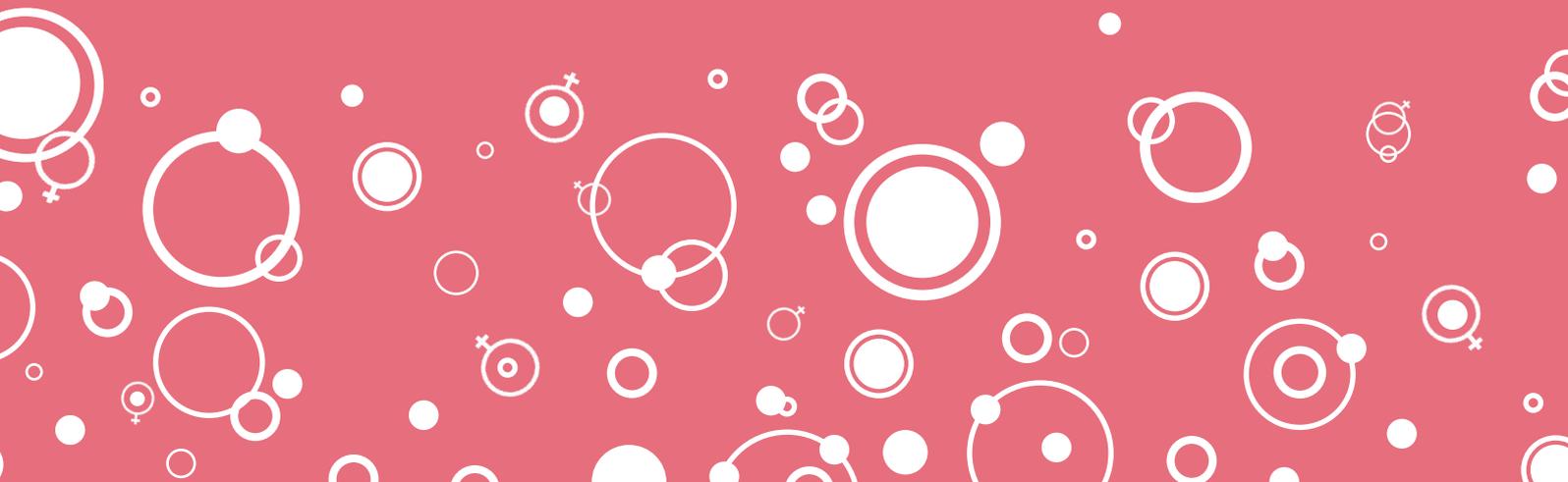


Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland
Annual Report 2007/ 08

Women's Rights are Human Rights



Published by Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland

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24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline: 0800 917 1414
Open to anyone affected by domestic violence

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Annual report, 2007–2008

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland
2008

Our Vision

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland's vision for the 21st century is the elimination of domestic violence.

Our Mission

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland exists to challenge attitudes and beliefs which perpetuate domestic violence. We seek through our work to promote healthy and non-abusive relationships.

Our Goal

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland strives to welcome and support all women, children and young people, including those with disabilities and those without, women from minority communities, different cultures, races, languages and sexual orientations and from a wide age range.

Contents

Chairperson's Report	6-7
Director's Report	8-9
Human Rights	10-13
Equality of Access Project	14-17
Young Person's Development Project	18-21
Training	22-23
24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline	24-29
Women's Aid Local Groups	30-45
Finance	46-57
Thank you	58

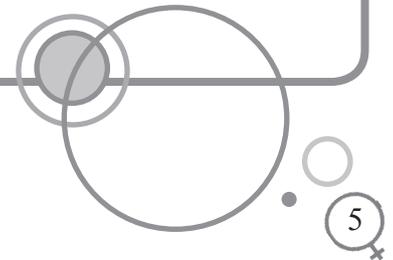
Article 1

☞ All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. ☞

Article 5

☞ No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. ☞

Universal Declaration of Human Rights



Chairperson's Report

Women's Aid has always known that the best way to help a child who is the victim of domestic violence is to empower the mother of that child and in September 2007 we were especially proud to launch our innovative 'You and Me Mum' training programme designed to help women support their children and young people who have lived with domestic violence. We were proud also that the programme was showcased at the Raising the Standards conference in Guernsey in October as an example of best practice from Northern Ireland. Best of all we are proud that the feedback from mothers attending the training has been so positive.

This year we have recouped and pressed on, determined to maintain the work of Women's Aid within an increasingly gloomy financial environment.

Facing up to the challenges of that and the outworkings of the Review of Public Administration we are extremely pleased to have secured support from NIHE to undertake a needs analysis of our services across Northern Ireland; to identify gaps in our services and to explore a shared services approach and possible re-structuring.

We know that the levels of domestic violence are not falling; indeed this year PSNI statistics for 2007/08 confront us with the stark reminder of the horror of domestic violence with 11 murders throughout the year having a domestic motivation.

We will not be found wanting in facing up to the challenge of change and to the challenge those

figures present. We know that with support from our key partners we can build a sustainable future, to continue to provide quality services for women and children, based on best practice and rooted in our core beliefs.

Thanks are due to all our funders who have supported our work throughout the year; a full list of funders appears on page 58.

Special thanks are due to the Domestic Violence Unit of the DHSSPS who provide our core funding, and to the DHSSPS, NIO and NIHE who jointly fund the Service Level Agreement for the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline. To have the Helpline secured within a Service Level Agreement is evidence of real partnership in action.

Finally thanks as always to the dedication of the members of the Federation Management Board and to the commitment of Annie Campbell, Director and her dedicated staff and volunteer team.

Elsie Jordan
Chair, Women's Aid Federation NI



Director's Report

Each year when the regional figures are compiled I feel proud and sad in equal measure. Sad that in the 21st century the abuse of human rights that is domestic violence is still with us and showing no signs of diminishing and proud that Women's Aid is here, offering refuge, support and services to so many women, children and young people across Northern Ireland throughout the year.

I am especially proud of the beacon of hope which is the 24 hour Domestic Violence Helpline which this year managed 24,153 calls. For every despairing woman who rings and accesses that circle of support to help her reach the safety of a local Women's Aid refuge; who finally after the 6 months.....or 20 years of abuse makes the call and finds a sympathetic response for perhaps the first time.....for every one of these women the Helpline is a miracle.

Mingled with this is a sense of frustration with the pace of change and the seeming intractability of some obstacles. We responded to the NILSC consultation on financial eligibility for Civil Legal Aid with mounting concern over how many women literally cannot afford to pay for their legal rights of protection. Our Equality of Access project report, completed this year, on women who have limited or no recourse to public funds and the desperate straits they are in when they are victims of domestic violence, was a wake-up call for authorities but so far no tangible response. We are still frustrated at the lack of strategic prevention work in schools.

But despite the frustrations genuine partnership work is here and here to stay. The Tackling

Violence at Home partnership is growing stronger with solid work being undertaken this year to frame a more concrete action plan. We know that partnership work is the way forward and we are committed to that journey as the only way to eliminate finally the abuse of human rights that is domestic violence.

This year I have a lot of people to thank for taking forward our work:

Firstly to the team of Senior Managers of the 10 local Women's Aid groups who regularly inspire and challenge me; from whom I have learnt so much and on whom I rely for their expertise, their commitment and their vision.

Many thanks go to our hard-working and enthusiastic team of Federation staff and volunteers; with particular thanks to the commitment and dedication of my Senior Managers Sarah Mason and Deirdre Teague.

Finally I'd also like to extend thanks to the lively, professional group of volunteers who make up our Management Board; led by Elsie Jordan, Chairperson, with great skill and understanding; their support and strategic leadership is a great strength.



Annie Campbell
Director, Women's Aid Federation NI

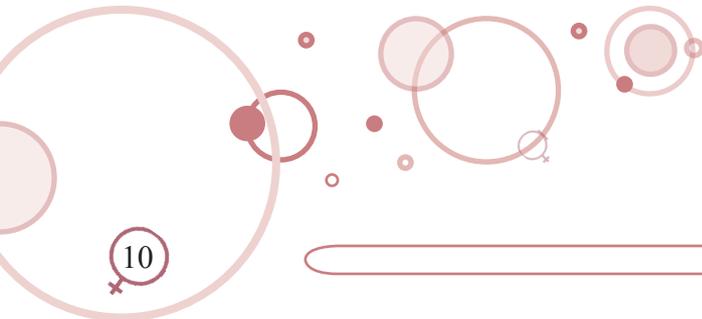
Human Rights

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) with its stirring assertion that ‘the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’.

Yet in this year the Women’s Rights Division of Human Rights Watch sent out an alarm call stating that:

‘Millions of women throughout the world live in conditions of abject deprivation of, and attacks against, their fundamental human rights for no other reason than that they are women. Abuses against women are relentless, systematic, and widely tolerated, if not explicitly condoned. Violence and discrimination against women are global social epidemics.’

Nearer to home we in Women’s Aid know only too well the abuse of women’s human rights that is domestic violence.



Domestic violence and other forms of violence against women is widespread in Northern Ireland:

- PSNI Statistics for 07/08 indicate that they responded to a domestic incident every 23 minutes of every day of the year.
- There were 382 rapes in Northern Ireland in the period 2007/08, 38 attempted rapes and 317 indecent assaults on a female.
- Official sources (NISOSMC) estimate that up to 80% of sex crimes are not reported.
- Over 30% of all domestic violence starts during pregnancy.
- 1102 women and 896 children sought refuge with Women's Aid in Northern Ireland in 07/08; many thousands more used our Floating Support / outreach services.
- The 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline managed 24,153 calls in 07/08.
- The number of all recorded offences of murder in Northern Ireland in 07/08 total 25; of these 11 had a domestic motivation.

Yet faced with this evidence the assertion that 'Women's Rights are Human Rights' still meets resistance.

On one hand it is profoundly simple - that as human beings women have human rights. However women have been marginalised in the world of human rights, relegated to 'special interest'

status. The transformative power of insisting that women's rights are human rights is enormous. If women's perspectives and lives are incorporated into human rights standards and practices then the profound lack of access to some of the most basic human rights by women is revealed and change becomes necessary.

This year Women's Aid Federation participated in the Bill of Rights Forum, consisting of political party and civil society representatives, to push for just such a change. Annie Campbell shared the women's sector seat with Margaret Ward, Women's Resource & Development Agency and vigorously pushed for full incorporation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the UN international women's human rights convention, into our new proposed Bill of Rights.

CEDAW calls for member states to overcome barriers of discrimination against women in the area of legal rights, education, employment, health care, politics, finance and family life. It calls for measures against sex slavery and exploitation, domestic violence and trafficking of women, and addresses equality for specific groups of women, such as rural women. Equality of outcome, actual as well as legal equality, is stressed.

The Bill of Rights Forum ended its work on 31 March 2008 with a final report handed over to the NI Human Rights Commission (NIHRC), with many of our recommendations receiving substantial support. The NIHRC is due to finalise its advice to the Secretary of State on the Bill of Rights later this year. It is essential that this advice from the NIHRC includes women's right to live free from violence as a cornerstone of all other rights for women.

This year Women's Aid Federation has also been active in promoting women's human rights by facilitating the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) Northern Ireland working group. EVAW launched the Making the Grade? 2007 report in Stormont in March this year which graded government departments on the work they are doing to end Violence Against Women. The results were not salutary however the EVAW Committee, recognising that the devolved administration at Stormont is still young, and that some excellent work had not been reported and hence not graded, has now embarked on a lobbying round to enter into dialogue on this critical issue with all departments.

We firmly believe that it is in everyone's interest to work to create a world, both public and private, that is a safe place for women and children. A world where women can achieve full equality; and where the rights of women are no longer marginal but take centre-stage.

'The realisation of women's rights is a global struggle based on universal human rights and the rule of law.

It is a fight for freedom to be fully and completely human and equal without apology or permission.

Ultimately, the struggle for women's human rights must be about making women's lives matter everywhere all the time.'

Women's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch

Equality of Access Project

Domestic violence knows no boundaries and cuts across all cultures, nationalities, religions, ages, and economic status.

The commitment to equality is embedded deep in the core values of Women's Aid with our focus on working to ensure equality of access to all our services.

This year as part of our Equality of Access project, funded through the Domestic Violence Unit, DHSSPS, we assessed the current position of marginalised groups in Northern Ireland affected by domestic violence.

Black and minority ethnic women, lesbian women and disabled women face more barriers when seeking help and have more obstacles to overcome before they can receive the support and services they need.

Cultural and language differences, lack of disability access, immigration legislation, homophobia, racism and discrimination can all operate as barriers to women when seeking help.

Women with complex needs, including those with mental health issues and alcohol and drugs dependency, face particular difficulty in accessing appropriate services.

In addition we have a growing alarm about the number of women who are denied access to

justice because of the Legal Aid system here; we have raised this forcefully in our response in February to the NI Legal Services Commission consultation on financial eligibility for access to civil Legal Aid.

In the past two years 72 women and 46 children with NLRPF were accommodated in Women's Aid refuges.

Women with no or limited recourse to public funds (NLRPF) were identified as a particularly vulnerable group and research was carried out into this issue and a report finalised in February. In the past two years 72 women and 46 children with NLRPF were accommodated in Women's Aid refuges. The research identified the additional barriers these women face when leaving their violent partners with lack of finance being the main one.

If a woman is subject to immigration control she cannot claim most state benefits, at least until a decision is made on her right to remain in the country. This rule may force her into total dependence on her husband/partner and family and will make it harder for her to leave an abusive relationship. If she leaves her violent partner she will not receive economic help or support from the state because of the NLRPF regulation. The fear of complete destitution is added to the nightmare of domestic violence in her life.

We will continue to lobby to address this inequality, pressing for financial support and safe accommodation for domestic violence victims to be available irrespective of race, ethnicity and immigration status.



The Equality of Access project strengthened our links with a variety of groups representing communities of interest, eg Disability Action helping us to raise awareness of domestic violence, to hear feedback about our services and to pursue projects of joint interest to challenge domestic violence and support women and children from all

We have a growing alarm about the number of women who are denied access to justice because of the Legal Aid system here.

communities who experience it.

Progressing equality of access to all our services is ongoing work and we will be taking this forward through an outreach project run by staff from the 24-Hour Domestic Violence Helpline.

Translated Leaflets

Women's Aid currently has leaflets translated into 6 languages:

- Irish
- Portuguese
- Chinese
- Urdu
- Hindi
- Arabic

Leaflets in a further 5 languages have now been translated and are being printed in:

- Russian
- Polish
- Lithuanian
- Spanish
- Bulgarian

We now plan to review and update Women's Aid Federation web-site to ensure information, including information in a range of languages, is more accessible.

Young Person's Development Project

The last year has been a busy year within the project, with promotion of specialised training programmes to the 10 local Women's Aid groups in Northern Ireland and external agencies providing support to children and young people who may or may not be affected by domestic violence throughout Northern Ireland.

In September 2007 Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland celebrated the launch of 'You and Me, Mum' a 10 week specialised programme focusing on how domestic violence can affect mothers and their children. The programme aims to empower, support and develop further understanding of mothers in addressing the needs of children and young people who have lived with domestic violence.

'You and Me, Mum' focuses on the dynamics within the family after the abuser has left and the violence has stopped. It acknowledges the challenges in re-establishing a family unit after a traumatic experience and provides ways of creating a positive future.

Delivery of the 'You and Me, Mum' programme is made possible by specially trained Women's Aid staff, who have accessed training from the Young Person's Development project. Facilitators create the opportunity for mothers to safely explore the impact domestic violence has had on relationships between mothers and their children.

*7328 Children
& Young People
accessed
Women's Aid
Prevention
Programmes*

This year 31 staff accessed the training within 10 local Women's Aid groups. The programme was launched at the prestigious surroundings of Stormount Buildings in September 2007 with M.L.A's and praised as a new initiative.

Following on from the successful launch of the programme, The Young Person's Development worker was proud to represent Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland when 'You and Me, Mum' was recognized and chosen by, the Northern Ireland Domestic Violence Unit to go forward to the "Raising the Standards" conference held in October 2007 in Guernsey to represent Northern Ireland.

The conference brought together representatives from all relevant government departments and non-governmental organisations across England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man to discuss and share good practice on tackling the complex issues and effects of domestic violence. At the conference 'You and Me, Mum' was highlighted as a positive way of working with mothers, children and young people.

The programme does not work directly with children. 'You and Me, Mum' recognises the central role of mothers in protecting children and young people and creating opportunities for positive development.



*2767
Children &
Young People
accessed
Protection &
Support
Services*



'You and Me, Mum' Aims:

- To understand how domestic violence can affect women as mothers.
- To understand the effects of domestic violence on children and young people.
- To develop effective communication skills between mothers & their children/young people.
- To promote healthy and non-violent relationships.
- To explore key Protective Behaviour messages and strategies for keeping mothers, children, and young people safe.



The programme features the following components over 10 weeks:

1. An ideal family
2. How domestic violence can affect me as a mother (1)
3. How domestic violence can affect me as a mother (2)
4. How domestic violence can affect my child or young person
5. Survival strategies of children and young people
6. How to deal with my child or young person's challenging behaviour
7. When a child or young person acts abusively in my home
8. How to support my child or young person with Protective Behaviours
9. Effective communication with my child or young person
10. My hopes, dreams and plans

'You and Me, Mum' acknowledges the strengths and coping skills of women and their children and promotes the Women's Aid ethos of empowerment and self help.

Training

Training is an integral part of the work of Women's Aid, both internally for staff development and support and externally raising awareness of domestic violence.

This year saw the beginning of working in partnership with the other Women's Aid Federations in England, Scotland and Wales for many years. The four Federations in the UK meet annually to review work and share good practice. One of the initiatives to come out of these meetings was a shared approach to accredited staff training in Women's Aid services.

A bid was put to Comic Relief to support the four Federations with this work and a 2 year grant was achieved. During this year the process began with a two-day conference hosted by ourselves with the three other Federations to map out the work ahead.

We have been an accredited training centre through Open College Network in NI for several years and currently run five accredited programmes. We shared all of our programmes and learning objectives with the other Federations in a bid to agree shared learning objectives and training programmes for all Women's Aid Federations.

This project has been very successful and has led to good partnership working and sharing of material. We look forward to the year ahead when the other Federations have successfully completed their accredited training centre process and we are sharing training material.

Our sincere thanks go to Comic Relief who have been committed to supporting Domestic Violence issues since the start of their fundraising initiative and this project could not have got off the ground without their help.

We continued to co-ordinate and deliver new recruit training with the PSNI with our local groups. This valued training has a direct impact on police response to domestic violence.

The members of the Regional Steering Group on Domestic Violence participated in a full day awareness raising training on domestic violence and the evaluations were extremely positive with a request for additional training.



24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline

The 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline is managed by Women's Aid Federation and is open to anyone affected by domestic violence. This freephone service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; it is more than a Helpline, for many, it is a lifeline. It is a link to practical help, emotional support and a place of safety.

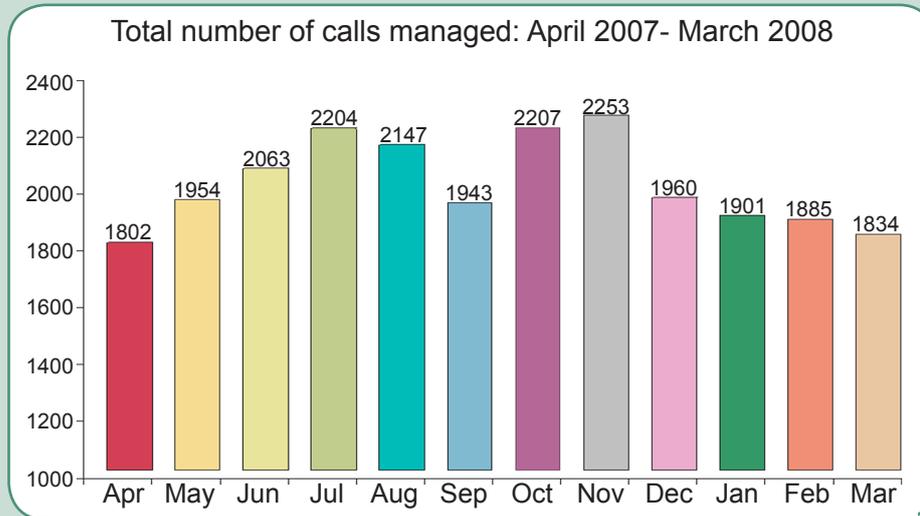
During the second successful year of our Service Level Agreement the Helpline managed 24,153 calls, an increase of 7% on the previous year. The majority of callers to the service are women who are experiencing domestic violence. Male callers are signposted to relevant support services and agencies.

A broad range of statutory agencies contact the service including health professionals, social services and the PSNI. Concerned friends and family members also contact the Helpline for information and support.

*Total
number of
calls managed
between April
2007- March
2008*
24,153

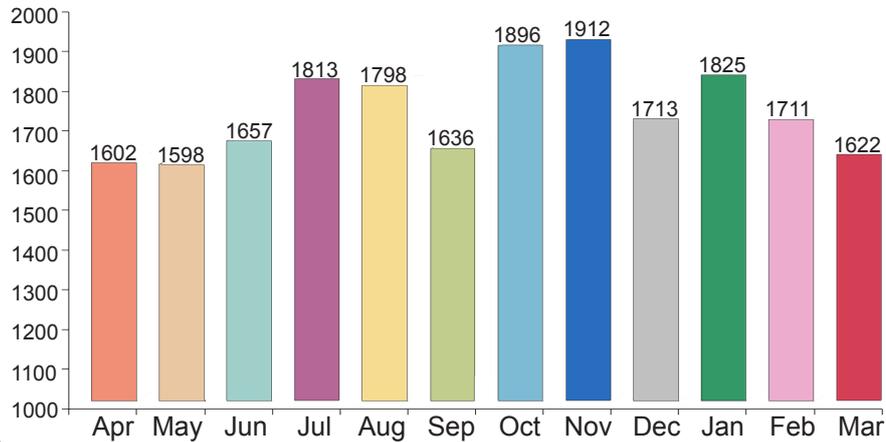


7%
*Increase in the
total number
of calls
managed*



Calls managed include all calls answered and all calls made by Helpline staff to follow up specific support and advice. For example, arranging refuge accommodation for a woman may involve Helpline workers making a number of calls out.

Total number of calls answered: April 2007- March 2008



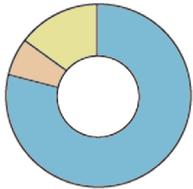
From September 2007 the Helpline achieved the 75% strike rate for calls answered recommended by the Telephone Helplines Association.

The majority of callers to the service are women experiencing physical, emotional, sexual, and/or financial abuse from their male partner.

Breakdown of callers: April 2007- March 2008



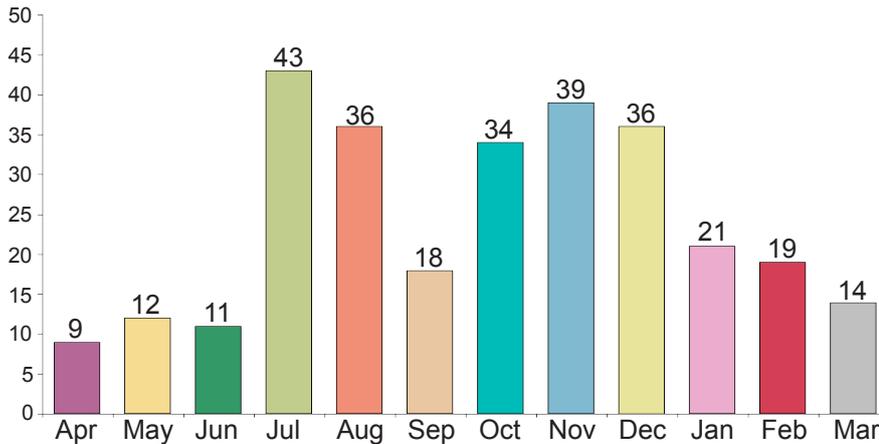
Referral's to Women's Aid Services April 2007- March 2008



- Callers given information on Floating Support services 4452
- Women referred to refuge 371
- Children referred to refuge 840

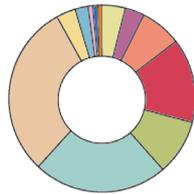
The number of callers given information on Women's Aid Floating Support services has increased by 22% since last year.

Male Callers contacting the Helpline: April 2007- March 2008



292 male callers were signposted to Men's Advisory Project, Men to Men, Men's Action Network, Tara Centre, Aisling Centre and a variety of statutory and support services.

Callers from Black & Minority Ethnic & Foreign national women:
April 2007- March 2008



■ Romanian 5	■ Polish 37
■ Nigerian 4	■ Czech Republic 4
■ Latvian 9	■ Zimbabwean 3
■ Lithuanian 18	■ Morocco 1
■ Slovak 12	■ Russian 1
■ Asian 29	■ Portuguese 1



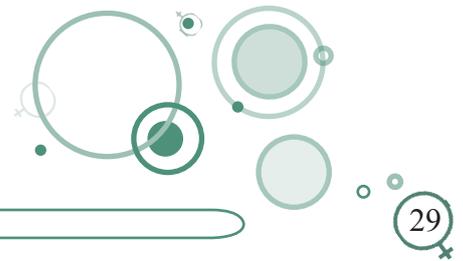
A total of 124 calls to the service were from black minority ethnic and foreign national women. This amounts to 0.6% of calls to the service. The Helpline is building on our outreach work to increase knowledge of the service in black and minority ethnic communities.

Helpline Volunteers

Volunteers are a core part of the Helpline team; throughout the year they contributed 3,178 hours to the service, an average of 9 hours per day, 365 days of the year. Each week volunteers provide approximately 61 hours of Helpline cover.

Volunteers receive training in domestic violence awareness raising, listening skills, child protection, housing issues, legal options, signposting and the impact of domestic violence on children. The Helpline provides new volunteer training bi-annually, in January and September. Volunteering on the Helpline can be demanding but the reward is in knowing that they are part of a team which delivers such an essential service.

The volunteer role within the Helpline has grown and developed over the last 13 years with volunteers contributing a creative and innovative added value to the service. Helpline calls have increased, with three lines open during busy periods, which would not be possible without the valued contribution made by our volunteers.



Women's Aid Local Groups

Statistics

Statistics can never give the full picture of what is happening to women and children living with the effects of domestic violence.

Statistics can give a snapshot of the work of Women's Aid Federation and the ten autonomous groups throughout Northern Ireland.

Number of women and children staying in refuge

A total of 1,998 women and children stayed in Women's Aid refuges during this year. There were 1,102 women and 896 children in refuge, showing a very slight decrease on last year. That means that every day in Northern Ireland another 5 women and children come to stay in refuge because their home is not a safe place to be. The number of women coming into refuge who disclosed having a disability was 79.



Age Range

The spread of women's ages is illustrated on the opposite page and shows that the most predominant age group is the 25 – 35 year olds, making up 30% of all women, accounting for almost one third of all women staying in refuge this year. The 36-45 year old group moved from the third highest group last year to the second highest with 26%. They were closely followed by the previously second highest group 17-24 year olds accounting for 24% of all women, then 46-55 year olds 14%, 56- 60 year olds 3%, 60 plus 2% and 16 years old with 1%.

Length of stay of Women & Children staying in Refuge

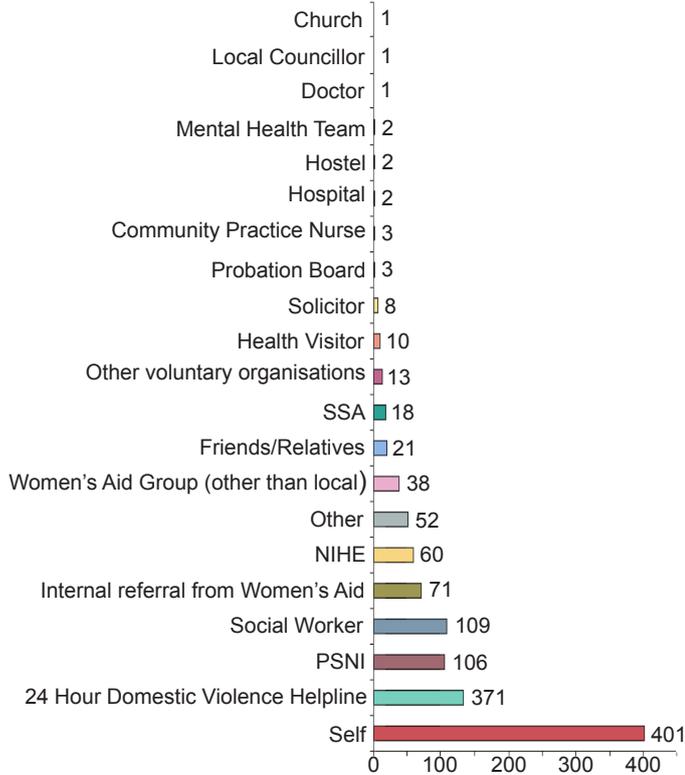


39% of women and children stayed one week or less in a refuge in any single visit this year. In comparison, 14% of women and children have stayed more than 6 months.

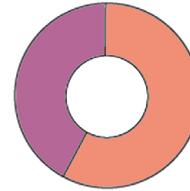
Source of Referrals to Refuge

There are a wide range of referrals to refuges and this further highlights the role that the wider community as well as voluntary and statutory agencies have in helping tackling domestic violence at a local level.

Source of Referrals to Refuge



Women from Black & Ethnic Minority Communities



■ Floating Support (143)
■ Refuge (199)

Diversity

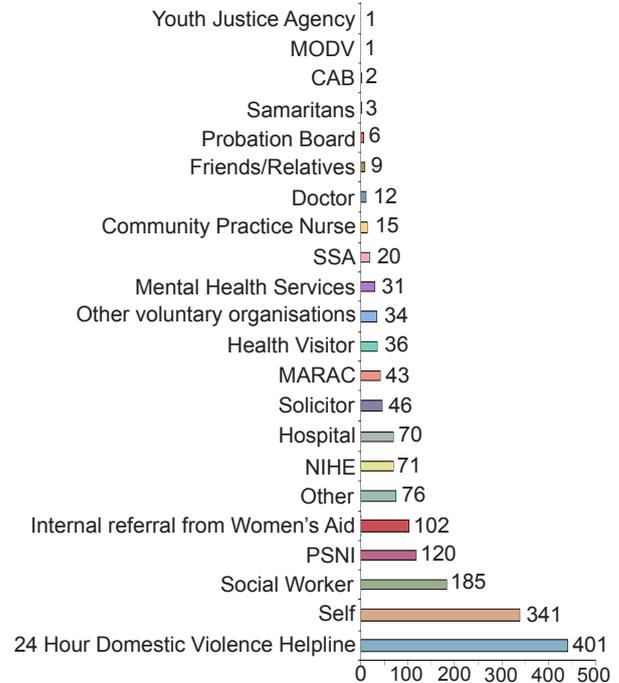
Within Northern Ireland today our society is changing and becoming more diverse. Women's Aid have responded to this changing environment and are offering services to women and children in both refuge and floating support services from minority communities. Women's Aid have published information leaflets in 6 different languages. Our 24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline and all local Women's Aid groups offer language line. Last year 40 woman who did not speak English as a first language and 43 woman from the traveling community were supported by Women's Aid services. This number has increased dramatically. 199 woman from

black and minority ethnic groups including the travelling community were accommodated in our local Women's Aid refuges. 143 women from this community also accessed floating support.

Floating Support

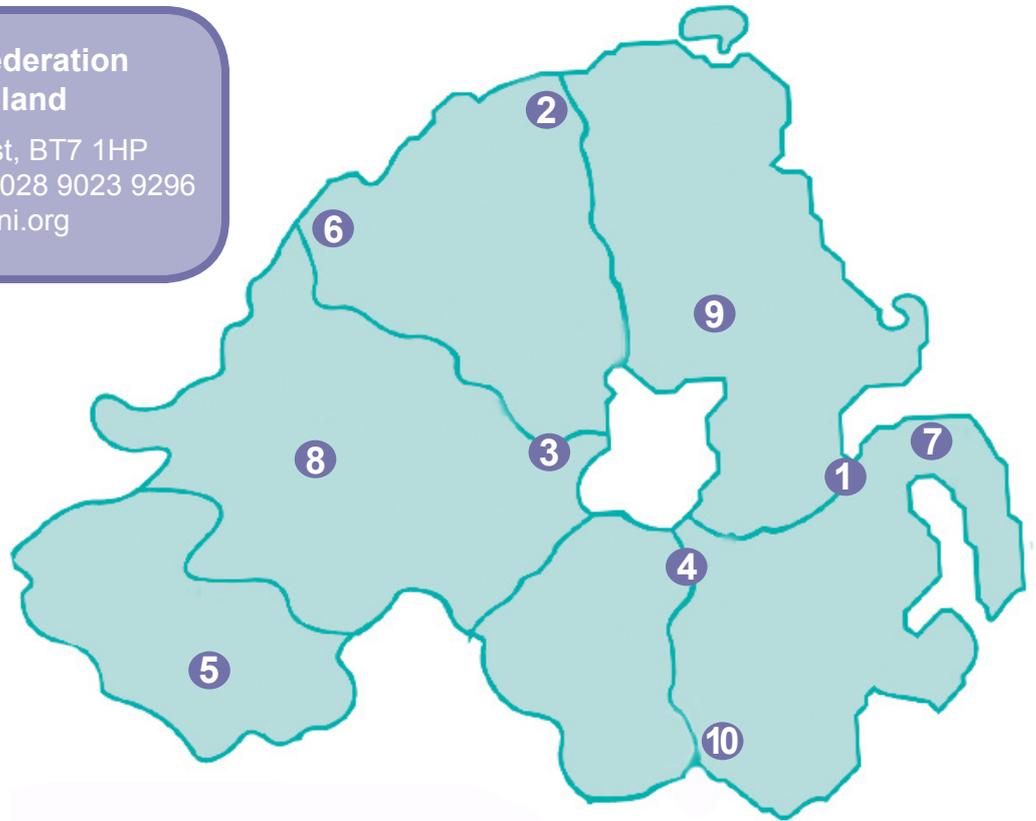
As the statistics have shown there was a slight decrease in the numbers of women accessing refuge accommodation this year. However, the amount of women accessing floating support and outreach work through the increased demand that Women's Aid has seen in the last year is growing significantly throughout Northern Ireland. A total of 2,205 women and 1,831 children accessed floating support this year. This is a growing area of support enabling women to access support whilst remaining in their own home. A wide range of agencies work together to access support for women experiencing domestic violence and this is reflected in the chart to the right outlining referrals to floating support this year.

Referrals to Floating Support



**Women's Aid Federation
Northern Ireland**

129 University St, Belfast, BT7 1HP
tel: 028 9024 9041, fax: 028 9023 9296
email: info@womensaidni.org



24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline 0800 917 1414

open to anyone affected by domestic violence

1. Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid

30 Adelaide Park, Belfast, BT9 6FY
tel: 028 9066 6049, fax: 028 9068 2874
email:admin@belfastwomensaid.org.uk

3. Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid

27 Old Coagh Road, Cookstown, BT80 8QG
tel: 028 8676 9300, fax: 028 8676 9300
email:womensaidcookstown@hotmail.com

5. Fermanagh Women's Aid

27a High Street, Enniskillen, BT74 7EH
tel: 028 6632 8898, fax: 028 6632 8859
email:womensaidfermanagh@btopenworld.com

7. North Down & Ards Women's Aid

18 Bingham Street, Bangor, BT20 5DW
tel: 028 9127 3196, fax: 028 9145 5245
email:ndawomensaid@hotmail.com

9. Women's Aid in Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne & Newtownabbey

2 Cullybackey Road, Ballymena, BT43 5BS
tel: 028 2563 2136, fax: 028 2565 3304
email:womensaidareaoffice@btconnect.com

2. Causeway Women's Aid

23 Abbey Street, Coleraine, BT52 1DU
tel: 028 7035 6573, fax: 028 7032 6949
email:womensaidcoleraine@btinternet.com

4. Craigavon & Banbridge Women's Aid

Office 1, Floor 1, Legahory Centre, Craigavon BT65 5BE
tel: 028 3834 3256, fax: 028 3832 2277
email:info@craigavonbanbridgewomensaid.org.uk

6. Foyle Women's Aid

Pathways, 24 Pump Street, Derry, BT48 6JG
tel: 028 7128 0060, fax: 028 7128 0061
email:marie.brown@foylewomensaid.org

8. Omagh Women's Aid

27 Market Street, Omagh, BT78 1EL
tel: 028 8224 1414, fax: 028 8224 1414
email:fiona@omaghwomensaid.org

10. Women's Aid Newry, Mourne, South Down & South Armagh

7 Downshire Place, Belfast Road, Newry BT34 1DZ
tel: 028 3025 0765, fax: 028 3026 9606
email:newrywomensaid@btconnect.com

Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid

New Children and Young People's Centre

Thanks to financial support from the Department of Education and the Oak Foundation we were able to develop and open our new Children's and Young People's Centre based beside our resource building in south Belfast; it is the realisation of a long held aspiration. The centre gives children and young people a safe and secure place to call their own.

The Minister of Education Caitriona Ruane opened our October seminar "What about the Children?" this was well attended by a representation of key professionals and practitioners from across the board.

One Stop Shop

This year has seen the continuing growth of our outreach service with more women and children being supported in the community. Due to the success of our "One Stop Shop" in Belfast we extended this service to the Downpatrick area. Our refuges continue to offer women and children safety and support, though we are increasingly aware of a number of emerging trends that are impacting detrimentally on women's capacity to access safety and protection; women with no recourse to public funds, working women who don't qualify for legal aid and those women who can't access housing benefits.

Causeway Women's Aid



Preventative Education Programme

Successful fundraising from the Big Lottery this year saw the implementation of our Preventative Education programme in schools across the three council areas of Coleraine, Ballymoney and Ballycastle. Our two dedicated workers have had great success with positive feedback from the schools and young people involved.

Youth Forum

As part of the Preventative Education programme we have established a youth forum with some young people now trained to deliver parts of the programme to their peers. Members of the Big Lottery Management Board met with staff and some of the young people involved and were particularly impressed with the work of the forum and the individual young people that they spoke to.

Retirement of Management Co-ordinator

This year also saw the retirement of our Management Co-ordinator, Avril Watson who retired in October after twenty years of dedicated service to the organisation. Avril's passion and commitment helped develop Causeway Women's Aid from our early days into our recognised position of delivering essential services in the local community that we now hold.



Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid

Outreach Work

During the year, outreach offices were opened in both Magherafelt and Dungannon. These were staffed one morning per week and made it possible for women from those areas to either make appointments or just drop in for information or support.

Civic Reception

In October, Dungannon Borough Council held a civic reception for Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid over a lunchtime period. Staff, volunteers and Management Committee members enjoyed a pleasant lunch and talk by the Mayor, Councillor Barry Monteith. This was followed by a presentation to our Chair of a certificate in a handcrafted frame from Island Turf Crafts.

New Facilities

Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid launched its new website www.cookstownwomensaid.org.uk to increase our visibility. This year also saw the beginning of the refurbishment and conversion of Rock Cottage, our new Resource Centre. Completion of this first phase of the work was enough to allow staff to move in and operate from there. We intend building an extension to the back of the premises as soon as funding becomes available.

Craigavon & Banbridge Women's Aid (incorporating Armagh City & District)

New Centre

This year end, we moved to new premises in the Legahory Centre and have settled in well continuing to provide the core of operations for our community based service provision.

Prevention work in schools

After a gap in this provision we are again offering this to schools both primary and intermediate. This essential prevention work will run parallel with parent support work which will be delivered both from our Centre and safe accommodation.

Outreach

Outreach work with women in the community continues to grow in demand and delivery. To continue to improve the standard of service offered to women in the community, amongst other training, four members of the team completed their NVQ Level Three and Assessor awards in work with Victims, Survivors and Witnesses through the Regional Assessment Centre for Justice Sector Awards.

Service User Forum

As well as dealing with internal work our Women's Aid Service User Group contributed to the Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety Craigavon & Banbridge Trust Working Group on introducing the policy of routine enquiry on domestic violence into local maternity hospitals.



Fermanagh Women's Aid

Core services

We continued to maintain core services throughout 07-08 in a difficult funding environment. Our funding from the Volunteer Development Agency enabled us to train over 40 volunteers who played a major role in delivering and supporting our service delivery. We are pleased to note that our volunteer work is flourishing and helps us maintain our core services.

Volunteer Training

The Volunteer Development Agency has recognised our achievements in the creation of a 60 Hour initial training programme and considers this work to be an example of best practice. The volunteers come from all backgrounds and our volunteer retention figures have been excellent.

Prevention School Programmes

An essential part of our work continues to be outreach to schools. Over 1,000 pupils have been reached through our school prevention programmes delivered by 2 workers and 3 volunteers.

Court Support

Court support is co-ordinated by and delivered by specially trained volunteers. Volunteers have brought a heart and soul to our work - our selection procedures are stringent and our training contains a strong element of self assessment.

Foyle Women's Aid

New Dedicated Childcare Unit

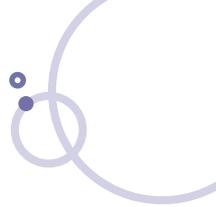
The highlight of our year was the opening of the dedicated childcare unit which has long been a goal for the organisation. This enables us to provide a wider range of activities and services for children and young people in line with Foyle Women's Aid Children's Strategy.

Training

Accredited training was developed by Foyle Women's Aid and delivered this year on a cross border basis between PSNI and An Garda Síochána. The purpose of the programme was to develop the capacity and skills of first and middle line managers of police officers working with victims of domestic violence. The programme was delivered by Foyle Women's Aid, from September to December 2007. There were 13 participants in attendance at the course, with a good cross section of representation from both police services.

New Development Group

The introduction of Foyle Women's Aid Development Group was established to assist strategic development of the organisation. This work of this group will equip us better to address the complexity of issues and challenges that face our service users.





North Down & Ards Women's Aid

Strategic Planning Day

'Awards for All' funded us for our Strategic Planning Day which was held in January 2008. Staff and volunteers attended to develop our strategic plan for the next 3 years.

Community Safety Partnerships

North Down Community Safety Partnership funded a new leaflet for women in the community and a reprint of our service leaflet. They also funded Domestic Violence level 1 training for voluntary, community and statutory agencies in the North Down area. Ards Community Safety Partnership funded Domestic Violence level 1 training for voluntary, community and statutory agencies in the Ards area.

Prevention School Programmes

10 senior schools participated in the 'Heading for Healthy Relationships' programme with a total of 1300 pupils taking part. This year a programme called 'Learning for Life' which covers self confidence and self esteem was started in Killard House Special School. 17 primary schools engaged in the 'Helping Hands' programme with a total of 554 pupils taking part. 5 Transformer groups were held throughout the year and a total of 52 children were supported through one-to-one sessions in the Bangor Centre.

Protective Behaviours

Group work on 'Protective Behaviours' was introduced as a service to women prisoners in Hydebank Prison.

Omagh Women's Aid

25th Anniversary Celebrations

The highlight of the year for Omagh Women's Aid was undoubtedly the series of events throughout November to commemorate 25 years of providing support to women and children affected by domestic violence in the Omagh area. The celebrations culminated in a gala concert featuring the best of female talent. Messages of support and congratulations were received from Ministers Michael McGimpsey and Caitriona Ruane, amongst others.

'You and Me, Mum'

Omagh Women's Aid were delighted when 'You and Me, Mum', a parenting programme for mothers affected by domestic violence, which was co-written by staff from Omagh Women's Aid and Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland and successfully piloted in Omagh, was chosen to be showcased at the annual Raising the Standards Conference in Guernsey.

Essential services

This year demand for our Floating Support and children's services continued to rise bringing with it the challenges of maintaining these essential services in a difficult funding environment.

Women's Aid Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne and Newtownabbey

MARAC

Women's Aid ABCLN continued to play a vital role within the MARAC Steering Committee and

also operationally working with the women who are victims. As a result of the successful pilot we are delighted that the PSNI intend rolling out MARAC regionally, with plans to do so now well advanced.

Social Economy

This year we launched ONUS, a social economy business in Ecos Park, Ballymena. This is a profit shedding company which will gift aid Women's Aid ABCLN.

Elder Abuse

We were pleased to work in conjunction with our partner Action on Elder Abuse on an innovative study highlighting the abuse of older people. The Prevalence Study on Abuse and Older People was formally launched at an event held in Stormont and sponsored by the First Minister.

Strategic Planning

In February we held a informative two day residential with all staff and volunteers to look at our 3 year strategic planning cycle.

Floating Support

Our Floating Support home visits totalled 1173 across the five areas we cover. 835 women attended groupwork courses including 'My life, My choices' and 'Journey to Freedom' facilitated by community resettlement workers across the five areas.



Women's Aid Newry, Mourne, South Down & South Armagh

No Recourse to Public Funds

Our refuge occupancy level remains very high with the majority of women originating from the Newry & Mourne area. Increasingly however there has been a significant rise in the number of women from ethnic minority communities accessing our service. This has serious financial implications for us due to the fact that no financial aid is available for women who have no recourse to public funds.

Prevention Programmes

Our prevention training in schools was extremely successful this year with a total of 742 children and young people receiving age appropriate training. 10 primary and 7 post primary schools were involved in the delivery of these highly successful programmes.

MODV

Women's Aid NMSDSA has co-ordinated the women's support service of the PBNI's Southern area 'Men Overcoming Domestic Violence' (MODV) programme. In this year we supported 15 women and continued to work closely with the PBNI in relation to the safety and well-being of the women whose partners or ex-partners are on the MODV programme.

Floating Support

Our community based support service continues to be a vital area of support for women with a total of 190 women accessing this essential resource.

Please note that the accounts that follow are an extract from the original document. A copy of the full accounts is available upon request by calling 028 9024 9041 or emailing info@womensaidni.org

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd
(Company Limited By Guarantee)**

Extract from the Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 March 2008

Company Information

Management Board

Elsie Jordan (Chair)

Anne McMahan (Secretary)

Christine Whiteman (Treasurer)

Donna Coyle

Margaret Kennedy

Margaret McMurrin

Lorna McAlpine

Debbie Coyle

Ursula Marshall

Kim Harvey

Laura McMahan

Auditors	Lynn, Drake & Co Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors 40 Main Street Moira BT67 0LQ
Bankers	First Trust Bank Donegall Square North Belfast BT2 8DY
Solicitors	Flynn & McGettrick 9 Clarence Street Belfast, BT2 8DY
Registered Office	129 University Street Belfast BT7 1HP
Charity Number	XN 45049
Registration Number	NI 021741
Governing Document	Memorandum and Articles of Association
Legal Status	Company Limited by Guarantee

Report Of Management Board

The Management Board (Board of Directors) presents their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2008.

Objects of the Charity

The aims of NIWAF (which has ten member groups throughout Northern Ireland) have been encapsulated in the following mission statement:

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation exists to challenge attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate domestic violence. We seek, through our work, to promote healthy and non-abusive relationships.

The following are key aims of NIWAF:

- 1 To educate and inform others of the social context of domestic violence, in particular the attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate abuse.
- 2 To support and promote the core aims of Women's Aid, which are:
 - To provide temporary refuge to women and their children affected by mental, physical or sexual abuse within the home.
 - To encourage the woman to take control of her own future, whether this involves returning home or beginning an independent life.
 - To recognize and care for the emotional needs of the children involved.

- To offer support and advice to any woman who asks for it.
- To encourage the promotion of a self-help ethos to achieve effective and equitable working relationships.

3 To monitor and evaluate the work to be inclusive and accountable to all communities of interest.

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland, together with its member groups, are the lead voluntary agency challenging domestic violence. The charity strives to create a safe and supportive society for women, children and young people affected by domestic violence.

Decision Making Structures

The governing body of Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland, the Management Board, is largely drawn from membership of affiliated groups. The Management Board are responsible for the strategic direction of the organisation and oversee the management of the organisation. The day-to-day management and operation of the activities are carried out by a staff team, lead by the Director and Management Team, who also report regularly to the Board.

Identified Risks

Uncertain and short term funding continues to make future planning extremely difficult. We will continue to negotiate with government departments to extend their commitment to ensure that our core work can effectively continue and secure the sustainability of all our projects. Some projects

continue to be at risk with short-term funding.

Volunteers

Volunteers play a key role in all the services of Women's Aid. Our Helpline could not be maintained without the vital support of our volunteers. The Management Board members (Directors) also volunteer their time freely to attend regular monthly Board meetings, sub groups and offer ongoing support to the organisation.

Review of the transactions and financial position of NIWAF

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland funds have mainly been applied to the objects specified by each project's funders. It is policy to meet all restricted fund deficits by transfers from the accumulated unrestricted funds.

The Statement of Financial Activities, indicates that the Organisation had incoming resources of £707,776 in the year which was exceeded by resources expended of £752,937 by £45,161 and this amount has been transferred from the Organisation's accumulated funds.

The Balance Sheet at 31 March 2008 shows a net Accumulated Funds balance at that date of £238,492.

No significant events have occurred since that date of the Balance Sheet which affect the Organisation or which materially affect these financial statements.

Fixed Assets

Additions to fixed assets are per note 11 of the Accounts.

Management Board (Board of Directors)

The following persons were members of the Management Board at some time during the year to 31 March 2008: -

Donna Coyle	Ursula Marshall	Lorna McAlpine	Kim Harvey
Elsie Jordan	Margaret McMurran	Laura McMahan	Debbie Coyle
Anne McMahan	Christine Whiteman	Margaret Kennedy	

The Management Board in each year shall consist of one member nominated by each affiliated group. If a Group has no-one able to serve, its committee may ask a second member of another group to act on their behalf. In the event that there are insufficient nominations and/or an identified skills deficit, the Management Board will seek co-options.

Management Board Responsibilities

Company Law requires the Management Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Directors are required to:-

- select suitable policies and apply them consistently;

- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Management Board are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Reserves Policy

The charity's policy is to retain a level of free reserves, which matches the needs of the organisation, both at the current time and in the foreseeable future. The reserves required should be sufficient to meet committed grant expenditure and the running costs for a period equivalent to six months annual expenditure. The charity will continue to monitor compliance with this policy on a regular basis and the Board will review the appropriateness of the policy annually.

Charitable Status

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd enjoys charitable status by the authority of the Inland Revenue under reference XN 45049.

Members

The members of the company at 31 March 2008 were as follows: -

Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid	Cookstown & Dungannon Women's Aid
Foyle Women's Aid	North Down & Ards Women's Aid
Causeway Women's Aid	Craigavon & Banbridge Women's Aid
Newry & Mourne Women's Aid	Omagh Women's Aid
Fermanagh Women's Aid	
Women's Aid in Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne & Newtownabbey	

Auditors

In accordance with Article 392(1) of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986, a resolution proposing the re-appointment of Lynn, Drake & Co as auditors to the Company will be put to the Annual General Meeting.

By Order of the Management Board



Anne McMahon
Secretary

11 October 2008



Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd
(Company Limited By Guarantee)
Statement Of Financial Activities For The Year Ended 31 March 2008

all amounts are in pounds sterling

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2008	Total Funds 2007
Incoming Resources					
Activities in furtherance of the Charity's objectives:					
Grants Receivable	5,415	—	656,417	661,832	634,054
Income from charitable activities	41,915	—	—	41,915	56,080
Activities for generating funds:					
Interest receivable	4,029	—	—	4,029	7,642
Total Incoming Resources	51,359	—	656,417	707,776	697,776
Resources Expended					
Costs of generating funds:	13,501	—	—	13,501	16,213
Charitable Expenditure:					
Costs in furtherance of charitable objectives	3,111	59,100	661,502	723,713	796,715
Management and Administration of the Charity	2,316	—	13,407	15,723	31,565
Total Resources Expended	18,928	59,100	674,909	752,937	844,493

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd
(Company Limited By Guarantee)
Statement Of Financial Activities For The Year Ended 31 March 2008

all amounts are in pounds sterling

	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2008	Total Funds 2007
Net (Outgoing)/ Incoming Resources					
Before Transfers	32,431	(59,100)	(18,492)	(45,161)	(146,717)
Transfer between Funds	(32,251)	—	32,251	—	—
Net Incoming Resources for the Year	<u>180</u>	<u>(59,100)</u>	<u>13,759</u>	<u>(45,161)</u>	<u>(146,717)</u>
Funds Balance brought forward at 1 April 2007	47,849	148,498	87,306	283,653	430,370
Net Movement in Funds in Year to 31 March 2008	180	(59,100)	13,759	(45,161)	(146,717)
Fund Balance carried forward at 31 March 2008	<u>48,029</u>	<u>89,398</u>	<u>101,065</u>	<u>238,492</u>	<u>283,653</u>

There were no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the statement of financial activities above.

Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd
(Company Limited By Guarantee)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2008

all amounts are in pounds sterling

	2008	2007
Fixed assets		
Tangible Fixed Assets	64,636	72,747
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Current Assets		
Debtors and Prepayments	61,008	59,775
Bank Accounts	130,599	179,270
Cash in Hand	119	103
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	191,726	239,148
Liabilities		
Amounts falling due within one year	(17,870)	(28,242)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Current Assets	173,856	210,906
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	238,492	283,653
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Liabilities – Amounts falling due after more than one year	—	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	238,492	283,653

**Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation Ltd
(Company Limited By Guarantee)
Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2008**

all amounts are in pounds sterling

	2008	2007
Provisions and charges		
Deferred Capital Grant Reserve	—	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Assets	238,492	283,653
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by: Accumulated Funds		
Unrestricted – General	48,029	47,849
Unrestricted – Designated	89,398	148,498
Restricted	101,065	87,306
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance at 31 March 2007	238,492	283,653
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Approved by the Management Board on 11 October 2008 and signed on its behalf by:



Elsie Jordan



Christine Whiteman

Thank you

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland would like to thank all our donors for their ongoing support and acknowledgement of our work and for enabling the continuation of so many vital projects.

- Charities Aid Foundation
- Comic Relief
- Community Safety Unit
- Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety
- Domestic Violence Unit
- Eastern Health & Social Services Board
- Individual Donors
- Northern Ireland Office
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Probation Board Northern Ireland
- Private Investors
- The Body Shop
- The Enkalon Foundation
- Topshop (Arcadia Group)
- Volunteers

Reach out. **Help is at hand.**

24 Hour Domestic Violence Helpline

0800 917 1414

Freephone number. Language line and minicom available.

Open to **anyone** affected by domestic violence.
Managed by Women's Aid.

Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland respects the right to privacy and anonymity.

While the images are representative of the women, children and young people who use our services, all photos used in this publication are posed by models.

Mindful of the very real danger to women and children even after they have escaped abuse, names and ages have been changed in personal stories to protect identities.

Designed Áine McClintock and printed by Dorman & Sons Ltd.

women's aid

Federation Northern Ireland

