

Annual Report

2018



Together,



we

change lives.

Since 1982, Women's Aid Organisation has provided free shelter, counselling, and crisis support to women and children who experience abuse. We help women and their children rebuild their lives, after surviving domestic violence, rape, trafficking, and other atrocities. Learning from women's experiences, we advocate to improve public policies and shift public mindsets.

Top: Crisis support officer graduation ceremony, July 2018.

Middle: WAO staff and beneficiaries in 2018. *Photo by Gary Ng.*

Cover page: 'The Ones We Don't See'. Pregnant woman shadow display. Installation art from WAO's 2018 #InvisibleWomen exhibition. *Art by Leo Burnett Malaysia. Photo by Gary Ng.*

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'Read Between The Lines'. Hanging display of women's stories of workplace discrimination. Installation art from WAO's 2018 #InvisibleWomen exhibition.

Art by Leo Burnett Malaysia. Photo by Gary Ng.

OUR IMPACT IN 2018

Crisis & post-crisis services

for survivors of gender-based violence

2016	2017	2018	
1,640	2,078	1,770	telephone Hotline consultations
699	1,698	1,652	SMS/WhatsApp (TINA) consultations
199	162	247	email and social media enquiries
106	132	185	women received in-person consultations
<i>New service in 2017</i>	113	69	women received counselling
<i>Started tracking in 2017</i>	977	2,102	case management intervention
118	63	59	women obtained temporary refuge
?	70	81	children obtained temporary refuge
?	34	19	children received therapy or counselling
62	90	67	children received education sponsorship
15	11	14	children stayed at our child care centre

Advocacy & Community Engagement

to reform public policies, change mindsets & build capacity

Led campaigns resulting in government commitment to enact **gender equality legislation** and improve **employment laws** for women

Part of campaigns leading to government commitment to enact **sexual harassment legislation** and raise the **minimum age of marriage** to 18

Coordinated campaigns resulting in notable policy developments on **stalking** and **marital rape**

Coordinated civil society to engage the **CEDAW shadow reporting** process

Shelter network dialogue and two government **multi-stakeholder meetings** organised.

Published four **policy briefs**, on pressing gender-based violence issues

Coordinated **multi-award winning awareness campaign** highlighting pregnancy discrimination

2017 2018

331 **385** **media mentions** of WAO, reaching millions of readers

180 **410** **persons trained** on gender-based violence

252 **433** **frontline government officers trained** on domestic violence

3,000 **4,500** **people reached in-person** through talks and mobile booths

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear friends,

WAO has a strong foundation, built by members and supporters like you, since 1982. Thinking about WAO's rich herstory truly humbles me, and drives me to serve as best as I can.

In 2018, we continued delivering life-changing services, and carrying-out impactful advocacy, outreach, and training – while observing high operational standards.

We provided critical information and advice to thousands of women through telephone, WhatsApp, email, and in-person consultations. We provided crisis services – including refuge, case management support, and counselling to hundreds of women and children.

Overall, our reach in 2018 remained roughly the same as 2017, though there was a slight drop in telephone consultations. We revamped our website to make critical information more accessible – our website was visited more than 100,000 times in 2018. We observed a deepening of WAO services – we made 2,102 interventions for clients in 2018, more than double compared to 2017.

We made progress on improving national laws. In 2018, the government committed to enact two milestone legislations – the Gender Equality

Act and the Sexual Harassment Act. This is a result of work by many partners, for many years. We are proud to be at the forefront of these efforts.

Through our media, community engagement, and training initiatives, we reached hundreds of thousands of individuals – to change mindsets and raise awareness on responding to gender-based violence.

We engaged with frontline officers towards improving our collective response to domestic violence cases, including training over 433 officers.

We coordinated civil society to participate in the CEDAW process, one of the most significant human rights milestone in the country. And we laid the groundwork to starting networks for domestic violence shelters across the country.

In line with our commitment to continuous improvement, we are in the process of getting Core Humanitarian Standard certification. This will strengthen our accountability and credibility – among supporters and those we serve.

With your effort and support, WAO has changed countless lives throughout the years. Whether you are a WAO member, volunteer, funder, staff, intern, partner, or supporter – you make WAO's work possible.

Thank you. It's been a privilege to serve with you.



Carol Chin

President
Women's Aid Organisation (WAO)
2017-2019



'Invisible Woman Discriminated at Work'.
Installation art from WAO's 2018
#InvisibleWomen exhibition.

Art by Leo Burnett Malaysia. Photo by Gary Ng.

WE SERVE

WAO provides free and confidential services to women and children who experience gender-based violence, including consultation, case management, counselling, and temporary refuge.

We help women and their children rebuild their lives, after surviving domestic violence, rape, trafficking, and other atrocities.

Case Consultations

Access to information can help women better understand their situation, choices, and rights – to live a life free from violence. WAO provides this information, and support, through various forms of case consultations.

These consultations helped women learn about and access social work, legal protection and rights, counselling, shelter, and other options available.

In 2018, WAO provided **1,770 phone consultations through the WAO Hotline**, provided **1,652 WhatsApp/SMS consultations** through TINA, and responded to **247 email and social media enquiries**. Additionally, WAO conducted **face-to-face consultations with 185 women**.

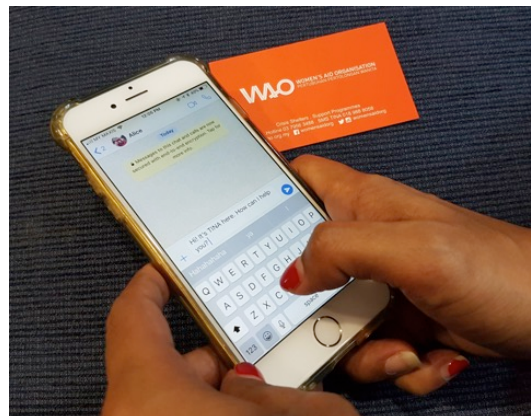
The vast majority of consultations were about domestic violence; other cases involved sexual harassment, child abuse, rape, and other forms of gender-based violence and discrimination. Most persons wanted to know more information. Legal information or help was the largest specific need, followed by shelter, and emotional support.

WAO social workers are supported by volunteer crisis support officers and legal aid chambering students to provide these consultations and other services.

WAO officer providing phone consultation through the WAO Hotline (03 7956 3488). The WAO Hotline hours are Mon-Sat: 9am-5pm, with extended hours on Tue, Wed & Fri: 7-10pm.



WAO crisis support officer providing WhatsApp consultation, through TINA (018 988 8058) which is contactable 24 hours a day.



Case Management & Advocacy

WAO supports survivors through case management and case advocacy – empowering survivors to make informed decisions at every stage of their journey, and advocating for her rights when facing obstacles in the system. This process also helps WAO identify systematic gaps which need improvement.



WAO social workers discussing a case in 2018.

Case management includes helping survivors **access police services**, to ensure survivors obtain protection. This includes supporting survivors to lodge police reports on the abuse, apply for protection orders, follow-up with investigations, and take other relevant measures. Case management also involves supporting survivors through the **court process**, to seek justice

and remedies for the survivor. This includes obtaining protection orders, going through criminal proceedings, seeking divorce and custody, and other cases. WAO prepares survivors for court dates, provides emotional support, monitors and helps survivors understand the proceedings, engages lawyers to holding watching briefs, and liaises with court officials and other authorities.

WAO also helps survivors access **medical help, welfare support, immigration services, economic opportunities**, and other social and legal support.

In 2018, **2,102 case management interventions** were made on behalf of women and children survivors.

CASE STUDY

Bella (pseudonym) had been abused by her husband for years. Finally — fearing for her childrens' safety — she left the home, with the children.

Bella approached WAO in 2018 for support. WAO social workers assisted Bella to lodge a police report to get an interim protection order (IPO), and assisted Bella's children to transfer to a school closer to their new living place. WAO also assisted the children — who witnessed the abuse — go through the police interviews.

One particular challenge was getting the children included in the IPO. The children were exposed to abuse and had been forcefully taken from their mother. WAO social workers engaged the police officer and welfare officer to get an IPO for the children, but the officers did not think it was necessary. However, the children successfully obtained an IPO in the end — the magistrate granted the order after hearing the situation from Bella, with the support of WAO social workers.

Another challenge faced was obtaining the protection order (PO) for Bella and her children. The IPO provide protection during the police investigation stage, and the PO provides protection during the court stage. When the case was brought to court, the officials had not applied for Bella's PO — leaving Bella without an IPO or PO. In the end, WAO assisted Bella to apply for the PO herself, and was successful.

WAO continued to support Bella and her children throughout the court process. Bella's husband was sentenced to seven days imprisonment and a fine of RM4,000.

Counselling

Domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and other gender-based violence and discrimination can cause emotional and psychological trauma and stress. This can cloud decision-making and has adverse long-term effects.

To help manage these adverse effects and help women make informed decisions about their lives, WAO supports women to obtain counselling.

In 2018, WAO **provided counselling to 69 women.**



Counsellor conducting a session with a client.
Photo by Gary Ng.

Refuge

The refuge is a safe place for women survivors of gender-based violence and their children to stay temporarily, to escape abuse.

In addition to ensuring security of a survivor, the refuge also facilitates case management, psychosocial support, empowerment programmes, and other activities that contribute to the well-being of survivors.

In 2018, **59 women and 81 children stayed at the refuge.**

Most of the refuge residents were Malaysians; we also supported residents of foreign nationalities. The vast majority of residents lived in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur. Residents' lengths of stay ranged between less than a week to more than three months.



Women and children in the WAO refuge.
Photo by Aaron Claringbold.



Refuge residents and staff enjoying yee sang, 2018.

Women's Programmes

In addition to crisis intervention, WAO's refuge organises women's programmes to help survivors move on from abuse and live independently.

This includes **programmes to improve livelihood** (including financial planning, business skills, vocational training, and peer support) and **leisurely and healthy-living activities** (including nutrition seminar, art classes, gardening, health screenings, festive celebrations and others).

Most of the activities were organised with the help of volunteers. Former residents and their children also joined some activities.

WAO also offers programmes **like financial support** for women starting their careers (Back To Work Fund, Tun Tan Siew Sin Memorial Fund), financial support for child care and children's education expenses, and financial literacy courses.

“WAO woke me up and nudged me to do the right thing, and now has put me on the centre stage helping women who aren't sure if they would live to see another day. Thank you.”

- Sunthari, domestic violence survivor who received support from WAO in the past. In 2018, she started giving public talks to raise awareness about domestic violence.



Residents in the refuge receiving health services through a clinic visit in 2018.



WAO residents and volunteers participating in a learning exercise in 2018.

Refuge for Children

Children living in homes with domestic violence witness the abuse – be it hitting, threats, the aftermath of abuse, or other signs – which has adverse short and long term effects on the child. Children in these situations are often abused themselves as well.

An abusive home is unsafe for children. So in a crisis situation, children as well as women need refuge. WAO provides a variety of services to cater to the specific needs of children in domestic violence situations.

As many children as women stay at WAO's **refuge**. In 2018, **81 children stayed at WAO's refuge**, with their mothers escaping abuse.

In the refuge, WAO facilitates physical safety, legal protection, and adequate living conditions for children.



Children in the refuge playing with toys in 2018.

“I like staying at WAO. We are like a family...we cook together and eat together.”

- J, 13-year-old girl who stayed at WAO's refuge with her mother, in 2018.

Education

WAO also strives to ensure the child's education is as uninterrupted as possible, during this crisis period.

Where possible, WAO facilitates the child to continue **formal education**. However, depending on a child's situation, he or she may need an alternative arrangement. WAO facilitates programmes like **home schooling, tutoring**, and other educational activities.

WAO also facilitates financial assistance for women who have left the shelter, to support educational expenses for their children. In 2017, **67 children (26 mothers) benefited from our child sponsorship programme**.

Counselling & Therapy for Children

Exposure to domestic violence can have long-term emotional impact on children. Children may experience sleep disturbances, headaches, and delayed cognitive skills, among other challenges.

WAO facilitates counselling and therapy for children, to help them manage emotionally.

In 2018, **19 children received counselling or therapy sessions** at WAO.

Child reading at WAO, in 2018.
Photo by Gary Ng.



Child Care Centre

Women face various challenges when moving on from abuse to live independently. This includes finding work while caring for children.

WAO's child care centre fills this gap by providing free **live-in and daycare child care services** for mothers moving on from abuse. The centre provides comprehensive care for the children, including ensuring safety, providing nutritious meals, managing trauma, facilitating education, and organising fun activities. WAO also supports the mothers to strengthen their livelihood opportunities.

In 2018, **14 children (six mothers) utilised live-in or daycare services** at the child care centre, and an additional **24 children (13 mothers) received support services**, including case management and ad hoc child care.

CASE STUDY

Salmah (pseudonym) is 6-years-old survivor of abuse, who received support from WAO in 2018. Her mother was abused as well. When Salmah first came to WAO, she walked with her eyes down and refused to talk or play with anyone. WAO arranged for Salmah to meet with a play therapist, and enrolled her into preschool.

During the play sessions, Salmah and the therapist played out a story about a princess who had been tricked by a witch. The witch trapped the princess, and made her eat poisonous food. For Salmah, this was a safe way for her to communicate the sexual abuse she had suffered.

The therapist helped Sally create a wise wizard character in her story. The wizard explained to the princess that she was a good person inside, that the witch was wrong to trick her and hurt her — it was not her fault.

One day during a session, Salmah picked up a magic wand — when the princess held the wand, magic came from inside the princess. When Salmah held the wand, she realised she was good and strong. Over time, Salmah's stories began to change. Instead of being tricked by the witch, she put a magic spell on her so that if she tried to hurt anyone else she would turn into a frog.

After 10 sessions, Salmah would arrive at WAO with a big smile and chat with staff, other children, and volunteers. She did not feel like she had to hide anymore.

WE ADVOCATE

Learning from women's experiences, we produce policy research and engage with policymakers to improve public policies.

Through public awareness initiatives, WAO helps inform and shape public discourse on women's rights, and raise awareness on how to respond to gender-based violence.

Public Policy Reform

WAO advocates for improved public policies relating to gender-based violence and gender equality, in collaboration with larger women's group networks including the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), and the National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO).

WAO has campaigned for a **Gender Equality Act**, to help fulfil gender equality in the country. In 2018, WAO coordinated a visit by equality law expert Professor Sandra Fredman (University of Oxford) to improve understanding of gender equality legislation among key stakeholders. WAO also coordinated a public awareness campaign and engaged with the Ministry of Women, Family and Community development and other policymakers on the proposed law.

The campaign achieved a major milestone in 2018, with the Pakatan Harapan **government committing to introduce the Gender Equality Act**.



Discussion between Professor Sandra Fredman, and members of parliament and research institutions, on the Gender Equality Act – organised by WAO, in May 2018.



Discussion between WAO and the Ministry of Human Resources, on the proposed Employment Act 1955 amendments, in October 2018.

With our partners, WAO also campaigned for a **Sexual Harassment Act**. In 2018, WAO was part of a team that produced a proposed sexual harassment law, and engaged with policymakers on the proposed law.

In 2018, the Pakatan Harapan **government committed to introduce the Sexual Harassment Act in 2019**.



WAO, with JAG and NCWO meeting with member of parliament YB Ramkarpal Singh, on the Sexual Harassment Act, in October 2018.



WAO, with JAG and NCWO, meeting with the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development – to discuss law reforms, in October 2018.

In 2018, WAO also campaigned for improved **employment laws** for women, including meeting with the Ministry of Human Resources and providing input through the Ministry's consultation process.

In 2018, the **government introduced proposed amendments to the Employment Act 1955** that would prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender, pregnancy, disability, and parental status; prohibit discrimination in the pre-employment stage; prohibit termination due to pregnancy; and increase the maternity leave period.

In 2018, WAO with Sisters in Islam, the Association of Women Lawyers, and The Body Shop Malaysia coordinated the **#EndChildMarriage campaign**. The campaign included a walk participated by around 200 people; a petition drive which collected over 57,000 signatures (including other campaigns, over 156,000 signatures were collected); and a petition handover event at Parliament.

WAO representative speaking at the #EndChildMarriage petition handover in front of Parliament, in November 2018. Two ministers, four deputy ministers, and four members of parliament attended.



Jolted by a prominent child marriage case, many individuals and groups joined the call to end child marriage in Malaysia. In response, the federal **government announced its intention to raise the minimum age of marriage to 18** (although with exceptions). Several state governments announced their intention to comply, including Selangor, Penang, Johor, Melaka, Sarawak, and Sabah.

WAO also continued our campaigns to make **stalking** a crime, and to remove legal immunity for husbands who rape their wives (**marital rape**), including through producing policy briefs, launching media campaigns, engaging with members of parliament, and engaging with the government.

We made headway with both campaigns. Discussions with the Minister in Prime Minister's Office (Law) are on-going, and the Deputy Minister of Women, Family and Community Development stating the government will look to amend section 375 of the Penal Code.

WAO joined civil society at large **to engage with the new government** and the reforming **Parliament**. WAO met with the Council of Eminent Persons (CEP), engaged with the Institutional Reforms Committee (IRC), advocated for 30 per cent women representation in cabinet, lobbied for a gender equality select committee in the Dewan Rakyat, among others.



WAO and JAG meeting with Deputy Minister of Women, Family and Community Development YB Hannah Yeoh, discussing marital rape, in November 2018.



WAO with JAG advocating for 30 per cent women representation in cabinet, outside Istana Negara, in May 2018.

WAO **published four policy briefs** in 2018, on pressing gender-based violence issues. We **provided input on gender and violence against women to various government and intergovernmental organisations**, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Department of Statistics, OHCHR Bangkok, UNFPA, UNDP, the World Bank, and others.

CEDAW & International Human Rights

WAO continued to lead the CEDAW Coalition – 37 Malaysian civil society organisations advocating for women’s rights through the CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) review process.

The CEDAW review is a major event in human rights in Malaysia, where the CEDAW Committee (the United Nations expert body on CEDAW) reviews the government’s performance on women’s rights, and makes recommendations.

In 2018, the coalition prepared the **NGO Shadow Report** and submitted it to the CEDAW Committee, to help inform the Committee’s review of Malaysia. The coalition also participated in the **review in Geneva**, including briefing the CEDAW Committee and having discussions with the Malaysian government.

Following the review, the CEDAW Committee issued **Concluding Observations**, containing recommendations to the Malaysian government. Many of the recommendations were consistent with the NGO Shadow Report.

Based on the Concluding Observations, the CEDAW Coalition conducts national-level advocacy and engagement.



Top: WAO with CEDAW Coalition observing CEDAW Committee’s review of the Malaysian government in Geneva, in February 2018.

Bottom: WAO with CEDAW Coalition briefing members of parliament on the CEDAW review and Concluding Observations, in July 2018.

The **CEDAW Committee’s Concluding Observations** to Malaysia contains 80 recommendations to the Malaysian government towards fulfilling gender equality in Malaysia. The recommendations cover issues like women’s access to healthcare, sex education, women in STEM, women’s political and economic participation, discrimination against LGBTI persons, gender-budgeting and mainstreaming, human trafficking, citizenship rights, family life, women workers rights, refugee and asylum-seeking women, among others. The need for gender equality legislation was also a main recommendation.

In 2018, WAO also engaged in the **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)** process, as part of the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO).

During the UPR, other countries make recommendations to Malaysia on human rights. WAO contributed towards COMANGO’s Stakeholder Report – which helps inform the review – and supported lobbying and public awareness efforts.

Among the recommendations accepted by the Malaysian government were enacting a gender equality law and adopting CEDAW’s definition of discrimination into domestic law.

WAO also supported the **ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (APF)**, through Malaysia’s national organising committee.

Public Awareness & Public Pressure

WAO conducts public advocacy through **news media**. Exposure in newspapers, online news, TV, radio, and magazines enables WAO to reach a wide audience. This informs the public on domestic violence, gender equality, and WAO services – and galvanises support for WAO campaigns.

In 2018, WAO earned **385 media mentions** – reaching millions of persons. Notably, we increased radio mentions of WAO from 10 in 2017 to 36 in 2018; and increased mentions of WAO in Bahasa Malaysia news media from 26 in 2017 to 57 in 2018.



WAO representative at an interview with Sinar FM, in October 2018.

WAO also engages the public through **social media**. At the end of 2018, WAO's social media reach was: Facebook: 20,363 likes; Instagram: 2,921 followers; and Twitter: 5,834 followers.

The **WAO website** (www.wao.org.my) is an important source of information on domestic violence and women's rights. In 2018, WAO revamped our website, and it has garnered more than ten thousand views monthly.

KEMPEN WANITA TERSISIH

Suarakan diskriminasi gender di tempat kerja

Kuala Lumpur: Wanita yang pernah berhadapan diskriminasi gender di tempat kerja diminta tampil menyuarakan atau berkongsi pengalaman mereka dengan Pertubuhan Pertolongan Wanita (WAO).
Isa selari dengan kempen Wanita Tersisih yang boleh dilayari menerusi laman sesawang invisiblewomen.com.my, iaitu platform kepada wanita yang pernah melalui pengalaman diskriminasi gender.
Presiden WAO, Carol Chin, berkata berdasarkan tujuan yang dilakukan pihaknya mendapati 40 peratus wanita hamil mengalami diskriminasi di tempat kerja.
Katanya, kempen Wanita Tersisih itu dijalankan bersama syarikat pe-



Carol Chin

ngklanan, Kumpulan Leo Burnett.
"Platform invisiblewomen.com.my adalah memberikan gambaran di sebalik statistik berkenaan, sekali gus menunjukkan impak ketara diskriminasi gender terhadap kehidupan wanita."
Berkongsi cerita
"Tujuan kempen ialah wanita berkongsi kisah mereka bagi menunjukkan betapa luas jurang diskriminasi gender, dan sewajarnya ada penambahan undang-undang berthubung itu ini," katanya dalam kenyataan, hari-baharu ini.
Chin berkata, ketika ini tiada undang-undang khusus melarang diskriminasi gender di sektor swasta.

"Matlamat kita untuk menyokong Akta Kesamarataan Gender yang akan melindungi mereka daripada diskriminasi gender. Kami memerlukan input dan sokongan orang ramai untuk menyokong tindakan ini."
"Apabila berkongsi cerita, kita akan mendapati kita tidak berendiran sekali gus mewujudkan perasaan soliditi dan menjadi sokongan kempen sebagai #MeToo bagi diskriminasi gender," katanya.
Semantara itu, Pengarah Kreatif Kumpulan Leo Burnett, bka Hashim, berkata pelaksanaan kempen menunjukkan betapa kerap masalah itu membelenggu wanita terutama membabitkan penyesihan terhadap mereka di tempat kerja.

"Masyarakat kita beranggapan wanita patut mempunyai anak namun secara profesional, sokongan ke arah itu tidak diberikan. Mula ketika di-tenduga, calon wanita ditanyakan mengenai perancangan mempunyai anak, bagi wanita hamil mereka berpotensi disisihkan di tempat kerja."
"Jika wanita itu berhenti kerja sementara membesarkan anak, mereka akan mengalami kesukaran untuk memasuki semula pasaran kerja," katanya memetik beberapa pandangan penulis yang diterbitkan dalam Leo Burnett.
Kempen berakhir dengan pameran seni menampilkan kisah kepimpinan wanita pada 8 hingga 19 Mac ini di White Box Theatre, Publika.

News coverage of WAO, on 25 February 2018 in Berita Harian.

Child marriage is a Malaysian concern, says WAO

By FATIMAH ZAINAL
faimah@theartv.com

PETALING JAYA: Over 200 students and members of the public turned up for a rally at Sunway in a roaring show of support to end child marriage.

The event, jointly organised by The Body Shop Malaysia, Women's Aid Organisation (WAO), Sisters in Islam (SIS) and the Association of Women Lawyers (AWL), marked the launch of the group's petition campaign to urge the government to raise the minimum age of marriage to 18 years, with no exceptions, regardless of gender, faith and ethnicity.
The campaign is also in line with the promise made by Pakatan Harapan in its election manifesto.
WAO vice-president Meera Samanthir said they were taking the matter a level higher as child marriage was a Malaysian concern.
"This is not an issue for one community, race or religion. There are many who are attempting to cloud the issue by mak-

ing it appear that way," she said, adding that last year's statistics showed that 52% or 968 from the total applications for child marriage were from non-Muslims. There were 877 applications or 42% from the Muslims.
"The fact that child marriage is rampant means that we are failing our children. To truly tackle this issue, we must stand together to safeguard the childhood of all children," she said.
The groups urged the government to amend a host of laws to end to child marriage such as Law Reform (Marriage and Divorce) Act 1976, Islamic Family Law, Child Act 2001, Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017, Age of Majority Act and Syariah Criminal Offences Act.

They said Sabah's Native Courts Enactment 1992 and the various native customary laws in Sarawak should also be amended.
The government must ensure that marriage is not used as an instrument to legitimise and justify sexual crimes against children.
The Body Shop Malaysia managing director Datin Mimi Cheah-Fong said beyond legal reform, there was a need to change public perception, institute comprehensive sexuality education and empower youths to completely end child marriage. "The petition has already collected almost 20,000 signatures."
The campaign will go on until Sept 30 before the petition is handed over to Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.
The petition can be found at all The Body Shop stores and online at www.thebodyshop.com.my/womensaid.
Deputy Women, Family and Community Development Minister Hannah Yeoh said with children making up 30% of the country's population, Malaysians should not talk about money when it comes to protecting them.

Watch the video theartv.com



Hear our voice: Young protesters at the rally holding up signs against child marriage.

News coverage of WAO, on 19 August 2018 in The Star.

WAO launched the **#InvisibleWomen campaign**, highlighting women's experiences of pregnancy and motherhood discrimination using art and creative storytelling (pictures of the art are featured throughout this annual report) – to generate public support for gender equality legislation.

The campaign included an art exhibition, a video, and a microsite (invisiblewomen.com.my) where the public submitted personal stories of discrimination.

Generating over 46 media articles through various public relations efforts, the campaign catalysed public discourse on the need for a Gender Equality Act and laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender and pregnancy.

The campaign won the Gold Award (Public Affairs category) at the Malaysia Public Relations Awards (MPRA) 2017/18, and Silver and Bronze Kancil Awards (2018).



WAO and panellists at the launch of #InvisibleWomen campaign, in March 2018. Project partners included the British High Commission (funder), Leo Burnett Malaysia (creative agency), and Perspective Strategies (PR agency).



WAO representative speaking on Bernama TV about the #InvisibleWomen campaign, on 28 February 2018.



Four-page spread about the #InvisibleWomen Campaign in Oriental Daily, on 26 March 2018.

WAO launched a **media campaign to highlight the need for anti-stalking laws** in Malaysia, including working with survivors of stalking to highlight their experiences.

The campaign ensured the issue received attention from policymakers and the public, generating over 20 media articles – in national and international media.



Klasifikasikan perbuatan intip dan hendap di bawah Kanun Acara Jenayah. - WAO

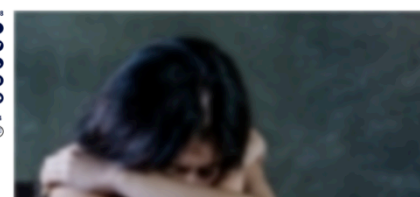
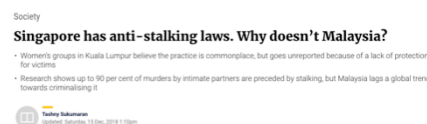
Tarikh kemaskini: 23/11/2018

KUALA LUMPUR, 23 Nov (Bernama) – Pertubuhan Pertolongan Wanita (WAO) mengesa para penggubal undang-undang negara s dan hendap bagi menjadikan perbuatan itu sebagai satu kesalahan jenayah di bawah Kanun Keseksaan, dan memperkenalkan peri Acara Jenayah.

WAO dalam satu kenyataan berkata intip dan hendap ketika ini tidak dianggap sebagai satu jenayah di Malaysia, yang bern menghubungkan, mengekori, atau muncul di tempat yang sering dikunjungi mangsa, pihak berkuasa tidak dapat berbuat apa-apa untuk

"Banyak negara mencaubal undang-undang membabitkan intip dan hendap ini hanya selepas berlaku kes-kes pembunuhan berpor

WAO statement on the need for anti-stalking laws covered by Bernama, on 23 November 2018.



South China Morning Post story on the need for stalking laws in Malaysia, on 15 December 2018

WE ENGAGE

Through community engagement, WAO reaches individuals in-person, to build capacity and change mindsets – on domestic violence, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, gender equality, and other related topics.

We conduct talks and trainings with corporations, front-line government officers, community organisations, universities, and other stakeholder groups.

Trainings with Communities

WAO conducts community trainings, where we facilitate groups to learn how to recognise and respond to domestic violence, sexual harassment, dating violence, and other forms of gender-based violence.

In 2018, WAO conducted **12 trainings**, reaching approximately **410 individuals**.

We conduct trainings with companies, universities, civil society organisations, residential communities, and other groups. Trainings typically take between 0.5 days to 1.5 days.

WAO partnered with Yayasan Sime Darby and Sime Darby Plantation to facilitate trainings with plantation staff.

The trainings aimed to build capacity on responding to cases of domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other forms of gender-based violence – and to develop internal mechanisms for reporting and responding. Trainings lasted for 1.5 days, with around 30 participants each.

In 2018, WAO facilitated seven trainings, with a total of 227 participants. More trainings are being conducted in 2019, with the aim of reaching plantation workers across the country.



Top: WAO facilitating a training with Sime Darby Plantation workers, in April 2018. Participants are learning about relevant legal protections and obligations for gender-based violence cases.

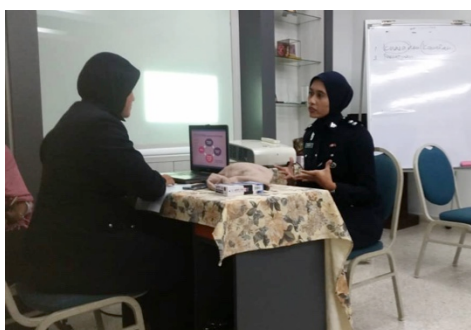
Bottom: WAO training with Sime Darby Plantation workers, in September 2018. Participants are discussing internal mechanisms to respond to cases of gender-based violence.

Trainings with Frontline Government Officers

WAO partners with the government to **build capacity of frontline officers** on responding to domestic violence. In 2018, WAO conducted **seven trainings with frontline officers**, with a total of **433 participants**.

The trainings were conducted with healthcare officials (from public hospitals and klinik kesihatan), police officers (investigating officers and assistant investigating officers), and welfare officers (enforcement officers). In previous years, WAO also conducted trainings with magistrates and deputy public prosecutors.

WAO typically delivers a 1-2 hour training session, as part of a full-day or multi-day training organised by government entities.



Police officers participating in a role-play activity at a WAO training session on domestic violence, in November 2018.

Building Networks of Service Providers

Malaysia critically needs more shelter space for domestic violence survivors.

To help expand access to critical services for domestic violence survivors across the country, WAO works alongside organisations and individuals located in different states to kick-start local networks of existing and potential service providers.



In 2018, WAO organised a shelter network dialogue with partners in the Klang Valley, and in 2019 aims to coordinate similar dialogues in other states across the country.

Participants at the Shelter Network Dialogue, in July 2018.

Working Together – Improving Joint Response to Domestic Violence

Various government stakeholders – including the police, welfare, hospitals, prosecutors, courts, and schools – and community groups are involved in domestic violence response. Coordination among these stakeholders is key to responding effectively to cases.

WAO engages policymakers to institute **platforms to facilitate multi-stakeholder coordination**.

In 2018, WAO coordinated a visit by domestic violence expert Faiza El-Higzi (Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council), to meet with Malaysian policymakers. This included a multi-stakeholder meeting chaired by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (KPWKM) – with 29 participants from various government agencies and civil society organisations.

In another positive development, the Welfare Department of Selangor organised an inter-agency meeting on domestic violence in April 2018 – the first time in many years. WAO participated and presented at the meeting.

WAO also **engages stakeholders bilaterally**, to facilitate exchange of knowledge and collaboration. This includes state governments, and national, state, and district officials such as the police, welfare department, and hospitals and clinics.



Multi-stakeholder meeting chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development and coordinated with WAO, with domestic violence expert Faiza El-Higzi, in February 2018.



WAO bilateral meeting with the new head of PDRM's D11 (domestic violence, sexual crimes, and crimes against children) unit, in November 2018.

Outreach

WAO conducts outreach initiatives, where we engage individuals in-person through talks and mobile information booths.

In 2018, WAO delivered **64 talks** and organised **35 mobile information booths** – at companies, universities, schools, conventions, community centres, and at other events.

WAO facilitators deliver talks on domestic violence, sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, and other issues relating to gender equality. Talks typically take 1-2 hours.

Through these engagements, we reached an estimated **4,500 individuals** in-person.



WAO facilitating a talk on sexual harassment with managers, factory workers, and office staff at a manufacturing plant, in August 2018.

WAO works with companies and employees to improve understanding on what is sexual harassment and how to prevent and respond to sexual harassment.



WAO facilitating a talk on domestic violence with office staff at an online sales company, in March 2018.

WAO works with universities, companies, schools, and other organisations to recognise and respond to domestic abuse.



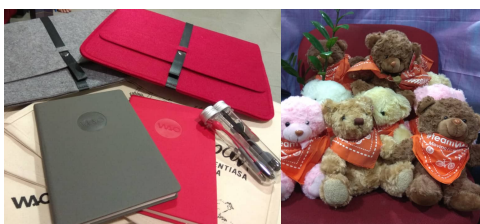
WAO representative speaking at the government's Hari Wanita event, in September 2018.

WAO speaks at events organised by government, companies, universities, schools, civil society organisations, and other groups, to raise awareness on domestic violence and women's rights.



WAO's mobile information booth, at a charity bazaar in a community club, in August 2018.

WAO sets up booths to reach members of the public, to raise awareness on domestic violence and WAO services.



WAO developed new merchandise in 2018, including new t-shirt designs, the WAO Support Bear, notebooks, canvas bags, laptop folders, and phone chargers.

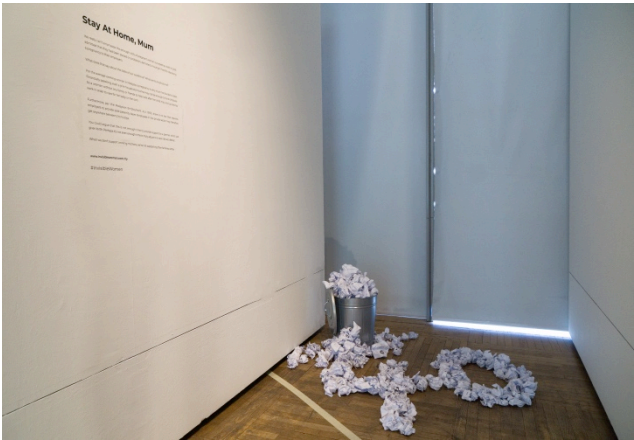
OPERATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Financial Highlights

	2018 (RM)	2017 (RM)	2016 (RM)
Balance Sheet (summary, as at 31 Dec)			
Property, plant and equipment	750,557	1,111,457	1,147,983
Current assets	3,348,014	2,932,467	3,093,963
Current liabilities	87,141	70,441	47,233
Net current assets	3,260,873	2,862,026	3,046,730
Accumulated fund	4,011,430	3,973,483	4,194,713

Statement of Income and Expenditure (summary, financial year ended 31 Dec)			
Income	2,601,441	2,226,825	2,137,555
Expenditure	2,563,494	2,448,055	2,126,446
(Deficit) / Surplus before taxation	37,947	(221,230)	11,110

'Stay At Home, Mum'. Installation art from WAO's 2018 #InvisibleWomen exhibition.
Art by Leo Burnett Malaysia. Photo by Gary Ng.



Thank You – Our 2018 Funders

WAO Strategic Partner (above RM500,000)

Yayasan Sime Darby

“WAO gave us the strength and content for us to empower our employees about how to be aware of what is violence against women and how do we respond if we have issues at the companies.”

- Muzdalifah Mohd Nasir, Head of Projects, Yayasan Sime Darby

RM200,001-RM500,000

CLSA Foundation

Cummins Inc

Selangor Properties Berhad

YTL Hotels & Properties Sdn Bhd

“We share WAO’s motivation in advancing women’s and children’s rights. Violence against women is a form of discrimination, a violation of human rights, a public health problem. It is our responsibility to strengthen the capacity of people who work tirelessly to address this debilitating issue. Thank you for helping women and children empower themselves so that they can overcome adversity and inspire others to do the same.”

- Vivian Yap, Philanthropy and Partnerships, Selangor Properties Berhad

RM50,001-RM100,000

Office of Y.B. Senator Datuk Paul Low Seng Kuan, Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department

RM20,001-RM50,000

Anne Witt (in Kristen Hoey's honour)
The Edge Education Foundation
Messrs Bodipalar Ponnudurai De Silva
British High Commission Malaysia
Ng Yit Swee Holding Sdn Bhd
Rampai-Niaga Sdn Bhd (The Body Shop Malaysia)
Sage Foundation
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Yeoh Seok Kah

“Support of WAO was one of the wishes my 32-year-old daughter Kristen Hoey made before her untimely death nearly 2 years ago. She had lived in Kuala Lumpur and was a volunteer. I hope this support makes a difference as part of the footprint left by her life.”

- Anne Witt, Kristin Hoey's Mother

RM10,001-RM20,000

Connie Tong May Kwei	Kuok Foundation Berhad
Harlow's & MGI Sdn Bhd	Kyochon Sdn Bhd
Hermo Creative (M) Sdn Bhd	Office of Y.B. Maria Chin Abdullah, Member of Parliament for Petaling Jaya
International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)	MIG Network & Consultancy Sdn Bhd
IWB Consultancy Sdn Bhd	Women's Fund Asia

RM5,001-RM10,000

Association of British Women in Malaysia	Messrs Mathews Hun Lachimanan
Bock & Partners	Maybank Heart
Hong Leong Bank Berhad	Messrs Mohanadass Partnership
Jason Lim Wei Li	

Thank you to all who contributed funds to WAO's mission, in whatever way you could.

We apologise for any omissions, which are inadvertent.

Team WAO

191 Members

Trustees

Toh Puan Dato' Seri Hjh Dr. Aishah Ong
Rashidah Abdullah

Dato' Noor Farida Ariffin
Puan Sri Chong Eu Nghoh

Executive Committee (2017-2019)

Carol Chin* (11) *President*
Meera Samanther* (9) *Vice President*
Chin Oy Sim* (10) *Secretary*
Tan May Lee* (5) *Assistant Secretary*
Yeow Ai Lin* (10) *Treasurer*

Shanthi Dairiam* (6) *Assistant Treasurer*
Yee Pek Mei* (9) *Committee Member*
Puveshini Rao (7) *Committee Member*
Wathshlah Naidu (2) *Committee Member* resigned 10/2018

*2018 EXCO meeting attendance (out of 11 meetings) in brackets. Names with asterisks * are also on the Staff and Finance Committee.*

Staff

Sumitra Visvanathan *Executive Director*
Charlene Fay Murray *Case Manager*
Jessie Ang Hoon Ai *Social Worker*
Vaneezha Muniandi *Social Worker*
Erica Koh Pei Wey / Jean Tan Yih Jun *Social Worker*
Manissha Kaur *Social Worker*
Ng Yi Ran / Gunawathi Ramachandran *Social Worker*
Chan Ee Lin *Social Worker*
Nusrat Hassan *Programme Manager*
Amy Hor Choi Fun *Shelter Supervisor*
Kaanchana Suppayah *Child Care Manager*
Saraswati a/p Balakrisnan *Child Care Provider*
Paruwathi a/p Pathathan *Child Care Provider*
Tinawaysandi bt Masang *Child Care Provider*
Thilagawathy a/p Narayanasamy *Child Care Provider*

Nur Amalina Syahmah Shaharudin *Child Care Provider*
Yap Lip Sue *Finance Officer*
Shuba Vashani *Admin & HR Officer*
Sunitha Rengasamy *Administration Specialist*
Sagita Paramalingam / Amnani Fatin Abdul Kadir *Partnership & Development Officer*
Yu Ren Chung *Advocacy Manager*
(Acting Executive Director 02-07 2018)
Yasmin Masidi *Advocacy Manager*
Kelvin Ang / Jaskirath Kaur Sohanpal *Community Engagement Officer*
Tan Pei Zin (Stella) *Research & Advocacy Officer*
Natasha Dandavati *Senior Research & Advocacy Officer*
Tan Heang Lee *Advocacy & Communications Officer*
Sharifah Shazana *Stakeholder Engagement Officer*
Vaishna Santharasagar / Melissa Mohd Akhir *Training Officer*

Interns

Amira Fretz *Matilda Strom*
Anna Rasmussen *Rati Mujumdar*
Daliy Omer Mohamed Ziyda *Roxanne Tan Yu Xian*
Delima Mohd Khalid *Sambhaiv Kumaresan*
Irene Rossi *Sarah Saeed*
Jayantika Rao *Simarpreet Kaur*
Katherine Louise Parkinson

Close up of 'Read Between The Lines'. Hanging display of women's stories of workplace discrimination. Installation art from WAO's 2018 #InvisibleWomen exhibition.

Art by Leo Burnett Malaysia. Photo by Gary Ng.



Volunteers

Adeela Abbas	Farah Naz	Malligah Suppiah	Sattya Shankary Gunasekaran
Aida Binti Anis	Franklin Tan	Marissa Feizal	Simarpreet Kaur
Ainur Syuhada	Frisca Freddy	Megan Teoh	Datin Sugirtha Kreeson
Aishah Syahirah	Gary Ng	Melanie John	Sumitha Kishna
Alice Yow Lee Chin	Gianne Heidi Yap Zhi Ling	Mogana Chinnathamby	Tan Qin Ru
Alicia	Goldwyn Matthews	Mok Chuang Lian	Tashia Peterson
Alina Filza	Hannah Jambunathan	Nadiah Azahari	Tay Ee Cher
Amanda Au	Hannah Marissa	Dr Nalini Velaitham	Tham Choi Kuen
Amanda Liew	Harvinod Singh	Natalia Vera Aw	Tusyita Menon
Anna See	Ida Kamarudin	Natellie Yap	Vanessa Gnanasurian
Aranxta Mur	Isma Husein	Norziehan binti Muhamad Fauzi	Vanessa Miranda
Athilia Ayra Yusoff	Ivy Josiah	P. Jane Peris	Datin Vatsala Nair Manoharan
Basit Ishak	Janice Leo	Pat Ramakrishnan	Vicky Dharma
Bina Ramanand	Jasmine Kuan	Piatra Florila	Vicky Siow
Britney Choo Zhi Chee	Jayanthi Thasarathapany	Preeta Rohan	Sze Mun Lee
Chong Ee Lian	Kathleen Khong Hor Yan	Prem Ananth	Yogeswaran Balakrishnan
Daarshini Ramesh	Khayma Balakrishnan	Punitha Shan	Yoogesh Rao Nageswerarav
Darshini Nadarajan	Kiranjeet Kaur	Qaisha Kamar	Yvonne Lim
David Natarajan	Lee Shook Fong	Rachel Tan	Zoe Liam
Debbie Siru	Lee Sze Mun	Raif Rashide	
Dora Tee Chui Peng	Leo Burnett	Raihanah Lukman	<i>Groups</i>
Ee Cher Tay	Leonardo Alexis Peralta	Ranessa Theyakaraja	Make It Right Movement,
Eliza Anthony	Lim Cheng Bock	Samantha Liza	Brickfields Asia College
Ellen Chua	Luminita Garaba	Sara Nizal	IACT College students
Emily Liew Ling Li	Ma Vanaja Pamela		UiTM Shah Alam students

Partner Organisations

Perspective Strategies (WAO Communications Partner)

Hays Malaysia

Leo Burnett Malaysia

Messrs Steven Thiru & Sudhar Partnership



Thank you for dedicating time and effort towards supporting WAO's mission.

We apologise for any omissions, which are inadvertent.

'Invisible Woman Unable to Return to the Workforce'. Installation art from WAO's 2018 #InvisibleWomen exhibition.

Art by Leo Burnett Malaysia. Photo by Gary Ng.

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Malaysia

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For general enquiries:

+603 7957 5636 / 7957 0636

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