



ISLAMIC WOMEN'S WELFARE COUNCIL of Victoria Inc.

Annual Report 2009



Published by:

Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria Inc.

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ISBN: 0 9758204 9 4

Designed by: Savanah Design Pty Ltd



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Council structure

Committee of Management

Executive committee

Tasneem Chopra	Chairperson
Fazila Hajeb	Vice Chairperson
Rasheeda Cooper	Treasurer
Hena Kalam	Secretary

Members

Anisa Buckley
Nasya Bahfen
Urfa Masood

Current Staff

Joumanah El Matrah	Executive Director
Nuzhat Lotia	Manager and Research & Education Group Work SILC: Leadership Development Program and Cornerstones Program
Zakia Ebrahim	Casework Supervisor
Asha Bedar	Research & Education Worker SILC: Leadership Development Program and Cornerstones Program
Sultan Cinar	Legal Literacy Coordinator Citizenship Program
Jaweria Khalid	Women's Groupwork Settlement Worker Diversity, Choices & Communications Program & Parenting & Resettlement Program
Maisa Dornaika	Parenting & Young Women's Project Worker
Filiz Mehmet	Building Futures & Young Women Program
Zakia Ebrahim	Casework Supervisor
Diane Lowther	Office Administrator

Previous Staff

Ava Quam
Lamisse Hamouda
Moona Hammoud
Munira Mahmoud



Objectives and Vision

Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria is a community welfare organisation established and managed by Muslim women for Muslim women. The Council was established in 1991, as a non-religious organisation reflecting the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and sectarian diversity of Muslim women living in the state of Victoria.

The Council is founded on the belief that meaningful change in the status of Muslim women is to be achieved through the improved situation of Muslim women individually and building their capacity collectively. To this end, the Council aims to facilitate Muslim women's full participation in Australian society. The Council is a grass roots organisation, informed by the historical, present and evolving status and needs of Muslim women, reflecting the impressive and complex diversity present in the Muslim Australian community.

The Islamic Women's Welfare Council aims to facilitate Muslim women's full participation in Australian society by:

- developing and delivering programs and services to meet the needs of Muslim women in a manner consistent with their values,
- empowering Muslim women through information,
- skill development, support and advocacy,
- promoting social justice, access and equity in the provision of services to Muslim women,
- promoting women's right to equality, justice, and self determination,
- promoting the complexity and diversity of Muslim women's identities, and building an interconnectedness between women through increased awareness of their common and diverse challenges,
- working to eliminate discrimination against Muslim women both within their community and in the broader social, economic and political spheres of Australia.
- contributing to the development of knowledge about Muslims at all levels of government, amongst professionals and within the general community,

The Council's work has been well recognised by various levels of government, the service system and by the community. Current work priorities of the Council include:

- settlement of newly arrived women into Victoria,
- poverty and housing,
- violence against Muslim women,
- capacity building and leadership development,
- education and training,
- economic participation.

The Council works toward these priorities by:

- providing a generalist support service,
- assisting women to locate housing and shelter,
- undertaking a community education campaign on citizenship and Australian law,
- providing parenting education sessions,
- developing leadership capacities in Muslim women
- facilitating communication skill development among young women,
- conducting research and community education campaign on violence against Muslim women,
- working against racial, religious and gender based crimes and vilification of Muslim women,
- lobbying and advocating on behalf of Muslim women.

Services available to Muslim women

All Muslim women living in Victoria are entitled to access services and programs provided by the Council. Current services operating at the Council include:

- information and referral,
- individual casework support and counselling,
- range of skill development group work and community education sessions,
- recreation and support groups,
- individual mentoring programs,
- volunteer and student placements,

For mainstream and community organisations, government and academic institutions:

- cross-cultural training and training on Islam
- secondary consultations
- research
- projects
- student/volunteer placements
- publications

Chairperson's Report

I am delighted to present to you the 2009 Annual Report for the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria (Council).

The Council has once again enjoyed a year replete with activities at the local, state and national level, including a foray into the international level as well, courtesy of conferencing participation of our Director.

At the outset I wish to commend the tremendous efforts of our dedicated voluntary Committee of Management (COM). Each of our members has committed over and above the required expectations of any COM member, both in time and resource support. There is no doubt that the continued strengthening of our organisation is due in large part to the belief of our Committee and staff in the crucial difference we aim to make to improve the outcomes experienced by Muslim women in Victoria and beyond.

And speaking of the staff at IWWCV, I must begin by applauding Joumanah ElMatrah, without whose tireless dedication and foresight, many of the Council's objectives would be rendered incomplete. The value she has made to the IWWCV is highlighted by her recent appointment to Australian Multicultural Advisory Council – in recognition of both our organisation's and Joumanah's personal capacity. Additionally, Joumanah's subsequent appointment as board member to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission reflects the growing status in Australia of our staff members being sought out for such pivotal positions.

Other staff members at the Council have also made strides in their areas of casework support, leadership training, group workshops, community development – to name but a few

areas. The far reaching expertise of our staff has continued to ensure a high delivery of service to our valued clients. And as our client numbers continue to grow each year, so too do the capacities of our staff in dealing with them.

These past twelve months have seen the Council venture into work with men and family relationships. And while this is new territory it has been generally well received across the local Muslim community. There is fortunately a growing recognition that the input of men at a workshop and dialogue level is central to achieving better outcomes for women. We see this as a potential victory for the community at large, should we succeed in engaging an increased respect and awareness of overcoming the mistreatment of women.

I wish to thank our government departments and the various philanthropic agencies who have resourced our work in this past year. And I wish also to congratulate the Council's COM and staff for their pursuit in achieving gender justice for Muslim women across the board. While this continues to present a challenge for the Council in many spheres, it remains a goal central to our philosophy of empowering women to be agents of change themselves.

Tasneem Chopra

Executive Director's Report

It is with great pleasure that I present our 2009 Annual Report. This year is one of our signatory years, with the Council working on the state, national and international level. We have been working tirelessly to connect with and reflect what we see to be an international movement of Muslim women working for gender justice on multiple platforms and diverse contexts.

Victoria remains our priority and this year we have provided <?> services to women and children and <?> services to mainstream communities and service providers. The staff have continued to develop community education programs and further extend their networks with women. This year we have again taken our capacity building programs interstate working with our sister organisations. We have also spent considerable time focused on our casework delivery service with a new casework Manager, Zakia Ebrahim reviewing, and where appropriate revising our practices. This internal work will ensure that the Council continues to reflect industry standards and best professional practice.

This year we commenced, in a small way, working with men on issues of family relationships particularly as they relate to women. We will continue to explore whether working with men will consequently improve women's status in relationships. We have also ventured into media, commenting on and writing about, the typically controversial issues related to Islam and women. I believe there will be a great deal more media focus on polygyny and Shar'iah tribunals in the coming years; this of course is to the detriment of the Muslim community. There are many important developments this year, including follow up work from the release of our Race, Faith and Gender: Converging Discriminations

Against Muslim Women in Victoria, The Ongoing Impact of September 11, 2001. In addition, we participated in the international gathering of Muslim women for the Muslim Women: Building Institutions, Creating Change in Malaysia this year. This was a project of the Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equality. It was intensely liberating and inspiring to be in a room of Muslim women from all over the world working for gender justice within Islam.

There are some important expressions of thanks which must be made; firstly our committee of management headed up by Tasneem Chopra, both she and our Treasurer Rasheeda Cooper have worked assiduously for this organisation. KPI Bookkeeping, now undertake our booking and accounting needs, and their contribution to the Council has been significant. I also want to thank the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the Department of Family, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; both their Local Answers Section and the Office for Women, The Ian Potter Foundation, Victorian Multicultural Commission, R. E Ross Trust, The Helen McPherson Smith Trust, The Danks Trust and the Frank and Flora Leith Charitable Trust. Without the support of these donor organisations we simply could not have done our work.

Joumanah El Matrah

Highlights 2009



Young Muslim Women's Conference: Build Your Future

30 October, 2009

The annual young Muslim women's conference "Build your Future" was a great success. The conference was held in November and was attended by students from schools across Victoria. The theme of the conference was developed to complement the "Building Futures Project" that the Council has been running since 2003. The aim of the conference was to expose young women to a variety of study skills that would help them in their academic performance. The workshops on offer included essay writing, mind mapping, time management, effective communication and assertiveness skills. These skills workshops were followed by a small expo comprising stalls from Victoria University, Latrobe University, Kangan Batman TAFE, Eating Disorders Foundation and Victoria Legal Aid. The afternoon was then dedicated to some fun and recreational workshops such as bollywood dancing, hip hop and drumming.



Muslim Women's Community Lunch

22 May 2009

The Council has a long standing tradition of organising events for Muslim women from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, aimed at building and strengthening their social networks. In line with this tradition, the Council organised a community lunch in May 2009. The lunch was attended by over one hundred women from Afghani, African, Arab, Kurdish and Turkish backgrounds. We provided a relaxed, but private space, for Muslim women to interact with each other across communities. The aim was to develop and strengthen women's linkages and networks. The lunch was very successful. In the words of some of the participants;

"We really enjoyed today, mainly because it was a multi-cultural group and we were able to meet our sisters from Turkish, Arabic and African backgrounds," and

"I have never attended an event like this before and am very happy at its success and the turnout of women."

Launch of Race, Faith and Gender: Converging Discriminations against Muslim Women

The Ongoing Impact of 11 September 2001

Keynote Address: Professor Kevin M. Dunn,
University of Western Sydney

12 December 2009

Introduction

I acknowledge the office bearers of the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria, George Lekakis the Chair of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and the Honourable Maxine Morand the Minister for Women's Affairs, and Nazeem. I also acknowledge the Murray People for their stewardship and protection of this land for many thousands of years. Stewardship – the protection of the land, society and people – is a theme of my address today.

In the aftermath of the terror attacks in the United States of America on 11th September 2001 there was a dramatic increase in the experience of racism by Muslims, and those perceived to be Muslims, in countries like Australia. Of course, there is no logical link, nor any relation, between the two events. However, this report confirms the findings of reports across western nations of a spike in the actual experience of racism following those terror and subsequent events. The terrorist attacks, and the political statements and debates that swirl around those events, provide perpetrators of racism with some sort of license to act. The psychology of racist actions is not the focus of this Report. The report focuses, for my mind, on three much more important things: how this racism was experienced; how it might be linked to attitudes, and; what might be done by way of remedies.

Experiences

The first focus is on the experience of Muslim women in Victoria. These experiences were collected through focus groups, and so in this Report we hear the voices of those women, reported in their own way, on their own experiences. The experiences of racism are shocking, and the Report reveals the unacceptable

exposure of Australian Muslim women to racism. An underlying theme of this Report, as inferred in the title, is how Muslim women, especially those whose origins are in Africa, are vulnerable to an invidious intersectionality – they are exposed to the combined effect of religious intolerance, racial intolerance and gender discrimination.

There have now been countless reports across the western world which draw attention to how hijab-wearing women bare the brunt of anti-Islamic racism. When a racist converts their anti-Islamic feeling into a racist action they require certain corporeal clues, the hijab is one, so is complexion, other forms of dress and beards are clues. They can also be accent, name, or the suburb someone lives in. This means racists often get it wrong. Take for example reports of anti-Islamic racism against non-Muslim Britons (of Indian or Pakistani ancestry, but not Muslim). This is another example of the illogical nature of racism. And, they are another clue to how racism can be ridiculed.

These hate crimes and incivilities against Muslim Australians over the last decade should have been seen as a national emergency. The voices presented in this report strongly evoke the sadness and disappointment felt by these women. Their disappointment is largely linked to the failure of Government and civil society to protect them as citizens. They are saddened by instances where their fellow non-Muslim citizens stood by and did nothing while they were racially abused in the public spaces of Australian cities.

In some instances bystanders do intervene, to assist Muslims who are experiencing race hate in public space. These moments have especially productive effects, and are affirming moments for the Muslims involved, confirming their senses of belonging, citizenship and community (HREOC, 2004:173-4; IWWCV, 2008:42). Anti-racism



campaigns ought draw attention to the wider social merit that can be gained from ordinary people 'bearing witness to' and protesting the everyday racist incivilities that many Muslims endure

The quotations in this report do draw attention to the sadness, and senses of alienation. But, they also gave me the sense that most of these women remain confident in both their faith and their Australian citizenship, despite these awful experiences.

There is in general, a striking earnestness and integrity to the statements of these Victorians.

Attitudes

The second important focus of this Report is on the attitudes of non-Muslim Victorians. Six hundred non-Muslims were surveyed in mid-2005. The surveys reveal that most non-Muslims are not anti-Islamic: most have a positive view of Muslims and feel that relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Victoria were generally friendly, and most Victorians thought that the media portrays Muslims quite poorly. Close to half of the survey respondents perceive Islam to have gender relations that disadvantage women, and this Report wisely draws our attention to this strongly held perception. Most non-Muslims are aware of their own ignorance of Islam, too few have meaningful contact with Muslims, and they acknowledge their problematic reliance on the media for information about Islam.

When asked whether non-Muslims in Victoria have a good understanding of the Muslim way of life, 69 per cent disagreed. Only one-fifth agreed with that proposition (IWWCV, 2008:79-8). Contemporary anti-Muslim sentiment in the west is typified by ignorance and stereotypes. Most ordinary

Australians acknowledge this problem, with the majority also agreeing (71%) that Australians need to be more tolerant of Muslims.

Some of what passes for a little bit of knowledge of Islam is of concern (Dunn, 2005). It is a mix of critical comments, as well as odd perceptions of core beliefs and key religious performances. Ignorance is fertile soil for virtually any idea to take root.

In general, Victorians would prefer that non-Muslims were more tolerant of Muslims – that is an encouraging insight into public opinion. They also called for Muslims to be more integrated into Australian society, no doubt for reasons already outlined. These are reasoned sets of opinion from reasonable people.

Remedies

A third important emphasis in this Report is on the actions that might be taken to reduce racism. Specifically action is needed to assuage the extent of everyday racist incivilities that are experienced by Muslims in Australia, but we also need to set in place strategies to deal with the outbreaks of violence that follow terror events overseas.

The latter requires a much more robust set of anti-vilification and anti-discrimination provisions. Government agencies must be better able to act on behalf of people who have been vilified and racially attacked. The Australian Government's National Action Plan has an over-riding emphasis upon Muslim vulnerability to extremism, which is appropriately seen as linked to alienation. But very little of the National Action Plan addresses a core cause of that alienation – the experience of racism and discrimination.

From a 2006 national survey of peoples' experiences of racism across Australia (n: 4020) it was found that only a tiny proportion of racist incidents are reported to authorities or employers / teachers etc. For example, of those who had been called an offensive slang name for their own cultural group, only three per cent had taken some form of formal action. Sixty-nine per cent did nothing, pretended it did not happen or "got used to it" (Dunn et al. forthcoming). The most common forms of active response (22%) were to confront the perpetrator, perhaps through humor, to reason with them, or to seek some form of reconciliation.

If most direct anti-racism in society takes these everyday forms then there ought to be more policy attention to encouraging and assisting that activity. Dunn et al. (2008) concluded that "Everyday racism needs everyday anti-racism", and the same is also true for the everyday racism experienced by Muslims. This could include the role modeling (by celebrities or political leaders) of counter-Islamophobic rhetoric, and the development of catch phrases that are nationally-endorsed, easily deployed, and which undermine common anti-Muslim stereotypes. These tools would be principally discursive, and would need to appropriately leverage from national and local vernacular. For example, catch-phrases that operationalise the Australian discourse of the 'fair go' could be used in campaigns to undermine generalisations about Muslims. These catch-phrases would operate as put-downs and reprimands that can be deployed when vilifying comments are made.

Research funded by the Federal Government's National Action Plan, which interviewed 221 Muslims in Western Australia, found that the "Government is also viewed as having contributed" to Muslim's "relative exclusion" (Yasmeen, 2008:iv, 51-55,73). The Report (2008:123) being launched today concludes that Muslim women "want politicians to refrain from making sensationalist and inaccurate comments about Muslims" and insisted that they needed to take "a strong anti-racist stance". An interview informant quoted in this Report stated that "The Government must say 'Stop' to the racist people"; and, that further, "It is everyone's responsibility, but the government and the politicians have the main responsibility" (2008:58).

In Victoria, you have at least had the benefit of state leaders who were prepared to spurn the electoral temptations of Islamophobia, and prepared in some circumstances to challenge the anti-Islamic statements made by Federal politicians. More of that is needed, but in NSW, there has been scant little of that.

In 2004 the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission made the following observation as a conclusion to their *Isma' Project*.

"To help overcome the sense of alienation and isolation identified by so many participants, it was felt that strong, clear, and regular messages of support and solidarity from a range of national, state and local political and community leaders were crucial" (HREOC, 2004: 174).

The voices in this Report also call for better leadership from our politicians and other opinion makers, to speak against racism, and to both confront and spurn the temptations of Islamophobia. Muslim women in Victoria want their governments to protect them from racism, they want positive leadership, and they wish to be treated as full citizens.

Muslims women also want there to be more information, and better information, to be made available to non-Muslims about Islam. They are more than happy to be involved in cross-faith and the necessary cross-cultural meetings and other forms of dialogue that will help improve understandings.

It is noteworthy that Muslim women's recommendations for improving perceptions are overwhelmingly the same as the recommendations made by the majority of non-Muslims.

I applaud the staff of the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria for the insights contained in this Report. I congratulate the Myer Foundation for its support. I strongly recommend this Report to all Australians who believe in social justice, a fair go, and freedom of religion.

Project Reports 2009

Citizenship report

The Citizenship and Anti-Violence Project continued to work with individuals, as well as groups, with the aim to improve Muslim women's access to mainstream services, building community knowledge and capacity. The project's case work services were extended to 170 clients, focusing mainly on providing information and referrals to individuals approaching the Council for various issues including domestic violence, legal rights, and citizenship rights information.

The capacity building work of the project included a variety of information sessions, seminars and workshops to facilitate women's settlement in Victoria. Many workshops were held in collaboration with community legal services, on the Australian legal system. The Council collaborated with the Casey Cardinia and Broadmeadows Legal Services to run two community seminars on Victorian family violence law. Feedback from these sessions showed that the participants had increased their awareness of their rights and responsibilities as Australian citizens, information on mainstream support services and a greater understanding of the Australian legal system. These sessions were attended by women from diverse backgrounds including Afghani, African, Arab and Turkish backgrounds.

Another important aspect of the project's work was running a leadership training program for Afghani women aimed at improving their leadership skills. The aim was to increase their capacity to advocate for their community's needs. The workshop focused on the development of self-efficacy and leadership skills, including information provision that increased the women's capacity to support others in their community. The Council was also instrumental in coordinating the intake of 14 women to participate in a Certificate III Child Care course. Of these, 13 completed work placements, a requirement of the course. Five of these trained women have been offered jobs and some of them plan to undertake further studies.

The impact of the project's ongoing casework and capacity building work is evident from the fact that the Muslim women that we have worked with are now more receptive to discussions of sensitive issues, and are more willing to discuss and accept information about family violence, legal issues and orientation. Furthermore, Afghani women are taking the first steps to connect with services and with other communities. They have become more interested in receiving information and are more open to engagement with services. This has been one of the most difficult communities to

engage. Confidence and post-war trauma have been significant barriers in facilitating women's engagement from this community. Through our networking with other service providers, there are also indications that Muslim women have been using relevant mainstream services in greater numbers than before. This is very encouraging and we hope to continue our work in 2010. The Council, through this project, considers itself as a 'bridge builder' between newly arrived women and Australian service systems. Our work has taught us that without this bridge building work, many women would simply not seek assistance.

Young Women's Workers' Report

2009 has been another busy year for the Young Women's Program with an ongoing focus on working with newly arrived and refugee young Muslim women in secondary schools across Victoria. The commitment of the program remains to support and advocate for young women at an individual level, while also providing groupwork for young women in schools.

The individual support of young women during the year involved providing intensive support and advocacy aiming to empower young women, as well as facilitate their settlement within Australia. We also aimed to bolster their ability to deal with the expectations of the school system. We endeavoured to provide young women with information to reduce barriers when they accessed services. Accessing long-term housing remained the primary issue challenging their settlement young women. This year, the nature of cases work presenting to the Council increased in flexibility. Women presented with a range of issues including financial difficulties, family violence and breakdown, homelessness, and mental health issues.

Support and empowerment through group work involved running 6-8 week sessions with young Muslim women in schools across metropolitan and rural Victoria. The group work sessions focused on issues of importance to young women such as gender development, self esteem, identity development, health and well being, and positive communication skills. This year the group work program was held at the Fountain Gate Secondary College. The participating students came from diverse backgrounds, including Afghanistan, Egypt and Bosnia. Our commitment to work in rural areas also continued to be an important part of our group work program, and we conducted a two-day session on communication and leadership

Project Reports 2009

in Shepparton. This was attended by 15 Afghani and Iraqi young women. The sessions involved an interactive and participatory approach to learning, through the use of role plays, practical activities and group discussions.

In addition to the group work, the program ran a series of one-off workshops. Five workshops covering a range of topics including health and wellbeing, identity and respect, career pathways and challenges faced by young Australian women, were held during the year. A total of 84 young women participated in these workshops that were conducted at Gilmore Secondary College, Eummering Secondary College, East Preston Islamic College and Minaret Secondary College.

Requests from schools for group work programs and one off workshops continue to grow. Nonetheless, we have recently undertaken a promotional campaign to strengthen our existing networks and to develop new ones, so that our outreach to schools and other relevant organisations in Victoria is extended further.

The program itself underwent a staff change during 2009 and a new worker was inducted. This provided an opportunity to take a fresh look at the program activities, and to further develop the program content and delivery.

2009 has been another fruitful year and we have enjoyed working with young women, particularly within the group setting. We have watched these young women become more self-confident and self-assured as they develop important life skills through our program. We are looking forward to continuing our work in the new year, and building on our work in the past.

Parenting Program Report

In July 2009, the Council's parenting programme received DIAC funding for three years. The project aims to provide support to Muslim women who have recently settled in Victoria through information and skills development. We believe that a better understanding of the Australian system, especially the education sector, and improved parenting skills would facilitate the successful settlement of Muslim women in Australia.

During the year, the parenting project continued its case work support, information sessions, group-work and radio programmes in the Cities of Dandenong, Casey, Maribyrnong, Yarra, Hobson's Bay, Hume and Brimbank, offering The women who benefited from our services in 2009 were from Afghani, Sudanese, Somali, Iranian, Turkish,

Egyptian, Horn of Africa, Lebanese and Iraqi backgrounds.

As in previous years, the casework component of the programme was extremely busy in 2009. Housing remained a big issue for case-work clients; in addition, this year the Council also received a significantly higher number of complex cases involving domestic violence.

With a focus on child development and healthy disciplining techniques in the Australian context, a seven-week group programme was run with Sudanese women in Footscray from February to April, and with Afghani mothers from October to November. The sessions provided participants with an in-depth understanding of the different stages, both physical and mental, of child development, as well as the opportunity to discuss and share with each other their parenting experiences and practices. The women responded very positively to the space to develop an understanding of the importance of adapting parenting practices to suit their new context and according to Australian law, which they felt would facilitate their own and their family's settlement.

A number of meetings and consultations were held with the Collingwood Neighborhood House to initiate a group work program with newly arrived Muslim women from the Horn of Africa and Somalia who are participating in the English class. A meeting was also held with a Somali group leader to discuss the groupwork program, which will start in February 2010 in Braybrook Community Centre.

In addition, we ran 7 one-off information sessions on parenting, adolescence, Vitamin D, employment, training and effective communication with children, during the year. Approximately 120 women - from the Horn of African background, at a camp at Port Anglesea, and with Afghani women in South Eastern suburbs of Melbourne - participated in these sessions.

The Council continued consulting the community on issues of importance to them. Between March and June 2009, six individual and three group consultations were held with Muslim women regarding their parenting concerns and needs. Key issues identified by the parents/mothers included lack of parenting support (no family ties in Australia); a difficulty in understanding disciplining techniques in the Australian context and a difficulty in understanding Australian culture in general; language barriers, a lack of positive communication between them and their children; disagreement between the parents when disciplining the children and a lack of equality in sharing the responsibility of taking care of the children.

The parenting project also continued to provide consultancy services to schools, hospitals, community organizations and service providers on their concerns with their Muslim clients. A total of 90 secondary consultations were conducted during the year.

In April, the Council facilitated the Dandenong Afghan Women's group in attending community lunch organised by us. The event was aimed at including women who were isolated and marginalised, including elderly women, single young mothers and women who are without family and friends. We organised a bus for 60 women from an Afghani background to participate in the lunch. This allowed women to meet and socialise with Muslim women from other communities, and was a good opportunity for them to step outside their immediate community circle.

This year three radio programs were broadcast in Arabic, Turkish and Somali. The programmes focused on parenting issues such as adolescent parenting, early childhood, parenting in the Australian context, children's basic needs and parental expectations from children. The programmes were broadcast on 3CR, 3ZZZ and on SBS radio stations. The feedback received from the producer/presenters and from community was that the programmes were a great success and that more were needed on a regular basis.

The Council continued to provide information sessions on Islam and Muslim communities to the larger community. One session was conducted at Mercy Hospital in September during Ramadan, attended by doctors, nurses and dieticians. Another session, titled 'Intersection between Religion and Law', focusing on the effects of a proposed Sharia Tribunal on women and children, was held in October. A total of 40 people participated in the sessions.

Networking with and strengthening its links with generalist service providers for newly arrived Muslim communities issues and concerns, remained a focus for the Council. Some of the networks the parenting project is involved are: the North Eastern Regional Settlement Information Network (NERSIN), the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), New and Emerging Communities Advisory Committee meetings, IHSS-SGP Network Meetings and PEN Northern Parenting.

The year 2009 has been a productive and enjoyable one, and we look forward to the Parenting Conference in the coming year.

Building Futures Project Worker's Report

The Building Futures Project in 2009 developed a program model, which included comprehensive workshops focussing on study skills development. The specific need to run study skills workshops emerged from our work under the Homework support and the Young Women's programs. Many of the young women that were accessing the on-going Homework Support programs highlighted the need for specific study skills support.

The project has kept to its objectives of empowering young Muslim women to engage and actively participate in expanding their educational and career options with a focus on targeting young Muslim women who are at risk of leaving school early due to lack of language, literacy and social support needed to deal with the demands of the Australian educational system. The project provides young Muslim women the opportunity to seek support with developing effective strategies to enhance academic performance and study skills such as essay writing, note taking, critical analyses, language convention, goal setting, memory techniques and public speaking skills that are key to academic success.

The Building Futures project worked with young Muslim women between the ages of 13-18 years in Secondary school needing to develop their study skills in order to succeed within the Australian educational system and its expectations.

Eleven half-day workshops were run at Roxburgh Park Secondary College, Hume Central Secondary College, East Preston Islamic College, Australian International Academy and the Alevi Community Council. The participants were from diverse ethnic backgrounds including African, Lebanese, Iraqi, Pakistani, Indian and Turkish backgrounds. Many of them were from migrant families whose parents may not be very familiar with the educational system in Australia and hence unable to guide their children.

The workshops were run by qualified facilitators/tutors who planned the sessions according to feedback received from students and teachers through consultations. These consultations were an important step in the workshop program development and part of the working norm of the Council to develop project content based on the articulated needs of the target group. A note worthy aspect of this project was that the facilitators worked with the young women as their mentors rather than a school teacher figure, thereby, creating a space for young women to

As our work with schools continued, in late 2009 we also ran a workshop with Muslim secondary school girls (from years 8–10) at the East Preston Islamic College (EPIC), on youth awareness, relationship and leadership skills. The response from EPIC has been extremely positive and enthusiastic, demonstrating a high level of commitment to the development of their students. Plans for work with the school in 2010 are already underway.

One unique feature of SILC's work in 2009 was its first ever workshop with Muslim men under the Cornerstones project. The need to include men in some of our work with families has been expressed time and again by the women we have worked with, and for the first time, a workshop specifically for men was organised. Twenty-one men participated in a session exploring men's perspectives on their roles, relationships and needs in the family. The response to the workshop was highly positive, with men openly discussing their concerns as well as their needs for more support and information. The main feedback from the session was that the Council should hold more such workshops for men.

In 2008, SILC had started focused work with Muslim women's groups across Australia. After a series of workshops in the first year, SILC returned to 4 states in 2009 for another set of workshops. In Hobart and Brisbane, we ran basic leadership workshops with groups of women recruited by the Muslim women's organisation in Brisbane and the Migrant Resource Centre in Hobart. The workshops run in Sydney and Adelaide; however, were second-level workshops based on a more advanced organisation development module developed by SILC in 2008 for organisations who had already participated in the basic leadership workshop. This included a focus on developing a vision and prioritising areas of work, reaching diverse groups with the community, etc.

In addition to its group-work and training, SILC also conducted a series of radio programmes on parenting, relationships and leadership issues in the Arabic, Turkish and Somali languages on the SBS and 3CR radio stations.

We would like to thank all the groups, schools, radio stations and organisations with whose support such extensive work by the SILC programme was made possible.

Casework Supervision Report

In 2009, the Young Women's and Parenting Case Work stream continued to work with Muslim women experiencing family violence and disruption. The aim was to support their access to housing, employment, financial and Centrelink services, as well as psychological and family support services. This made possible opportunities for safety and wellbeing, empowerment and inclusion in the wider community.

Staff also provided general advice, referral and support to Muslim women on a range of matters including settlement support and immigration, civil matters and those relating to general health and wellbeing.

The nature of case work currently being undertaken is complex, requiring equally complex responses. Emerging trends include an increasing number of incidents of family violence. These incidents are associated with subsequent homelessness, difficulty navigating the Centerlink conundrum, a need for individual counselling to address issues relating to trauma, anxiety and depression, isolation from family and community networks, and uncertainty about the future.

In order to achieve the best possible outcomes for our clients, structured supervision of case work staff commenced in May 2009. The supervision process is considered to be the cornerstone of sound practice in all direct client service delivery. Structured supervision has enabled staff to objectively examine and reflect on professional practice, and to effectively case plan and manage our cases.

This has allowed us to ensure quality and safe service delivery to clients. Subsequently, it has also contributed to enhancing practitioners' skills and practice, as well as increasing practitioner confidence and capacity in meeting the demands of their role. Professional development opportunities have also been able to be identified through this reflective way of practicing and provided a mechanism for skilling staff, and providing them with the tools needed to undertake this challenging and rewarding work.

The case work stream continues to build its relationship with other service providers to ensure that Muslim women are directed to the most appropriate services to meet their needs. In addition, this relationship building ensures that service providers are given culturally informed and appropriate advice.

Annual General Meeting 2008 <year?>

Attended by:	Lorraine Kamp
Adele Murdolo	Lutfiye Aly
Alaa Al Boarab	Madeleine Laming
Aldo Malavisi	Marina Karlos
Amal EL Khoury	Medina Idriess
Barry Strmelj	Michelle Burrell
Bernice Murphy	Michelle Burton
Brenda Nash	Hon. Maxine Morand
Carolyn Favier	Minister for Women's Affairs & Children and Early Childhood Development
Cholie McIntyre	Nadia Mohamed
Christopher Sonn	Nagwa Yassin
Diana Orlando	Nazeem Hussain
Dilbear Kirimof	Philppa Mc Cleen
Dilek Giyik	Pro. Kevin Dunn
Dr. Diane Sisely	Rosalind Smallwood
Duan Al Boarab	Sency Aktag
Emily Morrison	Shalome Knoll
Esin Aydogan	Stephanie Cauchi
Fahim Shah	Sue Erdogan
Gabrielle Fakhri	Sue Wasterval
Genevieve Bishiop	Surmeli Aydogan
George Lekakis	Tulay Metinkocamis
Gullu Cakir	Vanessa Peters
Gulten Arslan	Yassin Mahmoud
Helen Sumers	Zeynep Yesilyurt
Hisham Moustafa	Zohre Acik
Ifakert Sumertes	
Jenny Norvick	
Kim Webster	

Special thanks to our funding bodies

Attorney General's Department

Darebin City Council

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs: Office for Women

Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

The Dank's Trust

The Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust

The Ian Potter Foundation

The R.E Ross Charitable Trust

Victorian Multicultural Commission



Independent Audit Report To The Members Of Islamic Women's Welfare Council Of Victoria Inc.

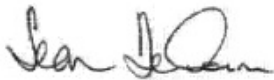
Report On The Financial Report

We Have Audited The Accompanying Financial Report, Being A Special Purpose Financial Report, Being A Special Purpose Financial Report, Of Islamic Women's Welfare Council Of Victoria Inc., Which Comprises The Balance Sheet, Statement Of Cash Flows As At 30 June 2009, And The Income Statement, A Summary Of Significant Accounting Policies, Other Explanatory Notes And The Statement By Members Of The Committee.

In Our Opinion:

The Financial Report Of Islamic Women's Welfare Council Of Victoria Inc. Is In Accordance With The Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria 1981) Including:

- I Giving A True And Fair View Of The Association's Financial Position As At 30 June 2009 And Of Their Performance For The Year Ended On That Date; And
- li Complying With Australian Accounting Standards (Including The Australian Accounting Interpretations) And The Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria 1981).



Sean Denham

Dated: 20 August 2009
Sean Denham & Associates
Cpa's
Suite 12, 13-25 Church Street Hawthorn Vic 3122

Income Statement for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

Income	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Grant Income		523,293	470,727
Interest received		723	379
Membership Fees		28	190
Sundry Income		-	1,239
Consultancy Fees		15,381	13,578
Sales & Publication		-	58
Donations		615	749
Project Management & Admin. Reimbursements		57,730	19,717
Melbourne Uni Service Fees		13,224	-
		610,994	506,637
Expenditure			
Salaries		354,165	337,064
Workcover		-	11,202
Superannuation		25,091	28,057
Staff Travel		37,052	14,577
Staff Amenities		2,175	-
Other Employment Costs		4,614	-
Audit Fees		7,840	5,638
Bank Charges		397	7
Cleaning		1,637	-
Capital Expenditure (minor equipment)		4,326	520
Evaluation Expenses		9,300	-
Postage		688	511
Printing/Photocopy/Fax		10,698	7,947
Rent & Rates		20,281	19,093
Maintenance		125	275
Catering		4,411	4,172
Resources		593	890
Office Expenses		6,531	10,656
Sundries		1,797	8,854
Telephone		5,509	1,411
A.G.M. Costs		31	308
Insurance		4,933	7,272
Meeting Costs		-	959
Training Costs		60	2,969
Publications/Subscriptions/Membership		1,002	634



Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Current Assets			
Cash	3	256,492	1 62,428
Trade and other receivables	4	23,674	-
Total Current Assets		280,166	162,428
Non Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	5	1,363	-
Total Non Current Assets		1,363	-
Total Assets		281,529	162,428
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other creditors	6	48,533	10,261
Amounts received in advance	7	-	16,892
Project balances	8	82,937	3 5,793
Provisions	9	62,667	4 4,081
Total Current Liabilities		194,137	1 07,027
Total Liabilities		194,137	107,027
Net Assets		87,392	55,401
Members' Funds			
Retained profits		87,392	55,401
Total members' funds		87,392	55,401

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Receipts from Grants (Recurrent)		529,871	470,501
Receipts from customers		86,978	35,531
Payments to suppliers and employees		(522,145)	(576,825)
Interest received		723	379
Net Cash provided by operating activities	10	95,427	(70,414)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
Payments for purchase of property and equipment		(1,363)	-
Net Cash provided by (used in) investing activities		(1,363)	-
Net increase (decrease) in cash held		94,064	(70,414)
Cash at the beginning of the year		162,428	232,842
Cash at the end of the year		256,492	162,428

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

Note 1: Statement Of Significant Accounting Policies

This Financial Report Is Special Purpose Financial Report Prepared In Order To Satisfy The Financial Reporting Requirements Of The Associations Incorporations Act (Vic.). The Committee Has Determined That The Association Is Not A Reporting Entity. The Financial Report Has Been Prepared In Accordance With The Requirements Of The Associations Incorporation Act (Vic.) And The Following Australian Accounting Standards:

- Aasb 101: Presentation Of Financial Statements;
- Aasb 107: Cash Flow Statements;
- Aasb 108: Accounting Policies, Changes In Accounting Estimates And Errors;
- Aasb 110: Events After The Balance Sheet Date;
- Aasb 112: Income Taxes
- Aasb 1031: Materiality;
- Aasb 1048: Interpretation And Application Of Standards.

No Other Applicable Accounting Standards, Urgent Issue Group Interpretations Or Other Authoritative Pronouncements Of The Australian Accounting Standards Board Have Been Applied.

The Financial Report Has Been Prepared On An Accrual Basis And Is Based On Historical Costs And Does Not Take Into Account Changing Money Values Or, Except Where Specifically Stated, Current Valuations Of Non-Current Assets.

The Following Material Accounting Policies, Which Are Consistent With The Previous Period Unless Otherwise Stated, Have Been Adopted In The Preparation Of This Financial Report.

A Income Tax

The Charge For Current Income Tax Expenses Is Based On Profit For The Year Adjusted For Non-Assessable Or Disallowed Items. It Is Calculated Using Tax Rates That Have Been Enacted By The Balance Sheet Date.

The Association Is Exempt From Paying Income Tax By Virtue Of Section 50-45 Of The Income Tax Assessment Act, 1997. Accordingly, Tax Effect Accounting Has Not Been Adopted.

B Fixed Assets

Leasehold Improvements And Office Equipment Are Carried At Cost Less, Where Applicable, Any Accumulated Depreciation.

The Depreciable Amount Of All Fixed Assets Are Depreciated Over The Useful Lives Of The Association Commencing From The Time The Asset Is Held Ready For Use.

C. Employee Entitlements

Provision Is Made For The Association's Liability For Employee Benefits Arising From Services Rendered By Employees To Balance Date. Employee Benefits That Are Expected To Be Settled Within One Year Have Been Measured At The Amount Expected To Be Paid When The Liability Is Settled. Employee Benefits Payable Later Than One Year Have Been Measured At The Present Value Of Estimated Future Cash Outflows To Be Made For Those Benefits.

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Note 2: Income Tax Expense			
Prima facie tax payable on operating profit at 30% (2008: 30%)		9,597	(5,821)
Less tax effect of:			
• non-taxable member income arising from principle of mutuality		(9,597)	5,821
Income tax expense		-	-
Note 3: Cash and cash equivalents			
Cash at bank		256,492	162,428
Note 4: Trade and other receivables			
Creditors and accruals		23,674	-
Note 5: Property, plant and equipment			
Office equipment - at cost		1,363	-
Less: Accumulated depreciation		-	-
		1,363	-
Note 6: Trade and other payables			
Creditors and accruals		39,347	1,700
BAS amounts payable		9,186	8,561
		48,533	10,261
Note 7: Amounts received in advance			
Grants in advance		-	16,892
Note 8: Project balances			
Project balance - DIAC #3		-	642
Project balance - Danks		9,901	-
Project balance - Ian Potter		30,235	-
Project balance - Leith		7,901	-
Project balance - Attorney General's Dept		34,900	35,151
		82,937	35,793
Note 9: Provisions			
Current			
Provision for annual leave		37,056	20,254
Provision for long service leave		25,611	23,827
		62,667	44,081

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2009

	Note	2009 \$	2008 \$
Note 10: Reconciliation of Cash Flow from Operations with Profit from Ordinary Activities after Income Tax			
Profit after income tax		31,991	(19,403)
Cash flows excluded from operating profit attributable to operating activities			
Non-cash flows in profit			
• Depreciation	-	-	
Changes in assets and liabilities;			
• (Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(23,674)	-	
• Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	38,272	(971)	
• Increase/(decrease) in amounts received in advance	(16,892)	(225)	
• Increase/(decrease) in project balances	47,144	(66,098)	
• Increase/(decrease) in provisions	18,586	16,283	
Net cash provided by Operating Activities		95,427	(70,414)

Statement by Members of the Committee for The Year Ended 30 June 2009

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 7:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria Inc. and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

<?>

Tasneem Chopra - Chairperson

Dated: <?>

<?>

Rasheeda Cooper - Treasurer

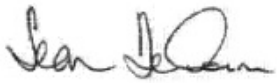
Dated: <?>



In our opinion:

The financial report of Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria Inc. is in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria 1981) including:

- i giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2009 and of their performance for the year ended on that date; and
- ii complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria 1981).



Sean Denham

Dated: 20 August 2009

Sean Denham & Associates

Cpa's

Suite 12, 13-25 Church Street Hawthorn Vic 3122

Islamic Women's Welfare
Council of Victoria Inc.

First Floor, 19 Arthurton Road
Northcote Vic 3070

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