



Women's Aid Organisation

Annual Report

2015



About WAO

“There is life after abuse. This is mine.”

— *Lindsay Fischer, The House on Sunset*

Women’s Aid Organisation is one of Malaysia’s leading domestic violence shelter, re-integration and case management service providers, supporting women and children through the challenge of evolving from domestic violence victims into empowered survivors. We match our services with strong, sustained advocacy work to create intolerance for violence against women.

Our work aims to increase women and child survivors’ access to justice and protection. We do this through many platforms, including advocacy, shelter services at the WAO Refuge and Child Care Centre, and case management support.

We honour the brave and empowered women and children who are surviving and have survived domestic violence. Their voices and views are mainstreamed throughout this Annual Report. Survivors help us understand the risks and struggles women and their children continue to endure even when courageously seeking to leave their abusive home to forge a safe, peaceful future. Survivors help us see the positive impact that immediate crisis response and long-term support can have on their lives. We must keep survivor support, safety and empowerment at the front and centre of our work.

If you are a survivor, if you wish to contribute to our work, or if you work in domestic violence response, WAO would be keen to hear from you. Please get in touch by email at: womensaidorg@gmail.com. Together, we can reclaim our power and change lives.

Call the WAO Hotline at +603 7956 3488 or SMS TINA at +6018 988 8058 if you or someone you know is experiencing abuse at home.

1.0

WAO in 2015

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1.1 Our Year in Review

Domestic violence against women is devastating, leaving women and their children hopeless, isolated and at constant risk of serious harm. We believe every woman deserves a life that is safe, fulfilled and empowered, a life that is free from violence.

We help women rebuild their lives after experiencing domestic violence. In 2015, we assisted 3,065 women survivors and their children in various ways to regain their self-respect, independence and safety. We also advocated for policy change and legal reform, and encouraged Malaysian society to become more aware and less tolerant of domestic violence and its debilitating effects.

We are determined to make positive change in Malaysia. We want to see a country where women are protected from violence, where laws, law enforcement, and judicial and public services are always available and meaningful. We must all work together to protect, respond and help rebuild women's lives that have been shattered by domestic violence.

We turned 33 in 2015. We celebrated through acknowledging our roots as a movement of women volunteers, bonded and working together through a shared commitment to protect and serve women survivors of domestic violence and their children. This is #teamWAO. Read more about us in these pages.



#teamWAO at KL Car-Free bike ride with Bengkel Basikal Kampung and at Malaysiaku carnival

This year, in our consultations with women residents at the WAO Refuge, as well as within our network of survivors, we learnt: (i) survivors want their voices to be heard, to resound in support and encouragement of other survivors; (ii) survivors face serious and on-going financial hurdles, both from financial abuse related to DV, its lasting and on-going effects and the difficulties from the current economic climate; (iii) the criticality of addressing the needs of children from abusive homes, to help them break the cycle of violence.

In response, with a keen eye on maintaining privacy and confidentiality, we facilitated survivor voices to be heard via social media, print media, television, and at our events.



Survivor Wishes on WAO Facebook for the 16 Days of Activism



WAO hosts FreedomFest screening, with a talk by a survivor and a volunteer



Survivor voices on Berita Harian, Utusan Malaysia and Astro Awani

We heard and recognized the vast economic difficulties survivors are facing. We conducted a living needs assessment with our long-term survivors, to help us learn more. We have initiated important networking and links with businesses, the community and within WAO to help survivors face the livelihood challenge. WAO now partners with skilled volunteers and agencies for programs advancing economic empowerment for women. We have taken the first steps towards social enterprise in December 2015, with resounding success. 2016 will be the year for assessment and evaluation on how to move this further forward.



Bags and bracelets made by WAO survivors

We have never had better or stronger impact in the **media**. In 2015, we are pleased to report 316 mentions in all media and 40 newspaper, radio and television interviews. We conducted 107 grassroots engagement through talks (30), trainings (26) and public education booths (11) as #teamWAO. This additional exposure has been buttressed by new partnerships for WAO, for **funding**, support and other services.

Our **service** for survivors shapes and directs WAO's advocacy in our quest to achieve substantive gender equality. There is a close link between the immediate and long-term needs of women survivors and the accountability of state responders, as well as the legal framework within which the response resides. Our services help us learn first-hand the experiences of women survivors and their children, driving our advocacy.

A great example of this synergy is WAO's 2015 Case Study Report, "Working Together", launched in conjunction with a public awareness campaign, "Can You Keep A Secret". That report was only possible through our learning of survivor experiences, from WAO and other partner organisations. The exhibition and campaign was made real and relevant through the articulation of actual words of WAO survivors, incorporated into the ceramic art installation through audio recordings.

We are proud to always provide a platform for survivor voices.

In our **advocacy** work, we partnered with women domestic violence survivors and their children, government agencies, civil society and communities to ensure a woman domestic violence survivor's access to legal protection and remedies; and to create a society that is intolerant of domestic violence.

A notable achievement has been the adoption in August 2015 of the Garis Panduan Untuk Menangani Keganasan Rumahtangga, (or Guidelines on Handling Domestic Violence Cases). Since 2009, WAO has been advocating for a comprehensive framework that spells out the roles and procedures for each agency mandated by law to provide response and services for survivors of domestic violence.

The development of the Garis Panduan has given new life to an existing WAO initiative, to foster a multi-stakeholder platform for the response to domestic violence. Using this platform, survivors, civil society and government agencies can work to implement these guidelines and strengthen response at national, state and district levels, through a strategic and coordinated approach. We work better when we work together.



Multi-Stakeholder Meeting with government agencies and civil society November 2015

Again, using this platform, and through support from the Canadian High Commission, WAO was able to kick-start the development of standards and a toolkit for domestic violence shelters. Consultations underpinning this effort were in progress at year's end, with women survivors and their children, stakeholders in government and civil society.

WAO, together with the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality, continued to raise public awareness and engage with Parliamentarians, policy-makers and other actors to drive forward much-needed **reforms** to laws relating to women, specifically on domestic violence and offences against women.



JAG Public Awareness initiative, Citizens Against Rape walk

We have made good progress in key areas. Yet, there is much more that needs to be done. We will continue to work with survivors, the authorities, people and groups in our community who believe, like us, that violence against women must end. We invite you to join us on our journey to make Malaysia a safer and more equal country for women.

1.2 What We Believe

We want to see positive change within society, government and for the women and children we serve. We have a clear Vision to create a society that is free from violence against women. Our steadfast Mission is to promote and create respect, protection and fulfillment of equal rights for women, to work towards the elimination of discrimination against women, and to bring about equality between women and men.

We believe our Strategic Objectives will help us achieve this and guide us:

- To provide on request to women and their children suffering from mental, physical and sexual abuse, temporary refuge services that empower and enable them to determine their own future.
- To offer emotional and social support to any women who request for it, resident or otherwise, and offer support and after-care.
- To undertake and encourage research into any of the factors that contributes to the inequality and subordination of women.
- To undertake and advocate with government and non-government organisations the eradication of factors that contribute to the inequality and subordination of women through law, policy and institutional reforms.

- To create an awareness and better understanding among individuals, public and relevant agencies on the issues of violence against women and the underlying inequalities.

WAO strives to walk our talk. We have identified and are motivated everyday by our Core Values. In all that we do as a team, we always:

- Act with Respect & Compassion
- Ensure we are Non-judgmental and Inclusive
- Act with Accountability
- Are Courageous
- Are Fun-loving and Professional



WAO staff celebrating at the WAO Hotline Para-counselor graduation



We at WAO know the power of people acting together for good. We know the power of putting a great idea or a positive act out there, one that captures attention, inspires action and supports change.

- Carol Chin, WAO President speaking at the launch of WAO's Play Therapy service

2.0

Service

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2.1 Service for Change

WAO's services impact survivor strength and resilience. We make possible survivor access to rights, justice and protection, limiting the adverse consequences of domestic violence. We also empower and support women and children to move towards sustainable recovery and independence. The need is immense and our response in 2015 continued to meet as much of the need as we could, both for women in crisis and in recovery.

In 2015, we continued to be motivated, inspired and energised by the women and children we serve. We put our core services through a thorough evaluation process in 2015. We learnt that we need to continue strengthening our services to not just address the crisis but also survivor sustainability and resilience to move forward towards independence. We learnt that we have a vast support base of energetic and committed volunteers in the community, for us to harness to broaden and deepen the reach of our service. The para-counselor force, staffing the WAO Hotline since October 2015, is one such example. Finally, we learnt the criticality of managing cases in a holistic and structured manner, tracking progress in each individual case in a systematic way, to ensure the maximum impact of our service for women and children.

WAO tempat yang selamat, mudah menyesuaikan diri dan di sana tiada rasa bimbang untuk berlandung di tempat yang baru.

- Former Resident at WAO



WAO staff, EXCO and Refuge residents (identities camouflaged) joined our Bust-the-Myths campaign, dispelling myths about abortion

2.2 Strengthening Survivors

Providing shelter from domestic violence means more than a bed and a roof. We know that survivors need a supportive and safe space. We work in partnership with survivors to promote self-dignity and self-determination. At WAO, we seek to balance support and self-help. Survivors know healing and recovery are at her own pace and that the door to WAO is always open for her. Through our joint efforts, the survivor is empowered to take control over decisions on her future, for positive change in her life. These are our core services:

Our **Refuge** is a crisis shelter that provides a temporary home to almost 300 women and children each year, and offers comprehensive support services. In 2015, we sheltered 151 women and 139 children. The availability of our Refuge ensured that women and children were not made homeless following domestic violence or other abusive crises endured.

The **Child Care Center** is a transitional home for children of survivors. On the survivor's request, we keep her children in the short-term, giving the survivor the time and support to viably re-establish a safe and independent life in the community of her choice. In 2015, we sheltered, counseled and ensured access to education for 37 children while their mothers prepared sustainable and independent lives for them.

Social Work ensures police action and perpetrator accountability, sources legal representation, and provides individual case advocacy to enhance survivors' access to health and other public services. In 2015, our social workers followed the cases of 700 women and 161 children.

Counseling & Therapy is multi-platform and conducted by social workers, trained interns, para-counsellors and chambering students. It comprises individual sessions (Face-to-Face, WAO Hotline, TINA SMS text and email). The WAO Hotline received more than 1,834 calls in 2015. In total, our counselling provided crisis intervention, safety planning and onward referrals for 2,639 survivors.



Hand-made fabric flowers



Appreciation cards made by CCC kids

Empowerment Programs offer refuge-based and post shelter support to all survivors and their children, in order to empower survivors to break the cycle of domestic

violence and maintain their independence. Our Empowerment programs benefited approximately 100 women and 150 children in 2015.

In 2015, WAO Services impacted these numbers of women:

Service	Number
<i>Refuge</i>	151 women, 139 children
<i>Face-to-Face Counselling (FFC)</i>	112 sessions
<i>FFC for Refugee Women</i>	41 sessions
<i>Telephone Counselling</i>	1834 calls
<i>Email Enquiries</i>	256 emails
<i>Tina SMS Conversations</i>	396 individuals
<i>Child Care Centre (CCC)</i>	37 children
<i>Anak Angkat</i>	37 women, 76 children
TOTAL	3079 women and children

2.3 The Refuge

The WAO Refuge is one of the leading crisis shelters in Malaysia for women domestic violence survivors and their children. We also shelter women who are survivors of other forms of violence. The Refuge provides a safe haven for an average of 90 days, during which time survivors receive intensive social work support, counselling and benefit from our empowerment programs.

It is a diverse place, hosting residents representing different cultural backgrounds, nationalities, ethnicities and languages. Nevertheless, the women are connected and bonded by the shared life experiences that were affected by violence.

Out of the 151 women sheltered in 2015, 29 women were returning ex-residents and 122 were new residents. There were six women who returned to the WAO Refuge in the same year.

The majority of our residents (91 women) were from Malaysia, 29 women from India and 22 women from Myanmar. The rest were from Indonesia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Iran, Iraq and Vietnam.

The Malaysian residents were mostly from Selangor and Wilayah Persekutuan. 117 residents were between the ages of 20 and 39, 23 residents were aged 40 and above, and 5 residents were below 20 years old.

We have partnered with the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) to also provide shelter services for women refugee survivors of violence. Our refugee clients numbered 23 women and 29 children in 2015.

“Shelter means a place that we can stay without fear and have freedom to live our own life. It helps to protect from the enemy or from those we don’t want to engage with. It is also a home where we do our routine, daily task like cooking, cleaning and etc. It is like a house of a friend that we can always visit. It also a rest place to relax.”

- A Survivor who sought shelter at the WAO Refuge.

2.4 Child Care Center

Being away from home and living at a shelter, even temporarily, can be a scary experience for children. Our programs for children aim to build the capacity of mothers to secure the best outcomes to recover from domestic violence.



CCC kids at their lessons

The Child Care Center (or “CCC”) is a very special place, a transition home for the children of our clients who had previously sought shelter at WAO Refuge. The children may have witnessed domestic violence or have been the victim of the violence themselves. CCC serves as a safe and supportive home for the children, to give the survivor mother the time and space to rebuild her life, secure a stable job, obtain some savings, and eventually have a home so that she can live with her children as a family.

While recognizing the need for urgent admissions, we aim to keep the number of children in our facility to a maximum of 15 so they can be given specialised care and attention by a group of dedicated and trained full-time staff consisting of a social worker and three child-minders. The social worker will help the mothers with all matters related to her children, including schooling, therapy and empowerment of the child.

As the end aim is to unite the mothers with their children within the shortest possible time, mothers are supported through our various programs to strengthen her livelihood opportunities. Mothers are encouraged to visit or stay over during weekends or on their days off work.

Every effort is made to enable the mother to have quality time with her children. The children are reassured and supported through this and mothers feel very much in touch with their children's lives. Mothers take their children home during school holidays unless they have yet to establish their own home.

In providing the transitional shelter for children, we are focused on their empowerment and capacity to cope with the previous experience of violence. We have zero-tolerance of abuse, and children are encouraged to embrace this, as well as to be well aware of their rights.

Children described what they liked most about WAO's services:

- We have space to play
- We have children's parties & gatherings
- WAO staff are good to us
- Group outings from the shelter

In 2015, 37 children sought CCC services. 25 children were registered in CCC and 12 children were short-term emergency stays.

The table on the next page shows the number, age of children and the length of their stay.

Child / Month	J a n	F e b	M a r	A p r	M a y	J u n e	J u l y	A u g	S e p	O c t	N o v	D e c
Total at month start	13	14	12	17	15	15	17	17	17	17	17	13
New Children	4	0	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
Emergency admission	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Highest during month	17	14	28	17	15	17	17	18	17	17	18	13
Left during the month	3	2	11	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	1
Total at month end	14	12	17	15	15	17	17	17	17	17	13	12
Age breakdown by month												
Below 3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Age 3 to 6	6	6	10	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	4	4
Age 7 to 9	5	2	5	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Age 10 to 12	5	5	9	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	3
Age 13 to 15	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Age 16 to 17	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

2.5 Social Work Case Management

WAO's case management is a holistic approach, taking into account all factors and opportunities, to meet a survivor's needs. Our goal is to enable women survivors to be aware of options they have in dealing with a particular problem, and to assist her in making an informed decision about what to do about domestic violence issues.

The survivor is the prime mover in finding solutions to improve her life in a sustainable way. We work to raise survivor awareness of her rights and in supporting her to access those rights. Case management is a critical part of our work, as it synergizes closely with systematic and substantive improvements that are needed when state responders do their work for domestic violence survivors.

“Recognising the important and positive role that authorities can play, I am concerned by the documented cases which illustrate how some still view domestic violence as a family matter and therefore do not provide the protection needed. Some attempts were made to mediate and persuade survivors to return to the abusive partners. Nonetheless, this report is about moving forward.”

- Mok Chuang Lian, ex-WAO President in the Foreword of the Working Together Case Study Report, launched 24 June 2015)

2.5.1. Survivors and the Police

The police play a critical role in providing protection for survivors of domestic violence and their families. WAO social workers assist survivors to report domestic violence crimes and liaise with the police, as well as conduct trainings and meetings to enhance protection for the survivors.

This year, 64 residents reported that they had lodged police reports before approaching WAO. During their stay at WAO, social workers assisted 27 women to make police reports. Some were reports requesting police to take action and open investigations, while others were cover reports for record purposes as they did not want to take action.

Out of those who made police reports, 18 women requested for an Interim Protection Order (IPO). 10 women successfully received their IPOs. The rest were unsuccessful, as the police did not open investigation because their cases were deemed not serious enough. WAO also managed to obtain 2 Protection Orders (PO) for Client. WAO continues to lobby for better police response for survivors of domestic violence, including following up with the cases where police action was lacking or insufficient.



WAO Staff during training for personnel at the Police's Child Interviewing Center

2.5.2. Survivors in Court

WAO's social workers, interns and chambering students accompanied survivors to attend court hearings and mentions in 2015. This includes providing emotional support, preparing survivors for the court process, monitoring the proceedings and liaising with court officials and other authorities. Not all cases reported to the police were brought to court, and court hearings can be long, time-consuming and emotionally draining. Support is critical for survivors in their quest towards justice.

Last year, WAO attended 101 court hearings or mentions, out of which 40 were for domestic violence related offences, 12 were to obtain Interim Protection Orders and Protection Orders, 8 were for divorce-related matters, 13 were for custody-related matters and 8 for Interim Custody for WAO's Child Care Center.

I believe once I stand for myself, it means I stand for other women too.

– Dr. Haliza Zurah Zulkefeli, survivor. Read her story [here](#).

Through WAO's intervention, a survivor was able to deliver her Victim Impact Statement (VIS) in court, which contributed to the perpetrator being sentenced with a fine of RM3,500 and 7 months jail. However, another perpetrator was charged with causing grievous hurt to the victim (severe beatings and hitting a woman's head with a motor chain lock), but the punishment meted was 2 months jail term. The perpetrator continued his abusive acts towards the survivors after he served his jail term.

WAO continued to monitor the domestic violence murder case of Nurhidayah Abdul Ghani, a woman who was allegedly beaten to death by her husband, and provided support for the family members of the victim. We also followed cases outside of Semenanjung Malaysia; 1 police investigation in Sabah and a domestic violence court case in Sarawak.

A case that we monitored under the Anti-Trafficking in Person Act has been given a prima-facie decision, and the hearings will continue in 2016. WAO continued to assist S. Deepa in her fight to get custody of her children who had been unilaterally converted

to Islam by her ex-husband. Our services and advocacy teams worked together to support Deepa and her family, as well as advocate for law and policy reforms to ensure that the rights of the non-converting spouse are upheld.

The Services Team also started to monitor court cases of Clients who are not staying in the shelter. This includes court cases and court related matters for ex residents, telephone counselling and face-to-face counselling clients. Social work for these Clients is now reported monthly in the Services Report.

2.5.3. Legal Aid Chambering Students

After they have completed their university education, these future lawyers are required to spend 12 days during their chambering period at various NGOs so that they can get “real” experiences before they go into the legal workforce. The experience with WAO is an opportunity for them to explore and increase their understanding on what the survivors have gone through before they reach the court system.

Chambering at WAO is an eye opener for me on various issues of violence against women- I will help them as much as I can in the future, perhaps give them pro bono services

- Rachel Tan, Legal Aid Chambering student.

Prior to WAO, the chambering students were trained in three main areas; syariah law, family law and NGO work. Syariah and family law trainings are conducted by LAC KL, whereas the Women NGOs’ training is conducted by SIS, AWAM and WAO at LAC KL, Wisma Hang Sam KL. From WAO, Meera Samanther conducted a session on Feminism while, Nazlina bt Ab Ghani conducted a session on Helping Process and Case Management.

In 2015, we had 13 chambering students – Goh Wai Ping, Rachel Tan Mei Chien, Nur Raihan Chia bt Farid Chia, Nur Aifaa’ Zahirah bt Nazaruddin, Fatin Multazimah bt Mohammad Multzam, Rasika a/pa Dharmasena, Wan Nur Sarah, Tan Lay Kuan, Nur Syazah bt Mohammad Noh, Adele’ Natasha bt Allatif, Debra Leow Khai Yi, Melissa Wong Qing Ling and Ros Shahira Saida bt Sirin. These interns came once a week for 12 weeks in a stretch. Each chambering student handled telephone calls, face-to-face interviews, documented cases and compiled statistical data of residents and ex-residents. They also accompanied some of the women to courts, police stations and clinics. These young future lawyers were energetic and keen in helping the survivors.

From November 2015, the chambering students conducted an In-House Legal Aid Clinic every Friday 2pm-4pm. Residents and ex-residents who need legal advice can come during these clinic hours to get professional legal advice.

2.6 Counseling and Therapy

WAO recognises that enhancing access to **specialised domestic violence information and counselling services** is critical so women can get access to help if and when they need it. Anecdotal evidence suggests that as many as 25-30% of survivors are likely to withdraw their requests for protection through the Interim Protection Order (IPO). However, access to specialised counselling and guidance that enables the woman survivor to make informed choices with confidence, may greatly contribute to lowering the rate of withdrawals of police reports by survivors and help her get a step closer to justice and protection.

We do all we can to ensure this access to information and counselling is always available to the women who need it most.

2.6.1. The WAO Hotline

We attended to 1,834 calls in 2015. This was an increase of 94 calls from last year's 1,740 calls. Most of the calls were about domestic violence issues while others called about legal matters, sexual harassment and unwanted pregnancy. Many women called simply to express their emotions to someone willing to listen. Most callers were from the Klang Valley although there were calls from other states including Johor, Negeri Sembilan and Perak. We also received calls from other countries outside of Malaysia, which we referred to the appropriate agencies abroad. 40% of the WAO Hotline calls were handled by trained interns and para-counsellors (para-counsellors completed their training in September 2015).



WAO Facebook promotion of the Hotline service.

2.6.2. Counselling

We counselled 112 women in individual, direct sessions (Face-to-Face) in 2015. Some women required direct sessions as they were unable to speak openly over the phone (lack of privacy or to avoid being observed by the abuser). Some felt more comfortable in a face-to-face setting instead of talking on the phone. Some women were advised by social workers to come in for face-to-face counselling owing to complex issues needing resolution.

2.6.3. Email Enquiries

We received an average of 20 emails per month and a total of 256 emails by the end of 2015. Emails were requesting information about our services, procedures on getting birth certificates, welfare aid, shelter homes, housing and even crisis issues. WAO is also currently a preferred option for students researching on women's issues. They request for interviews and information on violence against women, the women's rights movement in Malaysia, single pregnant women and sexual harassment, among other issues.

WAO ensures that all emails are responded to immediately. As emails are a very one-dimensional mode of communication, the language and tone that the message carries are given utmost priority to ensure that the clients feel reassured and get the support that they need.

2.6.4. TINA SMS Helpline

In March 2014, WAO launched a new SMS helpline service named as TINA "Think I Need Aid". TINA offers women the opportunity to reach out for help via SMS as some may not be comfortable, or able to call the WAO Hotline. TINA also serves as a 'friend' for women who need to talk about their problems before taking action.

By end of 2015, TINA had attended to 396 SMS conversations. 54.7% or 217 SMS conversations were about domestic violence while 21.2% or 46 SMS conversations were on non-domestic violence issues, including relationship issues (with boyfriend or family members), depression, and requests for information on divorce procedures.

2.7

Women's Empowerment Programmes

In 2015, various activities and programmes were carried out for women at WAO Refuge. Many activities and programmes were supported by various partners such as, Quota Club, Soroptimist International, Klinik Kesihatan Jaya, KL Writer's Workshop, Perspective Strategies, Volunteers from the Care2Run Team and Ernst and Young.

Through our diverse volunteers, interns and partners, we were able to design a wide variety of **programmes and events** catering to the many different interests of the women living in our shelter. Weekly classes such as baking, yoga, beading, kitchen remedies, English language, computer and creative writing workshops were held. Talks on breast-feeding, breast cancer awareness, and general health and hygiene were conducted. Women were also given access to swimming classes and grooming classes. We conducted occasional outings for women and their children to locations such as the KLCC Water Park, National Zoo, Jungle trekking trips and beach outing at Tanjung Tuan, Port Dickson. Women and children also watched "Inside Out" at Golden Screen Cinemas, Jaya Shopping Mall and "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" at MBO, Citta Mall. Sports days were held to foster a better relationship among the mothers and their children. WAO extended this program to our ex-clients and their children.

Our **economic empowerment** programme, the "*Back to Work*" fund continued in 2015. Residents who had secured jobs are supported through financial aid of RM100

– RM300 to be used for transport, food allowance and clothing. Nine women benefited from the programme in 2015. In addition, we established links with recruitment agencies and other potential employers to give our survivors better options in job-seeking.

In October 2015, WAO started a pilot project on **social entrepreneurship**. The objective of this project is to equip WAO's women (including the ex-residents) with skills to produce homemade products in order to earn additional income for their living. In this pilot project, 70 items were produced including hair accessories, bracelets, necklaces, bags and coin purses. The products were sold in charity bazaars and all proceeds from the sales were given to the women. Women earned a total of RM825 from two charity bazaars in 2015.



Beaded necklaces made by WAO Survivors. The skill is taught by a WAO volunteer, and products are sold for women by WAO. All proceeds are for the survivor makers.

There were two special **educational programmes** in 2015. Firstly, “*Choose2Protect*”, an education programme sponsored by Durex that engaged trainers from the Federation of Reproductive Health Association (FRHAM) and the media agency Perspectives Strategies, to conduct a series of sex and reproductive education sessions with our residents. In collaboration with Klinik Kesihatan, free medical check-ups and HIV tests were given to our women.

Our **Annual Gathering** was held in December 2015. 150 participants, comprised of 64 families, ex-residents and their children, attended the get together for fun, food, gifts and games. Besides the usual programme, two information booths at the Annual Gathering was set up. One was an education booth organised by Educational, Welfare & Research Foundation Malaysia (EWRF) to impart information on vocational training programmes and the other, a recruitment agency to interview women who needed employment. In addition, a post-shelter living needs assessment was conducted with the women to understand their needs in order for WAO to structure the programmes better.

2.7.1. WAO Special Funds

- TUN TAN SIEW SIN MEMORIAL FUND (TTSS)

Upon the passing away of our patron Tun Tan Siew Sin in 1988, the TTSS Memorial Fund was set up in 1990 to provide financial assistance in the form of a nominal sum

to help the women set up new homes or start a small business. Loans ranging from RM300 to RM1,000 were offered to our ex-residents. In 2015, 16 women benefited from this fund.

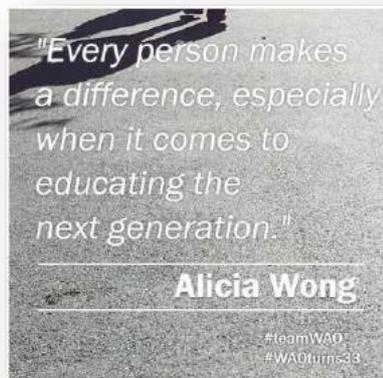
- LEGAL AID FUND

Services of lawyers are crucial in custody issues but these services can be expensive. We began the Legal Aid Fund in 2012 to assist women with court expenses, usually related to custody issues. In the usual case, the recipients do not have the financial means to employ lawyers and they are unable to wait for the services of lawyers from the Legal Aid Centre or Legal Aid Bureau, due to the urgency of their cases. In 2015, 3 women received money from WAO's Legal Aid Fund. In total, WAO gave out RM45,042 in 2015.

- FLIGHT FUND

This fund provides financial assistance for migrant women to purchase flight tickets if they wish to return to their home country. In view of increasing demand from trafficked survivors sheltered at WAO, the flight fund has been extended to include settling overstaying fines, getting special passes, and covering domestic travel expenses and some pocket money to bring home. In total, WAO gave out RM5,266.26 for 17 women in 2015.

Special thanks to #teamWAO volunteers, Vivienne Lee, Annie Ng, Koochithressia K.Thomas, Dr Goh Huay Yee, Dr Prema Latha, Wong Alicia, Bernice Chauly, Goh Poh Khim for their dedication and efforts in carrying out these programmes.



WAO Volunteers Alicia Wong and Vaneezha Muniandi (now a WAO staff-member) on their motivation for being #teamWAO

WAO would like to thank our Services interns for 2015 Helenna Hisham, Mary Imelda, Zuraika, Hassna Shuaibu Ojonuba, Shaista Zubair, Koh Hui San, Erica Koh Pei Wey, Tavleen Tarrant, Sim Yen Nee, Yong Kar Wei, Lim Jing Han, Zuriatun Fadzliah Sahdan, Eva Jin Hee Kraft, Amina Ammar, Naz Nadhira bt M Rosli, Siti Yusrina bt Abdul Azia, Natasys Suria.

2.7.2. WAO Anak Angkat Program

The AA programme has helped me a lot. My mother was able to use the money to buy UPSR practise books so I can do lots of exercise. Thank you so much to AA programme and WAO.

- Rajaie, recipient of AA Sponsorship Programme and WAO's UPSR'S Achiever's Award 2015 for obtaining outstanding result of 4A and 1B in Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah (UPSR).

The Anak Angkat programme was developed in 1985 as a support service to assist former residents of the Refuge. It aims to assist mothers with the cost of keeping their children in school.

Due to the increased cost of living, single parents risk poverty and sometimes homelessness. They struggle with managing many demands from that single paycheck. In mid-2015, WAO increased the sponsorship from RM870 to RM 1200 per year per child to ensure decent living standards for survivors and their children. We are always very grateful for the kind and generous support from our Anak Angkat sponsors.

In 2015, there was an increase in the number of sponsored children. A total of 76 children (37 families) received this aid, which is given on a monthly basis of RM 100/monthly per child. The money is used to provide basic necessities and daily maintenance of these children's school-going needs. A programme officer from WAO is responsible to coordinate and act as a medium between the sponsor and sponsored child. We provide regular progress reports of the child, photographs and other updates.

Over the years, Anak Angkat sponsors have participated in WAO's Annual Get Together Party, held annually in December. They provided special gifts for their sponsored children during festive seasons and offered to sponsor more than one child.

However, there is a long waiting list. WAO is currently actively seeking new sponsors for the increasing numbers of women needing support for their children.

The Anak Angkat sponsorship programme is a huge success because of our sponsors (see Fundraising section) who are committed to journeying with women and children in their quest for a life free from violence.

2.8 Child Empowerment Programmes

WAO recognises the importance of implementing specific programmes to address the needs of children survivors of violence, in addition to the women survivors. This is important in view of research indicating the impact of violence on children who grow up in an abusive environment, and the criticality of helping a child break through the cycle of violence. WAO's own data¹ shows that people who have experienced domestic violence as children have a higher risk of repeating the cycle as adults. Some

¹ Annual Report 2014 – [click here](#).

of our women survivors have provided clear testimony that as children, their husbands had witnessed their fathers abusing their mothers.

Children themselves have told us that separation from the abusive parent brightens the child's outlook. The moderating factor is the mother's ability to maintain her parenting even in adversity and to be positively supportive of the child. **This is a key challenge for us in supporting mothers to recover from domestic violence.**

In July 2015, WAO reviewed and restructured our children's programme in order to address the following objectives:

- To ease the anxiety that children survivors of violence may face from living in a new environment; to make the adjustment process easier.
- To provide education for school-going children and the younger children so they won't feel left out because they could not attend school while staying in the shelter.
- To provide children with a sense of being nurtured and cared for, and positive experiences so they can build on these to increase their self-confidence, self-esteem and self-care.
- To help children survivors of violence deal with their past experience so they can learn about other alternatives to violence.

2.8.1. Enriching the Refuge Experience

We aim for WAO to be a congenial place to detect and intervene for a child who exhibits symptoms that are a result of witnessing violence in their lives. This is done by discussing with the mother when a negative behavioral manifests. We also seek to move, towards prevention, building resilience and providing the right level of support for both mother and child to heal and recover.

The child is given the opportunity to record her experiences. A pocket file is given to every child to hold her personal belongings and books. The children were also given workbooks on English language, Bahasa Malaysia, Science and Mathematics to facilitate learning. When they leave the Refuge, each child is given a gift box containing small notes written by social workers and interns, as well as collection of their school and creative works from participating in the children's programme. The gift box will symbolise positive memories of their time in the Refuge. Since its inception in July 2015, approximately 30 children have benefited from this project.

The children enjoyed fun and educational outings together with their mothers' locations such as the KLCC Water Park, National Zoo, Jungle trekking trips and beach outing at Tanjung Tuan, Port Dickson. Women and children also watched "Inside Out" at Golden Screen Cinemas, Jaya Shopping Mall and "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" at MBO, Citta Mall. Sports days were held to foster a better relationship among the mothers and their children. WAO extended this program to our ex-clients and their children.

WAO would like to thank our interns for 2015 Helenna Hisham, Mary Imelda, Zuraika, Hassna Shuaibu Ojonuba, Shaista Zubair, Koh Hui San, Erica Koh Pei Wey, Tavleen Tarrant, Sim Yen Nee, Yong Kar Wei, Lim Jing Han, Zuriatun Fadzliah Sahdan, Eva Jin Hee Kraft, Amina Ammar, Naz Nadhira bt M Rosli, Siti Yusrina bt Abdul Azia, Natasys Suria.

2.8.2. Child Assessments

Child assessments were conducted with every child supported by WAO. The assessment is done by social workers and/or interns, but not the social worker in charge of the mother's case. This is to ensure that the wellbeing of the family is taken care by more than one case worker. Based on the results of the assessment, group programmes were conducted to meet the child's needs as well the mother's parenting priorities.

Child assessments facilitate better understanding and assessment of the children, and contribute towards more accurate and relevant interventions for each child, whether regarding therapy, healing or education programs.

2.8.3. Continuing Access to Education

Out of the 37 children staying in the CCC, 18 attended school. Two (2) children were in Secondary School (Form 1 & Form 4), 15 children were in Primary School (3 in Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (Tamil), 1 in Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (Cina), and 11 in Sekolah Kebangsaan) and 1 child in Montessori Kindergarten. Seven (7) children did not attend school as they were too young, under 6 years old. However, CCC conducted home schooling for these children, taught by staff, interns and volunteers. The home schooling activity was also extended to 12 children who stayed at CCC for a short period of time, due to Refuge's renovation or due to being emergency high-risk cases.

From September 2015, more structured and regular tuition classes were conducted for children from 7 to 12 years old. This is part of the on-going endeavour to ensure continuing access to education for children in crisis from domestic violence.



Play Therapy session



Birthday Party at CCC, organized by staff and interns

2.8.4. Play Therapy

The broad vision of the Play Therapy is to enhance the therapeutic impact of play for children and young people. Play Therapy is intended to help children identify and express emotions surrounding violence, separation, shame guilt and loss. Children and young people are encouraged to recognise and understand the importance of their

feelings and they are given opportunities to deal with them constructively. All children who seek shelter in the WAO Refuge with their mothers, or who reside in our Child Care Center will be able to have continued access to Play Therapy through this Project. WAO has been conducting Play Therapy for children at our Child Care Center since November 2014. In the first two quarters of 2015, we have expanded the service to the children living in crisis at the WAO Refuge.

2.8.5. Child Program Partners

- **Hong Leong English Reading Volunteers**

Starting from October 2014, Hong Leong English Reading Volunteers have started their volunteering activity in WAO. This project continued in 2015, whereby volunteers taught CCC children by reading English storybooks and helping them with English grammar and vocabulary. This year, volunteer came every 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month.

- **Project H.O.P.E and C.O.R.E 2015**

The Coastal Obstacle Reconnaissance Experience (C.O.R.E) 2015 activity was held at Port Dickson on 17 October 2015. This was the first WAO partnership with Project H.O.P.E. Women and children from both the Crisis Shelter and Child Care Centre participated in this project. 41 participants joined, and they enjoyed the jungle tracking and kayaking programme, as well as learning to care for each other, cooperation, learning about nature and building self-confidence.

- **Care2run**

Care2Run is a community sports project which provides opportunities for underprivileged children from shelter homes and disadvantaged families to run with mentors who are volunteer seasoned runners supported by professional athletic coaches, over a 12 session period. Care2Run program aims to use sports to nurture a growth mindset among the children and inspire them to achieve their goals using sports psychology while they are guided on staying fit and eating healthy. This year, 7 children above 10 years old, from WAO Child Care Centre, participated in the programme.

- **Blue Cap Relay Run**

Blue Cap Relay Run is organized by University Malaya to show support for Prostate Cancer Survivor and Promote Man Health. Project H.O.P.E joined this program and invited WAO staff, mother and children for event. Four (4) staff, 4 mothers and 16 children participated in this event.

- **Sex Education Class**

CCC conducted sex education classes for seven children above 10 years old. The classes cover topics such as the characteristics of being a male and female and how such characteristics made up a person's sexuality. Sexuality is an important aspect of the life of a human being and almost all people, including children, want to know about it. This Sex Education Class is taught by volunteer and EXCO committee member, Puveshini Rao.



Vintage photo of Pu and her mother

#TeamWAO works as an extended family, supporting these survivors in their time of need, sheltering them, educating them about their rights, sharing important life-skills and empowering them to make a better life for themselves and their children. Currently as a member and a volunteer, my role varies from sitting in executive committee meetings to providing interpreting services to women who don't speak the common language and anything else in between. No role is too small to play and every bit counts

- Puveshini on being #teamWAO

- **Spelling Bee Competition**

WAO children won first prize! Three children from WAO Child Care Centre participated in the Spelling Bee Competition, organised by the Soroptomist International Club of Damansara. This competition involved all children above year 4 until form 4 around Klang Valley. The children worked really hard for the competition and we are very proud of their success.

- **Art Class**

From July 2015, a volunteer from Life Line Association, Mr. Jacky taught art class to 7 of the CCC's children aged 10 and above. The volunteer used the art therapy technique in the class as a method of expression.

- **Sport Day**

On 23 May 2015, all CCC children together with Refuge Shelter residence and ex-residence participated in WAO Sport Day. This sport day was successfully done and all the children, women and mothers enjoyed a great time together.

Special thanks to volunteers Jessica Clare Saram, Eloise Green, Florence Seow, Wong Yen Ni, Pong Met Ting, Caroline Ahlgren, Yasmin Elsayi, Wong Yen Ni, Fong Mei Tong, Tan Siew Im and Annie Ng.

We would like to thank the interns for 2015, Yong Kai Xin, David Noel Koshy, & Shaista Zubair, Hassna Shuaibu Ojonuba, Lim Jing Han and Ng. Jia Shin

2.9 The Dimensions of Domestic Violence

Throughout 2015, we listened to the testimonies and experiences of courageous women survivors. We have not just responded to the needs of these survivors, but we have also learnt their experiences and recorded them. These stories inform us of important factors, trends and gaps. It helps us to not only understand the dynamics of domestic violence in Malaysia, but to also frame and propel our advocacy work.

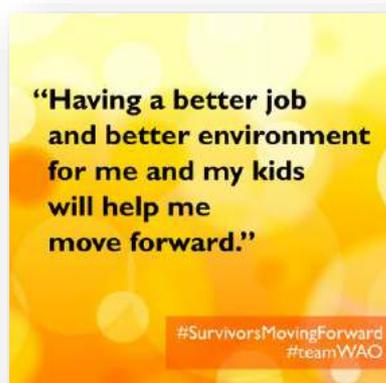
In 2015, the most prevalent source of abuse was the intimate partner (husband or boyfriend). The most prevalent form of abuse was psychological. This mirrors previous years.

In 2015, women in our Refuge described multiple forms of abuse:

Psychological abuse	(100%)
Physical abuse	(89.6%)
Financial abuse	(56.2%)
Social abuse	(53.3%)
Sexual abuse	(30.5%)

This year's data continued to demonstrate that psychological abuse is the most common form of domestic violence, impacting the survivors as adversely as physical violence.

Financial abuse was also rampant (56.2%). Women shared that their husbands would take their money while not providing them with the financial means to take care of the family. Abusive husbands also took financial loans in the woman's name and did not subsequently service those loans. This plunged women into debt and blacklisting by financial institutions. These women were severely economically disadvantaged even though gainfully employed, thereby restricting their financial independence even after leaving the abusive situation.



A survivor articulates her needs in moving forward to an independent, abuse-free future (posted on WAO Facebook in October 2015)

Social abuse is the type of abuse that make women feel isolated and afraid to seek help. Women shared that they were not allowed to make friends with others, which made them feel trapped and afraid to move out from the cycle of abuse. Some had lost contact with their family members, as they were not allowed to do so soon after they got married. When women were being isolated, it also made them have a high sense of hopelessness and helplessness, which resulted in most of them spending many years in such cycle.

Approximately 11% of the women reported that the perpetrators abused them with no associated triggering issues, whilst 37.1% mentioned that the perpetrators abused them with no reason. Among the reasons of abuse, the highest number recorded as jealousy (36.1%), suspicions (39.2%) and financial problems (27.8%). Substance abuse by the perpetrator was also a factor, including alcohol (30.9%) and drugs (24.7%) reported substance abuse involving mainly “ice”, “shabu”, “ubat batuk”). Most of the time, women reported a mix of triggering factors such as a jealous and suspicious husband, abusing them while under the influence of alcohol.

It is also important to highlight that 43.3% of the perpetrators and 35.1% of the survivors have a history of violence in their family. 26.8% of the women did not have knowledge on whether the perpetrators grew up in an abusive family environment. The husband or ex-husband perpetrated the abuse for 79.8% of residents, while parents, family members or boyfriends were the source of abuse for 16.5%. One woman reported her father-in-law as the perpetrator. 16.5% of the women also reported being abused by a second perpetrator such as parent, sibling, stepparent, in-law family member or relative.

2.9.1. Return to the Abusive Home

16 women returned to their former situation after careful consideration and weighing of options. While ensuring appropriate counselling to help women heal emotionally and regain their self-confidence, WAO will always support our clients in whatever decisions they make regarding their future. We aim to ensure that the decisions are informed and voluntary.

Women do decide to return to the abusive home for various reasons. It is quite common for women to make multiple attempts before finally leaving the abusive situation for good. The critical need is for WAO to stand ready to continue supporting women, in whatever choices they make, and to ensure access to protection and safety is always available.

In 2015, 68 residents informed that they have left their abusive situations at least once before.

17 women left and returned to the abusive home more than five times. Out of the 17 women who left their husband for more than five times, five still returned back to their husband after they sought help from WAO. They reconciled with their husbands for various reasons, especially after intervention by family members.

Why did these 16 women return?

- she wants to give her husband a chance
- she cannot afford to live on her own
- her husband has agreed to change
- she worries about her children's schooling
- her husband's attitudes improve after attending counselling
- she receives threats from the perpetrator
- her family member suffers with illness
- family members become the mediator and they had a discussion with her husband
- she hopes that her husband will change after UNHCR's interference
- she was pressured by family members
- for the sake of her children's safety
- she wants to save her marriage and keeps her family
- she needs the husband to renew her spouse visa

2.10

Women Surviving Other Forms of Violence

2.10.1 Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Collaboration with UNHCR:

Our work with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) began in 2003. WAO gives counselling services to women refugees at UNHCR premises on alternate Tuesdays.

In 2015, WAO provided 41 counselling sessions for refugee women at UNHCR. These cases involved rape, attempted rape, sexual harassment, depression and domestic violence. There were also other issues such as difficulty coping with living in Malaysia.

We provided shelter services for their refugee women who have suffered from Gender Based Violence. UNHCR referred one refugee woman and one child for shelter, both of whom were domestic violence survivors.

In December, WAO conducted two trainings for UNHCR's staffs from all departments to create awareness on issues related to Gender Based Violence (GBV).

In addition, UNHCR funded a community-based shelter project with the Chin Mang Tha Refugee Community. UNHCR approached WAO to provide training for their caretakers for the shelter and women under Mang Tha's economic empowerment project. WAO conducted three trainings for them which included sessions on shelter management, awareness of Gender Based Violence (GBV) issues and basic helping skills.

Collaboration with ICMC:

WAO continued our collaboration with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC). This programme started in October 2010 with the aim to recruit 25 women from various refugee communities to form a Refugee Women Protection Corps (RWPC). The RWPC will in turn raise awareness in their community on Gender Based

Violence (GBV) issues and provide assistance for refugees who face Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV).



WAO was contracted to conduct Training of Trainers' workshops for refugee women who were recruited under the RWPCs. WAO also conducted awareness training on Gender Based Violence for community leaders. Besides the usual training, ICMC had also engaged WAO to conduct 24 hours of training to assist the community in building a team of peer counsellors to assist survivors of GBV. For 2015, two trainings were conducted by WAO in which 30 RWPC were trained. These RWPC had reached out to 3,000 residents during their outreach programme by providing their participants with knowledge on GBV.

Due to the overwhelming demand from the refugee communities, ICMC engaged WAO to assist them in developing a pool of peer counsellors. WAO provided them with a thirty hours training, through which the participants were trained on basic counselling skills to enable them to provide psychological first aid via ICMC's helpline or during their house visits. WAO also conducted post-training evaluations. In 2015, WAO trained 15 participants and seven were selected to become ICMC's peer counsellors.

We also provided shelter services for survivors who were identified by the RWPC through ICMC's helpline and outreach program. ICMC referred 22 refugee women and 28 children for shelter – all from different ethnic groups from Myanmar. Among them, 18 were domestic violence survivors (18), two were trafficked and one was referred to WAO to facilitate attendance for an interview session with UNHCR. Also in 2015, ICMC started a branch in Penang where similar programmes were conducted for Refugee population in Northern Region. As such, when their clients needed to attend an interview at UNHCR, ICMC would request for WAO to take them into the shelter to stay a night before they could attend the UNHCR interview on the following day. In 2015, among ICMC referrals, six women and six children fall under this category.



A domestic violence survivor and refugee sheltered at the WAO Refuge while waiting to be relocated to the US. All she wants is to have a happy life with her children and for them to be able to attend school. She envisions a future in the US, where she would get a proper job and be safe from harm.

2.10.2 Abused Migrant Domestic Workers

Three migrant domestic workers sought shelter in 2015 from Indonesia and India. The workers were physically and psychologically abused, their wages were not paid, their documents were withheld and they had been deprived of food. We engaged with the respective embassies, the police and immigration department to ensure the women received protection and care from the law and their own diplomatic missions.

Social workers successfully negotiated with the employers to retrieve unpaid wages and withheld passports. The Indian High Commission assisted our clients to return home. One client left for another home while another client left to Indonesian Embassy.

2.10.3. Trafficked Women

Trafficking for labour and sex work is a serious issue in Malaysia. Women enter the country legally but end up with no proper papers, deplorable working conditions and very low or no wages. All of them were deceived, led to believe that they will receive a good wage with their work permits organised. All paid agents in their home country to come to Malaysia to work, only to find themselves in a situation of being trafficked.

In 2015, we assisted 27 such women. They were aged between 18 and 54 years. Most of them were referred by their respective embassies. Among them, 21 were brought in as domestic helpers, 4 were forced by the agent or multiple agents into sex work and 2 were sold by their own family members into sex work.

WAO had been receiving referrals of trafficking survivors from the Indian High Commission. At year-end, we put the referrals on hold, pending discussion with the Indian High Commission on a sustainable and rights-based framework for referral, domestic protection, access to justice and safe repatriation.

3.0

Advocacy

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3.1	Advocating for Change
3.2	Law and Policy
3.3	Women's Legal Protection in Practice
3.4	Raising Awareness
3.5	International Standards

3.1

Advocating for Change

Women's Aid Organisation has been engaging with women domestic violence survivors and their children, government partners, civil society and communities to ensure a woman domestic violence survivor's access to legal protection and remedies; and to create a society that is intolerant of domestic violence.

WAO's current advocacy programs are vibrant, and engage all relevant stakeholders and partners. We work on the domestic, regional, and international fronts on key issues relating to gender equality and violence against women.

In 2015, our regional and international work focused on holding Malaysia to account for its obligations in implementing policies and laws that advance gender equality. Our domestic work addressed law and policy reform, principally through engaging the Attorney General's Chambers and Parliamentarians, working within the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG). Our well-consolidated public education and media engagement continued. In 2015, we closely aligned our activities with the social change that we wanted to see.



WAO Communications Officer, Kristine Yap with lawyer and activist Honey Tan, after speaking on a BFM radio program on sexual violence

Throughout the year, we worked towards achieving cohesion within our internal structures and with all our stakeholders. We built on the synergies between advocacy and service work conducted by WAO. In this way, we believe we achieved deeper and broader impact. We look forward to 2016 as the year to strengthen the work we do in partnership with survivors, government responders, media and communities.

Interns Sarah Thomas, Jessie Blackledge, Tay Weiling, Shahirah Abdul Shukor, Ameera Natasha Moore, Lainey Lau [who is now one of our Advocacy Officers], Jay Teo, Tasnem Rain Aljoffery, and Sekheena Deslorieux contributed to WAO's advocacy work in 2015.

3.2 Law and Policy

3.2.1. Guidelines on Handling Domestic Violence Cases

This year saw a major milestone for our advocacy work to end domestic violence in Malaysia. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) finalised the “Guidelines on Handling Domestic Violence Cases” (*Garis Panduan Pengendalian Kes Keganasan Rumah Tangga*), which describes each step frontline officers (like police and welfare officers) need to take when handling domestic violence cases.

By making steps and responsibilities clear, the guidelines will help domestic violence survivors get the protection and justice they need and deserve from the government.

WAO’s advocacy on these guidelines began in 2009, when we engaged MWFCD to develop standard operating procedures for government agencies responding to domestic violence. As a result, MWFCD started drafting the document, titled the “Inter-agency Working Together Document to Handle Domestic Violence Cases”.

WAO and JAG continued to engage MWFCD on the guidelines, and our input has resulted in improved and additional provisions in the draft guidelines. We have also consistently worked with MWFCD for the document to be finalised and implemented as soon as possible, including by securing public commitments to do so, from the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development and top policy officials in MWFCD.

The guidelines can be downloaded here:

http://wao.org.my/file/Garis+Panduan+Pengendalian+Kes+Keganasan+Rumah+Tangga+-+Final_compressed.pdf

3.2.2. Working Committee to Review Laws on VAW & DAW

In September 2013 WAO, with JAG, launched a campaign to improve national laws relating to violence against women and discrimination against women.

We engaged multiple stakeholders in the Executive and Legislative branches of Government, including Members of Parliament, the de facto Minister of Law, and the Attorney General. JAG worked closely with the Women’s Parliamentary Caucus.

As a result, and following the proposal of WAO via JAG, a multi-stakeholder working committee known as the Working Committee to Review Laws on Violence and Discrimination Against Women – consisting of women’s NGOs, government bodies such as MWFCD and Polis DiRaja Malaysia, and the Bar Council – was formed. Chaired by the Attorney General, the Working Committee was tasked to review and reform laws on violence and discrimination against women.

Throughout 2013 to 2015, the Working Committee met six times and produced and discussed several draft bills. It agreed on several positive amendments, including proposed amendments to the Domestic Violence Act 2014, the Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Evidence Act, and the Evidence of Child Witness Act.

Unfortunately, unforeseen circumstances led to the termination of the Attorney General's tenure in office in July 2015, and the committee, which he chaired, has been discontinued. Nevertheless, the Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill 2015 has two proposed amendments that included some of our recommendations. Besides that, MWFCD has also informed us that the legal definition of rape has been widened in the latest amendment.

Despite certain setbacks, WAO is working to building a relationship with the new Attorney General in order to revive the Working Committee in 2016.

3.2.3. Improving the Labour Rights of Women and Migrant Workers

WAO advocates for law and policy reform in many aspects of women's rights in Malaysian society; the area of employment is one of these. Article 11 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) requires states to ensure that adequate action is taken to guarantee gender equality for women and men in the area of employment. Being a state party to CEDAW, Malaysia is obligated to ensure that women are not discriminated or disadvantaged in the workforce.

In August 2015, the Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR) of Malaysia invited civil society members, including WAO, for a consultation session to discuss MOHR's proposed amendments to Malaysian labour laws, with the intention of aligning them with the standards stipulated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The government requested for civil society to review the proposed amendments and provide written submissions regarding law reforms they wished to put forward.

WAO took advantage of this opportunity to coordinate the submissions to the MOHR on behalf of JAG, and of the Migrant Working Group (MWG), by consulting with members of both groups and other labour law experts. As JAG's priority is to promote gender equality, the proposed amendments in the submission focused on laws and policies that could hinder women from achieving equality in the workforce. The submission by MWG focused on bringing about law and policy reviews to improve the working conditions and treatment of migrant workers in Malaysia.

3.2.4. Unilateral Conversion



One of WAO's most high-profile cases is that of S. Deepa, a mother of two children whose abusive husband converted their two children to Islam without her consent. While Deepa had legal custody of the children (granted by the Seremban High Court), her ex-husband, Izwan, abducted their son. Her struggle to regain custody of her son was on-going throughout 2015.

On the 6th of January, the Federal Court deferred hearing Izwan's leave application to appeal against custody and recovery orders, and ordered Izwan to produce the son or risk contempt of court.

On the 14th of January, Izwan brought the son to court, where Deepa saw him for the first time after nine months. The Federal Court granted Izwan a stay on the custody and recovery orders until the next hearing date. WAO went to court with Deepa on that day, to provide her with moral support. We coordinated the media advocacy campaign to defend Deepa's rights, including issuing a press release, plugging press stories and giving media interviews on the case outcomes.

WAO went to court with Deepa again on the 25th of June, where the Federal Court directed the parents to bring the children to court on the day the court delivers its decision concerning the children's custody. WAO continued to coordinate media advocacy in conjunction with the court hearing.

Besides that, WAO maintained correspondence with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Bangkok to update them on Deepa's case, so that the case could be published in the Communications Report of the Special Procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council. WAO also supported the watching brief activities.

Moreover, JAG met up with YB Chew Mei Fun in October 2015 to lobby on issues of the rights of non-converting spouses, and has been following up with her office on the outcomes of the consultation.

The cumulative effect of the media campaign from 2014 to 2015 influenced positive change, in that the government of Negeri Sembilan is proposing that spouses who wish to convert to Islam would have to dissolve their marriage and fulfil all obligations under civil law before they are allowed to be registered as Muslim converts.

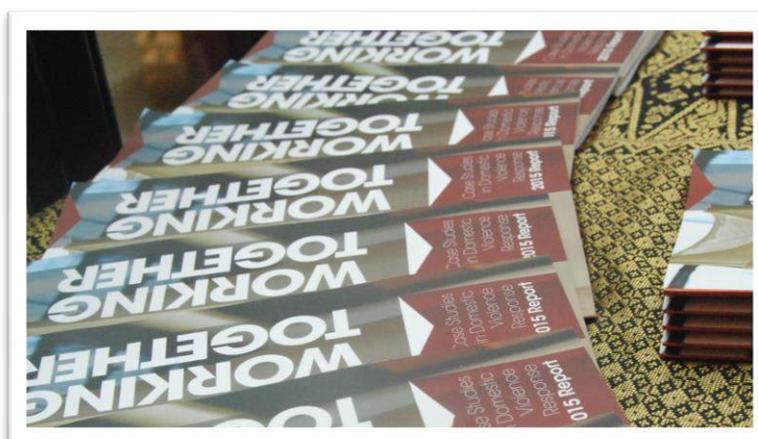
3.3 Women's Legal Protection in Practice

3.3.1. 2015 "Working Together" Case Study Report

WAO published a case study documentation report, titled "Working Together: Case Studies in Domestic Violence Response, 2015 Report," to highlight ongoing common challenges faced by domestic violence survivors and their children in obtaining protection, justice, and remedies, and to make recommendations on how to overcome these challenges.

The report was published in June 2015, and launched at an event officiated by the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development. The launch resulted in at

least 23 media stories, and the report was shared with our partners and relevant authorities. WAO also met separately with two Ministers and a Deputy Minister to discuss the contents of the report.



Twenty-three case studies were documented and analysed in the report. In addition to WAO case studies, case studies from Women's Centre for Change (WCC Penang), Perak Women for Women Society (PWW), and Rose Virginie Good Shepherd Centre were also included. Data collected from the 110 clients WAO served in 2014 was also used.

The Working Together Case Study Report is available here:

<http://wao.org.my/file/Working%20Together%20-%20Case%20Studies%20in%20Domestic%20Violence%20Response,%202015%20Report.pdf>

3.3.2. Multi-Stakeholder Meeting

WAO has been consulting with the policy division of MWFCDD to discuss strengthening cooperation between the NGOs and government agency responders to survivors of domestic violence. This is to ensure that the Guidelines on Handling Domestic Violence Cases (see above) are implemented in a practical manner. A result of these meetings was the agreement for MWFCDD and WAO to co-organise the Multi-Stakeholder Meeting, which materialised on the 26th of November.



Participants at the Multi-Stakeholder Meeting

This was the first Multi-Stakeholder Meeting between government agency responders to survivors of DV and NGOs that took place on the federal government level. Representatives from government agencies and NGOs (WAO, AWAM and Good Shepherd) came together to discuss how they could improve their response to survivors of domestic violence, what challenges they faced in their work, and how they could overcome these challenges.

The meeting was symbolic, in that the different stakeholders came together to confirm their commitment to working together to serve the survivors of domestic violence, and also produced a concrete outcome. The response was positive, and WAO and MWFCDC aim to organise these meetings on a regular basis.

3.3.3. Building Capacity with State Responders

WAO supported WCC Penang's efforts to propose a domestic violence training curriculum for Magistrates, and met with the Institut Latihan Kehakiman dan Perundangan (ILKAP). This resulted in ILKAP agreeing to organise, with WCC and WAO, a 3-day training for Magistrates and Deputy Public Prosecutors on 6th to 8th October 2015. The feedback we received from the training was very positive, and so this training programme has been institutionalised by ILKAP to be conducted once every few months. The second round of training took place in January 2016.

WAO also participated many training sessions with the Police, hospitals and OSCCs.



Police Officers take a “wefie” during a training session with WAO

We also secured a meeting with the head of PDRM's criminal investigation department and the head of the Police's D11 Unit that deals with crimes against women and children. During the meeting, WAO floated the idea of providing counselling support for women reporting domestic violence and sexual crimes in police stations. They verbally agreed to partner with WAO on two initiatives: (i) organising a collaborative workshop to strengthen NGO-PDRM relations; (ii) having a stand-by WAO officer assigned to assist Petaling Jaya Police Department in VAW cases.

The project is waiting funding support.

3.4 Raising Awareness

3.4.1. Videos/Animation

As part of WAO's goal to inform the public about the support survivors of domestic violence are able to receive from government agencies and NGOs, WAO has produced a video series on victim support, comprising 4 short videos explaining the process for survivors to access help through NGOs and government agencies.

The videos have been finalised, and the recording of the videos was done in Bahasa Malaysia. They were screened for the first time at the Multi-Stakeholder Meeting (see above). The final video scripts will be sent for the addition of English, Mandarin, and Tamil subtitles to ensure full accessibility to Malaysian society, as all videos are currently only in Bahasa Malaysia.

3.4.2. 'Can You Keep A Secret?'

A collaboration between WAO and Leo Burnett, 'Can You Keep A Secret?' was a public education campaign aimed at raising awareness on domestic violence, featuring installation art of live-size ceramic head sculptures representing everyday women who could be experiencing abuse. The twelve ceramic heads featured different domestic violence survivors with varied stories, to draw the public's attention and urge them to speak out when it matters most – when they notice abuse.



The installation was launched alongside WAO's 2015 "Working Together" Case Study Report at Publika, and was subsequently also on display at MWFCDC, Putrajaya, and The Gardens Mall.

3.4.3. Other Campaigns

- 1) WAO information spread in Majalah Komik Upin & Ipin – a periodical that is aimed at young readers – each month. Each spread is a complimentary two-

page spread that features a unique theme, e.g., positive body image, depression and sadness.

- 2) WAO “perfume strips”, a discreet way of promoting our hotline number, placed at selected MyNews outlets, places of worship, universities and colleges.
- 3) “Aiyoh Wat Lah!”, a spoof awards ceremony to raise awareness on what constitutes sexism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia, and to hold public figures/institutions accountable for their statements and actions, was held outside of the Klang Valley for the first time. The event in Ipoh drew our largest crowd yet, at 160 attendees. #aiyohwatlah also made it to the top 10 trending topics on Twitter.



- 4) Targeted media campaign to promote the WAO Hotline, where both Para-Counsellor trainers and trainees spoke about their experience with the training and volunteer programme. We reached print media and radio in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Chinese.



Article in the Star on the WAO Hotline, September 2015

- 5) #BustTheMyths campaign on 28th of September to promote awareness of access to safe and legal abortion. WAO's residents were also involved in the campaign.



- 6) Participation in Coalition of Bodily and Sexual Rights' "One Day, One Struggle" campaign to bring awareness to the rights of trans-persons in Malaysia. Videos from "I Am You: Be A Trans Ally" were used.

3.5 International Standards

3.5.1. ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF)

Malaysia was the chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2015, which meant that the ASEAN Summit, where ASEAN heads of state meet, was held in Malaysia. ASEAN civil society groups organised a parallel conference, the ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF) 2015. The APF is organised yearly, and is the largest gathering of civil society in ASEAN. It is a platform for civil society to engage with governments and conduct public advocacy.

WAO supported the organisation of the APF, as part of the National Organising Committee, and was responsible for leading two areas: the "APF statement" drafting process, and media engagement. WAO also worked to ensure that VAW and women's rights were prominently included in civil society's advocacy agenda.

One of the main outputs of the APF each year is a consolidated statement by ASEAN civil society. This statement voices out the aspirations and demands of *thousands* of ASEAN civil society members. WAO co-led the drafting process, facilitating the input and interests of civil society organisations and activists. The statement was the basis for the APF's public messaging and lobbying, and was used to engage directly with ASEAN heads of state.

WAO also coordinated media engagement leading up to and during the APF, including organising press conferences and press briefings, drafting press statements, producing press kits, and engaging with reporters during the APF. The event and our messages were covered widely in the media, with more than 90 mentions in the media in Malaysia, the region, and globally.

APF 2015 was attended by 1,445 participants from Malaysia and throughout Southeast Asia, and culminated in a “Solidarity Walk”, the first rally of ASEAN civil society in Malaysia. Following the conference, APF 2015 representatives met with heads of state of ASEAN member countries at the ASEAN Summit.



The APF statement: <http://aseanpeople.org/reclaiming-the-asean-community/>

3.5.2. ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Women

Two ASEAN bodies – the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) – drafted the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of Violence Against Women. This plan of action aims to support the implementation of ASEAN’s declaration on violence against women.

The Southeast Asia Women’s Caucus on ASEAN, a network of women’s rights organisations and individuals in Southeast Asia, submitted feedback to ACWC and AWC on the draft regional plan of action. WAO coordinated input from the Malaysian women’s groups into the network’s submission. WAO also provided the Malaysian government with the draft regional plan of action.

The SEA Women’s Caucus on ASEAN’s submission is available here: https://womenscaucusonasean.files.wordpress.com/2015/06/wc-submission_rpaonevaw_acwc-acw_06-15-final.pdf

3.5.3. ASEAN Engagement

As part of the APF 2015, the National Organising Committee led the process to finalise the drafting of the APF statement, as well as publicity for the statement, resulting in media coverage in *Malaysiakini*, *SEA Globe* and *The Guardian*. WAO secured a venue with possible sponsorship for the APF 2015.

WAO organised media activities including producing two press releases. Further, WAO also worked with SEA Women’s Caucus on ASEAN to produce the thematic session proposal (Women’s Forum) for the APF, and finalised venue sponsorship for the APF 2015.

As mentioned above, WAO coordinated the Malaysian women’s groups’ input into the submission by the Southeast Asia Women’s Caucus on ASEAN on the draft Regional Plan of Action on Elimination of VAW. The submission (an overview letter and a line-by-line commentary) is available in its entirety on the Women’s Caucus’ website. We also coordinated JAG’s input to lobby the Malaysian government on proposed amendments to the draft Regional Plan of Action on VAW. JAG, including WAO submitted written feedback and attended a meeting with MWFC. Comments from women’s groups on the draft Regional Plan of Action were considered by the MWFC, to be raised at ASEAN level meetings.

Further, WAO also coordinated Malaysian the participation by women’s groups in an ASEAN-level meeting with Parliamentarians.

WAO led the media committee in APF and the participation in ASEAN Civil Society Conference/APF Conference, Engaging 27th ASEAN Summit Workshop from 17th to 19th of November 2015. WAO drafted and released press statements to the media and coordinated press conferences. WAO also engaged with other NGOs from around Southeast Asia on increased NGO participation and specific recommendations to ASEAN governments.

3.5.4. BEIJING+20 Priority Setting for Malaysia

WAO lobbied the Malaysian government to improve provisions in the draft Beijing+20 declaration, by ensuring that the inputs of women’s groups like the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development reached the relevant officers in the Malaysian government. As a result, the Prime Minister announced the priority issues at the Global Leaders Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in September 2015, which included increasing female labour participation from 54 to 59% by 2020, and helping women achieve at least 30% of managerial and decision -making posts in the public and private sectors by 2016.



Our advocacy work is tied firmly to our #teamWAO platform. Shown here is the #teamWAO bandana, which presents vast opportunity for advocacy exposure through its myriad uses.

4.0

#teamWAO

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- 4.1 Members and Volunteers

 - 4.2 #teamWAO Raising Awareness

 - 4.3 WAO Interns as #teamWAO

 - 4.4 Social Media Gets Us Support

 - 4.5 Introduction to the Toolkit

4.1 Members and Volunteers



In our 33 years of empowering survivors, WAO has been strongly supported by scores of volunteers who have contributed in a myriad of ways. In conjunction with our 33rd anniversary in September, we launched **#teamWAO: Moving Forward** to celebrate the spirit of volunteerism. #teamWAO calls on all members of the community to step forward and support survivors in moving forward.

We were delighted to receive strong support from groups and individuals, all of whom are committed to joining WAO move our country and communities towards a future where violence and discrimination against women and girls is eliminated.



Jeff Ooi of Bengkel Basikal Kampung, the organiser of WAO's anniversary bike ride and the donate-a-bicycle initiative for WAO residents



Susan Lankester of Lankester Designs, renovated the WAO Refuge, through donated materials from Dulux, Kimgres tiles and others

4.1.1. Para-counselling Training Programme



The para-counselling training programme was developed to build the capacity of a pool of para-counsellors to support WAO's services work. In February, we made a call for volunteers to join the para-counsellor programme. By March, we received 80 applications. We conducted intensive trainings on VAW, empathetic listening skills, risk and needs assessment, etc. to equip the volunteers with the necessary skills and knowledge to service the WAO Hotline. To complete the last phase of the programme, the trainees were invited to join the practicum, which involved hands-on, supervised handling of Hotline calls. By November, we were thrilled to confirm that 42 trainees graduated to be WAO Para-Counsellors. Flying colours for #teamWAO!

During the Graduation, we also took the opportunity to network with friends and family of the Para-Counsellors. Our special thanks go to Team Leaders Bernadette Lau Weng Kong, Katharina Schlindwein, Liza Lew, Mohammed Mullaji, Nur Farisya Abdul Shukor and Sharmala Shaharuddin for supporting the event, and Brickfields Asia College for graciously hosting the Programme.

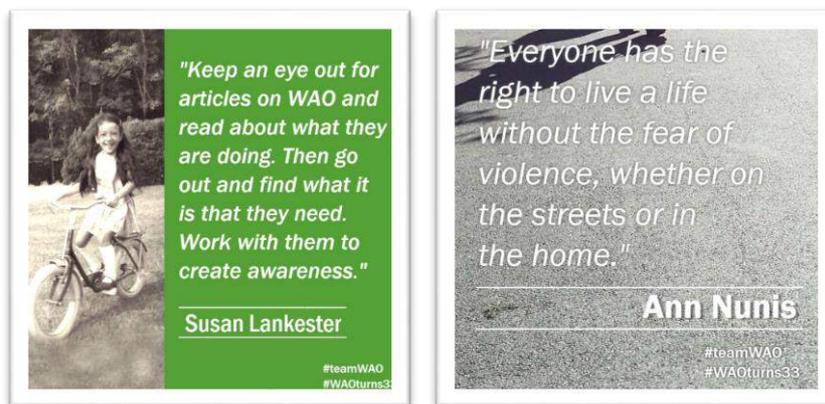
4.2 #teamWAO Raising Awareness

WAO volunteers were at the forefront at #HentikanRogol, the Citizens Against Rape (CAR) walk calling for an end to sexual violence, held in June. Thank you, Hanim binti Hassan and Liza Lew for leading WAO's participation in the movement.

In 2015, we held WAO Conversations, a platform for members, volunteers and friends to engage with WAO on specific topics. In June, we screened [Seeds of Hatred](#), and held a Q & A with the director, Mahi Ramakrishnan, on the plight of Rohingya refugees.



In September WAO co-hosted the Freedom Film Fest, engaging volunteers Nur Farisya Shukor and Bernice Chauly to be part of the panel alongside the filmmaker of *I Will Not Be Silenced*, a documentary on a rape survivor's legal ordeal that lasted over seven years.



Volunteers also shared their stories with us for #teamWAO: what brought them to WAO, why they volunteer, and advice they would give the younger generation to encourage them to get involved in ending VAW. These stories were featured on our social media with the hashtags [#teamWAO](#) and [#WAOturns33](#). Thank you for sharing your stories: Alicia Wong, Amelia Lim, Ann Nunis, Felicia Ong, Goh Poh Khim, Liza Lew, Puveshini Rao, Susan Lankester, Tan Siew Imm, Vaneezha Muniandi, Wisdom Club, and Yasmin Soraya Othman.



As part of #teamWAO celebrations in September, we were part of the Malaysiaku Rice Festival on 16 September, Malaysia Day. Members, volunteers and staff sold *thosai* homemade by Saras, a Child Minder at CCC who cares for and cooks for children at the Child Care Centre, and a survivor of domestic violence.

At Malaysiaku Rice Festival, Jeffrey Lim of Bengkel Basikal Kampung also raised funds to build a bicycle for the WAO Refuge. Huge thanks go to the team at Bengkel Basikal Kampung!



As part of #teamWAO, KPMG, Life Line Association Malaysia and WAO strengthened our partnership to build child resilience to domestic violence. KPMG is fully sponsoring the Play Therapy Programme which amounts to RM 24,000 (up to 900 one-to-one Play Therapy sessions), raised through a charity bazaar that was held in May 2015. Conducted by Life Line therapists, the programme's child-centred approach focuses on helping children understand domestic violence, recognise that the violence is not their fault, and to encourage recovery.

As part of WAO's 33rd anniversary celebrations, WAO and Bengkel Basikal Kampung organized a bike ride during the KL Car-Free Sunday. The event was a great opportunity to get active outdoors while raising awareness for WAO's mission and a sustainable, healthy lifestyle.



Volunteers are the backbone of WAO's work, extending the reach of the work that we do in so many areas. It's our movement of women and men working to end violence against women in Malaysia. Go #teamWAO!

4.3 WAO Interns

Our strategy this year has been to work with interns to not just help us do our work but also extend their impact by building the foundations of our #teamWAO movement. This has worked. We have had interns becoming volunteers, volunteers becoming interns, volunteers becoming staff – and all continue to be deeply committed to WAO and our mission.

We received a compelling letter from one intern, Jess Blackledge. She writes:

“During my time with WAO, I was given a huge number of opportunities, responsibilities, campaigns and projects to undertake, which lead to a vast amount of experience, which I will treasure forever.

The majority of my time was spent working with the advocacy team. The WAO team made me feel welcome and comfortable in the office, at the same time challenged me and set an example of dedication and hard work. The team at WAO are exactly what an NGO staff should be: passionate and dedicated to the cause, whilst knowing how to have just the right amount of fun. WAO has made me realise that I have both the passion and the ability to work in this field, and has pushed me to follow this passion.

Our interns have also gone on to write very strong opinion pieces, carried by major media in Malaysia. One example is Sekheena Deslorieux, writing on respect for breast cancer survivors in response to a sexualized awareness campaign run by a local company. She said:

Sexualised breast cancer awareness campaigns support a social cause primarily for women while undermining women's status in society to the value

of her breasts is counterproductive. Moreover, this kind of sexualised image does not stimulate thinking on the issue. Instead, initiatives like this succeed only in creating sensationalist and controversial campaigns that spreads their own name rather than any real and effective awareness on breast cancer.

We also supported volunteers to appear in the media to speak about their work for WAO, or anonymously, of their experiences as survivors of violence.



Interns at the Refuge

- Helenna Hisham
- Isniah @ Imelda binti Sukul
- Zuriatun Fadzliah Sahdan
- Hassana Shuaibu Ojonuba
- Shaista Zubair
- Kow Hui San
- Erica Koh Pei Wey
- Tavleen Tarrant
- Sim Yen Nee
- Yong Kar Wei
- Lim Jing Han
- Zuriatun Fadzliah Sahdan
- Eva Jin Hee Kraft
- Amina Ammar
- Naz Nadhira binti M Rosli
- Siti Yusrina bt Abdul Azia
- Natasya Suria

Interns at the Child Care Centre

- Yong Kai Xin
- David Noel Koshy
- Hassana Shuaibu Ojonuba
- Shaista Zubair
- Lim Jing Han
- Ng Jia Shin

Interns at the 3rd Centre

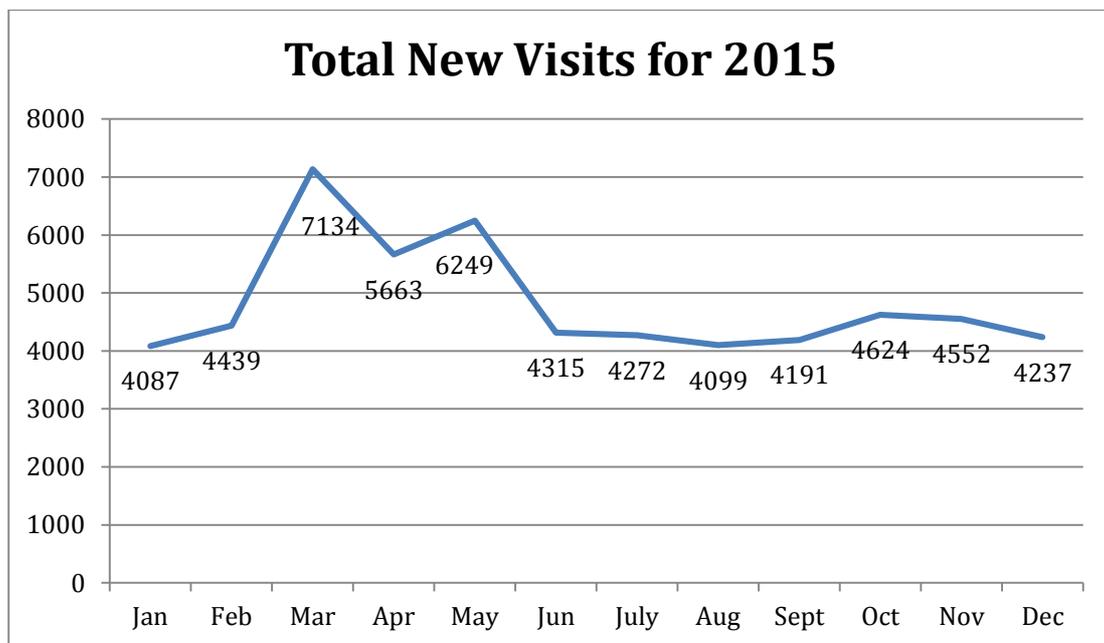
- Sarah Thomas
- Jessie Blackledge
- Tay Weiling
- Shahirah Abdul Shukor

- Ameera Natasha Moore
- Lainey Lau
- Jay Teo
- Tasnem Rain Aljoffery
- Sekheena Deslorieux

4.4 Social Media Gets Us Support

In addition to on-ground events, social media was also used as a mobilising tool. It was our aim to kick-start mobilisation of #teamWAO members and supporters through our engagement in social media. It paid off handsomely and we now have a great team of at least 40 active, skilled volunteers.

4.4.1. Website statistics:



Additional traffic was driven to the WAO website from the media publicity generated by our activities around International Women’s Day and the launch of the Domestic Violence Case Study Report, Working Together as well the ceramic art installation, Can You Keep a Secret.

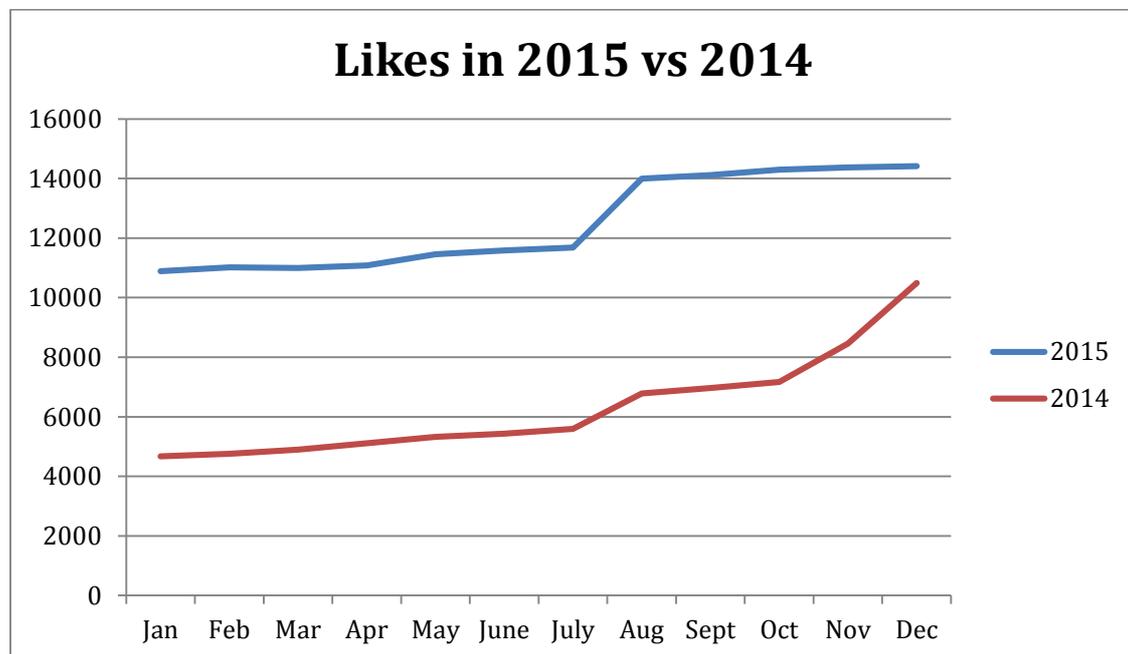
The WAO website continues to be an information source of information and assistance for domestic violence survivors. It is currently undergoing a process of review and will be upgraded in 2016.

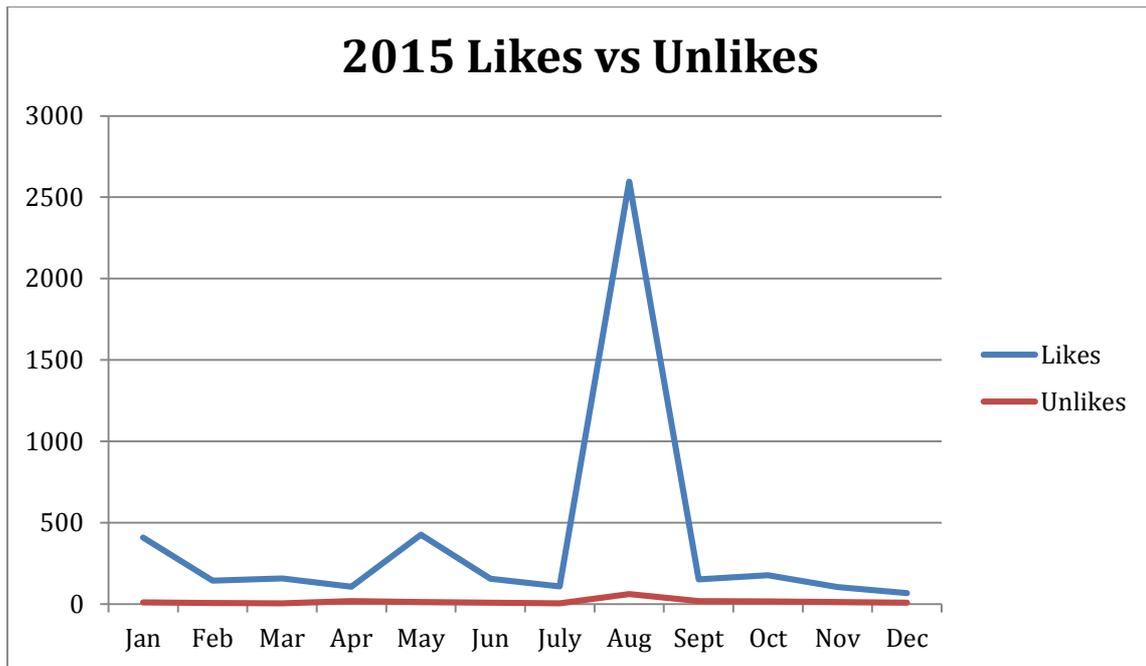
People from the following countries visited our website in 2015:

1. Malaysia 58,823
2. United States 3,130
3. India 1,457
4. Singapore 1,393
5. United Kingdom 1,306
6. Australia 941
7. South Africa 720
8. Kenya 591
9. Canada 443
10. Germany 431
11. Other: 5,555

Total: 74,550

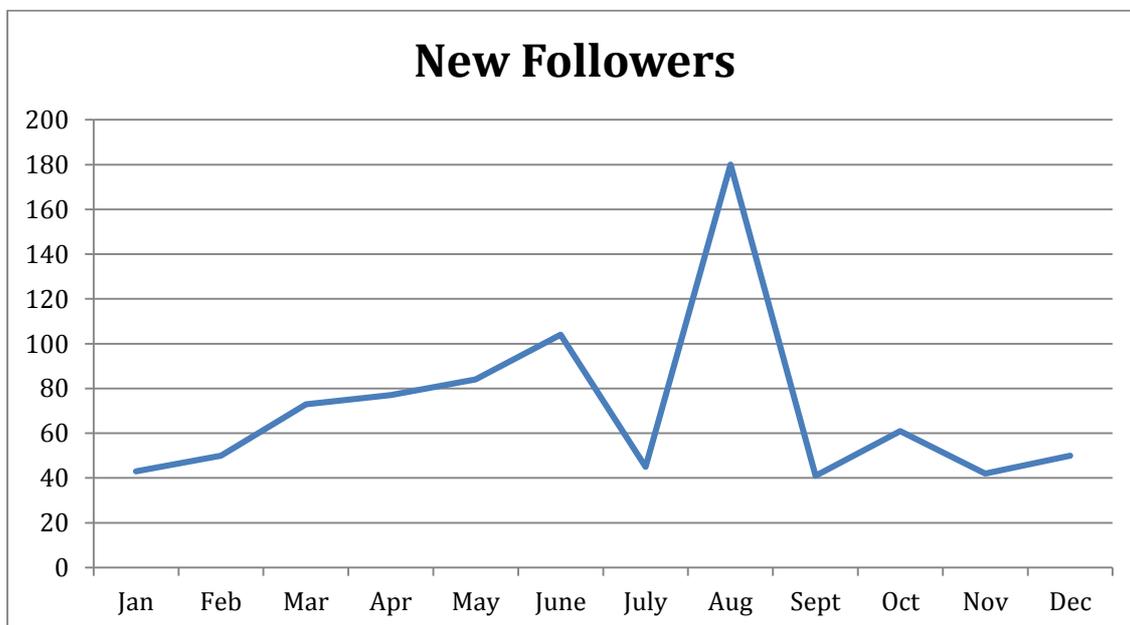
4.4.2. Facebook





Our Facebook page experiences lively engagement and, like the website, it is a critical tool for women survivors to get in touch with us for advice and assistance. We saw a spike in “likes” between July and October, following the increased social media activity around our ground events, anniversary celebrations and the launch of #teamWAO in September 2015.

4.4.3. Twitter Engagement



As with our engagement on Facebook, the second and last quarter generated a great deal of followers due to our events schedule being packed for creative activities that engaged volunteers and survivors through the #teamWAO platform.

Interactions were more powerful where they engaged issues as part of our work within JAG and other networks.

Monthly Tweet Chart-toppers of 2015:

January: Tweet for #NoExcuseforAbuse: **12,417 twitter interactions**

February: Tweet for #iamafeminist: **1,081 twitter interactions**

May: Tweet for #AiyohWatLah: **13,446 twitter interactions**

June: Tweet for #HentikanRogol: **26,888 twitter interactions**

July: Tweet for #hentikanrogol: **3,148 twitter interactions**

August: Tweet for #JomBersih4Malaysia/#BERSIH: **5,321 twitter interactions**

September: Tweet for #teamWAO/#WAOturns33: **3,016 twitter interactions**

October: Tweet for #hentikanrogol: **2,877 twitter interactions**

November: Tweet for #TransAlly #BeFreetoBeYourself / #OneDayOneStruggle/
#ODOS: **1,139 twitter interactions**

December: Tweet for #InternetKita: **3,174 twitter interactions**

5.0

Fundraising

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5.2 Long-term Supporters

5.3 WAO Fundraiser

5.4 Special Initiatives

5.1

WAO Donors

2015 was a wonderful year for Fundraising. We started new meaningful projects, made new links and continued collaborating with our loyal supporters.

We expanded our support to child survivors and introduced Play Therapy. We were also adamant that the Refuge which gives shelter to an average of 300 women and children in a year, undergo minor renovations to give the space a breath of fresh air.

A big thank you to KPMG, Malaysian Aeon Foundation, Association of British Women in Malaysia, Akzo Nobel (Dulux), Kingres Tiles for the support given to our renovation efforts at the WAO Refuge. We would also like to thank Susan Lankester for connecting the organisation with all the wonderful people who worked on the Refuge's renovation.

We acknowledge all the funders with whom we have developed a new partnership. They are Appco and SG Global Support Malaysia, Cheong Leng Resources Sdn Bhd, Harlows & MGI Sdn Bhd, HSBC Malaysia, Manulife Investment, Pk Agro-Industrial Products (M) Sdn. Bhd., Rexit Venture Sdn Bhd, Selangor Properties Berhad, Sierramas Home Owners Berhad, Star Foundation and The Bison Stores (myNews). We are also pleased to end the year with important funding support from the Canadian High Commission and the Australian High Commission for our projects on developing shelter standards and improving women's access to justice.

WAO also experienced a year of creative, inspiring and meaningful campaigns that were both fun and thought provoking. We listened to the inner voices of women survivors through a ceramic installation art by James Seet from Leo Burnett Malaysia. The pieces were then purchased by Brickfields Asia College. We saw men and women dash in their high heels at the aptly named event, High Heel Dash by Bloc 48. We "woke up to a good cause" with Marie Claire of Blu Inc Media in a social media campaign. We "moved freely" with MyTeksi and Zafigo in a public education and fundraising campaign which highlighted women's safety. We fought the dark side at the recent Star Wars Charity Screening with fans of the franchise and the biggest supporter of the night, REHDA Youth.

Thank you for all these wonderful collaborations and events.

5.2

Long-term Supporters

A number of funders have been supporting WAO for years and continue to do so. It was with their generosity and confidence that the organisation was able to work towards its objectives. Here is a long list of corporations and foundations who have made it possible for women and children to take the first step to rebuild their lives away from violence.

We thank the following for their commitment and consistency - Another Chance Charity Shop, Boh Plantations, Excel Force Msc Bhd, Klinik Haiwan Genting Klang, Kuok

Foundation Berhad, Lam Soon Edible Oils (Antabax), Malaysian Community & Education Fund, Rampai Niaga Sdn Bhd (The Body Shop), Spin Communications, Syarikat Wellchem Sdn Bhd, TDST Sdn Bhd (Tangs Malaysia), The Bloom Foundation, West Metric Sdn Bhd and the steadfast Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD).

5.2.1. Long-term Supporters Yayasan Sime Darby

WAO's journey with Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD) began in 2010. YSD supported and is still supporting the WAO Refuge. YSD's generous funds have enabled us to deliver important and urgent services to women affected by domestic violence and initiate programmes that empower them in their journey for independence.

WAO remains deeply appreciative for this strong support and commitment demonstrated by YSD to partner with us in our journey to rebuild survivor lives and end violence against women and girls in Malaysia.

5.3 WAO Fundraiser

Ivy Josiah, former Executive Director of WAO continued raising funds for the organisation as a Fundraiser. Ivy established new relationships and maintained communication with regular donors to help WAO in securing support financially and in kind. In her own capacity, she collected a total of RM1.9 million which include RM543,000 in cash donations and in kind donations worth approximately RM1.4 million for WAO in 2015. One of her most significant effort is obtaining redevelopment of the Child Care Centre by REHDA Youth in the coming years.

5.4 Special Initiatives

5.3.1. Annual Gathering

On Saturday 19 December 2015, we hosted an Annual Gathering for our current and former clients as well as their children. We appealed to our members and volunteers for sponsorship of food and gifts. We received tremendous responses! Thank you to Carol Chin, Chin Oy Sim, Datin Sugirtha Kreeson, Elaine Foong, Grand Central Enterprises Berhad, Hanim Hassan, Jayanthi Vadivaloo, PA Dynamics, Sheela Vasuthevan, Sumitra Visvanathan, Tashia Peterson, Dr Samantha Veronica Teh Poh Suan, Rebecca Nair, Ainul Irieza from Dunkin Donuts, Dr Sandra Chin, Datuk Lim Thuang Seng, The Ritz Carlton, KL and JW Marriott, KL.

5.3.2. Anak Angkat Sponsorship Programme

This year, WAO revised the sponsorship amount from RM860 to RM1,200 due to the rising cost of living. A huge number of sponsors remained dedicated in helping children continue with their education. We are most thankful to the following individuals and

companies who have contributed for the year 2015 and those who have renewed for the July 2015 – June 2016 term.

- Abirami a/p Karunanithi
- Ann Brockett
- Ann Siow Boon Ean
- Billy Akunna
- Chan Chee Keong
- Chang Sook Yee, Joyce
- Chin Kean Wai
- Ch'ng Ai Jjian
- Darina Yusof
- Dr Jayalakshmi Pailoor
- Dr Resha A Malik
- Dr Samantha Veronica
- Teh Poh Suan
- Dr Saradha Devi Narayanan
- Eswari a/p Nagaraju
- Fion Wong Sook Ling
- Fong Ju Li
- Fong Siew Pin
- Indra Kulasegaran
- Kiranjit Kaur
- Kishotharan a/ Saniraan
- Kon Cze Yan
- Leon Koay Li Onn
- Lim Hui Ru
- Linda Lim Mooi Eng
- Linda Yap Yen Ling
- Nurfarihan Abu Bakar
- Ong Pei Li
- Paul James Sapwell
- Prashanthini Sunderan
- Rachael Tan
- Shamala a/p Narayanan Nair
- Sheela Vasuthevan
- Shirin binti Ismail
- Soroptomist International Club of Damansara
- Subashini Selvaratnam
- Subbalakshmi Sankararaman
- Subbiah a/ Alagasundram/Kamal Gehi
- Tan Chwee Gek
- Tan Mian Lee
- Tan Swee Mi, Joanne
- Tan Yang Wah
- Tashia Peterson
- TDST Sdn Bhd (Tangs Malaysia)
- Toh Yung Fei
- Tracy Toh
- Usha Narayanan
- Venkata Chellam/Sook Oil Palms Sdn Bhd
- Victor Tan Hock Kim
- Vincent Quah Soon Chooi
- Vincent Yeoh Boon Seong
- Yew Mun Yee, Samantha
- YM Tunku Abang Faisal Amir

WAO extends her warmest wishes to everyone who has continued to assist WAO financially and in-kind - rain or shine. There are too many individuals to be mentioned here but we truly recognise their contribution and will always be grateful for their support. We raised approximately RM1.6 million in 2015.

6.0

Who's Who

at WAO

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6.1 WAO Governance

6.1.1. Trustees

Toh Puan Datin Dr. Aishah Ong
Rashidah Abdullah
Dato' Noor Faridah Ariffin
Puan Sri Chong Eu Ngoh

6.1.2. Membership

232 members.

6.1.3. WAO Executive Committee 2015 - 2017

The following members of the Executive Committee (EXCO) were elected for a two-year term (2015 – 2017) at the 32nd Annual General Meeting held on 26 May 2015 at the WAO Centre, Petaling Jaya. The EXCO held 13 meetings in 2015.

President	Carol Chin
Vice President	Tashia Peterson
Secretary	Puveshini Rao
Assistant Secretary	Chin Oy Sim
Treasurer	Mok Chuang Lian
Assistant Treasurer	Meera Samanther
Committee Members	Yeow Ai Lin Shoba Aiyar Shanthi Dairiam
Staff in attendance	Sumitra Visvanathan (Executive Director) Divvyananthini Manoharan (Finance Officer) Staff as Required

6.2 WAO Committees, Groups and Coalitions

Staff and Finance Committee	Carol Chin Tashia Peterson Puveshini Rao Mok Chuang Lian Meera Samanther Yeow Ai Lin (co-opted)
	Staff in attendance : Sumitra Visvanathan (Executive Director) Divvyananthini Manoharan (Finance Officer)

Legal Aid Centre (LAC) Representatives	Meera Samanther Umadevi Rajah Denram (until 10 Oct 2015) Nazlina Abdul Ghani
Coordinator for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Programme	Wong Su Zane
Coordinator for International Catholic Migration Commission's Programme	Wong Su Zane
Anak Angkat Coordinator	Yogasri Sivanyanam Ermawati bt Ahmad Sanusi (until 30 Sept 2015) Vivian Yap Wui Woon
Volunteer Coordinator	Kristine Yap Ching Yee
Social Media	Kristine Yap Ching Yee
Internship Coordinator	Shuba Vashani Perimbanayagam
Membership Coordinator	Shuba Vashani Perimbanayagam
National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO) Representatives	Shanthi Dairiam Nazlina Abdul Ghani
Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) Representatives	Sumitra Visvanathan Meera Samanther Shanthi Dairiam Wong Su Zane Yu Ren Chung Sally Wangsawijaya Mok Chuang Lian Tashia Peterson
JAG Fiesta Feminista	Umadevi Rajah Denram (until 10 Oct 2015)
Jaringan Pekerja Malaysia Representatives	Yu Ren Chung

Migration Working Group Representatives	Yu Ren Chung Sumitra Visvanathan Umadevi Rajah Denram (until 10 Oct 2015) Yogasri Sivanyanam
Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance Malaysia (RRAAM)	Jessie Ang
Southeast Asia Women's Caucus on ASEAN	Yu Ren Chung Sally Wangsawijaya Sumitra Visvanathan
Bersih 2.0	Yu Ren Chung Meera Samanther Sally Wangsawijaya Sumitra Visvanathan
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)	Ivy Josiah Sumitra Visvanathan
Asian Shelter Network	Ivy Josiah Sumitra Visvanathan Wong Su Zane
Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO)	Sumitra Visvanathan
Article 11	Sumitra Visvanathan Meera Samanther
Coalition for Sexual and Bodily Rights in Muslim Societies	Meera Samanther
Internal Advocacy Group	Shanthi Dairiam Meera Samanther Tashia Peterson Ivy Josiah Yu Ren Chung Elaine Lau May Ying (as of Sept 2015) Siti Hazwani binti Hanim (until 13 May 2015) Kristine Yap Ching Yee

6.3 WAO Staff

Management

Sumitra Visvanathan	Executive Director
Yu Ren Chung	Advocacy Manager
Wong Su Zane	Services Manager
Divvyananthini Manoharan	Finance Officer
Shuba Vashani Perimbanayagam	Admin & HR Officer

Refuge

Wong Su Zane	Services Manager
Amy Hor Choi Fun	Night Supervisor
Jessie Ang Hoon Ai	Social Worker
Nazlina Abdul Ghani	Social Worker
Umadevi Rajah Denram	Social Worker (until 10 Oct 2015)
Vaneezha Muniandy	Social Worker (as of 2 Nov 2015)
Yogasri a/p Sivanyanam	Social Worker
Ermawati bt Ahmad Sanusi	Social Worker (until 30 Sept 2015)
Sally Wangsawijaya	Social Work Supervisor

Child Care Centre (CCC)

Firkah bt Jenal	Child Social Worker
Saraswathy a/p Balakrishnan	Child Minder
Paruwathi a/p Pathathan	Child Minder
Sasikala d/o Ganesan	Child Minder

Administrative Staff

Malathy Suretheran	Finance & Admin Assistant (as of 1 Oct 2015)
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Fundraising

Vivian Yap Wui Woon	Projects Executive
Ivy Josiah	WAO Fundraiser

Advocacy Team

Yu Ren Chung	Advocacy Manager
Siti Hazwani Hanim binti Ramli	Advocacy Officer (until 13 May 2015)
Elaine Lau May Ying	Advocacy Officer (as of Sept 2015)
Kristine Yap Ching Yee	Communications Officer