



ALL WOMEN'S ACTION SOCIETY (AWAM)

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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AWAM'S VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Vision: AWAM envisions a just, democratic and equitable society where all persons - women especially - are treated with respect and are free from all forms of violence and discrimination.

Mission: Based on feminist principles, we seek to achieve our vision by building a movement that informs, connects and mobilises society towards:

- Securing women's rights and bringing about gender equality;
- Developing capacities for women's empowerment and social transformation; and
- Supporting women in crises.

Values: AWAM operates with the strength of a dynamic and dedicated group of members and staff who shape the direction and policies of the organisation. As a collective, AWAM strongly believes in having an inclusive participatory and empowering organisational culture. We are guided in our work and decision-making by five core values:

- Collectivism
- Compassion and respect
- Courage
- Equality and justice
- Integrity

PEOPLE OF AWAM

Office Bearers [March 2014 –March 2016]

President: Ho Yock Lin

Deputy President: Thency Gunasekaran

Hon. Secretary: Judith Loh Foong Lin

Hon. Treasurer:

Sue Chong Soo Hua (resigned 28 March)

Theresa Lim Chin Chin (commenced 28 March)

Ordinary Council Members:

Susie Cheng Yoke Chang (resigned 21 January)

Rabiatul Jusoh (commenced 28 March)

Wong Pui Yan (commenced 28 March)

Sofia Lim Siu Ching

Working Collective

Ain Nasiehad bt Amiruddin (commenced 3 August)

Ameirunaisyah Ismail (resigned 31 July)

Betty Yeoh Siew Peng

Choong Yong Yi

Deepa Chandra (commenced 16 March)

Emily O. Mathius

Evelynne Gomez

Ho Yock Lin

Judith Loh Foong Lin

Lee Wei San

Lim Chin Chin

Lochna Menon (commenced 3 August)

Pui Yan Wong

Rabiatul Adawiyah Yusoff

Sofia Lim Siu Ching

Susie Cheng Yoke Chang (resigned 21 January)

Tan beng hui

Thency Gunasekaran

Staff

Assistant Manager, Finance and Admin:

Emily O. Mathius

Senior Programme Manager: Lee Wei San

Programme Officers:

Ameirunaisyah Ismail (resigned 31 July)

Choong Yong Yi

Assistant Programme Officers:

Deepa Chandra (commenced 16 March)

Lochna Menon (commenced 3 August)

Ain Nasiehad bt Amiruddin (commenced 3 August)

Information Communication Officer:

Evelynne Gomez

Consultants:

Training Advisor: Betty Yeoh Siew Peng (commenced 1 July, formally Senior Programme Manager)

Book Keeper: Loke Siew Fung

Committees

Gender-Based Violence

Politicisation of Ethnicity and Religion

Services

Membership Development

Media

Fundraising

Finance

Joint Management and Management

Joint Management Committee

President: Ho Yock Lin

Hon. Secretary: Judith Loh Foong Lin

Council Member: Sofia Lim Siu Ching

Training Advisor: Betty Yeoh Siew Peng

Assistant Manager: Finance & Admin: Emily O. Mathius

Senior Programme Manager: Lee Wei San

REPORT FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY

On behalf of everyone in The All Women's Action Society (AWAM), I am pleased to present to you the Annual Report of 2015. Let me also take this opportunity on behalf of AWAM to wish our members, sponsors, funders, supporters and friends a joyful and safe year for all.

The past year has been a challenging one for the nation and its people, where our economy took a downturn, the depreciating Malaysian Ringgit, local political issues together with the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Despite the pressing challenging market conditions of the past year and our local political issues, AWAM held strong in what we wanted to achieve and tasked ourselves by strengthening our goals in securing women's rights and bringing about gender equality; developing capacities for women's empowerment and social transformation; and supporting women in crises.

The 2015 report gives an overall account of the different committees and work we do. It is a recalling and recording of our activities, achievements and challenges. We have also included an Annual Calendar of Events of the 12 months of 2015. The full version of the report will be made available on our website at <http://www.org.my/communications/publications/>.

AWAM continues to be a hub of activities, new learnings, new knowledge and skills but more important are the people who support the work we do. It is made possible through the commitment of our staff and active members. Within the organisation, we recognise that staff are part of a decision making body known as the Working Collective. It is about collective decisions, listening to each other and opening the space for dialogue. AWAM stress on the importance of empowering and creating awareness of issues to the public and it recognises too the importance of empowering the people working in the organisation.

AWAM values the richness and importance of the integration of ethnic groups and religion, and here in our own working environment, we celebrate diversity as well as experiences of founder members and those who have contributed over the years.

AWAM recognises the young spirit of its staff and its members and volunteers. As organisations are being challenged with finding new and younger members, AWAM is blessed with this young spirit. The categories of the younger and older women, the new and older members bring along different challenges and negotiations. We recognise this as part of building a feminist women's movement and the ability to work together.



Here is a summary of AWAM's 2015 work.

The Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Committee works toward the prevention and elimination of discrimination and violence against women.

The Nationwide Campaign against Domestic Violence in ten states of Malaysia began in 2013 culminated in 2015. We are grateful for the financial support from KL SOGO. The campaign:

- i. Reached out to over 5,000 participants, mostly women and some men from the rural and urban poor areas.
- ii. Participants learnt how to access support from various service providers.
- iii. AWAM developed a closer working relationship with the service providers. This included police from the D11 department that deals with sexual assault on women and children; the One Stop Crisis Centre(OSCC) in the government hospitals and the Welfare Department – Domestic Violence division.
- iv. Some of the state collaborators have also continued to give talks and advocate on this issue after their state seminar.

The Gender Based Violence (GBV) committee, organised two public events; one for International Women's Day and the other for the Sixteen Days of Activism against GBV. The detailed report is enclosed. These two events anchored by the GBV people together with new participants from the Feminist Camp. The event created spaces for participants to engage in a more innovative and proactive way as well as sharpen their understanding and awareness on issues of GBV and knowledge of AWAM. The two public events are well captured in the inside report.

Knowledge Transfer Project (KTP) is an interesting collaboration between AWAM's GBV committee with University Malaya and Taman Medan Health Clinic. KTP conducted five workshops on sexual reproductive health and rights for the youth in that community. Through these workshops, the committee noted interesting observations on behavioural change amongst the youth. You can read more about this project in the inside report.

The GBV committee hosted their first Big Group Meeting (BGM) focusing on the issue of marital rape. It was a panel discussion which covered various perspectives. This BGM came about as Damansara Utama State Assemblyperson, Yeo Bee Yin, launched a video on rape awareness campaign on marital rape with the tagline 'No Excuse to Rape'. AWAM was consulted on this. This controversial topic generated widespread debate with the public and drew much publicity on social media. It was a good way to generate greater awareness on the issue.



This year, our Public Education and Training Programme committee responded to 43 education talks, external training requests. We reached out to over 2,000 persons, including university and college students, corporate, political parties, social welfare officers, hospital personnel and youth from Taman Medan community. The topics covered were on gender-based violence with special focus on sexual harassment, domestic violence and rape, issues on reproductive health and rights together with leadership skills for the youth.

AWAM conducted training of trainers (TOT) for the Selangor State Pusat Wanita Berdaya (PWB). A total of 10 towns were covered, mainly in the rural areas of Selangor. Some of these areas were Rawang, Morib-Teluk Datuk, Dengkil and Sabak Bernam. The workshops covered gender and GBV and the women participants found these workshops very useful.

Over the years, AWAM has been conducting awareness sessions for local universities like HELP, SEGI, Monash, University Malaya, INTI, University Kebangsaan Malaysia. We have also granted interview requests for students of these universities on subjects like Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence, Gender Equality, and the work of AWAM as an organisation.

In the area of Advocacy and Networking, AWAM sees the importance of working closely with other organisations and coalitions at both the national and international levels. This enables us to amplify the impact and reach of our programmes, as well as to build the women's movement. Our engagement is also with the federal and state agencies so as to advocate for law reforms.

In regards to law reform interventions, AWAM provided input to the Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR) at the Consultation Session on the Draft of "Employment (procedure to inquire into complaints of sexual harassment) Regulations 2015", AWAM met with Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development to discuss moving forward on the sexual harassment bill, and met with representatives of Polis Di Raja Malaysia to discuss gender and VAW training for the police.

AWAM as part of Joint Action Group (JAG) for Gender Equality was part of the Attorney General (AG) delegation that met with the former AG on law reforms on issues surrounding domestic violence, sexual harassment, stalking and rape.

JAG, together with AWAM, organised the 4th Aiyoh Wat Lah Awards, an award winning event. The objective of the awards is to help create higher standards of discourse from public figures and institutions in Malaysia on issues of gender and sexuality.



A campaign called the Citizens Against Rape, a walk themed Hentikan Rogol: Stop the Rape of our Children was held specifically in response to the Sibu rape acquittal case where a 60-year-old man successfully appealed against his conviction of rape and impregnation of a 15-year-old girl with his semen-smearred fingers. This was a coalition based advocacy campaign with 10 other groups speaking out against the issue of rape especially on children.

The collaboration of the Women`s Learning Partnership (WLP) with AWAM began in 2009. Over the years this partnership has enhanced AWAM with leadership training skills and contents to conduct national training for trainers (TOT) as well as train political groups like DAP and Keadilan women`s wing. AWAM`s personnel has had opportunities to attend global trainings and to become global trainers in this partnership.

In the area of Services, AWAM offers free legal information and counselling for women facing violence/discrimination on issues of marriage, divorce, custody, maintenance, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault/rape, discrimination at work and others.

Our Services are coordinated by staff members, and is carried out with volunteers, specifically, intern counsellors and chambering pupils (via the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Legal Aid Centre). Please refer to the charts in our inside report for the different breakdown of cases and other data.

In AWAM`s journey towards creating a free and fair society, we are aware that the laws, policies and programmes we work on must take into account the fact that women are not one homogenous group. Women`s experiences and needs vary depending on factors such as class, age, beliefs, location, and sexual identity and expression. Ethnicity and religion in particular, are prominent identity markers that shape our identities in Malaysia. Increasingly, ethnicity, and religion have been used to justify segregation, discrimination and even violence against women. It is in this backdrop that the Politicisation of Ethnicity and Religion Committee continues to work towards building bridges as well as finding new ways to create understanding and respect in society.

All in all, 2015 was a fairly good year for the Committee in terms of the inroads made raising awareness about PER, and offering an alternative understanding and narratives about gender, ethnicity and religion in Malaysia.

For this year, PER`s primary focus was the PERpaduan programme which involved:

(i) Organising four workshops. Participants were from public universities, trainee teachers, NGO friends. These workshops offered participants new lens to understand how socio-cultural and political factors have shaped societal relations. These workshops created space for participants to reflect and dialogue in an open and safe space exploring ethnic, religious and gender relations.

(ii) Conducting and updating of PERpaduan Concepts and training of trainers. This was a two-and-a-half days session to deepen the comprehension on the concept of PER and how it intersects with patriarchy and neoliberalism.

(iii) Consolidating and further fine-tuning the PERpaduan Training Manual. The feedback from these workshops help the committee to fine-tune the subject matter as these trainings will give participants an insight to question and develop their ideas or plans in countering PER so as to advocate for change.

(iv) With the finalized English version manual completed in 2014, PER embarked with a Bahasa Malaysia version of this manual that will be ready in early 2016.

Besides the manual and workshops, the Committee held a Big Group discussion on vernacular education to help AWAM develop an organisational position on this subject. A detail write-up is enclosed in the report.

PER continued to build alliance with women from the mass-based Muslim organisation, like Wanita Ikram. We believe this to be an important step towards breaking down ethnic and religious barriers and misconceptions that have been deliberately fostered by those who politicise Islam.

PER also embarked on two smaller projects;

i. A new database to improve our documentation and analysis of PER-related news and articles. This will help to make these resources more useful and accessible to the PERpaduan pool of trainers and members of the PER committee.

ii. PER is producing a video clip for our Internet platforms and to share this message about politicised ethnicity and religion in a more creative and accessible manner. We hope that posting it on our social media, will help generate debate and discussion on the subject matter.

Moving on to another important area of AWAM's work is Information and Communication. It brings the message of women's issues to a wider forum through different channels. AWAM



connects with our members and the public through various means including its publications such as its E-links and event booklets; through press statements, TV and radio interviews; as well as our social media, and website.

This year AWAM came out with 12 press statements, endorsed 16 JAG press statements. AWAM's letter to the editor on "The Myth and Realities of Rape" was picked up by Malaysiakini, Malay Mail Online, and The Sun Daily.

Staff and members of AWAM participated in 11 radio interviews, and 6 TV interviews. The issues we raised through our media work include sexual harassment, domestic violence, statutory rape, and AWAM's campaigns and fundraising events like the 'White Ribbon Campaign Run and Walk.'

The stations we worked with this year were Traxx FM, Capital FM, Lite FM, BFM, NTV7, Bella, and Astro Arena.

This is the digital age and the young people enjoy the use of social media to tell stories, communicate and get informed. AWAM uses Facebook and Twitter as our main news source as it is interactive, instant and feedback is encouraged. AWAM's website is located at www.awam.org.my and is our main source of information on our internet.

AWAM is a member driven organization and one challenge we encounter is how to nurture our new members and strengthen existing members to play a role in the organisation. This led to the setting up of the Membership Development Committee in 2014. During this short space of time, the committee anchored AWAM's first Feminist Camp, hosted two orientation workshops and eight Feminist Fridays in 2015. These activities served as a platform for individuals who are keen to further explore and engage in discussions and exchange of ideas about women's issue and feminism. These understandings were key in encouraging individuals to get involved in activism work. Those who wish to do more within AWAM were able to sign-up to various organising committees to contribute and assist in AWAM's work. Read about it in the report.

With the rising cost each year, we see AWAM's operating cost increasing. We need about RM600,000 a year to run the organisation. The Finance Team tracks the budgets of the different committees and coordinates and oversees the financial status and operation of AWAM. A full report will be presented.

We are a non-profit organisation, which means much of what we do in our outreach, advocacy, training and our services requires funding. The Fundraising Committee took on two fundraising



events, AWAM's 10th Treasure Hunt and our 3rd White Ribbon Run and Walk. Though the main focus for these events is fundraising, much effort is created to highlight the issues surrounding the theme of 'Stop Violence Against Women'. We are dependent on our generous supporters, friends and donors and 2015, the fundraising team was delightfully encouraged by our generous donors. It is good to know that corporations value the work we do and see the importance in partnering with us for their corporate social responsibility.

AWAM was also the recipient of six fundraising drives that were initiated by individuals and corporations. We are grateful to have received funding from Akemi Uchi with a total sum of RM21,000; His Sanctuary of Glory (HSG) raised RM5,000, Kamini Manickam, an independent classical dancer gave us a donation of RM3,000, Ben's Independent Grocer (BIG) and Kitchen Table raised RM 7,662.18 in donation to AWAM.

The committee will continue to pursue keeping the cause of AWAM on course. We would like to thank the forty companies/corporations that supported our fundraising events during 2015. Thank you. More details of the events can be found in the inside report.

AWAM's members and staff came together for a three day long Strategic Planning Meeting in Gentings Pahang, to review AWAM's work over the last three years, as well as to chart its plans for the next five years. Being away from AWAM's hectic work environment, this relaxing space gave members and staff an opportunity to bond, reenergise, as well as explore the different areas of AWAM's work, and to participate in shaping AWAM's future. There was time to share, listen, play, and work together.

AWAM also embarked on an exciting project on uplifting and enhancing AWAM's physical space in house 85, our office. This renovation cost us RM105K. It is an important space for our visitors, clients and for all of our staff and members. We thank Inovar Industries Sendirian Berhad for donating wooden floorboards for the house and G-Lights for donating the lights. House 85 is now more spacious, and brighter as more natural light flows into the house. We thank our president Yock Lin and Assistant Admin Manager, Emily for coordinating the renovation and also those who have supported us in many generous ways.

Gratitude for Staff and Volunteers

We are pleased to say that the spirit of AWAMites is very much alive and thriving. AWAM has a small pool of seven dedicated staff that anchor all the activities and administration, together with the active and committed volunteers and members. We are very grateful to always have local and international interns to support us in our work. In a way it is about the idea of mentoring. Our



staff gets an opportunity to engage, supervise and impart knowledge, ideas and at the end of this internship, we know it has been one of a mutual benefit in the expansion of each other's horizon. This, I think, is a way forward as AWAM continues to receive more and more interns.

I invite you to read our report where our staff has taken time to reflect, write and share with you stories of AWAM. We are proud of what we have achieved this year. 2015 continues to be a year of growth and achievement, of personal efforts and collective efforts, of our dedicated volunteers, management and staff, generous donors and contributors, friends and families working together for the greater good of society.

We in AWAM are encouraged to continue to be a positive force and presence for the lives of women and society.

I also take this opportunity to thank our outgoing EXCO members of 2014-2016 for their commitment and contribution to AWAM's vision and mission, and we welcome the new EXCO members of 2016-2018. Thank you.

On behalf of AWAM I thank all of you for your support and your trust in us.

Keep in touch with us as we journey into 2016. We welcome your feedback.

Judith Loh-Koh

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

Date	
9 th	AWAM appreciation dinner for supporters of the White Ribbon Campaign (WRC) 2014
16 th	Joint Action Group For Gender Equality (JAG) internal strategy meeting to discuss developments concerning the Working Committee on VAW Laws
22 nd – 23 rd	AWAM attended the MASW- Workshop on Competency (22 nd - 24 th) AWAM organised its 2 nd Feminist Camp at Port Dickson (23 rd – 25 th)
30 th	AWAM attended the MASW- Workshop on Competency (30 th – 31 st)

FEBRUARY

Date	
5 th	AWAM jointly organised the Legal Aid Clinic (LAC)/NGO Mid Term Review
6 th	AWAM representatives attended a Budget Meeting organised by the Kementerian Pembangunan (KPWKM) in Putrajaya
7 th – 8 th	AWAM conducted a “Saya Boleh” Workshop for underprivileged youths as part of a joint project with UM-KTP
12 th	AWAM attended a meeting on “Assessment Development Results: UNDP and Government of Malaysia Cooperation Programme (2008-2014)”
15 th	AWAM conducted a sex, gender and VAW session, as part of a Para Counselling Course organised by the Buddhist Gem Fellowship KL

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

25th Visit by Japanese Lecturer with the Faculty of Law of University Malaya

MARCH

Date

5th Interview with HELP University students on careers with NGO

6th AWAM conducted a talk on sexual harassment at Bemis Healthcare Packaging, Selangor

7th AWAM International Women's Day Event, at Wariseni

11th AWAM conducted a talk on Domestic Violence at University Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)

12th AWAM conducted a talk on CEDAW and Leadership for American Express

14th AWAM moved to Forum 19 for the duration of renovations to the office

15th AWAM was on a panel discussion on the issue of sexual harassment jointly organised by the Gender Studies Programme, University Malaya and 3R

16th AWAM's first day at Forum 19

18th AWAM conducted a talk on the status of women in Malaysia for Comfori International Sdn Bhd

21st AWAM conducted a "Leading to Action" Peers Training Workshop for underprivileged youths as part of a joint project with UM-KTP (21st- 22nd)

AWAM conducted a talk on sexual harassment for Management and Staff of Bemis Healthcare Packaging Asia Pacific

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

24th AWAM attended the SUHAKAM Dialogue on Human Rights for Business Communities

25th AWAM conducted a talk on CEDAW at USIM

28th AWAM Orientation

AWAM Annual General Meeting (AGM)

APRIL

Date

3rd AWAM conducted a talk on VAW and Cyber Safety for girls at a camp organised by the Persatuan Pandu Puteri Daerah petaling.

8th AWAM conducted a talk on Child Rights and Protection at USIM

11th AWAM organised a Big Group Meeting on the issue of Vernacular Education

16th AWAM organised an internal workshop for AWAM working collective and committee members on “Conflict Management: Handling difficult situations”

17th AWAM organised a Workshop for Youths from University Malaya on “Perpaduan: Exploring ethnic, religious and gender relations in Malaysia” (17th – 19th)

18th AWAM conducted a workshop on Communications and Helping Skills as part of a joint project

20th AWAM attended a National Consultation on Internet Rights, Governance and Democracy
AWAM attended a Women’s Learning Partnership (WLP) online training session (20th – 23rd)

22nd AWAM attended the ASEAN People’s Forum 2015 (22nd - 24th)

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AWAM conducted a talk on Marriage and Divorce at USIM

24th AWAM attended “Dissemination seminar: Results of Survey on “SRH among Malaysian Youth: Sources of Information”

30th AWAM conducted a talk on Rape at Taylors University

MAY

Date

9th AWAM attended the GBM Summit on Civil Society: Post NEP-Towards a National Consensus.

10th AWAM, as part of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), organised the “AiyohWatLah Awards” in Ipoh

14th AWAM as part of JAG, attended a Meeting with Chew Mei Fun to discussed the Sexual Harassment bill

21st AWAM conducted an internal “Finance 101” session for members of its Working Collective

26th AWAM attended a meeting with the Ministry of Women to give input on the Regional Plan of Action on Violence Against Women

30th AWAM conducted a workshop on Communications and Helping Skills as part of a joint project with UM-KTP

31st AWAM organised its 10th Annual Treasure Walk-a-Hunt

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE

Date	
7 th	AWAM organised the “Hentikan Rogol Action”, as part of the Citizens Against Rape (CAR) coalition
11 th	AWAM had a Meeting with Wanita IKRAM
12 th	AWAM attended the JAG Evaluation and Planning in Ipoh (12 th – 14 th)
16 th	AWAM conducted a talk on Sexual Harassment organised by UNISEL
21 st	AWAM conducted a Gender Training for DAP Women
24 th	AWAM organised a Training the Trainers Workshop and Review of the WLP Victories Over Violence Manual for AWAM and JAG members (24 th – 25 th)
26 th	AWAM conducted a Gender Training for PKR Women

JULY

Date	
8 th	AWAM conducted a Talk on Women’s Safety for UM Wales AWAM conducted a Talk on VAW in Malaysia for IPPF Delegates who visited AWAM Centre, organised by FRHAM
14 th	AWAM attended a Psychology dialogue session at HELP University
25 th	AWAM conducted a Talk on AWAM’s work, for the Counselling Faculty, OUM

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

27th AWAM conducted Sexual Harassment TOT for UNIMAS in Sarawak (27th-28th)

Talk in Open University Malaysia (OUM) on Roles of NGOs

29th AWAM organised an internal study session on Nancy Fraser's article on the issue of feminism and capitalism

AUGUST

Date

6th AWAM organised an Internal Talk on Managing Crisis Related to Mental Health Issues

8th AWAM was part of a panel at the 9th Malaysian Student Leadership Summit, to talk about whether Men and Women are Equal in Malaysia

11th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with the Pusat Wanita Berdaya (PWB) in Klang

16th AWAM conducted a workshop on Sexual Harassment for YMCA

18th AWAM conducted a workshop on Sexual Harassment for Dimension Data (18th – 19th)

21st Conversation on Engaging with Internet Giants

22nd AWAM Orientation

24th AWAM organised a Workshop on Gender, Human Rights and VAW for the Police (24th – 26th)

26th AWAM organised a Workshop on Gender, VAW and Leadership for women community leaders mobilised by SAWO (24th – 26th)

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

28th AWAM attended a Seminar on CEDAW Jurisprudence organised by the KL Bar

SEPTEMBER

Date

2nd AWAM conducted Talk on Sexual Gender Based Violence for IPPF Malaysia

5th AWAM conducted an empowerment and leadership session for secondary school girls
- from SMK Sungai Tiang at a “Smart Girls Retreat”

AWAM organised a White Ribbon Forum on Power, Privilege and Permission

6th AWAM conducted a workshop called “Dah Kenal, Apa Lagi?” to provide basic helping
skills for health care service providers, as part of a joint project with UM-KTP

10th AWAM attended the National Consultation on the Rights of Vulnerable Witnesses in
Court

12th AWAM attended the Women’s Learning Partnership (WLP) Transnational Partnership
Convening (12th -16th)

14th AWAM attended the NGO open space discussion on nation in crisis, “RECLAIM THE
NATION”

16th AWAM organised an internal workshop on Resource Mobilisation

17th AWAM organised an internal workshop on Advocacy Strategy

18th AWAM organised a Training-the-Trainers Workshop and Updating of concepts meeting
on the Perpaduan Manual (18th – 20th)

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

19th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with PWB in Taman Medan & Bukit Gasing

23rd AWAM conducted a Talk on Child Sexual Abuse for hearing impaired children and their parents as part of a workshop organised by YWCA

OCTOBER

Date

3rd AWAM attended the Strategic Litigation Conference 2015

4th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with PWB in Sabak Bernam

7th AWAM conducted a Talk on women's rights at INTI college, Subang

AWAM conducted a Gender Sensitization talk for Putrajaya Hospital

10th AWAM attended a Workshop on Human Rights Online and Digital Security Strategy for Human Rights Defenders led by EMPOWER (10th- 11th and 17th-18th)

AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with the PWB Morib

AWAM organised a Big Group Meeting on the issue of Marital Rape

11th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with PWB Kuang

17th AWAM organised a White Ribbon Workshop

19th AWAM trainers joined the WLP Pre-TOT + Advanced TOT on Human Rights (19th- 24th)

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

21st AWAM organised a Workshop for Youths from UPM on “Perpaduan: Exploring ethnic, religious and gender relations in Malaysia” (21st – 23rd)

22nd AWAM attended the National Seminar on Human Rights

26th AWAM attended the Women of the Future Summit and Wilton Park Conference in the UK, by invitation from British High Commission of Malaysia, co-hosted by the Foreign and Commonwealth office (26th- 30th)

28th Students visit from Fakulti Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan (kerja sosial), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

30th AWAM organised a Workshop for Youths mobilised by Aliran in Penang, on “Perpaduan: Exploring ethnic, religious and gender relations in Malaysia” (30th – 1st Nov)

NOVEMBER

Date

2nd AWAM conducted a Training of Trainers Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with the Selangor State PWB (2nd- 4th)

Visit by students & lecturer from University Malaya

3rd AWAM organised a Press Conference on the White Ribbon Run event

4th AWAM conducted a Talk on Gender Sensitisation for welfare officers, organised by the Institut Sosial Malaysia (ISM)

6th AWAM organised a Workshop for Youths from UM on “Perpaduan: Exploring ethnic, religious and gender relations in Malaysia” (6th – 8th)

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

7th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with the PWB Damansara

19th AWAM had its Participant kit distribution for the White Ribbon Run (19th- 21st)

20th AWAM attended the YLC Seminar on Marriage, Relationships & Women's Rights

21st AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders, organised jointly with the PWB Shah Alam

22nd AWAM organised the White Ribbon Run (Padang Merbok)

AWAM conducted a Talk on Domestic violence at the St Francis Assis Church, Cheras

23rd AWAM conducted a Talk on the impact of the OSCC at the Academy of Medicine Malaysia

27th AWAM Evaluation and Planning Meeting and Retreat in Genting (27th-29th)

DECEMBER

Date

2nd AWAM conducted a Gender Sensitization session for service-providers at OSCC, Hospital Tunku Ampuan Rahimah Jalan Langat Klang Selangor Malaysia (HTAR)

AWAM jointly organised the Legal Aid Clinic (LAC)/NGO

AWAM organised a workshop, 'What's The Story with Power and Violence? - Linking Power and Gender-Based Violence' in conjunction with 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence

8th AWAM organised a Sexual Harassment Workshop for Hewlett Packard Enterprise

ANNUAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

9th AWAM organised a White Ribbon Run Thank You Dinner

12th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders,
organised jointly with the PWB Dengkil & Sg Pelek

13th AWAM conducted a Workshop on Gender and VAW for community women leaders,
organised jointly with the PWB Pekan Rawang

19th AWAM hosted a Feminist Reading Group organised by Alicia Izharuddin

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Committee Members

Staff Coordinator: Betty Yeoh (role changed to Training Advisor 1 July 2015) // Ameirunaisyah Ismail (resigned on 31 July 2015) // Choong Yong Yi (with effect from 3 August 2015)

Member Coordinator: Thency Gunasekaran

Members:

1. Betty Yeoh
2. Choo Wei Hoong (left 22 September 2015)
3. Kuek Yen Sim
4. Lee Wei San

Overview

Gender-based violence, including Violence against women, continues to nullify and impair women's access to and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The GBV Committee of AWAM works towards the prevention and elimination of violence and discrimination against women via public education campaigns, trainings, advocacy and networking with other organisations.

Public Education Campaigns

Some key achievements made by the GBV committee in 2015, through AWAM's work, include the following:

1. Nationwide Campaign against Domestic Violence

AWAM's campaign against Domestic Violence started in July 2013. As of December 2015, we carried out seminars in 10 states and one Federal Territory in Peninsular Malaysia, with the last seminar being held in 2015.

AWAM conceptualised the campaign together with Carol Lee, former Mrs Malaysia 2014 who also brought in funding support from KL SOGO. AWAM identified local partners to roll out the campaign in each state, so that there would be a local organisation to mobilise the community to attend the seminar, and to ensure that there is local presence to continue providing support after the seminar. Each local organisation was provided a seed fund to organise the state level seminar. The seminar would provide an introduction to the issue of domestic violence and how the public can access support and assistance. AWAM identified and invited service providers, including the Police, Welfare Department and General Hospital (One Stop Crisis Centre) to share information on the management of domestic violence at these seminars. AWAM representatives would speak about the issue and impact of domestic violence on women. This process enabled the local organisations and

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community to learn about our advocacy work and for AWAM to build better rapport with service providers who are front-line persons providing support for survivors.

This campaign has produced the following outcomes:

- i. Reached out to over 5,000 participants, mostly women and some men. These participants are from the rural and urban poor sectors which are often left out in such campaigns.
- ii. After a seminar, participants knew where to get help when faced with domestic violence and were more comfortable to accessing support because they met with these service providers.
- iii. AWAM developed a closer working relationship with the service providers. This includes the police especially with the D11 department that dealt with sexual assault on women and children; Hospital authority – the One Stop Crises Centre (OSCC) and the Welfare Department – Domestic Violence division.
- iv. Some of the state collaborators have also continued to give talks and advocate on this issue after their state seminar.

2. International Women’s Day Event: #DefineYourself

This year, the GBV committee anchored the International Women’s Day event as a follow-up activity for the Feminist Camp participants. In conjunction with International Women’s Day, AWAM held an event themed #DefineYourself on 10 May 2015 to encourage women to reclaim their own personal narratives and create new definitions of womanhood for themselves. Over eighty people attended the celebration, taking part in a whole range of



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interactive games and activities, including a carnival like game where guests were able to “Smash the Patriarchy” in the form of knock-them-down pins. The pins each represented a form of discrimination and oppression women faced. There were also booths which offered a reflective space for guests to define who they wanted to be, and what they would do to make it happen for themselves. Following the interactive segment, participants were treated to a wide range of performances. From artists, poets, thespians to dancers, women were given the space to express their creativity — celebrating their art with an engaged audience.

3. 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

On 5 December 2015, AWAM hosted a half-day workshop on the topic of ‘Linking Power and Gender-Based Violence’, in conjunction with 16 Days of Activism. 16 participants joined us to explore ideas of power, intersectionality, and gender-based violence through several interactive and discussion-based activities. Discussions raised questions of who has the power, what are their sources of power, and why do they exert power, leading participants to an understanding of power and privilege. The final session explored the question of what is violence and what are the different types of gender-based violence. Activities were able to guide participants to see the connection between power dynamics and GBV.



Trainings

Trainers: Ameirunaisyah Ismail, Betty Yeoh, Choo Wei Hoong, Lee Wei San, Ho Yock Lin, Rabiatul Adawiyah Yusoff, Thency Gunasekaran

Overview

The GBV Committee also conducts and responds to request for trainings. Our pool of trainers is made up of AWAM members who are skilled trainers and/or facilitators as well as those who are in the process of being nurtured to become AWAM trainers and/or facilitators.

This year, the committee responded to 24 external training requests. We reached out to over 1,000 persons, including university and college students, corporate, political parties, social

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welfare officers and hospital personnel. The topics are covered in requests for training were on gender-based violence with special focus on sexual harassment, domestic violence and rape.

Some of the trainings organised by or where GBV Committee members were resource persons, are as follows:

1. Training of Service Providers

1.1. *Training The Trainers (TTT) and Service Providers of AWAM & JAG*

AWAM held a two-day Training The Trainers and Service Providers workshop in June 2015. We trained a group of activist trainers on violence against women, as well as reviewed the contents/methodologies of the Women's Learning Partnership (WLP) manual titled 'Victories Over Violence' at the workshop.

A pool of 14 front-line activists from Perak Women for Women and Women's Aid Organization (partner organizations of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality Coalition), as well as AWAM staff and members attended this workshop.

This workshop enhanced the knowledge and skills of participants. In addition, it strengthened relationship between JAG coalition partners. Participants shared that the case studies and methodologies learned in the workshop were very useful. The key areas of feedback to the WLP manual, included to localise the contents of the manual and modify the methodology to be more relevant to the community we work with.

1.2. *Training Workshop on Gender and Violence against Women for Polis Di Raja Malaysia (PDRM)-D11*

AWAM conducted three-day Service Providers Training for PDRM-D11 on gender and VAW at the Child Interview Centre. This training was organised by AWAM with the support of WLP. The objectives of this training were to raise awareness of the police



officers on CEDAW and CRC and to gender sensitise the front-liners so that they are able to deliver gender sensitive survivor-cantered services.

A pre- and post-evaluation was conducted during the workshop. Based on the feedback from the

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participants, the results showed that there was an improved understanding on International Instruments, knowledge on local and global context of violence against women and the police standard operating procedure. This training also served as a good observation platform for us to look into aspects of our trainings that require refinement to better suit the needs of police officers in providing survivor-centred services.

As a result of this workshop, AWAM strengthened its rapport with PDRM-D11. We had a follow-up meeting with them to explore further collaboration opportunities on conducting workshops for PDRM-D11 officers and front-line officers in 2016.

1.3. Training Of Trainers for Sabah Activists and Front-line Workers

AWAM, in collaboration with Sabah Women Action Resources Group (SAWO), conducted a Training of Trainers for the local women's groups, counsellors and church committee leaders in Sabah. These participants came from several regions, including Ranau, Telupid, Sandakan, Inanam, Pitas, Kudat, Kota Marudu and Kota Kinabalu.

This training focused on providing participants with clearer understanding on gender and impact on violence against women, enhancing knowledge on violence against women and women's labour rights, so as to be able to speak on the issue, and strengthening participants' commitment to take up leadership position and be able to solve and support when challenges arise.

The participants reported that they gained information and increased knowledge with regards to gender and violence against women and how to better support survivors. There was also an increase in communication between participants compared when they first arrived for the workshop, which facilitated networking among these women from other community organisations.

The GBV committee would like to note our appreciation towards WLP for funding all of the above trainings.

2. Knowledge Transfer Project (KTP)

In 2015, AWAM continued working with youths in collaboration with University of Malaya (UM) and Taman Medan Health Clinic. We conducted five workshops, which encompassed topics around sexual reproductive health and rights, as well as helped participants build self-confidence and leadership abilities. The KTP committee, which comprises of academia,

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health providers and NGO (AWAM), came up with a photobook that summarised all activities done and recorded the successful transformation of the youths.

We observed behavioural changes as a result of the workshops and on-going engagements. One of the youths was initially not interested in the workshop, but indicated a behavioural change by wanting to study and starting to dress tidier, and later was voted as a co-chairperson of their youth club in their community. There was also an increase in confidence levels, as indicated by the girls becoming more confident in speaking out. One of the girls was later voted co-president of their youth club in their community.

The next step of the project is to see if the youths are able to sustain what they have gained from the workshops. We started with 50 to 60 participants and have been able to capture 20 consistently. There are now 14 participants who are still active, many of whom are girls since more boys have to work in their low-income areas. They can be a target group to tap into upon further follow-up. The next stage is to develop health providers in Taman Medan Health Clinic to make them a youth-friendly centre.

3. **Big Group Meeting (BGM) - Panel Discussion on Marital Rape**

The BGM aims at enabling AWAM members to better understand and discuss or debate issues which we are currently working on or which affect our work.

This year, the GBV committee hosted our first BGM on 10 October 2015 focusing on the issue of marital rape. Following Damansara Utama State Assemblyperson, Yeo Bee Yin's launch of a rape awareness campaign with the tagline 'No Excuse to Rape', widespread and controversial debate has been generated on the term 'marital rape'. Some of the key issues brought up were whether the law was sufficient, whether the term should be used, and whether there is such a thing as rape in marriage at all.



The GBV committee hosted a panel discussion and invited three panel speakers to present their views on the marital rape from various perspectives. Our speakers were Dr Ahmad Farouk Musa (Senior Lecturer at Monash University, Malaysia and Chairman & Director of

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Islamic Renaissance Front), Datin Paduka Che Asmah Ibrahim (Head of Wanita IKRAM) and Jason Liang (Lawyer from Wong & Partners). This panel discussion aimed to enable us to better understand the issue at hand, and to provide a platform for discussion.

The panel speakers emphasised the socio-cultural front, i.e. affecting a change in mind-set. This has been minimally addressed by AWAM regarding the issue of domestic violence. Through efforts made in raising awareness, the concept of violence against women is now an established one. Laws in themselves may not be sufficient, but specific laws such as the Domestic Violence Act, are important. Domestic violence was previously an issue that was not acknowledged, now the issue is slowly gaining traction. The same goal should be applied to the issue of marital rape. However, in practice, there are still complications related to law enforcement that must be addressed. Finally, the moderator closed the session with the sentiment that marital rape should be addressed within the context of violence against women.

The GBV committee will be hosting another follow-up session in 2016 for AWAM members to discuss this topic in depth.

Conclusion and Planning for 2016

2015 had been a busy year for the GBV committee as we continue our efforts in raising awareness and knowledge among activists and front-liners. Our work with police officers has also promoted greater consciousness among them, and we hope this increases access to services for the member of the public, particularly women. It is a challenge for us to reach out to the mass public due to our limited resources, therefore we continue to work and build partnerships with different organisations such as JAG and WLP.

The GBV committee recognises that a strong patriarchal culture continues to affect women's access to justice. It is a root cause of various oppressive systems, and leads to gender-based violence. There is a need to dismantle this system to create a just world where all persons, particularly women, are treated equally. The GBV committee plans to develop a manual that will enable young people to understand the role of patriarchy in facilitating gender-based violence and actively take steps to address these injustices. In 2016, we will also continue to work towards strengthening the capacity of service providers in providing services that are sensitised, which takes into account specific needs of the survivors.

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AWAM works closely with other organisations and coalitions at both the national and international levels in order to amplify the impact and reach of our programmes. Indeed, we consider networking and movement-building critical to our work and mission. We also engage with the federal and state agencies to advocate for law reforms. Note that this section covers advocacy and networking activities that span gender based violence issues as well as more general coalition building activities. This programme is mainly staff driven, with input and participation of members from various committees, and support from interns.

2015 Highlights

1. Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG)

In 2015, JAG held its annual the Aiyoh...Wat Lah?! Awards on 10 May 2015. Held annually since 2012, the Aiyoh...Wat Lah?! Awards was held for the fourth time in 2015 as a way to raise awareness on what constitutes sexism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia. The objective of the awards is to create higher standards of discourse from public figures and institutions in Malaysia on issues of gender and sexuality. In 2015, almost 1400 people voted for their 'favourite' nominee based on seven categories: "Foot in Mouth", "Insulting Intelligence", "Policy Fail", "Cannot Ignore", "Least Helpful to the Sisterhood", "Enough Already!", and "Right on Track".



For the first time ever, JAG took the Awards on the road and it was held at the Sarong Paloh Event Hall in Ipoh and hosted by the incomparable Ribena Berry, a fictional character enacted by actor Jo Kukathas. In an amazing show of support, we had the largest number of people attending our Aiyoh event to date at over 160 attendees at the awards. The #AiyohWatLah publicity hashtag became the #1 trending hashtag in Malaysia during the day of the awards.

During the awards, the discrimination and oppression faced by the transgender community was highlighted, when the winner from "Right on Track", was announced. The ruling of Datuk

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Mohd Hishamudin Yunus, then a High Court judge, that criminalising cross-dressing for Muslims was an unreasonable restriction of a person's freedom of expression was interviewed by The Star won that category.

More information on the Aiyoh... Wat Lah?! Awards can be found at the website: <https://aiyohwatlah.wordpress.com/>

2. Citizens Against Rape

The Hentikan Rogol Walk is an event by the Citizens Against Rape to protest against sexual violence and to prompt legislative and policy changes on the part of the authorities. The term 'citizens' here are not confined to Malaysian citizens, rather it is in reference to people as global citizens. This campaign is initiated by AWAM, in response to horrendous incidences of rape in the country.



On 7th June, the Citizens Against Rape organised a walk themed #HentikanRogol: Stop The Rape Of Our Children. This walk was held specifically in response to the Sibu rape acquittal case where a 60-year-old man successfully appealed against his conviction of rape and impregnation of a 15-year-old girl with his semen-smearred fingers.

AWAM lead the coordination of this coalition-based advocacy campaign, alongside other women's rights and children's rights NGOs such as AWL, Childline Malaysia, KLSCAH – Women's section, MCRI, SIS, SUARAM, VoC, Wanita IKRAM, WAO and WCC. The protest drew a crowd of 400 who marched from KL SOGO to KLCC.

As part of the programme of the walk, we heard from a survivor of sexual assault highlighting the invasive and challenging process of navigating the legal process post-assault. There was also a poetry recital by national poet laureate A. Samad Said, speeches by President of Childline Malaysia, Datin P.H.Wong, the Executive Director of Sisters In Islam, Ratna Osman, and a member of Men Against Violence, Vernon Emuang.

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A petition demanding for legislative changes and educational policies to better address rape, including the expansion of the current legal definition of rape, enhancing the weight of child's testimonies, as well as introducing gender equality curriculums in schools, garnered a total of 2,327 signatures, both online and offline as of October 2015.



The organising committee of Citizens Against Rape traditionally comprised mainly of women's groups. This is the first time that children's groups joined a protest with the women's groups, giving rise to a collaboration in our response to the call to plan and implement an action in response to an incident of sexual violence.

3. Women's Learning Partnership (WLP)

On 19 to 24 October, Thency attended the Advanced TOT on Human Rights as a participant, whereas Betty attended the Pre-TOT and Advance TOT as one of the WLP Global Facilitators in Beirut, Lebanon. The TOT focused on deepening the trainer's facilitation expertise and testing new curriculum, including WLP's new manual on women's human rights.

Thency shared that she learned about the new manuals and the work that the different WLP partners are doing. The Advanced TOT deepened her understanding on the topics on VAW, as well as different learning and working styles that different people have. Deeper friendships among the participants were formed because of the very encouraging and warm nature of the facilitators and participants.

4. Working Committee on Violence Against Women Laws, hosted by the Attorney General's Chambers (AGC)

There were 6 law reform meetings hosted by AG, Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Abdul Gani bin Patail, between November 2013 and January 2015. Submissions were made by JAG to the committee for law reform on issues surrounding Domestic Violence, Sexual Harassment, Stalking, and Rape, and there were debated and discussed at the meetings. The AGC then prepared draft bills for discussion based on feedback and written submissions. The working committee agreed on several amendments to the VAW laws including on the DVA, CPC, Penal Code and Evidence Act. However, the Working Committee of laws was dissolved in

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November 2015 after a change of leadership in the AGC. The submissions and research by JAG continues to be used in other lobbying efforts.

5. Other law reform interventions and coalition building activities

In addition to the above highlights, a selected listing of strategic interventions and inputs and coalition building activities are set out below:

Engagement with government and political parties:

- We were part of the JAG delegation that briefed Wanita MCA on the impact of conversion laws on women and children (7 October), and sexual assault against women and girls (29 October);
- Provided input to the Ministry of Human Resources (MOHR) at the Consultation Session on the Draft of "Employment (procedure to inquire into complaints of sexual harassment) Regulations 2015" (3 August);
- Met with Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development to discuss moving forward on the sexual harassment bill (14 May);
- Provided input to the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development on the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action (RPA) on VAW (29 June) and on the Sexual Harassment Bill (14 May);
- Provided input at a Consultative Dialogue and Launching of a Strategic Framework on a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights for Malaysia (24 March);
- Meet with representatives of Polis Di Raja Malaysia to discuss gender and VAW training for the police.

Coalition building and other activities:

- We attended a series of discussions organised by Gabungan Bertindak Malaysia (GBM) on ways forward after the Bersih 4.0 between September - October, which included dialogues with political parties. We continue to be part of this coalition;
- AWAM continue to support Bersih through solidarity presence at press conferences (29 July and 2 September), as well as participated in Bersih 4.0 in August;
- We continue to support the work of the Reproductive Rights Alliance Advocacy Malaysia (RRAAM) through attendance at quarterly meetings, and mobilisation of at least 1/3 of the participants at RRAAM 3 day Young Women Advocates Workshop from 24 – 25 July, and hosted the first follow up meeting;

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- At the invitation and with the support of the British High Commission of Malaysia, we participated in the Women of the Future Summit and Wilton Park dialogue on women economic and political participation from 27 – 30 October in the UK;
- We attended the Policy Dialogue on Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health towards the Post-2015 Development Agenda organised by FRHAM;
- Participated in the JAG Evaluation and Planning Meeting from 12 – 14 June, reporting on joint coalition activities which AWAM led or co-organised; and provided input on future direction and focus of JAG;
- Participated in the ASEAN People’s Forum from 22 – 24 April.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING (PET): NON-THEMATIC

Training Advisor: Betty Yeoh

External Training Requests

It is our aim that with training as a vehicle of change, we can reach the various levels of society to make AWAM's vision a reality.

In 2015, AWAM conducted or responded to a total of 43 public education talks and/or trainings, and reached over 2,000 persons. This number represents all public education talks and trainings organised by or responded to by the various committees AWAM, in particular the GBV and PER Committees, as well as the training advisor.

Trainings and talks related to GBV issues are reported under the GBV section, and trainings related to PER are reported under the PER section. Other talks covered topics such as CEDAW and women's leadership, Child Rights, VAW laws in Malaysia and about AWAM's work. We had a wide range of audience, including corporate bodies, university students and lecturers, staff from government agencies and members of the public.

One particularly exciting development in 2015, was that AWAM had an opportunity to work with the Selangor State Exco, in particular via a new programme, Pusat Wanita Berdaya (PWB) which aims to empower women in the state of Selangor. AWAM developed modules using a combination of various WLP resources, and conducted 11 one day Gender Awareness and VAW Workshops for over 300 participants, via PWB programmes in Klang, Taman Medan and Bukit Gasing, Sabak Bernam, Morib, Kuang, Sri Damansara, Shah Alam, Kajang, Dengkil, Rawang. We also conducted a 3 day training of trainers for 14 community leaders.

Education Booths

In 2015, AWAM set up four exhibition booths in the following events, namely International Women's Day, NGO Awareness Campaign, Psychology Day and Human Rights Day. Our interns, members and volunteers supported in managing these exhibition booths.

This provides us with a platform to initiate conversations and have face-to-face interactions with the members of the public. Education booths are also instruments for us to raise our organisational profile and the awareness of the core issues that we work on.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING (PET): NON-THEMATIC

Interviews

AWAM believes in the importance of sharing our work and messages and therefore try to accommodate as many interview requests as we can that we receive from universities and other organisations.

In 2015, there were a total of 16 interviews held at AWAM. Twelve (12) of these interviews were students from universities both in Malaysia and abroad. The interview list is as follows:

No	Date	Interviewer (Name / organisation)	Topics	AWAM Representative
1	9 January	Students of Diploma in counselling from Kolej Universiti Islam Melaka	AWAM's work and organisational background	Aisyah
2	22 January	Gulizar Hacıyakupoglu PHD Student from National University Singapore	Online Dissemination of Gender Equality in Islam	Wei San & Evie
3	25 February	Dr Mogana Sunthari Subramaniam of the Faculty of Law of University Malaya and three (3) researchers from Japan	Domestic Violence	Betty
4	5 March	Students from HELP University	Career for Fresh Graduates at an NGO.	Emily & Yong Yi
5	15 April	Aerina Hamzah (Journalism - Monash University)	Victim Blaming	Evie
6	16 April	Yap Whey Ling (Journalism - Monash University)	Domestic Violence	Aisyah & Yong Yi
7	20 April	30 law students from the Vrij Universiteit', Amsterdam	Legal system and development of the position of the women rights in Malaysia.	Wei San and someone from Services
8	7 May	Project Dialog	National unity	Aisyah, Yong Yi & Baanu (intern)
9	3 July	Students from SEGi University College, Kota Damansara	Sexual Harassment	Betty, Kelvin (intern) and Yong Yi
10	8 July	15 IPPF Delegates	Malaysian experience in addressing SGBV related issues	Betty

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING (PET): NON-THEMATIC

11	14 July	Fila Magnus, fellowship attached to Women Deliver	Marital Rape	Wei San
12	21 July	Law students on internship with Bar Council Legal Aid Center	AWAM Activities	Emily
13	22 September	PhD candidate from Curtin University	Shifting Role of NGOs in the New Media Landscape in Malaysia	Evie & Wei San
14	8 October 2015	Students from INTI College	AWAM's Background	Yong Yi
15	28 October 2015	Students from Social Work Course, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, UKM	AWAM's Background	Emily and Ain
16	15 Dec 2015	Student from International Islamic University Malaysia	Gender Dynamics between Men, Women And All The Other Genders that Exist within the Gender Spectrum, especially When it Pertains to the Context of Malaysian Culture.	Wei San

SERVICES

Committee Members

Staff Coordinator: Emily Octavia Mathius

Assistant Staff Coordinator: Ain Nasiehad bt Amiruddin

Member Coordinator: Siew Yin Heng

Members:

1. Ameirunaisyah Ismail
2. Betty Yeoh

Overview of 2015

2015 marked the beginning of a new chapter for Services as we started a working committee which focuses on specifically on our Services work. The committee was officially set up in August 2015. The work of Services was previously managed by staff and parked under the GBV Committee.

AWAM offers free legal information and counselling for women facing violence/discrimination. This includes on issues of marriage, divorce, custody, maintenance, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault/rape, discrimination at work and others.

Our Services are coordinated by staff members, and are carried out with volunteers, specifically, intern counsellors and chambering pupils through the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Legal Aid Centre.

In 2015, AWAM continued to organise regular trainings for new chambering pupils that join AWAM's Legal Aid Clinic, and briefings for intern counsellors that join AWAM's counselling centre to ensure that they employ AWAM's values in engaging with clients.

From January to December 2015, Services had four (4) batches of 11 legal aid pupils from the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Legal Aid Centre who assisted in providing legal information, and four (4) full time students of Masters in Counselling to provide counselling services. We also have a member coordinator assisting in monitoring challenging cases.

Trainings

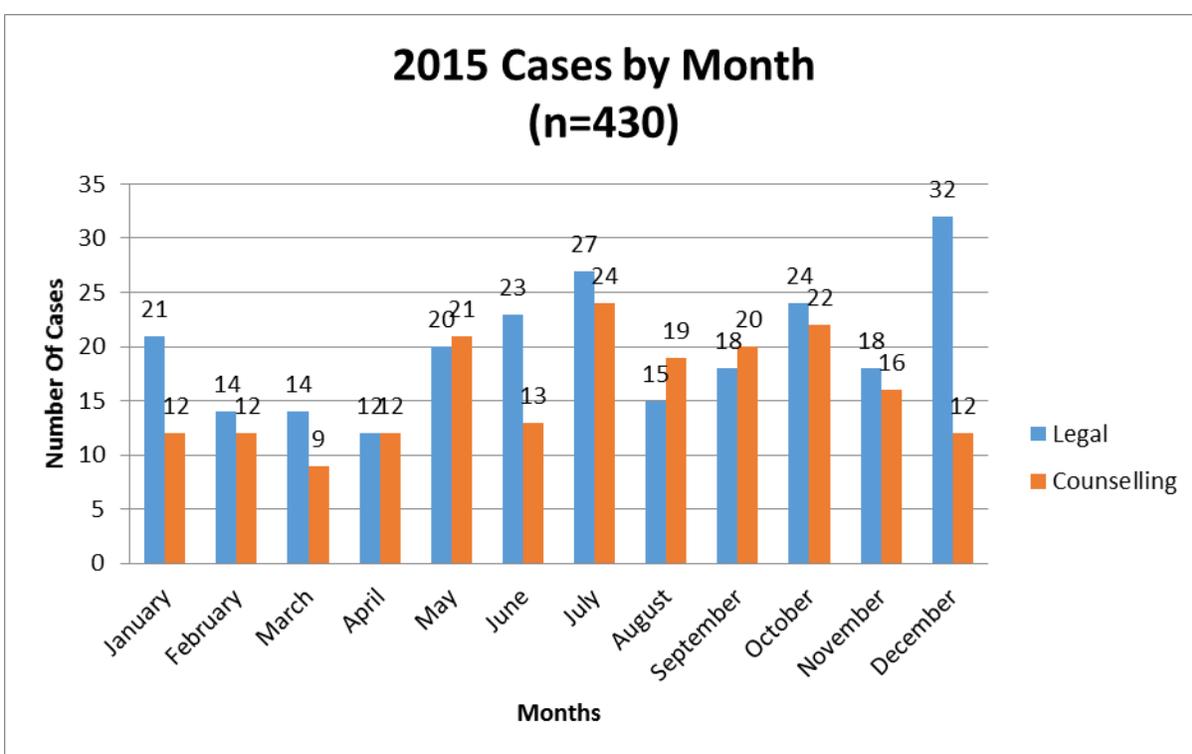
Four (4) trainings were carried out by AWAM, in collaboration with Sisters-in-Islam (SIS) and Women's Aid Organisation (WAO) to sensitise and familiarise legal aid pupils attached to the three NGOs. There were also follow-up midterm reviews of the pupils' legal aid experience. We

SERVICES

also did one para-counselling training on a domestic violence module in 2015 for another NGO, the Buddhist Gem Fellowship (BGF).

Statistics

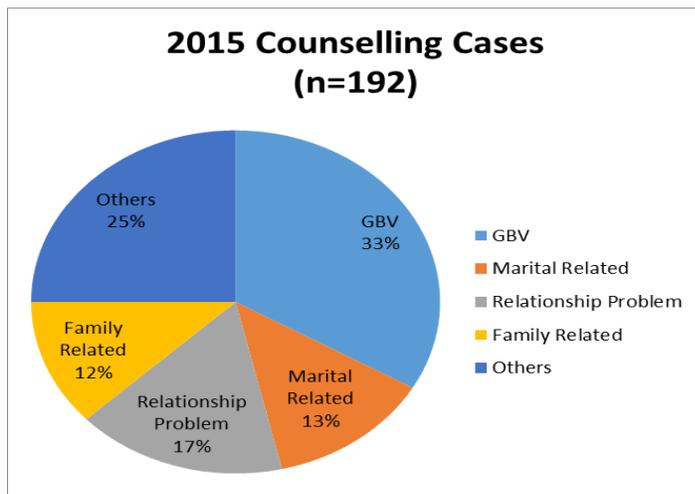
A total of 430 cases were recorded in 2015 of which 238 were legal and 192 were counselling cases. The highest number registered for clients with legal issues was in the month of December whilst the month of July was the peak for counselling case. (See chart below)



Based on our data, 29% of legal cases pertained to clients seeking help for issues related to domestic violence. These included assistance with lodging police reports and seeking shelter. 26% of cases under Others involved clients who enquired about property matters whilst 25% sought information on divorce. From the data that we have, it would appear that domestic violence is still very much prevalent in our society and AWAM strives to continue in our advocacy work to enhance greater awareness of this issue.

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The counselling data indicates 33% of clients came to AWAM based on issues related to gender-based violence. The other issues that brought clients to AWAM are mostly centered on relationship and family related concerns. We could use this information to organise workshops and talks for the public that are centralised on bettering communication and relationships.



POLITICISATION OF ETHNICITY AND RELIGION (PER)

PER Committee

Staff Coordinator: Ameirunaisyah Ismail (1 October 2014 – 15 March 2015) // Deepa Chandra (joined 16 March 2015)

Member Co-Coordinators: Lim Chin Chin & Tan beng hui

Members:

1. Adila Aziz (joined 22 Sept 2015)
2. Cecilia Ng
3. Evelynne Gomez
4. Hew Li-Sha
5. Lee Wei San
6. Wong Pui Yan
7. Yuhaniz Sazlin Mohd Aini (joined 30 Sept 2015)

The following members left our working team at different points in 2015 but continued to support us in different ways: Tashia Peterson, Ameirunaisyah Ismail, Rabiatul Adawiyah Yusoff, and Judith Loh. A big thank you to them for their tremendous contributions.

What the PER Committee accomplished in 2015

Politicised ethnicity and religion continued to rear its ugly head in Malaysia in 2015. Some developments were spillovers from the past, like the *hudud* and Islamic versus secular state debates. Others were new such as using the Sedition Act to clamp down on voices critiquing the powers of religious institutions or authorities. For women, both the Aisyah Tajuddin and Noor Farida Ariffin cases¹ — in which rape and murder threats were made with impunity — set a dangerous and worrying precedent. The message was clear: the state is prepared to ignore its obligation to protect women from violence when the latter are perceived as questioning ‘Islam’. Elsewhere, the obsession with dressing and morality continued. Women deemed inappropriately clothed were prevented from entering public buildings, and a national gymnast was censured because her outfit supposedly exposed her *aurat* and the ‘shape of her vagina’. When three young Muslim women hugged members of a K-pop boyband at their concert, the religious authorities demanded that they come in for questioning or face arrest.

This was the backdrop to the programmes the PER Committee conducted in 2015. Each activity was an attempt to counter the narrowing of democratic spaces through the use of ethnic and religious politics in this country, and even though these may not have directly addressed the above issues, they sought to achieve broader change in the long run.

¹ Aisyah Tajuddin, a radio journalist, was attacked for hosting a satirical video show that questioned *hudud*, while Noor Farida Ariffin, spokesperson of a group of former leading civil service officials, experienced the same after she criticised *khalwat* laws.

POLITICISATION OF ETHNICITY AND RELIGION (PER)

Our primary focus was the PERpaduan programme which involved (i) organising four youth workshops, (ii) conducting an updating of concepts and trainer's training, (iii) consolidating and further fine-tuning the PERpaduan Training Manual; and (iv) coming up with a Bahasa Malaysia version of this manual. Besides this, the Committee held a discussion on vernacular education to help AWAM develop an organisational position on this subject. We also continued to pursue getting to know Wanita Ikram to build better linkages between our two organisations. We embarked on two smaller projects as well; one, devising a new database to improve our documentation and analysis of PER-related news and articles, and two, producing a PER videoclip for our Internet platforms.

1. Trainings

1.1 PERpaduan Youth Workshops

The PER Committee used the PERpaduan Training Manual, conceptualised in 2013-2014, to run four workshops in 2015. These attracted over 60 young women and men in the Klang Valley and Penang. The majority were from public universities, while the rest were a combination of trainee teachers, NGO friends, and representatives of a state-level women's machinery.



Each workshop brought the participants through four interconnected sessions. In the first, they were exposed to a series of core concepts, starting with 'diversity' and 'stereotypes' before moving on to 'prejudice and discrimination', and 'power and privilege', and ending with an input on 'gender'. The second session was spent unravelling the connections between ethnicity, religion and politics both within and outside of Malaysia. While this session allowed the participants to see how the current state of ethnic and religious relations

in the country is relatively recent and socially constructed, the following session demonstrated how women are differentially impacted by this. It also helped them identify where messages that denigrate women come from, and to what end this may serve. Having gained better insights into how ethnicity and religion are politicised and affect gender relations, the participants were encouraged in the final session, to imagine what an alternative Malaysia would look like for them.

Most said that these workshops offered them a new lens to understand what was going on in Malaysia, including how socio-cultural and political factors have shaped societal relations. More importantly perhaps, they appreciated the safe space in which they could come together in a

POLITICISATION OF ETHNICITY AND RELIGION (PER)

mixed group, to speak openly about these issues and discuss how they led to discrimination and injustice. They believed this was important but had avoided such discussions previously because these has been discouraged. A number pledged to share what they had learnt, and expressed a desire to speak up among their friends and family whenever ethnic or religious stereotypes result in exclusion, discrimination or persecution.

The PER Committee is grateful for the help of the PERpaduan pool of trainers, especially Thency, Wei San, Lin, Syar, and Pui Yan in running the workshops; and our documenting and organising teams comprising Aisyah, Ruby, Effie, Evie and Deepa. Likewise, appreciation goes to maimuna, Ruhana, Kim, Vimala, Cecilia and Prema who made the workshops possible as well. As process observers of these workshops, Cecilia and Prema, together with Chin Chin and beng hui, also helped provide constructive feedback. Thanks to them for playing this role.

1.2 PERpaduan Concepts and Training of Trainers (PCTT) Workshop

This programme saw 18 current and potential PERpaduan trainers, and 2 observers come together for two-and-a-half days (18-20 Sept) to deepen their comprehension on the concept of PER and how this intersects with patriarchy and neoliberalism. Drawing on inputs by the resource team, and specially designed group work activities, the participants were exposed to new dimensions and ways to sharpen their analysis of how PER operates in Malaysia, and how women are potentially affected whenever this is invoked. They learnt how ethnic and religious politics do not exist in a vacuum but instead, operate within and to the benefit of the systems of patriarchy and neoliberalism. They were inspired by examples from Indonesia, where efforts are being undertaken to counter similar threats posed by the politicisation of Islam. A portion of this workshop was also spent reviewing feedback from the trainers and participants from the year's PERpaduan training.



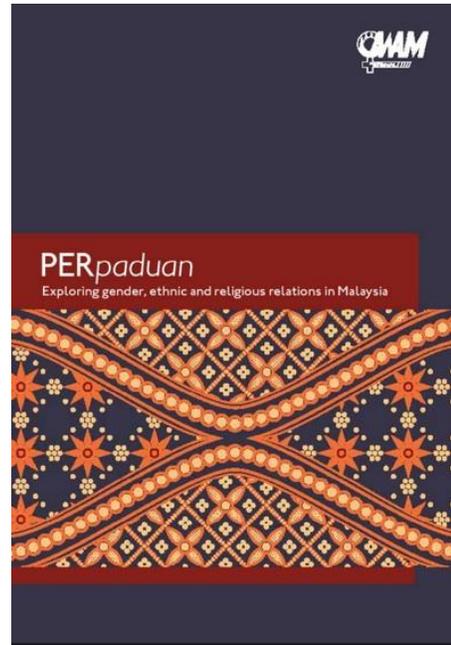
The resource team for the PCTT workshop comprised Kamala,² Prema, Cecilia and beng hui, with organising and documentation assistance provided by Deepa, Wei San and Kamilia.

² Kamala was also responsible for running a one-and-a-half day session (16-17 Sept) on resource mobilisation and advocacy strategies for AWAM members just prior to the PCTT Workshop. This helped us contextualise our PER work against broader global developments, and better understand the importance of being reflexive in the advocacy we undertake.

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2. Publications and Promotional Materials

The English version of the PERpaduan Training Manual was finalised towards the end of 2014 but continues to be work-in-progress as case studies or exercises are tweaked to keep up with changing times. Work on its Bahasa Malaysia version commenced in the second-quarter of 2015 after a slight delay. This translation work is almost completed and is expected to be ready by early 2016. As we plan to conduct more PERpaduan workshops in Malay, the availability of this translated manual will be most welcomed, and we expect that it will help boost the number of Bahasa Malaysia-speaking trainers as well. Thank you Rozana, Siew Eng, Masjaliza, and Ezrena for working on this project with us.



During the year too, the PER Committee, led by our very own Lin, started work on a short videoclip to share our message about politicised ethnicity and religion in a more creative and accessible manner. It will be shared on AWAM's website and Facebook pages upon completion (tentatively in early 2016). We hope that posting it on Facebook will help generate debate and discussion on the subject matter, with an audience that we would otherwise not reach.

3. AWAM Big Group Meeting

AWAM's Big Group Meetings were conceptualised as a space where members can come together to discuss contentious topics, and help the organisation gain clarity and develop a public stand on these if required. The first BGM for 2015 was hosted by the PER Committee on 11 April, to allow members to further explore the debates around vernacular education in this country. Our resource person was Chin Huat whose presentation 'Is a single stream education system good for Malaysia' provided a different take on a subject that has been contested for many years, and seen by some as being a product of politicised ethnicity. Amongst others, he pointed to the myth of English education as a social unifier, at the same time questioning the levelling effect of those who insist on 'mother tongue' education. Diversity, he argued, was not the problem but segregation and failure to deal with diversity was. Ultimately, this would lead to inequality.

Following this, the PER Committee proposed that AWAM's position on the vernacular versus national schools debate be as follows:

AWAM supports people's right to learn in the language of their own preference. In an ideal situation, every community (e.g. within a geographical location) should be able to decide what language their children are taught in. For instance, if there are

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200 children who want to learn in Tamil, then this should be possible. However, AWAM also believes that the vernacular education debate is a red herring. It distracts us from a more critical issue at hand, that of the poor quality of education which Malaysian children as a whole, receive. This situation is compounded because education is politicised. The most important aspect about education in Malaysia today is ensuring access to quality education for *all* children, one where they are able to learn how to think critically and build knowledge.

This position was adopted by the Working Collective on 6 August 2015.

4. Building alliances

In light of the unabated politicisation of ethnic and religious relations in the country in 2015, the PER Committee reaffirmed its commitment towards building bridges with women from the mass-based Muslim organisation, Ikram. We believe this to be an important step towards breaking down ethnic and religious barriers and misconceptions that have been deliberately fostered by those who politicise Islam. The Hentikan Rogol campaign which AWAM helped coordinate and the anti-rape digital campaign that AWAM worked on with a local political party, proved to be fortuitous opportunities for both AWAM and Wanita Ikram to get to know each other better at a personal and organisational level.

5. Upgrading the PER database

Since 2012, the PER Committee has monitored and stored PER-related news, articles and other resources to help inform our work. In an attempt to make these resources more useful and accessible to the PERpaduan pool of trainers, and members of the PER Committee, we decided to revamp and improve our database system in 2015 by introducing a standardized workflow and tagging system. With these improvements in place, information will be stored more efficiently, with better contextualisation and access to the relevant resources.

Conclusion and plans for 2016

All in all, 2015 was a fairly good year for the Committee in terms of the inroads we made raising awareness about PER, and offering an alternative understanding and narratives about gender, ethnicity and religion in Malaysia. Even though the numbers of those we reached were small (limited by the size of our training pool), we are confident that over time, this will grow, as will the impact of our PERpaduan workshops as attested to by the feedback of those we trained. The small number has enabled us to focus on quality and depth of the subject matter.

For this to happen we will continue to run our PERpaduan youth workshops, and will adopt a more structured follow-up programme in 2016, one that allows us to work with selected

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participants to nurture and develop their own ideas or plans in countering PER. We will also continue to support our pool of trainers, and hope to add to their numbers too.

As well, we expect to continue strengthening our linkages with Wanita Ikram, and to work together on issues of common interest.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Staff Coordinator: Evelynne Gomez

Media Team:

Members: Betty Yeoh Siew Peng

Ho Yock Lin

Lee Wei San

Sofia Lim Siu Ching

Thency Gunasekaran

Overview of 2015

In 2015, AWAM gained a much more noticeable online presence, which led to an increased engagement on our social media as opposed to previous years

This section contains a summary of AWAM's work in the following areas:

1. AWAM's publications which are e-links, and event booklets
2. AWAM engagement with the media that includes AWAM's and JAG's press statements, TV and radio interviews, and radio and video community messages.
3. Social media which include Facebook and Twitter.
4. Website

1. AWAM's PUBLICATIONS

A. E-links

The E-link is a form of monthly newsletter for AWAM to members and is used to update news, programmes and activities that have been carried out in the previous month. It is also used as a tool to inform members about upcoming AWAM events. In 2015, AWAM E-links were published bi-monthly, and 6 E-links were published over the course of the year.

B. Event Booklets

AWAM publishes a booklet for each of its main events. This year, booklets were made for the 10th Annual Treasure Walk-a-Hunt, and the White Ribbon Run 2015.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

2. AWAM ENGAGEMENT WITH THE MEDIA

A. PRESS STATEMENTS

AWAM Press Statements, Quotes, Mentions in the Media

In 2015, AWAM responded to statements in the press, either by request, or through our own volition. This is one of the main ways in which we are able to get our message on AWAM's stand on social issues out to the public. AWAM published 12 press statements in 2015.

At the same time, AWAM issued out 1 letter to the editor on the myths and realities of rape and endorsed 16 JAG press statements as well as 13 statements from various other organisations.

AWAM's press statements are drafted and/or vetted via its Media Team. AWAM's quotes and/or features can be found here: www.awam.org.my/communications/press-statements/

Month	Date	No.	Title	Picked Up By
February	17th	1.	Letter to the editor on the myths and realities of rape	Malaysiakini Malay Mail Online The Sun Daily
March	9th	2.	International Women's Day Event Press Release	The Star Sin Chew Daily
April	8th	3.	Treasure Walk-a-Hunt Event Press Release	The Star The Sun Daily
	29th	4.	Women Do Not Owe Their Husbands Sex	Malaysiakini Malay Mail Online Yahoo UK Free Malaysia Today
May	13th	5.	AWAM's Press Statement on Statutory Rape	Malaysiakini The Star Online The Star (print) Sin Chew Daily (print)
	15th	6.	Press Release on Treasure Hunt Action	Malaysiakini
June	1st	7.	Post-Event Press Release on AWAM's 10 th Annual Treasure Walk-a-Hunt	The Star (print) Berita Hairan

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July	6th	8,	AWAM's Press Statement on Maternity Aurat Pants	Reuters Business Insider AVC News (Australia) Thomson Reuters Foundation Straits Times Malay Mail Online (x2) Philly Voice Times Voice Irish Examiner Asian Age Vocal Republic
	8th	9.	AWAM's Press Statement on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace	The Star Online Free Malaysia Today
Sept	5th	10.	Press Release on AWAM's White Ribbon Forum	
	15th	11.	Happy Malaysia Day from AWAM	
October	29th	12.	The White Ribbon Run and Walk 2015 Pre-Launch	
November	22nd	13.	OVER 1000 BREAK THEIR SILENCE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT THE AWAM WHITE RIBBON RUN 2015	

JAG Issued Press Statements in 2015

The Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), a coalition of non-governmental organisations of which AWAM is a part of, issued 15 statements/letters to the editor in 2015, compared to 10 in 2014.

1. Withdrawing the Appeal Against the Damages Assessment Award to Noorfadilla binti Ahmad Saikin [6 January 2015]
2. Case of Nirmala Thapa, 24 year old Nepali migrant worker jailed for having had an abortion [29 January 2015]
3. Selangor Mufti Must Be Held Accountable For Statement Condoning Domestic Violence [29 January 2015]
4. Modest Attire Will Not Prevent Rape [12 February 2015]

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5. Aiyoh Wat Lah 2015 Press Statement [29 March 2015]
6. Equating women politicians with “leaking pipes” due to menses [16 April 2015]
7. Malaysia must act now to save human lives, protect victims of trafficking [18 May 2015]
8. JAG Expresses Shock Over Arbitrary Dress Code Enforcement in Government Offices [9 June 2015]
9. JAG Statement on Marital Rape [12 June 2015]
10. Stop mixing-up stats – Women do not outnumber men in labour force [17 August 2015]
11. JAG Statement In Support Of Bersih 4 [26 August 2015]
12. Don't Blame Women For Making Your Own Bad Decisions [8 September 2015]
13. Nirmala's Acquittal Welcome but Reproductive Rights Still a Concern [21 September 2015]
14. Malaysia Still Long Way To Go In Overcoming Child Marriage [2 October 2015]
15. Letter to the Editor Decrying Threats to G25 Spokesperson Datuk Noor Farida Ariffin [16 December 2015]

JAG press statements can be found here: www.awam.org.my/communications/press-statements/

B. MEDIA INTERVIEWS

AWAM also attended media interviews with print, radio and television stations to talk about the issues we work on, to promote our campaigns as well as fundraising events, and to share AWAM's work.

Radio/Television Interviews

AWAM participated in 11 radio interviews and 6 TV/video interviews in 2015.



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Month	No.	Show/Programme	Topic/Issue	Presenter(s)
January	1.	Traxx FM (20th)	Safety of Women in the Workplace	Wei San
February	2.	Traxx FM (11th)	Are Women Really Liberated?	Wei San & Kristine (WAO)
	3.	Traxx FM (27th)	Feminism and International Women's Day	Wei San & Evie
March	4.	DurianAsean (24th)	Rape	Yock Lin
	5.	DurianAsean (26th)	Sexism In Your Face!	Evie, Aliah (SIS), & Kristine (WAO)
April	6.	Traxx FM (9th)	AWAM'S Treasure Walk-a-Hunt	Yong Yi & Jude
	7.	Bella NTV7 (29th)	Women's Labour Participation	Betty
May	8.	Traxx FM (8th)	Women In The Workforce: Gender Equality	Yong Yi & Yock Lin
June	9.	Capital FM (3rd)	Hentikan Rogol	Wei San & Aliah (SIS)
	10.	BFM (15th)	Domestic Violence	Betty
	11.	Bella NTV7 (22nd)	Domestic Violence	Wei San & Emily
August	12.	TV2 (2 nd)	Dress Codes	Yong Yi & Kelvin
	13.	Astro Arena (27 th)	White Ribbon Campaign	Yong Yi & Lochna
October	14.	Traxx FM (16 th)	White Ribbon Campaign	Jude & Jason
November	15.	RTM 2 (15 th)	White Ribbon Campaign	Yong Yi
	16.	NTV7 (18 th)	Sexual Harassment	Betty
	17.	Lite FM (24 th)	AWAM's Services	Emily

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Impact of engagement with print and online media

As a result of the press releases and media interviews AWAM fielded, we were featured in at least 132 print and online media articles in 2015, in addition to the TV/radio interviews listed above.

Print/Online Interviews

AWAM receives interview requests from the various print and online media sources each other. These interviews allow us to spread our messages and information through to the general public. Below is a list of interviews AWAM fielded in 2015.

Month	No	Newspaper/Magazine	Topic/Issue	Person/People Interviewed	Picked Up By
January	1.	Ellen (counsellor) needed quotes for an article (13th)	Wage Discrepancy Between Men and Women	Media team	
	2.	The Star (25th)	Law to prevent parents from using physical punishment on their children	Yock Lin	
	3.	Malaysiakini (they called but never followed up) (29th)	Statements from the Selangor Mufti	Yock Lin/Wei San	
February	4.	Malaysiakini (Feb 6th)	Prohibition of conversion without settling an existing civil marriage	Media Team	
March	5.	New Sunday Times (March 8th)	A woman's place in the modern world	Betty	New Sunday Times
	6.	The Star (March 31st)	Statutory Rape Case	Media Team	The Star
April	7.	FocusWeek (April 1st)	Aiyoh Wat Lah	Evie, Aliah (SIS), and Kristine	FocusWeek (two articles - online and

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

			(WAO)	print)
	8.	NST (April 10th)	Indecent dressing enforcements in Terrenganu	Media Team
	9.	Malaysian Digest (April 22nd)	Counselling statistics on domestic abuse cases	Media Team Malaysian Digest
	10.	The Star (April 23rd)	Lonely women on the internet late at night being targets for ISIS	Media Team
	11.	The Star (April 24th)	Aiyoh Wat Lah	Evie, Aliah (SIS), and Kristine (WAO) The Star Online (two articles)
May	12.	The Star (May 5th)	Mara porn case	Yock Lin The Star Online
	13.	Sinchew Daily (May 13th)	Statutory rape	Yock Lin Sinchew Daily
	14.	The Star (May 16th)	Progress of amendments to the child act	Contacted AWAM, referred to the child NGOs
June	15.	The Sun Daily (June 9th)	JPJ dress code incident	Yock Lin The Sun Daily
	16.	NST (June 10th)	Top reasons of divorce amongst Muslim couples	Media team
	17.	The Rakyat Post (June 10th)	Decision of the courts to not criminalise marital rape	Media team
	18.	The Argonaut LA (June 11th)	Hentikan Rogol	Betty, Thency, & Evie
	19.	NST (June 14th)	Syariah Family Court tracking husbands who cannot be found to pay alimony	Betty

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	20.	China Press (June 23rd)	Policing of women's clothing	Yock Lin	
	21.	Malay Mail Online (June 23 rd)	Policing of women's clothing	Wei San	
	22.	The Sun Daily (June 24 th)	Catcalling	Yock Lin / Wei San	
	23.	NST (June 27 th)	Sultan of Selangor sending a letter of support to Farah Ann	Wei San	
July	24.	The Star (July 3 rd)	Sexual harassment laws	Betty	The Star Online
	25.	The Star (July 8 th)	Sexual harassment	Media team	
	26.	The Sun Daily (July 19 th)	Cat calling and street harassment	Media team	
	27.	The Rakyat Post (July 20 th)	PAS member's comments on divorcing wives	Media team	
August	28.	Elle Magazine (August 19 th)	Dress codes	Yong Yi / Ain	
	29.	The Sun Daily (August 20 th)	GBV in Malaysia over the past 15 years	Betty	
October	30.	The Malay Mail (October 4 th)	2016 Budget	Wei San	
	31.	The Star (October 13th)	SUHAKAM statement on "the power of the adolescent girl"	Media Team	
	32.	The Star (October 23 rd)	2016 Budget	Yock Lin	
	33.	Malaysiakini (October 23 rd)	2016 Budget	Yock Lin	
	34.	The Straits Times (October 23 rd)	2016 Budget	Yock Lin	

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November	35.	The Star (November 17 th)	Parliament: Athletes who wear “sexy” sports clothes are more likely to be promiscuous	Media team	
December	36.	China Press (December 3 rd)	Child Act	Yock Lin	
	37.	Sin Chew Daily (December 3 rd)	Child Act	Yock Lin	
	38.	Malysiakini (December 26 th)	Child rape	Yock Lin	Malysiakini
	39.	Malay Mail Online (December 31 st)	Statutory rape	Wei San	Malay Mail Online

3. SOCIAL MEDIA

A. Facebook

Through our Facebook platform, we share photos, news articles, videos, posters, general announcements, and event information. These posts help to keep our followers informed on upcoming programmes and events AWAM and other relevant parties may be holding, as well as on the latest news happening in Malaysia and around the world.

Our Facebook page also receives private messages from individuals seeking legal and/or counselling information, as well as requests regarding fundraising, membership, volunteer, and intern opportunities.

By the end of 2015, our Facebook page had a total of **8229** likes, an increase from the end of 2014, which had 7149 likes.

Facebook Page Traffic

Month	No. Of Likes
January	+40
February	+38

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

March	-184
April	+71
May	+114
June	+362
July	+61
August	+68
September	+68
October	+208
November	+140
December	+62
TOTAL	1048

B. Twitter

AWAM's Twitter account @AWAMMalaysia, was created in 2012. It is not as active as our Facebook, but gained much more followers during 2015 due to our increased participation in live tweeting events, such as the Aiyoh Wat Lah Awards and the Hentikan Rogol walk.

By the end of 2015, our Twitter page had a total of **700** followers, an increase from the end of 2014, which had 500 followers.

C. Website

AWAM's website, created in late 2012, is located at www.awam.org.my

Apart from our Facebook and Twitter pages, our website is the main source of information on the internet for people to find out about the organisation, who we are, what we stand for, what we do, and how we can be reached.

Our website is updated frequently with news of our latest events, our latest press releases/statements, new programmes and activities, statistics, and amendments to the laws.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Committee Members

Staff Coordinator: Choong Yong Yi

Member Coordinator: Susanna George

Members:

1. Evelynne Gomez (joined 2 April 2015)
2. Lee Wei San
3. Tan beng hui
4. Thency Gunasekaran (left 11 November 2015)
5. Yuhaniz Sazlin Mohd Aini (joined 27 June 2015)

Overview of 2015

The Membership Development Committee (MDC) was established in 2014 to:

- i. Provide a platform for potential, new and existing members to engage meaningfully with the organisation.
- ii. Create a safe space for potential, new and existing members to have constructive dialogues among themselves.
- iii. Communicate feminist perspectives to the potential, new and existing members via the activities.

In 2015, the committee organised a range of events which we believe have worked towards achieving the goals and targets we set for ourselves.

The membership of AWAM is smaller as compared to previous years with 60 as our current number of members. In the MDC however, we do not see this as a major issue, as what we are aiming towards as a committee has been on growing quality members in the organisation, i.e., those who subscribe to a common vision and mission, and who believe in our values – collectivism, courage, compassion and respect, integrity as well as justice and equality.

1) Feminist Camp

AWAM's first ever Feminist Camp was held from 23 to 25 January 2015 in Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan. The camp was the response of the MDC to a series of discussions around the question: How can we bring feminism back to the centre of AWAM?

We formed an Organising Committee comprising members of the MDC and Wei Hoong. This Feminist Camp Organising Committee (FCOC) came into existence as a lively ad hoc committee sometime in mid-2014.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The FCOC decided that we wanted to create an inviting meeting space where younger and older women from both within and outside AWAM could gather and have unfettered, in-depth conversations about the topics that they cared about the most. The objectives of the camp were fairly straightforward, i.e., to create spaces for diverse conversations on issues of feminism, and to give participants the opportunity to explore feminism.

We agreed to the theme: “*Katak di Bawah Tempurung No More: Exploring Feminism in Malaysia*” as we wanted a theme that was open enough that could accommodate every possible conversation that was on the minds of participants.

We decided to adopt a highly participatory methodology known as Open Space Technology (OST) as the main frame for generating great conversations in the FC. We decided this for two reasons: i) two Committee members, Susanna and Thency, were group process facilitators passionate



about the highly democratic and liberating methodology known as Open Space Technology (OST), and ii) this was also a methodology known and trusted by the majority of FCOC members.

We had 38 participants, mostly from the Klang Valley but also a few who came all the way from Penang at the camp. The programme of the camp was lightly structured so as to enable as much participant-led conversations as possible.

As is the core principle of OST, participants were left to determine all their respective workshop topics within the theme “*Katak di Bawah Tempurung No More: Exploring Feminism in Malaysia*”. As a result, the participants facilitated and documented a total of 22 workshops

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

by themselves and had discussions about issues related to achieving equality and changing the lives of the marginalised and delved into how gender intersects with issues of sexuality, class, ethnicity and religion.

The end result of a very involved, collaborative planning process was an experience of a lifetime for the 38 participants. In the words of one of the participants at the final Closing Circle at the end of the Feminist Camp: “I feel like my head literally exploded with new ideas – I didn’t know what to expect, and I didn’t know anybody before I came...but once I was here, I knew that this is where I wanted to be, and these are the people I have been looking for.”

One of the follow-up activities to the AWAM Feminist Camp was the production of a Book of Proceedings – a compilation of pictures, narratives and reports of all 22 of the workshops held over the course of the three days. The BoP was a labour of love that involved the efforts of all the members of the FCOC as well as volunteers who helped with documentation. Much appreciation goes to adrienne who was the overall coordinator of the production of the BoP, Ying Hui who transcribed the closing circle, the volunteers who gave of their time and all the FCOC members who did the writing, layout and editing.

Appreciation goes to our Organising Committee - Susanna, thency, Wei Hoong, beng hui and Yong Yi for putting this all together.

2) Orientation

The committee conducted two orientations in 2015, i.e., on 28 March and 22 August 2015. Orientation functions as the entry point for people who are curious about AWAM’s work and are interested in becoming members. This year, the committee greatly improved our orientations by introducing a clean language process, in addition to having a standardised format and improving the content and information relayed to participants. The sessions currently cover feminism and gender, history of AWAM, AWAM’s vision, mission and core values, as well as brief overview of AWAM’s programmes. The participants gave positive feedback on the content and methodology of the orientation, saying that they were not overwhelmed by the session. The schedule was flexible enough to allow the participants to have time to discuss and delve deeper into the issues raised at the Orientation.

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We had a total of 21 participants. Out of those who came for our sessions. Nine (9) subsequently were accepted as members. These were Adila, adrienne, Alex, Baanu, Hui Chin, Liza, Sazlin, Shirley and Ying Hui.

3) Feminist Friday

Feminist Friday, held on every third Friday of the month, is a member-driven discussion group that was initiated by participants of the AWAM Movers and Shakers training in 2014 to create space for conversations that explore feminism and women's rights. The format used is a fairly simple one – two facilitators co-



facilitate each session, and the topic as well as the co-facilitators for the next session is decided upon by those present at the previous session. In 2015, this activity was formally included as part of the MDC activities as its objectives was seen as falling under the purview of the MDC. In 2015, the committee committed to host eight Feminist Friday sessions, and all were carried out.

The topics chosen by the participants of the Feminist Fridays this year were: *Is Virginity Important?*, *LGBTIQPA*, *Sex Education*, *Femininity and Feminism*, *Pornography*, *What Makes a Woman?*, *Representation of Minorities in the Media*, and *Feminism is So Over!*. The session on



Femininity and Feminism had one of the largest number of participants, with 17 persons present at the discussion. The participants were a mix of those who have never been to AWAM before, as well as new and older members. All the sessions successfully engaged the participants in lively discussions that further and challenge their own understanding of feminism and feminist issues.

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These sessions were an opportunity to introduce AWAM to new people. Some participants from the Feminist Camp who were fairly new to the organisation took ownership of the sessions and were involved as volunteer facilitators. Out of 16 facilitators, we had four (4) new members and three (3) new volunteers who facilitated the discussions for the first time.

Moving forward, the Membership Development Committee is exploring the possibility of having an anchor (besides staff) as a guide to assist facilitators of the sessions so that the quality of the discussions is enhanced, and to provide adequate support to the new volunteers facilitating for the first time.

4) Katak-Berudu System

With the influx of new members, the committee decided it was important that there was a process in place to ensure that these individuals remain active in AWAM's work and activities, while feeling a sense of kinship and are more integrated with the rest of the membership. Thus, the Katak-Berudu system was introduced as a buddy system with each new member ("Berudu") assigned to an older AWAM member ("Katak") in the committee.

The committee also held a Katak-Berudu movie night in order to facilitate bonding and friendship-building. The movie chosen, "Suami Aku Ustadz", sparked a discussion on media's role in normalising statutory rape and child marriages, and other narratives that further strengthen patriarchal systems.

Conclusion and Future Planning for 2016:

Reflecting on AWAM's role in the larger women's movement, we recognise that this committee needs to move beyond establishing feminist framework within AWAM to strengthening feminist movements outside AWAM that is congruent with feminist analysis and practices.

There have been challenges for the committee to do its work over the past year, partly due to the teething problems and a need to iron out overlapping roles between MDC and other committees as well as limited human resources to carry out all the tasks committed. Nonetheless the committee members were active participants in the team, and were supportive of each other in order to help get the activities implemented.

The committee anchored AWAM's first Feminist Camp, hosted two (2) orientation workshops and eight (8) Feminist Fridays in 2015. These activities served as a platform for individuals who are keen to further explore and engage in discussions and exchange of ideas about women's

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issue and feminism. These understandings were key in encouraging individuals to get involved in activism work. Those who wish to do more within AWAM were able to sign-up to various organising committees to contribute further to AWAM's work. In addition, we elevated the standard of the orientation workshops. We also regularly hosted Feminist Friday throughout the year and it introduced new faces to AWAM.

Moving into 2016, the MDC would continue to implement programmes to keep members engaged and interested in AWAM's work, and to encourage them to take more ownership of AWAM's activities, including Feminist Camp, Feminist Fridays and the IWD activity. The committee also plans to run a series of capacity building workshops for members, including on group process awareness, effective communications in teams and meeting facilitation. The committee is also committed to supporting a continued learning and knowledge building for our members and volunteers. Amongst the activities planned for 2016 are discussion sessions on the notion of collectivism and feminism.

FUNDRAISING

Committee Members:

Staff Coordinator: Choong Yong Yi (transferred to GBV in August 2016) | Lochna Menon (started 3rd August)

Member Coordinator: Judith Loh Foong Lin

Members: Betty Yeoh, Choong Yong Yi, Ho Wai Ling, Ho Yock Lin, Madelynn Tan, Lee Wei San, Liena Chin Oay Oay, Liza Lew, Susie Cheng, Yasmin Ahmad Ariffin (Observer/Volunteer)

Overview of 2015

The Fundraising Committee focuses on organising major fund-raising public events for AWAM to raise funds for AWAM and highlight AWAM's work in the public sphere. The events coordinated by the committee in 2015 were as follows:

1) 10th Annual Treasure Walk-A-Hunt

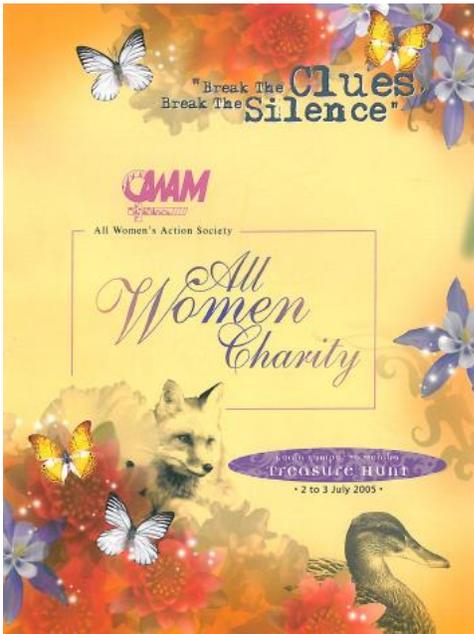
AWAM held its 10th Treasure Walk-a-Hunt at Viva Shopping Mall, Cheras. With over a hundred participants, it was a fun-filled day to “Pace for Change”. This year, the winning teams - 4Ekor and Team Bolster took home the grand prize, a 4 Day 3 Night Phuket and Krabi cruise sponsored by Star Cruise. The Lucky Draw event that was held after the Walk-a-Hunt allowed other participants to try their luck in winning some very exciting prizes, including a 4 Day 3Night Phuket and Krabi cruise by Star Cruise. For the past 10 years, AWAM's Treasure Walk-a-Hunt has been a success and could not have been achieved if it were not for our generous sponsors and participants. Despite our achievements, we know that there is still a long way to go before all women are afforded the equal opportunity and access they deserve. Thus, AWAM's annual Treasure Walk-a-Hunt was organised as part of our efforts to create a just, democratic and equitable society where all persons, including women, are free from all forms of discrimination and violence.



A Decade of Hunting For Equality

FUNDRAISING

2015 marks the final year of AWAM's treasure hunt for gender equality. In the ten years AWAM has organised the Treasure Hunt, we have continually reassessed our understanding of equality in



reference to gender. The Treasure Hunt is unique because the hunt itself mirrors AWAM's commitment to bring about greater gender equality for all. In the initial years, the hunt was only open to women participants; it was in our fourth year that we opened registration to everyone as we came to recognise that the fight for gender equality does not only belong to women, but everyone, as the fight for justice and change belongs to all.

Interestingly, in organising the Treasure Hunt, we were able to uncover the ways we ourselves conceive safe spaces for women when some of our members were hesitant to drive independently out of State for fear of being mugged, harassed et cetera. Such circumstances only serve to emphasise the importance of our work: women should not need to limit the space they occupy but rather spaces should be liberated to everyone.

Women's rights are human rights, and in no circumstance should there be discrimination against women on the basis of gender. However, there are cultural stereotypes steeped in patriarchy which subject women to certain kinds of violence, especially sexual and social violence. The first (2002) and second (2004) hunt were largely successful and AWAM was able to amass large funds for our work. During our fifth (2008) year of holding the hunt, winners from 'The Amazing Race' from Singapore and Philippines surprised us while we were 'Hunting for Equal Footing', much to the delight of the participating teams by joining our event. The sixth (2010), seventh (2012) and eighth (2013) year saw an increase in familiar faces joining up with AWAM to help us in our quest for gender equality. In 2010, singers Ning Baizura and Jaclyn Victor performed for our participants. Towards the later years, the theme of the hunt became clearer: 'Step Up for Change', 'Team Up for A Difference' and 'Gender equality - Pace for Change'.



FUNDRAISING

As we close this decade of hunting for equality, we would like to thank all our sponsors, participants and organisers who helped us create ten years of fun-filled, thrilling, awareness-building hunt for gender equality. We are incredibly grateful that the Treasure Hunts has given us so many opportunities to connect with people and engage with them in a fun and interactive way.

2) White Ribbon Run

AWAM held its third White Ribbon Run at Padang Merbok on November 22nd. With approximately 1000 participants in attendance, AWAM successfully emphasised that gender-based violence and violence against women are not solely women's rights issues, they are human rights issues and we should all be involved in addressing it. The White Ribbon is a powerful campaign that solicits men's involvement in the struggle for equality and an end to violence against women. This year (2015), AWAM was able to launch several male ambassadors of the White Ribbon who are able to speak on the gender biases that exist in our patriarchal society and they include Jason Liang, Soh Teng Kuann, Farhan bin Haziq, Steven Leong and his son, Bryan. The theme of the White Ribbon this year is the stories of the generations, where across the ages carry with them burdens given to them by patriarchal system and the stories that liberated them from this burden of perpetuating particular gender roles and stereotypes.

The White Ribbon is a powerful campaign which was only made possible by the continuous support of the public. We would especially like to thank the organising committee, as well as our wonderful volunteers and generous donors and sponsors for helping us make the event a huge success. We are especially thankful to receive the support of Maju Nusa, Wong and Partners, and Thiam Lai Yean Foundation.



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The White Ribbon Forum

The White Ribbon Public Forum is the child of the White Ribbon Campaign, aiming to elicit the participation of men in the advocacy to eliminate gendered social violence. This forum is one of its kind, consisting of 4 speakers representing the different social areas and the ways that Power, Privilege and Permission perpetuates gender stereotypes and inequity. These social areas are the arts and humanities, the entertainment industry, legal and psychological. Their respective representatives were Mr. Mueen, an international artist from Sri Lanka; Kong Eu who is a deejay at Traxx.fm; Jason Liang from Wong & Partners, and Alexius Cheah, a psychology lecturer from



IMU. What was interesting was that we had three male respondents below 25 who were able to provide their insights, drawing on their own experiences to add depth to the ensuing public discussion on gender, gender roles and men's experience of gender.

The event was held on 5 September 2015 at Three-Two Square, Petaling Jaya and successfully garnered an audience of thirty people, including the media. What was very interesting about the forum was that the discussion veered towards gender equality on its own, as speakers and respondents pondered on the distribution and access

to privilege on the basis of gender. Jason Liang, one of our speakers, went on to attend a radio show with AWAM's own, Judith Loh to talk about the White Ribbon Campaign. We would also like to acknowledge our White Ribbon Ambassadors, men who have taken up the platform to speak out against gender-based violence: David Anthony, Farhan Haziq, Ben Ibrahim and Noor Azamin bin Noor Azahari.

Other Fundraising Efforts

We would also like to take this opportunity to give recognition and thanks to organisations and individuals who have organised fundraising drives for AWAM. We are grateful to receive the support funder the Akemi Uchi label by Eadess Sdn. Bhd. with a total contribution of RM21,000; and His Sanctuary of Glory (HSG) raised RM5,000 from its Make A Difference Awareness Bazaar in support of our work. Kamini Manickam, an independent classical dancer had put together RM3,000 in donation to AWAM from the sales of tickets to LIPSTICK Series 2: sHE, woMAN,

FUNDRAISING

feMALE. AWAM also appreciates the jointly organised fundraising dinner by Ben's Independent Grocer (BIG) and Kitchen Table, who successfully raised RM 7,662.18 in donation to AWAM.

Last but not least, we would like to extend our appreciation to all our wonderful supporters and valued partners for supporting our mission and work over the years, empowering women and bringing forth a more empowered society. We would like to acknowledge the selfless contribution of Ho Wai Ling, Madelynn Tan, Liena Chin, Sue Chong and Susie Cheng in AWAM's fundraising efforts, over the years.



Conclusion and Future Planning for 2016:

The Fundraising Committee will be organising the White Ribbon Run in 2016. This year, the committee will be working with communities to have a more powerful and visible impact in creating safe and gender equal spaces for all. We also hope to receive collaboration from communities in the form of venue sponsorship, publicity, safety and security. We aim to raise awareness and create a shift in the way people think of women and men, and the way we perceive women's rights.

INTERNS, MEMBERS, AND VOLUNTEERS

Overview of 2015

In 2015, we had four intern counsellors to assist AWAM in providing counselling services and seven general interns who assisted with various areas of AWAM's work such as research, library organisation, database updating, social media and media statements: Zhen Ni, Nikkola Mikocki-Bleeker, Sathya Baanu Jeevanba, Kelvin Ng, Adrienne Cassandra Robson, Kavitha A/P Govindan, and Nur Hafizah binti Johari.

Member Experience at AWAM

by Ho Wai Ling

As I construct this piece, my memory throws me back to 2002. I had called a few organisations then, with the intention to do charity work by volunteering my services, which I did when I first started work. One of the organisations I had called declined immediately as they didn't need someone who was only able to help during free time; they preferred someone who able to commit fixed hours. I didn't completely understand that but I did not give up. Eventually, I came across AWAM's advertisement in The Star looking for volunteers to become paracounsellors (after undergoing training by AWAM) services to those who in need.



I registered myself on that fateful Saturday where my journey at AWAM began. Eight training sessions on Saturdays sparked my curiosity to find out more. As I continued my exploration of myself and the cause at AWAM, I didn't hesitate to dig my fingers in different areas, such as services, trainings and fundraising.

It seems like a lot of work. And yes, the workload was above what I was paid to do. I am asked, to this day, "You resigned (from AWAM)?" My casual answer is, "I never work at AWAM; I am a member and volunteer". Some of my friends often remarked on my activism whenever I have had to decline their invitation because of my commitments to AWAM; "You and your AWAM," they would say.

Don't get me wrong; I am not as generous as you think. AWAM opened up my mind, gave me the platform to learn and opportunities to choose what I want to do. Aside from work, there are numerous workshops organised for members, and activities by sister organisations as well as

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associates. Knowledge and skills acquired from all these activities have definitely added value to my career, not forgetting networks and friendships built along the way.

All the people in AWAM are my mentors in one way or another. As I mentioned earlier, I choose what I want. On that note, the sweet and beautiful memories of my journey, I carry with me and are backed up on my archive; while the less pleasant experiences I carry with me as a reminder to be cautious, and not to do it onto others.

Intern Experiences at AWAM



by Zhen Ni [1st December 2015 – 15th January 2016]

My initial thought right after graduation was, “Okay, what now?”. After having read law for three years, I was admittedly a bit directionless, fumbling around trying to decide whether or not to continue down the path to be a lawyer. The only certainty I had was a desire to work in human rights, and after a few months of debating with myself about what I should do next, I finally took the plunge to apply for an internship. The amount of information I was given on my first day felt like a forkful of your fourth slice of cake—you’re stuffed, but you want more. It was a matter of getting up to speed on past and current happenings at AWAM, and once that was out of the way, it was clear that the work done both within the organisation and in collaboration with other organisations was incredibly diverse, and more importantly, relevant. I say this because through the work that AWAM does on the ground level—trainings, public education, counselling— there is a direct and immediate impact. Surrounded by perhaps the friendliest and most passionate bunch of people I have ever met, AWAM is definitely an organisation I personally will always gravitate towards.

by Effie Johari [1st October – 31st December 2015]

My internship at AWAM provided me with a platform to experience working in an organisation that fights for women’s liberation through collective efforts, and my exposure to AWAM’s network gave me a glimpse into how various government and civil society bodies function in the broader feminist movement. During my internship, I was introduced to an organisation that works to maximise its impact by focusing on areas it was most effective in,



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while working towards building the capacity to be inclusive in its activism. Most admirable to me was the fact that AWAM is constantly evolving to be better, and is always open to learning from change or listening to new voices.

As someone who has been exposed to feminist ideas and writings from a young age, I was curious as to how the (lifelong) process of internalizing values and the reading of articles and books compared to physically working in a feminist organisation, surrounded by other dedicated feminists. In particular, the PERpaduan Youth Workshops exposed me to training and education as a tool of advocacy, and allowed me to meet participants and trainers of the workshops. Besides that, I am also grateful to have had the opportunity to rapporteur for AWAM's Evaluation and Planning meeting, as I came away with a deeper understanding of AWAM's work and its different committees, and had the chance to bond with members and staff of AWAM.

Initially, I considered my internship as a professional endeavour, but towards the end, I realized that I had gained just as much personally. I made many friends, constantly surrounded by discussions that were thought-provoking and opinions that were diverse. I carry away a lot of positive memories of working and simply hanging out with people, talking, sharing food, playing games, etc. Getting to know the people in AWAM and being part of a group that share feminist ideals (even with different interpretations, even for a short period of time) was the key takeaway from the program. Being a feminist is a constant struggle both external and internal, and being around good people makes the work not just bearable, but rewarding in and of itself.



by Adrienne Robson [8th June 2015 – 27th November 2015]

Interning at AWAM has been an experience no words can pen my emotions to and I am going to try anyway. Coming in with the motivation to learn as much as I can from the women's movement here in Malaysia; I left AWAM with that, and more. AWAM gave me the space to critically analyse, reflect and question, which is something that isn't condoned or encouraged in the public education system that I come from in Malaysia.

Having the ability to experience such spaces left me feeling empowered and I am immensely grateful to the staff of AWAM for having given me the opportunity to do so. The amiable, kind, compassionate and dedicated staff and volunteers made it easier to be absorbed in the work that they do and continue to stay around for. The flattening of hierarchies AWAM practices also

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created equal opportunities for me and the experiences (e.g. attending workshops, forums, discussions etc.) I have gotten from this opportunity has been exceedingly enriching and beneficial. It was worth every six months of my time at AWAM and I would definitely encourage other feminists, activist or even inquisitives out there to apply for an internship. You might not leave a feminist, but at least you'd leave loving some.

by Kelvin Ng [11th May – 31st July 2015]

My internship at AWAM has certainly enriched my knowledge and made me re-evaluate my values to stand for more inclusivity. Working at AWAM as a cisgender male was ultimately a very humbling experience because I've come to grasp the multifaceted, intersectional nature of privilege, and realise that so many things I've taken for granted are actually manifestations of my privilege. Beyond evolving my views on feminism and gender, my experience in AWAM has also equipped me with a broad scope of skills applicable to almost any profession, such as writing/editing, proofreading, research and copywriting. I'm beyond inspired by the experiences I've had working and interacting with passionate, committed feminists, and I seek to use my own privilege in ways that can contribute to dismantling the patriarchy. I hope AWAM continues its good work and inspires more in the years to come!



by Sathya Baanu Jeevanba [1st April – 15th July 2015]

Deciding to apply for an internship with AWAM was an easy decision to make. It seemed like an inherently natural progression towards my personal and career development. I started developing interest in feminism while in college and always wanted to learn more about it in a Malaysian context. When I got introduced to the ideas and beliefs that make up feminism, I was in the United States and though there are many shared concepts, being able to learn and know about how feminism is interpreted in Malaysia and used to facilitate the fight towards gender-equality provided me with a wider and most importantly, intersectional understanding of feminism.

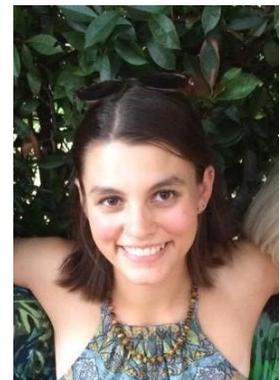
INTERNS, MEMBERS, AND VOLUNTEERS

Working in AWAM has definitely been such a rewarding experience. I must say that the sense of inclusivity that exists in AWAM is due to the people working here. Everyone at AWAM has been more than welcoming and it was not difficult to feel comfortable and part of the team.

I am so glad I decided to intern at AWAM as it has been inspiring and I hope to always carry on these values in my life. I also hope that AWAM will continue to inspire others by the work it does!

by Nikkola Mikocki-Bleeker [9th February – 17th April 2015]

I chose to apply for an internship at AWAM because I have a huge interest in the unique ways in which feminism and women's empowerment are interpreted in different cultural contexts. As someone who tries to respect others' lived experience and an intersectional brand of feminism, viewing issues surrounding gender and sexuality in a different cultural light is vital. As western (and white) feminists, I think if we do not critically and reflexively examine the way in which other cultures pursue women's empowerment in comparison to our own methods it is impossible to avoid hegemony. In my view, feminism ought to recognise that unique axes of oppression exist, in order to avoid being prescriptive. This is not just regarding difference in culture, but also religion, gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, ability, class and other identifiers. Feminism should expound solidarity, respect, and progression of an equality that is inclusive. Ideally, this equality acknowledges that difference exists yet holds that recognising this difference should never result in the subordination of one experience by another.



My experience at AWAM has been, in respect to the above, incredibly useful. I have learnt about the ways in which Malaysian feminism compares and contrasts to my experience of feminism at home in Australia. This has been challenging, rewarding and immeasurably insightful. I have been offered unique and exciting opportunities in the form of the tasks I have performed. Yet, perhaps most of all, my personal experience has been of the incredibly warm work environment of the organisation. I could not have asked for a more friendly welcome than the one that I have received, and I think my lasting impression will be more of the amazing people I have encountered and worked with than of the work itself.

THE AWAM CENTRE'S RENOVATION

From mid-March to early May, the AWAM Centre underwent extensive renovation both outside and inside the building. During this time, the AWAM staff relocated to office space at Forum 19.

We would like to extend a note of thanks to Sue Chong, Inovar, Sarah Sheah, Mr Sheah of GLights, and Mr Lee for their assistance and support during our renovation process.

Special thanks to our renovation team, Emily, Yock Lin, and Jude, who oversaw the whole process!



APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE

We would like to warmly thank all our sponsors, volunteers, members, and everyone who has supported us and participated in our events over the year. Your contributions have helped us keep working towards a violence free community in Malaysia!

From the AWAM Family