

Bawso

Providing specialist services for BME communities

2020 Annual report



Changing lives

Our vision is of a future when all people in Wales are free from abuse, violence and exploitation



I must begin by expressing great thanks to my fellow Trustees, all our wonderful staff, volunteers, interpreters and to Friends of Bawso for the extraordinary commitment and effort made during the year to preserve and enhance Bawso services and to maintain both the financial sustainability and the quality of support provided to survivors. I am honoured to be the Chair of such a professional and determined organisation and we should all be proud of our achievements.

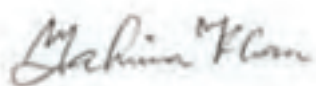
As the year progressed Bawso managed more and more effectively to overcome all the challenges that delivering a nationwide service presents. We introduced new and innovative approaches to changes in the funding environment, persistently addressed the need to explain and evidence the need for our specialist services in the face of pressures to disadvantage, denigrate and divide civil society, and continued to place survivors at the centre of all that we did.

I am particularly pleased that Bawso was able to secure the continuation of service delivery contracts and additional project funding from Trusts and Foundations. Thanks to our funders is heartfelt.

The arrival of COVID-19 late in the year accentuated the flexibility and resilience of Bawso's governance, management, and support staff. Bawso acted very early and with speed and efficiency to protect survivors, employees and volunteers and transformed its service delivery model to include remote working. The help of everyone to shoulder additional workloads and responsibilities to implement new arrangements and protocols was truly impressive.

This report has been produced against the backdrop of a global pandemic that impacted on our services as we closed the financial year. There was a lot of anxiety within BME communities and among survivors but the whole team at Bawso worked hard to ensure that survivors remained at the core of our work, were safe and protected. Accordingly, we can regard the year as exceptionally successful given the surrounding environment and I am confident in the depth and breadth of Bawso's ability to meet any challenges that 2020/21 might present.

Everyone, thank you again.



Tahmina Khan
Board Chair

WHO WE ARE AND THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE



Bawso is a BME led organisation which has been providing practical and emotional support to BME victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and forced marriage in Wales for over 25 years.

It runs programs that contribute to the prevention of violence and supports more than 6,000 adults and children each year through its protection and support services and initiatives to counter re-victimisation. Each year it must raise funds to maintain a pattern specialist services across Wales. These include a 24-hour Help Line, crises intervention support, advocacy and advice, access to statutory help and services, outreach and community-based services, safe accommodation at refuges and safe houses, and survivors' empowerment programmes.

2019/20 saw an increase in the number of people we supported from 6,745 in 2018/2019 to 7,681. 98% of whom were women.

Embedding the Survivor's Voice

Bawso service users are fully involved in all facets of the life of Bawso. If they are accommodated at a refuge they play a part in running it and supporting other residents. They are consulted on services development. Some survivors, after they leave Bawso services, volunteer as Panel members to appointment new staff.

Others support service programmes and a number receive professional training and re-join Bawso as paid staff. Service users occupy reserved places on the Bawso Board.

PREVENTION WORK

We strive to contribute to ending all forms of violence and abuse. To this end we raise awareness of all forms of Violence Against Women through a range of events and campaigns. We also work to change attitudes amongst communities, and build the capacity of other service providers to respond to the needs of BME victims:

Working with BME women and children and saying No to Violence Bawso works with BME women who are in danger of abuse and violence in such a way as to enable them to appreciate what constitutes abuse and that it is unacceptable. Bawso also provides support on health and wellbeing, on parenting, budgeting, and language skills. The continuation of support meets the needs of service users in the short, medium and long term.

Working with BME women and children and saying No to Violence

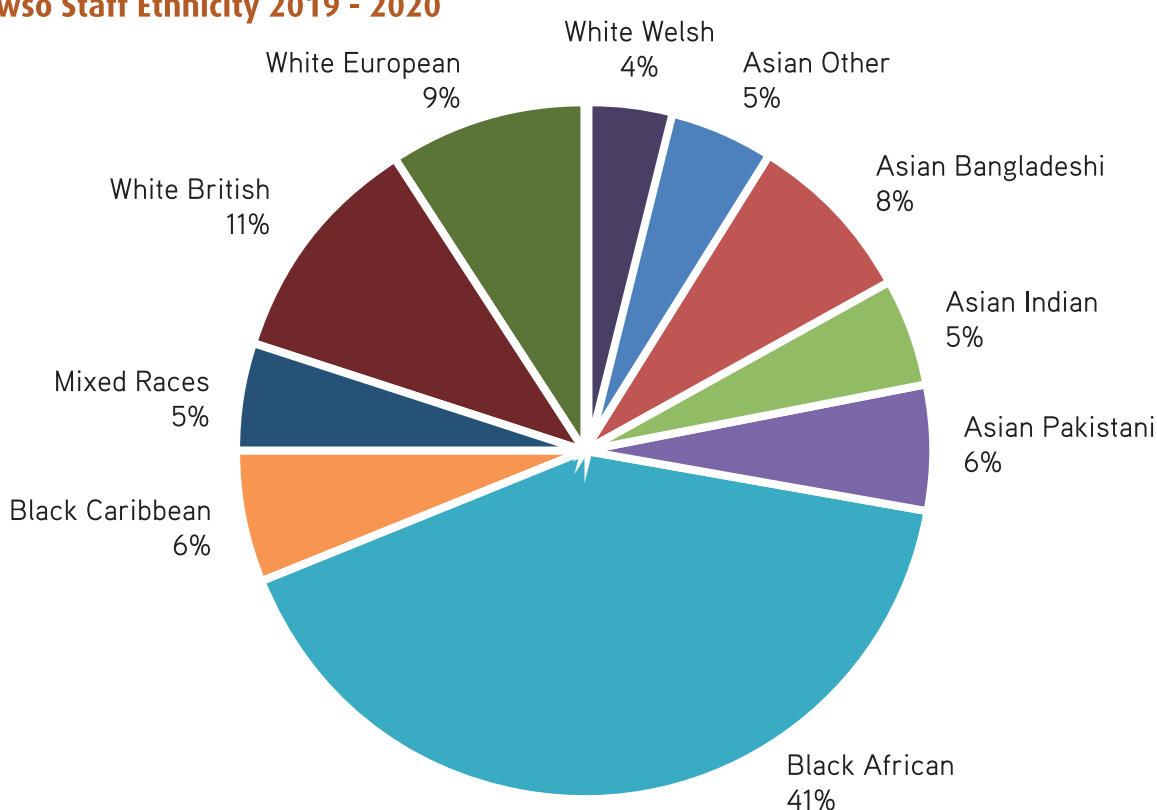
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BME communities generate referrals to Bawso because Bawso is trusted and its integrity and sensitivity is well established and appreciated.

BME women and girls know about Bawso through family and friends and they understand its purpose making it possible for them to contact Bawso without trepidation. Bawso is relied upon to understand the complex individual circumstances of women in BME communities. These communities are the source of Bawso's insight and acceptance which enables Bawso to maintain a dialogue about harmful practices such as FGM, forced marriage and honour-based violence. Staff are members of the communities that we serve.

Bawso Staff Ethnicity 2019 - 2020



Changing attitudes within BME Communities

We work to change attitudes within BME communities that traditionally practice Female Genital Mutilation, forced marriage, and honour-based violence. Our non-divisive engagement strategies help communities understand that they can preserve positive aspects of their 'culture' while discarding harmful practices. We train community members to become advocates for change and equip BME young people with the tools to keep themselves and others safe from violence. As a result, communities are more aware of relevant legislation and of the risks of harmful traditional practices, more confident to reject them as part of their identity and to speak out against them. During the year we reached young people from schools, colleges, and GP surgeries. We trained 40 youth advocates and over 1,200 individuals as part of our Building Stronger Britain Together (BSBT) project.

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Bawso tries wherever possible to reach and influence public opinion and civil society in Wales to be positive towards diversity and to understand the special needs of BME women facing VAWDASV. This it does through annual events to mark Zero tolerance VAWDASV UN days:



Training for frontline workers in public services

Professionals in the statutory and voluntary sectors tell us that they need to understand the specific needs of BME clients and to acquire appropriate tools to support them. We offer training and advice to practitioners in health and education, the Police, social services, local authorities and third sector organisations.

The IRIS Project has Specialist Advocate Educators who provide training and tailored consultancy to GP practice staff and act as a single point of contact to accept referrals from GPs. This is making a real difference to victims of domestic abuse. For the first time in their lives women who have been living in fear finally receive the support they so desperately need. Last year, we received 170 referrals from the GP surgeries we trained. This is in stark contrast to the two referrals received in the previous year.

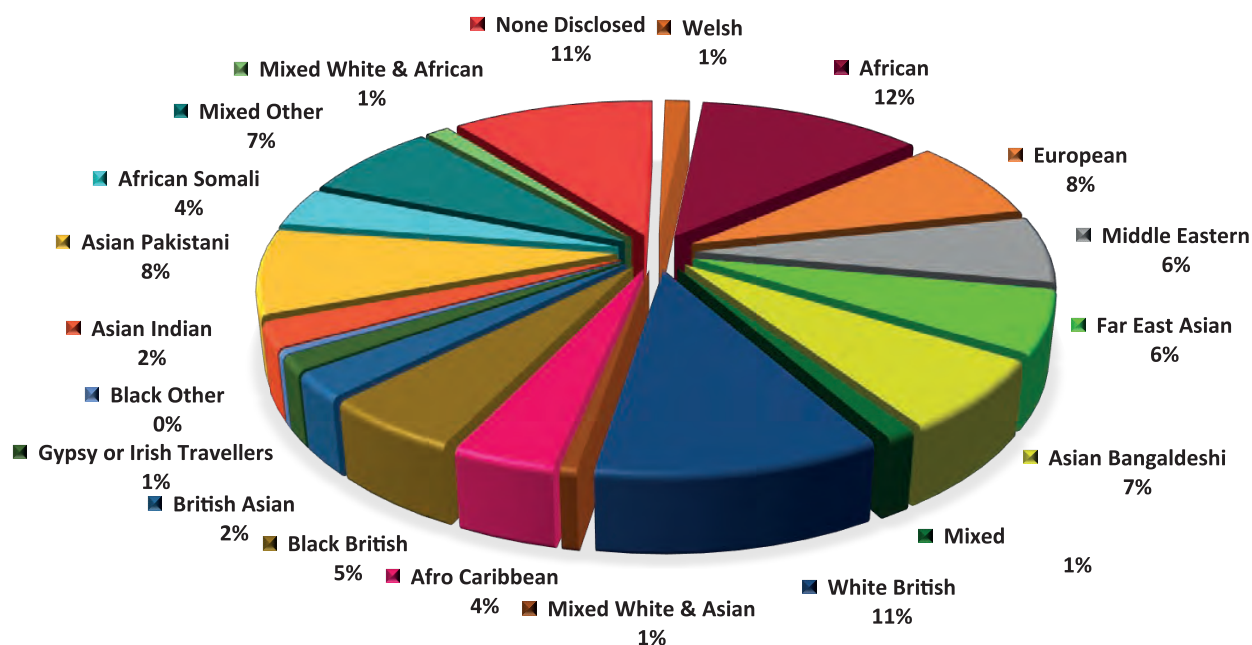


99% of the public sector practitioners we trained reported an increased understanding of how to support BAME victims.

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The ethnicity of the 7,681 Service Users supported is as follows:

ETHNICITY OF ALL WALES SERVICE USERS 2019



Advice and housing support

We provided practical and emotional support to families at risk of becoming homeless due to domestic abuse, to manage their accommodation and live independently and inclusively in the community. This included provision of advice on their entitlements, support to apply for benefits, signposting, and making referrals to other agencies for additional support such as counselling. We also provided money and debt advice and training, and a 24/7 helpline.

In 2019/20, we advised 3,168 individuals, and provided housing-related support to 660 families. Our initial advice to families contributed to prevention of homelessness as families were advised on housing benefits and where applicable, supported to apply for social housing. 840 callers were advised by our 24-hour Helpline.

Safe accommodation for victims of domestic abuse

Women victims of violence often report feeling isolated and lonely and burdened with extended family responsibilities as shared below.

'I got married 17 years ago from my home. I have two sons. I do not have any intimate relations with my husband or even talking. I spend a lot of time and money on buses going to his parents' home to cook, clean and look after his parents. He does not help me.

He calls me their slave and that I was saved from a life of poverty so I must work for them.

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Before I came to Bawso, I was struggling with money because my husband left us with no money and with a mortgage. I did not know what to do and was crying a lot because I was scared of losing the house and sleeping on the street with the children. Bawso helped me to apply for Child Tax Credit, Child Benefit and Council Tax and now I have money for food and pay for the house.'

Our purpose-built refuges are specially adapted to meet the cultural and religious needs of service users. We deliver all our interventions in collaboration with service users. Creating a safe environment and providing support to children is an integral part of what we do. In 2019/20, we accommodated 126 women and 113 children.

98% of women experiencing abuse reported feeling safer following our intervention.

Support for women at high risk of homicide (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate Service - IDVA)

Highly trained specialist workers provide outreach support to victims who are most at risk of homicide. In partnership with a range of agencies they address practical steps to protect victims and their children and provide longer-term solutions. In 2019/20, we supported 839 high-risk victims.

Over 78% of women reported feeling safer and witnessing a reduction in the escalation and severity of abuse.

SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY

People can be trafficked into the UK for many different forms of exploitation such as forced prostitution, forced labour, forced criminality, domestic servitude and forced marriage. We run the only supported housing and outreach project (four safe houses) for female and male victims of human trafficking and modern slavery in Wales.

We delivered a partnership project with Hestia, Crisis and Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid under the umbrella of (Train. Identify. Learn. Intelligence-TILI project). This work has led to a community-wide awareness and an increase in victim referrals to a total of 46. We provide practical and emotional support. In 2019/20, we supported 250 individuals.

47 Women & 14 Men
supported in our
refuges.

189 victims of
human trafficking
supported in the
community.

99% Human trafficking victim supported in our Safe House told us that the abuse had ceased.

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Soraya, a 22-year-old aspiring model from Eastern Europe saw an advert in the local newspaper that would change her life for good. She beamed with excitement at the prospect of finally leaving her life of poverty behind and making a life for herself in London.

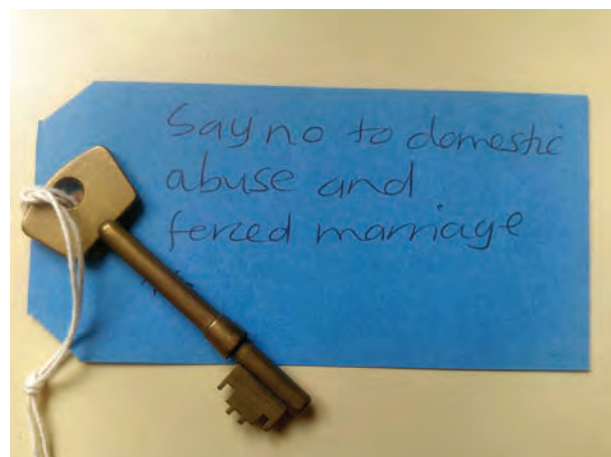
She excitedly called the contact in the newspaper and started preparing for her journey to England. She gladly accepted the generosity of 'these strangers' who paid for her flight and would meet her expenses once in London.

Her first day in London is one she remembers nostalgically and the nice hotel she spent on her first night. She has no recollection of the days or weeks that followed as she was forced to work as a prostitute. She was moved from city to city and received no pay.

FORCED MARRIAGE AND HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE (HBV)

Forced marriage involves mental, physical, emotional abuse and blackmail to force victims who refuse to consent to marriage. Fleeing from violence is seen as an irresponsible act which jeopardises the "Izzat" or "family/community Honour".

Victims of honour-based violence see themselves as perpetrators of wrongdoing against their families and not victims. We support survivors to relocate from trapped marriages and those at risk of HBV.



SERVICES FOR WOMEN AND FAMILIES AFFECTED BY FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM), FORCED MARRIAGE AND HBV

We are the leading organisation in Wales providing services to women and families affected by FGM, Forced Marriage and HBV.

We provide one-to-one specialist, holistic and culturally aware support and advocacy that meet the physical, emotional and mental health needs of women and girls. We work very closely with children services to protect children at risk. We also run support peer-groups for survivors. We Co-Chair the Welsh Government All Wales HBV Leadership Group.

Through our activities we reached out to over 1,800 people during the year.



"these sessions have helped me more than anything, they are way better than anti-depressants or alcohol, they stopped me feeling crazy and alone."

Knowledge and information were cited as an invaluable asset for victims of FGM who believe it is a religious practice and carries a curse on the whole family.

PREVENTION OF RE-VICTIMISATION, RECOVERY, AND EMPOWERMENT SERVICES

Recovery and empowerment services are critically important for victims from minority ethnic backgrounds and migrant and foreign-born women. This may be the first time in their lives that they have a chance to articulate their needs, manage their own finances, or live independently from family. They may have very limited support networks to rely on and not be able to access other vital services, such as mental health services, due to stigma and fear. To address these needs we offer individual and group-based services to help women recover from trauma. We also offer peer-support and empowerment groups that help women make sense of their experiences and understand what their human rights are.

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PREVENTION OF RE-VICTIMISATION, RECOVERY, AND EMPOWERMENT SERVICES

We provide opportunities for service users to regain or reshape their sense of self and capabilities. For example, by encouraging women to get involved in the running of Bawso, from taking part in recruitment panels and focus groups to design new services and evaluate current ones. For those women who do not feel able to take part, we offer a range of empowerment courses to build their confidence and assertiveness.



“Yoga and body art therapy sessions helped me to deal with stress in a happy way”.

99% of women who completed the Recovery Toolkit reported improved self-esteem, confidence, health and well-being.

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

The Board of Trustees is the governing body of the charity. It determines the strategic vision of the organisation, the direction and thrust of its work. It also monitors and evaluates quality and progress. The composition of the Board is very diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender, age and backgrounds. Collectively, the Board has a wealth of expertise in all areas of our work. Survivors and Bawso ex-service users bring their first-hand experience to ensure the organisation is fully responsive to service users' needs and views.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

To ensure that the diverse needs of our service users are met we work very closely with a range of service providers and statutory services. For example, work closely with the four Police forces in Wales to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account; we collaborate with children social services to improve outcomes for children who are on the child protection register.

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Bawso Limited**Company Limited by Guarantee**
Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)
Year ended 31 March 2020

	Unrestricted funds £	2020 Restricted funds £	Total funds £	2019 Total funds £
Income and endowments				
Donations and legacies	710,511	—	710,511	647,272
Charitable activities	466,143	2,020,994	2,487,137	2,234,256
Other trading activities	16,015	2,500	18,515	25,801
Investment income	11	—	11	102
Other income	4,098	—	4,098	3,530
Total income	1,196,778	2,023,494	3,220,272	2,910,961
Expenditure				
Expenditure on charitable activities	1,151,435	1,973,882	3,125,317	3,191,317
Total expenditure	1,151,435	1,973,882	3,125,317	3,191,317
Net income/(expenditure)	45,343	49,612	94,955	(280,356)
Transfers between funds	(7,355)	7,355	—	—
Net movement in funds	37,988	56,967	94,955	(280,356)
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	94,445	552,380	646,825	927,181
Total funds carried forward	132,433	609,347	741,780	646,825

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
 All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

