



GENDER EQUALITY FOR ALL

**Annual
Report
2013**



PUBLISHED BY

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ABOUT US

The Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC) is a state agency which works towards the transformation of Penang into an advanced and progressive society through the promotion of equality among all women and men, girls and boys regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender or socio-economic background. PWDC believes that Penang's people are the key to her future and shared prosperity, and that all women and men, girls and boys must have the opportunities, rights and freedoms to develop their full potential as citizens who can contribute to achieving the visions and aspirations of the state.

Since its establishment in November 2011, PWDC has played a pivotal role as the key State Government agency working towards the mainstreaming of gender equality, social inclusion and good governance across all sectors in Penang. PWDC achieves this by working with partners to plan and implement gender-responsive projects, raise public awareness of gender issues, and build capacity among individuals and communities. PWDC also advocates measures to bridge gender gaps between women and men in the economy, public sphere, politics and governance.

As Penang progresses towards its aspiration of being an advanced society, PWDC will continue to strategise and execute multi-level and multi-pronged approaches to bring about meaningful and lasting change. PWDC envisions a future in which all women and men, girls and boys will have the equal opportunity to fully contribute to and benefit from a Penang which values and upholds the principles of democratic participation, respect for diversity and individual dignity, and social inclusion and social justice.



VISION

PWDC envisions a Penang which mainstreams gender into the policies and programmes of all sectors to achieve gender and social justice in the State.

MISSION STATEMENT

PWDC seeks to contribute to the transformation of Penang based on principles of substantive equality and good governance. Integral to our work is the recognition of women's diverse identities, women's representation in all spheres and the equitable redistribution of resources.

This will be achieved through research and advocacy on gender responsive policies, capacity development, strategic networking, and women's empowerment programmes; working in smart partnership with all levels of the Penang state and local governments, non-governmental and community-based organisations, the academe, the private sector and the public.

OBJECTIVES

PWDC has five key objectives, namely:

- 1. To develop gender responsive policies and good governance.**
- 2. To promote awareness and understanding of gender and social justice.**
- 3. To enhance women's participation in the socio-economic and political life of society.**
- 4. To strengthen women's leadership and decision making in all sectors of society.**
- 5. To enhance and promote an environment of inclusiveness within the multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious context of Penang.**

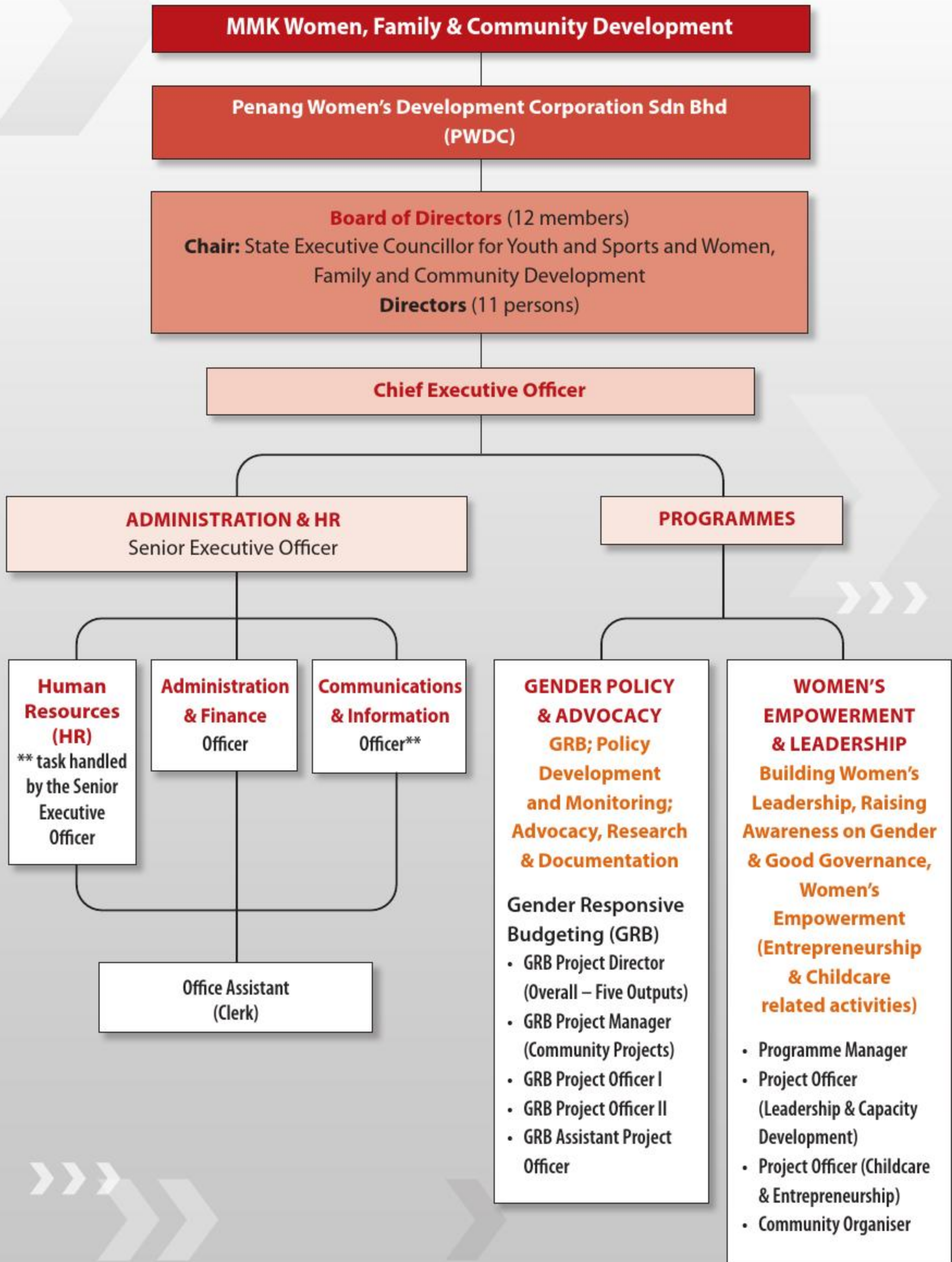
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The PWDC Board of Directors provides advice and guidance on the various policies, programmes and projects within the organisation's key thrust areas. The members of the Board as at 31st December 2013 are as follows:

- ▶ **Chairperson (from May 2013): YB Puan Chong Eng**
- ▶ YB Dr. Norlela binti Ariffin
- ▶ **Dr. Cecilia Ng Choon Sim**
- ▶ Chin Soo Wah
- ▶ **Hajjah Aida binti Haji Yusof Rawa**
- ▶ Loh Cheng Kooi
- ▶ **Mangaleswary a/p V. Kumarasamy**
- ▶ Dr. Marina Lalitha Devi a/p A. David
- ▶ **Lim Kah Cheng (appointed November 2013)**

PWDC would like to thank outgoing Directors YB Puan Lydia Ong Kok Fooi (also Chairperson until May 2013), YB Dato' Law Choo Kiang, and Dr. Lilis Surienty binti Abd Talib for their service and contributions.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

YB Puan Chong Eng



Since 2008, the Penang State Government under Pakatan Rakyat has maintained a firm commitment to transform Penang into an international and intelligent city. Indeed, as the year 2013 draws to a close, Penang's achievements are impressive – with full employment numbers, yearly surplus budgets and a reduction in state debt by 95% since 2008, and investments of RM36.1 billion from 2008 through 2012, among others.

At the same time, the Penang State Government believes that true development is not about growth by numbers alone. We believe that Penang's transformation must go beyond increasing basic incomes, levels of economic activity, or the quality and quantity of material infrastructure. And we know that to achieve this transformation, Penang must pay heed to the human and social aspects of development – given that the people of Penang are its greatest assets and should be its prime investments. Penang must be a place where all women and men, girls and boys – regardless of ethnicity, gender, vocation or background – are included in society and able to achieve their goals and dreams.

The hard work of investing in Penang's people requires time, resources and concerted efforts. It is here that PWDC, as an agency of the Penang State Government, has a unique and pivotal role to play. Over the last two years, PWDC has pioneered and delivered innovative programmes to build capacity, citizenship and leadership among individuals and communities on the ground. Through its various projects and partnerships, PWDC has successfully reached out to record-breaking numbers of women across Penang in 2013 alone, and this is bound to bring returns to the state.

Yet, it is important to realise that empowering women and communities cannot be achieved overnight. The challenges ahead are vast and numerous. Till this day, women all over Penang and Malaysia face many socio-economic obstacles, ranging from systemic poverty and deprivation to a general lack of access and opportunities. Women still have to confront societal, institutional and individual attitudes which downplay their contributions and leadership, and discourage them from participating freely in the economy, the public sphere, politics and governance. Women also face harmful stereotypes about their roles and capabilities, discrimination and denial of basic rights, and abuse and violence. Because of this, many women are unable to realise their full potential. In light of these challenges, PWDC will continue to strategise and implement multi-level and multi-pronged approaches to bring about meaningful and lasting change in the direction of gender and social justice.

Despite these challenges, PWDC is proud to have made great strides in our 2nd year and we continue to grow from strength to strength. The achievements we have chalked up, as related below, gives us confidence to look forward to the milestones ahead.

This year, PWDC's **Gender Responsive Budget (GRB)** programme expanded greatly in partnership with Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang (MPPP) and Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai (MPSP) to promote gender sensitisation, bottom-up participatory budgeting, local democracy, and grassroots empowerment among the people of Penang. PWDC not only enhanced its projects at the two low-cost housing communities of PPR Jalan Sungai in Daerah Timur Laut and PPR Ampangan in Seberang Perai Tengah, but also started work for future GRB projects at Kampung Sungai Cheenam and Taman Tambun Indah in Seberang Perai Selatan.

As a result of the GRB project, the cleanliness and physical conditions of the low-cost housing flats in PPR Jalan Sungai improved significantly as residents began to take responsibility and ownership of their surroundings. A historic Community Contract, the first of its kind in Penang, was forged between MPPP and the Residents' Association of PPR Jalan Sungai to create jobs for residents and maintain cleanliness at the community level. Through GRB, PWDC continues to bring together ordinary Penangites and local authorities to create visible change.

The ultimate aim of the GRB project is that gender responsive and participatory processes become institutionalised in the budget cycles of State and local governments. To this end, in 2013, PWDC continued to conduct training sessions, dialogues and roundtables on Gender,

Good Governance and GRB and sex-disaggregated data mapping for key stakeholders, namely MPSP staff members, department heads and councillors. With these steps forward and more to come, PWDC is honored to play a key role in mainstreaming gender at the local authority level.

Under the **Women's Empowerment and Leadership (WEL)** programme, PWDC continued to organise and conduct events to raise awareness on Gender Equality and Good Governance, as well as sessions for capacity building, leadership training and networking among women from all walks of life. Key highlights included the Dialog Suara Wanita series, women's motivational talks, and Lean In @ Penang targeted at women in the corporate sector.

Through the WEL programme, the Penang State Government successfully launched Briged Wanita Pulau Pinang (BWPP), a grassroots-driven volunteer corps tasked with identifying and registering eligible women for support programmes provided by the Penang State Government, namely tokens of appreciation for single mothers and homemakers, microcredit facilities and mammogram screenings. By the end of 2013, over 1,500 women from all over Penang had become BWPP members. Efforts are being made to enhance BWPP as a network to facilitate women's improved access to resources and capacity-developing activities.



A notable milestone was achieved when the Penang State Government officially adopted and implemented the Penang State Childcare Policy and Action Plan (2013-2015) drafted by PWDC, the first of its kind in Malaysia. The impact of the Childcare Policy is not only limited to providing a much needed service for families but also giving women the choice of remaining in the workforce, thus contributing to economic growth. By the end of the year, PWDC completed the setting up of the first childcare centre (taska) in KOMTAR catering to government employees. Further efforts are underway to expand childcare access and training throughout Penang to support working parents, caregivers, and childcare providers in public, private and home-based sectors.

Throughout the year, PWDC reached out to women and concerned citizens from all ethnic, religious and language groups through strategically tailored workshops, forums, public talks and awareness-raising events. PWDC is proud to have engaged more than 3,000 persons from across Penang with an eye to increasing their awareness on gender equality and good governance, and developing them to become agents of change and social progress.

In tandem with PWDC's aim of achieving gender mainstreaming in Penang's governance, PWDC's **Gender Policy and Advocacy (GPA)** programme formulated a Gender Policy and Action Plan for the Penang State Government's consideration. The Gender Policy and Action Plan lays out 4 key objectives of

economic security for all, freedom from gender-based violence, just distribution of power and influence, and gender responsive and participatory governance, as well as recommendations for implementation. This Gender Policy and Action Plan will form the overarching framework within which the State Government and PWDC will undertake measures to promote and, ultimately, achieve gender and social justice.

As we come to the end of the year, I am proud to say that PWDC has continued to play a pivotal role as the key agency of the Penang State Government tasked with implementing and mainstreaming gender equality, women's development and gender-responsive governance.

On this note, I wish to record my thanks and appreciation to all Federal and State departments, agencies, private sector institutions, companies, NGOs, community partners, volunteers and the public for their meaningful support and contribution to the work of PWDC. I convey my utmost appreciation to my colleagues in the PWDC Board, the PWDC Advisory Committees, and the PWDC Management and Staff for their dedication and hard work in meeting the demands and challenges of the year.

Thank you.

YB Puan Chong Eng

Chairperson

Penang Women's Development Corporation



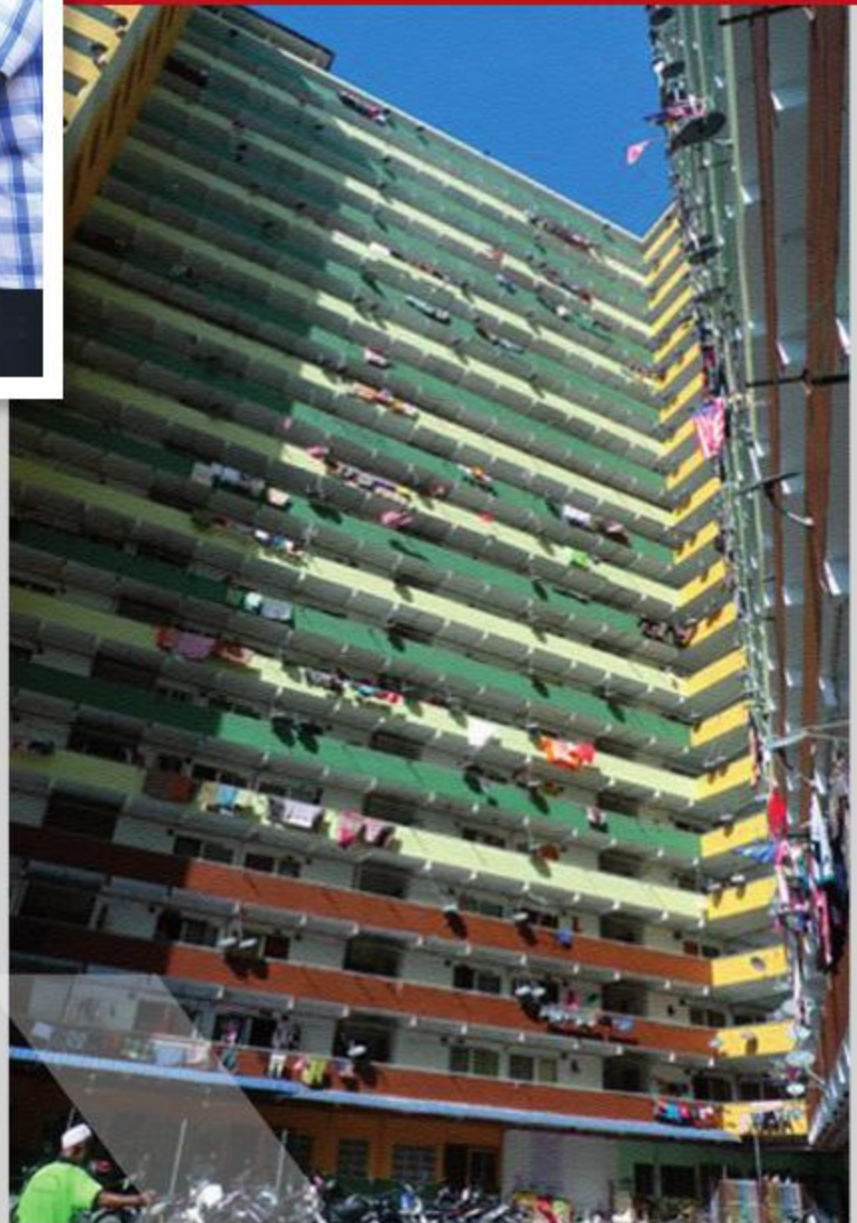
GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING (GRB)



Repainting project at PPR Jalan Sungai.



Before



After

**DIFFERENT PEOPLE
DIFFERENT NEEDS**



INTRODUCTION

In line with the Penang State Government's efforts to implement CAT principles (competency, accountability and transparency) in governance, PWDC has developed a Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) programme to ensure that the needs of both women and men in Penang are met. The GRB programme's key aims are to make government budgeting processes more gender-responsive, participatory and inclusive for diverse communities across the state. PWDC believes that government will be more effective by being responsive in allocating resources towards the different needs of different peoples in Penang.

PWDC's GRB team works in partnership with the *State Executive Council for Local Government and Traffic Management* and both local authorities of Penang, *Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang* (MPPP or Municipal Council of Penang Island) and *Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai* (MPSP or Municipal Council of Seberang Perai).

Since 2012, GRB's pilot low-income community projects have focused on PPR Jalan Sungai under MPPP and PPR Ampangan under MPSP. Both projects have successfully empowered residents of the low-cost flats to engage with the local authorities and have a direct say in the services they require. By being able to articulate their priorities and have the local authorities respond to them, both communities have undergone

a dramatic transformation within a short span of 2 years since the introduction of GRB. The reduction in vandalism, improvement in cleanliness and increase in community responsibility has also led to cost savings for MPPP and MPSP.

In 2013, the GRB programme accomplished significant milestones in the following areas:

Transforming Communities

In 2012, PWDC through the GRB programme implemented innovative processes which allowed residents of PPR Jalan Sungai and PPR Ampangan – women and men, girls and boys from all walks of life – to vote for how they wanted MPPP and MPSP to prioritise and spend the budget allocations for both communities. Following the swift and effective responses from both local councils, the physical and social transformation of both areas has been extremely impressive.

At **PPR Jalan Sungai**, MPPP stepped up its efforts and increased its project budget to improve the physical conditions of the low-cost flats and upgrade the outdoor recreational area. Through dialogues and joint projects organised between PWDC, MPPP and the community, residents organised themselves to help reduce vandalism, improve safety and maintain the physical environment of PPR Jalan Sungai. The community's positive response led MPPP to allocate additional funds for a new coat of paint for the flats, the colours of which were chosen by the residents in line with the participatory and people-centric principles of GRB.

The success of PWDC's work to empower the community resulted in a historic partnership forged directly between MPPP and the Residents' Association of PPR Jalan Sungai (PKPJS) in the form of a Community Contract. The **Community Contract**, which is the first of its kind in Penang, employs residents to manage and maintain the safety and physical



upkeep of the area and in doing so has resulted in a level of cleanliness not seen before. Over the year, residents of PPR Jalan Sungai have begun to take ownership and responsibility for their surroundings, which has hastened the transformation and uplifting of their well-being. As of the end of 2013, PPR Jalan Sungai is one of the cleanest low-cost housing areas in Penang.



At **PPR Ampangan**, following consultations with the residents, MPSP upgraded the recreational facilities there by adding two rest areas, reflexology paths and outdoor gym equipment designed for and catering to the different needs of the women and men, girls and boys in the community. As a result of PWDC's continuous efforts to raise awareness and educate the PPR Ampangan community on good governance principles, the residents have become increasingly involved in their own community matters and interested in local governance. For the first time ever, PPR Ampangan residents were present at MPSP's Budget Dialogue alongside residents from all over Seberang Perai and MPSP department heads, officers and councillors.

Throughout the year, PWDC not only helped to forge ties and establish rapport between local council staff and residents of both PPR housing areas, but also among residents of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious communities themselves. PWDC achieved this by developing and participating in a mixture of interactive activities, awareness-raising programmes, and festive gatherings intended to bring together and empower different resident groups. A special mention goes to Penang Arts-Ed who helped create a joint programme for the children of PPR Jalan Sungai to develop their talents and minds through an arts-based approach. PWDC also partnered with Women's Centre for Change (WCC) Penang and Soroptimist

International Penang (SIP) to organise talks on Violence Against Women (VAW) for the women and men of PPR Jalan Sungai. Based on the success of these talks, PWDC plans to offer a further series of talks and trainings in 2014 to reach out to larger groups of PPR residents.

In reviewing the accomplishments achieved through GRB in 2013, PWDC as an agency of the Penang State Government is proud to have played a key role in bringing together local authorities and citizens of Penang through sustained engagement and strategic activities.

Significant events and activities at both PPR communities were:

23th February 2013: Chap Goh Meh Celebration to promote multi-culturalism at PPR Jalan Sungai.

10th March 2013: Official Launch of Repainting and Recreation Park Upgrade at PPR Jalan Sungai.

7th April 2013: Family Day (Hari Keluarga) and Launching of Phase 4 Implementation of GRB for PPR Ampangan Residents at Taman Bandar.

21st April 2013: Capacity Building Session for members of AJK LA21 Ampangan and resident Bureaus of PPR Ampangan on roles and responsibilities in the community and planning of programmes and activities for the year.

28th April 2013: Capacity Building Session for members of Persatuan Penduduk '09 of PPR Jalan Sungai on roles and responsibilities in the community.

2nd June 2013: Parents Day (Hari Ibu Bapa) at PPR Ampangan.

22nd July 2013: PWDC-MPSP Opening of Tender Contract to upgrade Taman Rekreasi PPR Ampangan.

25th July 2013: Nuzul Al-Quran and Breaking of Fast Reception (Buka Puasa) at PPR Jalan Sungai.

25th August 2013: Official Launch of Taman Rekreasi PPR Ampangan, Merdeka Day Celebration and Open House at PPR Ampangan.

8th October 2013: Signing of Community Contract and Press Conference at PPR Jalan Sungai.

16th November 2013: Launch of Kempen Kebersihan (Cleanliness Campaign) and Children's Art Competition on Cleanliness (with Arts-Ed) at PPR Jalan Sungai.

7th December 2013: Women's Centre for Change-Soroptimist International Penang talk on *Violence Against Women* (VAW) at PPR Jalan Sungai.

Institutionalising GRB in MPPP and MPSP

Throughout 2013, PWDC continued to support the institutionalisation of gender, good governance and GRB principles and practices in MPPP and MPSP. PWDC achieved this by conducting capacity training and development in GRB methodology and tools for councillors, officers and staff in both local authorities.

In 2012, MPPP formed a GRB Working Group (GRBWG) and a GRB Technical Support Group to oversee GRB matters, address specific concerns and ensure prompt actions. MPSP also set up a GRB Working Group (which was later replaced by a Gender Committee comprising the President of MPSP, heads of departments and 12 councillors) to do the same. To build capacity and gender understanding for all local government stakeholders, PWDC staff conducted a Gender Dialogue for 17 councillors and four department heads of MPSP and workshops for 100 staff from Levels 17-44 of MPSP, similar to workshops conducted for staff of MPPP in 2012.

PWDC also organised two separate roundtables to discuss the sex-disaggregated data which was compiled and analysed by consultant Dr. Jacqueline Fernandez from Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). The roundtables were attended by members of the state-level GRB Steering Committee, MPPP and MPSP Presidents, councillors and department heads, and members of the MPPP GRB Working Group and MPSP Gender Committee. The research findings included sex-disaggregated user counts and surveys of selected public areas including libraries, markets and recreational facilities in order to gauge frequency of use, adequacy of facilities, and satisfaction towards public services provided by both local authorities. At the end of their respective roundtables, both MPPP and MPSP representatives agreed on the importance of obtaining and using sex-disaggregated data for planning, policy-making and budgeting to ensure that different gender needs in society are met.

To complement PWDC's efforts to promote gender data collection to improve and refine policy-making and service delivery, MPPP and MPSP launched online surveys for Budget 2014 which incorporated gender-sensitive questions and perspectives in order to obtain more detailed feedback from residents of Penang. In addition, PWDC performed Benefit Incident Analysis (quantitative) and Beneficiary Impact Assessment(s) (qualitative) on GRB community events and activities to measure levels of gender participation against



the public funds spent. PWDC also reported the BIA findings to MPPP and MPSP at the respective GRB Working Group and Gender Committee quarterly meetings.

Although capacity development is an exhaustive, ongoing and lengthy process, PWDC is proud to have introduced effective concepts, data collection and assessment methodologies which will help local government stakeholders with policy decisions and implementation. In future, PWDC hopes to expand methodology training and awareness-raising of gender, good governance and GRB beyond the local authority level and to other key agencies within the State Government.

Key dates and events included:

17th January 2013: PWDC-GRB Presentation to MPSP Finance and Admin Committee.

21st January 2013: MPSP Roundtable Discussion on Sex-Disaggregated Data.

5th February 2013: MPPP Roundtable Discussion on Sex-Disaggregated Data.

21st March 2013: 1st MPSP GRBWG Meeting of the year.

25th April 2013: 1st MPPP GRBWG Meeting of the year.

11th June 2013: MPSP Gender Committee Meeting.

13th-14th June 2013: PWDC-GRB Capacity Building Session on Understanding Gender and Good Governance for MPSP staff from Levels 27-44.

2nd July 2013: MPSP-PUSPANITA working visit to PWDC.

4th-5th July 2013: PWDC-GRB Gender Dialogue with MPSP Councillors.

28th-31th October 2013: GRB Training for MPSP staff from Levels 29-44.

Promoting GRB through Partnerships, Programmes and Networking

Throughout 2013, PWDC worked to develop relationships with external partners, conduct joint programmes, increase publicity and promote awareness of gender and GRB. Key partners from Penang included the Office of the State Assemblyman for DUN Batu Maung, the Village Security and Development Committee (JKKK) for Pulau Betong in Balik Pulau, Mobile Legal Aid Council (MOBLAC), and SUARAM. PWDC also shared the GRB experience with interested parties from as far away as South Korea, Germany and Canada.

Significant networking and partnership events included:

23th May 2013: Hosted visitors from University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

8th June 2013: PWDC-GRB exhibition booth at Georgetown Festival.

6th July 2013: PWDC-GRB exhibition booth at MPSP Hari Majlis & Budget Dialogue.

1st September 2013: PWDC-GRB exhibition booth at Program Ibu Bapa Mithali organised by the Office of the State Assemblyman for DUN Batu Maung.

12th September 2013: Interview with journalist from The Segye Times, South Korea on Penang's experience with GRB.

21th-22th September 2013: PWDC-GRB exhibition booth at Penang Green Expo 2013 at PISA.

14th-26th November 2013: GRB Working Visit and Project Assessment by Dr. Regina Frey, Head of the Gender Bureau in Berlin, Germany.

29th November 2013: PWDC-GRB Briefing to JKKK Pulau Betong in Balik Pulau.

13th December 2013: GRB Briefing for participants of SUARAM Youth Parliament.

Implementing New Community Projects

As 2013 draws to a close, PWDC looks forward to expanding the GRB programme's reach to more community groups and residential areas throughout Penang. PWDC believes that GRB has great potential to uplift and build communities of women and men, girls and boys to become citizens who are united, socially

conscious, gender sensitive, and who work closely together with all levels of government to transform their own lives and well-being.

As of late 2013, PWDC has reached out to **Kampung Sungai Chenaam**, Nibong Tebal in Seberang Perai Selatan. The GRB project there focuses especially on women and youth, and going into 2014, envisions a future Budget Dialogue between MPSP and residents of Kampung Sungai Chenaam to address their priority needs.

In line with the State Government's agenda for a Cleaner, Greener, Safer & Healthier Penang, PWDC is working together with MPSP to promote community responsibility and recycling activities among residents of **Taman Tambun Indah** in Seberang Perai Selatan. MPSP hopes to transform this area into a zero-waste community by composting food waste into fertiliser instead of sending organic refuse to the Pulau Burung landfill. At the same time, PWDC plans to incorporate gender-inclusive practices into this particular programme. PWDC also aims to work with communities in support of MPSP's efforts to reduce waste output by five percent in Seberang Perai.



WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP (WEL)



INTRODUCTION

In line with the Penang State Government's desire to empower the women of Penang, PWDC through the WEL team works on enhancing women's participation, leadership and capacity development through outreach and engagement. PWDC specifically seeks to enhance the understanding, practical skills, capacity and support networks of decision makers, existing and potential women leaders, as well as local community representatives from different levels, in gender equality, women's leadership, good governance and human rights.

Central to PWDC's approach is the understanding that empowerment requires the improvement of women's socio-economic well-being. To this end, PWDC as a state agency works to enhance access to resources by women, particularly those from low-income and other vulnerable groups.

Throughout the year, PWDC through the WEL Programme achieved new milestones in its work, namely in the following key areas:

Gender Empowerment and Advocacy

In order to reach out to and empower women from all walks of life, the WEL team organised a diverse range of activities with the aim of raising public understanding and awareness on gender equality, human rights, social justice, discrimination and violence against women. These activities included trainings, dialogues, seminars, forums, networking sessions and festivals.

Many of these events were organised in partnership with the Office of the Penang State EXCO for Women, Family and Community Development, other Penang State Government agencies, women's NGOs, local businesses, cultural associations, schools, and community institutions. Through these activities, PWDC successfully reached out to thousands of people in Penang.



Key events included:

2nd March 2013: Wanita Pemangkin Ekonomi: Fiesta Keusahawanan Wanita networking event (collaboration with Koperasi Ibu Tunggal dan Wanita Seberang Perai Tengah) at Auditorium MPSP, Bandar Perda, Seberang Perai Tengah.

8th March 2013: Penang State Government's International Women's Day 2013 Celebration (Penang Island) at Padang Kota Lama, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

9th March 2013: Penang State Government's International Women's Day 2013 Celebration (Seberang Perai) at Summit Plaza, Bukit Mertajam, Seberang Perai Tengah.

18th May 2013: Mandarin Language Seminar on Women as a Force for Change and Gender Equality at i-Lohas Centre, Bukit Mertajam, Seberang Perai Tengah.

6th July 2013: Community-Level Women's Motivational Talk on Yakin Diri Tingkat Prestasi by Pn Noor Zakiah Shuhadah Zakaria (collaboration with Pusat Perkhidmatan Wanita Seberang Perai and Pertubuhan MAWAR) at Penaga, Seberang Perai Utara.

3rd August 2013: Talk on Women and Beauty focusing on societal stereotypes of women's bodies at JCI Pearl Beauty Seminar (collaboration with JCI Pearl Penang) at Bayview George Town Hotel, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.



Briged Wanita Pulau Pinang

In June 2013, the Penang State Government launched *Briged Wanita Pulau Pinang* (BWPP), a voluntary body tasked with mobilising and reaching out to women from all walks of life and locations across Penang. In the short term, the BWPP's key responsibility is to register eligible women for support programmes provided by the State Government, namely tokens of appreciation for single mothers and homemakers under 60 years of age, microcredit facilities for small business owners, and free mammogram screenings. BWPP also serves as a leadership training and skill development network for the women of Penang.

PWDC was appointed as the BWPP secretariat and tasked with conducting induction courses as well as leadership trainings for members. Within a short span of six months, PWDC conducted seven BWPP Induction Trainings attended by over 900 participants in all five State districts. By the end of 2013, over 1,500 women throughout Penang were registered as BWPP members.

The schedule of events for BWPP were as follows:

28th September 2013: Capacity Building Workshop for Daerah Timur Laut Women JKKK, Briged Wanita Pulau Pinang Members and NGOs on Violence Against Women (VAW) and Domestic Violence (collaboration with Women's Centre for Change (WCC) Penang) at WCC Training Centre, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

29th October 2013: Lean In @ Penang Initiation Workshop (supporting the Office of the Penang State EXCO for Women, Family and Community Development) at E&O Hotel, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

3rd November 2013: Mandarin Language Gender Equality Workshop for Secondary School Students (collaboration with Neighborhood Performance Group) at Auditorium A, KOMTAR, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

28th November 2013 – Session on Gender dan Keluarga at Bengkel Jalinan Kasih, a workshop for married couples on strengthening marital relationships organised by the Office of the Penang State Secretary (Pejabat SUK) for State Government employees at Copthorne Hotel, Tanjung Bungah, Daerah Timur Laut.

22nd December 2013 – Mandarin Language Inter-Secondary School Gender Equality Drama Competition (collaboration with Neighborhood Performance Group) at Auditorium A, KOMTAR, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

22nd June 2013: Official Launching of Briged Wanita Pulau Pinang and first Briged Wanita Pulau Pinang Induction Training at Dewan Auditorium A, KOMTAR, George Town (for Daerah Timur Laut).

17th August 2013: Briged Wanita Induction Training at Summit Hotel, Bukit Mertajam (Mandarin Language, for Seberang Perai Tengah).

1st September 2013: Briged Wanita Induction Training at Wawasan Open University, George Town (for Daerah Timur Laut).

21st September 2013: Briged Wanita Induction Training at B-Suite Hotel, Bayan Baru (for Daerah Barat Daya).

19th October 2013: Briged Wanita Induction Training at Sunway Carnival Convention Centre, Seberang Jaya (for Seberang Perai Utara).

26th October 2013: Briged Wanita Induction Training at Hotel D'Jawi Bella, Jawi (for Seberang Perai Selatan).

9th November 2013: Briged Wanita Induction Training at Summit Hotel, Bukit Mertajam (for Seberang Perai Tengah).

Dialog Suara Wanita

Over the year, PWDC conducted a series of community-level dialogues known as *Dialog Suara Wanita*, which reached out to a total of over 600 participants in four out of the five districts of Penang. The purpose of these informal dialogues was to reach out to women at the grassroots level and hear their concerns, grievances, and priority needs. PWDC also helped to connect participants to the authorities responsible for addressing these issues, as well as representatives of the relevant institutions providing assistance such as microcredit schemes and welfare aid.

In light of the good public response to these dialogue sessions, PWDC was requested to work with other state agencies to hold a similar session for youths from Balik Pulau.

The schedule of events for the Dialog series was as follows:

20th January 2013: Dialog Suara Wanita Permatang Pauh: *Isu Wanita Setempat dan Cadangan Pelan Tindakan Wanita* at Dewan Yayasan Aman, Seberang Perai Tengah.

24th February 2013: Dialog Suara Wanita Seberang Perai Selatan: *Isu Wanita Setempat dan Cadangan Pelan Tindakan Wanita* at Dewan Serbaguna Jawi, Seberang Perai Selatan.

3rd March 2013: Dialog Isu Wanita Seberang Perai Utara: *Isu Wanita Setempat dan Cadangan Pelan Tindakan Wanita* at Dewan JKKK Simpang Empat Permatang Buluh, Seberang Perai Utara.

30th March 2013: Dialog Suara Wanita Daerah Barat Daya: *Isu Wanita Setempat dan Cadangan Pelan Tindakan Wanita* at Dewan MPPP, Balik Pulau, Daerah Barat Daya.

5th October 2013: Dialog Suara Anak Muda Balik Pulau at Auditorium C, KOMTAR, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut (collaboration with Penang Youth Development Corporation (PYDC), Penang Institute and Majlis Sukan Negeri Pulau Pinang).

Childcare Policy, Action Plan and Training



The lack of accessible, affordable and quality childcare has been identified as a key factor which inhibits women's participation in the workforce as well as public life. PWDC believes that greater institutional support and resources should go towards closing gender gaps in the economy and reducing the burdens of working parents and caregivers in Penang. If the 'brain drain' of women out of the labour force is substantially and successfully addressed, Penang could achieve greater economic prosperity and higher income status.

To support these endeavours, PWDC undertook a research project on the need for quality and affordable childcare facilities in Penang, and subsequently formulated a policy and action plan for adoption and implementation by the Penang State Government. The Penang State Childcare Policy and Action Plan (2013-2015), the first of its kind in the country, was launched by the Chief Minister of Penang on 8th March 2013 in conjunction with International Women's Day.

Following the official launch, PWDC conducted stakeholder briefings, including at the local council level, to obtain support towards the implementation of the Action Plan. PWDC also obtained the help of a GIS mapping expert to develop an informational map of all childcare centres in Penang which will serve as a resource database for the easy reference of working parents and caregivers, and for further monitoring and planning by relevant authorities.

To strengthen the childcare sector in Penang, PWDC organised five childcare trainings and follow-up support sessions for over 190 participants throughout the state. By December 2013, PWDC also completed the setting up of the first childcare centre (taska) in KOMTAR which aims to provide affordable, quality and safe childcare services to government staff. The taska also serves as a model for employers in the state to provide childcare facilities for their own staff, whether within their individual workplaces or through external providers.

The schedule of childcare-related events initiated by PWDC was as follows:

8th March 2013: Official Launching of Penang State Childcare Policy and Action Plan (2013-2015) by YAB Lim Guan Eng at the Penang State Government's International Women's Day 2013 Celebration (Penang Island), Padang Kota Lama, George Town.

16th-17th March 2013: 2-Day Training on *Tatacara Penubuhan Taska di Rumah* at Dewan Taman Teluk, Teluk Kumbar, Daerah Barat Daya.

28th March 2013: Briefing for MPSP (full council and heads of departments) on the Penang State Childcare Policy and Action Plan (2013-2015) and proposed guidelines for the establishment of childcare centres and kindergartens at Dewan MPSP, Bandar Perda, Seberang Perai Tengah.

10th April 2013: Briefing for MPPP (*Jawatankuasa Tetap Perancangan*) on the Penang State Childcare Policy and Action Plan (2013-2015) and proposed guidelines for the establishment of childcare centres and kindergartens at MPPP City Hall, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

25th-30th May 2013: 6-Day Training on *Kursus Asas Asuhan Kanak-Kanak – Taska Di Rumah* at Hotel Sunway, Seberang Jaya, Seberang Perai Tengah.

2nd-7th June 2013: 6-Day Training on *Kursus Asas Asuhan Kanak-Kanak – Taska Di Rumah* at Hotel Seri Malaysia, Kepala Batas, Seberang Perai Utara.

25th July 2013: Press Conference for launching of PWDC Pamphlet on Penang State Childcare Policy and Action Plan (2013-2015) at Level 4, KOMTAR, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

16th November 2013: Reunion of Graduates of PWDC's *Kursus Asas Asuhan Kanak-Kanak* at Summit Hotel, Bukit Mertajam, Seberang Perai Tengah.

30th November – 1st December 2013: 2-Day Training on *Tatacara Penubuhan Taska Di Rumah* at Hotel B-Suite, Bayan Baru, Daerah Barat Daya.

19 December 2013: Briefing on Taska D'Komtar to State Government employees at KOMTAR, Auditorium C, KOMTAR, George Town, Daerah Timur Laut.

GENDER POLICY AND ADVOCACY (GPA)



INTRODUCTION

The Gender Policy and Advocacy (GPA) programme of PWDC is tasked with formulating policies and conducting advocacy to accelerate the full participation of women in the social, economic and political transformation of Penang. The GPA programme's responsibilities include identifying specific factors and issues that contribute to gender inequality in the State, and designing strategies to address these factors and promote gender mainstreaming in all sectors.

To fulfil these roles the GPA team undertakes research and documentation work in order to formulate evidence-based gender-responsive policies and ensure that its advocacy work is premised on sound foundations. For 2013, the GPA programme's major achievement is the completion of the Penang Gender Policy and Action Plan which captures the gender realities in Penang and proposes concrete action for overcoming the gender gaps.

PWDC, through the GPA programme, also works with partners within the Penang State Government to create awareness of gender mainstreaming and facilitate the incorporation of gender dimensions into the governance and policies of relevant State Executive Council portfolios. It seeks actively to provide input to enable its government partners to deliberate and address pertinent issues with a gender lens. Through these efforts, PWDC hopes to help institutionalise gender responsive and participatory governance in Penang.

For 2013, the GPA team achieved the following:

Gender Policy Formulation

In 2013, PWDC completed the drafting of a comprehensive **Gender Policy and Action Plan** based on the principle that women and men are equal citizens who must be granted the best conditions under which to develop their full potentials and have the same



power to shape society and their own lives. Official data and quantitative statistics collected in the course of formulating the policy strongly demonstrate the existence of gender gaps and inequalities for women across many sectors. The presence and extent of these gender gaps in Penang were further substantiated by qualitative feedback gathered from community dialogues, interviews and focus group discussions all over the state. This overwhelming evidence of gender inequality shows that there is an urgent need for systematic policy formulation, planning and resource allocation to address these issues.

The Gender Policy document lays out four key objectives of economic security for all, freedom from gender-based violence, just distribution of power and influence, and gender responsive and participatory governance, as well as recommendations for implementation. This Gender Policy and Action Plan will form the overarching framework within which the State Government and PWDC will undertake measures to promote and, ultimately, achieve gender and social justice.

Under the objective of **Economic Security for All**, the Gender Policy and Action Plan envisions that the people of Penang should enjoy a minimum essential level of economic and social rights. Central to this is the guarantee of economic security, which allows every person to make life choices and live with dignity. It means that every adult woman or man must be able to build a secure, preferably independent, livelihood regardless of gender or marital status. Key recommendations include increasing women's

participation in the labour force, reducing youth unemployment, improving employability of disabled persons, providing work-life balance provisions and legislative protections for all workers, and providing social security for vulnerable groups.

Under the objective of **Freedom from Gender-based Violence**, the Gender Policy and Action Plan identifies violence against women (VAW), violence against men (VAM), high levels of crime and unsafe public spaces as critical concerns to be addressed. Key recommendations include developing a comprehensive programme for dealing with VAW, collaborating with non-government organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) to reduce gender-based violence and seek redress for victims, implementing social programmes and skills training for youth, and incorporating gender-inclusive principles and programmes into urban planning and development in Penang.

Under the objective of **Just Distribution of Power and Influence**, the Gender Policy and Action Plan expresses concern on the issue of unequal distribution of political and socio-economic power between women and men, which has tremendous implications for the fulfilment of women's wellbeing, rights and concerns. Key recommendations include increasing the number and capability of women representatives at all tiers of governance, reducing gender imbalances in the civil service and private sector, and moving towards work-life balance, equal treatment and equal pay for women in order to retain them in the workforce and facilitate their progress towards senior positions.

Under the objective of **Gender Responsive and Participatory Governance**, the Gender Policy and Action Plan envisions the mainstreaming of governance that is responsive to the different needs, interests, priorities and responsibilities of women and men. Key issues for consideration include mainstreaming gender within the State Government to ensure that all its policies, plans and programmes bring about fair results for women and

men, and building on the ongoing mainstreaming of Gender Responsive and Participatory Budgeting (GRPB) in local government.

Following its completion in September 2013, the draft Gender Policy document was presented to various stakeholder groups for further input and refinement. The draft is currently pending review by key decision-makers in the Penang State Government.

Key events and dates for the development of the Gender Policy and Action Plan included:

1st-17th April 2013: Consultation Meetings with representatives of the Office of the Penang State EXCO for Welfare, Caring Society and Environment, Penang Institute, Penang Development Corporation (PDC), Penang Skills Development Centre (PSDC), investPenang, MPPP and MPSP, Pusat Penyelidikan Pembangunan Wanita (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia, and members of the disabled community.

5th April 2013: Talk on *Introduction to Due Diligence and State Compliance to End Violence Against Women* by Zarizana Abdul Aziz at Women's Centre for Change (WCC) Penang Training Centre, George Town.

6th-21st April 2013: Community Level Focus Group Discussions to gather feedback on issues for the Gender Policy Document at WCC, Penang; PPR Jalan Sungai, George Town; and Women's Rights Awareness Association (WRAA) at Bukit Mertajam.

9th April 2013: Strategic Discussion on 'Islamic Family Law (IFL): Its Application to Penang, and Strategies and Action Items for inclusion in the Penang Gender Policy Document' led by Sisters-in-Islam (SIS) at the PWDC Office, KOMTAR, George Town.

20th September 2013: Completion of Final Draft of Gender Policy and Action Plan.

Representation in State-Level Decision-Making Bodies

As the key state agency responsible for advancing the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, PWDC was invited to take part in relevant State Executive Councils (Majlis Mesyuarat Kerajaan or MMKs) and contribute feedback on policy issues and decisions. The MMKs included *MMK Agama Islam* (Islamic Affairs), *MMK Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat* (Women, Family and Community Development), and *MMK Kerajaan Tempatan dan Lalulintas* (Local Government and Traffic Management). PWDC is grateful for this opportunity to promote gender perspectives and gender-friendly policies for the consideration and review of State partners.

Networking and Consultation with State and External Partners

Throughout 2013, PWDC embarked on many networking and consultation sessions with local, regional and international groups and individuals. These sessions were carried out to build shared understanding and experiences on women's empowerment, gender equality and social inclusion.

PWDC also assisted the Office of the Penang State EXCO for Women, Family and Community Development in conducting dialogues between State Government representatives and NGOs, groups and individuals working for women and children in Penang. These dialogue sessions helped to identify critical problems in Penang and develop possible strategies and solutions for joint action.

Significant events included:

9th September 2013: Discussion and sharing session with Helen Rubenstein, Staff Attorney with the Women's Human Rights Program at The Advocates for Human Rights on issues of violence against women and different models of intervention in the United States of America.

30th September 2013: Workshop with Professor Eric Britton for Think City's Focus Group on Women, Gender Balance and Leadership under the theme of Sustainable Penang: Towards a New Mobility Agenda.

26th October 2013: Dialogue with Penang women NGOs at Red Rock Hotel, George Town (supporting the Office of the Penang State EXCO for Women, Family and Community Development).

7th December 2013: Dialogue with Penang NGOs, groups and individuals working for children (supporting the Office of the Penang State EXCO for Women, Family and Community Development).

19th December 2013: Post-MDG Public Lecture organised by PWDC and Penang Institute entitled 'The New Development Framework and the Penang Paradigm: Gender, Governance and Nation Building' featuring Judy Cheng-Hopkins, United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support.