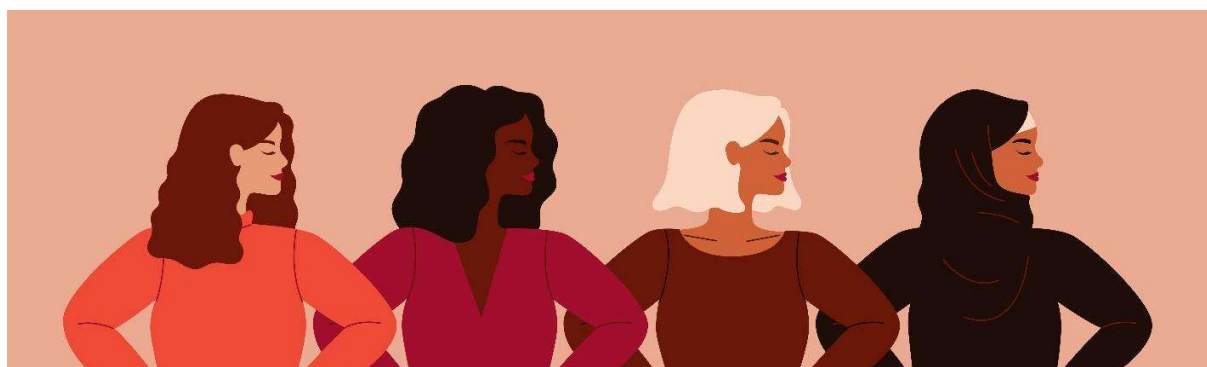


2020-2022 Annual Report



**Black and Minority
Ethnic Women's
Network**





Letter from the committee

Jan 2021 – March 2022

Last year, new members were elected to the board and we started new projects!

We were proud to partner with Training for Women Network and the Northwest Migrants' Forum on a number of projects.

April 2020 – December 2020

During this period of time, many board members took a leave of absence due to family bereavement and severe illness. However, the Network continued to remain active on the Racial Equality Subgroup and complete training programmes that had began in the previous financial year.

2021 Committee:

Sarah Stack, Chair
Sipho Sibanda, Vice-Chair & Secretary
Anita Covaciu, Treasurer
Coulilah Manjoo, Trustee (co-opted Nov 2021)
Lucy Cunningham, Secretary (co-opted Feb – Mar 2021)

Advisors:


Kristyene Boreland
Barbara Boyle

2020 Committee:

Lumturi Podrimaj, Chair (Jan 17 – Jan 21)
Kristyene Boreland, Vice-Chair (Jun 2015)
Sarah Stack, Secretary (Oct 17 - present)
Jennifer Yu, Trustee (Oct 17 – Jan 21)
Asma Niazi, Trustee (Mar 19 – Jan 21)

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The aim of the BME Women's Network is to promote gender and racial equality for BME women in Northern Ireland.

The objectives of the Network are to:

1. Develop the capacity of BME women so they can support and assist their communities on policies and services related to gender and racial equality.
2. Develop sustainable community based leadership of BME women in Northern Ireland.
3. Empower BME women through education, training and the development of role models.
4. Promote and increase BME women's participation in all aspects of public life.
5. Identify the issues and needs of BME women through data collection and research.
6. Organise BME women living in Northern Ireland through developing programs and organising activities.



Policy and Research

The Executive Office Racial Equality Subgroup

The Vice-Chair represents the Network at the Racial Equality Subgroup, which was launched at Stormont by the Executive Office around September 2016. The RES Subgroup meets four times a year in various locations around Northern Ireland. Additionally, the RES holds consultation events and information sessions.

Evidence Paper with Northwest Migrant's Forum

In collaboration with lead partner, Northwest Migrant's Forum, BMEWN along with a number of organisations supporting migrant and minority ethnic people, responded to the Executive Office's consultations on migrant and minority ethnic people living in Northern Ireland. Network members participated in focus groups in order to support the research and endorsed the final paper.

Racial Equality Strategy 16 years on, Tuesday 14 Sep

BMEWN members attended the NorthWest Migrants Forum, Belfast Multi-Cultural Association, Belfast Islamic Centre, NI Assembly and presented to the assembly on the work of the Network as well as our key objectives.



Education and Training

As part of the Women Involved in Community Transformation project (WICT is funded by the Department for Communities), BME Women's Network partnered with Training for Women Network (the lead partner of the Women Intervention Partnership) to deliver the WICT Training Programme which included the option to complete the ILM Level 2 Award in Leadership and Management.

In 2020, a cohort of 8 women took part in South Belfast and finished in 2021. In 2021, a cohort of 8 women took part in Ards and North Down.



Activities

Mobile Clothing Swap

In response to the social and economic crisis caused by the pandemic, BMEWN worked with TWN to create a mobile clothing swap for families in need. TWN members were able to donate their household items, furniture, hygiene products, clothing, toys and baby items to TWN offices and TWN staff collected bulky or large items. Then, BMEWN volunteers sorted the items and delivered them to asylum seekers, destitute asylum seekers, and migrant families who were signposted or requested support. In total, 18 families received donations in 2020-2021.

Eirene and Pax: Women of Peace Festival

In collaboration with lead partner Training for Women Network and Wheelworks Arts, we coordinated 5 events as part of an online Festival celebrating Women's History Month in March 2021. BMEWN facilitated the Same Difference and Sewing Together events, co-facilitated the Culture and Craft events with WheelWorks Arts, and our Vice-Chair spoke at TWN's closing dialogue event. 28 participants took part in activities together, meeting new women and building positive relationships.

Same Difference

13th March 2021 & 20th March 2021

Facilitated by our Vice Chair, Siphon Sibanda, the following women panelists spoke about their achievements and struggles as women as well as their hope for the future of Northern Ireland.



Panel 1 – 13th March 2021

Athi Silevu (Southern Africa)
Coulilah Manjoo (Mauritius)
Michelle (Northern Ireland)
Tian Yu Lloyd (China)

Panel 2 – 20th March 2021

Anita Covaciu (Romania)
Charlotte Cochard (France)
Kristyene Boreland (Singapore)
Barbara Boyle (Germany)

Sewing Together

26th March 2021

Led by Alexis Ekwueme



Culture and Crafts: Salt Dough Ring Bowls, 30th March 2021

Led by artist Fru with Wheelworks Arts



Culture and Crafts: Quilling 31st March 2021

Led by artist Fru with Wheelworks Arts



Opening Dialogue – Eirene and Pax: Women of Peace on Women in Public Life. 24th March 2021

Guest speakers:

Eileen Bell CBE, former Speaker of the NI Assembly and first woman Speaker
Siphon Sibanda, Human rights activist





Networking

BMEWN is a member of the following networks and organisations:

- NI Council for Voluntary Action
- Training for Women Network

BMEWN works for the public benefit for the charitable purpose number 8 under the Charity Commission for NI.

The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity



Who We Are



Sarah Stack

(Chair, elected Jan 2021)

Sarah is a qualified trainer and certified court mediator who moved to Northern Ireland in 2013. She is passionate about grassroots movements to enable all women and girls to access their rights. She currently serves on the UK Civil Society Women's Alliance Core Group, representing Northern Ireland. Previously Sarah worked in race relations in the US State of Georgia, serving on the Latino Initiative at the University of Georgia.

Sarah is an avid cyclist, plays the piano in her spare time and loves being an auntie.



Siphosibanda

*(Vice-Chair & Secretary,
elected Jan 2021)*

Siphosibanda is a Social policy student at Ulster University and Human Rights Activist. Siphosibanda is a founding member of Housing4All and the Current Chairperson of Refugee's Welcome NI.

Siphosibanda has a keen interest in social policy particularly as a tool for social justice. Siphosibanda is also a mother, and in her spare time she enjoys relaxing with a cup of coffee and catching up with friends.



Who We Are

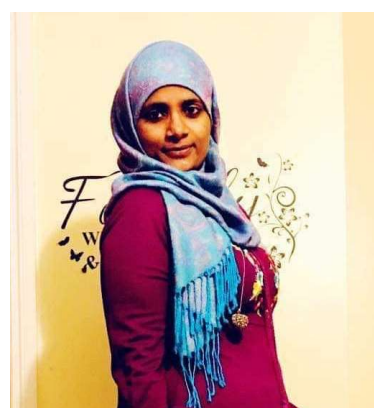


Anita Covaciu

(Treasurer, elected Jan 2021)

Anita is a Roma woman who has been living in Northern Ireland for 10 years. She volunteers with the Belfast Friendship Club as a committee member and has previously volunteered with the Roma Community. Issues that are important to her are addressing discrimination.

She is a qualified child development worker. She loves being an auntie.



Coumilah Manjoo

(Trustee, co-opted Nov 2021)

Coumilah is originally from Mauritius. As an EU citizen, she has lived in United Kingdom, Ireland and France, and Northern Ireland has been home for the last 12 years. She has studied various fields of social sciences as an undergrad and holds an LLM in Human Rights. She has a keen interest in intercultural dialogue and currently works extensively in the voluntary sector with grassroots organizations.

She is a daughter, sister and a mother of three children.

Our Advisors



Kristyene Boreland

(Advisor)

Kristyene was elected as the Network's first chair in 2015. During her tenure, she served as the Network's representative on the Racial Equality Subgroup, and we are pleased to continue to have her support and leadership.

Born in Singapore, Kristyene came to Northern Ireland in 1993. Before moving from East to West (a very big step), she lived in the Middle East.

She works as a Care Manager in the private, independent Nursing Sector. She has also completed a Diploma in Egyptian Dance, Peace and Reconciliation Diploma, Paralegal Studies, Aromatherapy and Reflexology, the latter which helped her integrate with local society via cross community activities.

She brought up two step boys and eventually her son came along in 1998.



Barbara Boyle

(Advisor)

Barbara was elected as the Network's secretary in 2015 and was instrumental in building the membership of the Network and setting up the Network as an independent registered charity. We are pleased to continue to have her support in order to meet the aims of the Network.

Barbara Boyle MA MA MCIL teaches German Business Communication at Queen's University Belfast and she is a registered interpreter/ translator with several language agencies. Since her arrival in Northern Ireland, she has been involved in cross-community and cross-cultural activities.

Her hobbies are creative writing, art, walking and photography. She has been married for 37 years and has two grown-up sons.

Approved and signed by:



Sarah Stack, Chair

Date: 5-11-2022



Sipho Sibanda, Vice-Chair & Secretary

Date: 5-11-2022