



# 2021 ANNUAL REVIEW



## VISION

WCC envisions an inclusive society free from gender violence and discrimination, and where women can actualise their full potential.

## MISSION

WCC is committed to:

- Eliminating violence against women and children
- Empowering women and children
- Promoting gender equality and social justice

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## DONATION

WCC is a non-profit, tax-exempt organisation and is totally dependent on donations and sponsorship in support of our work.

**Name: Pusat Kesedaran Wanita**  
**CIMB 8601023057**



*\*Any donation of RM50 and above will be issued a tax exempt receipt.*

# CONTENTS

## PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

2021 Highlights	2
Ongoing Work	3
Gratitude and Appreciation	4

## KEY PROGRAMMES

### Service 2021

Counselling	5
Hospital Support	8
Service Advocacy	9
Other Services	9
Training, Community Talks and Media Engagement	10

### Outreach 2021

Raising Public Awareness	12
Preventing Sexual Abuse	14
Production of Cybersafety Guidebook	15

### Advocacy 2021

Supporting Victims' Access to Justice	16
Advocating for Better Victim Support Services	18
Lobbying and Networking on Women and Children's Rights	18

## OUR PEOPLE

General Committee 2021	20
Staff and Working Committees	21

### 2021 Appreciation and Gratitude

Donors and Sponsors	22
Partners and Supporting Agencies	24
Volunteers	26

# PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

By Susan Siew

As Malaysia entered into the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, the lockdowns were extended over several stages for nearly seven months, resulting in greater suffering in people's lives. Life under the pandemic was a challenge but once again WCC responded by continually adapting our work into impactful online activities. Our multi-tasking staff became more adept in IT and they worked hard on a mostly hybrid basis; both from home and in the office whenever the Movement Control Order (MCO) was lifted temporarily.



## 2021 HIGHLIGHTS

### Supporting Victims of Sexual Crimes

After over a decade of WCC's providing comprehensive service advocacy work in supporting victims of sexual crimes, we were proud to publish our research report entitled *Standing with Sexual Crimes: WCC Support Services*. Significantly, the research data findings showed a conviction rate of 30% compared to 4% from an earlier WCC study. In short, WCC's support services for sexual crime victims have made a crucial difference in assisting clients to seek justice.

To promote these important findings, a virtual launch of the report was organised in December 2021 and officiated by the Honourable Federal Court judge, Yang Arif Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan. The event saw some 70 distinguished participants from the judiciary, police, hospitals, Social Welfare Departments and other agencies attending, clearly indicating a strong interest in improving justice for sexual crime victims.

### Upholding Muslim Women's Rights

WCC also embarked on a new project to empower Muslim women on their rights in the family. We produced three short videos on healthy Muslim marriage, *ta'liq* (marriage conditions), and *nafkah* (maintenance), as we realised that many Muslim wives are unaware of their basic rights. We also produced a fourth video on domestic violence in Muslim marriages, where testimonies from real life survivors were shared to highlight their struggles. These videos have been well promoted and used for our WCC training workshops.



## ONGOING WORK



**Service:** In 2021, the core service work in our two offices and in hospitals was greatly affected by the extended lockdowns, resulting in lower numbers of cases handled. Most of our cases remained domestic and sexual violence cases, the latter involving child victims especially. Our face-to-face counselling numbers saw a significant drop of 32% while our hotline numbers decreased by 10%, despite our providing online counselling as alternative. Our clients preferred face-to-face counselling as they lacked privacy at home and sometimes faced internet access problems for online counselling sessions. A new trend was also seen with increased cases of online violence against women and children since the pandemic began in 2020.



**Outreach:** On the positive side, the pandemic has enabled WCC to gain popularity nationwide through various online platforms, especially as speakers on gender-based violence issues. In 2021, WCC organised and spoke at a total of 58 online talks and webinars in multiple languages for audiences across Malaysia. Our signature programmes, *OK Tak OK* and *Cybersafety* were able to be sustained due to the tremendous support of Dell Technologies Women in Action employees who were trained by WCC. These dedicated volunteers ran nearly 60 online sessions for 2,000 children and teenagers in seven different states in Malaysia, to educate them about the dangers of bad touch and cyberviolence. WCC also published a guidebook entitled *Cybersafety: Keeping Children and Teenagers Safe Online* to enable educators to conduct similar programmes in schools.



**Advocacy:** Despite the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic, the advocacy team supported a total of 73 cases, of which 32 were new cases. Online follow-up increased greatly during lockdown, while our court support decreased accordingly.



## WCC Value Shop

As for our social enterprise work, WCC is fortunate that both our Value Shops survived the prolonged lockdowns, albeit with smaller sales proceeds. We owe our success to our dedicated supervisors and volunteers, generous pre-loved donations from the public, and regular shoppers.



## GRATITUDE AND APPRECIATION

WCC is very blessed as we were able to source financial support from various agencies during this prolonged pandemic.

We express our deepest gratitude to the **Penang State Executive Council for Social Development**, under YB Chong Eng, whose annual funding for Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita (PPW), our Seberang Perai office, since 2009, has enabled WCC to serve thousands of women and children in crisis in the Penang mainland. No other state government has provided such sustained support for local NGOs.

Our appreciation goes to **Dell Technologies** for its second grant enabling WCC to enhance digital inclusion for communities, especially for women and young adults, in the areas of entrepreneurship and key life skills. This fruitful partnership shows how a non-profit can work in synergy with a corporate to have a fulfilling outcome which benefits our communities.

WCC is also pleased to receive a two-year **Hasanah Special Grant** in support of our multi-level work in service, training, community outreach and resource development. This grant is aimed specifically at benefitting vulnerable communities impacted by the pandemic.

We are also thankful to our others sponsors like the **Ministry of Health** for our service work, **Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI)** for our Muslim women's rights project and **OCBC Bank** for our website work.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the many **patrons and individuals**, whose donations, big and small, reflect the tremendous public support for WCC's work.

Finally, I would like to end by extending my gratitude to our General Committee, staff and volunteers whose dedication and commitment make us proud to be part of the WCC family.

*To each and everyone, ribuan terima kasih!*



In 2021, WCC service work was better equipped to handle the challenges from the pandemic compared to the previous year. Our hotline mobile phones and tablets enabled us to provide online counselling services as an alternative to face-to-face counselling. Despite the prolonged Covid-19 movement control order (MCO) from 13 January to 4 March, and from 12 May to 3 October (27 weeks in total), both WCC Island and PPW\* continued our services without interruption, handling 352 clients and 2,261 calls in total.

By going online, the Island office had opportunities to work with new partners from different states. This led to an increase of clients and callers from other states. For the PPW office, the largest number of referrals came from One Stop Crisis Centres (OSSCs) in mainland government hospitals.

*Service Team: S. Mangleswary, Ooi Say Tee, Lau Swee Li, Yeap Yen Ying, Asmar Bakhari, Salma Farhanah A. Rasid, Sinthu Krishna & Teh Hui Hui*

## COUNSELLING

### Face-to-Face/Online Counselling 2021

Clients	WCC Island	PPW	Total No. of Clients
New Clients	183	143	326
Former Clients	15	11	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>352</b>

Figure 1: Number of Face-to-Face/Online Counselling Clients

The prolonged lockdown had significantly impacted our services, resulting in a marked decrease of clients handled. As shown in Figure 1, overall WCC handled a total of 352 face-to-face/online counselling clients in 2021, reflecting a drop of 32% compared to 2020. Despite the availability of online counselling via Zoom, Google Meet & WhatsApp video call, clients still preferred face-to-face counselling. Among the reasons given were a lack of safe spaces at home for them to speak in private, fear of their calls being monitored by their abusive partners, and a lack or shortage of mobile data and/or internet instability.

Compared to 2020, the WCC Island office saw a major drop of 39% in new clients. Only 32% of them were online counselling clients whereas the rest were seen face-to-face when our office reopened in between MCOs. The number of clients from other states also doubled to 17%. Similarly, PPW saw a decrease of 17% in the number of new cases handled. Out of 143 of its new clients, a higher percentage (52%) was counselled online. This was likely due to longer travelling distances to our mainland office and transportation issues faced by clients.

*\*PPW (Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita) is a joint project between the Penang State government and WCC to serve women and children in crisis in the mainland.*

## Types of Cases Handled

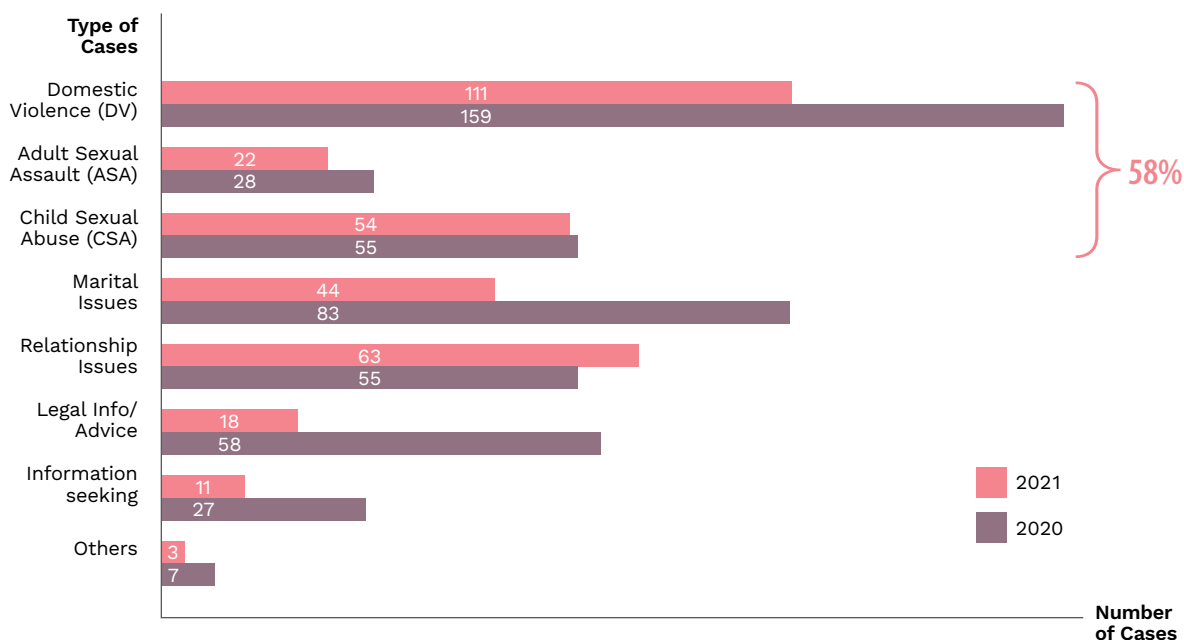


Figure 2: Types of Cases Handled in 2021

Domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) cases remained the bulk of cases (58%) handled by WCC and PPW in 2021. Most of these were referred to us by the OSCCs of Penang government hospitals. There was a slight increase in the overall number of child sexual abuse (CSA) cases (5%), and in relationship issues (7%) especially for the WCC Island office, and a decrease in marital and legal advice seeking cases.



CSA in mainland Penang is of serious concern. Out of 35 CSA cases handled by PPW in 2021, 74% of rape victims were girls between 13 to 17 years old, and most of the molestation victims were aged 12 and below.

RAPE VICTIMS

74%

13-17 Years Old

Since the Covid-19 pandemic began in 2020, WCC has been taking note of the rising number of cases involving online violence against women and children. In 2021, we revised our client data collection system to better capture information on this trend. Out of the 187 DV and SA cases we handled, 14% involved online violence. The most common pattern observed for SA cases involved online grooming, harassment, and the taking and circulation of intimate images (photographs and videos) without consent. For DV cases, digital stalking was prevalent, including the use of tracking software and spyware to monitor the victims' chat messages and mobile phone calls.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
& SEXUAL ASSAULT

14%

Involved Online  
Violence

## Clients' Demographics

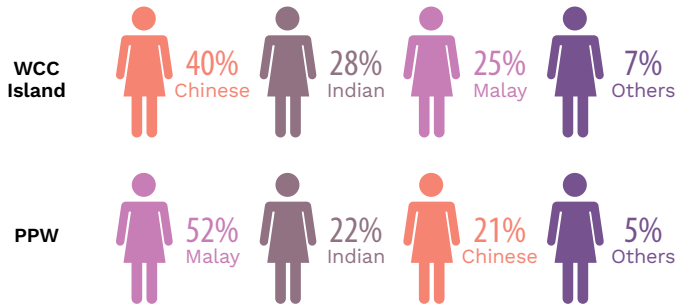


Figure 3: Clients' Ethnicity 2021

In recent years, the number of Malay clients supported by WCC has gradually increased, largely due to OSCC referrals to our PPW office. In 2021, overall the largest number of clients were of Malay ethnicity (37%), followed by Chinese clients at 32% and Indian clients at 25%.

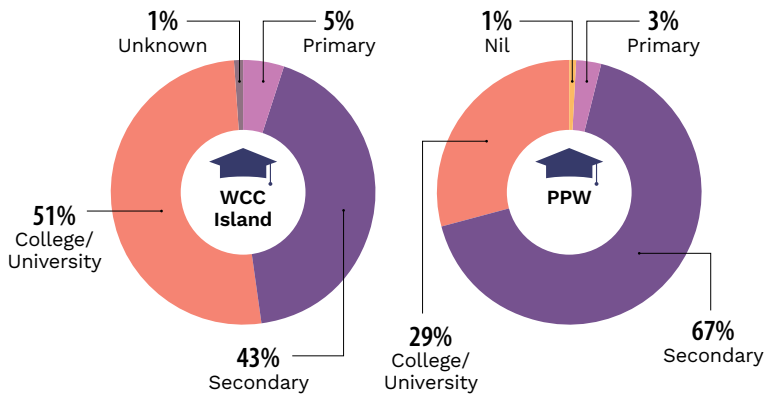


Figure 4: Clients' Education Level 2021

In 2021, out of the total of 326 clients, 68 were children (21%). Of the remaining adult clients, 57% were educated up to secondary level, and 42% had tertiary education.

INCOME LEVEL	WCC ISLAND	PPW
> RM3,000	26%	18%
RM2,001 - RM3,000	12%	13%
RM1,001 - RM2,000	20%	27%
< RM1,000	11%	7%
Nil	28%	35%
Adult Students	3%	None

Figure 5: Clients' Income Level 2021

In 2021, a third of our adult clients earned RM2,000 and below, with another third having no income. Like previous years, most of our clients in 2021 were from lower income groups.

## Telephone Counselling

In 2021, due to the extended lockdowns, WCC's hotlines remained the main avenue for our counselling support. As seen in Figure 6, both offices handled a total of 1,042 new calls, a 10% decrease from 2020 when the pandemic first erupted. However, there was a 36% increase in follow-up calls. Overall, the types of calls were similar in pattern to the face-to-face cases handled. A third of the new calls received by WCC Island office were from other states, and nearly half of our PPW calls were OSCC referrals.

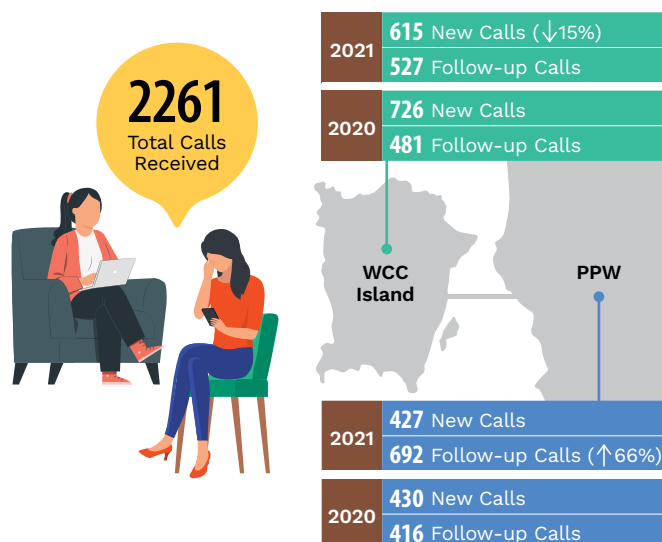


Figure 6: Telephone Calls in 2021

## HOSPITAL SUPPORT

An important part of WCC's victim support work is our close partnership with One Stop Crisis Centres at the Emergency Department of government hospitals in Penang, namely Hospital Pulau Pinang (HPP), Hospital Balik Pulau (HBP), Hospital Seberang Jaya (HSJ), Hospital Kepala Batas (HKB) and Hospital Bukit Mertajam (HBM). Victims of domestic and sexual violence who are treated at these hospitals are referred to WCC for counselling and emotional support with their consent. During 2021, our support work continued primarily on a remote basis, via hotline and online counselling, due to the extended lockdowns.

In 2021, the number of DV and SA victims seen at HPP and HBP drastically reduced by 39%. In the mainland hospitals (HSJ, HKB & HBM) it also dropped by 16% compared to 2020. This was likely due to some Penang hospitals serving as quarantine centres for Covid-19 patients, deterring DV and SA victims from seeking help there.

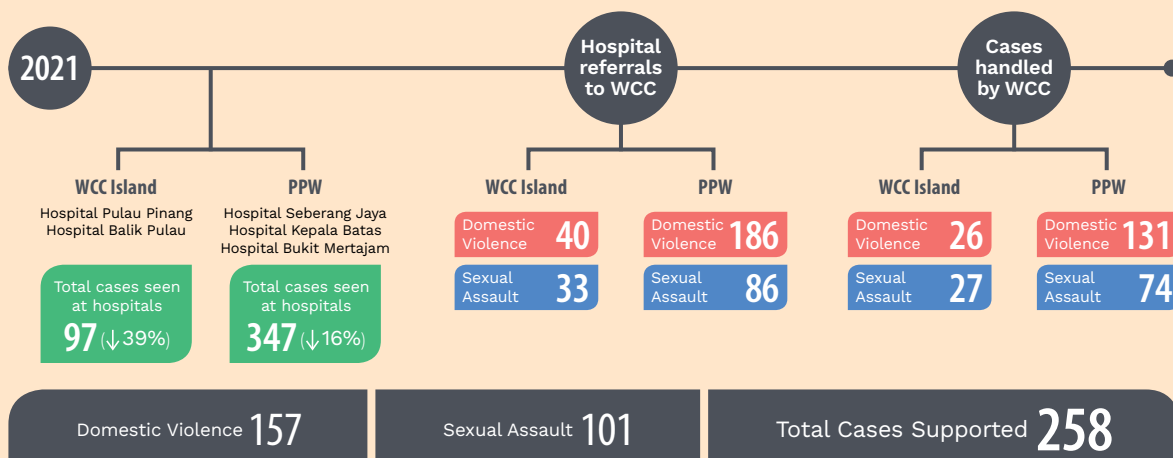


Figure 7: OSCC Cases Handled in 2021

**SERVICE ADVOCACY**

In 2021, WCC and PPW provided a range of 321 interventions in total. These included providing legal information, and communicating with the investigating police officer, social welfare officers and child protectors for updates on cases and to ensure the safety of the clients. Where suspects were charged, interventions included accompanying clients in court as well as following up with deputy public prosecutors. Due to court restrictions during the MCO, our social workers only managed to provide court support for seven clients in 2021.

**Legal info/advice**

WCC Island	82
PPW	114
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>

**Follow up with agencies**

WCC Island	15
PPW	95
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>

**Accompany client in court**

WCC Island	5
PPW	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

**Others**

WCC Island	8
PPW	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>

**OTHER SERVICES****Email and Social Media Enquiries**

WCC's social media channels (Facebook Messenger, Instagram and Twitter) have become an

important communication platform for those facing crisis to reach out to us. In 2021, we had 43 enquiries via social media. However, e-mail enquiries have reduced in number, with only 22 e-mails in 2021 compared to 35 in 2020.

**Shelter**

In 2021, WCC sheltered four domestic violence clients and their sixteen children. All four women

left their abusive husbands to move on with their lives. Two of them were non-Malaysian citizens, and WCC worked closely with their respective embassies to support the women and their children in their cross-border journeys to their home countries. Due to the Social Welfare Department's requirement of negative Covid-19 test results for clients before they could be admitted to shelters, WCC arranged to place them in budget hotels while awaiting their test results. This added to the overall challenge of managing cases during the MCO.



## TRAINING, COMMUNITY TALKS & MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

### Safe Family Policy Training

WCC continued its strategic partnership with the Penang Executive Council for Social Development and Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC) to continue training for First Support Points (FSPs) to assist domestic violence (DV) victims.

On 6 April 2021, WCC conducted an FSP training in Mandarin for 43 representatives from State Assemblyperson (ADUN) and Member of Parliament service centres, Women and Family Development Committees (JPWks) and several NGOs. The training methodology was highly participatory, including interactive lectures, role play, videos and group work. Topics covered were *Understanding Power Dynamics in the Family*, *Understanding DV* and *How to Support DV Victims*.



A Focus Group session was organised by PWDC for 24 trained representatives from ADUN service centres to understand challenges faced in assisting domestic violence victims and further support needed. Challenges shared by participants included the lack of publicity on the existence of FSPs, the lack of more detailed guidance, lack of private space to speak to victims, language barriers and unhelpful attitudes of some government agency personnel.



## Community Talks

### Talks for medical and social work community

In 2021, WCC gave talks on handling domestic violence and sexual assault victims to medical personnel and students at Hospital Kepala Batas, Hospital Sultan Abdul Halim, Sungai Petani and University Malaya Medical College. In total, over 150 medical personnel and students benefitted from these talks. We also collaborated with social science schools of public universities like Universiti Sains Malaysia and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia to give talks on social workers' roles in eradicating violence against women and children. We reached over 430 students through these talks.



### Talks for communities

WCC collaborated with new partners including Persatuan Pendidikan Ilham, Education, Welfare and Research Foundation, and Vetri Association to deliver both physical talks and webinars. We were able to reach out to 10,737 people collectively. The topics included child sexual abuse, domestic violence, sexuality and women's empowerment.

## Media Engagement

Social workers were interviewed by different mass media on WCC's work, rising numbers of domestic violence, child sexual abuse and child marriage cases. Our media coverage was widespread across multiple languages, including China Press, Sin Chew Daily, Kwong Wah, Buletin Mutiara, Minnal FM, Asia TV News Southeast Asia, Bernama Channel and Astro Vaanavil.

Moving forward, the service team in both offices will continue to strengthen our strategic partnership with the OSCCs in hospitals as well as the Penang State Health Department, and to expand our services to women and children in need of help.





Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, WCC has been conducting outreach programmes and activities online, enabling us to achieve a nationwide reach. Partnering with various organisations in the public, private and civil society sectors has greatly increased our visibility in the virtual world, resulting in many invitations for collaboration on online talks, webinars and trainings.

In 2021, WCC successfully organised and participated in 58 online talks and webinars in multiple languages on various aspects of gender-based violence. In addition, about 15 dedicated volunteers from Dell Technologies who underwent WCC's training of facilitators impressively conducted our signature child and teenage sexual abuse prevention programmes in almost 60 sessions nationwide.

*Outreach Team: Nadila Daud, Yeap Yen Ying, Salma Farhanah A.Rasid, S. Mangleswary & Ooi Say Tee*

## RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS

### Online Talks and Webinars

WCC organised 11 webinars in various languages for diverse groups within the community. These webinars were supported by Dell Technologies, Hasanah Special Grant (HSG) and Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) in 2021. The details are as follows:

#### Men's Roles as Agents of Change in Modern Families (Chinese)

3 Jan 2021

Akasha Learning Companionship Association & Pusat Khidmat Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (ADUN) Machang Bubuk

**3,700 views**  
**8,700 reach**

#### Naveena Ulagil Vanigam: Business in the Digital World (Tamil)

6 Feb 2021

Mom's Village Asia, Jawatankuasa Pembangunan Wanita dan Kanak-kanak (JPWK) of Pantai Jerejak & Seri Delima

**5,900 views**  
**8,200 reach**

#### ABCD Usahawan 5.0: Terokai Dunia Perniagaan Digital (Bahasa Malaysia)

20 Feb 2021

JPWKs of Pantai Jerejak & Seri Delima

**2,300 views**  
**2,700 reach**

#### Digital Entrepreneurship in the New Normal: Opportunities for Change (English)

6 Mar 2021

JPWKs of Pantai Jerejak & Seri Delima

**1,400 views**  
**4,300 reach**

#### Breaking Boundaries: Women in Online Marketing (Chinese)

21 Mar 2021

YY Channel, JPWKs of Pantai Jerejak & Seri Delima

**2,100 views**  
**4,700 reach**

#### Eh! Where Did My Money Go? (Chinese)

22 May 2021

SK iWealth, JPWKs of Berapit, Bukit Tambun, Machang Bubuk, Batu Lanchang & Sungai Pinang

**1,000 views**  
**2,100 reach**

**My Money, My Decision (Chinese)**

5 June 2021

SK iWealth, JPWKs of Berapit,  
Bukit Tambun, Machang Bubuk,  
Batu Lanchang & Sungai Pinang**1,200 views**  
**1,900 reach****Eh! Mana Duit Saya? (Bahasa Malaysia)**

19 June 2021

SK iWealth, JPWKs of Air Itam,  
Machang Bubuk & Sungai Acheh**1,900 views**  
**9,500 reach****Duit Saya, Keputusan Saya (Bahasa Malaysia)**

3 July 2021

SK iWealth, JPWKs of Air Itam,  
Machang Bubuk & Sungai Acheh**778 views**  
**585 reach****Adat vs Hukum Dalam Perkahwinan Islam (Bahasa Malaysia)**

30 Oct 2021

Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam  
Negeri Pulau Pinang (JHEAIPP)**1,200 views**  
**1,100 reach****Sustaining the Environment, Empowering Women (English)**

11 Dec 2021

Green Hero, OWL Zero Waste Store,  
JPWKs of Berapit, Batu Lanchang,  
Bukit Tambun, Machang Bubuk,  
Padang Lalang, Seri Delima  
& Sungai Pinang**1,000 views**  
**3,400 reach**Total views  
**22,478**Total reach  
**47,185**

We also received a total of 47 invitations from various public, private and civil society organisations as guest speakers for various webinars on topics related to violence against women and children (VAWC). These webinars were organised by local partners such as JPWKs, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Education, Welfare and Research Foundation (EWRf), and others. We also collaborated with international organisations such as Taiwan Coalition Against Violence, Asian Law Student Association (ALSA), UNFPA Malaysia and others. These webinars achieved an international reach.

**Empowering Muslim Women on Their Rights in the Family**

The WANIS (Wanita dan Islam) project, is WCC's latest initiative in raising public awareness on women's rights in Islamic family law based on the experiences shared by our clients going through the Shariah court processes. With the support of the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), WCC produced four short videos on healthy Muslim marriages, *ta'liq* (marriage conditions), *nafkah* (maintenance) and women's rights in domestic violence situations to raise public awareness on these issues. WCC also conducted a webinar entitled "Adat vs Hukum Dalam Perkahwinan Islam" (Culture vs Law in Muslim Marriage) in collaboration with the Penang Islamic Religious Affairs Department (JHEAIPP) under this project.

**Webinar WCC**

**Adat vs Hukum Dalam Perkahwinan Islam**

Sabtu | 30 Okt 2021 | 8.30 - 9.30 malam | FB Live

**Panelis**

**Puan Fathiah Abdul Rahman**  
Penolong Pengarah Kanan  
Unit Nikah, Cerai dan Rujuk  
Bahagian Undang-Undang Keluarga Islam,  
Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Pulau Pinang

**Encik Ahmad Munawir Abdul Aziz**  
Peguambela & Peguamcara Mahkamah  
Tinggi Malaya / Peguam Syarie

**Moderator**

**Cik Selma Farhanah**  
Penerima Sosial  
WCC Seberang/PPW

Disaja Oleh: WCC Women's Centre for Change

in partnership with: Canada

## PREVENTING SEXUAL ABUSE

### Training Facilitators & Reaching Young Ones Through WCC's *OK Tak OK* & *Cybersafety* Programmes

#### ***Bengkel Pengendalian Kes Penderaan Seksual Terhadap Kanak-Kanak***

WCC's signature programme, *OK Tak OK* was designed to prevent child sexual abuse by teaching children to differentiate between good and bad touch as well as how to seek help. In January 2021, WCC conducted an online workshop for teachers and educators to train them to conduct WCC's *OK Tak OK* programme online. We also shared tips on how to handle disclosure of child sexual abuse from children. A total of 50 teachers and educators attended the two-part training that was sponsored by Hasanah Special Grant.



#### ***OK Tak OK and Cybersafety Online Training for Facilitators***



WCC also conducted four sessions of online facilitator training for 50 new volunteers from Dell Technologies to educate them about child sexual abuse and the perpetrators' modus operandi. We then trained them to conduct the *OK Tak OK* and *Cybersafety* programme online. Around 15 trained volunteers went on to conduct nearly 60 sessions of *OK Tak OK* and *Cybersafety* online achieving a nationwide reach.

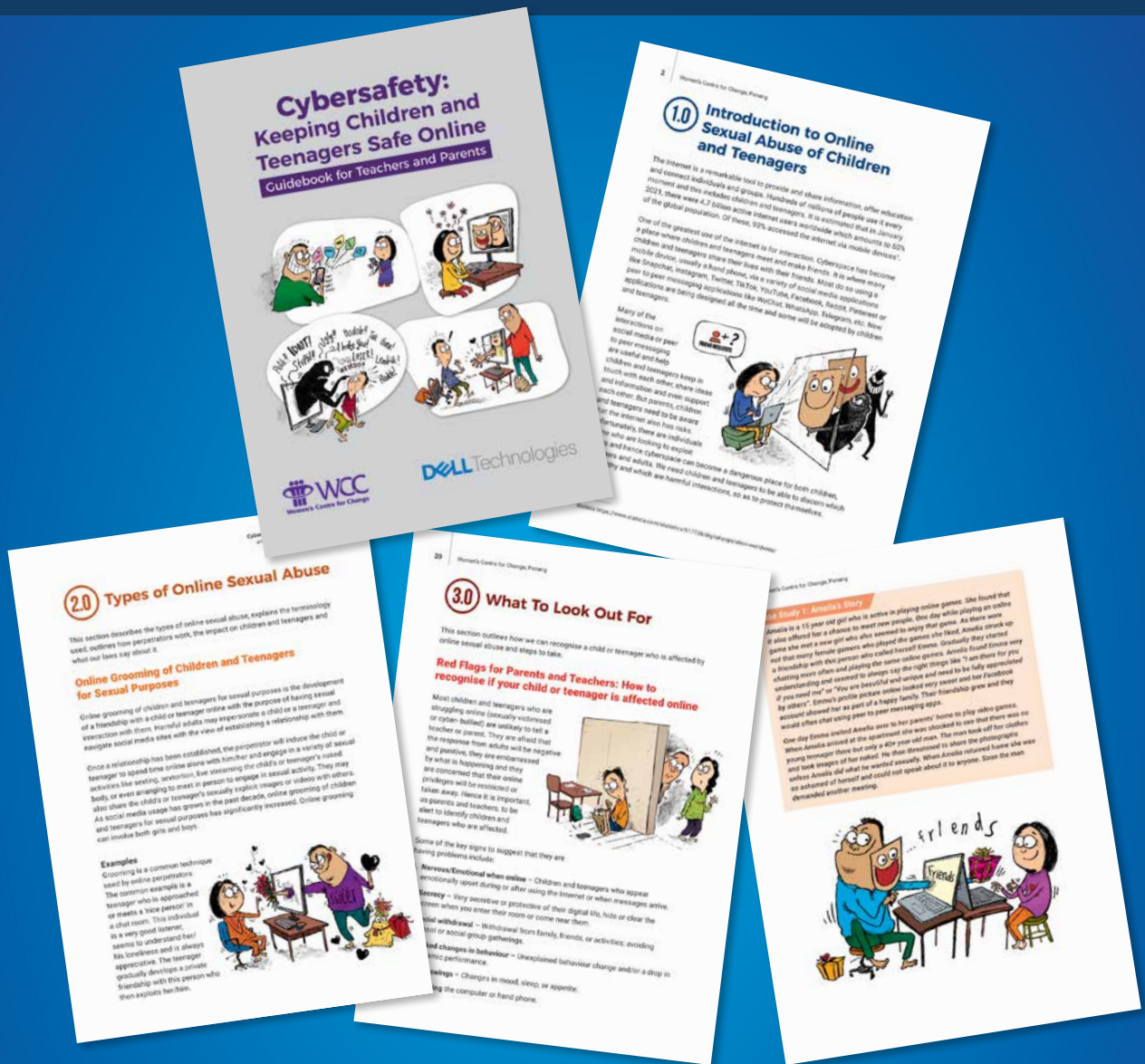
#### ***OK Tak OK Online Programme for Children***

Expanding our pool of volunteers for our *OK Tak OK* programme and utilising online platforms enabled us to have a nationwide reach. A total of 31 online sessions were conducted by WCC staff and trained volunteers, benefitting 963 children not only in Penang but also other states such as Kedah, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Sabah.

#### ***Cybersafety Online Programme for Teenagers***

Another popular WCC programme is *Cybersafety*, which is designed to help teenagers protect themselves from online abuse. The pandemic has resulted in children becoming more dependent on the Internet for education, gaming as well as making new friends, which makes them more vulnerable to such abuse. Throughout the year, WCC staff and trained Dell Technologies volunteers conducted 28 online sessions of *Cybersafety*, reaching 973 teenagers across Malaysia.

## PRODUCTION OF CYBERSAFETY GUIDEBOOK



WCC extended its work to combat online sexual abuse of children and teenagers by producing a new guidebook for teachers and parents entitled *Cybersafety: Keeping Children and Teenagers Safe Online*. This guidebook was written by consultant paediatrician, Datuk Dr Amar Singh HSS with the support of the WCC team and sponsored by Dell Technologies. WCC printed 500 copies to distribute to our volunteers and partners.

In summary, WCC's work to raise public awareness and engagement on violence against women and children and to prevent child sexual abuse has expanded nationwide effectively. We believe it has made a positive impact.



With extended Covid-19 lockdowns, 2021 was another challenging year for the advocacy team. Our staff had to work from home for nearly seven months, and most planned physical activities had to be cancelled. Nevertheless, despite these setbacks, we managed to support a total of 73 cases (32 new cases and 41 existing cases).

*Advocacy Team: Hastiny Subramaniam, Choong Yong Yi, Karen Lai & Loh Cheng Kooi*

## SUPPORTING VICTIMS' ACCESS TO JUSTICE

### Types and number of cases we supported

Supporting victims of domestic and sexual violence in their access to justice remains the core work of the Advocacy team.

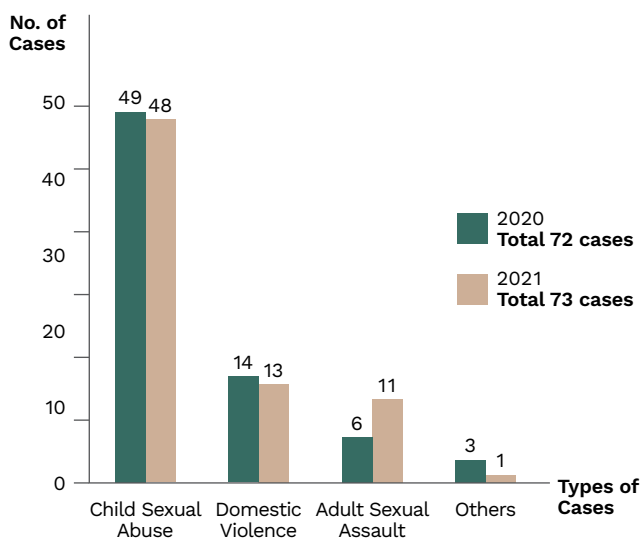


Figure 1: Types & Numbers of Cases Supported

Figure 1 shows the types and numbers of cases supported in 2020 and 2021. As before, the majority of the cases were of child sexual abuse (66%). However, in 2021, we also saw a nearly twofold increase to 11 cases of adult sexual assault.

### Status of cases handled in 2021

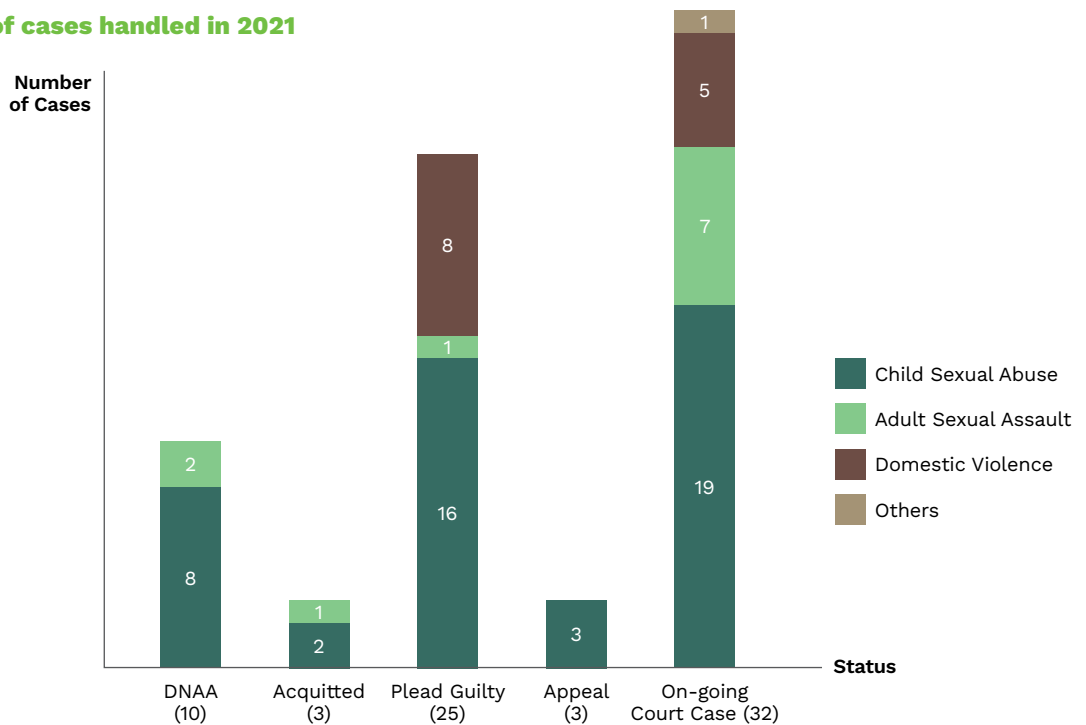


Figure 2: Status of 73 cases handled in 2021

Figure 2 shows the status of the 73 court cases handled in 2021. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, the courts were closed for three weeks in January and thereafter, resumed operations throughout the year. Despite this, we saw fewer trials for the cases that we supported. As a result, there were no convictions after trial for the cases we supported in 2021.

Interestingly, compared to only 6 cases in 2020, we saw a fourfold increase in the total number of cases where the accused pleaded guilty. Most of these were child sexual abuse cases. Guilty pleas by the accused mean that victims no longer need to attend lengthy court trials, hence saving time, financial costs and additional stress.

### Our interventions

The closure of WCC's offices for nearly seven months had greatly affected the number of our advocacy interventions. As shown in Figure 3, we conducted a total of 195 interventions. Compared to 2020 where we conducted 327 interventions in total, this number had dropped by almost half in 2021. Despite this reduction, we saw a nearly twofold increase in online checks, mostly comprising searches through the court e-filing system to monitor progress of cases during the Covid-19 lockdowns.

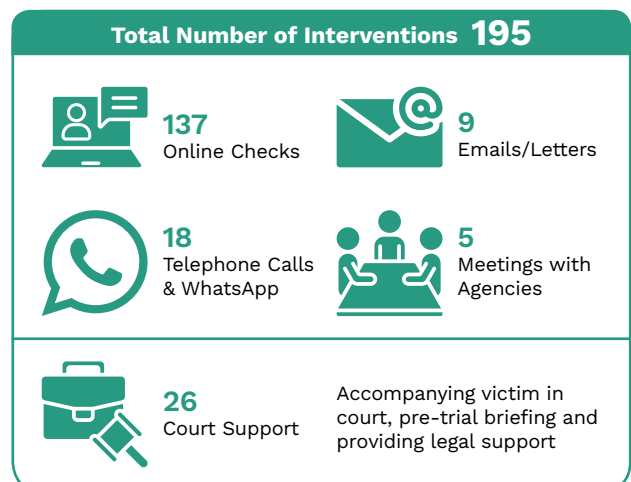


Figure 3: Types and Number of Interventions in 2021

## ADVOCATING FOR BETTER VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES

### Research report and virtual launch

In April 2021, WCC published *Standing with Sexual Crime Victims: WCC Support Services Report* which documents a decade of our comprehensive victim support services as well as their impact for the period of 2015 to 2019. Despite some data limitations, the report's key findings were most encouraging, showing an increase in conviction rate and a decrease in discharge not amounting to acquittal (DNAA) rate for cases where victims were supported by WCC. The report also includes recommendations for action by relevant stakeholders. Over 250 copies of the report have been disseminated to various agencies, serving as a critical tool to lobby for improved victim support in the criminal justice system.



On 17 December 2021, we successfully publicised the above research report through a virtual launch conducted via Zoom and streamed via Facebook Live. The launch was officiated by the Honourable Federal Court Judge, Yang Arif Dato' Mary Lim Thiam Suan, with Dr David Krivanek from the German Embassy representing our funder for the report. Approximately 70 distinguished participants from various government agencies such as the judiciary, the Attorney General's Chambers, the police, hospitals, Social Welfare Department, the Malaysian and Penang Bars, ministries, NGOs, UN agencies, and members of the media attended the launch. The event reached over 500 viewers online through Facebook Live, and received good press coverage.

## LOBBYING AND NETWORKING ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

### Women's Tribunal Malaysia 2021

In November 2021, Malaysia's first ever Women's Tribunal was organised by the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) and ENGENDER Consultancy. WCC was part of the Steering Committee. The Tribunal, guided by principles of inclusivity and intersectionality, served as an alternative platform to amplify the voices of women, especially those from marginalised communities. A total of 26 testimonies (via audio, video recordings and live appearances) and nine advocate statements were heard, covering



issues related to legal and constitutional framework, economy, health, violence against women, political and public life, education, family and marriage, and gender identity. A panel of three judges presented their recommendations to the government to amend discriminatory laws and implement policies to protect women's human rights. The event was well covered by the media.

## KPWKM Jawatankuasa Keganasan Rumah Tangga (JKRT)

The JKRT (Domestic Violence Committee) is a national level committee set up by the Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat (KPWKM). The committee consists of representatives from key ministries and government agencies, including KPWKM, the health ministry, PDRM, hospitals, Attorney General's Chambers, Social Welfare Department (JKM), the courts, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The committee was set up to monitor and coordinate the handling of domestic violence cases nationwide, especially between the government agencies and NGOs. WCC is a member of the JKRT and two of its subcommittees, namely Data and Advocacy & Capacity Building. In 2021, we attended four online meetings and gave inputs on the working process.

## Strategic Meetings of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG)

The Advocacy team participated in two JAG strategic meetings in 2021. JAG consists of 14 member organisations, including WCC, working towards policy and legal reforms affecting women and children at the national level. At these strategic meetings, ten working clusters were formed which helped to streamline communications and work among JAG organisations. WCC is co-leading the access to gender-based violence support services cluster, and is supporting the Sexual Harassment Bill and digital rights clusters.



## Media Advocacy

In 2021, WCC endorsed 23 media statements by JAG and other civil society organisations on women and children's rights, and other human rights issues. We also issued a media statement to promote our short videos on Muslim women's rights.

Moving forward, in 2022, the Advocacy team will continue supporting victims of sexual and gender-based violence through our services, dialogues, trainings and advocacy on legislative reform at the national level.

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### In Memory of

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- IMO Lim Saw Gim
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- 2 Twelve Production
- Exabytes Network Sdn Bhd
- EY Malaysia
- Pusat Khidmat ADUN Pulau Tikus

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We apologise for not listing every individual donation due to limited space.*

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- All Women's Action Society (AWAM)
- Association of Women Lawyers (AWL)
- Attorney General's Chambers
- Brickfields Asia College
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- Mom's Village Asia
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- Office of the Chief Registrar of the Federal Court of Malaysia
- OWL Zero Waste Store





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## About WCC



[www.wccpenang.org](http://www.wccpenang.org)

The Women's Centre for Change, Penang is a non-profit, tax-exempt organisation dedicated to the elimination of violence against women and children, and the promotion of gender equality and social justice.

Established in 1985, WCC provides services in counselling, court support, and temporary shelter. We also conduct outreach programmes in schools and communities, and advocate for legal and policy reforms affecting women and children.

WCC is a member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) which actively campaigns for policy and legal reforms.

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