

VISION

SOCIETAL VISION

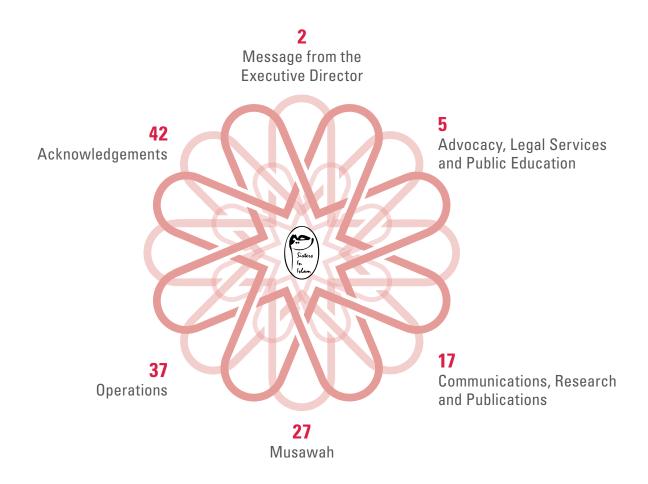
To be a progressive and democratic society that upholds freedom of expression, gender equality and social justice for all.

ORGANISATIONAL VISION

To be recognised as the national and global leader for gender equality and justice in Islam.

MISSION

To promote the principles of gender equality, justice, freedom and dignity in Islam and empower women to be advocates for change.



Annual Review 2013 Contents



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

ransitions can be challenging to manage. In January this year we were still settling in at No.

4, Lorong 11/8E, having shifted to our new premises just two months prior to that. In the midst of promoting gender equality, justice, freedom and dignity in Islam, we also had boxes to unpack and computer cables to untangle. We only got around to organising our office-

By then, our new office had already been broken into.

warming party in March!

We reviewed our security measures and took additional steps to ensure the safety of our staff, which has always been our top priority. We got more locks. We tightened the SOPs. We got back to work.

It has been a busy year. So many people have had so much stolen from them: dignity, freedom, justice, peace of mind, privacy, physical wellbeing, a sense of security, the right to education, the right to health, the right to work, equal opportunities.

When the victim is a child, something else is taken: innocence. In the past, we repeatedly called for an end to child marriage. This year we were outraged when media reports surfaced of an alleged rapist who had attempted to evade charges of statutory rape by

seeking the Shari'ah court's approval to marry his child victim. There was the familiar Malaysian irony of how a Muslim—in this case, a child—appeared to have fewer rights than a non-Muslim. But there was also the shocking and sickening realisation that a child was about to be thrown to the wolves, and that this was a fate made possible by the nation's laws.

Another report, on whipping carried out by the Johor Religious Department, concerned us for many reasons (see page 20). Again, the elements were all too familiar: laws applying to Muslim Malaysians often leave them worse off than their non-Muslim compatriots; laws, or their enforcement, often leave women worse off than men; laws appear to punish victims (in this case an unwilling participant in incest).

We have long held the position that many problems faced by women and families are rooted in our legal system. There are also the complications arising from the different sets of laws for Muslims and non-Muslims. And don't get us started on how the issuing of fatwas in Malaysia appears to literally be a law unto itself. (On the plus side, we were heartened to see that the judiciary remained committed to upholding fundamental liberties with respect to one of our books which had previously been banned by the

Government; in addition to the High Court and the Court of Appeals, the Federal Court has now also sided with us on this matter.)

In 2013, Malaysia went to the polls. The country is in transition, and it is perhaps too early to tell whether our choice of lawmakers this year will lead to better laws—and a better life—for citizens, especially women and families. In the meantime, SIS will continue to highlight the many injustices in the current Islamic Family Law, and push on with our Muslim Family Law Campaign to get the MFL adopted.

This initiative in Malaysia runs parallel with developments around the world spearheaded by Musawah, the global movement for equality and justice in the Muslim family. Musawah is undergoing its own exciting transition as its Secretariat, currently based at SIS, prepares to move to Cairo in 2014. SIS has served as host to the Musawah Secretariat since the establishment of the movement in 2009, and while there are still many challenges to overcome in the handover, we cannot wait to see Musawah take flight when it moves to this important region of the Muslim world.

We began 2013 with considerable financial constraints and spent the year having to do more work with fewer

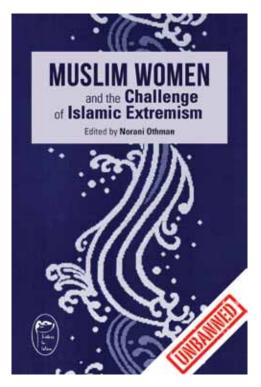
resources. Despite the constraints, we were able to optimise our resources across all our units, accomplishing things like designing a new workshop to more effectively raise the level of legal literacy among grassroots women, and working on an app that will allow players to walk in the steps of a Muslim woman.

Funding remains a key challenge but with the measures taken in 2013, which include the establishment of a Fundraising Committee to complement our Finance Committee, we look forward to seeing more funders and donors coming on board.

This Annual Review, as the name suggests, is largely a look back at the year that was, but here at SIS we always look back in the belief that doing so will illuminate the future. As we stand between the past and what is to come, between what we have succeeded in doing with much support from our friends and allies, and what remains to be done in the years ahead, we say Alhamdulillah and we say Insha'Allah. At our office, every last box has now been unpacked and we are ready for more work.

Ratna Osman

Executive Director





On 14 March, the Federal Court dismissed the Government's second attempt to reinstate the ban on the SIS publication Muslim Women and the Challenge of Islamic Extremism. The Government had banned the book in 2008 on grounds that it was "prejudicial to public order", and that its contents, among other things, "would confuse the Muslim community, especially women", and "those who have shallow religious beliefs."

Advocacy, Legal Services and Public Education



With a focus on the legal perspective, the Advocacy, Legal Services and Public Education (ALPE) unit leads SIS initiatives in three areas:

- Advocacy. SIS advocates women's rights on behalf of individuals as well as groups. Efforts to
 help women reclaim their rights and challenge injustices are undertaken in various spheres:
 in the courts, in the media, in policymaking and in public discourse. Our advocacy work
 encompasses both long-term initiatives, such as the Muslim Family Law Campaign, as well as
 initiatives undertaken in response to issues as and when they arise.
- Legal services. Telenisa, the legal clinic run by SIS, provides gender-sensitive legal services on
 family matters and Shari'ah law. Mobile Legal Clinics periodically extend these services to lowincome areas. Legal literacy is promoted through newspaper columns and the dissemination of
 material about legal issues. We also host and train law students.
- Public education. Scholars, journalists, professionals, artists, activists, government officials, religious leaders, citizens—we are all stakeholders in advocating justice and equality for women in Islam. Our objective in public education is to create platforms for SIS to meaningfully engage with stakeholders, and for stakeholders to engage with each other, through public forums, workshops, study sessions and other events and activities.

ADVOCACY

The Muslim Family Law Campaign

In Malaysia, the lives of many Muslim women and families continue to be adversely affected by the injustices in the current Islamic Family Law (IFL). In 2007, SIS completed the drafting of a model Muslim Family Law (MFL) based on the principles of justice and equality, and began a campaign to build support for the MFL.

2013 was another active year for the MFL Campaign. Individuals such as Dato' Ismail Yahya continued to lend their support. The MFL also figured

prominently in our partnership with the National Council of Women's Organisations Malaysia (NCWO). Within SIS, our Public Education unit designed a new workshop known as *Bengkel Celik Undang-Undang* (see page 13). Its aim of promoting legal literacy is very much in line with the MFL, and the workshop will likely play a key role in the run-up to the 2014 MFL National Convention. In 2013, SIS also initiated the process of translating the MFL document into Malay.

Consultation with Dato' Ismail Yahya.

Beginning in May, we had a series of consultations with Chief Justice of the Terengganu Shari'ah Court Dato' Ismail Yahya, who gave us valuable input on our MFL document. He also conducted a two-day workshop for SIS Members and staff on Shari'ah court procedures, going through the relevant steps in making court submissions and giving us important advice on the relevant statutes. Dato' Ismail shared his thoughts on a few potentially contentious issues in the MFL, such as interfaith marriage, and the differences in wali requirements.

SIS' MFL and the NCWO's Legal Reform **Proposal.** At the launch of the NCWO's Golden Jubilee celebration in January, Prime Minister Dato' Sri Najib Razak invited the NCWO to submit its proposal on legal reforms. In a subsequent discussion on issues that the NCWO would put forward, Norhayati Kaprawi of SIS highlighted developments concerning the MFL Campaign to NCWO President Prof Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hassan Shahabudin. Tan Sri Dr Sharifah Hapsah agreed to incorporate SIS' MFL proposal into the NCWO's submission. The NCWO also agreed to include SIS' proposals for underage marriage and the status of children born out of wedlock.

Meeting with the de facto law minister.

On 12 September, the NCWO met de facto Law Minister Nancy Shukri to discuss issues raised in the NCWO's memorandum on law reform. SIS attended the meeting at the invitation of

the NCWO. Issues discussed included child religious conversion, child marriage, the right of children to derive rights to citizenship from their mothers, and the current Islamic Family Law. SIS' Norhayati Kaprawi briefed the Minister on issues raised in our proposed IFL amendments as well as the problems women faced due to certain Shari'ah court procedures and the insufficient number of lawyers at the Government's Legal Aid Bureau. The Minister was open to SIS' suggestion to incorporate gender awareness programmes into the training module of the Judicial and Legal Training Institute (ILKAP) and the Institut Latihan Islam Malaysia (ILIM).

Consultation on child marriage. On 24 September, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development organised a consultation meeting on child marriage, which SIS attended at the invitation of the NCWO. Several issues were discussed:

 The primary reasons for child marriage in most South Asian countries are poverty and exploitation, but in 95 per cent of cases in Malaysia, the court consented to the girl being married (at the request of the girl's parents) because the girl was pregnant. Marriage was requested to avoid shame and to make the baby's father responsible for the baby. For

their part, many Shari'ah judges felt compelled to agree if all parties consented and all conditions for the solemnisation of marriage were met. SIS' Norhayati Kaprawi noted that the court's philosophy should be to act "in the best interests of the child." Instead of just basing its decision on "consent" by parents and the young couple, the court should also seek expert medical opinion on whether the girl was physically and emotionally fit to continue with the pregnancy and enter into marriage. Norhayati also suggested that adoption or abortion be considered under certain conditions, noting that in the latter case, Dato' Ismail Yahya had clearly said that abortion could be carried out if the pregnancy might cause harm (physical, psychological, etc) to the mother; and this included cases involving rape. Given that statutory rape is acknowledged as being applicable to Muslims (at least in Malaysia), abortion should be an option presented to the girl and her family.

Since the main reason for an application of marriage is to compel the baby's father to provide maintenance for the girl and her child, SIS also proposed that the Government should review the Shari'ah law in the

Federal Territories that currently states that only the mother of the "illegitimate" baby—and not the father—is required to care and provide maintenance for the child. Marriage may not be necessary if Shari'ah law made the fathers of children born out of wedlock equally responsible for the welfare of their children.

 In the matter of statutory rape, NCWO representative Dato' Noor Faridah Ariffin expressed concern about whether the male partner should be charged with statutory rape when he himself is a minor. In Canada, for example, the law stipulates that if the age difference between the boy and girl is less than three years, the consensual sexual act shall not be deemed as statutory rape.

Dato' Noor Faridah later informed us that the Ministry's advisory board on the issue of child marriage had agreed to the following: (1) the proposal to include the age difference as a factor in statutory rape cases; (2) for marriage applications involving girls below 18 and above 16, discretionary powers will be given to judges but with strict conditions and guidelines; and (3) a court procedure will be established to seek expert medical opinion on the physical, mental and emotional state of

the girl before marriage is approved—if the girl is found unfit, abortion will be considered as an option.

Other advocacy initiatives

SIS engaged in many other advocacy initiatives in 2013. The joint efforts which we undertook with our allies enabled us to promote women's rights issues to a wider audience. SIS is an active member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG)—a group of women's rights organisations established in 1985.

JAG Press conference on the Delhi rape. On 15 January JAG held a Press conference at the All Women's Action Society (AWAM) regarding the Delhi rape case, relating it to the situation in Malaysia and calling for a wider definition of rape in the Penal Code to include "rape with an object" rather than merely classifying this act as "sexual connection with an object."

SIS video clip on children born out of wedlock. Anak Tak Sah Taraf, a 13-minute video clip by SIS, was uploaded to YouTube on 15 February. The clip highlights the plight of children born out of wedlock and their rights to a name, identity and family. Produced by Norhayati Kaprawi, the video features Perlis Mufti Dr Juanda Jaya and Chief Justice of the Terengganu Shari'ah

Court Dato' Ismail Yahya, as well as a father and son who have been affected by the issue and their experience with the registration system. This issue was highlighted by SIS in 2011 and has not improved much since then, requiring ongoing advocacy (see Sisters in Islam Annual Review 2012, pages 8-9).

JAG video clip encouraging women to vote. #WanitaUndi was uploaded to YouTube on 18 March. This video clip by JAG aimed to reach out to women and encourage them to vote in the 2013 General Election. A series of shorter videos was also uploaded featuring interviews with a textile factory worker, a community leader, a youth activist, a victim of crime and a concerned parent.

ZAFELA-SIS Knowledge Exchange.

This collaboration between SIS and the Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association (ZAFELA) entered its second phase in 2013. SIS visited Zanzibar (18-25 Mar) to engage with ZAFELA members and other institutions pushing for law reform in Zanzibar. ZAFELA's specific aim is to push for the reform of the Kadhi Court system and to codify a Muslim Family Law. To provide ZAFELA a range of country experiences, SIS also coordinated the visits of representatives from Singapore and Indonesia.

Bengkel Pengukuhan Institusi
Kekeluargaan Islam. SIS participated in this workshop for government agencies and NGOs at the Kuala Lumpur Shari'ah Court (26 Mar) to discuss the high divorce rate among Muslim couples in Malaysia and how to tackle it. Also discussed was the role of the Bahagian Sokongan Keluarga (BSK) in enforcing the Shari'ah court's maintenance orders and ensuring that husbands or former husbands abided by them.

Partners' Meeting for "Strengthening the Voices of Young Women as Gender Equality Advocates in South East Asia." Organised by International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAW) Asia Pacific, this meeting (1-2 Apr) with NGOs from Laos, Timor Leste, Vietnam and Malaysia focused on an upcoming project to empower young women to

become gender equality and human rights advocates. The project would run for two and a half years during which a group of 25 women below the age of 30 would be regularly trained on human rights advocacy to enable them to run their own initiatives.

"Rape-and-marry" (child marriage and statutory rape). In May news reports of a "rape-and-marry" case in Sabah prompted SIS to reiterate its call for an end to child marriage. The Sabah case involved an alleged rapist who had applied for the withdrawal of the criminal charge on grounds that he intended to marry the underage victim and had sought approval from the Shari'ah court to do so. Besides issuing Press statements and partnering with the NCWO, SIS also undertook the following:

- Online petition. In May an online petition under JAG was created at Change.org to gather signatures to protest against child marriage. The petition gained the attention of the media and also MPs, some of whom used the statistics in their Press statements. We also carried out an active campaign on Facebook and Twitter to highlight child marriage.
- BFM radio interview on child marriage. On 21 May SIS participated in a radio interview entitled Child Marriage: What Rights for the Child? with representatives from Voice of the Children and Suaram to discuss the Sabah case and the laws pertaining to statutory rape and child marriage in Malaysia.

"Muslim and non-Muslim children must not be treated differently, and it is deplorable that marriage is being used by alleged rapists as a way to escape prosecution. The Government must act upon its pronouncements and stop rapists and paedophiles from manipulating religion and culture, thereby denying protection to our children."

from a Press statement issued by SIS in 2013, "Pushing For An End in Child Marriage."

NTV7 TV interview on child marriage and statutory rape.

SIS participated in a talk show discussion (4 June) on NTV7's The Breakfast Show on the Sabah case. Other participants included representatives of the Malaysian Psychiatric Association, Voice of the Children, the Bar Council and

AWAM.

JAG advocacy on the "Administration of the Religion of Islam" Bill. At the first meeting of the 13th Parliament on 26 June, three new Bills were tabled for debate to replace existing laws. JAG initiated a series of activities to look into problematic provisions contained in the three Bills: the Administration of the Religion of Islam (Federal Territories) Bill 2013, the Shari'ah Criminal Procedure (Federal Territories) (Amendment) Bill 2013, and the Shari'ah Civil Procedure (Federal Territories) (Amendment) Bill 2013. Under these new Bills, the consent of only one parent would be sufficient to convert a minor to Islam. Also, the National Fatwa Committee would be allowed to decide on issues of national interest—fatwas would thus have the force of law and the Committee would have de facto powers to introduce laws without first tabling them in Parliament. On 27 June, JAG members met to study the Bills. It was later decided that since the existing laws themselves

had problematic provisions, it would be better to advocate that the new bills be stayed for amendment rather than withdrawn altogether. On behalf of JAG, Honey Tan of EMPOWER wrote a Letter to the Editor explaining why the Bills should be stayed. The Bills continued to be met with much opposition from civil society and they were withdrawn from Parliament on 8 July.

Leadership Training for Young Women and Young Transwomen. Two SIS officers participated in this programme organised by Knowledge and Rights with Young People through Safer Spaces (KRYSS) (22-25 Aug). The training was a follow-up to the Partners Meeting organised by IWRAW Asia Pacific in April, during which KRYSS was chosen to facilitate the project in Malaysia.

Tabling of amendments relating to domestic violence in the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code. The Government tabled amendments to the two statutes relating to domestic violence and sexual crimes during the second Parliamentary sitting for the year (23 Sept-3 Oct). These amendments had been rushed through without prior consultation with women's groups. As part of intense lobbying to recommend changes to the Government's proposals, JAG initiated a series of activities beginning with the

drafting of a memo that was handed to de facto Law Minister Nancy Shukri on 30 September. The JAG memo was also received by several other ministers and MPs. Numerous meetings were held with the Parliamentary Women's Caucus chaired by Dato' Seri Azalina Othman Said, the Gender Caucus, the Attorney-General and Tan Sri Shahrir Abdul Samad (Chair, Barisan Nasional Backbenchers Club). These efforts produced a positive outcome: the Barisan Nasional MPs recommended that the Attorney-General's Chambers adopt the recommendations made by JAG, and the Attorney-General agreed to the establishment of a working committee to review all laws (except Islamic Family Law) that discriminate against women.

Aiyoh...What Lah?! Awards. SIS and other members of JAG organised the 2013 Aiyoh...What Lah?! Awards—a set of annual spoof-awards to highlight sexism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia in the Malaysian community. Any public statement, act, or policy that had been reported in the media during the previous year was eligible for nomination. Ribena Berry (actor, playwright and director Jo Kukathas) played host again, handing out awards in several "bad" categories and one "good" category. The Kelantan state government won the "Policy Fail Award" for summonsing a female

hairdresser in Kota Bharu for cutting a male customer's hair. The "Foot in Mouth Award" went to then-de facto Law Minister Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz for saying "I don't sleep with my son, I'm not gay", which he reportedly made when asked about his son's relationship with a Sabahan timber trader. The "Right on Track Award", the sole "good" award, went to the Dewan Rakyat for amending its Standing Orders to prohibit Members of Parliament from making sexist remarks.

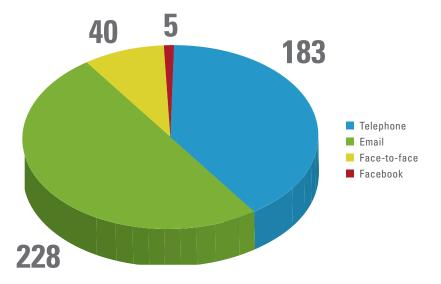
LEGAL SERVICES

Telenisa

Telenisa, SIS' legal clinic, was established to provide free legal advice, improve the quality of legal information for women, and better study the needs of society (particularly those of Muslim women) in relation to issues concerning Islam and the Shari'ah courts. Clients are predominantly Muslim women, but there are also male and non-Muslim clients seeking advice for friends and relatives, as well as international clients needing information in the Malaysian context.

Legal counselling is available via faceto-face meetings, telephone, email and Facebook. A Legal Officer provides the client with legal advice while a chambering student documents the

Telenisa clients



Telenisa is open every Tuesday to Thursday from 10am to 5pm. Telenisa helpline: 03-7960 8802. Email **telenisa@sistersinislam.org.my**. Enquiries can also be faxed to 03-7785 8737 or posted to Telenisa, No 4, Lorong 11/8E, 46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.

case. The unit's mini-library contains law books, archives of newspaper articles on related cases and other resource materials.

In 2013 Telenisa assisted 456 clients on a total of 783 cases.

The Telenisa cases are documented and analysed to enable us to study and identify trends, which in turn will improve our advocacy efforts. In 2013 we developed the database and acquired SPSS, specialised software

for statistical analysis in the social sciences.

In recent years Telenisa has seen fewer clients perhaps because there are now other NGOs offering similar legal services. There has also been less awareness of Telenisa after our weekly legal column in *Utusan Malaysia* ended in 2010. In 2013, we continued to promote awareness to make sure those who needed Telenisa were aware of its availability. In 2013, we began republishing our column on

our Facebook page on a weekly basis. Based on feedback, we also learned that while the Internet played a role in increasing Telenisa's visibility, most of our clients came to know of us through word-of-mouth.

Hubungi kami di talian TeleNisa





Cases cover a wide range of issues: Marriage (procedures, wali, marriage abroad, etc) • Polygamy • Divorce • Wife (maintenance, matrimonial assets) • Children (maintenance, custody, etc) • Violence against women • Faraid (will, hibah, etc) • Shari'ah criminal • Conversion/apostasy • Miscellaneous (e.g. sulh, forced marriage) • General enquiry

Telenisa workshop

In 2013 we conducted the Telenisa workshop *Ketahui Hak Wanita Dalam Perundangan Islam* (Knowing Women's Rights under Islamic Law), a repeat of the workshop we conducted in 2012 which received a very positive response. This year, the workshop was conducted in Petaling Java (20 Apr) and attended by 23 Telenisa clients. The four objectives were to: (1) empower women by raising their awareness of women's legal rights; (2) increase the understanding of women's rights in Islam especially in matters related to maintenance, divorce, polygamy and shared matrimonial property; (3) provide a platform for women to meet and share experiences; and (4) discuss methods and strategies through which women can support each other.

Students

Chambering students. The Bar Council of Malaysia requires law graduates to undertake a nine-month period of pupillage, which must include a stint in legal aid service. In 2013, SIS received 22 chambering students. SIS' 14-week chambering programme helps students: (1) strengthen their legal-theoretical foundations; (2) relate theory to practice; (3) develop soft skills, such as listening with empathy; and (4) gain a holistic appreciation of a client's circumstances beyond the legal context.

The programme includes training conducted by the Kuala Lumpur Bar-Legal Aid Centre (covering human rights, and civil and Shari'ah laws); a workshop organised by SIS, the All Women's Action Society (AWAM) and the Women's Aid Organisation (WAO); and Shari'ah Advanced Training in a one-day course developed by SIS to better equip students to handle court procedures and aspects of more complex Shari'ah cases.

Chambering students at SIS are assigned to work at Telenisa. They draft email replies (which are checked by a Legal Officer); document face-to-face legal advice sessions with clients; and handle Telenisa phone queries. Students also help with newspaper cuttings, data entry and preparation for workshops.

In 2013, the Pangkalan Data Klinik
Telenisa (Telenisa Clinic Database)
was developed to enable chambering
students to easily browse for relevant
information while attending to clients
on the phone. We are also creating
a directory of services offered by
other Islamic agencies to enable
us to make referrals more easily
(particularly regarding issues that fall
outside Telenisa's scope), as well as
a follow-up system to help us sustain
our relationships with ex-chambering
pupils.

Attachment students. The KL Bar-LAC also sends attachment students (those still pursuing their degrees) to SIS for a quick introduction to the organisation. This year we received students from the University of Malaya, the International Islamic University Malaysia and Universiti Teknologi MARA.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Workshops

New workshop: Bengkel Celik Undang-**Undang.** The great enthusiasm we saw at SIS' MFL roadshow programmes in 2011 and 2012 showed us that there was a real thirst for knowledge. For this reason, our workshops focused initially on knowledge building, primarily concerning women's rights in Islam. In 2013, we decided to fine-tune our training: we would not only empower women with broad-based knowledge of women's rights in Islam, but also help them develop practical skills related to Shari'ah legal procedures in Malaysia, for example in preparing written submissions for court. By being wellversed in court procedures and other practical legal matters such as writing affidavits, women can avoid becoming victims of unscrupulous lawyers, have the courage to assert their rights in court and be empowered to help others.

In 2013 the Public Education unit developed a new workshop called Bengkel Celik Undang-Undang (Legal Literacy Workshop). The workshop aims to generate awareness of the procedural aspects of Shari'ah law, the importance of filling the correct forms, understanding basic legal terms, court etiquette, seeking financial aid and bringing attention to their cases. The new workshop was also an opportunity for capacity building for SIS staff, who became involved from concept to execution of the programme with the support of experienced Shari'ah legal practitioners.

- Bengkel Celik Undang-Undang (for SIS staff). This workshop (13 May) was designed for our staff, namely SIS' legal officers and chambering students seeking specific knowledge that can help them run the Telenisa legal clinic. Dato' Ismail Yahya was the resource person for this workshop.
- Bengkel Celik Undang-Undang (the first workshop). The first workshop was held on 22 June in Petaling Jaya, with participants from Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang and Kedah. Some were Telenisa clients while others were from local single mothers' associations. Civil law practitioners also attended the workshop. We familiarised

- participants with Shari'ah court procedures and taught them how to write and submit their own affidavits. Participants found the workshop very useful although we realised there was still a need to cover basic women's rights within the context of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). We are now planning a two-day workshop that will touch on legal procedures as well as knowledge of fiqh.
- Bengkel Celik Undang-Undang
 (for Wibawa). This workshop (20
 Oct) was designed for members
 of Wibawa. Topics covered
 included Muslim women's issues
 in Malaysia, property in marriage
 (maintenance, joint matrimonial
 property and beneficiaries),
 understanding Islamic Family
 Law in Malaysia, and Shari'ah
 court procedures in Malaysia.
 Hjh Sa'adiah Din served as the
 resource person.
- Bengkel Celik Undang-Undang (for Persatuan Kebajikan Ibu Tunggal dan Anak Yatim Kedah or PRITY).
 This two-day workshop (25-26 Oct) involved participants from women's organisations in Kedah and Perlis, and addressed topics similar to those covered in the workshop for Wibawa.

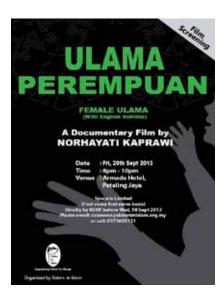
Reading for Gender in the Qur'an.

Participants of this workshop (25-26 May) came with a variety of expectations: to learn different methods of interpreting texts, especially alternatives to patriarchal views as well as to understand feminist interpretations of Islam: to seek answers to the question of whether Islam demands the subjugation of women; and to learn more about Islam and gender in order to defend the rights of mothers, daughters and sisters. As the resource person for this workshop, Dr Amina Wadud shared her sharp insights into human behaviour and her vast knowledge of the Text with participants, many of whom took the opportunity to seek her advice on personal questions, conflicts and encounters.

Wanita dan Islam: Antara Martabat dan Diskriminasi. Participants in this workshop (Women and Islam: Between Dignity and Discrimination, 21-22 Sept) comprised Shari'ah students, lawyers and practitioners. Resource persons included Kyai Husein Muhammad, Dr Nur Rofiah, Aditiana Dewi Eridani, and Ibu Nyai Umi Hanik. This was the first time that SIS organised a workshop solely for Shari'ah university students. From the feedback we received, the workshop was an eye-opener for many of the participants and exposed them to gender roles and different perspectives

on the interpretation and understanding of Islam. Participants also expressed an interest in knowing more about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender issues and moral policing.

Screening and discussion



About 100 people attended the September screening of this documentary about female ulama.

In these sessions, audiences had a chance to view documentaries and films and use audio-visual media as a springboard to engage in discussions about complex issues. In 2013, we screened *Ulama Perempuan*, a documentary by Norhayati Kaprawi about female ulama. The screening on 20 September attracted about 100 people, many with Shari'ah

backgrounds. The film gave audiences a glimpse into the role of female ulama in Indonesia and how they engaged with the realities around them. Besides encouraging viewers to consider the differences in approaches between ulama in Indonesia and those in Malaysia, the film also raised awareness about women's rights and female empowerment.

Study sessions

Study sessions provide a platform for participants to discuss local and international issues.

Proceed with Caution! Organising on Minority Rights in Muslim-Majority **Contexts.** At this Seek to Understand Conversation (S2UC) on 15 February, speakers Asih Widiyowati, Kamilia Manaf and SIS' Suri Kempe discussed the importance of working on Muslim women's sexual rights including lesbian sexuality: creative ways to engage and reach out to young people; the need for allies; digital security; and the need for awareness of Islamophobia within the LGBT community. Participants were impressed with the work done by SIS, Bayt Al-Hikmah and Institut Pelangi Perempuan, especially within the context of Muslim women's issues and pesantren (religious schools) and in conditions of growing violence against the LGBT community and its allies.

Sex and the Citadel. This S2UC on 31 May saw participants engaging in a lively discussion about the connection between the political and the personal. Shereen El Feki spoke on the influence that religious leaders wield over the general public, marriages and conduct in the bedroom. El Feki believed it was possible to get Muslim clerics to come together to talk about these issues under the pretext of tackling the HIV/ AIDS endemic and other reproductive health or social problems. Sexuality education can provide a safe space to discuss these issues, and activists should not get caught up with whether to label it as family education, reproductive health or sex education.

Large group training awareness

Large group training awareness (LGTA) forums are conducted primarily outside the Klang Valley. LGTA forums are focused on raising awareness of Muslim women's rights and engaging with grassroots Muslim women. One LGTA forum was held in Kelantan (17 Nov).

THE LIFE STORIES PROJECT (MALAYSIA)

The Life Stories Project in Malaysia is an ongoing initiative under Musawah's Global Life Stories Project (see Musawah, Global Life Stories Project). Malaysia is one of 10 countries involved. The objectives of the Malaysian Life Stories Project are to: (1) create an understanding of the concepts of giwamah (commonly understood as male authority over women) and wilayah (commonly understood as male quardianship over women and children) and their application in Muslim family life in Malaysia; (2) document the lived realities of women negotiating giwamah and wilayah in Malaysia; (3) contribute towards national advocacy projects; (4) contribute towards capacity building for SIS and our partners; (5) empower resource persons, create alliances and foster movement building; and (6) fulfil the objectives of the Global Life Stories Project as stated in the terms of reference set by Musawah.

Activities

Continuing from the previous year, the Life Stories team undertook four types of activities in 2013.

A. Documentation and analysis

 A total of nine stories have been collected and five have been written-up in narrative form. A report submitted to Musawah in November included the life stories as well as analysis and socioeconomic data for Malaysia.

B. Developing output based on the life stories

In 2013 we began developing the collected life stories into output that will support the objectives of the project. We commissioned a documentary on qiwamah and wilayah, and a series of three animated shorts. Both documentary and animation were expected to be completed by January 2014. We also held discussions with an illustrator to develop graphic novels based on the life stories; a theatre director to develop an interactive play geared towards a younger audience, which would promote the concept of equality in Muslim marriage; and a TV drama screenwriter to explore the possibility of promoting gender justice and equality through popular media.

C. Capacity building

- Preliminary Analysis Workshop (staff). At this workshop (11 June) for the Life Stories team and all SIS staff, the Life Stories Coordinator shared the methodology learned during the Musawah mid-term review. The methodology was also tested on two stories.
- Life Stories Analysis workshop.
 On 20 September we organised
 a larger Life Stories Analysis
 workshop for SIS staff, Members

and collaborators. Led by Dr
Nur Rofiah, the workshop aimed
to help participants: (1) gain an
understanding of the concepts of
qiwamah and wilayah; (2) examine
the lived experiences of qiwamah
and wilayah in the Muslim family by
analysing women's life stories; and
(3) explore the use of life stories for
collective learning and advocacy.
Besides gaining an appreciation

of the different tools used in analysing life stories, participants were also introduced to theories relating to Women's Ways of Knowing.

D. Participation in Global Musawah exchange

 Monthly Reading Circle. The Musawah Global Coordinator for the Life Stories project organises a monthly reading circle to foster exchange among the 12 country teams. In 2013 the Malaysian coordinator participated in monthly meetings online and led discussions for several sessions.

The Life Stories Project (Malaysia): Activities

Documentation and analysis

- 9 stories covered
- 5 stories written
- 1 report submitted



Developing output based on the life stories

- Documentary, animated shorts commissioned
- Ideas for graphic novel, play, TV drama explored



Capacity building

- Preliminary Analysis
 Workshop
- Life Stories Analysis workshop



Participation in Global Musawah exchange

Monthly Reading Circle



Communications, Research and Publications



The Communications, Research and Publications (CRP) unit focuses on three areas:

- Communications. SIS recognises the media as a unique ally with the power to significantly
 amplify our voice and increase the impact of the work that we do. Media relations work includes
 issuing Press statements, writing articles, conducting workshops for media practitioners and
 media monitoring. Our website, identity and branding, Resource Centre and alternative media
 initiatives are also important components of our communications programme.
- Research. The CRP unit undertakes research with the objective of collecting data on SIS issues
 and supporting SIS advocacy work. The groundbreaking study on the Impact of Polygamy on the
 Family in Malaysia is our biggest research project to date.
- Publications are produced with the aim of: (1) promoting progressive views and alternative
 interpretations within Islam that uphold principles of justice, equality and freedom, particularly
 with regard to women's rights; (2) enriching resources available to academicians, researchers,
 students and women's and human rights activists; and (3) documenting and evaluating SIS
 activities.

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2013, the CRP unit undertook media advocacy initiatives in line with our objectives, which are to: (1) promote an understanding of Islam that recognises the principles of justice, equality, freedom and dignity within a democratic nation-state; (2) create public awareness of gender equality and non-discrimination for women in Islam; (3) publicise and affirm SIS' views in the media; and (4) support and work closely with like-minded organisations.

Press statements. In 2013, SIS issued seven Press statements on various issues. We also co-authored.

endorsed or co-signed 13 statements as a member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), and one statement as a member of the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the Universal Periodic Review Process (COMANGO).

Media coverage. In 2013 there were 162 news articles mentioning SIS. Besides showing a keen interest in SIS' work, journalists also sought our views on many other topics and current events, including Malay special rights, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, beauty pageants in Malaysia, Muslim dog trainers, public whipping, the legislation of fatwas, child marriage, book banning, pregnancy tests for National Service trainees, discrimination at work against women

9 January

"No one deserves to be battered."

In early 2013 the media reported cases of domestic violence that had resulted in serious injury and death. JAG called on the Government to improve enforcement of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA), while reminding all Malaysians that combating domestic violence was a joint task. "Domestic violence is a crime, not a private matter. As neighbours, friends, and members of a community, we too have a responsibility to speak up."

16 January

"We remember and we will not be indifferent to rape."

In December 2012 the death of a New Delhi woman from injuries sustained in a brutal gang rape sparked worldwide outrage. JAG renewed its call to the Malaysian government to implement the demands contained in the JAG Memorandum on Rape submitted in 2003. At the same time, JAG noted that "we need more than the law to protect us from rape. We need a change in mindset...It is time to stop asking women and children to avoid getting raped. It is time to start asking men and boys to NOT rape."

5 February

"Sekali lagi, kotakan kata!"

In the run-up to the 2013 General Election, this statement repeated JAG's 2008 call for elected representatives to "Kotakan Kata!" and make good on election promises to end gender-based discrimination and to uphold women's rights.

11 March

"Malaysia should take the Universal Periodic Review more seriously."

COMANGO issued this Press statement on the day it submitted its report on human rights in Malaysia to the United Nations. Lead writer Honey Tan of EMPOWER noted that "the Government made many commitments at the previous UPR session in 2009 and only 23 per cent are fully implemented."

12 March

Aiyoh...Wat Lah?!

JAG announced the nominees for this spoof awards ceremony to highlight sexism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia. (see page ___).

14 March

"Federal Court dismisses Government appeal on decision to lift ban on SIS book."

SIS issued this statement on the day the Federal Court dismissed the Government's second attempt to reinstate the ban on the SIS publication Muslim Women and the Challenge of Islamic Extremism. "As citizens of a democratic country, Muslim women have the right to discuss how laws and policies impact their everyday lives, especially in ways that are discriminatory and harmful and seek ways to redress the injustice caused."

PRESS STATEMENTS 2013

In 2013, SIS issued seven Press statements on various issues. We also co-authored, endorsed or co-signed 13 statements as a member of the Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG), and one statement as a member of the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the Universal Periodic Review Process (COMANGO).

19 April

"Sisters in Islam extends condolences on the passing of Tan Sri Aishah Ghani."

The passing of the former Minister of Welfare Services and UMNO Wanita chief was greatly felt by SIS. We fondly remembered her as an ardent advocate for women's rights. "Simultaneously nurturing her family and a nation, Tan Sri Aishah Ghani served as an exemplary individual who showcased her ability to play multiple roles apart from the one that was expected of her as a woman... May her legacy live on through the relentless pursuit of justice and equality for women."

13 May

"Protect our children from rapists and paedophiles."

In May the media highlighted a "rape-and-marry" case in Sabah (see page 9). In this statement, JAG asked: "Is this the way our society treats underage girls where an alleged rapist may be allowed to escape jail sentence by promising marriage? Should parents be allowed to marry off their girl-child for reasons such as poverty, culture or tradition?... Why is there an exception to the protection accorded to all children in Malaysia, merely because a child is Muslim?"

17 May

"Malaysians deserve more women in Cabinet."

Following the announcement of the Prime Minister's new Cabinet, JAG noted that only two full ministerial positions (5.7 per cent) had been filled by women, far short of the Government's own target of women comprising at least 30 per cent of decision-making positions.

20 May

"Pushing for an end in child marriage." Girls who marry later and delay pregnancy beyond adolescence have a greater chance of being healthy, educated and able to build a better life. Besides calling for an end to child marriage in general, SIS also criticised the recent actions of the Shari'ah Court in expediting the approval of the marriage of an alleged rapist to his underaged victim (see page 9). "Muslim and non-Muslim children must not be treated differently, and it is deplorable that marriage is being used by alleged rapists as a way to escape prosecution. The Government must act upon its pronouncements and stop rapists and paedophiles from manipulating religion and culture, thereby denying protection

to our children."

10 June

"Turning a blind eye to domestic violence deaths."

In this Letter to the Editor, JAG once again highlighted the urgent need for authorities to review the protocols on handling domestic violence cases so that victims receive an appropriate and urgent response.

"Violence inflicted on one family member fundamentally impacts all other family members in the same home, especially vulnerable children. The government must act now to make a stand against domestic violence and stop this social scourge."

14 June

"Repeal Shari'ah Criminal Offences laws."

News reports that the Johor
Religious Department had whipped
men and women for allegedly
committing incest and having sex
outside of wedlock raised many
issues of concern: the fact that
whipping as a form of punishment
violates human rights principles
and discriminates against Muslim
women (non-Muslim women are
not subjected to whipping); the fact
that Shari'ah Criminal Offences laws
render a victim of incest liable to a
charge of illicit consensual sex; the
disproportionate number of women

whipped and sentenced compared to men; the conflict between the provisions of the Penal Code and the Johor Shari'ah Criminal Offences

Enactment; and the fact that degrading punishments go against the teachings of the Qur'an. In this Letter to the Editor, JAG reiterated its call to the Government to review and repeal Shari'ah Criminal Offences legislation "on the grounds that many of its provisions have no basis in Islamic legal theory and practice. Moreover, many of them as well conflict with the Penal Code and the Federal Constitution."

24 June

JAG's response to Wanita ISMA's statement on whipping and Shari'ah Criminal Offences.

Following JAG's statement on whipping (see 14 June), Wanita ISMA expressed support for the Johor Religious Department, arguing that "incest and pre-marital sex must be dealt with 'comprehensively beyond the myopic angle of liberalism or feminism as it involves major offences as stated in Shari'ah law.'" In this Letter to the Editor, JAG argued that the assumption alluded to by Wanita ISMA "that whipping will deter future offenders from committing the crime does not take into account that victims of

incest are not willing participants...

Punishing the victims will only discourage them from reporting the crime, and will eventually force them to suffer alone in silence..."

27 June

"Government withdraws appeal; CEDAW has the force of law."

In 2009, when Noorfadilla Ahmad Saikin had her job offer retracted by the Education Ministry because she was pregnant, she sued the Government for discrimination and won. The landmark High Court judgment asserted that CEDAW "has the force of law and [is] binding on member states, including Malaysia." When the Government withdrew its appeal, JAG hailed the withdrawal as "a victory for all women in Malaysia who face gender discrimination in their lives. There can be no more excuse for an employer, be it the government or private entity, to deny a woman her right to work and to the same employment opportunities as men, on the basis of gender."

23 July

"Procedure for Legislating Fatwas Un-Islamic and Undemocratic."

The disqualification of four Muslim beauty contest finalists on the basis that their participation contravened a 1996 fatwa raised concerns about the overreaching of fatwas beyond their original intent.

Besides the problem of gender bias, inconsistencies and double standards, SIS was particularly concerned with "how gazetted fatwas have the automatic force of law without going through the legislative process, and are used as a tool to undemocratically pass laws that infringe on our fundamental liberties...After approval by the State Executive Council and the Sultan, a fatwa only needs to be gazetted to become law. It is not tabled for debate in the legislative body. Any violation of the fatwa is a criminal offence. Any effort to dispute or to give an opinion contrary to the fatwa is also a criminal offence. Such provisions have no basis in the Qur'an and historical practices of Islam and violate several articles in the Federal Constitution."

24 July

"Mandatory pregnancy tests a violation of privacy and bodily integrity."

SIS opposed the proposal to impose mandatory pregnancy tests on female trainees prior to undergoing National Service training, stating

PRESS STATEMENTS 2013

that it was a violation of a person's right to privacy and bodily integrity. SIS also viewed the proposal as a disproportionate response to the six girls who had given birth during the programme as opposed to the thousands who had undergone training without incident.

30 July

"Focus On Effective Enforcement Of Polygamy Laws."

On the Kelantan government's

"Ideal Polygamist" programme, SIS
maintained that if the intent was to
ensure husbands are responsible, do
not hide their polygamous marriages
from their wives, and are fair to
their wives, such issues would best
be addressed by enforcing existing
laws on polygamy and tightening
the procedural mechanisms in
the Shari'ah Court to reduce the
likelihood of injustice.

6 August

"Domestic Violence Act already protects men; efforts should be focused on implementation and enforcement instead."

Following an announcement by the Minister of Women, Family and Community Development that new laws may be drafted to protect men from domestic abuse, JAG reminded the Minister in this statement that the existing Domestic Violence
Act 1994 is gender neutral. "It is
important to demystify the fact
that the Act only protects women.
Yes, men too can become victims
of domestic violence. However, the
reality on the ground unfortunately
shows that the majority of the
victims are women."

22 October

"Violence against women clauses must be improved, withdraw bill and consult public."

JAG pushed for the withdrawal of the Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, insisting that the proposed amendments relating to domestic violence be improved, and that the relevant section be made consistent with the Domestic Violence Act 1994. JAG noted that nothing had been proposed to penalise rape within a marriage—an act criminalised in 104 countries. JAG also objected to the manner in which the Bill had been drafted and introduced: "We should not accept bad laws that are drafted in secret and rushed through Parliament hastily."

25 October

JAG wins UN Award.

In October the United Nations awarded JAG the United Nations Award 2013 for Millennium Development Goal Three: Promote
Gender Equality and Empower
Women. Maria Chin Abdullah of
EMPOWER received the award for
JAG: "In our 28-year herstory this is
the first time JAG has been given an
award, we are proud that JAG's work
has been given recognition, and we
are certain that this milestone will
motivate us further moving forward."

19 December

"Drop proposal of Shari'ah police."

SIS called on the Government to drop the proposed creation of a special police unit that would ostensibly be tasked with battling the spread of Shi'ite teachings in Malaysia. One of our concerns was that the move could simply enhance the enforcement powers of the state religious authorities, leading to further harassment, intimidation and moral policing of Muslims and the violation of their fundamental liberties. "We do not believe a punitive approach to monitor Muslims and how they practise their faith is the wisest way forward for a country that claims to lead a global movement of moderates."

PRESS STATEMENTS 2013

wearing the hijab, and the possible demolition of a surau where Buddhist prayers had been conducted. The majority (88.8 per cent) of our news coverage was conducted by Englishlanguage media with nine per cent by Malay-language media. The remainder consisted of coverage in Chinese, Bahasa Indonesia and French.

Media workshop. A media workshop, Muslim Women and the Current Family Law, was conducted on 22 February. The objectives were to: (1) expose media practitioners to the shortcomings of the current Islamic Family Law and the possibilities of reform through SIS' Muslim Family Law Campaign; (2) equip journalists and editors with the knowledge and confidence to report accurately and critically on issues pertaining to Islam and the rights of women—particularly issues related to the IFL/MFL; and (3) identify potential media allies for the MFL Campaign and other future initiatives.

Monitoring. Besides giving us insights into current trends and issues, the consistent monitoring of the media helps us see how people are discussing issues on the ground and whether our media advocacy has had an impact on community-level discourse. In 2013 we continued to provide staff and Members with regular updates on SIS media coverage and other issues of interest.

Website

In 2013 we continued working on the revamp of our website and uploading our vast content archive to the new site. Like its predecessor, the new SIS website will be a key communications tool with design and features that offer audiences a simple and intuitive way to access our Press statements, columns and other publications, as well as updates on our services and upcoming events. We will also continue to work on plans to introduce a Malay-language version.

Resource Centre

The SIS Resource Centre houses a sizeable collection of material on progressive understandings of Islam. Materials include books, periodicals, bulletins, reports and pamphlets. On average, the Centre receives 20 new items per month. One challenge in 2013 has been the lack of storage space at SIS' new premises. The Centre is also underutilised, and SIS will continue to raise awareness to encourage academicians, students and the public to avail themselves of the facilities here.

Alternative media

Social media. In 2013 SIS continued to use Facebook and Twitter as platforms for our communications and

advocacy initiatives. SIS' Facebook
Fan Page had 7,230 likes (as at 18
October), an increase of 1,465 from
January. We created 451 posts, which
generated an estimated 1 million
potential impressions. We had 12,791
Twitter followers (as at 18 October),
an increase of 5,317 from January.
Besides complementing the Facebook
posts, Twitter was also used to promote
Musawah Tweet Seminars. In 2013
we sent out 1,926 tweets, resulting
in an estimated 39 million potential
impressions.

Video projects. In 2013, the CRP unit handled two video projects. The 62-minute Know Your Rights video by Red Communications is undergoing final edit, after which it will be uploaded. The other video project, a four-minute fundraising video will also be uploaded when completed. Beginning 2014, we are aiming to produce two short advocacy videos a year to promote awareness and understanding of SIS advocacy issues.

Public service announcements.

In 2013, SIS commissioned three Malay-language public service announcements (PSAs) with the aim of promoting equality in marriage. Red Communications proposed three scripts on gender-role stereotypes, early marriage and household duties. Shooting began in October.

Infographics. Besides traditional text-driven communication, we are also increasingly looking at infographics as a way to present information to potential funders, stakeholders and policymakers in an accessible format. The first infographic, on polygamy, will utilise the information obtained from the SIS polygamy research project.

E-Newsletter

In an effort to keep our core audiences fully updated on SIS news and events, we launched an e-newsletter in April.
Our mailing list of 824 recipients consisted of SIS staff, Members,
Associate Members, Friends of SIS, volunteers, individual donors, funders,
NGO allies, Telenisa clients, chambering students, embassy and foreign officials, foundations, organisations and people who have attended our study sessions.
We later revised the e-newsletter and are currently finalising the new format.

RESEARCH

The Impact of Polygamy on the Family in Malaysia

Our ongoing research project into polygamy aims to: (1) study the impact of polygamy and how it affects the quality of family life; (2) understand the dynamics of polygamous families; and (3) provide qualitative and

quantitative data for advocating policy and law reform, influencing public opinion and critiquing official discourse on polygamy. SIS has led this groundbreaking research initiative since 2004, and in 2013 the project achieved a milestone with the organisation of the International Symposium on Muslim Polygamy.

International Symposium on Muslim
Polygamy. Much of the preparatory
work had already been completed
in 2012 for this symposium, titled
International Symposium on Muslim
Polygamy: Berkongsi Makan Hati—
Sharing is not Caring. Final preparations
included briefings (4-7 Jan) for
speakers, moderators, discussants and
volunteers. More than 100 participants
attended the Symposium, held over
three days (8-10 Jan).

Meetings. Key project meetings in 2013 included a post-mortem following the International Symposium on Muslim Polygamy (28 Feb), a meeting involving all project team members (28 Mar), and a meeting on the progress of the publication of the research findings (9 May).

Polygamy blog. This blog (http:// realitipoligami.blogspot.com) was launched in April and the team is currently working on ways to publicise it.

Academic publication. An important component of the project is the preparation of an academic publication documenting the research findings. Tentatively titled Muslim Polygamy in Malaysia: Lived Realities and Impact, the book will comprehensively present



The International Symposium on Muslim Polygamy was held 8-10 January.

the various findings of the survey and qualitative studies. Writing of the chapters continued in 2013 and we hope to publish the book in 2014.

Discussion guidelines for documentary screenings. In 2013, SIS continued to organise screenings of the two documentaries on polygamy (*From Machang to Kajang and An-Nisa'*) that had been completed in 2012. A meeting was held (7 Oct) to draft guidelines on initiating Q&A sessions among students and the public following the screenings.

PUBLICATIONS

The objectives of the Publications unit are to: (1) promote progressive views and alternative interpretations within Islam that uphold principles of justice, equality and freedom, particularly with regard to women's rights; (2) enrich the pool of references for academicians, researchers, students and women's and human rights activists; (3) evaluate and document SIS activities with the publication of the Annual Review; and (4) ensure effective and timely distribution of publications.

Publication work undertaken in 2013 included the printing and distribution of the SIS newsletter *Baraza!* issue V ("Why Musawah"), and the design of *Baraza!* issue VII in November, after several articles had been revised. Work

also continued on our Malay-language booklet on domestic violence, which included illustrations, and the booklet was printed in November.

The Women Deliver Conference held from 28-30 May provided us an opportunity to promote SIS' many publications.

The year also saw the reprint and launch of the SIS publication *Muslim Women and the Challenge of Islamic Extremism.* This book was first banned by the Home Ministry in 2008. Since then, the courts have repeatedly ruled in favour of SIS, beginning with the High Court's decision in 2010 to lift the ban, followed by the Court of Appeal's decision in 2012 to reject

the Government's appeal challenging the lifting of the ban and, finally, the Federal Court's dismissal on 14 March this year of the Government's appeal against the Court of Appeal's judgment. SIS reprinted the book, and launched it on 23 June in Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with Borders.

Jejak Muslimah: A SIS app/game. In 2013, SIS was approached by Projek Dialog's Ahmad Fuad Rahmat with a proposal to develop an app/game for Facebook users to raise awareness and better inform Malaysian Muslim youths about longstanding issues facing Muslim women in Malaysia. Jejak Muslimah will use a game format to present, in an accessible and fun manner, otherwise complex information



The Jejak Muslimah app/game aims to raise awareness and better inform Malaysian Muslim youths about longstanding issues facing Muslim women in Malaysia.

about Muslim Family Law. The target audience consists of Malaysian Muslim youths aged 17-30. The goal is to promote greater inter-gender tolerance, equality and understanding among Malaysian Muslims, particularly within the family context. The focus will be on showing how Islam promotes love, compassion, dialogue and democracy within the family, and how the family unit can in turn foster healthy inter-faith and inter-community relations.

Players will walk in the shoes of a Muslim woman and answer questions on issues likely to be encountered by the character in her life's journey. There will be five characters to choose from: the curious teenager, the single mother, the obedient wife, the career woman and the grandmother. At the end of each life-journey, the player receives points and memes that they can share on their Facebook wall or send out in a private message of empowerment (for example a relevant Qur'anic verse) to a friend.

We completed the first round of sketches in 2013 and are working on the 100 questions to be featured in the app. Besides promoting it on multiple platforms, we also intend to showcase the app at the Musawah Global Meeting 2014.

The COMANGO UPR Report. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a process by which the human rights records of United Nations member states are reviewed every four and a half years by the UN Human Rights Council. Malaysia's second UPR took place in October. SIS was a member of the Coalition of Malaysian NGOs in the UPR Process (COMANGO)—the largest coalition of Malaysian NGOs to submit a UPR report to the UN (the Bar Council and other coalitions such as the Child Rights Coalition submitted separate UPR reports). The drafting of the COMANGO report was led by Honey Tan of EMPOWER. Launched on 11 March. the report evaluated government commitments and highlighted human rights issues not included in Malaysia's 2008 report, e.g. the rights of noncitizens, sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), and racism. Briefings for diplomats and embassies were held. A COMANGO delegation went to Geneva to lobby representatives from the permanent missions of various countries. The group also met representatives of the UN Special Rapporteurs. In Malaysia, COMANGO organised a live webcast screening of the UPR Review on 24 October for the public, embassy representatives and the media. There was heightened media interest due to attacks against COMANGO by the Coalition of Muslim NGOs in the UPR Process (MUPRO) and

other groups. On the night of the UPR Review, #UPR2013 trended at No. 1 in Malaysia.

Australia-Malaysia Muslim Leadership Exchange Programme.

SIS Programme Manager Suri Kempe was selected to participate in the programme (19-25 May), which included visits to Melbourne and Sydney to meet representatives of various organisations, places of worship, government agencies and government-linked foundations promoting multiculturalism. The trip presented media opportunities to highlight SIS' work at the international level as well as the issue of child marriage (which was in the news at the time).



SIS participated in a press conference by COMANGO in conjunction with the submission of the COMANGO UPR Report to the UN.





Musawah, the global movement for equality and justice in the Muslim family, was initiated in 2007 by SIS and an international planning committee of activists and scholars. Officially launched in February 2009 in Kuala Lumpur, Musawah ("Equality" in Arabic) brings together NGOs, activists, scholars, practitioners, policymakers and grassroots women and men from around the world. Musawah's key areas of work focus on knowledge building, international advocacy and outreach to build the movement to advance equality and justice in the Muslim family. The Musawah Secretariat is currently based at SIS. Visit www.musawah.org for more information.



In 2013, Musawah accomplished much despite having a small team and limited funding. Governance and organisational structures are now firmly in place.

One of Musawah's greatest strengths remains the widely experienced leaders who serve as excellent mentors to the younger members and staff. Musawah has also successfully maintained its international flavour.

KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

The country teams involved in the Global Life Stories Project were increasingly able to draw on the project's growing body of knowledge in 2013. They also benefited from groundbreaking research into the

exegetical constructs of giwamah by Omaima Abou-Bakr, who is a member of the Musawah International Advisory Group (IAG). The year also saw the launch of Gender Equality and Muslim Family Law: Justice and Ethics in the Islamic Legal Tradition, a publication to which SIS and Musawah resource persons contributed and for which Musawah IAG member 7iha Mir-Hosseini served as chief editor. During the year, Musawah also held an inaugural meeting with traditional religious scholars from Al-Azhar University, Egypt, and Rabitat Muhammadiyah in Rabat, Morocco, to build bridges on the possibility and necessity of reform in the Muslim legal tradition.

Compilation of theoretical papers. The eight research papers commissioned have been completed with the

exception of a paper that will take into account the process and products of the life-stories groups.

Research papers for the Knowledge Building Initiative on *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah*

- 1 An Egalitarian Reading of the Concepts of Khilafah, Wilayah and Qiwamah (Asma Lamrabet)
- 2 The Interpretive Legacy of Qiwamah-ta'ah as Exegetical Constructs
 (Omaima Abou-Bakr)
- 3 Islamic Law, Sufism, and Gender: Rethinking the Terms of Debate (Sa'diyya Shaikh)
- 4 Qiwamah and Wilayah as Legal Postulates in Muslim Family Laws
 (Lynn Welchman)
- "Men Are the Protectors and Maintainers of Women..." The Question of Economy and Gender Roles in Marriage (Lena Larsen)
- 6 Producing Gender-Egalitarian Islamic Law: A Case Study of Guardianship (Wilayah) in Prophetic Practice (Ayesha Choudry)
- Justice through Equality. Rethinking the Notion of Authority in the Family (Ziba Mir-Hosseini)
- Life Stories: Muslim Feminist Inquiry and Alternative Knowledge about Qiwamah and Wilayah (Mulki Al-Sharmani and Jana Rumminger)

Knowledge Building Initiative on *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah*

The Knowledge Building Initiative on *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah* aims to produce new feminist knowledge and rethink the idea and realities of *qiwamah* (commonly understood as male authority over women) and *wilayah* (commonly understood as male guardianship of women and children).

The Initiative comprises the following elements: (1) commissioning background research on qiwamah and wilayah within historical and present-day Muslim legal traditions; (2) conducting participatory research to collect women's and men's life stories in relation to qiwamah and wilayah through the Global Life Stories Project; and (3) opening spaces for scholars and activists to discuss and forge new understandings of qiwamah and wilayah.

The Global Life Stories Project entered its second year in 2013. This project, which involves 10 countries, aims to document life stories in order to better understand how *qiwamah* and *wilayah* impact the lived realities of women and men. The teams share a common research methodology but tailor their projects to local contexts and needs. In 2013 the groups supported one another through Skype sessions, email

listservs and the Mid-Term Review Workshop. They shared knowledge and experiences concerning theory, methodology and analysis. The countries are at different stages of their research and are expected to submit their country reports by end-2013.

Capacity building

The objective of capacity building is to build a core of Advocates able to: (1) share knowledge about the dynamic interactions among the Qur'an, fiqh and the rights framework; and (2) advance rights-based arguments grounded in lived realities and an understanding of Islam that upholds equality and justice.

Capacity Building Workshop (CBW

2013). This workshop (23-31 Aug) was held in Port Dickson, Malaysia. CBW 2013 was a follow-up to the Musawah Curriculum Development Meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia, in 2011, which focused on designing a seven-day training curriculum based on SIS' twoweek Short Course on Understanding Islam from a Rights Perspective. CBW 2013 aimed at fine-tuning the Musawah seven-day curriculum and expanding the movement's international pool of resource persons and facilitators. Amina Wadud, Khalid Masud and Ziba Mir-Hosseini were the resource persons for CBW 2013, while Nani Zulminarni, Marwa Sharafeldin and

Rozana Isa were facilitators. The video recording of the workshop will be used as a capacity building resource as well as for a proposed Musawah eCourse.

OUTREACH

The objective of outreach is to build a critical mass of organisations, groups and individuals who support, use, and promote the Musawah Framework for Action and who are empowered to engage in public discourse about Islam and women's rights.

The 10 countries of the Global Life Stories Project



Building the movement

Advocate outreach. Musawah's outreach work has been seeded into all other areas of work as this has proven to be most effective at building the movement organically. Many new Advocates have been introduced to Musawah by current Advocates and IAG Members. Others have joined through the Knowledge Building Initiative on *Qiwamah* and *Wilayah*—these include new Advocates from countries that previously lacked representation such as Bangladesh, Iran and Afghanistan.

New allies. IAG Members have helped to gather new allies through their networks, at international events, and through interviews and articles. In

2013 Musawah was visible at events such as the Human Rights Defenders Conference held by the Carter Center (June), the 11th Nuremberg Forum in Germany (Sept), the Women's Forum in France (Oct), and the Salzburg Global Seminar (Oct). Musawah's Communications team also engages in media outreach. An increasing number of academics, especially in the US, are using our materials as references for courses.

Increasing youth participation

Young Women's Caucus (YWC).

Members of the YWC are young Muslim women aged 18-40 who are women's rights activists, students and representatives of NGOs and community service organisations (CSOs). Members have convened several times over the past few years to discuss Musawah, its core issue areas, issues in their home countries and most of all to talk about their lives and experiences as young Muslim women. Members converse via YWC's Google Groups and Facebook page. At the 2013 IAG Meeting, a new Chair, Johaira Wahab from the Philippines, was appointed to steer the YWC. Currently a new set of guidelines for online activity and a vision plan document are being drafted.

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY

Musawah's International Advocacy team advances equality and justice in the Muslim family by supporting

"Does the concept of *qiwamah* have positive elements that should be retained? What does protection mean, where does hierarchy come in, how does control fit in, how can care come in? The search for answers to these questions takes us to realms outside the Muslim legal tradition, to human rights law, feminist legal theory, experiences of family law reform in other legal traditions, and the lived realities of today when so many women are providers and protectors of their families."

"Decoding the 'DNA of Patriarchy' in Muslim Family Laws", by Ziba-Mir-Hosseini and Zainah Anwar, in a special issue of *Baraza!* in 2013.

the work of international and regional human rights mechanisms as well as groups and individuals conducting advocacy within these processes and spaces.

This year the team continued to make inroads at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Achievements for international advocacy included: (1) the expansion of our work to include submission to the Convention on the Flimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) List of Issues and Questions process: (2) the inclusion of four questions from the Musawah List into the CEDAW List of Issues for Qatar; (3) building new allies in the CEDAW Committee; and (4) holding the first International Advocacy Working Group Meetina.

Musawah work continues to be cited and promoted by United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay and OHCHR Director of the Human Rights Treaties Division Ibrahim Salama at meetings in Geneva and especially with the OIC.

Engagement with the CEDAW process

Musawah engages with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in three ways, namely by: (1) supporting activists who prepare CEDAW shadow reports on key issues related to Islam and women's rights, especially under Article 16; (2) engaging with the OHCHR as well as CEDAW Committee members to promote Musawah and its call for the reform of discriminatory laws and practices made in the name of Islam; and (3) assessing possible entry points with other human rights mechanisms.

Engagement with NGOs. In 2013 Musawah worked closely with Qatari activists to provide substantive inputs on Article 16 on marriage and family for their first shadow report. Qatar will report to the CEDAW Committee in February 2014. We also gave presentations on CEDAW and Muslim Family Laws at two regional meetings: a Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) training session in January for young Middle East and North Africa (MENA) women leaders, and a strategy meeting of the Equality Without Reservation network in Cairo. International Women's Rights Action Watch (IWRAW) Asia Pacific also used the Musawah report in training activists to prepare shadow reports for Iraq, Bahrain and Qatar.

Engagement with the OHCHR and the CEDAW Committee. In July, Musawah submitted a Thematic Report on Article 16 for Afghanistan as well as our first input into the List of Issues and Questions process for Bahrain and Oatar, Musawah also undertook an advocacy visit to Geneva for the 55th CEDAW Session, In Geneva, activities included: (1) meetings with OHCHR officials and other Genevabased institutions; (2) a briefing on Musawah at the OHCHR on 5 July; (3) assisting the Afghan delegation with their Oral Statement and moderating their lunchtime briefing for CEDAW Committee members; and (4) engaging with the IWRAW Asia Pacific team and its Global to Local training.

Engagement with other international platforms

Musawah's engagement with other international platforms included: (1) ongoing communications with contacts in the OIC Human Rights Commission and the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice; (2) jointly organising a strategy meeting with the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) for the Challenging Religious Fundamentalisms programme, which

will bring activists and groups together across regions and sectors to plan strategies to meet the challenge of rising religious fundamentalisms and their influence in the UN system; (3) organising a panel to introduce our work to the 2014 annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women; and (4) holding the first International Advocacy Working Group Meeting (16-17 Aug) to strategise the direction of international advocacy.

COMMUNICATIONS

The overall objectives of the Musawah Communications unit are to: (1) support Musawah areas of work through communications; (2) support and contribute effectively to movement building; and (3) help raise the global visibility of Musawah.

The Musawah Communications Group (CWG) was convened online with the appointment of Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir as Convenor. The Group, consisting of feminist communications and technology experts from diverse backgrounds, met for the first time for Musawah's second Communications Strategy Meeting in Port Dickson, Malaysia (Sept). Besides evaluating activities in the past three years, the group identified new strategic priorities reflecting Musawah's transition to the Middle East and North Africa

(MENA) region. A new Musawah Communications Strategy for 2014-2016 will be formulated.

New media

Our new-media initiatives aim to:
(1) serve the information needs of
Musawah Advocates; (2) proactively
identify family law topics for Musawah
to address; (3) contribute to raising
the global visibility of Musawah as a
movement; and (4) contribute to global
efforts to protect and promote access
to communications spaces.

e-Newsletter. Musawah's quarterly e-newsletter, Musawah Vision, is a compact bulletin of the collective achievements of the movement.

Newsletters feature current news and trends concerning Muslim family laws around the world, updates from Musawah Advocates and activities led by the Musawah Secretariat. Issues 12 and 13 were distributed in 2013. The current mailing list has 740 international subscribers. The newsletters were also shared across social media with Musawah's allies in women's and human rights organisations.

e-Announcements. Musawah Vision is supplemented by e-announcements and e-call outs that keep the Musawah community up to date. The e-announcement on the first Musawah

tweet seminar invited fans and followers to a live class on Reading for Gender from the Qur'an. Musawah also sent out greetings for Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as well as a year-end update of activities coinciding with Christmas and the New Year.

Website, Musawah's website continues to be the online face for the movement. Website development is ongoing and, under Phase II in 2013, greater social media integration was introduced. The goal was to vastly increase traffic to the site using social media. This would feed into the website's objective of being the primary online hub for resources concerning Muslim family laws. New advocacy tools and resources were highlighted in Musawah Vision as well as via social media. In 2013, the majority of visitors (54.15 per cent of whom were male) accessed the site's Resources section. The resource most referred to was the article "Decoding the DNA of Patriarchy" by Ziba Mir-Hosseini and 7ainah Anwar.

Online exchange platforms. In 2013
Google Groups were set up for each
of the five Musawah Working Groups,
the Musawah International Advisory
Group and the Secretariat. The use of
Dropbox has enabled convenient storing
and sharing of working documents
for members of the Global Life Stories
Project, facilitators and resource

persons for Musawah's Short Course on Islam, Gender Equality and Justice (I-nGEJ) and the Communications Working Group.

Social media

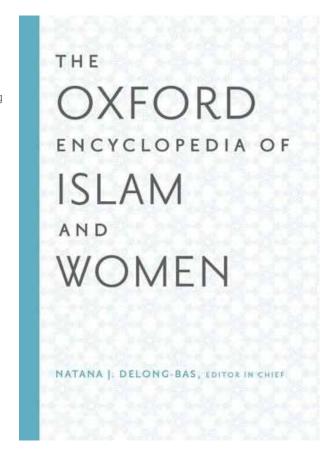
Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. On Twitter, a large percentage of Musawah followers are women between the ages of 18 and 44. Most are based in Malaysia, the US, the UK and the Middle East and tend to be activists, academics, media practitioners, students and politicians. In 2013 we launched Musawah Tweet Seminars. one of which featured Amina Wadud's workshop (organised by SIS) on Reading for Gender from the Qur'an. This online seminar gained Musawah positive feedback from around the world, with supporters writing reviews and requesting for more such seminars. Also, the Musawah community page on Facebook saw a steady increase in fans to 900 "likes". Facebook "shares" that have garnered an increase in fans have been 7iha Mir-Hosseini's seminar series on The Potential and Promise of Feminist Voices in Islam, updates from Musawah's research initiative on giwamah and wilayah, Musawah interventions at the CEDAW sessions. and Musawah Vision. On YouTube, the Musawah Opening video attracted 4,338 views. The Musawah channel is expected to see a substantial increase

in subscribers once Musawah's digital storytelling (in collaboration with the Global Life Stories Project) takes off.

Publications

Toolkit. The Musawah Toolkit *Sharing* the Musawah Framework and Key Messages is a vibrant new e-publication designed mainly for Musawah Advocates. The Toolkit brings to life

the Musawah Framework for Action and key messages, helping Advocates to think about equality and justice in the family as well as introduce and promote Musawah to wider audiences. Accompanied by notes for facilitators to help steer discussions, the Toolkit was distributed among Musawah's most active Advocates, and a distribution strategy to disseminate it in the public domain is currently being reviewed.



In 2013 Zainah Anwar submitted an entry on Musawah to The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women. Translations. Musawah is committed to supporting the efforts of Advocates in translating key Musawah knowledge resources. The Musawah report CEDAW and Muslim Family Laws: In Search of Common Ground was translated into Arabic and is currently being disseminated by Musawah Advocates in Egypt at the Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA). The Musawah Framework for Action was translated into Dhivehi by Musawah Advocates in the Maldives.

Raising visibility

Media partnerships helped raise the visibility of Musawah as well as draw attention to its core issue areas. In 2013, the efforts of Musawah Advocates were featured in Muslima an online exhibition curated by Samina Ali of the International Museum of Women (IMOW). The journal Women and Islam will publish articles by Marina Mahathir and Meghana Bahar, Zainah Anwar submitted two entries on Musawah to The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women and Oxford Islamic Studies Online. At Triggerpitch India, Musawah partnered with a documentary film production company to publicise Invoking Justice, a documentary on India's first Muslim women's iama'at led by Sharifa Khanum. Faction Films of the UK contacted Musawah to help publicise their film Hip

Hop Hijabis, featuring a British-Muslim rapper duo. Hope Studios of Australia in collaboration with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) will produce a short documentary featuring Musawah Advocates.

SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat is the first point of contact for any queries relating to the movement as well as its Advocates. Besides providing administrative, human resource and finance support to all Musawah key areas of work, the Secretariat began documentation for handover purposes to the incoming Musawah Secretariat in Egypt that is targeted for 2013.

Governance

Following Musawah's commitment in 2011 to appointing new members to the International Advisory Group (IAG), six new members were appointed to the IAG in 2013. IAG member Cassandra Balchin passed away this year and four other members stepped down. The IAG currently consists of 14 members.

Governance and Working Group structures are now in place and functioning. The Knowledge Building Working Group is exemplary in demonstrating how a working group comprising an IAG member and parttime programme staff can take the lead and move programme work forward with minimal intervention from the Secretariat.

Finances

Fundraising efforts in 2013 were focused on Egypt, in line with the Secretariat's transition from Kuala Lumpur to Cairio. Zainah Anwar and Marwa Sharafeldin embarked on a fundraising mission in Cairo in January, meeting eight institutional funders and submitting threeyear funding proposals. While the organisations were excited about the Secretariat's impending move to Cairo and recognised the significance of Musawah's work to the region, only one institution (the Ford Foundation in Cairo) came back with a positive response. There is still an urgent need to secure more funds to ensure the sustainability of the movement.

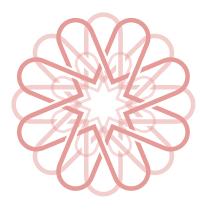
Transition

Musawah's rotating Secretariat ensures that as a global movement, Musawah grows in diverse cultural and political contexts. The rotating structure also offers leadership opportunities to more Advocates.

The decision to move the Musawah Secretariat to Cairo was made in February 2010. Initially, the host organisation for the Musawah Secretariat was to have been the Centre for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance (CEWLA) led by Azza Soliman. Given the current challenges faced by NGOs in Egypt in receiving funds from funders, it was decided that the Musawah Secretariat in Cairo would now be hosted as a project within a law syndicate (established by Azza Soliman) known as Lawyers for Justice and Peace (LJP). Musawah may be affiliated with CEWLA where it is strategic to do SO.

Despite the challenges, it is still strategic for Musawah to be located in Cairo. There is increasing demand for the Musawah discourse in the MENA region and the ground is ripe for movement building. Musawah's potential engagement with religious

scholars in the region, particularly the progressive scholars at Al-Azhar, will not only enrich the discourse and scholarship on the rights of Muslim women but also build support for Musawah. Already, Musawah's Knowledge Building Initiative on Qiwamah and Wilayah has made groundbreaking findings that were shared for engagement and discussion in November in a consultative meeting with selected ulama in Morocco. Following the decision taken at the Musawah IAG meeting in 2012 to register Musawah as its own entity, Musawah Global Consultancy Sdn Bhd was incorporated in Malaysia on 18 July 2013. Besides ensuring that fundraising activities can continue smoothly through periods of Secretariat transition in the future, the registered entity also helps us overcome restrictions on funds channelled directly to NGOs in Egypt, where the Musawah Secretariat will soon he hased







The objectives of the **Operations** unit are to:

- Provide efficient operational support to SIS, with the smooth running of the office as a priority.
- Optimise staff capacity and maintain a work environment that allows SIS to attract and retain the best staff.
- Manage SIS finances and fundraising with a view to ensuring sustainability of the organisation and its programmes.

ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Activities

Other activities. In addition to supporting the initiatives under the various SIS units, the Operations unit also coordinated social events and gettogethers for the whole organisation. We began 2013 with an Office Warming Party (11 Mar) to mark the move to our new premises in late 2012. Other events included *tahlil* and SIS Buka Puasa (24 July), SIS Hari Raya Open House (15 Aug), Malaysia Day (15-16 Sept) and a Bobo Talks session by Prof Dr Norani Othman.

Visits, networking and meetings. As in previous years, we had a full calendar of visits and meetings in 2013, with organisations as well as individuals such as noted author and academic Tamir Moustafa and former ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan.

Visits to SIS. SIS regularly welcomes academics, students, journalists and NGO representatives from around the world who come to find out more about our work, conduct interviews with SIS staff and strengthen ties. Notable visitors in 2013 included former President of Finland Ms Tarja Halonen, and the Ambassador of Norway to Malaysia.

- Networking. We continuously expand our network at the numerous events to which we are invited. In 2013 these included national day celebrations hosted by embassies, lunches, open houses and other social events.
- **E&P** and other meetings. At the annual Evaluation and Planning Meeting (E&P) held every fourth quarter, all units in SIS come together to review and plan. The E&P is an occasion for staff to reflect on the previous year and prepare for the year ahead. The 13th E&P took place from 1-3 November. Besides the E&P, the four board meetings and the Annual General Meeting, numerous meetings were arranged with current and prospective funders. SIS staff also participated in meetings spearheaded by other organisations.

Participation in external events. In 2013 SIS Members and staff attended numerous talks, public forums, conferences, workshops and training sessions. We were frequently involved as paper presenters, panel speakers and trainers.

Staff development and wellness programmes

Training sessions to build capacity and improve skills are held regularly at SIS. In 2013, these included sessions on the Quickbooks accounting system (16 May) and SPSS software for statistical analysis (9-10 September). We also continued holding weekly English classes for staff.

Besides hard skills, we are also committed to the wellbeing of our staff and to maintaining a healthy and balanced work environment. Yoga classes were held fortnightly in 2013. A workshop on Terms of References was conducted by Saira Shameem (2 July). We also organised thanksgiving, memorial and other prayers for SIS members, staff and friends. These included majlis yasin, tahlil dan doa selamat, tahlil arwah and tahlil kesyukuran.

Staffing the organisation

At the end of 2013, the organisation comprised 4 Board members, 15 permanent staff, and 3 part-time/

Staff strength by unit







Executive Director

Advocacy, Legal Services and Public Education



Communications, Research and Publications





Musawah

Operations

GOVERNANCE

Collectively as well as in their personal capacities, SIS Board Members are actively involved in: (1) fundraising, with Board Members assisting via their professional and personal networks of contacts; (2) crisis management; (3) capacity building of staff members; (4) reviewing annual work plans, budgets, funding proposals, staff salaries and structures as well as assisting in job interviews and appraisals; and (5) giving public talks, attending meetings and briefings involving VIP visitors, and

Extending the organisation







Associate Members



Friends of SIS (FOSIS)



Volunteers

At end-2013, there were 32 Members, 2 Associate Members, 18 Friends of SIS and 14 volunteers. SIS Members are accepted based on demanding membership criteria: new members must be recommended and each member is expected to make a significant contribution to the organisation and its activities. Associate Members are gender-sensitive men who play an important role in support of SIS work. Friends of SIS (FOSIS) are people who are supportive of SIS work and want to be part of SIS but do not fulfil the criteria for SIS membership or do not have time to be members. FOSIS includes Muslim and non-Muslim men and women who receive our newsletter and are invited to study sessions and other activities.

representing SIS in talks to journalists, researchers and students.

Four board meetings were held in 2013 (20 Feb, 8 May, 17 July and 23 Oct). The Annual General Meeting was held on 1 June. Challenges this year included recruiting a much-needed Operations Manager and Finance Officer; reviewing security SOPs for the SIS office in light of a break-in which occurred in February; and leading a domestic inquiry.

For 2014, the Board hopes to introduce a programme to encourage the interest and commitment of younger SIS Members to become future Board Members. For a start, Members will

be invited to Board meetings to afford them a better understanding of how the Board works.

FINANCE AND FUNDRAISING

The objectives of the Operations unit with regard to finance and fundraising are to: (1) ensure the sustainability of the organisation; (2) ensure the continued flow of grants annually to enhance SIS' financial stability; (3) practise accountability to the SIS Board, SIS members, funders and donors; and (4) optimise the use of resources.

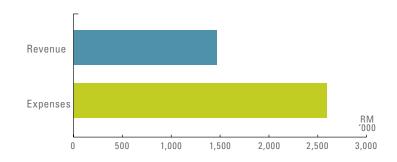
In 2013 the Operations unit took steps to strengthen its financial management systems and structures to achieve timely financial reporting and better control of expenditure and funding reserves. These steps included training of staff in line with the change of accounting software in the previous year, and resetting the Chart of Accounts.

In terms of strengthening structures, the long-established Finance Committee welcomed new members in 2013. The Finance Committee will now also be supported by the Fundraising Committee. The two committees are focused on their respective roles of monitoring finance and expenditure (for the former) and raising funds (for the latter). Board Members also continued to contribute to fundraising in their personal capacities. A funder management system has also been proposed to facilitate SIS fundraising work. Another important development was the drafting of the Financial Safe Zone Guidelines to ensure that income does not fall below a fixed baseline expenditure over a period of time. This will also facilitate in setting fundraising targets to cover baseline expenditure.

For the financial year ending 31 December 2013, revenue totalled RM1,467,535, while expenses totalled RM2,592,410.

Revenue and expenses

	2013 RM
	RM1,467,535
Expenses	RM2,592,410



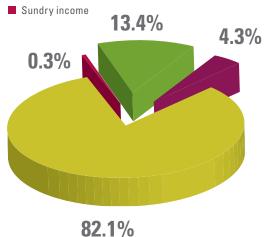
Sources of revenue

	2013 RM
Unrestricted funds	195,987
Interest on fixed deposit	62,410
Reimbursement	1,204,115
Sundry income	5,023
Total	1,467,535



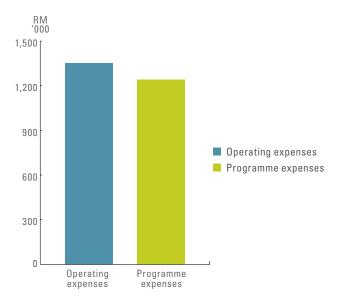
■ Interest on fixed deposit

Reimbursement



Expenses

	2013 RM
Operating expenses	1,353,033
Programme expenses	1,239,377
Total	2,592,410



While programme expenses are sufficiently supported by Funders, SIS continuously faces challenges in sourcing for financial support to meet its operating expenses.

GETTING INVOLVED

SIS is a constant hive of activity. We strive to provide a bright and cheerful volunteer environment, and welcome those who share our vision and commitment to make this world a better place, in big and small ways. Volunteers help to accompany SIS clients to court, monitor court proceedings, assist with SIS campaigns and outreach activities, and catalogue books and newspaper clippings.

If you have the right experience or a willing spirit, we welcome your help in research, writing, editing, filing, cataloguing, fundraising, legal advice, website management and public outreach events. If you just want to show your support for SIS and its work, become a Friend of SIS (FOSIS) for just RM50 a year.

Call our Operations Manager at 03-7785 6121, drop by our office at No 4, Lorong 11/8E, 46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, MALAYSIA or email us at sistersinislam@pd.jaring.my. Our volunteer and FOSIS forms are also available on our website www.sistersinislam.org.my.

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All SIS staff

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Friends of Sisters in Islam

THE SIS ORGANISATION IN 2013

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Executive Director

Ratna Osman

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Hairun Nisa Abu Bakar (Operations, until Mar 2013), Rosezaini
Mansor (Finance & Operations, effective Dec 2013), Rozana Mohd
Isa (Programme Coordinator, Musawah Secretariat), Suriani
Kempe (Communications, Research & Publications), Zainah
Anwar (Part-time Project Director, Musawah Secretariat)

Senior Programme Officer

Azareena Abd Aziz (Advocacy, Legal Services & Public Education), Hartini Abdullah (Finance, until Jun 2013), Syarifatul Adibah Mohammad Jodi (Communications, Research & Publications)

Officers

Arnie Ruxana Ridzuan Lee (Communications, Research & Publications, effective Mar 2013), Gnei Meghana Bahar (Communications, Musawah Secretariat), Kartina Mohd Sobri (Advocacy, Legal Services & Public Education), Natasha Dar (Advocacy, Musawah Secretariat, effective Mar 2013), Nur Azrine Abdul Razak (Advocacy, Legal Services & Public Education), Nur Liyana Mohamed Akbar (Operations, until Feb 2013), Nooradila Abd Aziz (Administration, Musawah Secretariat), Noorulhuda Mohd Noor (Communications, Research & Publications), Oleyda Jamaluddin (Operations, Apr until Dec 2013)

Programme Assistants

Hernani Jaapar (Finance & Operations)



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