



MASS Action

Annual Report

April 2021 - March 2022

Migrant and Asylum Seekers Solidarity Action
87 Broadway, Cambridge, CB3 9NQ.
Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Charity Number: 1177804

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ABOUT MASS ACTION

MASS Action is a registered CIO that believes in collective action and solidarity for change. Our work centres the needs of migrants and asylum seekers by providing financial and logistical support through collaborations with projects that align with our core values. A big part of this is that projects are led by, or aim to centre and amplify the voices of those with lived experience of migration and asylum systems. We are proud to collaborate with projects that recognize the importance of community, build non-hierarchical relations and maintain financial transparency. As well as our work with partner projects, a priority for the association is advocating for political change and the free movement of people.

OUR MISSION

To support grassroots projects that provide dignified and sustainable initiatives for migrants and asylum seekers. To increase awareness of the social, economic, political and ecological factors which cause migration thereby challenging negative public perceptions on the movement of people.

CORE VALUES

- Equal rights regardless of legal status, nationality, religion, gender, age, sexuality or any other identity marker.
- Honest and dynamic engagement with the communities we work with
- Breaking-down hierarchies that are not just around us but between us
- Financial transparency and efficiency
- Collective action to challenge and overcome violent migration policies and border regimes

HISTORY

MASS Action was founded by nine individuals who felt frustrated by the lack of access to funding for small grassroots initiatives doing impressive work with very little resources . We saw how hard it is to juggle running impactful projects alongside applying for funding and maintaining social media campaigns. Donors, whether they are individuals making small donations, or big trusts giving out grants, are usually attracted to large scale projects with quantitative results. We can understand this, but we also felt there was a huge need to increase funding for projects that focus

on social impact through building relationships and communities; where small donations have a big impact. We registered with the UK Charities Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2018 and since then have been working with various partner projects to provide funding to sustain their operations as well as logistical support and advice.

MEETING OUR OBJECTIVES

Our idea for bringing about change is based on an understanding that we need financial redistribution to projects who are facilitating sustainable and dignified initiatives as well as collective action against violent migration policies. This was central to the inception of the association, we wanted to advocate for a new way of viewing the movement of people to challenge and overcome negative discourse. In this past year of operations we have prioritised fundraising to provide stability for partner projects.

We achieve our objectives in two ways:

1. First, by granting money to and fundraising in collaboration with projects we are either partnered to or consider within our supporting scope. We are holding an annual open call for funding applications in order to reach more projects. We are currently fundraising through grant applications as well as online fundraisers.
2. Second, MASS Action raises awareness of issues around migration more broadly. We do this with regular posts on Facebook and Instagram, sharing reliable news sources and publishing longer informative social media posts that reflect the reality of being a migrant or asylum seeker in the UK or more generally in Europe.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the charity commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the trust's aims and objectives in planning future activities.

PROJECT FOCUS

Part of the functioning of MASS Action concerns support to partner projects in fundraising. We provide a platform through which projects can hold online fundraisers, claiming gift aid on all eligible UK donations. Furthermore projects can apply collaboratively for grants that require a UK charitable status for eligibility purposes. The following projects are our current partners:

Khora

Athens - Partner since 2018

Khora is a self-organised collective of individuals, registered as an association in Athens, Greece. It began in 2016 when a group of volunteers working in Lesbos came to Athens and opened a community centre. Contained within an eight-story building, Khora Community Centre provided a vast array of services that aimed to meet both short and long term needs of migrants, asylum seekers and locals in Athens. This included food, clothing, education, legal support, information sharing and signposting, safe spaces for children and women, creative workshops and a whole host of other events. More than anything, what Khora offered was a feeling of community, a friendly environment that welcomed everyone, without judgement or labels. Sadly the centre had to close down in 2018 due to building licensing issues. After a long search Khora now rents two new spaces in addition to the already existing Free Shop space. One of these new buildings houses the Khora Asylum Support team, a makerspace group called The Beehive, The United African Women Organisation and a music space. The other building houses the activities of the Khora Kitchen and Cafe.

Mazi Housing Project

Athens - Partner since 2018

Mazi is a housing project which provides a home to six displaced young men who are in Athens on their own and were previously homeless. Mazi, meaning 'together' in Greek, speaks to the sense of community and support central to the initiative. The project is aimed at a group that is often ignored by both governments and NGOs: young men. The project challenges cycles of dependency by empowering residents to overcome social exclusion through holistic and collaborative support. Without housing in Greece you cannot access vital services including non-emergency health care, registered employment, financial support, a bank account, public education, or even a public transport card. While minors are given a certain amount of support, many young individuals find themselves in a highly vulnerable position when they turn eighteen and are suddenly no longer able to access this support. A safe, secure house can provide protection not only from exposure to crime, violence, drug abuse and sexual exploitation whilst living on the streets but also allows these young men to go to classes, get a job, receive financial support and build basic autonomy.

Play Up! (formerly Kids Klub)

Athens - Partner since 2018

Play Up! creates safe play and learning spaces inside informal living spaces in Athens. Play Up! consists of a team of volunteers who run daily play and learning sessions for children. The aim of Play Up! is to provide spaces (classrooms, family spaces, outside playgrounds), for children and their parents to come to play and to learn. Through the long term connections made within these family spaces, a supportive community of parents, children and volunteers is established.

Syrian Greek Youth Forum

Athens - Partner since 2019

The Syrian and Greek Youth Forum (SGYF) – an international activism movement in Athens, Greece. They work to support community-building activities, provide pathways to employment, and to contribute and participate in research to implement sustainable solutions for an inclusive society.

LGBT Unity

Glasgow - Partner since 2020

The LGBT Unity Glasgow group is a space where LGBTQ+ people navigating the asylum system, and people supporting them come together to share ideas, interact and to express their feelings. The group is only open to people who identify as LGBTQ+. LGBT UNITY Glasgow is supporting its members with food vouchers, mobile phone top-up vouchers and other essential items on a weekly basis especially to those who are destitute without any support while they are still in asylum process and those living at the hotels, and those with mental health issues.

Chamomile

Athens - Partner since 2021

Chamomile Housing Project provides holistic supportive accommodation and social support to previously homeless displaced people (refugees, asylum seekers, migrants) with psychosocial challenges with the final aim of independent living for all residents. Chamomile Housing Project grew out of Amigos de Ritsona Accommodation Project - an informal accommodation project that has been working with displaced people who have mental health challenges since 2017. They provided accommodation and connections to psychosocial support encouraging independent living throughout the program and with the aim of full independence from the project itself. In 2020 the opportunity emerged to expand the project both in numbers and scope. A formal partnership was cemented with Babel Day Centre (LINK) and in August 2020 they began taking referrals for a new program which provides housing, psychosocial support and material support. Eight apartments are currently operating; three more will open in the coming month.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Capacity Building:

- Advertised and inducted one new volunteer (Jessie)
- Started collaboration with established fundraising group Thighs of Steel (see below)

Projects Supported:

- Miles on MASS fundraiser
- Mazi Marathon Fundraiser
- Chamomile Marathon Fundraiser
- Khora 5 Years of Solidarity Fundraiser
- Push Back Against Bike Fundraiser
- Spring Open Funding Call Opened

Outreach:

- Enhanced our social media presence on Facebook and Instagram through regular posting, inter-organisational campaigns and advocacy.
- Broadened outreach through the Open Call by supporting projects across a range of sectors (healthcare, physical wellbeing and sports, digital support, advocacy, LGBTQIA+ rights)

Collaboration with Thighs of Steel

Thighs of Steel (ToS) organises challenging physical bike rides with the aim of fundraising for refugee projects and organisations. Their main event, a relay from the UK to Athens, is Europe's longest charity bike ride. In 2020 and 2021, ToS organised two successful UK-based, pandemic-friendly adventures. In 2022, they are back with another relay ride to Athens, this time leaving from Glasgow. Since 2016, ToS's adventures have raised £532,223, more than half of which has been granted to Khora, a project in Athens.

For their upcoming 2022 ToS have been looking for a group to manage the logistics of the online fundraiser and the distribution of funds. Due to our mutual collaboration with Khora we started discussions regarding partnering with one another late in 2021 and signing a memorandum of understanding in 2022. The key commitments of our working relationship are as follows:

MASS Action commits to:

- providing ToS with an appropriate platform to raise funds during the ride;
- claiming gift aid where legal on any donations made;
- distributing funds to projects in line with the timeline below; and
- communicating the chosen grantees to ToS in a timely manner and occasionally updating ToS regarding the projects of those grantees.

MASS Action and Thighs of Steel will mutually agree the target or aims of each fundraising campaign, before it is launched. This could include:

- specific organisations that will be funded, as long as that project meets MASS Action's funding criteria
- characteristics of organisations
- or types of outcomes that would be funded.

The funds raised by ToS across the Summer of 2022 will be distributed in an open funding call in Autumn 2022 following a similar model to that carried out previously. ToS and MASS Action also agreed to ring-fence a proportion of the raised funds to go toward Khora's running costs across 2022 and 2023.

Fundraisers Hosted

Miles on MASS fundraiser

- Miles on MASS was an internal MASS fundraising event in order to raise funds for MASS action running costs. The format of this fundraiser was a virtual marathon taking place in May 2022 where people conducted their own fundraisers centred on a feat of physical distance conducted simultaneously. This included runs, cycles and kayaks. The fundraiser successfully raised £3821.08.

Mazi and Chamomile Marathon Fundraiser

- Partner Projects Mazi Housing Project and Chamomile both carried out marathons in order to raise money for their respective accommodation projects (details above). Both teams successfully completed their marathons and raised impressive amounts to meet their running costs. Mazi raised £7305.45 and Chamomile raised £8115.87.

Khora Fundraiser

- Khora started an online fundraising campaign through MASS Action in order to raise money to cover the costs of rent and fresh food in 2022. This was a hugely successful campaign, raising £21482.36.

Push Back Against Bikes Fundraiser (PBAB)

- We started a partnership with PBAB who planned to raise money for two Lesvos based projects. In May of 2022 PBAB will cycle 4,000km from Bristol - Turkey. They are undertaking the journey to fundraise for two organisation's - Legal Centre Lesvos and Yoga and Sport with Refugees.
 - The Legal Centre Lesvos is a non-profit legal aid organisation that provides free legal advice and representation to asylum-seekers and refugees. They also conduct

strategic litigation, primarily against illegal collective expulsions ('push backs'). The Legal Centre is currently taking the Greek government before the European Court of Human Rights in order to put a stop to this barbaric practice, which the Greek authorities deny the very existence of.

- Yoga and Sport with Refugees aims to build a strong and integrated community based on team-building and inclusive power or team sports and physical well-being. It provides the equipment, facilities, and expertise to provide asylum-seekers, refugees, and volunteers with a fun, supportive atmosphere in which to bond. It has recently lost a significant amount of funding due to the decision by One Happy Family to leave Lesvos.

Open Call Funding Grants- Spring 2022

In 2021 MASS Action applied for a grant to the Britford Bridge Trust for a £45000 2-year flexible grant in order to support our open funding call to projects working with displaced people. The grant application was accepted and we received the first instalment of the grant (£22500) in September of 2021. We launched an Open Funding Call in February 2022 which closed in March 2022. We are currently processing the 58 applications we received from projects based in the UK and Greece. Prior to the launch of the funding, MASS Action created promotional materials which were distributed through social media platforms and through our network. The application criteria was developed to encourage applicants from those entities that often struggle to access funding. The criteria and assessment method was designed to ensure a non-biased consideration of all incoming applications. The money distributed (£25000 total) through this funding call will be represented in the 2022-2023 annual report.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategic: Beginning a new partnership with Thighs of Steel presents the risk of taking a new strategic direction. This includes different decision-making processes which include both the opinions of Thighs of Steel and their network of supporters. Through our memorandum of understanding and regular check-ins with the Thighs network we intend to maintain healthy and consistent communication streams. As an organisation which uses consensus-based decision making and functions through a horizontal structure, MASS Action works towards dismantling the hierarchies in place across the third sector. While this structure allows all members of the team the opportunity to offer opinions, work in cooperation and individually to solve operational problems, it also presents the challenge of slower decision-making processes. We are addressing this by consolidating clear working groups and revolving responsibilities so pressure does not fall on a few individuals. Other continued risks include intensifying government migration policies in Greece and the UK, which pose heightened risks to our partner projects, their service-users and staff. MASS Action is alert to these developments and is constantly adapting to support our own team and partner projects through these uncertain circumstances.

Operational: Hosting our second Open Call has heightened our awareness of the need to consolidate our assessment process to ensure it is as consistent as possible. In light of this, and to incorporate the expertise of groups working on the ground we plan to recruit an external board of markers for the next Open Call. We intend to diversify the locations in which we deliver the Open Call. This presents an operational risk in terms of operations management and sustaining strong communication with partner projects. In regards to personnel, since MASS Action is run exclusively by volunteers, we face the ongoing risk of fluctuating capacity, availability and participation. A central risk for MASS Action is therefore the dual possibility of having limited capacity for important projects, and too much work falling on a small number of individuals. Furthermore the remote nature of our team may impact the cohesiveness of our group. However, our regular meetings and long-term distributed working structure puts us in a strong position to build and maintain good communication channels and working relationships.

Financial: Our partnership with Thighs of Steel presents new financial responsibilities and an increased funding stream. We plan to manage this risk through increasing capacity with more volunteers, and possibly reviewing the scoring process for grants to reflect any changes to the scope of the Open Call through looking at our previous Calls and what we can expect for the next one. Our continued fundraising focus is towards our partner projects and the Open Funding Call. As a result, an element of our financial risk is ensuring that we can accommodate for our modest annual overheads. Good accounting and awareness of the amount of unrestricted funds as well as outgoing

costs is needed to ensure there is enough in reserve to pay all bills and fees. Future grant proposals and unrestricted fundraisers should include a percentage contribution to our overhead costs.

Compliance: This is a medium risk area, the most important areas where MASS Action needs to ensure that it is compliant include GDPR, safeguarding, and areas of donor reporting. MASS Action has some systems in place to manage most of these, but we need to strengthen and evolve our policies to ensure there are clear roles and responsibilities, and ultimately accountability to individual, institutional and project stakeholders.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITY

The charity's trustees are responsible for ensuring the preparation of the trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and its compliance to all legal requirements. They are also responsible for safeguarding the reputation of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. The Trustees take pride in maintaining the integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity website and other social media.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Following on from the funding call we held in 2020 we wanted to try to acquire funds to put on regular funding calls. We found this challenging as most grant-giving bodies do not give grants for the purposes of re-granting to other projects. We applied again to Britford Bridge for a larger grant that would enable us to commit to at least two more funding calls over the coming years. Our application was successful therefore we will now focus our attention on organising the distribution of these funds through open funding calls.

At the start of 2022 we also embarked on a collaboration with Thighs of Steel. Thighs of Steel are a well established and organised fundraising group that have similar values to MASS action. Our ability to help facilitate their fundraising activities and manage the distribution of funds is a good example of a cohesive relationship built with our different strengths that could create a more consistent funding stream to grassroots projects working with displaced people in Europe. For

MASS Action, this means that we will have a larger pot of available funds to go towards our annual open funding calls.

Furthermore the fundraising platform that we provide to our partner projects has enabled a number of successful online fundraisers to be held over the past year. Khora, Chamomile and Mazi have all raised funds through MASS Action that will contribute to their running costs. It is great that we have been able to maintain an original objective of MASS Action in providing this fundraising platform making the process through which groups can fundraise less burdensome .

As our regular activities became more defined over the course of this year so have the possibilities of having more rigid roles. We anticipate that we will need to recruit further to support the obligations of our collaboration with Thighs of Steel, however we feel this will be easier with a better definition of the jobs related to this.

Financial review:

Charity income was £60758 for the financial year ending 31st March 2022 compared with charity income of £20772 for the financial year ending 31st March 2021. Total expenditure of £34195 for the financial year ending 31st March 2022 compared with expenditure of £45540 for the financial year ending 31st March 2021. Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action 2021-2022 financial year total fund balance was £36361.

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to and been associated with MASS Action during the course of this year. To the members of the MASS team, our partner projects new and old, and to all those who have supported and funded our work, we extend our deepest gratitude to you all.

Firstly, we would like to thank all those who organised fundraising events, both for specific projects and for assisting our overall objectives. Furthermore, we greatly appreciate the time and effort put in by all those involved in our Open Call. We also greatly appreciate the time and energy spent by all those who applied to the Funding Pot.

In August 2021 Jessie joined our team as an operational volunteer. We would like to express our welcome to Jessie and the experience and enthusiasm she will bring to our group.

Josie Dibnah



Calum Frost



LOOKING AHEAD

Looking to the future, we will continue to further the impactful work of MASS Action, by building on the successes of all the activities carried out this year and incorporating key learnings. To enable us to do so, we have summarised the main steps we will be taking to enable us to sustainably grow in five categories:

1. People and structure:

- As our capacity has fluctuated throughout the year, we intend to build a more robust working group system, within each we will have several volunteers.
- Building our volunteer base will allow us to engage in our activities more effectively, we hope that our collaboration with Thighs of Steel may help to build our volunteer base.
- We will ensure overhead costs are covered for all volunteers.

2. Outreach and Engagement:

- Through our second open funding call, we are hoping to continue to reach a broader range of projects, both within Greece and the UK.
- We intend to continue to expand our social media presence through more regular posts relating to events, news and advocacy.

3. Fundraising:

- We will continue to host online fundraisers on behalf of our partnered projects at their request
- We will continue to support our partnered projects in the application of grants, using our charity status when applications require it. Also we will manage the diversity of application needs of our partner projects.

- We will ring-fence a percentage of unrestricted funds to cover any operational expenses, determined by our predicted overhead costs.
- Develop clear guidance on what organisations we are willing to apply for funding from.

4. Projects:

- Continue to increase the number of projects we support and diversify the geographical distribution of projects
- Continue to work closely with supporting projects beyond fundraising activities.
- Develop a clear Monitoring & Evaluation framework to support an efficient MEL.
- Ensure we remind projects to complete and submit the required Monitoring & Evaluating forms.
- We will develop a robust process for launching open calls and will define specific criteria to support the shortlisting process. We will attempt to make the decision-making process of our funding calls more inclusive.

5. Networking and advocacy:

- We intend to organise more advocacy events, this will allow us to further develop our networks with other projects campaigning for issues around asylum and the movement of people
- We will centre people with experience of the asylum system as well Black, Indigenous and People of Colour when organising advocacy events.
- We will continue to work with projects and people across the UK and Greece. We hope to build a stronger, more diverse network with projects in multiple locations to share perspectives and grow collectively.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF MIGRANT AND ASYLUM SEEKER SOLIDARITY ACTION FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 APRIL 2021 TO 31 MARCH 2022

I report on the financial statements of Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2022 as amended.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the charity's Trustees of Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the charity regulations.

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charity as amended are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's financial statements as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Report

My investigation was conducted in accordance with the Charity Commissioners' General Directions. An examination comprises a review of the charity's accounting records and bank statements and a comparison of the financial statements to those records. It also includes considering any odd items or disclosures in the financial statements, as well as asking for explanations from you as trustees. Because the processes used do not offer all the evidence that would be needed in an audit, no opinion is given as to whether the financial statements present a "true and fair view," and the report is confined to the items listed below.

Independent Examiners' Statement

In connection with my investigation and all amendments done, no matter has come to my attention that gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with Section 30 of the Charities Act,
- The accounts were inconsistent with the accounting records,
- The accounts did not comply with the accounting requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I don't have any worries, and I haven't found anything else during the examination that should be brought up in this report so that the accounts can be understood properly.

Regards



Oladele Olayiwola
(Accountant)

MASS Action
Statement of Financial Activities (Receipts & Payments)
April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022

	Total	General Fund (U)	Chamomile (R)	Khora (R)	Mazi (R)	Thighs of Steel (R)
<i>Receipts</i>						
Income and Endowments						
Grants	22,500.00	22,500.00				
Income from Donations and Legacies	33,888.49	3,803.63	6,832.94	15,381.13	5,908.97	1,961.82
Gift Aid Claimed	4,369.78	617.25	1,061.37	1,261.27	1,197.23	232.66
Total Receipts	60,758.27	26,920.88	7,894.31	16,642.40	7,106.20	2,194.48
<i>Payments</i>						
Expenditure						
Charitable Activities						
Charity Management & Administration	865.74	865.74				
Bank Charges	96.21	96.21				
Project Grants	33,132.62		7,904.31	16,915.84	8,312.47	
Expenditure on Raising Funds	100.00	100.00				
Total Payments	34,194.57	1,061.95	7,904.31	16,915.84	8,312.47	0.00
All Receipts	60,758.27	26,920.88	7,894.31	16,642.40	7,106.20	2,194.48
All Payments	34,194.57	1,061.95	7,904.31	16,915.84	8,312.47	0.00
Transfers Between Funds	0.00	0.00	10.00	-10.00	0.00	0.00
Net Movement in Funds	26,563.70	25,858.93	0.00	-283.44	-1,206.27	2,194.48
Total Funds Brought Forward	9,796.83	8,307.12	0.00	283.44	1,206.27	0.00
Total Funds Carried Forward	36,360.53	34,166.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,194.48

Josie Dibnah



Calum Frost

