

# Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women's Centre

Annual Report 2013-2014

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## CHAIRS FOREWORD

2014 at Al-Hasaniya has been varied and incredibly fulfilling!

I'm deeply humbled that I have been elected as chair again. This organisation, small in size but extraordinarily big in achievement, has truly cemented my belief that we can ALL contribute and make a difference to all our communities.

Whilst current political discourse may lead us to believe that there is only one challenge, through the report you will read about how we continue to empower the excluded and marginalized, protect the abused and sustain our elderly and vulnerable.

Al-Hasaniya is not only a first port of call in every sense of the word but also a beacon of hope to those who have lost so much, in different ways and find it extremely challenging to manage.

I am proud of our ability to continue to provide good value for money and are truly grateful for the unyielding support given to us by those who believe in our ability to serve, support and sustain our client group. By continually providing the needed resources, whether as a founder, partner or indeed a service provider, without you, we could not serve and support the thousands of women and their families we see every year.

Al-Hasaniya has become an ambassador for the minorities within minorities and is not shy to be controversial and outspoken when it is right to do so in the interest of our communities. I am so deeply honored to be part of this success story.

**FATIMA MOURAD**

*Chair since 1992*

## MANAGERS REPORT

In my second year as Centre Manager and having worked for the charity for over a decade, never have I been more pleased of my achievements in actively supporting this small but highly important service. I am humbled to be in this position and proud to have made a difference not just to my local community but more importantly wider society.

As many local and national government changes continue to take shape around us Al-Hasaniya maintains an integral position within the sector. We have developed and adapted to these growing changes and whilst it continues to be a juggling act to ensure we form part of these changes, the work on the ground has never been more necessary.

This year we have introduced a brand new project and thanks to the John Lyon's Charity in sharing our vision of supporting the future generations, we are now able to extend our support to the younger generation through our Young Women's Project.

Unfortunately, just as new projects start, others sadly end and this year saw the close of one of our most significant projects (funded by the Big Lottery); the 3E's Project (Educate, Empower and Engage). This project tackled important gaps within the sector and successfully engaged with a large number of women, working with a wide network of partnerships, including the DWP to help get women back into education and employment.

As we move into harder challenges with a demand in capacity vs less resource, we have growing concerns on the direct impact of this at a grass roots level. More than ever services like ours are needed to help the vulnerable and it is of vital importance that we all work harder, together to ensure we remain. Our commitment and passion in making a difference is all the more necessary and I would like to thank our growing supporters in not only their recognition of what we do but indeed their invaluable contributions, both financial and otherwise.

Al-Hasaniya's supporters this year have included the Kensington Foundation, through which we were able to obtain the support from The Hollick Family Charitable Trust. The Metropolitan Police, who have worked with us through the growing problems we are facing with our younger generations. Our Tri Borough Prevent team who continues to actively bridge gaps between local services and government policy. And last but by all means not least, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea who have been formidable in their support throughout our service history and are to bridging gaps through growing tri-borough partnerships and national government changes.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to our trustees, who share passion and commitment in carrying the centre from strength to strength. The staff who reflect true care and commitment to our services users and our volunteers for their invaluable contributions.

I look forward to leading 30 years of the service's establishment next year. We hope all those who were involved with the service, both past and present will join us in celebrating.

ESMA DUKALI  
Centre Manager

## INTRODUCTION

*“You are my brother and I love you, I love you when you bow in your mosque, kneel in your temple, pray in your church. For you and I are sons of one religion, and it is the spirit”* [Khalil Gibran](#)

The above quote was used as an opening to my speech at the Royal borough of Kensington and Chelsea’s Art festival 2014.

Some described it as very fitting, appropriate and others said it was moving and set the tone for this years’ festival.

For me it was and is pertinently relevant and significant, because we have come to live in a globalised world, where harmonious living and true citizenship have been somewhat compromised by the erroneous religious narratives on one hand, and drastic political actions on the other.

The last year or so have been particularly poignant for all. The devastating results of erroneous religious narratives have proved to be a wakeup call for all concerned to co-operate and pool resources together to support our community at large and ensure that our ethos of cohesiveness, multiculturalism, tolerance and forbearance remain at the very heart of everything we do, whatever our job might be.

To bring the best out of our young people, we must be robust in our approach and positive in our attitude. We must concentrate on what brings us all together, what we have in common and promote our precious principal of equality, freedom and tolerance.

Never has it been so important to counter attack, the negative narratives, misinformation and misguided loyalties that our young people may feel is the right path to take. It is vital to remain vigilant and to work harder than ever to ensure that our community is well informed of its rights, but also its obligations and responsibility to the society at large.



**SOUAD TALSI MBE**

Founder Member & 3E’s Project Coordinator

## KEY PROJECTS & SERVICES

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Our culturally sensitive and holistic approach in supporting our service users place us in a unique position to provide efficient and effective support for our women. This also makes us a first port of call for children effected by domestic violence.

Being alone in a strange country and not knowing who to approach in difficult times, is a daunting prospect for anyone. To suffer abuse in addition, as do many of our clients and those who come for help, can prove a lifelong devastating experience. The trend of marrying British-Muslims from “other” cultures has been increasing in recent years and nowhere as common as in Morocco. The trend for British-Muslims from other cultures and backgrounds bringing in wives has seen a sharp increase in recent years. And with that an overwhelming call for support has been placed on this already overstretched project.

Too often these young women, marry in blind faith. Having been promised comfortable lives, love and good care, however once they set foot in the UK, they find themselves beaten, ill-treated, abused and in some case used as slaves by the extended family.

By the time they are known to us, a great number of these young women, are pregnant, penniless and without recourse to public funds; because of the restrictions placed on their stay in the UK. Whilst the projects first and foremost priority is to ensure the safety of these women and their eventual integration in the community, is it equally important that we also continually play an important role in raising awareness amongst policy makers and that they recognize and are indeed influenced by our experiences to ultimately sustain lasting, productive and constructive services to this important client group.

Our collaborative work with local community safety teams, protection services, local councils, the Home Office and a growing number of tri-borough partnerships all provide an important foundation in which we can all help to eradicate abuse.

So far this year, we have supported 315 women and young mothers.

The project although much stretched and at times overwhelming, has been sustained and supported by the multiple service delivery approach we have in the Centre. Both our Mental Health Project and indeed the 3Es have proved a fantastic complimentary service to this client group, allowing them to grow in confidence, become empowered and more engaged, for an ultimately truly independent well informed way of life.

Until we can eradicate violence within the home in all its forms, it is imperative that this project remains a life line to the women and families we seek to support and certainly we all have a duty to ensure the safety and well-being of women and children.

## OLDER PEOPLES OUTREACH PROJECT

It is a fact that the migrant community that came to the UK and settled in this borough back in the 60s is now elderly and still living here. The subsequent generations have either left elsewhere or indeed adopted the nuclear family concept, leaving this section of the community to struggle on its own. Our elderly users are very isolated, vulnerable and suffer from a myriad of socio-economic problems, illiteracy and cultural barriers, all of which add a terrific obstacle to their ability to access help and support.

The OPO project is very unique as it opens its doors to all these vulnerable ladies and makes them feel at home. We run a holistic service at Al-Hasaniya Moroccan Women Centre where we offer one to one sessions, weekly activities; training sessions, health and welfare workshop, exercise classes, as well as home visits and outreach to those who are residing in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Our weekly drop-in sessions are well attended by the women as they feel they are welcomed and can be supported immediately.

The project offers a feel of “home from home” and our successful approach in providing a varied programme of services has proved a tremendous morale booster for the women we see and help each week, thus enabling resilience and reducing the impact on the wider community.

Our weekly Luncheon Club is an exceedingly popular programme and thanks to the Grove Trust for its significant donation in enabling this service to continue, it continues to provide an important platform in which the project leader can organize workshops as well as allows the women an opportunity to meet, chat and engage with each other. It is always a warm and welcoming environment which continually encourages women to leave home and get out, walk and make an effort to see others.

This year so far we have supported 686 users where 389 have fully benefited from one to one direct services.

This project is a unique service to our aging population. We hope to continue to build on our partners in order to maximize support to our users. We will be producing a series of new workshops that will be designed and tailored to their needs. Our local Imam as well as a local the Moroccan female Chaplin have promised us a series of workshops in the coming months. And above all both centre manager and Trustees are continually looking for alternative and complimentary funding to sustain the varied programmes we offer within.

MOUNA EL-OGBANI  
OPO Project

## MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Social Isolation is a known cause in affecting the mental health and well-being of people. Increasing stress levels, anxiety, frustrations and deep routed depression all create low feelings and consequently reduce the quality of life for those most affected. In our experience

Moroccan and Arabic speaking women are particularly at risk of such social isolation which surface from a variety of factors, most of which stem from a loss or misunderstanding of identity, self-purpose/worth and belonging.

A provision of services which provides a variety of interventions can improve people's life chances, their quality of life and overall health and well-being. The mental health project is able to achieve this through a number of methods, such as one to one support, mental health training and awareness programmes, confidence building workshops, physical activity and therapeutic support. Our partnerships and full engagement with statutory services bridge a growing gap between service users and providers, making two way access easier which in turn goes a long way to promoting and encouraging a better, self-sufficient lifestyle for Moroccan and Arabic speaking women resident in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

The project has supported over **121 women** in the third quarter of 2014 alone. The number is both an indication of the vital service delivery we offer and indeed the crucial need to support this client group in a culturally sensitive manner. This year we have introduced a weekly Café Club, a Gardening Programme in partnership with Meanwhile Gardens and offered volunteering opportunities to service members.

This client group remains incredibly fortunate to be assisted and supported by the Centre as the project works in partnership with other project within, thus offering a variety of programmes and support, all tailored to get them healthy and feeling much more confident. The multidisciplinary approach the centre has as a policy, works incredibly well and we strongly believe that having all under one roof is proving the catalyst of the success we have maintained over the years.

ZOHRA DAVIS  
MH Project

### INSPIRE WELL WOMEN PROJECT

IWW Project works in partnership with Midaye Somali Development Network to jointly support Somali and Arabic speaking women living in the borough of Kensington & Chelsea. Developed by Midaye SDN and Al-Hasaniya MWP and in its fourth year of successful delivery, the programme aims to offer holistic advice, guidance and support focused on health and well-being through a variety of activities and services which include;

- Talking Therapy
- One to One Support
- Self-Advocacy Skills
- Health Information
- Exercise Classes
- Confidence Building

This project ultimately focuses on changing behaviors through the variation in activities and tailor made programmes. Workshops on healthy eating and growing illnesses such as breast

cancer and diabetes provide added information and raise awareness in areas that affect us all. This is an important tool in educating women about their health, teaching new skills and provides practical solutions to healthy living and indeed aims to reduce queues at the GP surgery and demand on other NHS services.

Both organisations have consistently delivered on the projects objectives and outcomes. We have been very fortunate to have been provided with the opportunity to maintain the project over the last four years, ensuring a sufficient period of time which allows us to fully monitor, evaluate and evidence a credible difference in changing behavior. Within this period we have fully delivered on targets and even exceeded in some areas with a growing interest in the programme both from individuals and other service providers.

A total number of **80 women** have benefited from the service this year so far. We have delivered parenting skill programmes (Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities), religious workshops (counter attacking erroneous religious narratives), Zumba exercise classes, confidence building and a Fit For Life programme facilitated by the a health nutritionist. Many women using this service have noticed they are less anxious, much more positive and able to think more constructively.

**ZOHRA DAVIS**  
IWW Project

### **3E's PROJECT**

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund, the 3E's Project is an innovative and very exciting project. Unfortunately 2014 marks its final year, and we are saddened to see it end. We are deeply grateful to the BLF for allowing us the opportunity to provide chances, encouragement and support to a client group that was totally reliant on the welfare state and through sharing our vision to change that, we did make a change.

With an aim to Educate, Empower and Engage these women; helping them feel more confident by providing them with the tools that gave them awareness of what's available to them within their local community, these women reached the unthinkable! The stories are terrific and varied. One such example is that of a partially sighted lady, having suffered abuse for years at the hand of her spouse, she came to the UK as a refugee and became exceedingly isolated. With the help and support from both our DV and MHP project, she came through and joined this project. Two years later, she is now volunteering and working part time. She is also looking for a publisher, to publish her biography, detailing the journey of pains she endured and how she came through. She contends that the 3Es has spectacularly changed her life and for the better.

Although it has come to an end, 3Es three main programmes will go beyond with the help and generosity of volunteers. Having supported over 430 women over the last three years of its life, the 3Es three programmes have remained intact. The first is our ESOL programme, managed by two volunteers will continue to run much needed classes of English and positive citizenship. Into work programme is in partnership with the Clement James Centre, it offers



tailored support and job search, including how to write a CV and prepare for a job interview. The last is fairly recent partnership with the DWP, where Arabic-speaking women signing on for job seekers allowance at the local JobCentrePlus, will continue to be referred to the services.

A large number of these women face enormous hurdles and barriers in accessing paid employment. Many are single parents with health problems in additions to other social challenges they face. They lack accredited qualifications and generally are on very low incomes as a result of benefit dependency.

The project should be nurtured to grow and serve more women and we are looking to the private sector, local employers and businesses to help us provide long term sustainability.

The project provided a safe and motivating environment, by running workshops for personal development, confidence building and employability programmes.

There is no doubt whatsoever that without the centre and this project in particular, the women we served would not have been able to gain the needed confidence to grow and become independent. Independent enough to seek paid employment, away from a common life time habit of claiming benefits and remaining marginalised and isolated.

**IBTESAM HASSAN**

3Es Project

## **NEW TO 2014**

### **YOUNG WOMEN'S PROJECT**

I joined Al-Hasaniya in July 2014 after they were successful in securing a three-year grant from the John Lyons Charity for the Young Women's Project.

The Project aims to support and work with young girls and women from Arabic backgrounds aged between 16 and 25 years of age who emanate or have experienced abuse in any shape or form. It aims to raise awareness on healthy and unhealthy relationships, provide one to one support and link support to services.

Al-Hasaniya realised there was a gap in the services available to young girls and in particular, those from Arabic backgrounds who experience a range of challenges, from identity issues, to mental health problems. The risk of not having a service such as Al-Hasaniya's Young Women's Project is that it may leave young girls and women struggling to find the appropriate support for their needs.

Although the Project is still within its early stages, the launch of the Project has been met by wonderful support from stakeholders, growing tri-borough partnerships and young women.

As with Al-Hasaniya's ethos, we are dedicated to supporting women from Arabic speaking backgrounds and aim to make this much needed project a great success.

**ZAINAB AL-SHARIFF**

Link Officer YWP

AL-HASANIYA MOROCCAN WOMEN'S PROJECT  
(a company limited by guarantee)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
(INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

				<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
				TOTAL FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS
		£	£	£	£
	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds		
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Grants	4		220924	220924	223420
Donations and Fundraising		730		730	1430
Bank interest		0		0	40
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<u>730</u>	<u>220924</u>	<u>221654</u>	<u>224891</u>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
<i>Charitable expenditure</i>					
Running Costs and Centre Manager			53728	53728	52248
Mental Health Project			11080	11080	23066
Domestic Violence Project			19057	19057	18951
Older Peoples' Outreach Project			16396	16396	21482
Older Peoples' Luncheon Club			7131	7131	4740
3 E's Project			45825	45825	44701
Inspire Well Women Project			15766	15766	22077
Supporting Vulnerable Women Project			22253	22253	0
Inspire Youth Project			1046	1046	0
Alnoor Dardasha			3248	3248	0
Eid El-Fitar Project			0	0	5480
Strengthening Communities Project			23744	23744	2026
Renovations Project			0	0	2398
Creche			765	765	0
<i>Governance costs - accountancy</i>			2200	2200	1750
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<u>0</u>	<u>222238</u>	<u>222238</u>	<u>198918</u>
Net incoming resources before transfers		730	(1315)	(584)	25972
Transfers between funds	3	<u>(537)</u>	537	0	0
Net incoming resources after transfers		193	(778)	(584)	25972
TOTAL FUNDS AT START OF YEAR	7	37383	71714	109097	83124
TOTAL FUNDS AT END OF YEAR		<u>37576</u>	<u>70936</u>	<u>108513</u>	<u>109096</u>

Movements in reserves are all recognised and losses are shown above.

The charity's incoming resources and resources expended all relate to continuing activities.