersex people; and to deliver clinically competent, trauma-informed interventions that enable healing and resilience.

A violation is an action or inaction that infringes on a person's human rights. A violation can occur intentionally (e.g., abuse or violence from a person/authority) or by omission (e.g., a failure to protect from harm). Wholeness and Justice provides services to members of the LGBTQI+ community who have experienced violations.

Some examples of violations are provided below:

- Abuse from authorities and/or persons
- Infringement on safety and security of the person
- State failure to protect from abuse, exploitation, and/or discrimination
- Infringement on equality before the law and due process.

The Wholeness and Justice team assesses each case, and provides service based on the availability of capacity and resources. Referrals are made if the Programme is unable to take a case.

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The Programme provides support through the combination of legal, social work, peer navigation and referral services, as well as the enrolment of allies, for members of the community who have experienced a violation. The Programme's services include legal support and advocacy, counselling, competence-building of justice and service systems, strategic litigation, policy advocacy, and community-level outreach.

The Programme offers three types of services:

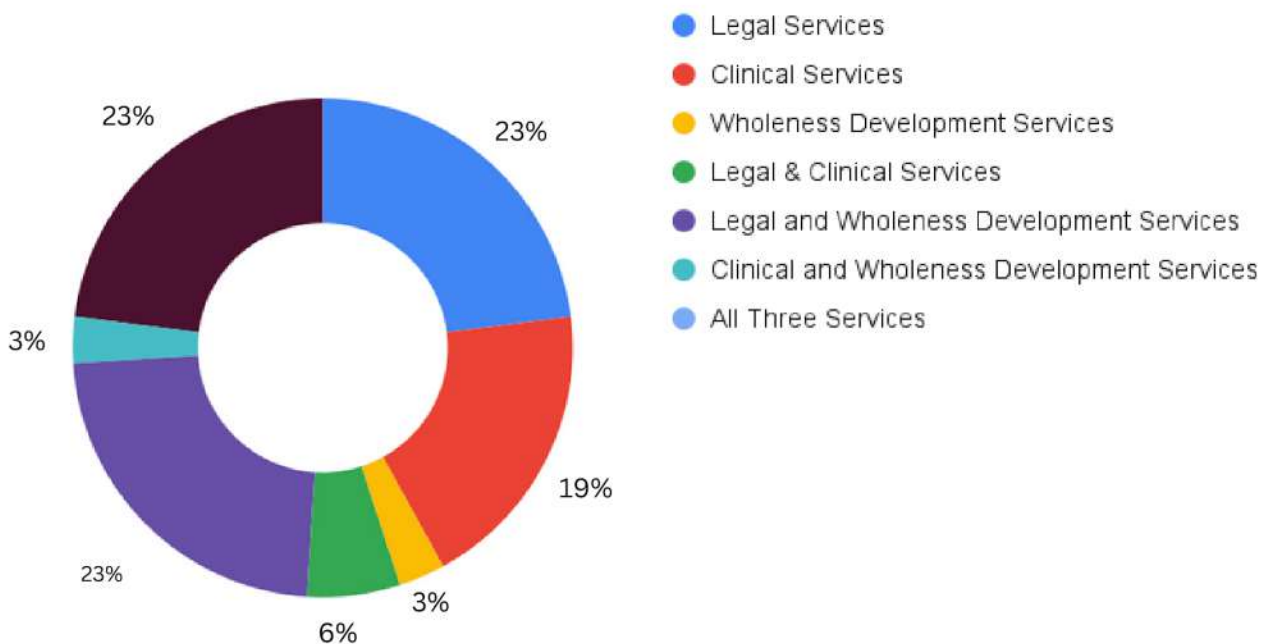
1. Legal support for clients who experience any violations, acts of discrimination, or abuse. Based on available resources and capacity, the programme may enlist the support of partners or limit the type of legal support provided.
2. Clinical (psychosocial) support to members of the LGBTQI+ community, who may experience traumatic events, require mental health support while accessing other services, or need assistance with managing day-to-day challenges, aiming to respond to these needs.
3. Wholeness Development - guidance and support in managing day-to-day life challenges, including financial planning, activity routines, connecting with service providers, and engaging different agencies and bodies. Additionally, Wholeness & Justice is committed to engaging community development initiatives and working to build capacity among service providers accessed by LGBTQI+ people.

SERVICE OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW OF CASES 2022	
CLIENTS	CASE ACTIVITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intakes for 2022: 47 • New Clients enlisted: 31 • Total Clients since December 2020: 64 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open cases: 21 • Service pause: 05 • Closed cases: 38

SERVICES PROVIDED

Distribution of Services



Of the combination of services that the Programme offers, 74% of clients enlisted in 2022 were provided with a legal service, in varying combinations.

LEGAL SERVICES

The Programme provides legal services to LGBTQI+ people in Trinidad & Tobago who have experienced a violation. All legal services begin with a preliminary legal consultation, which may result in legal representation by the Community Lawyer in the client’s matter or support in an existing legal matter. Legal support includes providing the clients with guidance and advice about the related legal process. There were instances where, upon legal consultation, the Community Lawyer determined that another institution was more suitable to address the matter. In those cases, the Community Lawyer assisted the client with navigating that institution, supporting them throughout the process. These cases involved migration and employment issues, among others.

In 2022, the Programme provided legal services to 23 new clients while continuing services to existing clients from 2021. The details below focus on 2022 intake of clients:

INSIGHTS FROM LEGAL SERVICES 2022	
CLIENTS	LEGAL ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 clients accessed legal services • 16 clients accessed a combination of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation and advice • Contentious landlord-tenant situations • Deed polls for name changes • Intimate partner violence (protection order, divorce proceedings) • Legal support in navigating social services • Strategic litigation – 4 ongoing matters • Unfair dismissals from employment (due to sexual orientation, mental health discrimination, and harassment)

CLINICAL & SOCIAL SERVICES

The Clinical team spearheads all clinical interventions including psychosocial support, complex trauma therapy, support with social, economic and personal issues and social services navigation. Interventions focus on providing LGBTQI+ people with mental and emotional support while they receive legal services and navigate relevant institutions and legal processes. The Clinical team aims to equip clients with skills to cope with their experiences of violation and trauma as well as to manage stress and day-to-day challenges. Ultimately, all clinical interventions focus on enabling healing and resilience in addition to encouraging self-advocacy and self-empowerment.

From 2021 through 2022, the Programme expanded services to provide support to LGBTQI+ people who did not have a violation (or were unable to pursue legal action for a variety of reasons) but required mental health support. The majority of these cases were closed in 2022.

In 2022, the Programme provided clinical services to 16 new clients while continuing services to existing clients from 2021.

INSIGHTS FROM CLINICAL SERVICES 2022	
CLIENTS	CLINICAL ISSUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 clients accessed clinical services • 10 clients accessed a combination of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical interventions and support for clients with legal cases (in particular, matters related to intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and unfair dismissals; and preparing clients for court) • Clients managing multiple issues related to mental health (anxiety, depression, stress, among other issues), exacerbated by homophobia/transphobia • Severe and ongoing trauma due to family violence and structural discrimination Referrals for psychiatric care

WHOLENESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

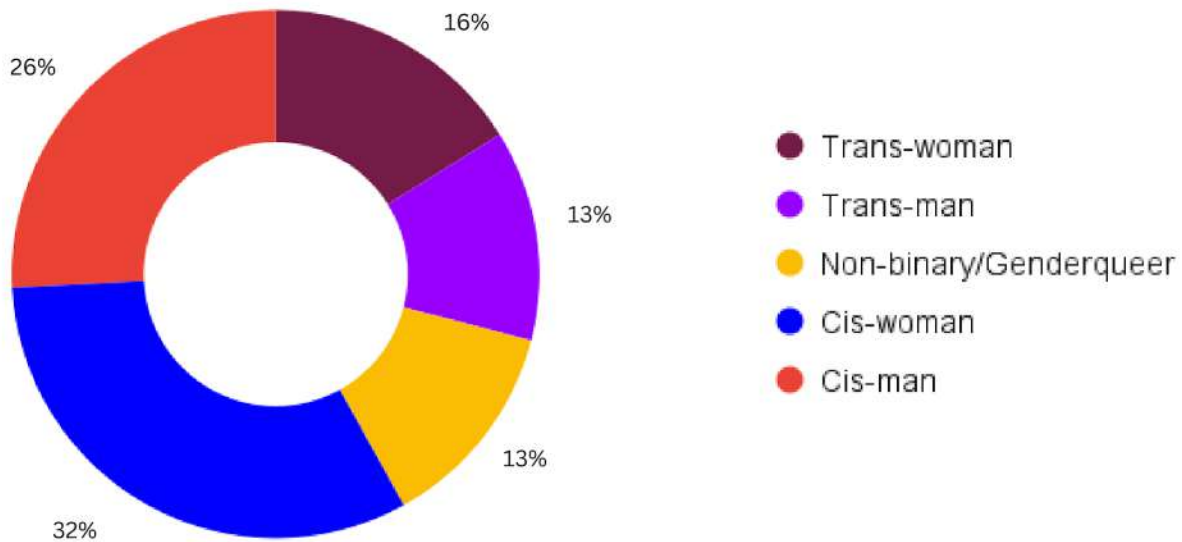
Wholeness Development Services seek to respond to client needs that intersect with and exacerbate their legal issue(s). These include housing instability, food insecurity, lack of access to safe transportation, and lack of access to healthcare, among others. These experiences increase the risk of exposure to violence for LGBTQI+ people and limit responsiveness to legal and clinical interventions. Therefore, wholeness development services are a key component of the support the Programme provides – and underpins the philosophy of Wholeness and Justice.

In 2022, the Programme provided wholeness development services to 16 new clients while continuing to offer support to clients from 2021. Further, many community members contacted the Programme with questions and shared various challenges – with some becoming clients and others being referred to partner organisations or national services where possible.

INSIGHTS FROM WHOLENESS DEVELOPMENT 2022	
CLIENTS	ISSUES/CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 clients accessed a combination of services • 1 client accessed wholeness service only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 30 people contacted the programme in need of housing, with the majority experiencing family violence and/or challenges with rental accommodation • Navigating social and emergency services - health, police and social services display a significant lack of sensitivity or ability to manage LGBTQI+ issues or people • Increase in persons requiring emergency food support (particularly migrants and people engaged in sex work) • Parents requesting support for LGBTQI+ youth.

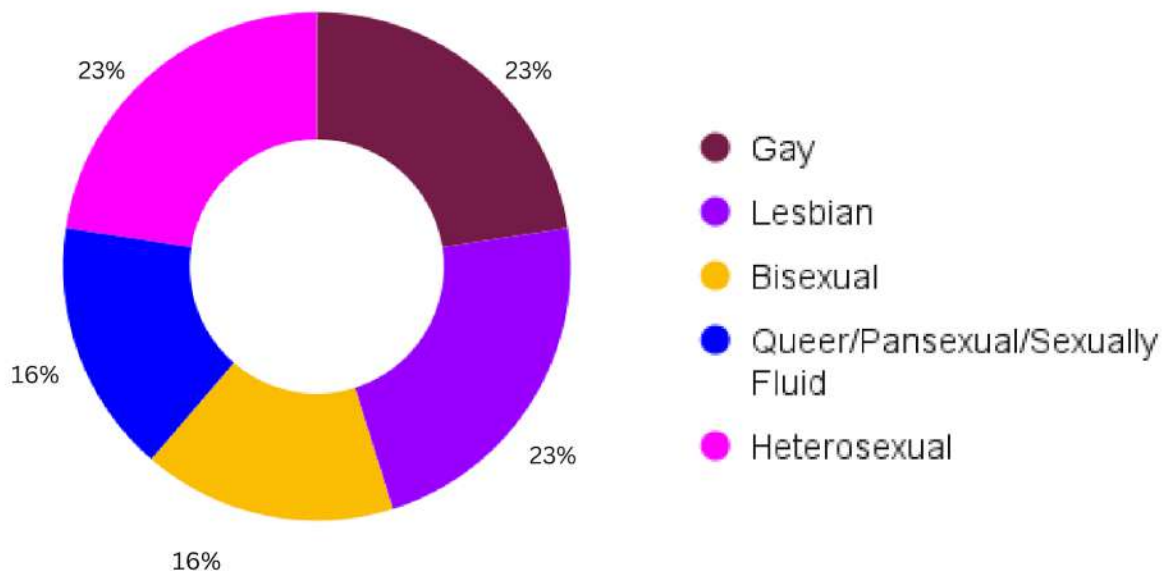
A CLOSER LOOK AT 2022

Gender Identity Distribution



Of the total clients enlisted in 2022, close to 50% were gender diverse. This includes people who identified as transgender, non-binary, or genderqueer.

Sexual Orientation Distribution



This year, there were equal numbers of bisexual and queer/pansexual clients. Similarly, there were equal number of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual clients. It is important to note that the heterosexual clients include people of trans experience, and therefore reflect the diversity of the community.

KEY FINDINGS

Structural Discrimination Inhibits LGBTQI+ People's Access to Public Services

Structural discrimination is an active hindrance for LGBTQI+ people attempting to access public services. Homophobic and transphobic attitudes are among the accepted social and cultural norms that permeate institutions and organisations – even national services that ought to be accessible to all citizens, such as government social and family services, health facilities, law enforcement and protective agencies, and judicial services.

Clients have shared with the Programme their general unwillingness to engage, and initial anxieties around, engaging public services because of fear of stigma and discrimination. Several clients reported scenarios where public servants used slurs in referencing the clients' issues; they were laughed and mocked at, not taken seriously, or told that the service/agency did not cover or respond to matters involving LGBTQI+ issues. As a result, LGBTQI+ people either avoid these services altogether or withhold information relating to their LGBTQI+ identity and experience that may be pertinent for the required response.

This year, the Programme further engaged with LGBTQI+ people with intersecting identities and experiences that made them more vulnerable or subjected to multiple forms of discrimination. Among these were deaf, young (ages 18 to 25) and socially displaced people, migrants, and/or people engaged in sex work. These groups face unique and disproportionate challenges and barriers to securing social services for a variety of reasons. For example, some social services are unable to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities or have requirements such as identity documents or a fixed/permanent address, which some people do not have.

These varied experiences based on ability, socio-economic status, migration status, housing, and employment further marginalise LGBTQI+ people and re-traumatise them in their pursuit of care.

Housing Instability, Food Insecurity, and Family Violence Remain Prevalent

The Programme continues to note housing instability and food insecurity as pre-eminent social and economic issues affecting LGBTQI+ people. These are often caused and aggravated by family violence, employment issues, and job insecurity.

Several clients and LGBTQI+ community members requesting support (housing, financial, and/or food) from the Programme have shared that they have challenges maintaining jobs because of harmful attitudes from employers and employees based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity and expression. On the other hand, employers' prejudice prevent some clients from accessing employment. This is particularly so for people of trans experience and people whose gender expressions does not align with their perceived sex or gender identity. Trans and gender non-conforming people have experienced being denied both housing and employment, especially when their appearance does not seem to match the sex stated on identity documents. Discriminatory practices like these prevent LGBTQI+ people from maintaining a sustainable income to meet their basic human needs.

Family violence contributes to the social and economic hardships LGBTQI+ people experience, especially with respect to housing, food, medicine, and other basic human needs. Young LGBTQI+ clients are disproportionately affected by family violence. Throughout the year, the Programme consistently received requests from (and for) young people, between the ages of 19 and 25, who were displaced from their homes by family members who disapproved of their LGBTQI+ identity. In all cases seen, young LGBTQI+ clients had very limited social support networks and were unable to support themselves financially, because of their previous dependence on relatives to meet their basic human needs.

It is important to note that there are no legal protections that prohibit family violence and offer LGBTQI+ people options for redress when they experience this. Further, there are no designated LGBTQI+ housing shelters provided by the state.

LGBTQI+ People Present with Multiple (and often Competing) Issues

Throughout the year, clients frequently presented with multiple legal issues. There were instances where intervention had to prioritise clients' immediate needs before addressing their primary legal issue. In other cases, clients had to first complete an initial requisite legal process. Examples of these immediate issues include housing instability, food insecurity, contentious landlord and tenant relationships, and preparation of documents.

There were some cases where, despite clear violations, clients expressed unwillingness to engage legal services. The majority of these clients described their immediate needs as their primary concern, while for others, legal intervention posed an imminent risk to them. This was the case with clients who lived in communities with a high incidence of violence (including gun violence) and who were directly threatened by perpetrators. Clinical services (particularly mental and emotional support) were extended to those clients who accepted them.



Wholeness and Justice Responds to the Needs of the LGBTQI+ Community

The Programme remains committed to responding to the needs of the LGBTQI+ community in Trinidad and Tobago while maintaining its mandate to respond to violations experienced based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Because of the precarity caused by the restrictions put in place to combat COVID-19, the Programme extended its services to LGBTQI+ people who did not experience a violation but needed mental health support. This response accounted for a significant number of clients during this period.

Furthermore, the Programme understands its utility as a community resource. As such, it continues to engage different mechanisms to support and increase the capacity and knowledge of LGBTQI+ people and key stakeholders, regarding legal and clinical issues experienced by the community. This is reflected in the community engagement initiatives, community interventions, and public education sessions hosted in 2022. In addition, the Community Lawyer provided legal consultations to community members, even when no violation was involved, for example, in civil claims arising out of contentious romantic relationships.

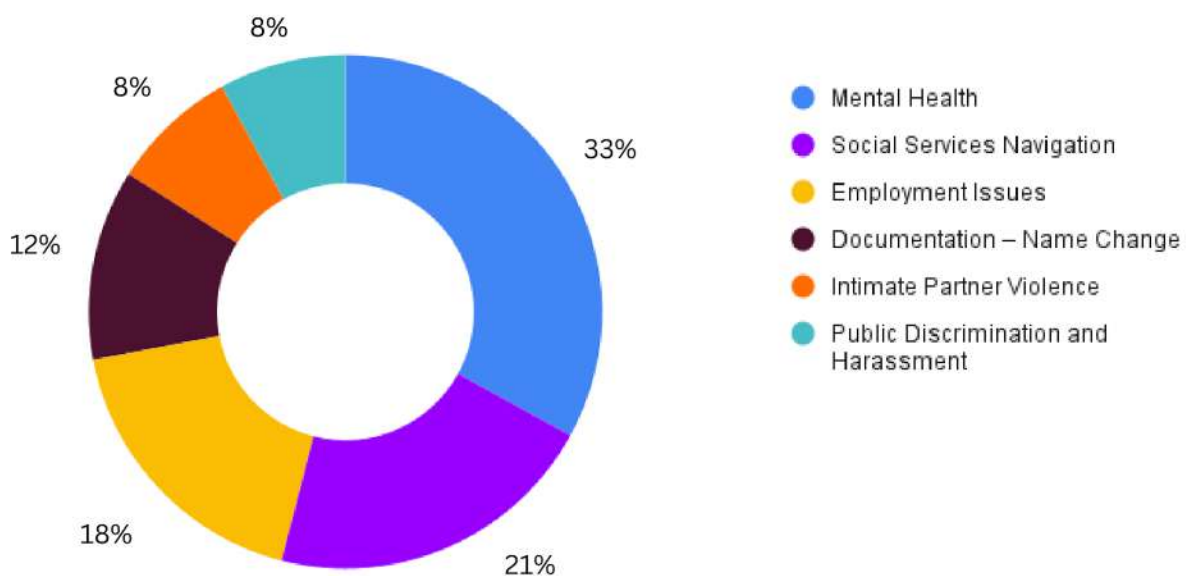
In 2022, there was a noticeable increase in community members who recognised when a legal issue arose and sought information on the process to resolve same or access redress. This is an important shift from 2021, when clients generally found it difficult to recognise legal issues or did not think they could seek redress. Wholeness and Justice continues to engage LGBTQI+ people on rights awareness and justice-seeking.

PROFILES OF PRESENTING PROBLEMS

Introduction

The Wholeness and Justice Programme was intentionally designed to provide services, to LGBTQI+ people who experience violations based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity, in a way that recognises individuals as whole beings with issues, life experiences, and needs that do not exist in isolation. Over the course of its existence, the Programme has noted prominent presenting problems within the LGBTQI+ community and intersecting issues that seem to be consistent among clients. This section offers profiles of the six foremost presenting problems, identifies the intersecting issues, and explores how these issues manifest in client experiences and interact with Programme service provision.

Distribution



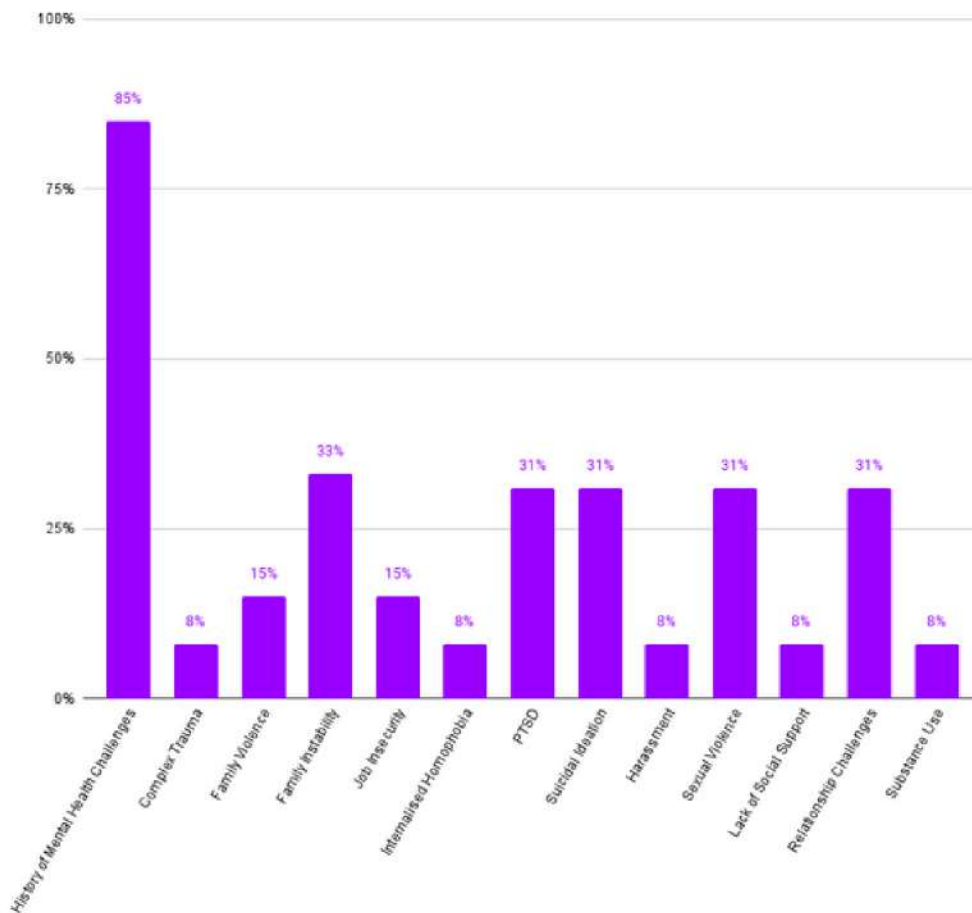
This chart and the following list represent, in order of prevalence, the problems clients presented with in cases that were active throughout 2022. In the distribution of intersecting issues below, it is important to note that one client may present with multiple intersecting issues.

Mental Health

Description: As a presenting problem, mental health refers to instances where clients experienced challenges to their mental and emotional wellbeing, either from an active violation or otherwise, that require psychosocial support, complex trauma therapy, or advanced psychiatric intervention. Mental health has been the highest prevailing problem for which clients have sought support, and yet, it is also a cross-cutting issue that intersects with several related, and at times, competing problems.

The Clinical team’s responses to this prevailing problem included a range of approaches – behavioural and somatic therapies and other psychosocial interventions – all focused on healing and resilience.

Distribution of Intersecting Clinical and Casework Issues



Mental Health

During the period January to December 2022, most of the Programme's clients comprised people who accessed the services, primarily for mental health support. Of these clients, 85% had a history of mental health challenges, 48% were experiencing issues related to their families, and 31% had relationship challenges.

This includes clients who benefitted from the decision, taken by the Programme in the 2021 period, to extend services to LGBTQI+ people who had not experienced a violation but needed mental health support. At the time, because of COVID-19 restrictions, most of the community members were without their everyday social spaces and confined to homes with family members who were either not accepting of their LGBTQI+ identity or were unaware of this identity. As such, clients would have to hide an integral part of themselves due to fear of repercussions (from being displaced to violence).

The Programme's Clinical team identified the prolonged exposure of LGBTQI+ people to spaces that are neither inclusive nor enabling, as contributing to a phenomenon described as 'endurance trauma'. LGBTQI+ people are actively traumatised in such spaces and are likely to develop multiple mental health challenges.

Mental Health

Clinical interventions are compromised by ongoing emotional stress, lack of privacy to access virtual sessions, housing challenges, job insecurity, and unstable social circumstances. Therefore, even as clients receive treatment, they are often subjected to further harm due to these ongoing threats and insecurities.

Several clients need long-term mental healthcare, requiring, in turn, extensive human resources and financial capital. Ideally, these clients should be able to receive mental and emotional support from public social and healthcare services. However, LGBTQI+ people (clients and non-clients) complain that service providers in the public sector are not LGBTQI+ sensitive and do not affirm their identity as LGBTQI+ people.

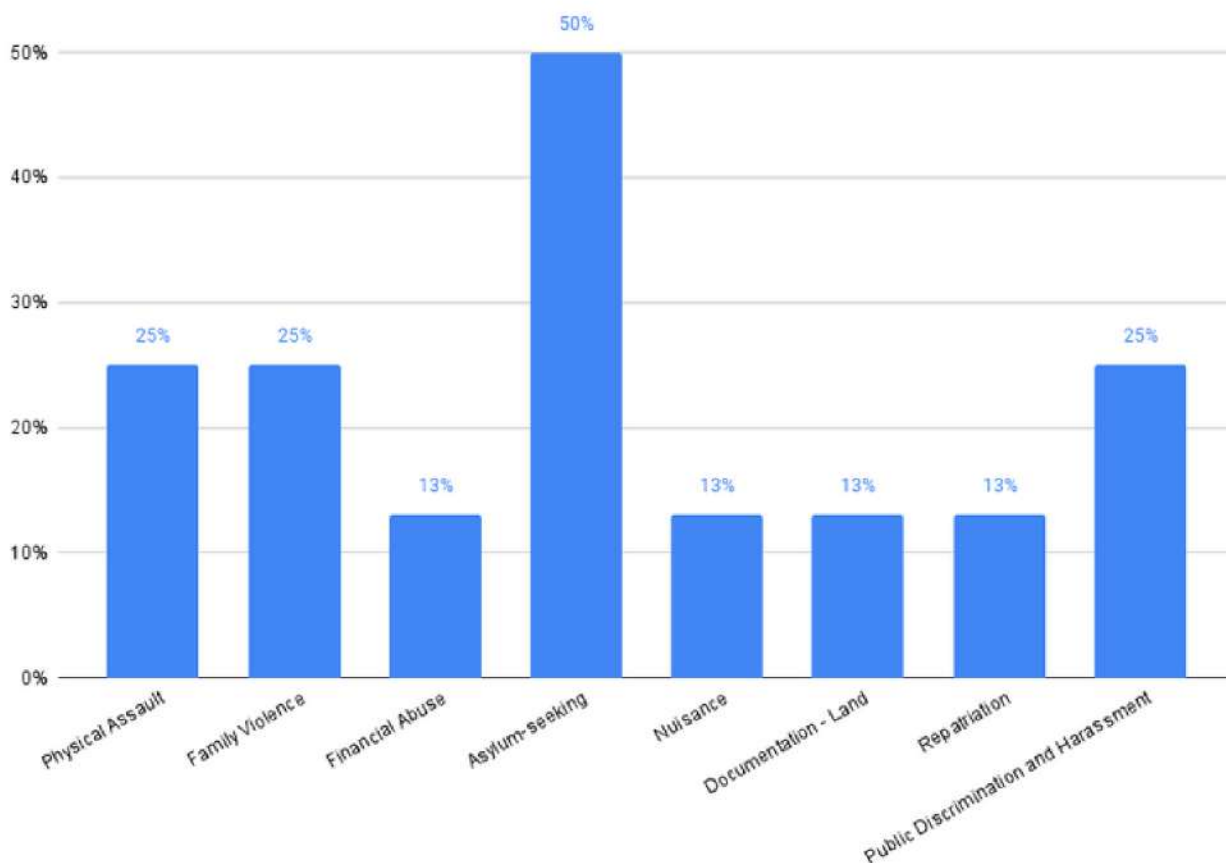
Client Testimonial: “[I] felt very comfortable and safe. My mental health has gotten so much better with [clinical intervention]. I don't know if I'd still be here without [the programme].”

Social Services Navigation

Social services navigation refers to those instances where clients engaged the Programme with a primary need revolving around accessing social services, namely public mental healthcare, housing repairs, food cards, disability, and public assistance. Supporting clients through this process required a combination of legal services, casework navigation, and psycho-social support. Intervention in this regard included providing organisational support, advice on available social services options and their requirements, document preparation, and where necessary, attending appointments with clients.

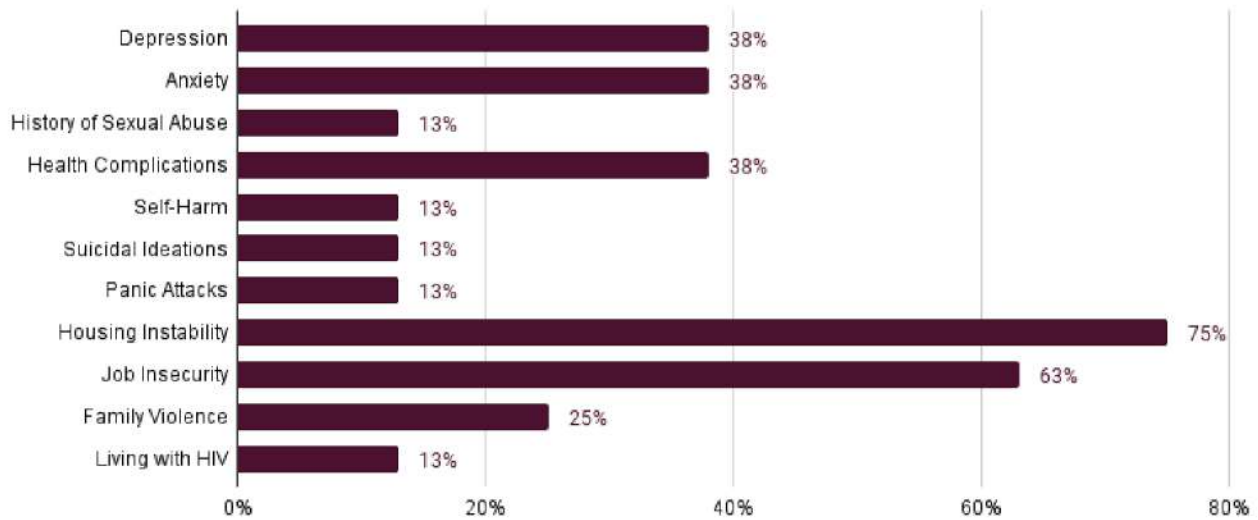
Responses to this presenting problem required extensive engagement with referral partners and external stakeholders (including state agencies and non-governmental organisations).

Distribution of Legal Issues



Social Services Navigation

Distribution of Intersecting Clinical and Casework Issues



It is critical to note that 75% of the people who accessed social services navigation from the Programme were gender diverse (trans, non-binary, and gender queer), while 63% were LGBTQI+ migrants. This points to the way intersecting identities increase vulnerabilities and make it difficult for some LGBTQI+ people to engage social service institutions on their own.

As shown in the graph, 75% of these clients experienced housing instability while 63% experienced job insecurity. Public assistance grants would have allowed these clients to support themselves, especially those experiencing violent domestic relationships and health challenges. However, structural discrimination, as manifested in the procedural requirements for accessing such grants (such as identity documents or a fixed address), inhibits access to some clients, particularly those of transgender experience (75%) and clients with disabilities (25%).

Social Services Navigation

Occasionally, the Programme provided direct support to meet the basic needs of clients who were either unable to access public social services for the aforementioned reasons, or who experienced undue delays receiving public assistance. These cases were among the 88% of clients received wholeness development services in 2022, and the 25% who receiving emergency financial support.

Since the Programme is known as a resource for LGBTQI+ people in Trinidad and Tobago, community members contacted us to find out about available public assistance options and/or institutions that can respond to their needs. This included LGBTQI+ migrants (63%) who accessed the Programme for assistance with navigating the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) registration process (50%) and repatriation to their home country (13%).

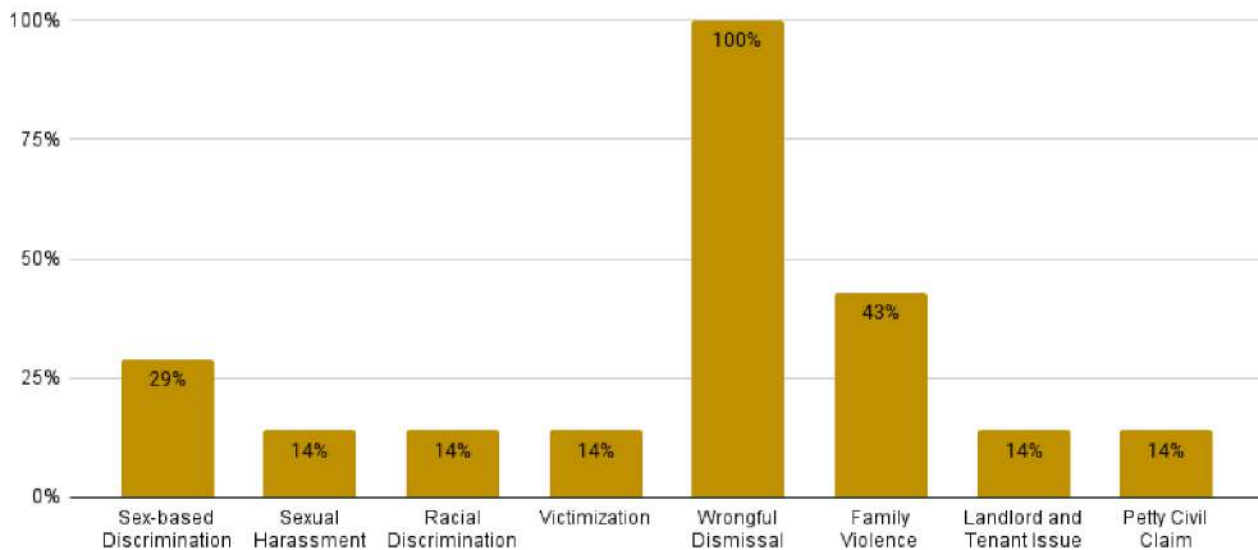
Key Intervention: Successful referral partner engagement with the Living Water Community (LWC) for LGBTQI+ migrant assistance. Successful navigation of public assistance for nationals, including completing paperwork for national grants.

Employment Issues

Description: Employment issues encompass negative experiences clients had within their workplaces and with their employers. Clients have had issues accessing employment, experienced harassment and discrimination in the workplace, were denied their wages, or were wrongfully dismissed. Transgender and gender non-conforming people experienced disproportionate challenges with stable and formal employment.

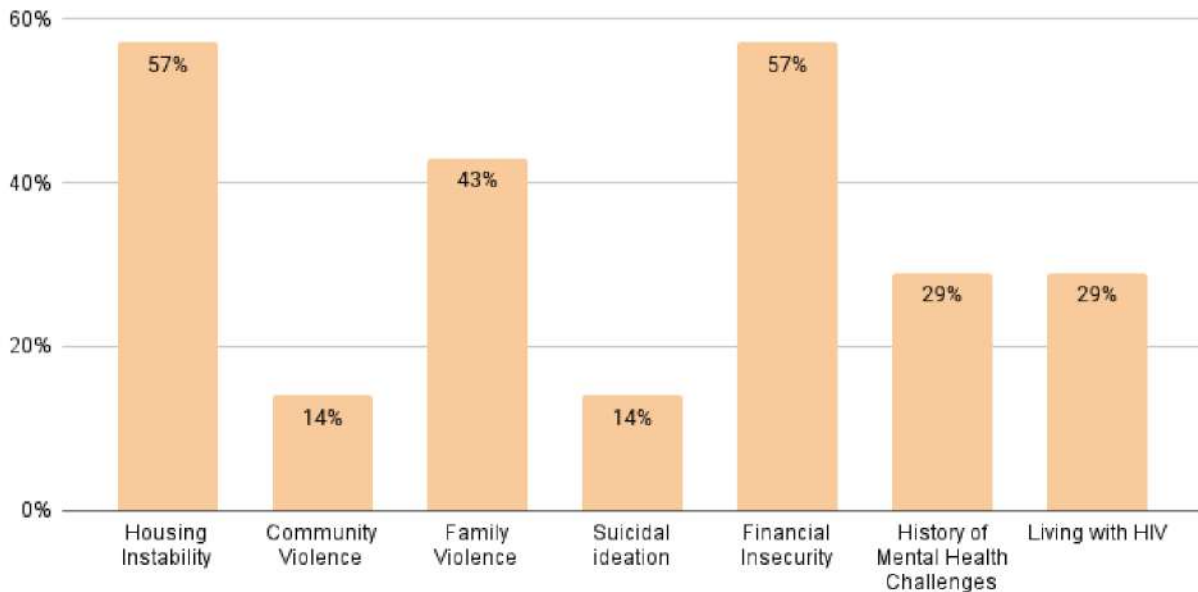
Legal interventions involved active stakeholder engagement, especially with trade unions and the Equal Opportunity Commission.

Distribution of Legal Issues



Employment Issues

Distribution of Intersecting Clinical and Casework Issues



Employment issues were among those with pervading implications for clients. Every client presenting with employment issues was wrongfully dismissed. The Programme intervened by providing legal advice upon consultation, connecting clients to workers' unions, and offering direct guidance through various and related trade unions and industrial relations processes, where possible and needed.

Forty-three percent of these clients received clinical services and 71% received wholeness development services. This coordinated approach was necessary for several reasons. The Programme recognised clients needed a therapeutic space to discuss their feelings, given their mistreatment, and to be reaffirmed. Additionally, 57% of these clients were experiencing housing instability, 57% were financially insecure, and 43% did not have supportive family environments.

Employment Issues

In a community response to employment issues experienced by LGBTQI+ clients (including issues accessing employment), the Programme hosted a series of skills-building workshops for community members (with special invitations to clients) on resumé writing and preparing for job interviews. During these workshops, community members identified serious issues with employment, with some (14%) enlisting as clients of the Programme.

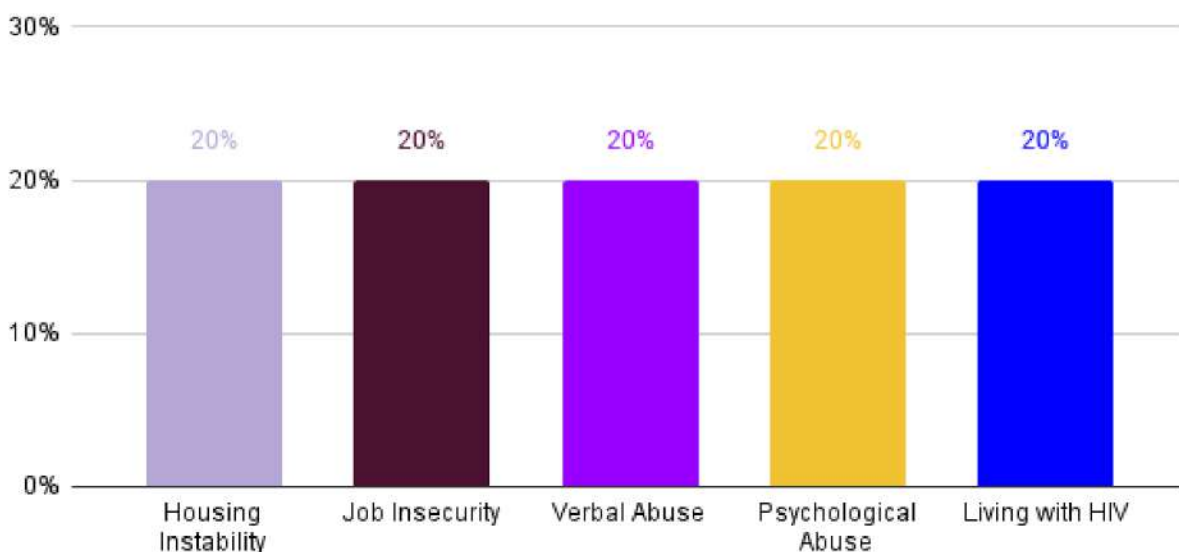
Key Intervention: Fostered relationships between LGBTQI+ people who experienced employment issues and the National Workers' Union. The Programme recognises unions as the experts on employment-related issues and notes the need for wider community education on the role of unions.

Name Change

Description: This refers to cases where clients engaged the Programme for a legal name change, and the Programme completed the Deed Poll Application process on their behalf. Upon successful completion, clients are guided on the procedure to have their legal name reflected on their identity documents, namely National Identification Card, Driver’s License, and Passport.

This legal service is most popular among our transgender, non-binary and genderqueer clients. The strategy for affirming identity and one’s chosen name, emerged through community engagement and virtual discussions with trans people enquiring about their legal options. Changing one’s name is an important pathway and legal solution for getting the world to address you by your chosen name, without it being optional.

Distribution of Clinical and Casework Intersecting Issues



Name Change

The Programme has continued to support name changes through the Deed Poll Application process. This is an important way that LGBTQI+ people (particularly of trans experience) are able to affirm their identities and take control of their narratives. Gender-diverse people prioritise this process for themselves and have engaged the programme with this presenting problem. These clients also present with intersecting issues as described above, but they identified the name change as being a priority even as other services and support were also offered. Twenty percent of these clients shared that public discrimination and harassment were significant motivating factors for their decision to request a name change.

Name changes on identity documents provide a degree of relief to gender diverse LGBTQI+ people. However, the presence of ‘assigned sex at birth’ markers (i.e. ‘male’ or ‘female’) on identity documents still puts them at risk of public discrimination and harassment. This experience is common in public offices where it is necessary for clients to present these documents to receive services. It is not possible (as yet) in Trinidad and Tobago to change one’s sex identity marker to align with one’s gender identity.

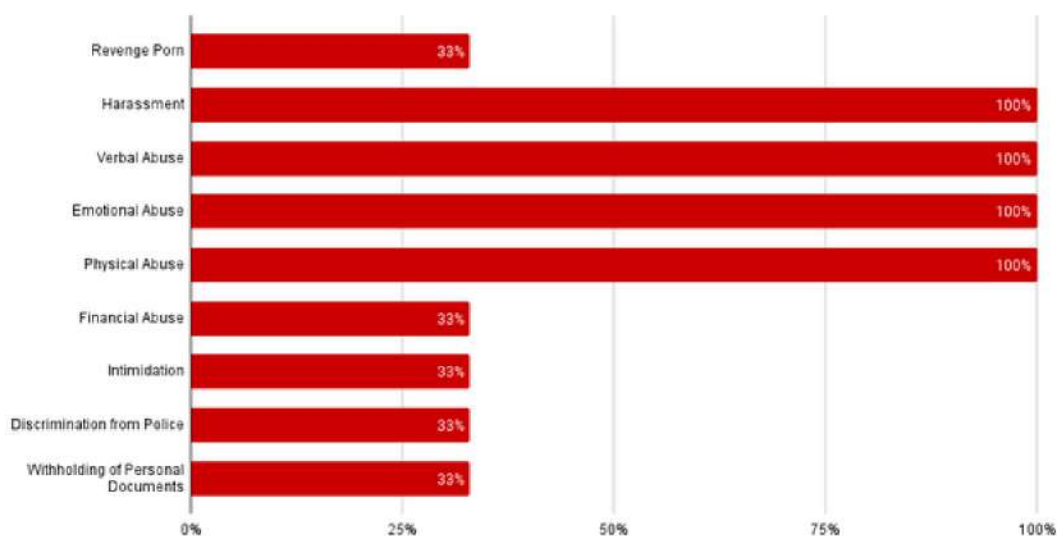
Client Testimonial – upon completion of the name change: “The programme enabled me to begin my journey of being true to myself.”

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

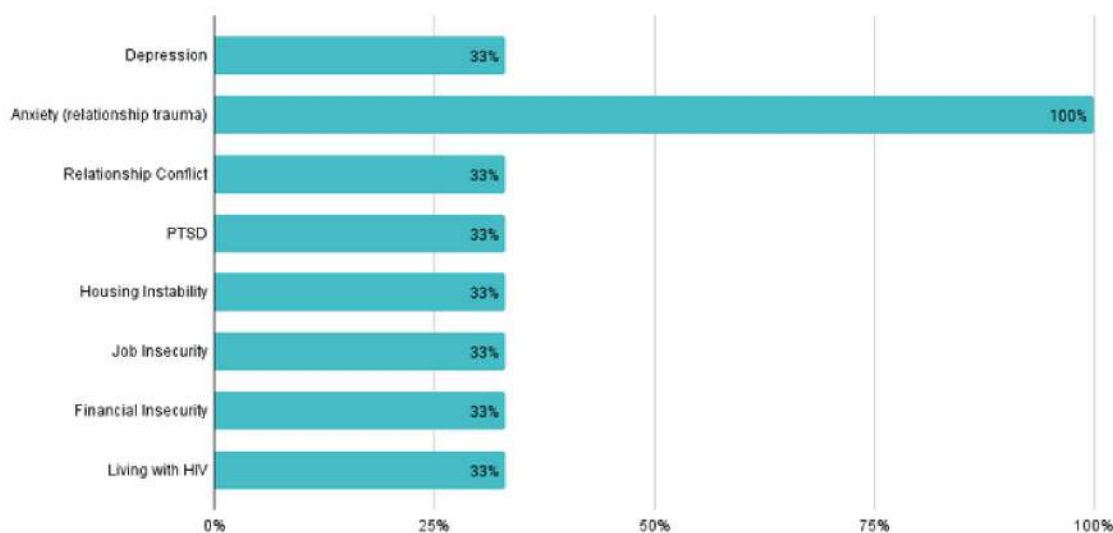
Description: Intimate partner violence refers to physical, emotional, sexual, or financial violence between two or more persons who are (or were) in a romantic, sexual and/or dating relationship.

Intervention to this problem, required a coordinated approach among legal, clinical, and wholeness development services.

Distribution of Legal Issues



Distribution of Intersecting Clinical and Casework Issues



Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Sixty-seven percent of clients who experienced Intimate Partner Violence identified as women (this includes trans and cis-gender women). Further, clients identified their relationships as same-sex relationships (33%) but the majority (66%) identified their relationships as being either opposite sex or opposite-gender relationships. As indicated in the data, clients experienced different forms of IPV, including harassment, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, and physical abuse. In attempting to report their experiences to the Police, 33% of clients experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation.

One of the amendments to the Domestic Violence Act in 2020 makes it possible for LGBTQI+ people in same-sex or queer relationships (that is, in dating relationships – not living together) to access protection from the courts against violence in their relationship context. This created an avenue for 33% of transgender clients - all migrants with UNHCR registration - to apply for protection orders from the courts. Additionally, the Programme included adjacent requests for petitions for divorce and applications for child custody orders, as part of its intervention for clients.

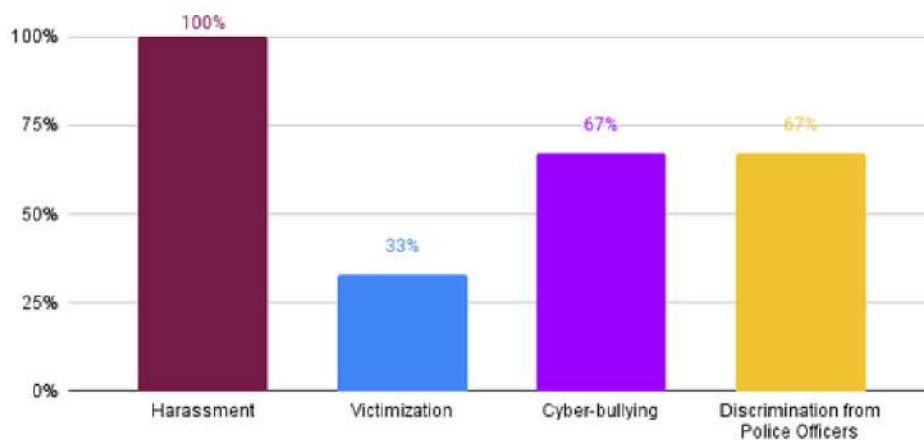
Moreover, all clients who received legal services for IPV matters, benefitted from clinical interventions, which sought to address their trauma and with re-orientation after being in a violent relationship.

Key Intervention: Dialogue with the Court Executive Administrator to clarify the Judiciary’s official position on accepting applications for protection orders from persons in a same-sex dating relationship.

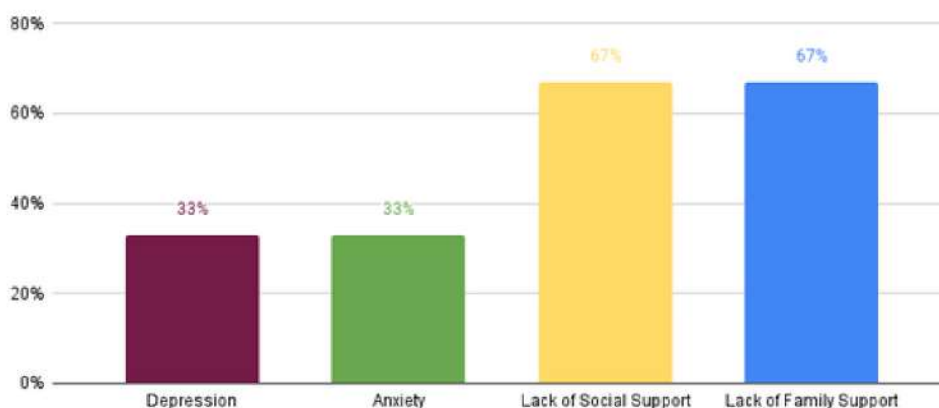
Public Discrimination and Harassment

Description: Public discrimination and harassment refers to cases where clients experienced targeted prejudicial attitudes and behaviours based on their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. These harmful displays occurred in public and private spaces and were committed by public servants, including healthcare providers and police officers, while accessing service. Many clients and community members have identified this as a problem, but few felt they were able to make a complaint or receive redress. This type of behaviour from the police has a major impact on community members' trust or ability to report any act of violence or go to the police when needed.

Distribution of Legal Issues



Distribution of Intersecting Clinical and Casework Issues



Public Discrimination and Harassment

Public discrimination and harassment of LGBTQI+ people have been normalised, to the extent that they are passed off as banter or an experience that LGBTQI+ people should expect. However, these experiences have long-lasting effects, including depression and anxiety.

Clients shared with the Programme that public discrimination and harassment occurs from neighbours, school mates, strangers on the street and in cyber space, and from police officers. In working with clients, the Clinical team noticed that some LGBTQI+ people internalised this form of violence, to the extent that they presumed it to be their fault. This self-blame makes it difficult for clients to cope since they are unable to change the attributes about themselves and often think it makes them a target for violence.

Moreover, clients have shared that it is sometimes difficult to report these violations as they often present as microaggressions, of which there might not be any evidence. Further, perpetrators on social media are often anonymous, while those in public spaces are often unidentifiable.

Regardless, the Programme initiated legal action for recourse for these clients and assisted them with navigating the requisite reporting process, evidence documentation, and process for redress.

Key Intervention: Utilised official complaints mechanisms such as the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) and Police Complaints Division (PCD) for instances where LGBTQI+ people experienced abuse of power from members of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS).

CAPACITY BUILDING AND EDUCATION

Clinical Webinars

The Clinical team hosted two free, well-attended webinars (with 60+ registered participants for each). “Working with LGBTQI+ Couples” was held in March for mental health practitioners and “Tools to Tame the Tide: Resolution in LGBTQI+ Relationships” was held in July and targeted both mental health practitioners and the LGBTQI+ community.

Public Education

The Legal team produced and published two video series in 2022: “Being LGBTQI in T&T for Spanish-speaking Migrants” and “Wills & Grace Estate Planning for LGBTQI Community.” Both were launched on CAISO’s YouTube channel and website, where they remain featured as resources. Two legal education resource guides were also published: “Seeking Protection under the DV Act for LGBTQI people” and “Navigating TT Police Service as an LGBTQI+ Person”; and both resources are available on the CAISO website.

The Legal team also contributed to the Mapping (In)Justice Project (an anti-police violence, know-your-rights campaign) by reviewing the legal information and interpretation of laws and rights.

The Legal and Clinical teams also contributed to the production of two toolkits in 2022: namely, “Finding an Equal Place at Work” and “HIV Toolkit for LGBTQI+ Community”.

All education materials are available on the CAISO website.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND WHOLENESS DEVELOPMENT

Emergency Financial Support for Clients

Rental Support	TT\$ 22,950
Medical Support	TT\$ 1,200
Transport Support	TT\$ 2,000
Legal / Other Fees	TT\$ 350
Total	TT\$ 26,479

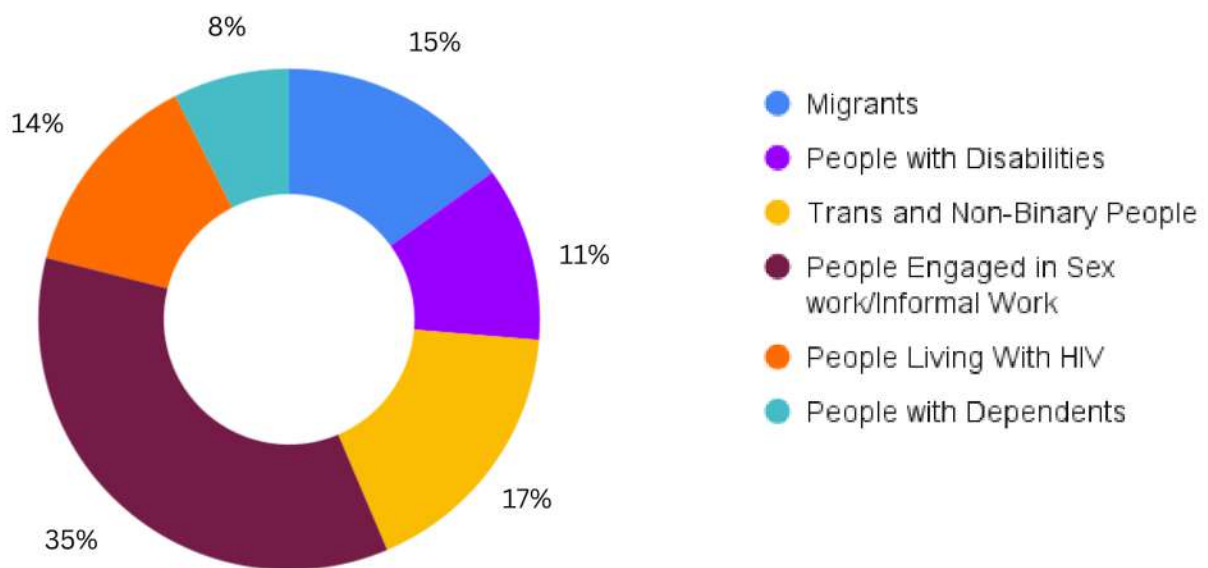
Emergency Food Support

The Programme supported an average of 15 clients and community members each month with cards to purchase groceries. Some people received support for consecutive months. Priority groups included trans people, migrants, people engaged in sex work, and people living with HIV.

Due to an overwhelming number of requests for food assistance, we launched a Community Food Bank for the Christmas holidays, and received donations of food, cash, and other supplies to support over 50 community members during December 2022.

Food Support			
ACTIVITY	TARGET GROUP	TOTAL (TTD)	RESOURCES
Distributed 180 food cards monthly @ \$650 - \$800 each	Monthly Support to 10-15 priority clients and community members	\$127,850	Wholeness and Justice Emergency Support
Launched Community Food Bank Drive	50+ no-income and low-income clients/community members supported during December holidays through community food drive and donations	Valued at \$30,500	Donations from Massy Stores, Living Water Community, and Catholic Church Youth Ministry

Overview of Priority Groups (some people are included in more than one group due to intersectional identities/experiences)



Community Outreach

The Community Outreach team organised and facilitated several outreach activities to support community members, with over 20 participants at each event. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these activities had to be hosted virtually which offered needed interventions and support for community members.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH ACTIVITIES 2022	
Community Meet-ups	<p>March 8 – International Women’s Day: Trans Zoomlandia - Trans-led virtual space for Non-binary and Trans communities (regional)</p> <p>March 31 - Trans Day of Visibility: Community Meet-up with W&J Community Lawyer</p>
Living Room (workshops and virtual safe space for LGBTQI+ persons)	<p>May 21 - CV Writing Workshop</p> <p>May 28 - Interview Prep Workshop</p> <p>July 24 - Sex, Safety, and Pleasure Interactive Workshop</p> <p>October 22 - Virtual Games Night</p>
Community Outreach	<p>August 1 - Emancipation Parade and Village</p> <p>September 6 - UWI Guild Fest</p>

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the Wholeness and Justice Programme continues to provide services, responding to the community's needs remains its top priority. Aside from service provision, responses include building on strategic litigation and strategic advocacy around the issues affecting clients and the community. Also, offering opportunities for public education centred on rights awareness, service navigation, skills-sharing and capacity-building. All efforts to achieve these remain hinged upon meaningful community engagement, collaboration and alliance-building.

Policy Recommendations:

The preceding findings of the *Wholeness and Justice 2022* Insights Report based on the provision of services to LGBTQI+ people in Trinidad and Tobago, inform the following recommendations to the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and related stakeholders. Implementing these will indicate that the government, as duty bearer, respects, protects and fulfils the rights of all LGBTQI+ people, as equal rights-holders in Trinidad and Tobago. Among these rights are, the right to legal protection from arbitrary infringements of human rights, the right to equitable access to public services and the right to access redress, when an infringement occurs.

Policy Recommendations:

- Create safe and affordable housing for LGBTQI+ people, especially youth and those who experience family violence in homes, and gender-based violence in state care.
- Engage in legislative review regarding non-discrimination and enact laws that specifically prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC). This includes making amendments to the Equal Opportunity Act to reflect this.
- Update social welfare policies that limit or prevent access to services, namely the “fixed address” requirement, which discriminates against people in need of social services who do not have stable or permanent housing.
- Support capacity-building and gender and LGBTQI+ sensitivity training for public servants (including police officers and healthcare workers) who are key stakeholders in providing social services.
- Provide concrete and responsive mechanisms for complaint and redress when public servants infringe rights.
- Provide continuous training of judicial officers – especially as it relates to the 2020 Amendments to the Domestic Violence Act.
- Engage meaningful dialogue with organisations working with LGBTQI+ community – on needs of the community and support social services navigation.
- Ensure LGBTQI+ groups and vulnerable people are represented and included in law reform to protect and promote rights and address issues that concern them.

Insights from Wholeness and Justice 2022

Published by CAISO: Sex and Gender Justice, May 2023

Primary Author: Kellog Nkemakolam

Graphic Design: Chinyere Brown



**Services Provided by and Report Completed
by the Wholeness and Justice Team:**

Kellog Nkemakolam (Research & Programme Officer), Donielle A Jones (Community Lawyer),
Rae Alibey (Community Caseworker), Akilah Riley-Richardson (Community Therapist),
Johannah-Rae Reyes (Community Outreach), Angelique V. Nixon (Community Outreach
and Programme Admin) and Elron Elahie (Programme Coordinator).