



Impact Report

2023-2025

**Several Seats
Mind Under
Water**

Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Meet the Founder
- 3 Impact Report
- 4 Future Plan
- 5 How to help



Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Several Seats and mental health issues faced by ethnic minority women.

At Several Seats, we take pride in our mission and the work we do. We are inviting businesses to get to know us better and explore how we can work together to ensure ethnic minority women have access to mental health support tailored to their unique needs. Women from these communities often encounter individual and societal challenges that a "one-size-fits-all" approach simply cannot address.

We ask companies to step up by supporting our inclusive mental health work through sponsorship, project funding, donations, co-creation, training, and policy change. For ethnic minority women who have experienced mental struggles in the workplace, it's crucial to have supportive management, fair treatment, and policies/procedures in place that protect them against racism, discrimination, and inequalities.

Choosing to support Several Seats is a choice that echoes far beyond an act of corporate social responsibility. It's an investment in the mental well-being of the broader community, your customers, suppliers, partners, and employees. Your support, involvement, and dedication enable us to continue our vital work, and every contribution, no matter the size, makes a significant difference.

Meet Our Founder

Joan OluwaBusola Idowu set up 'Several Seats', a name that was born from a conversation between a mother and her daughter, initiated by a simple yet powerful "take a seat, let's talk".

As a woman with lived experience of mental health challenges, Joan and many other women of colour have struggled to have a seat at the table to be seen and heard. At this table, we invite women to take Several Seats and explore the cultural and gender barriers.

Joan has worked in the public health sector as an Assistant Clinical Psychologist and has seen first hand the lack of diversity and representation of healthcare professionals not reflecting the population that it seeks to serve, but this is starting to change as the number of people from diverse backgrounds accessing the service is increasing. Joan realised that she had the opportunity to fill this gap and pursued it.

Joan hopes that 'Several Seats' will inspire women of colour all around the world, sharing and celebrating their stories and encouraging prospective and aspiring mental health professionals.

Why We Do What We Do

At Several Seats, we exist because too many ethnic minority women continue to face barriers to mental wellbeing, community belonging, and opportunities for growth. We do what we do because every woman deserves a place where her experiences are understood, her identity is valued, and her voice is heard.

We create spaces that centre healing, creativity, physical wellbeing, and meaningful connection. Whether it's stepping into the water through Mind Under Water, finding calm in community during our Coffee Mornings, expressing emotions through art with Paint and Pour, or building professional confidence in our Mentorship Scheme, each of our programmes is designed with one purpose: to empower women to thrive.

This is the heart of Several Seats: creating safe, joyful, and transformative spaces where women can see themselves, trust themselves, and grow into the fullness of who they are.

We have developed three key priorities that guide the work of Several Seats:

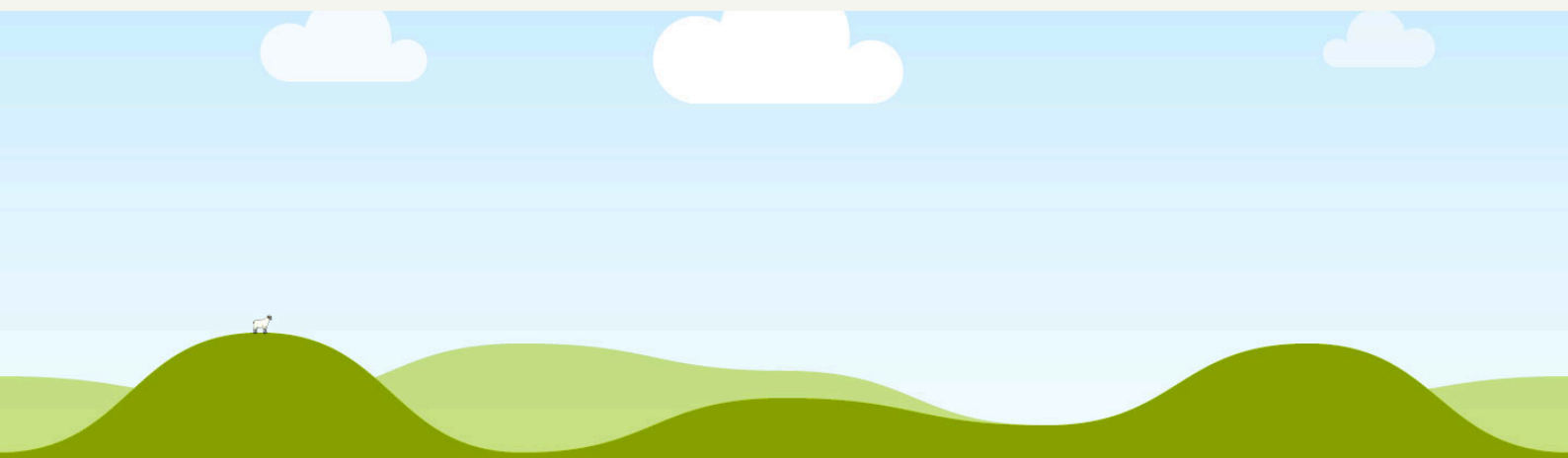
- **Empower:** We seek to empower ethnic minority women to recognise their unique talents and create an avenue for those skills to flourish.
- **Inspire:** We seek to inspire ethnic minority women to take control and reclaim their passion, power, and purpose in life.
- **Educate:** To educate a woman is to educate a nation. We will use education as a tool to help us as ethnic minority women to change the world. It will help gain equal treatment for ethnic minority women who experience both discrimination through mental health alongside other forms of discrimination and prejudice.



Mind Under WATER

Mind Under Water is a wellbeing and inclusion initiative designed to address two interconnected challenges: the lack of accessible swimming opportunities for women from ethnically diverse backgrounds, and the significant mental-health benefits that water-based exercise can provide when these barriers are removed. The programme recognises that many women of colour face structural, cultural, and economic obstacles that limit their ability to participate in swimming. These barriers contribute to long-standing inequalities in water safety and swimming confidence, with national data showing that children and adults from Black, Asian, and other minority communities are far less likely to meet basic swimming standards. This not only affects physical wellbeing and safety, but also restricts access to a powerful form of mental-health support.

Mind Under Water directly addresses this gap by creating women-only, culturally sensitive sessions that support both swimming skill development and confidence-building. By creating sessions tailored to the needs of women of colour, Mind Under Water promotes wellbeing, empowerment, and social inclusion, while also helping participants learn a vital life skill. It aligns its activities directly with its mission: to remove historic barriers to aquatic spaces and ensure that women from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to experience the physical, mental, and social benefits of swimming. The initiative also contributes to broader community health outcomes by increasing physical activity levels among groups who are statistically less likely to access traditional fitness environments. (ask Joan if can put any image of women swimming/ graphic of women swimming below; Also ask about this section being too wordy, also adding numbers would make this more lengthy)



Why Support Us?

1

Help provide culturally safe aquatic sessions that lower anxiety and depression for ethnically diverse women.

2

You will have the opportunity to contribute ideas on different projects – to ensure our vision is aligned and your CSR goals are met

3

By partnering with us, you help expand an evidence-based programme that improves mental health, builds confidence in water, and increases physical activity among groups least represented in aquatic environments.

4

Your support helps remove cultural and structural barriers, aligning directly with organisational goals around inclusion, mental health, and reducing health inequalities.

facts and numbers on this page, and add another page for how to support, similar structure in the shared previous report, also the first 2 pages i just copied and pasted content from the previous report, also for the mind under water page, i rewrote the content, questions related to that are on that page.

2024 Impact Report

Prepared by:
Several Seats

Empowering Change,
One Step at a Time



\$1.8M

in total donations received



30+

community programs
implemented successfully



12,500

individuals successfully
reached across 5 regions

Education Support



2,300+

school kits distributed across 5 regions

115

students received
scholarships

5

after-school
learning centers

Skills Training

950

women and youth trained

220+

local job placements created

Health & Wellness

18

free medical
camps hosted

4,800

individuals
screened

10,000


hygiene kits
distributed

Community Engagement

1,200

volunteers
contributed

 **85%**
donor retention rate

 **34%**
growth in social media following

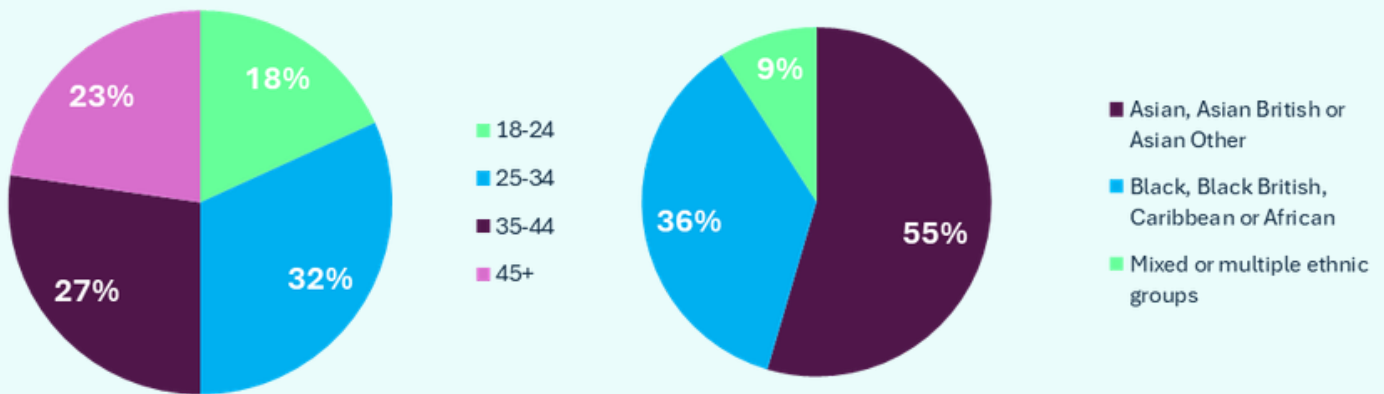


Participant demographics

In 2024, we had **22** participants in total

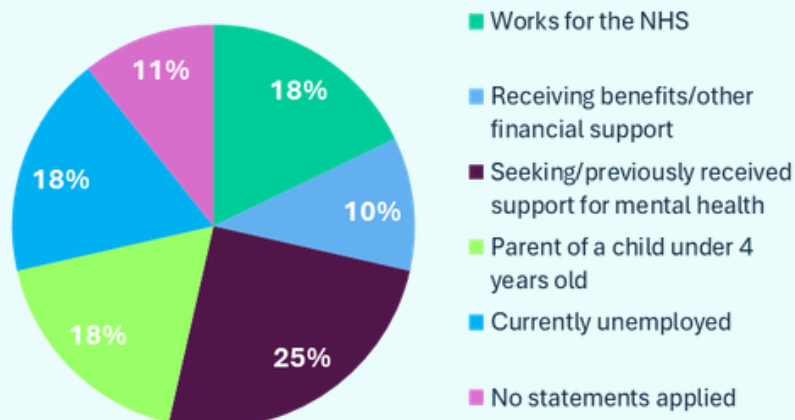


We supported women from a range of ages and ethnic backgrounds...



... whilst prioritising women from groups that would benefit from our programme

Statements applied



Feedback/Quotes

All the staff are lovely.
Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. I don't have much confidence swimming but had so much fun in the first lesson.



Beautifully organised session and so inclusive and encouraging. It left me buzzing and excited for the next round.

"I've absolutely loved every part of this swimming programme. From the very first lesson to the final session, it's been an amazing journey that's left me feeling proud, confident, and truly grateful. Each lesson helped me grow, and I'm so glad I stuck with it."

"Really lovely lesson. Felt very comfortable with the instructor and the other ladies. Was nice to get some me time and also learn an important skill"

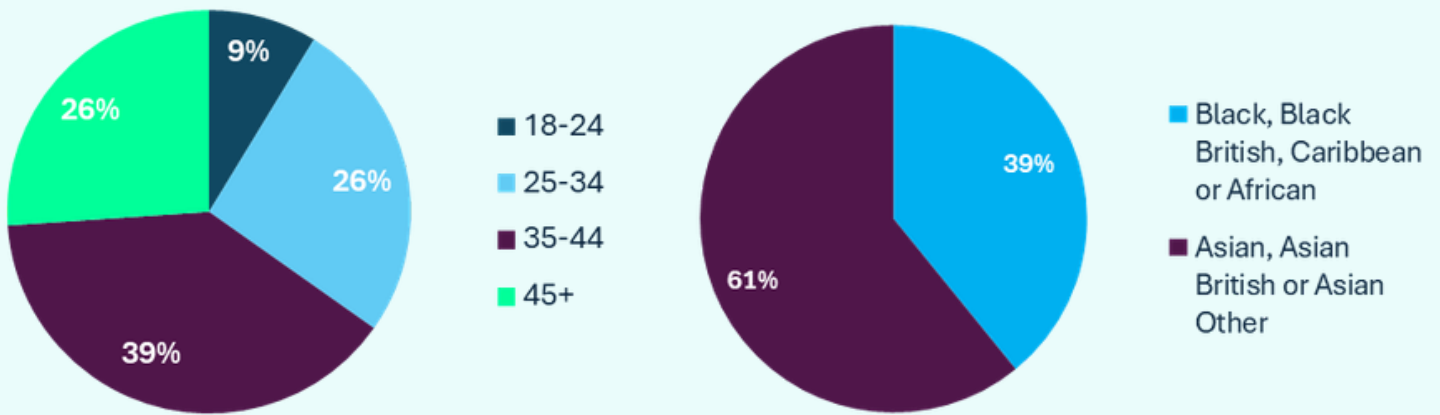
I felt completely at ease with the instructor and the other ladies. It was such a comforting, supportive atmosphere. I'm walking away feeling calm, proud, and genuinely grateful for the experience

Participant demographics

In 2025, we had **23** participants in total

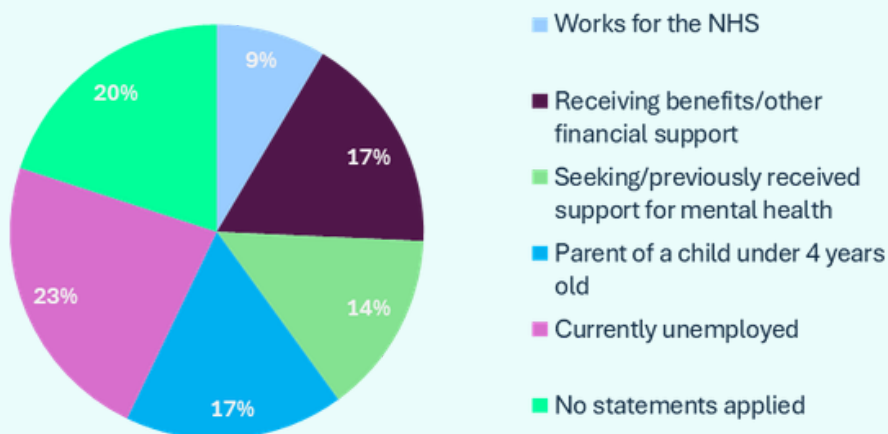


We supported women from a range of ages and ethnic backgrounds...



... whilst prioritising women from groups that would benefit from our programme

Statements applied



Before

100%

of participants did not know how to swim/were not fully confident swimming

I don't know how to swim

13

I'm just starting out and need support in the water

5

I can swim a little but still building confidence

5

After

I can swim a little but still building my confidence

6

I am comfortable swimming in shallow water

11

I am comfortable swimming in deep water

6

100%

of participants knew how to swim

Feedback/Quotes

"I loved the sessions SO much. It helped me incredibly in regards to my mental wellbeing. It gave me something to look forward to every week. It's given me the courage to continue taking lessons. I will miss it a lot."

"On a mental and emotional level, the sessions have been empowering and refreshing. Being surrounded by other women from similar backgrounds has created a real sense of belonging and encouragement. It's boosted my confidence not only in swimming but also in everyday life."

"It's given me confidence to continue with trying to learn to swim and it has been deeply satisfying knowing that I was engaging in a physically challenging activity every Saturday."

"It has shown me that I can do hard things and more practically meant that I don't freeze in fear around water anymore."



The sessions have helped me manage stress better, build self-confidence, and connect with other women who share similar experiences. Being part of a programme that celebrates diversity and creates a safe, encouraging space has truly been inspiring.

Feedback statistics

86%

programme
satisfaction in 2024

100%

programme
satisfaction in 2025

100%

of participants in
2025 would
recommend to a
family/friend

£28500

provided for funding

- £20000 - National Lottery Fund
- £2000 - Dream fund
- £2500 - Sports England
- £4000 - BLCF

How to help

Most impact reports conclude with a page acknowledging the contributions of the people who worked tirelessly on the projects mentioned within. Below, list down the names of those committed to these projects, such as:

Those responsible for **concept and coordination**

Your **group of researchers**

The **writers** behind the impact report

The **designers** of the impact report

Your **colleagues** from Local and Partner Organizations

Your **contributors**



We thank you for your continued support in our programs.

Several Seats

www.severalseats.org
team@severalseats.org
[@severalseats_](https://www.instagram.com/severalseats_)