



WE CAN STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
WAO

WAO TURNS

40!



A **tribute** to 40 years of relentless effort towards women's empowerment and rights advocacy

EDITORS



HIPAYAH

- "unpredictable, fun & sometimes funny" - a friend
- forgets directions, remembers lyrics
- fav genre is anything on the female experience

POPPY

- just a girly gal whose life revolves around her kitty cat yola & her blossoming plant babies
- currently in her #YogiLife era
- LOVES livin' the beach life. HATES getting sunburnt #ItsComplicated

ANGELINE

- the living embodiment of the phrase "no talking before coffee"
- enjoys exercising her freedom to go out but most of the time prefers to stay indoors
- has a low sense of humour & loves puns

WAO

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

AND

PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

IN MALAYSIA SINCE...

CONTRIBUTORS

- Joyce
- Li Ann
- Isma

1980'S

The initial conception of WAO emerged from the dedicated efforts of six friends intent on providing their friend and her children a refuge from domestic violence.

WAO gains official recognition as a society.

Subsequently, Tun Tan Siew Sin envisioned the idea of setting up a haven for abused women and generously donated RM34,000.

WAO marked a milestone by purchasing its first property intended as a women's refuge.



1981



1983



1985



1982

WAO registers to the Registrar of Societies Malaysia (ROS).

A woman and her children became the first residents of WAO's rented refuge premise in September 1982, after discovering the organization through a Malay Mail feature.



1984

In its first operational year, the WAO shelter housed 57 women and 75 children, and counselled 200 women over the phone.

In the same year, the Joint Action Group Against Violence Against Women was formed. [Later renamed as Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAGGE)]

1988

WAO expanded its operations by establishing a childcare centre.



W

You are WORTH it

You deserve to be treated
with respect, kindness & love.

A

You are AMAZING.

Just the way you are.
Your honest and authentic self.

O

Own your uniqueness

and empower yourself to thrive
in every aspect of life.

BECAUSE OF YOU, 40-YEARS ON

Because of you, I was inspired to be a
Crisis Support Officer.

A privilege to serve as one of you.
Astonishing to be able to observe you.

I often wonder every now and then,
how everyone just works so unconditionally
as well as so selflessly. Whether it is
to contribute an hour here or take on
an extra duty slot there.

Because of you, stepping forward to
lend courage and knowledge. You help others
brave up and in turn, step forward.

Because of you, someone now knows better.

Because of you, WAO is 40-years on.
Because of you, kindness and compassion
continue to uplift others.

Because of you. Driving Change.
Impacting Lives. Making a Difference.

Thank You

joys.lai

by Joyce (WAO Ambassador)



*Domestic
Violence Act
1994*

In 2000,
Dato Dr Siti Zaharah
Sulaiman presented
the Bill for
Child's Act in Parliament.
The Act was then gazetted
on 1 March 2001.



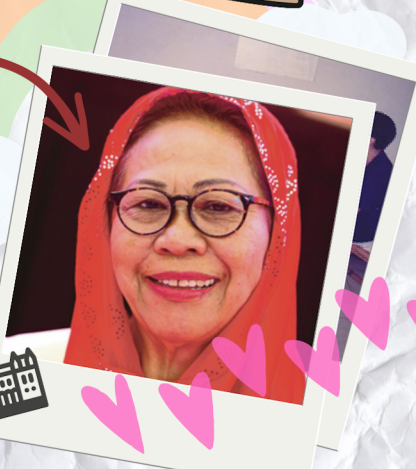
- WAO
- All Women's Action Society
- Women's Centre for Change
- Association of Women Lawyers
- Justice for Sisters
- EMPOWER
- Family Frontiers
- KRYSS Network
- Perak Women for Women Society
- Persatuan Sahabat Wanita Selangor
- Sabah Women's Action Resource Group
- Sarawak Women for Women Society
- Sisters in Islam
- Tenaganita

1994

Dato Napsiah binti Omar
introduced the Bill for
Domestic Violence Act in
Parliament. The Act was
gazetted on 7 July 1994.



2001



2009

The Joint Action Group
for Gender Equality
(JAGGE) expanded to
include 13 more
organisations alongside
WAO.

40 Years and Beyond

by Kon Li Ann (WAO Ambassador)

In this poem we honour the hands, mouths and hearts at WAO, an unwavering and fearless force that rose to challenge societal norms, driving the enhancement of women's rights in Malaysia. Their dedication and passion have kindled hope and empowered countless lives. Thank you, WAO, for being the guiding light on the path to equality and for transforming the lives of women with your unwavering commitment.



Just 40 years ago, a spark ignited.
Women's rights in Malaysia stifled, benighted.
But WAO emerged, with courage profound,
To shake the nation and unchain the bound.

A new dawn broke, a fierce brigade,
WAO warriors, unafraid.
Passion in their hearts, they took the lead,
With purpose, power, their mission decreed.

A force of change, they roared aloud,
Injustice scattered like a cloud.
Survivors' hopes, they gently mend,
With love and care, they fiercely defend.

Empowering women, they lit the way,
Shattering darkness, bright as day.
Hotlines, shelters, programs they extend,
Beckoned in, a new world to befriend.

Through advocacy, their voices strong,
They challenged systems, righted wrongs.
With programmes diverse, they paved the road,
For a future where every woman could be so bold.

Glass ceilings shattered, loud and clear,
WAO's triumphs ringing near.
From boardrooms high to assemblies of might,
They championed dreams, reaching heights.

40 years of battles fought,
Yet still, the struggle can't be bought.
Challenges loom, they stand tall,
Together, we rise, never to fall.

Keep fighting, WAO, our guiding light,
In unity, we'll take our flight.
Your legacy etched in history's scroll,
With WAO, we'll reach our goal.

So, here's to WAO, fierce and free,
Warriors of change, warriors like thee.
With every step, a victory soar,
Inspiring Malaysia forevermore.

In this poem of triumph's dance,
Let's celebrate WAO's grand stance.
With heart's entwined, we'll rise above,
For 40 years and beyond, empowered with love.

IN THE YEARS TO COME,
WAO MADE GREAT
STRIDES IN PUBLICATIONS
AND THE DEVELOPMENT
OF SOCIAL SERVICES IN
MALAYSIA.

HERE ARE SOME OF WAO'S
ACHIEVEMENTS....

- Launched **Think I Need Aid (TINA)** in 2014.
- Introduced **Crisis Support Officers**; trained volunteers that handle WAO Hotline.
- Published report: **'Working Together: Case Studies in Domestic Violence Response'**.

- WAO celebrated key legislative headways; Parliament passed the Bill for **Sexual Offences Against children Act** & made amendments to the **Domestic Violence Act 1994**.
- Published **'TINA's Journey'**; a collection of words and poetry by survivors of domestic violence.
- Published reports: **"Perspectives on Domestic Violence"** and **"Human Trafficking in Malaysia: A Focus on Women and Children"**.



- The National Domestic Violence Committee was set up.
- Ground Breaking ceremony for the childcare centre rebuilding with REDA Youth.
- Developed **"Level Up"**; a WAO Gender mainstreaming program & **"WAO Girl"** empowerment program.



2012

- Coordinated and edited **'CEDAW & Malaysia'**, an NGO Alternative Report.



2015

2016

- On 13/11/2016, WAO's Childcare Centre was burned down by fire caused by lightning.
- Published the guideline: **'Domestic Violence Shelter Standards and Toolkit'**.



2017

2018

- Capacity Building & Partnership Division was established.
- Distributed the WAO CEDAW handbook and training with members of parliaments.
- Launched **WAO Community Selamat**.

2019

- Published:
- **'The Status of Women's Human Rights: 24 Years of CEDAW in Malaysia'**,
 - **'Where's the Child: The Rights of Child Domestic Violence Survivors'**,
 - **'The Shelter Needs of Domestic Violence Survivors and the Availability and Accessibility of Shelters and Related Services in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur'**.



40 YEARS OF SERVICE & 40 YEARS OF GRATITUDE TO AN EVER GROWING COMMUNITY

WAO
Be it physical, verbal,
or emotional, there's

WAO
Be it physical, verbal,
or emotional, there's

STOP
LENCE
WOMEN
WAO

WAO
physical, verbal,
emotional, there's

- "Shadow pandemic" saw the rapid expansion of WAO's operations (including online).
- WAO partners with UN Agencies
- WAO publishes a gender responsive budget memorandum:

"Facilitating Resilient and Sustainable Reforms to Support Women and Children"

- Research team was established
- WAO Services Centre



WAO celebrates amendments to Section 507A of the Penal Code (Act 574), which makes **stalking a criminal offense** in Malaysia.

The anti-stalking and protection order provisions came into force on 31 May 2023



so,
what's
next for

WAO?



2020

2022

2023



WAO

marches onwards,
championing
the cause of
women's rights & empowerment with
unyielding
determination!



Gender Responsive Budgeting-in-Practice (GRBiP) Programme



WAO's persistent advocacy aided in achieving amendments to the **Employment Act 1955** on the following:

- **Paternity Leave & Maternity Leave**
- **Anti Sexual Harassment Legislation**
- **Anti Discrimination Against Women Act**

Together with ENGENDER & MoF, WAO conducted ministry training for:

"Gender Responsive Budgeting in Practice (GRBiP)"

BETWEEN

JAN 2022  JUN 2023

WAO

ASSISTED
455
WOMEN



RECEIVED
5,609

TINA WHATSAPP /
SMS & HOTLINE
ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

me?

by Isma (WAO Ambassador)

I am me
Or so they say

I am me
Or so I think

But it seems
That I don't exist

For I am
A daughter
A sister
A wife
A mother

But never just 'me'

It seems
I exist

Only in relation
To you

It seems
I don't exist

Because it's convenient
For you

But wait
There seems to be me

When something is wrong

Then the blame
Is fully on me
And it's no one else's fault

So I do exist
But only to serve
And only for blame

For I am a woman

Soon
I will realize
That I don't need you
To define who I am

As I am me
A woman
Existing
As I am

Saya seorang yang **tabah**.
Apa yang saya takut?
Hingga hari ini hidupku
tak begitu lepas dari
penderitaan.

Dah banyak benda-benda
buruk yang saya telah
melalui -
(masa aku kecil mak aku
dipukul oleh bapa setiap
hari. Bila bapa aku mati,
setitik air mata pun tak
terkeluar dari mata aku) -
menjadikan saya lemah
dan penakut.
Dia menjadi saya penakut.

Sadie, Dewi, Bobo,
Saya rindu kalian.
Saya rindu canda tawa
kalian semua.
Kalian yang membuat saya
cuba kuat, tidak sedih.



EXCERPTS FROM TINA'S JOURNEY

**Beat me down,
tear at me.**
But how can
he hurt our
beautiful child.



Angry as I am when I
see the hurt that I
endured all the years.

Angry and the anger
reigns in me.

Glows in my blood.
Sweeps through me.
Angry with myself.



Inspirational quotes

"You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right."

-Rosa Parks

"Fight for the things you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

-Ruth Bader Ginsburg



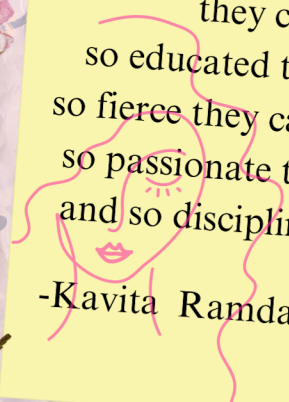
Stay strong through your pain
grow flowers from it
you have helped me
grow flowers out of mine so
bloom beautifully
dangerously
loudly
bloom softly
however you need
just bloom

-Milk and Honey by Rupi Kaur



“We need women who are so strong they can be gentle, so educated they can be humble, so fierce they can be compassionate, so passionate they can be rational, and so disciplined they can be free.”

-Kavita Ramdas



Women's Aid Organisation (WAO) provides free and confidential services to survivors of domestic violence, rape, and other forms of violence. If you or someone you know is in need of our services,

please contact:



WAO HOTLINE
+603 3000 8858

TINA SMS/WHATSAPP
+6018 988 8058



Follow us on :



@WOMENSAIDORG
@WAOVOLUNTEERS



WWW.WAO.ORG.MY

The logo for Women's Aid Organisation (WAO), consisting of the letters 'WAO' in white on a dark red square background. The 'O' has a white arrow pointing to the right.