

MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION

Registered Charity

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31ST MARCH 2024

Charity number: 1150129

**MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION
YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

Registered Charity Number: 1150129

Principal address:

Andover Community Centre
55-57 Corker Walk
Andover Estate
N7 7R

Trustees:

Ms G Marco - Chairperson
Ms T Foulds -Treasurer
Mrs C Mayfield
Ms B Fatherazi
Miss R Alaaldin
Ms D Elrayyes
Ms M Sookias

Governing document:

The charity is operated under the rules of its Constitution.

Bankers:

HSBC Bank

Independent Examiner and Accountant:

TACTS Accountant
Chartered Certified Accountant
61 Fountains Crescent
Southgate
London, N14 6BD

**MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION
YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

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MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION

Report of the Trustees

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Middle Eastern Women and Society Organisation's (MEWSO) Trustees are pleased to present their annual report and independently examined financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2024.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

Governance, Structure and Management

MEWSO was registered as a charity on 11th December 2012. The charity is governed by its Constitution. The trustees are appointed or reappointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. Appointment and retirement of trustees is in accordance with the Articles of Association. All trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity.

The overall management of finance is the responsibility of all the Trustees acting on the recommendations of the Chairperson, the Treasurer and the Director. The Trustees form the Management Committee who meets regularly to oversee the running of the organisation.

Background

MEWSO was set in 2010 by Halaleh Taheri to support migrant and ethnic minority women from Middle Eastern and North African background. Since then, our befriending services, advice, counselling and social groups have supported hundreds of women to become independent and rebuild their lives free from gender-based violence and discrimination. The women we support face a number of disadvantages, mostly resulting from the social constructs in Middle Eastern cultures. They also experience structural poverty, social and health inequalities and endure or have survived gender-based violence. Throughout the years, many have found friends and supporters in the face of our advisors, facilitators and befrienders. The culturally-tailored support we provide to these women is vital for their social integration and wellbeing. Our activities help them reduce their dependency on families, spouses and partners, and empower them to rebuild their lives. We are the only voluntary support organization in London promoting support for Middle Eastern women who are trapped in polygamous relationship or have survived forced virginity testing or hymenoplasty. We also support women from LGBTQ+ communities or those with unsettled immigration status fearing to report abuse due to deportation.

Our organisation rejects every form of discrimination, inequality and exclusion and aspires to a society where every woman lives in safety with equal opportunities. We hope for a society in which diversity is considered an element of strength and not of division. Our organisation is built on the values of secularism, solidarity and social justice.

Charitable Objects:

The promotion of social inclusion for the public benefit in particular but not exclusively among women of Middle Eastern descent who are socially excluded on the grounds of their social and economic position, preventing them from becoming socially excluded, relieving their needs and assisting them to integrate into society, by:

1. Providing workshops, forums, advocacy and general support;
2. Education and training in English language and in vocational and other skills;
3. Social and recreational facilities and events involving the local community; and
4. Raising public awareness of issues affecting these individuals and the reasons behind their social exclusion, including violence against women and honour related violence.

Within this wording 'Middle Eastern' means countries including: Egypt, Iran, Iraq, turkey, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestinian territories, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Cyprus.

Activities and Achievements

The past year has posed numerous challenges for the voluntary sector and the communities supported by MEWSo. The burden of the rising cost of living and the hostile environment towards migrants has significantly impacted women from minoritized communities. Many of those we supported faced difficult choices between securing warmth, food, or clothing for their families. A large proportion of women we supported were trapped in abusive relationships and unable to live independently. Despite the ever-growing demand, MEWSo's staff and volunteers continued to support as many women as possible. We tirelessly fought for justice and equality, striving to improve the living conditions of migrant women. Our efforts involved collaboration with communities, policymakers, partner organizations, and health and social care practitioners.

Below are some of our statistics of supported women throughout the year:

- Over 600 women facing domestic abuse with individual advice, advocacy and counselling in community languages.
- Over 60 were living in polygamous relationships
- Over 150 were seeking asylum
- Over 90 women had no recourse to public funds
- Over 250 needed welfare support
- 80 women with NRPF in Hackney supported through hardship grants.
- 38 women experiencing domestic abuse supported in Haringey received emergency grants.

We continued to fight for justice and equality by tackling harmful cultural practices. We reached out to Gillian Keegan, Secretary of State for Education, asking for reassurance that the core of Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) will prioritize the safety of all young people, regardless of their culture or background. We celebrated International Women's Day with sessions raising awareness on virginity testing practices and polygamy. We delivered seven workshops on polygamy in collaboration with Greenwich University. These emotionally charged sessions allowed participating women to discuss the financial, psychological, and physical impacts placed on them and their children by being in polygamous relationships.

We also condemned the Illegal Migration Act by issuing a joint statement supporting migrant women's rights to seek safety and a better life. Hundreds signed our "Raise Your Voice" petition and joined our protest in Trafalgar Square, urging the Government to do more to isolate Iran's Islamic Regime. Our team visited refugees in hotels to assess their needs and how the voluntary sector may support them. Following these visits, we wrote an open letter drawing attention to the appalling conditions many refugees are forced to endure in hotels, highlighting issues such as prolonged neglect, trauma, and inadequate access to essential services.

We are grateful that our efforts and work have been acknowledged by partners. We won the London and South East England Prestige Award 2023 for Domestic Abuse Support Nonprofit Organization. One of our volunteers in Islington was named Young Volunteer of the Year at the Islington Volunteer of the Year Awards 2023.

We strengthened our partnerships with key funders like Westminster Council and the Paddington corporate sector, delivering Conversational English classes for women recently arrived in the UK, wellbeing sessions, cancer awareness workshops, money management workshops, picnics, and walks across the neighbourhood, healthy lifestyle workshops, nutrition advice and community meals. We also partnered with Trieu Nails, who held two masterclasses for our clients as part of their initiative to support vulnerable women 18 years and over.

In Islington, we revived our Olive Club - a self-steering group where participating women decide what activities to do, such as visiting a local coffee shop, cooking Middle Eastern food together, sharing recipes, or taking part in traditional dance sessions. We continue to deliver our flagship Conversational English classes so women can confidently participate in local life and wider society. We became Hate Crime community champions and held an awareness event to help tackle hate crime against LGBTQ+ women.

Our LGBTQ+ Group acted as a safe space for young women from different parts of the Middle East to find support and connections in their new home, London.

Our volunteers contributed altogether over 100 hours, spread between interpreting, delivering activities and classes and working with our Advice Department.

Risk management

MEWSo's trustees have a risk management strategy which comprises:

- an annual review of the principal risks and uncertainties that the charity undertakes.
 - the establishment of policies, systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified in the annual review;
- and
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise or manage any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

This work has identified that financial sustainability is the major financial risk for the charity. A key element in the management of financial risk is a regular review of available liquid funds. Attention has also been focussed on non-financial risks arising from fire, health and safety and food hygiene.

These risks are managed by ensuring accreditation is up to date, having robust policies and procedures in place and regular awareness training for staff working in these operational areas. The Trustees constantly review risks relevant to MEWSo. Any risks identified are reported to the Trustees and decisions made on how to minimise risk.

In reviewing the effect of COVID-19 Pandemic, MEWSo has reviewed its risk assessment and taken actions in mitigating any associated risks and amend accordingly. The charity's resilience was responsive and strong which ensured organisational sustainability during this exceptional time.

Financial Review

MEWSo's main funding sources are restricted funding. This year we were successful in bringing in £ 189,815 (£279,578 in 2022/2023) from various funders.

Reserve's policy and Going Concern

Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between the spending and receiving of income and to cover unplanned emergency repairs and other expenditure. The trustees consider that the ideal level of reserves in the light of the main risks to the organisation. As a result, the Board has approved a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed, should be held in reserve and maintained at a level which ensures that MEWSo's core activity could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty. The target reserve amount represents at least 6 months' (26 weeks) expenditure and will be reviewed annually.

Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a Trustee or senior manager of the charity with its members must be disclosed to the full board of Trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year no such related party transactions were reported.

Independent Examiner

TACTS Accountant firm was appointed as the charity's independent examiner during the year and has expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

Statement Trustees Responsibilities

Charity trustees are the people who serve on the governing body of a charity. They may be known as trustees, directors, board members, governors or committee members. The principles and main duties are the same in all cases.

Trustees have, and must accept, ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of a charity, and ensuring that it is solvent, well-run, and meeting the needs for which it has been set up.

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company.

Signed on behalf of the board,



Halaleh Taheri
Founder & CEO
20/07/2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION (MEWSO)

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st March 2024, which are set out on pages 9 to 14.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Date: 20/07/2024

Chartered Certified Accountant
TACTS Accountant, 61 Fountains Crescent, London, N14 6BD

MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR END 31 MARCH 2024

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Restricted</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Funds</u> 2024	<u>Total</u> <u>Funds</u> 2023
<u>INCOMING RESOURCES: -</u>		£	£	£	£
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Voluntary income		5,176	-	5,176	36,763
Incoming resources from charitable activities					
Grants to provide charitable activities	(16)	-	184,639	184,639	242,815
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		5,176	184,639	189,815	279,578
<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>					
Expenditure on charitable activities	(14)	2,617	268,294	270,911	218,332
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		2,617	268,294	270,911	218,332
Net Incomings and (outgoings) resources		2,559	(83,655)	(81,096)	61,247
Balances Brought Forward		93,183	208,649	301,833	240,586
Balances Carried Forward		95,743	124,994	220,737	301,833

There were no recognised gains or losses for the above period other than those shown in the statement of financial activities for the above financial year. All incoming resources and resources expended are derived from continuing activities.

(The notes attached form part of these financial statements)

MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	£ <u>2024</u>	£ <u>2023</u>
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets		-	-
Current Assets:			
Debtors	(12)	70	15,020
Cash at Bank and In Hand		223,912	289,446
Current Liabilities:			
Creditors:			
Amount falling due within one year:			
Accruals & Creditors	(13)	3,245	2,633
Deferred Income		-	-
Net Assets		<u>220,737</u>	<u>301,833</u>
As Represented By			
Unrestricted Fund		95,743	93,183
Restricted Fund	(15)	<u>124,994</u>	<u>208,649</u>
Total Funds		<u>220,737</u>	<u>301,833</u>

(The notes form part of this account)

The accounts were approved by the Trustees on 20/07/2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Ms G Marco
Chairperson

MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN & SOCIETY ORGANISATION
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

1. Accounting basis.

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). MEWSo meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The Charity trustees are of the view that measures taken subsequent to the year-end to reduce operating costs and successful in applying for continuation funding have secured the immediate future of the Charity for the next 12 to 18 months and that on this basis the charity is a going concern.

2. Cash Flow Statement

The trustees have taken advantage of the exemption in Financial Reporting Standard No 1 (revised) from including a cash flow statement in the financial statements on the grounds that the charity is small.

3. Income

Income is recognised in the period to which it relates, unless specified otherwise by the funder. Project funding is, in general, repayable if not expended within the relevant project. Such income is only recognised to the extent that it ceases to be repayable. The income is accounted for on a receivable basis.

4. Resource Expended

Resources expended are included in the Statement of Financial Activities inclusive of VAT which cannot be recovered. Direct charitable expenditure include includes the direct costs of the activities. Where such costs relate to more than one functional cost category, they have been apportioned in line with the direct costs of the relevant service.

5. Taxation

MEWSo is a registered charity and is not liable for corporation tax on its income under section 505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 to the extent that it is applied to its charitable activities.

6. Tangible fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation.

No Fixed asset to be depreciated in this year.

7. Staff Costs

The total staff cost for the year on payroll was £140,119 (£118,226 in 2022/23) including Tax, NIC and pension. Total numbers of employees were 6 in this year.

4 self-employed staff were used in this financial year

Trustees are not remunerated.

8. Status

MEWSo is a registered charity.

9. Fund Accounting

Fund accounting unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a specific purpose.

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the charity's work.

10. Support Cost

Allocation of support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back-office costs, finance, personnel, and governance costs which support the Charity activities. These costs have been allocated between cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The bases on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 17.

11. Taxation

MEWSo is a registered charity and is not liable for corporation tax on its income under section 505 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 to the extent that it is applied to its charitable activities.

12. Debtors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trust For London	-	15,020
Other debtors	70	-
	<u>70</u>	<u>15,020</u>

13. Accrual and Creditors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Professional fees	-	950
Other Creditors	3,245	1,683
	<u>3,245</u>	<u>2,633</u>

14. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds 2024</u>	<u>Total Funds 2023</u>
<u>RESOURCES EXPENDED</u>	£	£	£	£
Charitable Expenses:				
Staff Costs and Sessional Workers	2,503	204,279	206,782	174,468
Training, Workshops and Activities	-	14,719	14,719	5,986
Partnerships and Collaboration	-	16,099	16,099	-
Participants Expenses	-	2,318	2,318	1,785
Volunteer Expenses	-	4,601	4,601	2,739
Rent and Room Hire	-	6,581	6,581	6,761
Equipment & hiring	-	630	630	1,110
Publicity & Advertisement	-	378	378	1,040
Memberships and Subscription	-	1,887	1,887	4,936
Refreshments and Catering	-	1,834	1,834	1,765
Transport and Travel	-	2,231	2,231	2,166
Professional and Consultancy fees	-	6,690	6,690	11,708
Insurance	-	228	228	683
Office & IT Expenses	114	5,819	5,933	3,184
Total Charitable Activities	2,617	268,294	270,911	218,332

15. Analysis of Restricted Fund

	Balance at 1st April 2023	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	Balance at 31st March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Action Funder	-	4,999	194	4,805
Trust For London	15,020	-	15,020	-
Islington Fund	-	5,585	2,450	3,135
London Community Found.	57,052	66,991	55,684	68,358
Haringey Council	-	4,125	4,125	-
Health Forum Fund	-	10,735	10,735	-
Rocket Science	337	-	337	-
Cripplegate Foundation	20,406	4,000	20,406	4,000
The National Lottery Fund	33,031	46,521	59,064	20,488
GLA Fund	-	500	500	-
City of Westminster Trust	-	7,528	3,836	3,692
Westminster Council	56,916	33,656	70,057	20,515
The Big Give Trust	3,017	-	3,017	-
Rosa Foundation	22,868	-	22,868	-
	208,649	184,639	268,293	124,993

16. Grant Receivable

Funder	<u>Purpose of Fund</u>	<u>Funds</u> 2024	<u>Funds</u> 2023
		£	£
The London Com. Foundation	Asylum, Migrants, Advice & Health	66,991	64,019
Action Funder	Health and Wellbeing	4,999	-
Islington Fund	Health and Wellbeing	5,585	2,505
Haringey Council	Health and Wellbeing	4,125	-
Rosa Fund	Counselling & Outreach	-	32,000
Health Forum Fund	Health and Wellbeing	10,735	-
GLA Fund	Health and Wellbeing	500	4,180
The National Lottery Fund	Domestic Violence Support	46,521	33,592
City of Westminster Trusts	Young Girls Support	7,528	7,528
Rocket Science	Digital Help & Support	-	9,000
Groundwork	Tackle Isolation & Loneliness	-	1,672
City of Hackney-NRPF	Health and Wellbeing	-	2,042
Trust For London	Domestic Violence Support	-	21,070
Cripplegate Foundation	Information & Advice	4,000	16,806
Westminster Council	Sports, Health & Wellbeing	33,656	44,816
The Big Give Trust	Domestic Violence Support	-	3,585
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCE		<u>184,639</u>	<u>242,815</u>

17. Governance and Support cost

	General Support	Governance	Total
	£	£	£
Professional and Consultancy fees	5,740	950	6,690
Insurance	-	228	228
Office & IT Expenses	5,819	-	5,819
Office Rent and Room Hire	6,581	-	6,581
	<u>18,140</u>	<u>1,178</u>	<u>19,319</u>