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**Women's Centre for Change
Pusat Kesedaran Wanita**

(formerly Women's Crisis Centre)

www.wccpenang.org

ANNUAL REVIEW

2008

• SERVICES • COUNSELLING • HOTLINE • SHELTER •



Women's Centre for Change **Pusat Kesedaran Wanita**

(formerly Women's Crisis Centre)

The Women's Centre for Change (WCC) Penang is a non-governmental, non-profit organization dedicated to the elimination of violence against women and children and the promotion of gender equality. We believe that women, men and children have a right to live in a society free from all forms of violence and discrimination.

Established in 1985 by a group of concerned women and men, WCC provides free services in counselling, emotional support, legal advice and temporary shelter for women in crisis, irrespective of their ethnicity, religion and social background.

WCC also conducts various outreach programmes on sexual abuse prevention for children and youth and on gender awareness for the public. WCC is a member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) which actively campaigns for policy and legal reforms affecting women and children.

In 2002, WCC underwent a name change from Women's Crisis Centre to Women's Centre for Change to better reflect our expanded scope of work.

Donation & Sponsorship

WCC is a registered, tax-exempt organization and welcomes donations and sponsorships which will help promote our work and activities. Cheques should be made payable to: Women's Centre for Change.

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President's Report 2008

by Datin Chin Khuan Sui

Looking Back in 2008...

Year 2008 turned out to be such an exciting time for Malaysians. The watershed 12th General Election which took place on March 8, coinciding with International Women's Day, saw for the first time in our 50 year history, the ruling party Barisan National being deprived of a two-third majority in Parliament with five states under the rule of the opposition coalition, Pakatan Rakyat. But what does this political change actually mean for Malaysian women?



Sadly, all signs indicate that women's interests have gone under the radar of our predominantly male leadership. Even though the number of women candidates fielded was the highest in this general election, women were still under-represented. We constituted a mere 8% of the total of the 1,568 seats contested. After the election, our numbers remained at 11% (24 out of 222) in Parliament and only 8% (40 out of 505) at the State Assemblies. This hardly reflects the government's target to increase women's participation in decision-making positions to at least 30%.

As the months went by, women were once again subjected to the male chauvinistic thinking of our leaders. In response to Malaysian women being used as drug mules, the Foreign Minister disingenuously proposed that all women travelling alone overseas must first get their families' consent. Women were once again blamed when the Kota Baru Municipality issued a circular asking Muslim women not to use heavy lipstick or wear high heel shoes as that would lead to immoral activities. To add insult to injury, the Malacca government proposed that Muslim men be given RM1,000 to take single mothers as second wives! In October, Muslim women's lives were again curtailed when the National Fatwa Council passed a *fatwa* on tomboyish behaviour as well as on the practice of yoga.

Do some of our male leaders care what Malaysian women think and feel when such proposals and rulings are made on our behalf? Is there any thought given that these proposals which affect women who make up 51% of the population should at least be discussed with women first? Where is the respect for



a woman's fundamental right to choose, decide and think for herself? Women should not have ideas imposed on them. In a developed country like Malaysia, it is a constant fight to ensure that such rights are not eroded though often it seems as if these rights are slipping away.

Thus it is incumbent on us women to not only make the change but also to sustain it. We must make our presence felt if we are to become a force to be reckoned with in the future. The 2008 election showed that ordinary citizens have the power to make a difference by using their vote. Women must begin to make that start, as individuals and as part of civil society, to make our voices heard, to fight for our rights – the right to determine our own destiny instead of allowing some gender-insensitive leaders to make decisions on our behalf.

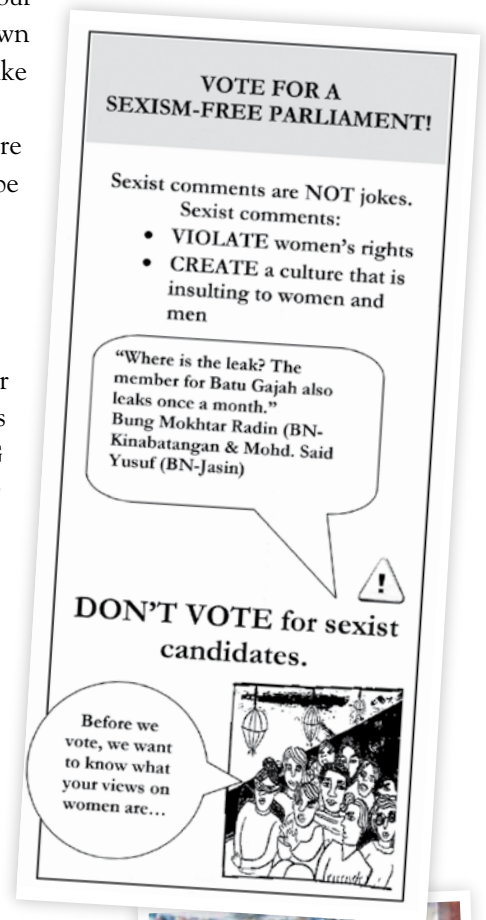
So how does a Penang-based women's group like Women's Centre for Change (WCC) get women's voices heard so that women may be treated as equals in this country?

WCC as part of Civil Society . . .

Our struggle began long ago and in our 2008 strategy we joined our sister organisations, namely All Women's Action Society, Women's Aid Organization, Sisters in Islam and Empower, as part of the JAG (Joint Action Group for Gender Equality) campaign towards urging political parties not to field sexist MPs in the general election. Several letters and press statements were issued early this year highlighting the need for non-sexist politicians and the need to field more women candidates.

Twenty JAG members and supporters made a trip to Sungai Siput to distribute pamphlets on voter education against sexist politicians and to campaign against one of the nine named sexist politicians namely, Datuk Seri Samy Vellu. During the campaign period itself, the Women's Candidacy Initiative created a character *Mak Bedah* who went around asking candidates what their agenda for women would be if they were to be elected. JAG also made its presence felt when its members turned up at the first parliamentary sitting at the august house, distributing to MPs an attractive folder entitled *Kotakan Kata* (Honour your words – Walk the talk) with a list of demands for ending discrimination and promoting gender equality for Malaysian women.

Following the March election, WCC paid a protocol visit to the new Chief Minister, YAB Lim Guan Eng, to present a policy paper on women to look into women's needs and interests. In April, WCC became an active member of a Penang NGO coalition and organized a forum where 150 participants and NGO representatives discussed 11 critical issues from environment, traffic, culture, arts and heritage, women, labour, disability, health, youth and students, goodwill, and local governance. Subsequently the Penang Forum representatives met



with the Penang Chief Minister to deliver the Penang Forum Declaration and seek regular consultation between civil society and state government on issues affecting Penang and its people.

Hence in 2008, WCC played an important role in the civil society in Penang, lobbying for increased consultation between the state and its people. WCC was proud when our committee member, Lim Kah Cheng was selected from one of two NGOs to become a Penang state municipal councillor. Kah Cheng is also a prominent campaigner for the rights of the disabled. Several key WCC persons including our Vice President, Lalitha Menon, Executive Director, Loh Cheng Kooi, and former Vice President, Yuslinov Ahmad, were also selected to be members of *Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan* (MMK) of the Penang State Women, Family and Community Development. In all these activities, WCC's role has been to ensure that the people's issues, particularly women's issues, are heard and become an integral part of good governance and citizenship.

In addition to all these interesting developments, the WCC staff remained steadfastly committed to our ground work for women and children and 2008 was filled with non-stop activities and programmes.

WCC's Services Growing . . .

WCC service for women in crisis, especially domestic violence clients, is well established. In 2008, WCC provided counselling and shelter assistance to over 300 new and former clients, handled 1,000 telephone counselling calls and dealt with an ever-increasing number of e-counselling requests. Our social workers worked tirelessly to ensure that abused women were assisted and empowered with the knowledge to act against violence. They went beyond merely counselling to proactively assist clients to find low cost housing and employment.

To support our ex-clients, WCC organized a skills development workshop to train single mothers to sew quality bags for sale to augment their income. With the help of *Agensi Kaunseling Pengurusan Kredit* (Counselling and Debt Management Agency), WCC held a workshop to teach these women how to manage their limited finances.

To ensure that our social workers do not experience burn out, WCC also conducted a two-day workshop, "Caring for the Caregivers", for 26 caregivers from different service NGOs in recognition of the need for carers and care givers to take care of themselves in order to continue servicing their



clients efficiently and effectively. This workshop was much appreciated as it helped service providers recognize symptoms of stress and burnout and find ways to re-energize themselves through self-reflection and relaxation and so overcome personal challenges.

A new initiative to build a Rape Survivor Network was launched by WCC working together with the One-Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC) in Penang General Hospital. This year, WCC went on call for rape cases handled at the hospital and gave immediate assistance to these clients. This initiative was made possible through the effort of the WCC Programme Director, Prema Devaraj. The direct contact with rape victims enabled WCC to have a better understanding about the situations and types of rape. Interestingly, WCC found that almost half the rape cases were for statutory rape, where many of the underaged victims had had consensual sex with their boyfriends but it was their parents who objected. In these instances, many of these young girls were unaware of their reproductive health or rights. In other rape cases, the rape victims displayed very different reactions immediately after the incident and needed either moral support or trauma counselling. In 2009, a workshop in support of rape victims has been planned to bring together medical personnel and relevant agencies to seek ways to understand rape victims better and help establish a rape victim network.

WCC was approached by the MMK of the Penang State Women, Family and Community Development to set up and manage a women's service centre in Seberang Perai. WCC welcomed such an effort as we realised there are many women living on the mainland and surrounding states who face crises and are unable to come to WCC based on Penang island for reasons of distance, poor public transport, and the lack of resources. We intend to have such a centre in operation by early 2009.



OK TAK OK

WCC's Outreach Expanding ...

Our community outreach work has always been a source of pride for WCC. In 2008 WCC's outreach benefitted an even greater number of people from wider communities. Our personal safety programme on the prevention of child sexual abuse, *Bijak Itu Selamat* (Be Smart, Be Safe) reached a total of 1,160 Standard 5 and 6 primary school children. Our popularity with secondary schools grew as WCC staff and volunteers were kept busy giving talks and workshops on teenage behaviour, relationships and personal safety to both island and mainland schools. These included 17 national and vernacular schools, benefitting nearly 2,200 boys and girls. In institutions of higher learning such as private colleges and USM, WCC



was invited to give talks on issues like gender violence, child sexual abuse and violence against women. WCC frequently acted as resource speakers and trainers on topics like domestic violence, rape and sexuality rights.

For the public, other NGOs, and local communities, WCC was able to reach out to over 1,600 people. WCC's multi-ethnic staff and volunteers worked hard to ensure that most request invitations were met for the different communities and conducted in the language most appropriate to that community.



Despite this busy schedule, the energetic WCC team initiated a new project on Conflict Literacy as an expansion of our work to help children in situations when conflicts arise. The premise is that if at a young age, children are taught how to deal appropriately when a conflict arises, then they will grow up to be less violent. The new initiative saw WCC staff and volunteers being trained on

conflict literacy theory and practice. A module was subsequently developed and piloted in a national and a vernacular school. The project will be followed up in 2009. WCC also undertook a small study on the impact of our personal safety programme *Bijak Itu Selamat* on children. By measuring how much children who have been through our safety programme have learnt compared to those who had not, the study concluded that those who had gone through our programme benefitted significantly in terms of knowledge, skills and confidence gained.

In terms of resources, two colourful brochures were developed; one on domestic violence "When There is Hurt at Home" and another, Wheel of Action OK Tak OK to support the extensive outreach work of WCC. The WCC website (www.wccpenang.org) also underwent a major revamp and the new look has received many good reviews.



This year has been another high performance year for WCC. There is no doubt that the WCC is fortunate in having devoted staff, carrying out their respective tasks and often going beyond the call of duty to ensure that WCC continues to blaze a trail that others would be proud to follow in years to come. The in-flow of volunteers, old and new, with their different skills and expertise complemented and greatly helped office staff with their work, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all.

WCC's says thank you...

WCC is indebted to our sponsors and donors whose monies enabled WCC to carry out our extensive work for 2008. We are extremely grateful to our main sponsor Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED) for supporting our work in reducing violence against women and children. In 2008, WCC was fortunate to be the beneficiary of several charity events; the “Malaysian 1st World Belly Dance Day” organized by the Zero Fitness Dance Studio, “An Evening with Ning Baizura” by Berjaya Georgetown Hotel and Easter Charity Bazaar by Junior Chambers International Tanjung Bunga. The New Millennium Graduates of the USM School of Mass Communication organized a public campaign on domestic violence and held a charity walk for WCC. We are deeply appreciative for our regular grants from the Lim Lean Teng Foundation and the social welfare grant from the government. Every donation is meaningful, whether from an individual or an organization, because it is a sign that our work is acknowledged and well-received. This gives us hope and strength to continue to our goal of promoting a violence-free society where women and men are given due respect and their rights and dignity honoured.

I would also like to thank the staff for their dedication, boundless energy and selfless resolve to help women in need, as well as for their preventive work in outreach. In our every activity and effort, we truly believe in educating and empowering women, men, and children and instilling in them the knowledge that violence is not acceptable, and in this way, bring about the change we need.

Lastly, do log into our website to know more about the work of WCC and share with us on how to do things even better.

“Every donation is meaningful, whether from an individual or an organization, because it is a sign that our work is acknowledged and well-received...”



Patron: Y.A.Bhg. Toh Puan Dato' Seri Utama Hajah Majimor bt. Shariff

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Vice President	■ Lalitha Menon
Secretary	■ Noraida Endut
Assistant Secretary	■ Ivy Ho Siew Yoong
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Internal Auditor	■ Wendy Ang

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Programme Director	■ Prema Devaraj
Service Coordinator	■ Annie Yeap Lay Pheng
Project Officer	■ Tasha Merican
Social Worker	■ Lee Sook Foong
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Administrator	■ Tan Lean Kim
Project Officer (part-time)	■ T. Michael Thomas
Shelter Assistant	■ Sharon Sim Joo Joo
Senior Social Worker	■ Lau Swee Li (Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita)
Project Officer	■ Jayamalar Samuel – up to August 2008
Project Officer	■ Shariza Kamarudin – up to January 2008
Legal Officer	■ Karen Lai Yu Lee – up to June 2008

Sub-Committees

Service (Counselling, Shelter & Training) ■ Jenny Lim*, Maria Francisca, Wendy Ang, Noraida Endut, Annie, Prema, Sook Foong, Tasha Merican, Thomas & Sharon Sim

Community Outreach ■ Ivy Ho*, Lim Kah Cheng, Hajar Abdul Rahim, Sharon Thilainathan, Furziah Affandi, Nora Beh, Tang Kae Shih, Prema & Jaya

Campaign & Advocacy ■ Lalitha Menon*, Lim Kah Cheng, Hajar Abdul Rahim, Shakila Abdul Manan, James Lochhead, Tan Pek Leng, Cheng Kooi, Karen & Shobana

Personnel & Administration ■ Khuan Sui*, Mariam Lim, Yeong Joo Kean & Cheng Kooi

Finance ■ Khuan Sui*, Kah Cheng, Yeong Joo Kean, Ang Cheng Im & Cheng Kooi

** Chairperson of subcommittee*



Service Report 2008

by Annie Yeap, Prema Devaraj, Tasha Merican & Michael Thomas

In 2008, WCC saw a small decline in face-to-face counselling as well as telephone counselling but we had an increase in online counselling. Despite the drop in clients, our staff were kept busy throughout the year with follow-up cases, in particular, seeing to the needs of shelter clients as well as the service outreach programme.

Provision of Services

Table 1: Services Provided and Numbers of Cases Handled in 2008

Type of Services	Total Number
1 Face-to-Face Counselling	434 counselling sessions
2 Telephone Counselling	977 calls
3 Online Counselling	94 emails
4 Shelter	7 women and 8 children
5 Service Outreach	340 participants attended our talks
6 Working with Men	5 men attended group sessions

Face-to-Face Counselling

In 2008, WCC saw a total of 250 new clients, a decrease of 7% compared to 2007. For our new and follow-up cases, a total of 434 counselling sessions were conducted.

In Table 2, out of the 296 clients who came to see us, 46 were from previous years. These clients returned for a total of 74 follow-up sessions with our social workers. There were many follow-up sessions with new clients and some were shelter clients who needed support throughout the process, like referring them to other agencies and finding homes for those who wanted to set up a new life. The social worker assisted shelter clients to find jobs as well.

Table 2: Face-to-Face Counselling in 2008

	Number of clients	Counselling sessions
New cases	250	250
Follow-up sessions*	44	110
Old cases (follow-up)	46	74
Total	296**	434

* Follow-up: Out of the 250 new cases, 44 clients came back for follow-up sessions.

** Total clients seen = 250 + 46 = 296

Table 3: Types of New Cases in 2008

Types of new cases	No. of clients	Percentage (%)
Domestic violence	86	34.0
Marital problems	53	21.0
Information seeking	24	10.0
Legal advice	30	12.0
Relationship problems	19	7.6
Rape	23	9.0
Child sexual abuse	1	0.4
Others	14	6.0
Total	250	100.0

In 2008, domestic violence cases accounted for 34% and remained as the highest category seen. Out of 86 cases, fewer than a third of the clients lodged police reports and only six applied for Interim Protection Order (IPO). Most of the clients said that they did not want to make it a big issue but would rather just file for divorce. Some asked to know their rights and the procedures involved in getting an IPO.

Clients with marital problems (53) also decreased to 21% from 29% in 2007. Half of the women complained that their husbands were having extra-marital affairs. Another 23% stated that they were already separated and needed to know how to go about getting a divorce. 15% of the clients had already filed for divorce but were facing problems because their husbands refused to pay maintenance. The rest were related to spousal behavior like alcoholism and gambling. 12% (30) of the clients approached WCC for legal advice. Most of the problems were related to maintenance, child custody, and property issues.

The number of rape cases rose to 23 compared to seven cases last year. The increased number reported was possibly due to our initiative of starting a rape support network for rape victims prompting the Penang General Hospital to refer these cases directly to WCC for immediate counselling.

WCC received 36 referrals from different agencies including the government hospital, police department, welfare department, Legal Aid Bureau, and political parties' service centres.

"... domestic violence cases accounted for 34% and remained as the highest category..."

Clients' Profile

The ethnic distribution of WCC's clients is as follows: 53% Chinese, followed by Indian (32%), Malay (12%), and others (3%). This trend has remained largely unchanged over the years. There was a slight increase of Malay clients who sought help compared to 2007. 83% of WCC's clientele had secondary education, 9% primary education only and 4% were illiterate. In terms of

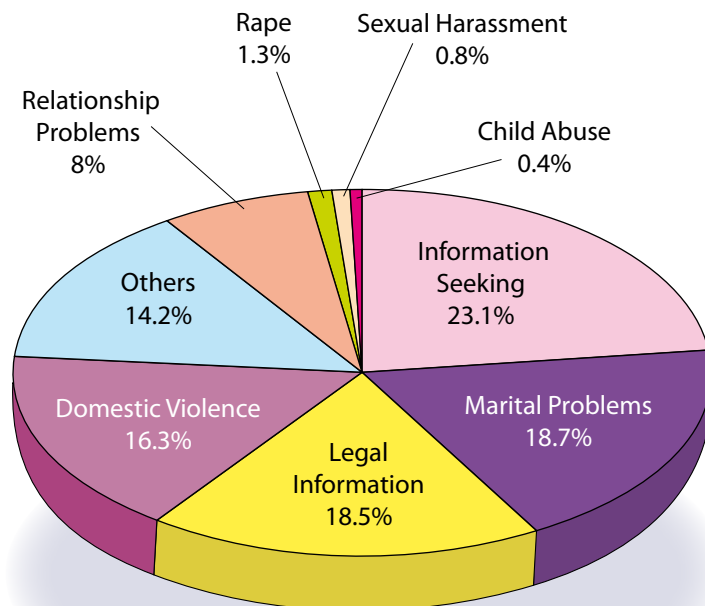
socio-economic background, 66% of the clients were working women, 18% housewives, 10% unemployed and 6% were students. In terms of income, 34% had no income, 40% earned less than RM1,500 per month, and 24% earned more than RM1,500. From the data collected, it was clear that WCC serves primarily women who have only secondary education and in the lower income group.

Telephone Counselling

WCC received a total of 977 calls in 2008 – 529 new calls and 448 follow-up calls. There was a decrease of 12% in telephone counselling compared to 2007 (1,120 calls).

23% of calls received related to information-seeking like job opportunities, financial support, etc. 19% to legal matters like divorce, maintenance and custody of children. Another 19% of the calls were regarding marital problems, e.g., extra-marital affairs and communication breakdown. 16% sought help on domestic violence. Most of them wanted to know their rights, the procedures for getting help and putting a stop to domestic violence.

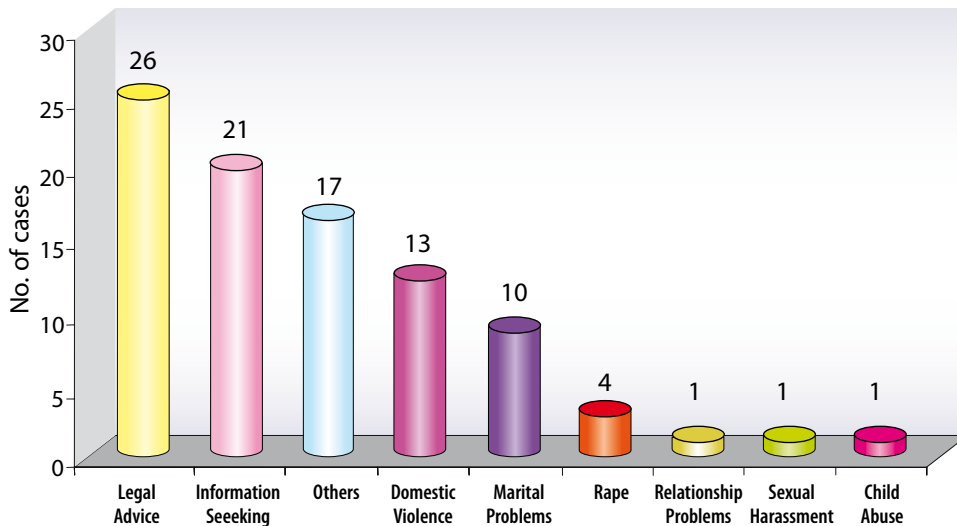
Figure 1: Types of Telephone Counselling



Online Counselling

Online counselling increased steadily over the last three years. In 2008, WCC received 94 emails compared to 61 emails in 2007 and 39 emails in 2006.

Figure 2: Types of Online Counselling



28% of them were about legal advice on divorce, children custody and maintenance. 14% sought advice on domestic violence and 11% on marital problems. 22% of the emails were from university or college students who asked for data relating to domestic violence, sexual harassment, and child sexual abuse for their research papers. 4% were related to rape cases whereas the rest were about relationship problems, sexual harassment, and child abuse. Another 18% wrote in regarding financial problems, job opportunities, employment rights, etc.

Shelter

The number of clients who sought shelter dropped to seven women and eight children. This was a 50% decrease compared to 2007. Five of the women who sought shelter were new cases and one of them had to return to the shelter twice this year.

Most of our shelter clients were housewives and only two were working women. More than half of the shelter clients were Indian and two were Malay. Half of the women who sought shelter were referred to WCC by government agencies like the welfare department and hospital. Their length of stay was from a minimum one day to a maximum of three weeks. Out of the seven, three decided to go back to their husbands; four left their abusive husbands.

Service Outreach

WCC conducts regular talks for medical personnel every year. In 2008, two lectures were given to student nurses from Lam Wah Ee Hospital in March and August. Another four lectures were conducted at the Penang Medical College in May, June, August, and November. The medical students and student nurses were very participatory and were able to debate the myths on domestic violence and rape. The common belief for most of the students was that alcohol caused violence. However, after going through the lively debate, they concluded that there did not have to be a reason for domestic violence. All in, WCC reached out to about 200 persons from the medical sector.



WCC also conducts regular sessions on gender for para-counsellors as part of the Penang Counselling Course. WCC sent two new staff and a few volunteers to attend training. The course is to help the para-counsellor acquire basic counselling skills. The course covered topics which included cognitive behavioral therapy, crisis intervention, counselling children and adolescents.

Initiating Rape Survivor Support

Responding to calls for support for rape victims in Penang General Hospital as well as recognizing the rising number of rape cases yearly, WCC initiated a project spanning three years, intended to provide a support network for these women. In its first year, the project began with consultations with medical personnel from One Stop Crisis Centre (OSCC) in the Accident and Emergency Department at Penang General Hospital. WCC subsequently went on call where the OSCC staff would call WCC for counselling whenever a rape victim attended hospital for treatment.

Between April and December 2008, WCC staff, Prema Devaraj attended at ten different rape cases, visiting the women either warded at the OSCC or in their homes. These face-to-face visits enabled WCC staff to build rapport with the victims. WCC staff then made weekly follow-up phone calls to each victim for a period of three weeks.

WCC has become acutely aware of the different needs of rape victims and WCC staff have undergone training on trauma responses so that they may help rape victims handle their fears. Interestingly, approximately half the rape victims seen by WCC at the Penang General Hospital were statutory rape victims, many of whom had had consensual sex with their partners. However, rape reports had been lodged by family members because the children were underaged. These young women were ignorant of basic reproductive health and needed support in terms of self-esteem and direction. In some instances, the parents or family members of these young women were more upset than the girls themselves. Older rape victims had different concerns such as the possibility of pregnancy arising from rape, subsequent retaliation by the perpetrator, difficulties in sleeping and many worried about what would happen next.

In the second year of the project, WCC will continue to liaise with the OSCC in both Penang and Seberang Prai hospitals as well as begin to recruit and train a pool of volunteers who will then provide support for rape victims in the community.

Skills Training for Single Mothers

WCC has moved from being merely a support group for single mothers to empowering these women through financial independence. WCC initiated a project that focused on developing financially productive skills by training the women to sew handicrafts. 23 women from the lower income group participated.

The project was made possible through the help and expertise of our volunteer, Paridah Mokhsin, who conducted four training sessions. The Bayan Baru Community College was also helpful as they lent us the sewing machines and venue for classes.

Many women said that they would like to use their skills to start up small businesses while others said that they would take up employment in the field. Soroptimist International (SI) Penang supported our project with a request for sewing 100 bags for their environmental project. SI Penang went on to teach these women other skills using beads to make necklaces and bangles.



Workshop on 'Manage your Finances'



In the process of equipping single mothers and women with knowledge on budgeting, WCC organized a capacity-building workshop on 'Manage Your Finances' on 18 October at Kompleks Masyarakat Penyayang. The aim was to help single mothers learn how to budget. There was a turnout of 45.

The guest speaker, Ms Chong Ee Ee from Agensi Kaunseling Pengurusan Kredit (AKPK) Penang Branch, spoke about AKPK services and how they assist individuals in debt. She also gave participants tips on how to draw up monthly budgets. Three participants revealed their personal

budgets during the exercise and two of them expressed difficulty in managing their monthly income. They were taught how to tackle their spending habits and plan budgets more effectively.

Generally participants felt that it was a good workshop and hoped that WCC would organize similar workshop in the future.

Workshop for Care-Givers

Service providers are often regarded as individuals who offer care to those in need without realizing that they need care themselves. For the first time, WCC organized a workshop focused on caring for service providers, held on 15 & 16 November at Tanjung Bungah Beach Hotel.

The two-day workshop was conducted by Ms Koh Tan Peng who is a trainer and registered counsellor. There was a good turnout of 26 participants including WCC social workers. Participants from various NGOs such as Penang Care,

Than Hsiang Mitra Welfare Centre, Hospice, Befrienders, Salvation Army and government agencies like Penang General Hospital attended.

The workshop not only provided space and time for participants to relax and enjoy but also helped them understand themselves and recognize symptoms of stress and burnout. There was much self-reflection and participants were able to consider both their strengths and weaknesses.



Muslim Women Workshop

Having identified the lack of awareness of rights among Muslim women, WCC embarked on a three-year awareness raising programme for them. WCC first reached out to different Muslim women's groups and shelters in Penang, offering to visit and work with them. These included groups such as Pertubuhan Jemaah Islah Malaysia (JIM) and Lembaga Kebajikan Perempuan Islam (LKPI). Shelters visited included Pusat Bimbingan Remaja Raudatus Sakinah and Rumah Darul Sakinah. In addition, WCC also made contact with four Single Mothers Associations from different districts in Penang. Some of the groups contacted were unaware of WCC's existence and services. Others were happy to hear from us and were enthusiastic about future collaboration.

On 23 May 2008, WCC organized a workshop for Muslim Women *Peranan Anda Untuk Perubahan* (Your Role for Change), at Hotel 1926. The objective of the programme was to create awareness of Islamic Family Law and introduce the topic of gender. Twenty participants attended the programme.

They were given a brief background to Islamic Family Law and the issues facing Muslim women. Case studies on domestic violence, maintenance, divorce, and faraid (division of property) were discussed and presented by the participants themselves. The workshop session on gender helped them understand the context in which they live, why gender discrimination exists and how it impacts on them.

In December, WCC with a local community group, *Badan Kebajikan Masyarakat Nibong Tebal* conducted a joint workshop for the Muslim women's community. Approximately 50 Muslim women attended. WCC's volunteer lawyer, Yuslinov Ahmad, conducted a session on Islamic Family Law. The main questions raised were on Nafkah (maintenance for wife and children), Nusyuz (disobedience) and Faraid (division of property). A small survey, using a simple questionnaire,

was conducted among the 20 participants to establish what problems they faced in their marriage. A number of them revealed that they were experiencing domestic violence. Examples include being hit, pressurized emotionally, not being allowed to mix with their own family members, being forced to have sex, verbal abuse and interrogation when they go out.

WCC will continue to liaise with Muslim women's community groups in the coming year.



Working with Men

In 2008, the male project officer counselled 13 men. Some of them were walk-in while others were called to attend for sessions at the request of their wives. A total of 16 face-to-face counselling sessions were conducted. Compared to 2007, the number of men seeking counselling had doubled. Most of the clients were counselled on issues relating to marital problems, verbal and social abuse and controlling behavior towards their partners.

In June, the WCC male social worker conducted a series of group sessions on “Understanding Violence” for men in Kulim organised by Sunshine Home. Five men from different backgrounds attended these group work sessions. The sessions help them explore domestic violence, the effects of violence and how to deal with it. The participants were open in their discussions and some even spoke of their personal struggles to control their anger. They found the sessions helped them identify the stages of anger and how to deal with it. The six sessions ended in July.

Overall, the participants were happy and appreciated the work of WCC. They said they would participate in future programmes.



Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita

In 2008, with the new state government, two projects were initiated by the Penang State Women, Family and Community Development. One of them was to set up a women's service centre on the mainland and another project was for a day care centre for school going children. WCC agreed to set up and manage a new centre named Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita (PPW – Women's Service Centre) Seberang Perai on behalf of the state government. The preparatory

work for the setting up of PPW began in the second half of the year, to identify a suitable location and recruit a new staff for PPW.

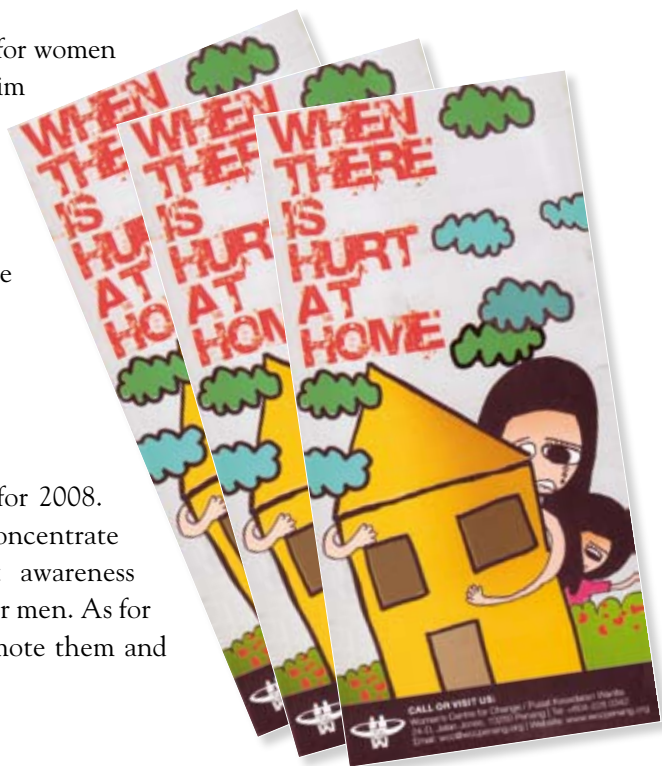
Lau Swee Li, a senior social worker was recruited to manage PPW. WCC began by conducting a series of training sessions to recruit new volunteers. The training was held at WCC and it covered topics like violence against women and basic counselling skills. WCC intends to start serving women in crisis for the mainland by early 2009.

Resource Development

WCC published a new brochure on family violence for women entitled “When There is Hurt at Home”. The aim of this brochure is to help women understand what family violence is and how they can help themselves when faced with the situation. WCC received good feedback from its members and shelter clients who found the information very helpful. The brochure will be translated into Malay and Chinese.

Conclusion

WCC carried out all of the programmes planned for 2008. In the coming year, WCC will continue to concentrate on capacity building for single mothers, conduct awareness workshops for Muslim women as well as programmes for men. As for improvement of services, WCC will continue to promote them and work closely with other agencies.



Community Outreach Report 2008

by Prema Devaraj
Jayamalar Samuel &
Tasha Merican



What an incredible year this has been for the outreach team! Working at full steam with volunteers, WCC staff were able to carry out numerous programmes both in schools and in the community. The work, as always, grounds us to the reality faced by both children and women in society. WCC's outreach team tenaciously pushed forward with the prevention of child sexual abuse project, youth work for boys and girls, and gender sensitization programmes. Expanding our work into new areas, the team embarked on a conflict literacy programme for 11 and 12 year old children and a skills-building project for Tamil speaking women.

Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse

Bijak Itu Selamat Programme



WCC's programme for the prevention of child sexual abuse *Bijak Itu Selamat* or 'Be Smart Be Safe' continues to be well received on many levels in the community. Starting off more than ten years ago as a simple programme to help children differentiate between good and bad touch, WCC has since expanded the programme to include different target groups, training components for facilitators, development of new material, advocacy for the inclusion of such programmes into educational curricula and so on. The programme continues to be implemented both in Penang and nationally. This year, the programme was supported on many levels by WCC staff Jayamalar Samuel, Tasha Merican and Prema Devaraj.

- **Working with Children:** Working directly with the target group, WCC staff and volunteers were able to conduct the WCC Personal Safety *Bijak Itu Selamat* programme for over 1,000 primary school children between the ages of 11 and 12 in seven schools in Penang. Responses from the children continue to inspire WCC staff to carry on with their work.
- **Training of Teachers:** WCC staff continued to train teachers so that they, in turn, would be able to carry out the programme using the *Ok Tak Ok*



Siri 2 VCD with children in their schools. More than 120 teachers were trained to conduct the programme through sessions organized by Penang English Language Learning and Teaching Association (PELLTA) and Perak Women for Women (PWW). WCC also trained 12 final year teacher trainee students from the Institute Perguruan Pulau Pinang, six of whom were able to reach out to more than 300 students in the schools where they had their final year teaching practical.

■ **Curriculum Incorporation Advocacy:** Meanwhile, efforts continued with regards to getting the topic of child sexual abuse and prevention programmes incorporated into the curriculum of the Education Faculty in USM. This year after further discussion with the staff of the Education Faculty, WCC was given two lectures slots on Child Sexual Abuse and so was able to reach out to more than 200 undergraduate students. WCC also began similar discussions with Institute Perguruan Pulau Pinang (IPPP) and delivered a lecture on “The Need for Prevention Programmes on Child Sexual Abuse” to 90 lecturers. The Director of IPPP, Mr Rijeng Jahit, was very positive about the programme and WCC hopes to be invited for more lectures in the coming year.

■ **New Directions:** Every year, WCC attempts to push the boundaries of their work either in terms of taking the programme to a different state, working with different target groups, working differently with existing material, or creating new material. WCC has accomplished the following:

Launch in Perak

For 2008, WCC's was able to launch our *Bijak Itu Selamat* programme in Perak with the support of Perak Women for Women (PWW), Rotary Club, and the State Education Department training over 100 primary school counsellors in a one-day workshop. To date, WCC is proud that to have been able to launch our child sexual abuse prevention programme with the support of the respective state education departments in five states namely Penang, Perlis, Perak, Kedah, and Kelantan. We hope to take the programme into more states in the coming years.

Study on the Impact of the Prevention Programme

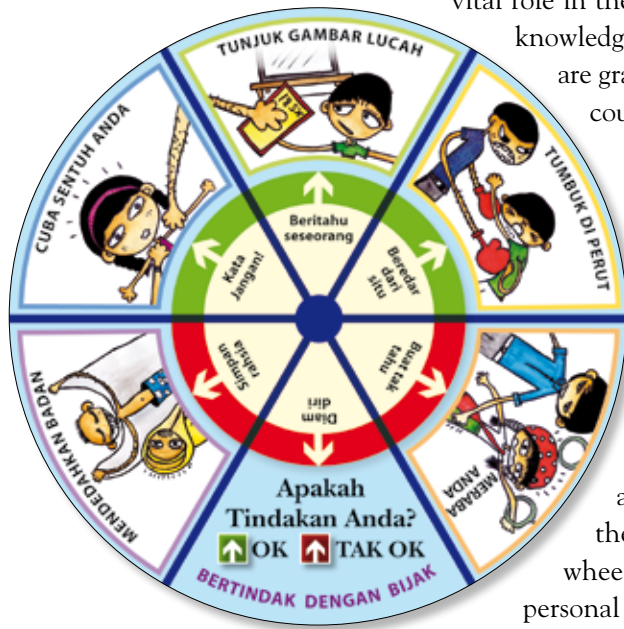
After years of conducting the personal safety programme with children, WCC decided to measure the impact of the programme on children in terms of knowledge, skills, and



confidence gained. Working with SRK Convent Green Lane, WCC carried out a short research project between April and August. Four groups of students took part. One was the control group and the other three were test groups, T1, T2, and T3 respectively. The control group had no input on personal safety from WCC. T1 were just given the WCC *Ok Tak Ok Siri 2* VCD to watch. T2 and T3 were given the full personal safety lesson which involved watching the VCD and having the WCC facilitator reinforce the messages in the VCD. The students were given a questionnaire to answer at the start of the project and again after the intervention (i.e., showing of VCD only or having the full personal safety programme). Their answers were scored and analysed using the SPSS programme for group statistical analyses.

The findings indicated that:

- showing the VCD alone the students' knowledge increased significantly, and
- the presence of a facilitator providing a full personal safety lesson extended their knowledge, skills, and confidence even further. The facilitator plays a vital role in the delivery of the programme and has a clear impact on the knowledge, skills and confidence levels attained by the students. We are grateful to SRK Convent Green Lane students and the school counselor, Ms Mona for enabling us to carry out this study.



New Resources

WCC created *Roda Tindakan* (Wheel of Action) – a circular disc which helps children determine the type of action they take (*Ok* or *Tak Ok*) when faced with risky or sexually exploitative situations. The wheel is designed to get children to view *OK* actions as the following: saying no, moving away and telling someone about it. *Tak Ok* actions include remaining silent, keeping the abuse a secret and pretending it never happened. The wheel is meant to be given to children after they have had a personal safety lesson. WCC also redesigned the packaging of *Bijak Itu Selamat* (Be Smart, Be Safe) to allow for greater accessibility as well as ease of storage of the VCD.

Working with Youth

WCC has always been concerned about the level of gender violence especially among youth. WCC's approach has been to conduct gender sensitizing programmes in different forms:

- working with girls on personal safety;
- working with boys on their behaviour; and
- working with both boys and girls.

Working with girls

In 2008, WCC conducted our Personal Safety programme for secondary students. This is an adaptation of our earlier programme *Membina Perhubungan Mesra* (Building Healthy Relationships). This programme is a two-hour workshop which comprises three parts,

- a VCD scenario *Mabuk Cinta*;
- a Powerpoint presentation on rape; and
- a question and answer session.



The programme design allows participants to visualise the build-up to a potentially risky situation, have a discussion about what happened and subsequently role play safety precautions to avert the undesirable situation. In

addition, participants receive information regarding rape and learn, among other things, the myths of rape and steps to take should such an incident take place. The focus is very much on not blaming the rape victim and instead getting her actively to seek help. The question and answer session at the end of the programme is vital as it helps the facilitator get a sense of the situations many of the students face and at the same time enables the students to clarify their thoughts on certain issues and obtain accurate information.

All in all, WCC staff Jayamalar, Tasha and Prema have worked with more than 1,200 teenage school girls from 11 schools. Volunteers who have accompanied WCC to some of these programmes include Tang Kae Shih, Carrienne Ewe, Sally Eu and Ng Yee Wen.

Working with boys

WCC developed a 90-minute programme called *Perlakuan Remaja* (Youth Behaviour) late in 2007 in response to complaints of sexual harassment from teachers and students by 13-14 year old schoolboys in a number of schools. The programme is an adaptation of an earlier programme for 16-17 year old boys called Turning Point which basically gets young men to link their behaviour towards women with their ideas about women.



In *Perlakuan Remaja*, the youths get to explore their understanding of sexual harassment using a quiz. WCC's project officer, Michael Thomas, confronts their ideas of victim blaming using an interactive Powerpoint presentation. Skilful facilitation and frank discussions are necessary to get the boys to realize where such behaviour stems from and what it means to a girl or a boy when she or he is teased, molested, or sexually harassed. The boys are often surprised to learn that sexual harassment is a crime and punishable by law. The programme also has a VCD component where the boys get to view a short clip on sexual harassment and analyse the behaviour of the young men as well as the feelings of the victim through a series of questions posed. The boys are able accurately to identify the types of sexual harassment portrayed and empathize with the victim. Generally the boys are in agreement by the end of the programme that sexual harassment is not a joke but a serious matter. They come away from the programme more mindful of their behaviour.

Thomas has conducted this programme for about 500 schoolboys in six Penang island and mainland schools. He also presented the programme to 130 secondary school counsellors at the FRIS Engineering Institute in October 2008.

Working with both boys and girls

WCC staff Jayamalar, Tasha and Prema conduct different types of gender sensitisation workshops when the audience is a mixed group. One such variation of the workshop programme is the following: the first session helps participants differentiate between sex and gender. Next, is a game which gives the participants an opportunity to work out how gender impacts on the decisions they make or take when in a relationship. The last session involves the participants working in single sex groups, listing what they think their ideal partner should be. They then share these ideas. Through this exercise, gender expectations are clearly seen from both sides. The participants, when confronted with expectations from the opposite sex and possible outcomes when expectations are not met, begin to feel the unfairness of the situation and begin to question the assumptions made by the opposite sex. This year, more than 400 youth, both boys and girls, from two secondary schools and one college went through WCC's gender sensitization workshops.

Conflict Literacy Programme

Concerned about the growing problem of violence in schools, WCC initiated a new project on Conflict Literacy among school children aged 11 years.

The initial work of the project involved:

- an action research with children to determine their understanding of conflict;
- training for facilitators on conflict literacy;
- developing a module on conflict literacy; and
- piloting the module with school children.

The action research was conducted with 80 children in two schools. WCC staff Annie Yeap and Jayamalar together with WCC volunteers

Tang Kae Shih and Ng Li Ying made use of cartoon drawings to help children discuss the topic, for e.g., what they understood by the term, what sorts of conflicts they had, what their needs and actions were, how they regarded the antagonist's needs and possible solutions to their conflicts. The analysis of the action research showed that the children were aware of conflicts in their lives but did not have the vocabulary to express what they were going through. They were able to identify their own needs but less so the needs of the antagonist. The children were able, upon reflection of their



own conflict, to give theoretical non-violent methods of handling conflicts. However, at the point of conflict, more than half cited aggressive actions like hitting, fighting, scolding, and grabbing to resolve the conflict.

WCC then enlisted a resource person, Janet Pillai, as a trainer to help staff and volunteer facilitators have a better understanding of conflict which included, among other things, a theoretical introduction to conflict, definitions of conflict, elements of conflict, stages of conflict as well as emotions arising from conflicts. The training sessions also exposed the facilitators to group exercises, games and different techniques of teaching and learning which enabled theory to be put into practice. The result of the training sessions was that WCC staff and volunteer facilitators were able to design a module on Conflict Literacy for 11 year olds.

The module, consisting of six one-hour sessions, aims to promote conflict literacy among children, i.e., give them a better understanding of conflict, what it is, how it occurs, how it involves emotions, and different non-violent ways of responding to conflict.

WCC piloted the conflict literacy module with 40 children (boys and girls) from two schools over a three week period. Prema, Tasha and Yee Wen worked with children from a national school while Annie, Kae Shih and Li Ying worked with children from a vernacular school. The students enjoyed the sessions and were able to grasp the concepts presented in game format or through drama and interactive activities that were fun. An evaluation of what was learnt was conducted at the end of each session. WCC is presently making amendments to the module to incorporate student feedback for the following year's programme. WCC is indebted to the students and the school counsellors, Puan Sandha and Puan Lim Pei Syuan, for making this possible.

Working with Indian Women

The majority of women who need to use WCC's shelter are Indian (Tamil speaking) women, most of whom are unaware of their rights and have endured years of abuse and suffering before coming forward for help. Many have limited financial resources or job potential. So WCC undertook a three-year skills-building programme specifically for Tamil speaking women in the community. The objectives of this programme were to:

- create awareness of women's rights;
- expose participants to gender issues;
- train women leaders on handling procedures for common challenges faced by women; and
- establish a pool of gender-sensitised Indian women leaders.

With these aims in mind, WCC organized the first skills-building workshop targeting women community leaders on 14 and 15 June. Thirteen participants

from various Penang- based organizations attended the programme held at the YMCA Penang.

WCC staff, Jayamalar, Prema and Annie together with WCC Committee Member Maria Francisca and Vice-President Lalitha Menon conducted this programme. The women were given sessions on gender sensitization and exposed to the issue of domestic violence and how to access help should domestic violence arise. A popular film *Magalir Matthum* was used to encourage analysis and discussion of violence against women. Participants were also given the opportunity to discuss and seek information on a variety of common problems facing women in the community. These included domestic violence, divorce and custody issues, unregistered marriages, late registration of births and marital problems. Participant feedback was positive. WCC volunteers Praba, Kanageswari and Roshini helped out with the programme.

As a follow-up, participants were contacted six months later to assess the impact of the workshop on their lives. Most reported that the workshop had given them a sense of empowerment and self-assurance. They were more confident of their rights and some of them had been able to use their knowledge to help other women in their community with problems such as domestic violence. They all asked for more such workshops for other women and also that they be included in WCC's follow-up workshops.



Talks in the Community

WCC staff continue to receive invitations to give talks in the community on issues pertaining to women's rights and violence against women. Organizations, groups or institutions like Kanita USM, Help4U, Penang Counselling Group, NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women, DELL, FRIS Engineering Institute, Northern Indian Corridor, USM Kubang Kerian and SUHAKAM are some examples of those extending invitations to WCC to participate as resource persons. WCC staff Cheng Kooi, Prema, Annie and Karen, as well as, WCC volunteers Lalitha Menon, Yuslinov Ahmad, James Lochhead and Tan Pek Leng have represented WCC as resource persons or guest speakers to these talks at various times during the year.

Volunteers

This year, in an attempt to encourage more volunteers to participate in WCC activities, WCC staff made a concerted effort to involve volunteers in their programmes. WCC designed a special form for volunteers to fill in so that

WCC staff can best assess where to place them in terms of matching skills and interests. A volunteer email list was created and regular updates are sent out to volunteers to keep them informed of upcoming WCC events so that they and their friends can participate.

To date, volunteers continue to help us with the writing, editing, translating and collation of our materials as well as being directly involved in our outreach programmes with children and youth and even (when trained) in the counselling of clients. Volunteers also help us with our public events, e.g., leafleting and the setting up of exhibitions booths, explaining exhibition material and so on. WCC staff Prema, Annie, Tasha and Sook Foong were involved in three training sessions for volunteers on the following topics including gender, violence against women, domestic violence, counselling techniques and working with women in crisis. Attendance ranged between 10-20 volunteers each session.

Conclusion

The outreach team, together with the support of dedicated WCC volunteers and the cooperation of the various institutions, groups and individuals in the community, made the variety of programmes in the community possible. WCC's messages on gender equality, stopping violence against women and preventing child sexual abuse continue to be spread in the community in one form or another. In the following year, WCC will build on the experiences of 2008 and continue to reach out to the community via the on-going projects. The challenge was, and still is, to keep at it and believe that change, though slow to come, is always possible.

Advocacy & Campaign Report 2008

by Shobana Pandian & Loh Cheng Kooi

The year 2008 took an astonishing turn on March 8 General Election when Barisan Nasional won only by a simple majority and was denied its long-held two-thirds majority rule. Furthermore, the opposition coalition, Pakatan Rakyat unexpectedly took control of five states, including Penang.

WCC's advocacy work pertaining to Malaysian women's concerns and interests shifted gear as the political climate changed. WCC, as part of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) were involved in two campaigns; one against sexist MPs and the other encouraging elected representatives to commit to issues affecting women. At the local level, WCC was involved in a civil society movement, calling for good governance and better state-civil society interaction.

WCC is honoured to have actively participated and contributed as members of civil society working towards democratic change so badly needed in this country. The details of our main activities, both at organisational and national levels are as follows:

Lobbying against Sexist MPs and ADUNs

The campaign against sexist remarks by parliamentarians began in 2007 when JAG issued several press statements on the chauvinistic comments made by political leaders. Such remarks are offensive, distasteful, and violate women's rights to be treated with respect and dignity. It is particularly insulting when it takes place in Parliament, the highest decision making body in the country, where leaders of this nation are expected to display exemplary behaviour.

In January 2008, JAG's campaign against sexist MPs and ADUNs took off with the issuance of letters to all political parties urging them not field the nine named MPs who have made sexist remarks in Parliament in previous years. JAG demanded that concrete action be taken against these MPs and for greater gender sensitivity be instilled among all MPs. JAG reiterated our demands for more women candidates to be fielded and also urged the political



Photo: The Star

parties to contribute towards gender equality and bring meaningful changes for women in the forthcoming elections.

On 30 March, JAG members campaigned in the Sungai Siput constituency, which Datuk Seri Samy Vellu, one of the nine MPs who has shown disrespect to women, was contesting. JAG members distributed leaflets in four languages on “Vote for a sexism-free Parliament” so as to raise public awareness on the issue as well as elicit support from constituents to demand an end to sexism in Parliament. JAG members spent time explaining to Sungai Siput residents the purpose of its campaign. JAG was joined by Women’s Candidacy Initiative(WCI) friends who turned up as *Mak Bedah* characters who asked political candidates their positions on gender equality and highlighted Malaysian women’s list of demands. *Mak Bedah* activists appeared at different constituencies to remind political candidates not to ignore women’s interests as well as test their sincerity in representing women’s demands.

JAG’s Wish List

JAG’s lobbying continued at the august house. On 30 April, at the first parliamentary sitting, some 20 JAG members and activists made their presence felt when they turned up in the Parliament lobby and presented an eye-catching folder titled *Kotakan Kata* to elected Members of Parliament. The slogan chosen, *Kotakan Kata*, is a Malay saying which we all hold dear: *Kata mesti dikota*. Your word is your bond, and promises must be kept. Inside the folder was

a Wish List for Malaysian women, together with a ruler to monitor MPs progress in meeting our demands. Included in the Wish List were a Sexual Harassment Law, amendments to the Domestic Violence Act, the standardization of the Islamic Family Law in all states and the Federal Territories, and the criminalization of marital rape. The JAG folders were well received by the Prime Minister and other MPs present. The event was covered by several papers.



Photo: The Star

Lobbying with the Penang State government

Following the outcome of the 12th General Election, there was much excitement as Penang state underwent a change in government. WCC was equally enthused. We took the opportunity to lobby for the advancement of the women’s agenda and also participated in calling for change as part of Penang civil society.

WCC's advocacy work commenced with its staff and volunteers preparing a Policy Paper on Women, which reflected Penang women's needs and interests. In the policy paper, WCC called for gender equality for women as guaranteed in Article 8(2) of Federal Constitution which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender. The paper also called for CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), as ratified by the Malaysian government, to be incorporated into Malaysian law. The aim of this paper is for the overall advancement, development, and empowerment of women in Penang and the achievement of gender equality, i.e., that women be given equal opportunities in all spheres which include political, economic, social, cultural, and civil rights.

On 28 March, a WCC delegation paid a courtesy visit to the Penang Chief Minister YAB Lim Guan Eng to present our policy paper on women. WCC was represented by its President Khuan Sui, committee members Kah Cheng, members Yuslinov Ahmad and Pek Leng and staff, Loh Cheng Kooi, Prema Devaraj and Karen Lai. Also present at the meeting were Penang State Exco for Women, Family and Community Development, YB Lydia Ong Kok Fook, and the MP for Bukit Mertajam, YB Chong Eng.



Several recommendations emerged from their discussions, namely the setting up of a service centre for women on the mainland and the establishment of childcare services to assist lower income women. WCC also offered to undertake gender sensitizing training for all levels of society to ensure greater understanding of gender perspective in the development of Penang and so promote the advancement of women in Penang.

WCC's involvement received a boost when our committee member Kah Cheng was appointed as a Penang State Municipal Councillor. WCC was one of only two NGOs, besides Francis Loh, Aliran Secretary, to be nominated. Alongside this success were the appointments of WCC's Vice President Lalitha Menon and Executive Director Cheng Kooi, as well as former vice president, Yuslinov Ahmad, as members of *Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan* (MMK) of the Penang State Women, Family and Community Development.

Penang Forum

Being an active NGO in Penang, WCC became part of a larger NGO coalition, which organized a public forum on 13 April and brought together public interest groups and individuals to discuss issues affecting Penang and its people. The meeting was well attended with 150 participants and topics ranged from environment, traffic, arts and heritage, women, labour, health, goodwill,



the disabled, youth and students to local government. Prema Devaraj gave a presentation on the issue of women and Kah Cheng on disabled people's rights. At the meeting, a Penang Forum Declaration was issued. Eleven working groups were set up to make specific recommendations to the new state government. WCC headed the Working Group on Women and prepared the report and recommendations.

On 14 May, a delegation of 13 NGO representatives of the Penang Forum, including WCC's representatives, Kah Cheng and Cheng Kooi, met up with the Chief Minister and presented him the Penang Forum Declaration. The Declaration called upon the Penang State Government to ensure transparency, accountability, and social justice. The NGOs urged the new state government to have regular dialogue sessions with NGOs and ask for better access to public venues and halls to conduct their activities. They also look forward to forging a constructive partnership between state government and the people of Penang in advancing the *rakyat's* interests. The Chief Minister was agreeable to the Penang Forum's requests and welcomed a working relationship with NGOs per its CAT policy of competency, accountability, and transparency.

Anti-ISA Campaign

In September the sudden arrests of three persons, a reporter from the Chinese press, a Member of Parliament and a popular blogger, under the notorious Internal Security Act (ISA) shocked the nation into realization of the fragility of our rights as citizens. The draconian ISA which allows arbitrary detention without the right to a fair and open trial totally disregards basic fundamental human rights. The ISA violates not only our rights as enshrined in the

Federal Constitution but also our rights according to international human rights standards. Ironically, Malaysia, as a member of the United



Nations Human Rights Council, has breached its own pledge to the Human Rights Council and the international community to promote and protect human rights.

Malaysians responded to these arrests in anger and shame, and Penangites played their role as concerned citizens by participating in candlelight vigils to protest against the ISA detentions. The NGO coalition, Gerakan Mansuhkan ISA (Abolish ISA Movement), organized the candlelight vigils which were held at the Dewan Sri Pinang every Friday for seven weeks throughout September and October. WCC members participated actively and supported the vigils. At each vigil, there were speeches by activists, slogan chanting, civil protest songs and poems calling for the release of those detained under the ISA and for its abolition. Other activities included petitions calling for the abolition of the Act, encouraging people to send cards to detainees in Kamunting, the sale of anti-ISA badges, car stickers, T-shirts, and balloons. Several hundred people attended each session, even when it rained and many donated generously to support the anti-ISA campaign.

Alleged Sexual Abuse of Penan Women and Children

In September, the alleged sexual abuse of a number of Penan women and children was highlighted in several national papers. WCC issued a strong statement calling for an investigation into the alleged abuses which was echoed by several other NGOs and members of the public. Given the huge public outcry, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development set up a national taskforce to investigate the allegations. WCC and Women's Aid Organisation (WAO) together with other relevant agencies were selected to be part of this taskforce. WCC's Programme Director, Prema Devaraj, represented WCC at all taskforce meetings. The group met several times and their findings were collated by the Ministry of Women, Community and Family Development to be submitted to the Cabinet for further action.

In conclusion, the year 2008 was full of surprises which had WCC responding to many issues and situations that had been unplanned. WCC took up the challenge and actively responded to these issues as our commitment to gender equality is part of the bigger picture of social justice for all. We are committed to creating and sustaining a just, gender-sensitive and non-violent society for all.



WCC in the Press

> SEXUAL-HARASSMENT LAWS

Not all are cov

HUMAN Resources Minister Such announcements and subsequent objections by the

THE STAR, THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2008

Act against culprits

THE Women's Centre for Change, Penang (WCC) is extremely disturbed to learn that the teacher who was recently charged with molesting his students since 2006, had had more than 10 complaints made against him and yet no action was taken until recently. It took two brave students to lodge police reports before any investigation commenced.

WCC would like to know why the authorities failed to act any sooner for a police report to be made before any action was taken? Will the Ministry of Education take any action against the headmaster for his failure to report abuse complaints or will he be excused there serious loopholes in the report? Will the teachers be unable to act as an irresponsible school headmaster? Will the Ministry have proper procedures for sexual abuse cases committed by teachers? This is not the first time WCC has been involved across a sexual abuse case involving a

that the school authorities either knew or suspected something was amiss but were reluctant to have the allegations or suspicions investigated.

Are the school authorities more concerned about protecting irresponsible teachers than protecting innocent children? Is preserving the image of the school more important

ers must be investigated immediately, and the teacher suspended until the outcome of investigations by the education authorities.

The perpetrator must be stopped and punished, and not merely transferred to another school as has happened.

Low conviction rate in sexual cases tried in courts

ONLY 12 of the 302 sexual crime cases tried in Penang courts returned a guilty verdict, according to a research.

A substantial 198 cases were classified as discharged not amounting to an acquittal (DNAA), while the remaining 92 cases were discharged for various reasons.

The research was based on 439 sexual crime cases in Penang courts between year 2000 and 2004, of which the defendants pleaded



Concerned: (From left) KANITA visiting professor Prof Cecelia Ng, Loh, Lochead, Rashidah and other participants engaged in a discussion after the lecture.

victims did not turn up or could not be found while 28% was because of requests by the Deputy Public Prosecutor.

"The longer a trial goes on, the case will likely turn into a DNAA case," he said.

the sexual act.

"And quite often, the defence used myths in their arguments to show that the victim had invited 'the crime'," he said.

WCC executive director Loh Cheng Kooi said the research, sponsored by the European Commission, found out how the

crime cases.

Also present was KANITA director Prof Datin Rashidah Shuib who said the lecture was among the programmes lined up for this year in conjunction with KANITA's 30th anniversary.

More information on the research can be found on www.wcc-penang.org.

> CITIZENSHIP SURPRISE

Review laws against women

MABEL Teoh's joy of becoming a mother in Switzerland turned into shock when she discovered that if her child was born overseas, the child will not be entitled to Malaysian citizenship unless her husband is a Malaysian ("Why can't my child be a citizen?" - NST, April 25). The only recourse for Teoh is to fly back to Malaysia to deliver her baby.

The fact is, gender inequality exists for Malaysian women despite 50 years of Merdeka. Malaysian women with foreign spouses face discrimination while this does not apply to Malaysian men with foreign wives. Underpinning this is the archaic patriarchal value that sees women as being worth less than men and who can only be dependents of their husbands and sons.

In simple words, women are still second-class citizens.

Ironically, the government amended Article 8 (2) of the Federal Constitution in 2001, which recognises that women are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of

inequality and discrimination. Another area is the plight of foreign spouses of Malaysians, both women and men, living in Malaysia.

They face difficulties trying to get permanent-resident status. For most of them, their stay depends on their spouses renewing their social passes and the authorities granting them.

If the spouse does not get the pass renewed, he or she has to leave the country or face deportation.

Foreign wives who face domestic violence have to face the daunting decision whether to take legal action to protect themselves and their children for if they do, they face threat of their social pass not being renewed. Many prefer in silence.

The Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAGGE) has been lobbying for the removal of such discriminatory laws for the last two decades.

JAGGE urges Women, Family and Community Development Minister Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen to review and amend all laws

> RAPE TRIALS

Court case taking too long

THE Women's Centre for Change (WCC), Penang, would like to highlight an example of justice delayed in a rape case involving a teenager in 1992 ("Rape accused gets third delay of appeal" - NST, July 29). The report states that a 78-year-old man was found guilty of raping the teenager and sentenced to a 12-year jail term in 1998. The offence was committed in 1992.

The teenager was made pregnant by the rape and bore a child. The accused, however, appealed against his conviction and is out on bail.

Accessing justice for rape victims is not an easy task. Many victims do not lodge reports about the rape. When reports are lodged, the deputy public prosecutor will decide,

after an investigation, whether to prosecute. One estimate is that only one in 10 rape reports lodged results in a trial.

Even when cases go to trial, the conviction rate is low.

A trial can be traumatic for a rape victim. Sexual crime victims have complained: "There is no difference between being raped and giving evidence as a key witness at the trial of your alleged rapist, except that this time it happens in front of a crowd."

Rape victims have to recall the rape in detail.

They have to stand the persistent questioning from defence lawyers. In addition, rape victims are often in the same courtroom as the accused.

In the case mentioned above, it took six years from the time the offence was committed to the time the accused was convicted.

The accused's appeal to the High Court took another two years and his appeal to the Court of Appeal has not been heard after eight years. The whole process has taken 15 years and is ongoing.


How long does a rape victim have to wait for justice?

The WCC urges the government and the judiciary to take steps to ensure fair and expeditious trials as well as appeal hearings. Justice delayed is justice denied.

PREMA DEVARAJ
Women's Centre for Change, Penang

WCC Diary of Events 2008

January

8	WCC Executive Director Loh Cheng Kooi gave a lecture on <i>Violence against Women</i> at the Baptist Seminary College to their MA (Masters) students in Counselling.
11-13	As a member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), WCC representatives, Cheng Kooi, Programme Director Prema Devaraj and Legal Officer Karen Lai, went to Fraser's Hill to attend the JAG Evaluation and Planning Meeting for 2008.
19	WCC General Committee Meeting.
25	<p>The first WCC Volunteers' Evening of the year was well attended. WCC President Datin Chin Khuan Sui welcomed the 25 volunteers present and staff briefed them on WCC work and activities.</p> 
28	Prema conducted a training session on child sexual abuse prevention <i>Be Smart Be Safe</i> for 12 trainee teachers of the Malayan Teachers' College.
29	WCC President Khuan Sui, Cheng Kooi and Service Coordinator Annie Yeap were at USM to support the launching of a social campaign on domestic violence <i>Act for a Change Today</i> by the New Millennium Graduates (NEMGRADS), students majoring in Persuasive Communication from the School of Communication, USM.
29	Prema and WCC Social Worker, Lee Sook Foong conducted a session on <i>Domestic Violence</i> for 150 secondary students, organised by NEMGRADS, USM.
30	WCC staff Prema and Sook Foong were at DELL to give a talk on <i>Child Sexual Abuse Prevention</i> for their staff.
31	WCC Project Officer, Michael Thomas conducted a session on <i>Teenage Behaviour</i> for 35 Form 1 students of SMK Tg. Bungah.

February

22-24

WCC together with two other project partners, AWAM and WDC, of the European Commission-funded project were in Langkawi for the final evaluation meeting. Cheng Kooi and Karen represented WCC and presented our Research and Advocacy Project on Sexual Crimes.

24

WCC participated in the February Little Penang Street Market event themed Celebrating Women in conjunction with International Women's Day. WCC organized an exhibition, quiz on *Violence against Women*, personal safety workshops for children and a skit called *Kopi Satu*.



March

1

Cheng Kooi and Sook Foong attended the one-day seminar *Speaking Out: Women's Rights to Contraception and Abortion* organized by the Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance Malaysia.

2

Cheng Kooi joined a contingent of 30 women activists from JAG, Perak Women for Women, and Women's Candidacy Initiative in Sungai Siput, Perak to campaign for voters education against sexist electoral candidate.

6

Thomas conducted a session on *Teenage Behaviour* at SMK Perai for 47 Form 1 students.

10 March -
8 April

Two interns from Aceh, Cut Intan Mutia Nur and Martini Mahmud arrived for a month's study tour to learn about crisis counselling and shelter work.

10

At the invitation from Sunshine Cottage, Thomas gave a talk on *Violence* to 25 teenage boys and girls who were attending the Youth Camp at Tanjong Bungah.



11

Karen jointly with visiting professor from KANITA, Dr. Cecilia Ng, to conduct a seminar on *Sexual Harassment* for 80 USM undergraduate students.

13

WCC Consultant Researcher, James Lochhead presented a talk on *Justice for Survivors of Sexual Crimes*, based on WCC court research and advocacy projects on sexual crimes at KANITA, USM.

22-23	<p>Prema and Project Officer Jayamalar Samuel attended the 6th National Symposium on Adolescent Health and Safety in Kuching, Sarawak.</p>
23	<p>WCC staff and volunteers participated in the Easter Charity Bazaar jointly organised by the Junior Chamber International Tg. Bungah and Paradise Sandy Bay Beach Resort. WCC sold donated cakes and sandwiches and promoted WCC books and pamphlets. WCC was named one of the beneficiaries of the event.</p>
27	<p>At the invitation of SMK Permatang Rawa, Jaya and Project Officer Tasha Merican presented a talk on <i>Personal Safety</i> for 180 Form 1 and 2 students at the school's <i>surau</i>.</p>
28	<p>Annie and Sook Foong conducted the regular talk on <i>Domestic Violence</i> for trainee nurses of Lam Wah Ee Hospital.</p>
28	<p>WCC paid a protocol visit to the new Penang Chief Minister, YAB Lim Guan Eng. The WCC delegation was led by President Khuan Sui, Committee Member Kah Cheng, members Yuslinov Ahmad and Pek Leng, staff Cheng Kooi, Prema and Karen.</p>
29	<p>WCC 23rd Annual General Meeting at Tanjong Country Club.</p>
April	
6	<p>Jaya conducted a <i>Personal Safety</i> programme for 15 children at the Church of Immaculate Conception.</p>
8	<p>Prema and Cheng Kooi met with Dr. Teo Aik Howe and Dr. Elizabeth Anthony of the A & E Section, Penang Hospital, to discuss the possibility of setting up a support system for rape victims.</p>
8	<p>Prema, Karen and Cheng Kooi attended the talk <i>Do Numbers Matter?</i> by Dr. Cecilia Ng at KANITA, USM.</p>
10	<p>Penang Jemaah Islah Malaysia (JIM) representative, Hj. Jamaluddin Abdullah and his wife met with Prema and Thomas to discuss and learn about WCC programmes for men and boys.</p>
11	<p>Annie together with volunteer Kae Shih conducted a <i>Personal Safety</i> workshop for 110 students of SRJK(C) Chong Teik.</p>



13	A one-day Penang NGO Forum on <i>Issues of Concern affecting the People</i> , was organized by the Coalition of Penang NGOs, of which WCC is a member. WCC Committee Member Kah Cheng and Prema made presentations on the Disabled and women's issues respectively, and Cheng Kooi chaired a session.
19	WCC organized a Gender Sensitization workshop for 58 new MTC trainee teachers with facilitators Prema, Jaya, Tasha and volunteer Zaemah.
19	WCC General Committee Meeting.
22 & 23	Jaya and Tasha were at the Methodist Girls' School and SRK Telok Kumbar to talk to their Std. 5 and 6 students on <i>Personal Safety</i> . A total of 340 students participated.
26 till August	WCC Member Janet Pillai gave a series of 8 training sessions on conflict literacy for primary school children to WCC staff and 14 volunteers. WCC will pilot this project at year end.
28	At the invitation of Pusat Kesedaran Wanita Kedah, WCC Outreach Team, Prema, Jaya, Tasha and WCC member Shariza Kamarudin were in Alor Setar to conduct two workshops on <i>Healthy Relationships</i> for 280 Form 5 and 6 students of SMK Tunku Abdul Rahman and SMK Sultanah Asma.
30	WCC Member Annie Chin represented WCC at the charity event "A Batik Evening with Ning", organized by Berjaya Georgetown Hotel. WCC was named the beneficiary of the function.
May	
2	Annie gave a talk on <i>Violence against Women (VAW)</i> for the Penang Medical College students.
2	Prema met the Director of Malayan Teachers' College, Mr. Rijeng Jahet, to discuss the possibility of incorporating a lecture on <i>Child Sexual Abuse</i> on a regular basis for trainee teachers.
6	Prema, assisted by Tasha, gave a lecture on <i>Child Sexual Abuse</i> and <i>The Need for Preventive Programmes</i> to 20 USM undergraduates from the Faculty of Education.



7 & 22	Two brainstorming sessions with Form 2 and 4 students of SMK Sungai Ara and Methodist Girls School were conducted by Jaya on the WCC proposed teenage rape pamphlet.	
8	Elaine Loh and Sumana Nip from the Women's Institute of Management visited WCC to share their WIM project and learn about WCC.	
9	Jaya and Tasha conducted the <i>Ok Tak Ok</i> programme at SRK Telok Kumbar for 100 Std. 5 & 6 students.	
10	Cheng Kooi represented WCC at Malaysia First World Belly Dance Day Charity Event "The Harmony" at Berjaya Georgetown Hotel. WCC was one of the beneficiaries of the event.	
12 May - 4 July	Norbaizura Samsudin from UKM begun her internship at WCC.	
12	A talk <i>Starting Them Young: Creating Awareness about VAW amongst Children and Young Persons</i> was given by Prema to 20 participants attending the training on VAW, organized by NAM Institute for the Empowerment of Women (NIEW) in collaboration with KANITA, USM.	
14	Karen conducted a session <i>Tackling Violence against Women through Law and Social Change</i> at the NIEW Training.	
14	13 NGO representatives, with Kah Cheng and Cheng Kooi representing WCC, called on Penang Chief Minister to present the <i>Penang Forum Declaration</i> .	
15	Thomas started the first of a series of six group sessions on <i>Violence against Women</i> for men in Kulim. Sunshine Home organized the sessions.	
26 May - 20 June	Cheng Kooi was in Manila for her Asian Public Intellectual (API) Fellowship. She met up with women's groups and activists to study their work on violence against women.	
23	WCC organized a Muslim Women's workshop <i>Peranan Anda untuk Perubahan</i> to create awareness of Islamic Family Law and introduce the topic of gender to 20 participants. WCC Honorary Secretary Noraida Endut, member Shariza and Tasha were the facilitators.	

27	The Penang Chief Minister hosted a dinner for Penang NGOs at Rumah Tetamu. 130 people from 40 NGOs including WCC President Khuan Sui, Vice President Lalitha Menon, Member Annie Chin, Yuslinov Ahmad, staff Karen and Sook Foong attended.
30	WCC volunteers' monthly meeting. 10 members and volunteers and 5 staff were present to discuss fairy tales and the roles women were given. WCC member Shakila Manan and Jaya conducted the session.
June	
3	At the invitation of RTM, Tasha was on air to talk about WCC services and activities.
9-11	Prema attended the three-day course on <i>Penang Child Trauma Psychosocial Response Training</i> , organized by Penang Hospital and Mental Health Association of Penang.
10	150 Form 1 and 2 students of SMK Sg. Nibong attended the talk on <i>Teenagers and Personal Safety</i> conducted by Jaya, Tasha and intern Norbaizura.
13	Visit by Stephen Chow and Kana Devakumari, Persatuan Perkhidmatan Komuniti, Taiping to WCC to learn about our child sexual abuse programme.
14-15	<p>WCC organized a two-day skills building workshop for 13 Indian women community leaders. The workshop was facilitated by WCC Vice President Lalitha, Committee Member Maria Francisca, staff Prema, Jaya, and assisted by volunteers Praba, Kanageswari and Roshini.</p> 
15-20	Karen attended the Training of Trainers-Plus on <i>Feminist Legal Theory and Practice</i> , organized by the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development in Chiangmai, Thailand.
18	400 Form 1 and 2 students of SMJK Sacred Heart attended the talk on <i>Teenagers and Personal Safety</i> conducted by Annie in Mandarin.
18-19	An evaluation to gauge the effectiveness of our personal safety programme was carried by Tasha and intern Norbaizura at SRK Convent Green Lane, involving 80 Std. 5 students.
22	KDU School of Communication invited Prema and Jaya to assess their students' assignments on child sexual abuse, in the form of pamphlet/poster/booklet for children.

22	Prema together with WCC member Sudandarambal Saminathan attended the World Refugee Day Celebration in Seberang Jaya, organized by <i>Jaringan Utara Migrasi dan Pelarian (JUMP)</i> .
22 June - 7 September	WCC staff Tasha and Sharon Sim, volunteers Khor Meow Wei, Chia Wei Wenn and Ng Siew Mei attended the 10-week counselling course organized by the Penang Counselling Group.
27	Annie was at the Penang Medical College to talk on <i>Violence against Women</i> for their medical students.
July	
1-24	Jenna Yang Wan Jun from Wesleyan University, USA, interned at WCC.
3	Prema and Sundandarambal attended a talk <i>Single Women: Some Timely Truths</i> by Dr. Hamima Dona Mustafa at KANITA, USM.
9	Jaya and Tasha presented a talk on <i>Personal Safety</i> for 170 students of SK Bayan Lepas.
12 July - 3 August	WCC Volunteer Paridah Mokhsin conducted four sessions of skills training for 23 single mothers and marginalized women. The participants were taught the skills of sewing bags and handicrafts.
18-20	23 JAG members from WAO, SIS, AWAM, Empower and WCC, represented by Cheng Kooi, Prema and Karen, gathered at Port Dickson for an evaluation and planning meeting.
25	Sook Foong attended a workshop <i>Advanced Family Therapy</i> organized by the Penang Association of Counselling and Psychology.
August	
1-3	WCC members Karen, Shariza, Teo Sue Ann and volunteers Lee Bee Yew and Raiha Ahmad attended the <i>Fiesta Feminista 2010 - The Political DEFs Workshop</i> at Bukit Tinggi.
2	WCC General Committee Meeting.
9	At the invitation of Help4U, WCC member Karen Lai gave a talk on <i>Laws Affecting Young Adults</i> for their volunteers.
11	Jaya conducted an evaluation to gauge the effectiveness of our personal safety programme taught to 161 Std. 5 students of SRK Convent Green Lane.



12	Launching of WCC's <i>Bijak Itu Selamat</i> programme in Perak in partnership with Perak Women for Women and Rotary Club for 100 primary school teachers and counsellors from the Kinta District, Perak.
22	Annie gave a talk on <i>Violence against Women</i> to 31 medical students from Penang Medical College.
22-23	Cheng Kooi attended a two-day seminar on <i>Capacity Building for NGOs</i> , organized by the Health Promotion Board Malaysia, held at the Penang General Hospital.
24	Prema conducted a session on <i>Gender</i> for 25 participants of the counselling course organized by Penang Counselling Group at YWCA.
28	A gender sensitization awareness session was conducted at SMJK Chung Hwa Confucian for 70 Form 4 students by Jaya, Annie, Tasha and volunteer Kae Shih.
29	Farewell party for Jaya and Karen. 20 General Committee members and staff were present to bid them farewell and wish them both the very best.
29	Annie together with Sook Foong gave a lecture on Domestic Violence for 45 student nurses from Lam Wah Ee Hospital.
September	
4	WCC President Khuan Sui with staff Prema, Tasha and volunteer Wong Yee Wen were at Institusi Perguruan Pulau Pinang to talk about the importance of integrating a child sexual abuse prevention session into their curriculum for trainee teachers. 90 lecturers attended.
9	Thomas conducted two sessions on <i>Teenage Behaviour</i> for 143 Form 1 students of SMK St. Mark, Butterworth.
14 September - 17 October	WCC members and staff participated six every Friday night candlelight vigils calling for the abolition of the ISA at the Dewan Sri Pinang, organized by <i>Gerakan Mansuhkan ISA</i> .
20	Prema, with Advocacy Officer Shobana Pandian and Sook Foong gave a talk on <i>Domestic Violence</i> at Rumah Hospis.



24	WCC's inaugural lecture on <i>Child Sexual Abuse</i> for USM Faculty of Education students was given by Prema with PPW social worker Lau Swee Li assisting.	
27	Prema was invited by the Penang English Language Learning and Teaching Association to conduct a training programme on <i>How to Teach Children Personal Safety</i> for 20 teachers and parents.	
28	<i>Freedom Film Fest 2008</i> was held Wawasan University. Prema was the resource person.	
October		
9,10, 16, 17, 23 & 24	Six Conflict Literacy sessions were carried out at SRK Hamilton by Tasha and volunteer Wong Yee Wen on 20 Std. 6 students.	
14	President Khuan Sui represented WCC at the Forum Perundingan Kerajaan Tempatan Pulau Pinang in Kompleks Masyarakat Penyayang.	
14	Prema, representing WCC, was in Kuala Lumpur to attend the meeting of the Taskforce on Penan sexual abuse.	
15	FRIS Engineering Institute invited Cheng Kooi to speak about WCC's work and Thomas presented a session on <i>Sexual Harassment</i> for secondary school counsellors and officials from the Penang Education Department at PISA.	
16	Jabatan Kesihatan Pulau Pinang invited WCC to their one-day seminar for 200 medical personnel and staff nurses. Annie gave a talk on <i>The Role of NGOs in Handling Domestic Violence</i> while Yuslinov led the session on <i>Legal Aspects of Domestic Violence</i> . Tasha and Swee Li attended the seminar.	
18	WCC organized a capacity building workshop on <i>Manage Your Finances</i> to train 45 single mothers and marginalized women how to budget with guest speaker Chong Ee Ee from Credit Management and Counselling Agency (AKPK).	
18	WCC General Committee Meeting.	
20, 22 28 & 31	Annie and volunteer Kae Shih conducted the Conflict Literacy sessions at SJKC Min Sin for 20 Std. 6 students.	

21	The first training session for volunteers of the Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita (PPW) Seberang Perai, a project of the Penang State Women, Family & Community Development Committee and managed by WCC. The training session was coordinated by Swee Li with WCC facilitators Annie, Sook Foong and Tasha.
21	Prema represented WCC at the Federation of Family Planning Associations Malaysia and Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance Malaysia consultation meeting in Kuala Lumpur.
23	Cheng Kooi was in Kuala Lumpur to participate in the workshop <i>Towards Achieving at Least 30% Participation of Women in Decision Making Levels</i> , jointly organized by the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development and UNDP.
28	WCC volunteer Carrienne Ewe together with Cheng Kooi attended the presentation by USM Ph.D. candidate, Manuela Colombini, on her research findings on <i>Domestic Violence</i> in Malaysia.
29	Prema, Tasha and Swee Li gave talks on <i>Personal Safety and Healthy Relationships</i> to 80 Form 1 – 3 students from SMK Sri Mutiara, SMK Al-Mashoor Perempuan, SMJK Chinese Girls School and SMK Convent Pulau Tikus.
30	Second training session conducted by Prema and Annie on the concept on sex and gender for volunteers of PPW Seberang Perai.
31	Volunteer Tan See See received, on behalf of WCC, the Appreciation Award presented by the Penang Health Department, at the World Mental Health Day Celebration held in Bukit Mertajam.
November	
2-5	Prema represented WCC and presented a paper <i>Controlling Expressions of Female Sexuality: The Malaysian Context</i> at the 2 nd Conference on the Future of Asian Feminism Confronting Fundamentalism, Conflict and Neoliberalism in Sanur, Bali.
3 & 7	The final two Conflict Literacy sessions were carried out at SJKC Min Sin by Annie and volunteer Kae Shih for their Std. 6 students.
4 & 5	Talks on Teenage Behaviour were given by Thomas and volunteer Ravi, at SMK St. Xavier, for 60 Form 1 and Form 2 students and at SMK Alma Bukit Mertajam for 52 Form 3 students.

**4, 5, 6
& 13**

Talks on *Personal Safety* were conducted at SMK Convent Butterworth, SMK Alma Bukit Mertajam, SMK Berapit Bukit Mertajam and SMK Convent Green Lane, respectively. Staff Tasha, Shobana, Swee Li gave the talks with volunteers Yee Wen and Sally Ewe assisted.



7

Annie facilitated a session on *Violence against Women* for 32 medical students of Penang Medical College.

11

WCC President Khuan Sui represented WCC at the Tun Sardon Foundation's cheque presentation ceremony at Tanjung Bungah Hotel. TYT Yang DiPertua Negeri Pulau Pinang was the guest of honour.

12

At the invitation of SMK Scared Heart, Balik Pulau, Thomas gave a talk on *Teenage Behaviour* to their Form 2 male students while Annie with Swee Li spoke on *Personal Safety* to their Form 2 female students.

13-16

Shobana and volunteer Karen Lai were in KL to participate in the 6th Women's Rights Workshop, organized by All Women's Action Society.

15-16

WCC organized a *Care for Caregivers Workshop*, focusing on caring for service providers, at Tanjung Bungah Beach Hotel. 22 caregivers from NGOs and government agencies together with WCC volunteer Carrienne Ewe and staff Annie, Sook Foong and Tasha participated in the workshop.

16

Vice-President Lalitha was invited by Rumah Nur Bukit Mertajam to talk on *Domestic Violence, their Rights and Related Laws* to 20 Indian women.

22

Cheng Kooi, an API Fellow 2007, participated at the Asian Public Intellectuals Workshop in Yogyakarta, Indonesia and presented her paper *Strategies for Overcoming Violence Against Women: The ASEAN Experience*.

27

Prema and Annie attended the 5th Forum on *Crime and Policing in Malaysia* at USM. Vice-President Lalitha talked about the absence of rigorous investigation as well as the lack of police empathy when dealing with violence against women at the forum.

27

Tasha, assisted by volunteer Sally Eu, talked on *Personal Safety* to the Form 1 to Form 4 students attending the Youth Camp organized by Logo Mission Centre.

28

Ten students from Segi College accompanied by their lecturer Sharon Anthony, as well as a WCC Committee Member, visited WCC. Prema and Sook Foong briefed them.

29	WCC General Committee Meeting.	
December		
1	Prema and Shobana gave a presentation on WCC's work and spoke on <i>Activism</i> at the 3-day Human Rights Camp, jointly organized by the Malaysian Youth and Students Democratic Movement and Amnesty International.	
3-4	Cheng Kooi participated in the USM Kubang Kerian Women's Health Development Unit Workshop NGOs as Research Partners, in the research on health status and impact on women experiencing domestic violence in Malaysia led by Siti Hawa Ali, WCC former President. Cheng Kooi also conducted a session on fundraising for several NGOs there.	
4	Third training session for volunteers of PPW at MAY Care Centre in Seberang Jaya, conducted by Annie and Swee Li.	
9-12	Annie attended the 4-day workshop on <i>Professional Accountable Practice</i> organized by the Malaysian Association of Social Workers.	
13-14	WCC hosted the Fiesta Feminista (FF) Steering Committee meeting and a BBQ on the beach for 10 members of the FF team from KL.	
20	A talk on <i>Marriage and Divorce</i> was given by Lalitha and Shobana to 40 participants attending the workshop organized by the Northern Indian Corridor Association.	
20	WCC team, Yuslinov, Tasha and Swee Li, conducted a half-day workshop on <i>Domestic Violence and Islamic Family Law</i> for 50 Muslim women, organized by Badan Kebajikan Masyarakat Nibong Tebal.	
23	Cheng Kooi was invited to facilitate a session on <i>Violation of Women's Rights</i> for 40 officers-in-charge of Police Stations in Perak at the 2-day Human Rights training, organized by the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) in Taiping.	

Sponsors & Donors

Agencies & Foundations

- Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst e.V. (EED)
- Lim Lean Teng Foundation
- Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Malaysia
- NEMGRADS, School of Communication, USM
- Junior Chamber International Tanjung Bunga (Malaysia)
- International Women's Association, Penang
- Tun Sardon Foundation
- Lions Club of Georgetown Island Penang

A Batik Evening with Ning Baizura

- Berjaya Georgetown Hotel
- Sebarang (M) Sdn. Bhd.
- AA Anthony Securities Sdn. Bhd.
- The Learning Garden

Malaysia First World Belly Dance Day Charity Event

- Zero Fitness Dance Studio
- Telestructure Sdn. Bhd.
- ER Mekatron Sdn. Bhd.
- Orangenlime
- Puan Sri Chui Kah Peng
- Datin Lee Lai Ghueen
- Dato' Nazir Ariff

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- Chan Lai Mei
- Chin Wey Tze
- Juanita Poleho
- Maznah Mohamad
- Tan Ah Hio
- Vivienne Tneh
- Yap Yee Ling
- Tan Siew Tee
- Patricia Ooi Li Kean
- In memory of Lee Liam Keng
- In memory of Philip & Miki Hoalim
- In memory of Patsy Yeoh Kooi Sim

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- Biro Bantuan Guaman Pulau Pinang
- Children's Protection Society
- Community Aids Service Penang
- Kolej Komuniti Bayan Baru
- Lam Wah Ee Nursing College
- Legal Aid Centre, Penang
- Little Penang Street Market
- Hospital Pulau Pinang
- Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Negeri P. Pinang
- Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary
- Than Hsiang Mitra Welfare Association
- Ramakrishna Ashrama
- Pejabat Pembangunan Wanita Negeri P. Pinang
- Penang English Language Learning and Teaching Association (PELLTA)
- Penang Medical College
- Penang Office for Human Development (POHD)
- Perak Women for Women (PWW)
- Persatuan Kebajikan Shammah
- Pertubuhan Kesedaran Wanita Kedah
- Rumah Kebajikan Seri Cahaya
- Rumah-Rumah Nur di Pulau Pinang
- Sisters in Islam (SIS)
- St. Joseph Home
- Sunshine Cottage
- Women's Aid Organisation (WAO)
- Women's Development Collective (WDC)
- Wesley Methodist Church
- Women's Welfare Council



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- | | |
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and our sincere apologies to those that we may have inadvertently left out.





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