

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

WAO Services: The Figures

The Shelter

In 1988, 83 women, together with 103 children stayed at the Centre. 69 of these women were victims of domestic violence (15 of these 69 women were ex-residents i.e. they had come to the Centre previously). Most of the other 14 women were destitute or homeless and were referred to WAO by the Department of Welfare Services or other agencies.

Type \ Ethnicity	Indian	Chinese	Malay	Others	Foreigner	Total
Victims of Domestic Violence	39	17	7	1	5	69
Others	11	2	1	0	0	14
Total	50(45)	19(16)	8(0)	1(0)	5(0)	83(61)

(Figures in brackets indicate 1987 statistics)



The following figures are of the women who came to the centre due to domestic violence (69 women)

Length of stay

The women stayed for a period ranging from 1 day to 186 days. The average period of stay was 32.3 days.

Residence

Most of the women were from the Selangor and Wilayah Persekutuan area with 41 from Selangor and 23 from Wilayah. Four women were from Perak and one from Negeri Sembilan.

Age

The age of the women ranged from 20 to 52 years. The average age was 32 years.

Religion

Age Group	No.	%
20 years and below	1	1.4
21 — 25 years	14	20.3
26 — 30 years	15	21.8
31 — 35 years	23	33.3
36 — 40 years	10	14.5
41 — 45 years	3	4.4
46 — 50 years	2	2.9
51 years and above	1	1.4

	No.	%
Hindu	26	37.7
Christian	19	27.6
Buddhist	13	18.9
Muslim	9	13.0
Sikh	1	1.4
Unknown	1	1.4



Marriage

41 or 59.4% of the women had registered marriages. 28 or 40.6% had customary marriages or were co-habiting. The average age at marriage/co-habitation was 22.9 years and the length of marriage/co-habitation ranged from less than one year to 30 years. The average length of marriage/co-habitation was 8.9 years.

Education

About 90% of the women had some education; the majority having secondary school education. Almost 30% had completed Form V and 10% had College/University education.

Level of Education	No.	%
None	8	11.6
Primary School	15	21.7
Up to Form III	15	21.7
Up to Form V	19	27.6
Up to Form VI	4	5.8
College/University	7	10.2
Not Available	1	1.4

Employment

Only 18 or approximately 25% of the women were working prior to coming to the Centre.

Type of Occupation	No.
Unskilled	8
Skilled	2
Professional	3
Self-employed	5

Income	No.
Less than \$200	1
\$200 — \$399	8
\$400 — \$599	1
\$600 — \$799	2
\$800 — \$999	3
\$1,000 and above	2
Not available	1

Children

The average number of children per women was 2.5, but the average number of the children brought to the Centre was only 1.5. Over 1/3 of the women had to leave their children behind for various reasons, e.g. some of the children were old enough to be left behind; some husbands/partners had prevented them from taking their children with them; some of the women were afraid of the legal consequences of taking the children with them.

Spouses/Partners

Some of the main characteristics regarding the spouses/partners are given in the tables below.

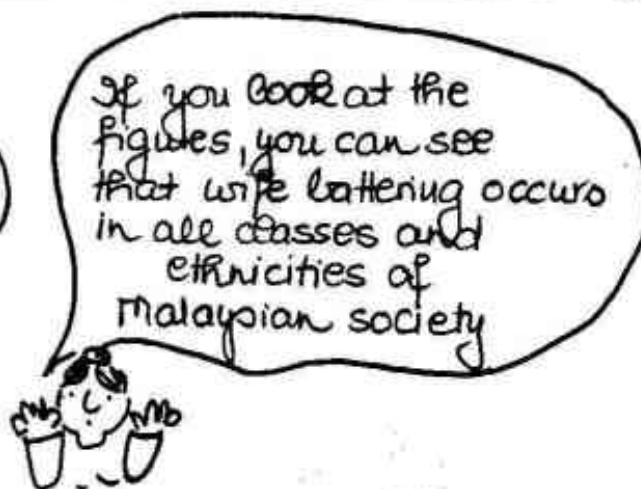
Their ages ranged from 24 to 57; the average age was 36.7. About 16% of the men were unemployed, whereas 17.3% were professionals. Almost 20% of the men were earning an income of \$1000 and more.

Age Group	No.	%
21—25 years	4	5.8
26—30 years	11	16.0
31—35 years	21	30.4
36—40 years	14	20.3
41—45 years	8	11.6
46—50 years	8	11.6
51 years and above	3	4.3

Ethnicity	No.	%
Indian	43	62.3
Chinese	18	26.1
Malay	7	10.2
Other	1	1.4

Type of Occupation	No.
Unemployed	11
Unskilled	18
Skilled	12
Clerical	1
Professional	12
Self-employed	9
Others	3
Not available	3

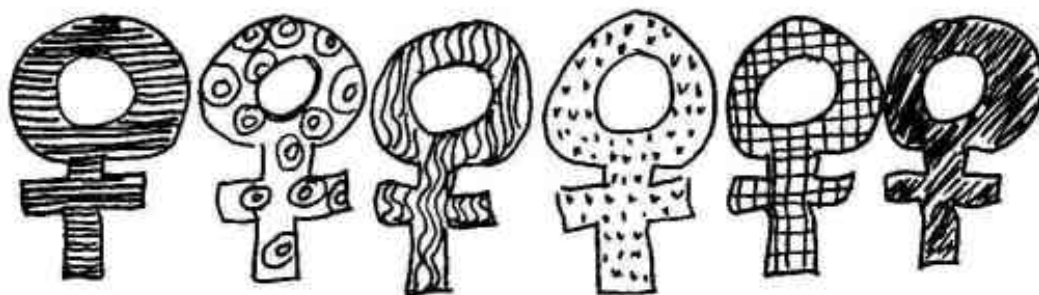
Income	No.
—	—
\$200—\$399	7
\$400—\$599	13
\$600—\$799	2
\$800—\$999	4
\$1,000 and above	15
Not known	15
Not available	2



Source of Awareness, Referral and Contact

A major source of information and referral regarding WAO and its services was by word-of-mouth, such as through friends and ex-residents. This informal source is as valuable as the formal sources, such as the Department of Welfare Services, hospitals and the media.

Source of Information regarding WAO	No.	%
Friends and Relatives	20	29.0
Hospital and Welfare Services	13	18.8
Media (Press, TV, Radio)	15	21.8
Charitable Organizations	3	4.3
Church	2	2.9
Doctor	2	2.9
Others	9	13.1
Not Available	5	7.2
Referred by:		
Self	39	56.6
Friends, Relatives, ex-residents	13	18.9
Department of Welfare Services	7	10.1
Hospital	7	10.1
Others	2	2.9
Not Available	1	1.4
Contact:		
By telephone	37	53.6
In person	30	43.5
Not available	2	2.9



Problems

The women who came to the Centre had been subjected to a number of problems. In a lot of cases it was a multitude of problems that led them to come to the Centre.

Type of Problem	No.	%
Violence	61	88.4
Psychological	51	73.9
Financial	38	55.1
Homeless	20	29.0
In-laws	20	29.0
Other wife or woman of partner	15	21.7

Outcome

About 40% of the women returned to their husbands/partners; about 37% of them moved in with their parents, relatives or friends; 20% went on to live independently. Every attempt is made to keep in touch with ex-residents, but unfortunately it is not always possible, because some of them do not leave forwarding addresses or contact with us.

Outcome	No.	%
Went back to husband	28	40.6
Went back to live with parents, relatives, friends	25	36.2
Found job and living independently	13	18.9
Filed for divorce and living independently	1	1.4
Left without informing	2	2.9

THE OTHER CASES (14 women)

These women stayed for a period ranging from 1 to 125 days; the average period was 26.6 days. These women came for various reasons: one woman had no means of support, because her husband was in jail. There were also 3 single girls who had been physically beaten by family members: 2 of them for refusing to marry men chosen by the family and 1 for having a boyfriend unacceptable to the family. One was a destitute woman with her child, found living on the street. The remaining women needed temporary shelter and employment and were referred to us by the Department of Social Welfare.

Telephone Service

A total of 641 calls were recorded in 1988. The majority of the calls were either for advice or counselling on various issues. There were also enquiries pertaining to WAO services and how WAO could help in particular cases; calls from women in need of immediate shelter or shelter in the near future; and jobs etc. (see Table)

Call-Type \ Ethnicity	I	C	M	O	U	Total	%
Counselling	33	83	22	2	4	144	22.6
Advice	75	166	40	6	15	302	47.2
Anak Angkat	3	5	—	—	4	12	2.0
Welfare/Other Charitable Org.	2	5	3	—	8	18	2.9
Enquiries	13	14	3	—	6	36	5.7
Resident	8	1	—	—	1	10	1.7
Ex-Resident	7	7	1	—	2	17	2.7
Shelter	11	15	4	1	1	22	3.5
Job Offer	5	7	1	—	—	13	2.4
Seeking Employment	1	3	—	—	1	5	0.9
Press	—	5	3	—	1	9	1.5
Information	8	13	5	1	2	29	4.5
Volunteer	3	5	2	—	—	10	1.7
Donation	1	2	—	—	1	4	0.7
Total	170	331	84	10	46	641	100
%	26.5	51.6	13.1	1.6	7.2	100	

I = Indian

C = Chinese

M = Malay

O = Others

U = Unknown

Face-to-Face Counselling

A total of 79 women opted for face-to-face counselling. 71 of these women were victims of domestic violence, i.e. battering by husbands. The others came to see us for various reasons, viz: desertion by their husbands (3), sexual abuse by father (1), single girls with family problems (3), legal advice regarding property (1).

The ethnicity of the callers can be seen below:

Ethnicity	No.	%
Indian	25	32%
Malay	11	14%
Chinese	43	54%

