



**BLACK WOMEN'S
HEALTH & FAMILY
SUPPORT**

Annual Report 2006 - 2007

25 Years of Success

**25
YEARS**

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ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

PATRONS

Mrs Berhane Ras-Work (President Inter-African Committee)
Baroness Ruth Rendell
Baroness Pola Uddin

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Mr Mahamed Elmi	Chairperson
Ms Comfort Momoh	Co-Chair
Ms Suzette Barry	Secretary
Mr Abdi Ahmed Hassan	Treasurer
Ms Saada Rahme	Member
Ms Amma Anane-Agyei	Member
Ms Ayan Farah	Member
Mr Anthony Uwadiale	Co-opted Member
Ms Zainab Warsame	Member
Ms Una Howe	Member
Mr John Dua-Agyemang	Member
Ms Nadia Adan	Member
Mr Abdulgadir Abass	Member
Ms Helen Parslow	Member
Ms Zainab Warsame	Member

ADMINISTRATOR/SUPPORT WORKER

Mr Ahmed Dirir	Operations Director	Ms Joycelyn Hayford	Acting Director
Ms Faduma Hassan	FGM Peer Educ. Co-ordinator	Ms Shanti Kar	Finance Worker
Mr Ahmed Mire	Youth Dev. Worker/Access Co-ordinator	Mr Mustapha Hassan	Access Worker
Ms Asha Ibrahim	Luncheon Club Cook	Ms Zainab Sharif	Arabic Tutor
Mr Aided Elmi Ali	Care Support Worker	Ms Fowzia Jama	Mother Tongue Tutor
Ms Sada Dirir	Senior Play & Support Worker	Mr Mohamed Hirsi	ICT Tutor
Ms Christine Lungu	Administrator/Support Worker	Ms Asha Guled	Cook
Ms Julie N Begum	ESOL Tutor	Ms Maliha Khatun	Sewing Teacher
Ms Balkis Karim	Massage and Reflexology	Ms Hodo Adan	Support Worker
Ms Asna Hassan	Support Worker	Ms Sahra Cali	Cleaner

VOLUNTEERS/PLACEMENTS LIST

Halema Khanom	Sheila Levers	Maria Adeboje	Ese Odiette Dura
Fathema Subhan	Nilima Begum	Jasmin Begum	Fatima Ali
Zandra Ejimonyeabala	Sarah E. Oboh	Sarah Gowan	Cynthia Waithe
Fatema Begum	Sabiha Karim	Mohamed Ali	Shamala Zaman
Alta Sinclair	Ayana Tyler Hosten	Elisabeth Allinson	Agnes Ines. Bezzina
Christine Lungu	Chyanne Cockings-Gibson	Jean Boyce	Jazmin Morgan
Helen Adejumo	Anita Sagnia	Veronica Robinson	Anika Williams
Makeda Mckenzie	Kimberley Wilson	Denise Paul	Sahra Abdi Hassan



CO-CHAIR REMARKS

I am very proud to continue supporting this grass-roots organisation, as Co-Chair in what is my 10th year with BWHAFS - a unique organisation. We have seen changes during this time; the name of the organisation has changed from London Black Women's Health Action Project (LBWHAP) to Black Women Health & Family Support (BWHAFS), our founder and Director Shamis Dirir retired and our Acting Director resigned last year.

We now have a new Director and she and her dedicated team are working very hard to regain our funding and to continue the good work. We have made headway since last year and remain optimistic that next year will be even better in terms of funding and activities to our clients and providers. I am very proud of you all for the support and time you provide to our clients and service users.

We are extremely fortunate and blessed to have dedicated people working for this organisation - the management committee, staff and voluntary personnel. Their efforts and support have seen us through very challenging times, both financially and physically and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our funders, donors, supporters, staff and voluntary workers the management committee, our clients and all the organisations that we work with for their continuing support for BWHAFS.

You are all cordially invited to our 25th Anniversary on, Wednesday 24th October 2007, at the Oxford House Plc, 2 Derbyshire Street, Bethnal Green Road, London E2 6HG. Please make it a date and join us in celebrating our achievements and support for the community.

Comfort Momoh
(Co-Chair)

OUTGOING BWHAFS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

I have enjoyed managing Black Women's Health and Family Support (BWHAFS) and while it was challenging, I feel that it has been a great experience. When I took on the role of Director following the early retirement of my mother Mrs Shamis Dirir (founder), it was like 'hitting the ground running'. Whilst I understood the organisation very well, there were many financial difficulties that needed immediate attention.

They say that institutions that cannot adapt to change become extinct; well, BWHAFS is a real example of organisational survival. My aim was to diversify the work of the organisation and build on existing good work done within the care sector. As a long-term personal carer of my brother I knew personally what informal carers went through looking after members of their families and not being able to work or study. My focus was to develop a dedicated Somali Carers Project that would specialise in meeting the needs of Somali carers in Tower Hamlets.

After much campaigning and highlighting of issues facing Somali Carers, we finally managed to secure a research and pilot project that flagged up many unmet needs, eventually turning into a fully-fledged Somali Carers Project that today assesses and supports the needs of Somali carers in a multitude of ways. My other achievement was to secure funding with a grant from the Neighbourhood Renewal Funding that would build on existing work with Somali elderly women, making BWHAFS the focal point or hub for Somali elderly women in Tower Hamlets.

Much of my time was spent involved in various boards and platforms representing the rights of ethnic minority carers and in particular Somali carers. I worked on the Older People's Partnership Board and The Involvement Consortium most of the time. I am glad to say that BWHAFS is thriving and in a much stronger position today.



The organisation is very special to me, as my mother Shamis Dirir was one of the main founders and Director for over 20 years. I left on six months extended leave in November 2006, eventually handing over the reigns of the organisation to my long-time colleague and friend Joycelyn Hayford in April 2007. I would like to say that it has been an honour and pleasure to work with her and other members of the organisation I have come to love.

I have relocated my family and started a new life in the Somaliland Republic, starting a new business in Water Well Drilling and renewable energy. I am very happy to say that my family's relocation is complete and the start of my new business has gone well. I have now decided to be permanently based in Somaliland with my family and will probably travel to the UK now and again.

I would like to say goodbye and wish happiness to all the people I have had the pleasure to come across while working in Tower Hamlets.

Best regards

Mr Ahmed Dirir
Outgoing Director

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Joycelyn Hayford

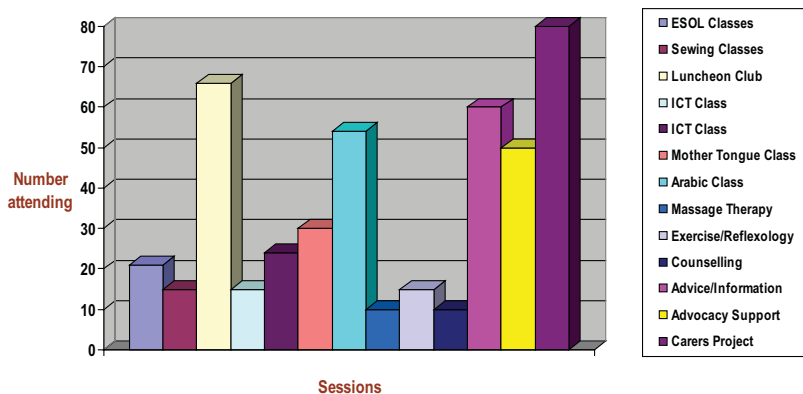


Black Women's Health and Family Support is growing from strength to strength. Since its inception in 1982 the project has supported Black and Minority Ethnic Groups locally, nationally and internationally.

As part of community development and women's empowerment, BWHAFS has effortlessly supported local women, children, young people, older people and families. Over the past 25 years the project has developed a menu of programmes and activities to help meet the needs of its target groups, providing advice, guidance, counselling services, employability training, English language support, ICT training, sewing lessons, healthy move sessions, massage/reflexology therapy and luncheon services for older people.

We are indeed pleased to report that the project's services has expanded and the number of service users has increased considerably over the past year following our successes in obtaining funding from the following sources: London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (50+) programme, Henry Smith Charity, and the Leaside Regeneration Funding (Action for Bow fund). We also obtained a one-off grant from the (LBTH) Challenge Fund to conduct an access audit of our premises, which was successfully carried out by the Helen Allen Design Associates (HADA), and to provide some training for the staff.

SERVICES STATISTICS



To date BWHAFS provides services for up to 454 clients each week, and most of these projects are oversubscribed.



BWHAFS continues to play an active role in campaigning against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), raising awareness of the amended legislation amongst practising communities by running educational workshops, training sessions, conferences and seminars for both the practising communities and health professionals. This year, demand for information and advice on this issue has soared dramatically. The project receives emails, letters and phone calls on FGM from solicitors, GPs, schools, the Home Office and from international organisations on a regular basis. Students studying at Universities use our educational resources for their projects and dissertations, which is a great credit to the organisation. BWHAFS readily acknowledges that after 25 years of struggle against the practice the message is gradually getting across to practising communities and health and educational professionals.

BWHAFS' continued work with marginalized Somali people has made the Care Project very popular in the London Borough of the Tower Hamlets. The project has been very successful in identifying a high number of Somali Carers in the borough that had no access to respite care. The project has progressed in identifying carers needs, providing advice, supporting and working closely with them. The project is now aiming to pursue this community work, by setting up a care agency; there is a great demand amongst the Somali community, as majority of them will not use other day care centres. In order for this dream to come true, BWHAFS requires a Care Manager.

The entire staff and volunteers also had the privilege of undertaking series of developmental training to help enhance their skills and to enable them to perform effectively. Some of these training sessions were held in-house whilst others were held externally. Feedback from the staff and volunteers shows that all training sessions were very useful and informative.

- First Aid
- Disability Awareness Training
- Food Hygiene
- Health & Safety
- General Fire Safety
- Manual Handling

The year has been very exciting and challenging, most especially Acting as the Director of the organisation. My new role began when Ahmed Dirir (Operations Director) took extended leave. My new role was familiar, as I have worked in the organisation for 13 years and I am happy to report that the project is making great headway. All projects are running successfully. We very much look forward to commemorating our 25th anniversary in grand style in October 2007, as we focus on our achievements in empowering women within the community to make informed choices and to share our success in campaigning against the harmful practice of Female Genital Mutilation. We at BWHAFS take pride in this

progress and we hope you will join us to celebrate this memorable occasion.

On behalf of the entire organisation we say a big thank you to all our funders and individual donors for supporting the organisation financially to enable this expansion of services to take place. The staff team, volunteers, and placement students have performed tremendously well this year, and they deserve our unreserved praise. Our utmost thanks also goes to the management committee for their time and effort and to our service users.

ADMINISTRATOR/SUPPORT WORKER'S REPORT

I came to BWHAFS as a volunteer from Action for Employment in November 2006. I worked alongside Joycelyn Hayford who gave me a lot of support and encouragement. I fitted in well in my role as a volunteer and all the staff were very accommodating.

I enjoyed volunteering at BWHAFS so much that when the vacancy in Administration came up I applied for the post.

I am pleased to confirm that I am now working for the organisation, as both an Administrator and a Support Worker for various projects. I also offer support to the volunteers and placements. The role can be a challenging one sometimes, as communication with the service users can prove difficult, but on the positive side, the service users are now able to communicate in English and they now feel more confident and much happier in themselves.

The year so far has been very busy and challenging, as I was involved in organising MC meetings and the International Women's Day in March. The experience was very rewarding and I got to know the members of the committee and members of other organisations. I am pleased to say that I have been able to build a good working relationship with service users, so much so that some of them are now approaching me for assistance, especially with welfare rights and billing issues. I get a lot of satisfaction from my job, as I enjoy assisting clients with their day-to-day queries.

So far 31 volunteers and placement students have been supported and they have the benefit of learning skills such as, typing, faxing, binding, laminating and performing reception duties. To date 15 volunteers had gained full time employment. The volunteers and placements play a very important role in the day-to-day running of the organisation and I would like to thank them for their valuable help. I would also like to thank our funders and donors for all their support and contributions.

Christine Lungu
Administrator/Support Worker



VOLUNTEER'S REPORT

Two months ago, (starting May 2007), I was given the opportunity from Action for Employment to start a volunteer placement at BWHAFS. Since starting volunteer work I have really enjoyed the experience of working alongside the staff that have helped and supported me throughout. I have gained and developed my existing skills that will help further progression in finding employment.

The duties that I have undertaken range from managing the reception and general administration, including meeting and greeting visitors, as they come in and out of the premises, operating the telephone system, faxing, photocopying, typing up letters and reports, typing up Minutes, dealing with incoming and outgoing post, laminating, binding, and instructing and helping other volunteers.

Gaining knowledge and skills within an office environment has significantly improved my chances in finding appropriate administrative roles and I have since been invited along to some interviews during my time here at BWHAFS. I would like to thank all those at BWHAFS for their guidance and will continue to give my support to help this organisation maintain its future success.

Kimberley Wilson
Volunteer Worker



FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION PEER EDUCATION PROJECT

Faduma Hassan
FGM Peer Education Co-ordinator

The FGM Peer Education Project (FGMPEP) has been running for three years and been funded by Comic Relief. This is the first project since BWHAFS was established in 1982 with the aim of addressing the FGM issue by engaging young people, teachers, school nurses and everyone directly or indirectly involved in children's care and well-being.

BWHAS has been given the opportunity to sustain its campaign against FGM and empower and encourage young people to stand up and take decisions for themselves, siblings and their peers. We have trained about 50 young people as FGM Peer Educators who are working with young people in youth clubs, colleges and community centres. Training and support, especially for young girls, is important for the success of the fight against FGM and for confronting gender and ethnic stereotypes, which can hinder their development in this challenging world.

We have achieved our aims by involving the whole family in the discussion and challenging the beliefs that have upheld FGM for generations. The FGMPEP started off with the publication of the FGM Peer Education Leaflet and a website where children could access information on FGM. The FGM Peer Education leaflets were circulated to more than 500 schools, youth clubs and community centres and its message is disseminated at conferences and wherever, the issue is being raised.

Our community development and awareness-raising strategies encompass the whole family. Both childbearing and older women have been educated on the hazards of FGM and the implications of the new FGM Act (2003). In Tower Hamlets, Greenwich, Lewisham and Hackney, FGM sessions were run for women's groups. Training sessions have also been facilitated for teachers, head-teachers, educational professionals, social workers and school nurses in Greenwich, Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Newham and Brent.

School holidays provide an ideal opportunity for bringing families and children together to share ideas and activities. Young girls outings have helped us to gauge the level of awareness of young people about FGM, boys and girls' relationships and how that can fit in the traditional family values.

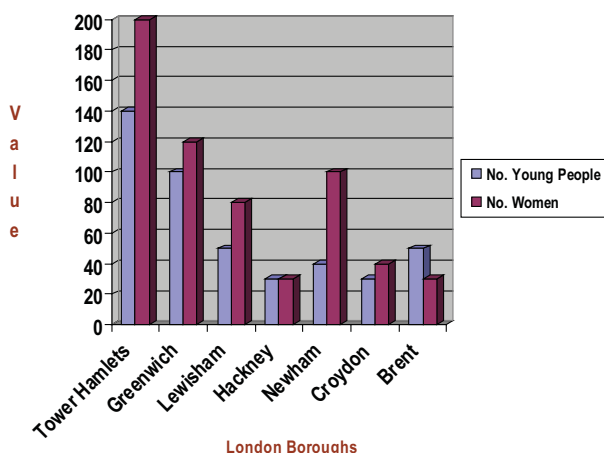
Unfortunately this rewarding project will come to an end this August and we very much appreciate the funding provided by Comic Relief. The FGMPEP has successfully secured a 3 year funding from The City Bridge Trust to reinstate the project, and we are very grateful for that.

FGM Peer Education Sessions (2006-2007)

London Boroughs	No. Young People	No. Women
Tower Hamlets	140	200
Greenwich	100	120
Lewisham	50	80
Hackney	30	30
Newham	40	100
Croydon	30	40
Brent	50	30
TOTAL	440	600

Statistics - FGM Peer Education Session 2006-2007

FGM STATISTICS





OLDER SOMALI WOMEN'S LUNCHEON CLUB

The Older Somali Women's Luncheon Club is funded by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (50+) scheme. It has become very popular amongst the older Somali women living in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The luncheon club is held four days per week, Mondays to Thursdays from 12.00pm to 1.00pm and provides hot nutritious Somali meals for 22 Somali older women each week.

The Luncheon Club provides great support to most of these older women who live alone and find cooking a great difficulty. It is also an opportunity for them to socialise with other service users and exchange ideas. Health experts hold health talks every six weeks to promote good health i.e. healthy eating, diabetes awareness, blood pressure, hypertension, bowel cancer and breast cancer awareness.

Asha Ibrahim and Asha Guled
Luncheon Club Cook



ESOL CLASSES

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund funds the ESOL project, its aim to strengthen the English language skills of our Somali women service users and is tailored around speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The ESOL classes run two days per week on Mondays and Tuesdays between 10am-12pm.

The ESOL classes started in February 2007 with 21 students. It became expedient to split the class into two groups, Entry 1 and Entry 2, as their levels varied. The number of student attendees is encouraging, although punctuality is an issue in some cases. Classes are progressing very well and the students are now able to read simple books and greet each other according to the time of the day. The students feel confident and much happier in themselves now that they can understand a little bit of the English language.

I am happy to report that the students have made improvements in speaking, reading and writing at a basic level and I am hoping that we can enter some of them for English Language examinations next year, through Trinity College London, as they offer this kind of exam for beginners. I recommend that they do Step 1 or Step 2 and we would need to register them for that purpose.

During the year the ESOL Class also had the privilege of making an excursion to the V&A Museum of Childhood on 16 & 17 July 2007; ten students attended. The students had the chance to tour round the museum, looking at displays. They also talked about going to other interesting places such as the seaside in the summer and some also expressed an interest in joining the Spa at York Hall, as part of healthy living exercise.

I have generally enjoyed working with the organisation.

Julie Begum
ESOL Tutor





INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) PROJECT

OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The ICT course started in the first week of January 2007. The project is partly funded by the Microsoft Communities Award Learning and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The course is designed to give delegates a full understanding of the skills and techniques required to master Windows and Office applications, as well as understanding Data Protection Act. On completion of the course students will be able to identify different parts of the PC and how they operate; the students will also use both the mouse and keyboard with confidence.

Students were required to complete the Foundation Course. Students learnt different parts of the PC, e.g. monitor, CPU, keyboard, mouse, floppy drive, CD-Rom, power cables, printer etc. They also learnt how to open an email account and how to use it, how to use the Web, and mastered basics of touch-typing.

STUDENT'S ATTENDANCE AND PROGRESS

There are currently 18 adult students (50+) with varied ability and knowledge attending the course. Most of them were absolute beginners and others were intermediate students with good language skills. At present most of the students are confident about their respective topics and levels. They have gained all the basic skills they were expected to master. Some are exceptionally advanced due to fact that they have good language skills.

The other set of adult students use the computer to study Arabic and the Qur'an. This is becoming very popular amongst the older Somali Women's group. We also have 14 young students between the ages of (5 - 12) years. Their IT applications skills are straightforward, as they are schoolchildren. Their use of the Web and email communications, as well as the web-based supplementary materials of the school curriculum was very good, and they have gained a lot of skills in this area.

The project now has quite a lot of useful training software (ECDL / Touch Typing) and this has contributed to the success of the programme. The adult students had a very useful basic training programme of Microsoft Interactive Training. Students have recently started studying ECDL with Office Applications and Touch Typing and the following topics: -

KEY TOPICS

ECDL:

Basic concepts of IT
Using the computer and managing files
Information and telecommunication
Data Protection Act
Setting up and using Emails
ECDL Office Applications:
Word processing
Excel (spreadsheet)
Database

TOUCH TYPING:

Mouse
Keyboard functions
Speed typing

I am indeed pleased to say that those students who did not have any idea about computing are now able to use a computer with confidence and on many occasions are reluctant to take a break. I would therefore recommend the following:

- To allow students to follow their respective path in order to complete the rest of their guided study programmes
- To upgrade the hardware, as it is necessary to have suitable PC for the training because students always compete for the few new PC's
- To arrange a formal test for official certification of the ECDL + Office and Touch Typing programmes at conclusion.

We are very grateful for all the funding support from the Microsoft Communities Learning Awards and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. We would however appreciate donations from other charities to help upgrade our computer systems.

Mohammed Hirsi



MASSAGE THERAPY AND REFLEXOLOGY

I started employment at BWHAFS in April 2007, as the Massage Therapist and Reflexologist to the 50+ programme for Somali Older women. From my assessment most of the clients were stressed out and tired. Others needed dietary advice to enable them to live a healthy lifestyle. With the well-managed massage therapy and reflexology services provided by the project, one could proudly say that clients' lifestyle has changed considerably and the aches and pains that they used to experience have reduced. To date 128 clients have used the service.

I feel very comfortable working with this busy and well-organised project. I would like to thank Joycelyn Hayford (Director) for all her support and dedication to the organisation. We are also most grateful to all our funders and donors for this initiative.

Balkis Karim



SEWING CLASSES

The sewing classes began in February 2007, as part of 50+ programme for Somali Older Women funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

The sewing class is a unique project, set out to train, empower and enhance the sewing skills of Somali women living in the borough so as to make them self sufficient. The sewing class is held on Tuesdays between 12pm - 2pm, and the class has progressed to 16 women being taught how to do the following: cutting and making dresses, cushions covers, embroidery, tablecloths and banners.

The project intends to exhibit its products at the 25th anniversary celebration in October and we hope you will join us on the day.

We say a very big thank you to all our funders, work colleagues and volunteers who in diverse ways have supported the project.

Moliha Khatum
Sewing Tutor



MOTHER TONGUE CLASSES

The Mother Tongue Class is growing more and more popular amongst Somali children, as the population has grown in the borough.

We have high numbers of children who attend the class for the opportunity to reconnect with their roots. We currently have 17 children attending the class (10 girls and 7 boys) between the ages of 7-13 years. The class does not only provide language literacy support, it also offers an opportunity for Somali children and their families to mix and gain from each other's experiences.

The class is a mixture of Somali children who were born in the UK and refugees who arrived in the 80's and 90's. This environment provides children with valuable learning experience and information exchange. The class is run two days a week (Mondays and Tuesdays) on an after-school club basis (4pm-6pm).

Feedback from parents and the children themselves shows that progress has been made. Thanks to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for funding this unique programme.

Fowzia Jama
Mother Tongue Tutor



COUNSELLING THERAPY

Our counselling therapy is mainly for women and is provided free of charge. The therapy is based on person-centred methods and is conducted on a one-to-one basis. This means that the therapist aims to assist the client in resolving and learning to live with life events, which cause them emotional difficulty and distress, rather than telling them what they think they should do.

The helper is there not to impose her own beliefs and options on the client, but be an active and rewarding listener. Empathic listening, understanding, respect and trust are crucial to clients' ability to speak openly. Counsellors are helpers who are not there to impose their own beliefs or ideas or undermine client's own views but rather, to be active and rewarding listeners helping clients find the best ways forward in leading their own lives.

The counselling therapy offers group and individual counselling sessions aimed at dealing with health and emotional issues arising as a result of Female Genital Mutilation and other health related issues. The counselling sessions are held two days per week and individual counselling by appointments-only on Tuesday and Thursdays. Sessions take place in a client-safe environment where strict confidentiality is maintained and clients have the space to freely express their emotions.

Counselling sessions usually last for 30 minutes but can be extended according to circumstances; after an initial session, clients are free to decide whether they wish to continue with the process over an initial six-week period. This year 52 clients were each seen for a period of 6 weeks or more. Demand for this service is very high.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S PROJECT

The goal of the Somali Young People's Project is to achieve the following aims:

- To develop a better understanding of the issues and concerns of young people from the Somali community. These issues include crime, drugs, and anti- social behaviour
- To empower young people to actively participate in community safety and crime reduction
- To work with young people on projects to identify and tackle local issues including bullying, racism, vandalism, theft and personal safety
- To work in partnership with other agencies.

In order to achieve the aforementioned aims, workshops were organised and participation was very encouraging. Workshops were on the topics of: -

- Drug awareness
- Sexual health and HIV/AIDS
- Healthy lifestyle
- FGM
- Crime prevention

Through my experience as a youth worker, and holding group discussions with young people, I was able to identify the needs of Somali young people in East London. The work of the Somali Youth Project has been shown to have positive results, achieving its goal of delivering quality services. The number of young people who are accessing the project has increased, with 200 young people participating in different organised activities and workshops over the past year.

We work closely with other youth providers in Tower Hamlets to share resources and give young people maximum choice of activities on offer.

Ahmed Mire

Young People's Development Worker



SOMALI CARERS' ACCESS PROJECT



BWHAFS successfully obtained some funding from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Adults Services prior to the pilot study conducted by the project to identify hidden carers within the borough. The project had progressed this year.

Since its inception, the project's aim has been to provide support, information and a voice for Somali Carers in Tower Hamlets, to identify hidden carers and to offer advice, counselling, and advocacy support, and to refer carers to specialist agencies for assistance.

The project is focussed on ensuring that all our clients know their rights and can access services such as respite care or benefits to which they are entitled to help improve their quality of the life.

During the year the project worked closely with the following care support agencies some of which clients were referred to for assistance the Somali Day Centre, Somali Senior Citizens club, and Age Concern Tower Hamlets, Tower Hamlets Social Services, St Hilda's, GPs, and hospitals and other voluntary and statutory agencies.

To date 150 hidden carers had been identified. Information and follow up letters were sent out to these carers and a monthly follow up phone calls were also made to ensure that clients needs are met.

The project currently provides the following services for carers:-

Carers support sessions two days per week.
Drop in sessions
Advice and information on all aspects of caring, and welfare rights benefits.
Home visits
Liasing with statutory services
Telephone advice.
Advocacy support
Counselling Therapy
Massage therapy

BWHAFS appreciates all the financial support received from our funders and donors. Your generous giving has helped sustain the organisation.

Ahmed Mire
Carers Access Support Worker

SOMALI CARERS' OUTREACH & SUPPORT PROJECT (BOW AREA)

BWHAFS was offered a grant from Action For Bow for one year to provide services for Somali Carers in the Bow Area. The aim of the project is to identify hidden carers and to offer the chance for them to access care training opportunities in the Bow area, and borough wide. To improve the quality of life for Somali elderly and disabled people in the community by assessing their needs: for example, in housing, health, domestic and personal care provision, which they are entitled to from Social Services and other statutory organisations. The project also aims to reconnect them with local service providers in order to reduce isolation of the housebound, which contributes to depression and poor health.

The project started later than the specified date and the first few months proved very challenging, as we needed to establish links in the Bow Area. Nevertheless, with the support and assistance of our members of staff and other organisations such as St Paul's Vicarage, Mile End Hospital, OSCA, Old Ford Housing Association, Somali Education & Cultural Project, we persevered and managed to meet our target.

During the year, two health awareness workshops were held in our centre with 12 people attending each session:

- Healthy Eating
- Diabetes

We also organised four training sessions for the service users, which was attended by 10 people. Both the health workshops and training sessions were very successful.

- First Aid
- Fire Safety
- Health & Safety
- Food Hygiene

17 young people were offered advice and guidance in job search; from that number, 7 obtained gainful employment.

23 local vulnerable older people were supported.



ACTIVITIES

HEALTH AWARENESS

Healthy Eating	12
Diabetes	12
ADVISE AND GUIDANCE	
Job search- young people	17
SUPPORT	
Local vulnerable adults	23

Unfortunately the funding for this rewarding project ended in June 2007. I have enjoyed working with the project very much indeed and I hope we could raise more funds to reinstate this worthwhile project.

BARAKO FAMILY & EDUCATIONAL CENTRE



The Barako Family Health and Education continues to be one of the largest non-governmental s (NGO) working in the Togdheer region of Somaliland. The project has over the past years be working to help improve the quality of life for some of the most vulnerable local people.

War and economic displacement over the past decades has led to a large influx of refugees into the region and in its wake, a large number of girls who are forced to marry young, divorced or raped and abandoned. The Centre was initially established to help such young girls and women re-build their broken lives through training and support in setting up their own businesses through Micro-credit loans.

At the same time, the project raises awareness amongst local women of the hazards of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other important issues affecting local families.

Young girls are becoming literate and gaining numeracy and other skills that enable them to find gainful employment or further education opportunities. Through the help of the project, young boys are also gaining literacy skills which deter them from drugs and anti-social behaviour. Older men and

women are also being advised on options for raising their girls other than forcing them into marriage.

Health awareness sessions and seminars are run in the centre for different community groups as older men and women play an important role in initiation rituals such as FGM. This aspect of our outreach work has encountered some difficulties along the way, but is fortunately running smoothly at present.

A new seven-member Board of Directors is now in place which consists of three Executive members and four ordinary members. With enthusiasm and energy, they are working very hard to consolidate the achievements of the previous years as well as to introduce a new system of management that will promote the organization's credibility, sustainability and transparency. Barako also still has present challenges in terms of funding and resources to provide much needed services. Although we have not succeeded in obtaining funding from national aid agencies in Somaliland, our new Board of Directors and members of staff have been able to benefit from a three-month capacity-building programme jointly facilitated by Novib and UNICEF.

Without the continuous assistance of Black Women's Health & Family Support, Barako would not have been able to continue supporting the most vulnerable people of Barako for all these years. In addition to help facilitate the creation of a five year plan for the organization, BWHAFS provided us with literature and guidance on good governance, management, human resources, financial resources, services, sustainability and external relations. A manual for mothers highlighting means of tackling sensitive issues was also printed for staff and Board members.

Thanks to such training and capacity-building support, the organization is now on track to unfold its newly mapped out plans for the future.

JO BRYANT CLINIC

The Jo Bryant Clinic is currently in operation and a doctor and a nurse are running the clinic on every Thursday for up to 35 patients each week. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, some patients are referred elsewhere.

FGM FISTULA CLINIC

An FGM Fistula Clinic has been set up alongside this surgery to help women suffering from this sad condition. While most of these patients have to be referred to mainstream hospitals where no specialist assistance for corrective surgery exists, we have recently identified a specialist Fistula hospital in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with whom we are hoping to build further links.



FGM HILFE AUSTRIA

Barako has received a container of sewing machines, materials and other accessories to help enhance skills and creativity of the women and young girls that use the centre from the FGM HILFE Group in Austria.

In addition to paying for the salaries of six teachers at our project, Dr Elizabeth Cencig, founder of the FGM HILFE Group, has also arranged for other sponsors to support six orphan children from different sectors of the Burco community. Two vehicles were also purchased for Barako Family and Education by the FGM HILFE to support our outreach work in Somaliland.

EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE

One of Barako's aim has always been to help young girls who have been forcibly married as the project sees this practice as a human rights violation.

This year, a forced marriage case came to the attention of Barako which involved a young girl who was jailed for killing her older Somali husband who came from America. The young girl had run away from this man several times but each time, was forcefully taken back. The young girl finally killed her husband with a gun. Unfortunately, this story is not an isolated case as women come to defend themselves in similar violent ways.

Barako therefore helped find a suitable solicitor to argue on the young woman's behalf from a human rights perspective. Barako has, over years, helped in similar cases, visiting clients in jail or at home to offer advice and moral support. It has, however, been very difficult to provide such support on a regular basis due to lack of resources.

HEALTH REPORT

During the year Barako took part in the nationwide children's immunization campaign. Families were encouraged to immunize their children by raising awareness on the triple vaccine which is important for babies as well as chicken pox and measles.

A clinic has since been opened for families of small children so as to educate them on the importance of hygiene and sanitation and how a lack of sanitation leads to the spread of disease. Posters and leaflets were disseminated in the Centre and slogans about the campaign were put on buses. Other health awareness issues such as HIV/AIDS and FGM were also addressed.

The project celebrated International Women's Day in grand style by inviting members of the local Somali community, the government and members of the public to celebrate and share experiences on the day.

BARAKO'S SCHOOL REPORT

Since the establishment of the Barako Project, it has run educational and technical courses for young people who do not have access to mainstream education for economic, cultural and social reasons.



Many of these boys and girls are orphans and from single parent families who are struggling with their daily livelihood and desperate to find jobs or other means to occupy their teenagers.

The Barako school has relieved pressure felt by many of these poor families. As the premises have limited space to accommodate all who wanted to join, it has become necessary to hold a morning and afternoon sessions running from 7.30am to 12.30pm and from 3 pm to 6 pm.

The school started with Somali literacy and numeracy classes to give the students the ability to read and write in their own language and understand the information which is written in the local newspapers. As the school took the shape and became more of a formal school, more courses were introduced alongside technical skills such as sewing, crafts and cooking. English, Science, Arabic, History, Geography, Economics and Management are now taught in the school. The project currently have 350 students in all whose ages range from 6 to 45 years of age. Most of the morning students are 72% are female and 28% are males. In the Afternoon classes, 81% are female and 19% are male.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE PLANS

This year, the project offered 152 students with an award certificate, and some teachers were trained. A sport team had also been created called Barako School Team.

In future, the School intends to introduce courses such as office management, accounts, IT and administration that can offer young people opportunities to compete on the job market.



WORKSHOPS

The project runs workshops for schools and community based groups in Burco city in which religious men are invited to participate in the discussions. Poets are also involved at cultural events to raise awareness on the pain and problems caused by FGM. Mothers are always reminded of the pain they themselves had endured and the fact that there are human rights conventions that protect women and children.

BARAKO AND PARTNER

The Barako Project has, since its inception, had a good relationship with its partners, government and other agencies. Barako is part of a big umbrella of 75 organisations and is in contact with others in Burao whose services are beneficial to the staff and client groups.

Barako Family Health Education would like to thank all its funders and donors including Womankind Worldwide, FGM HILIFE, Jo Bryant Trust and Individual donors who have supported the project in diverse ways. Unfortunately, the funding from Womankind Worldwide came to an end last year, as a result of that the level of staffing has decreased. I hope that as you read this report, you will be touched to give generously to this rewarding project.

Mrs Shamis Dirir

Chairperson

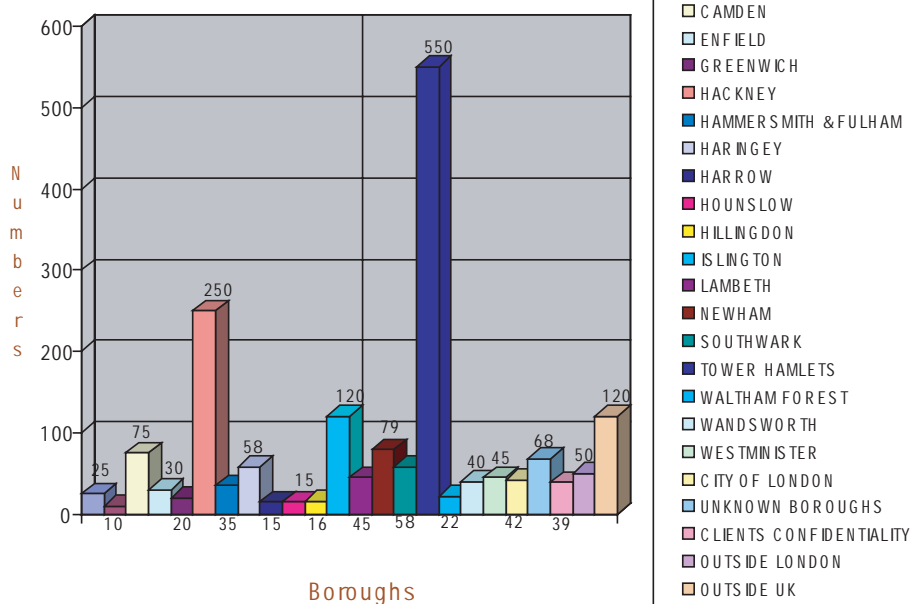
Barako Women's Health and Education.

OFFICE BASED CLIENT CONTACTS

Statistical data of clients seen by BWHFS between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2007 (including drop-in visitors, telephone calls and general requests for information and or assistance)

BOROUGHS	NUMBERS
Barking & Dagenham	25
Bexley	10
Camden	75
Enfield	30
Greenwich	20
Hackney	250
Hammersmith & Fulham	35
Haringey	58
Harrow	15
Hounslow	15
Hillingdon	16
Islington	120
Lambeth	45
Newham	79
Southwark	58
Tower Hamlets	550
Waltham Forest	22
Wandsworth	40
Westminster	45
City of London	42
Unknown Boroughs	68
Client confidentiality	39
Outside London	50
Outside UK	120
TOTAL	1,827

OFFICE BASE CLIENT CONTACTS - STATISTIC



BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT

(A CHARITY COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2007

	Endowment Fund	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2007	Funds 2006
	£	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from donors		-	4,858	4,858	-
Income from operating activities : to further the charity's objects		-	158,496	158,496	161,743
Other incoming resources		37	-	37	-
Income from investment		330	74	404	407
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	-	367	163,428	163,795	162,150
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Cost of generating funds					
Direct Expenditure		-	134,308	134,308	120,589
Support Expenditure		1,500	24,258	25,758	29,395
Management and Administration	-	5,284	5,284	5,482	
TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED		1,500	163,850	165,350	155,466
NET (EXPENDED)/INCOMING RESOURCES	-	-1,133	-422	-1,555	6,684
Gains and Losses on investments - Unrealised	-	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	-	-1,133	-422	-1,555	6,684
Balance B/Fwd at 1 April 2006		3,060	7,330	10,390	3,706
BALANCE C/FWD AT 31 MARCH 2007	-	1,927	6,908	8,835	10,390



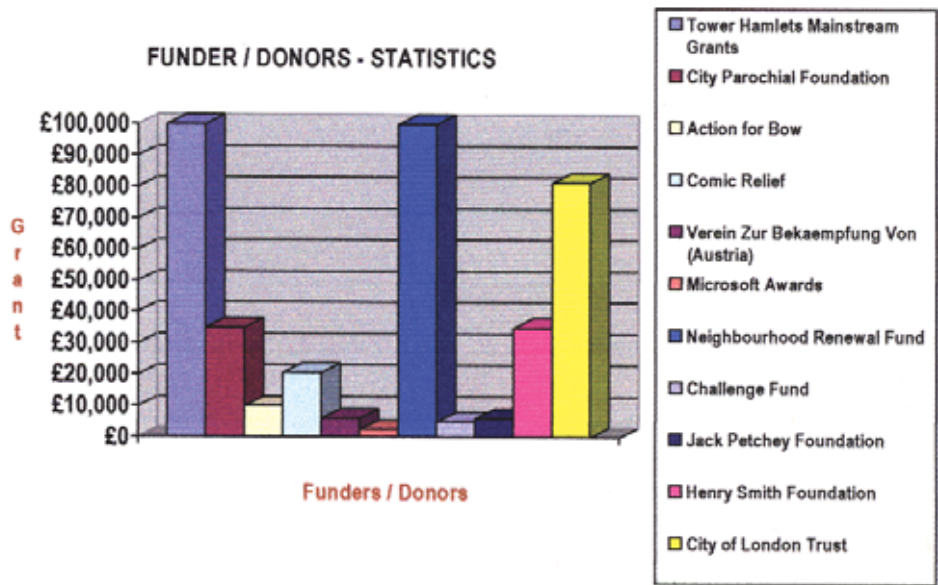
BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH AND FAMILY SUPPORT
(A CHARITY COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2007

	2007	2006
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible Fixed Assets	4,835	2,263
	<u>4,835</u>	<u>2,263</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	22,331	2,029
Short term deposits	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand	14,837	33,790
	<u>37,168</u>	<u>35,819</u>
LIABILITIES:		
Amounts falling due within one year	33,168	27,692
NET CURRENT ASSETS	4,000	8,127
NET ASSETS	<u>8,835</u>	<u>10,390</u>
FUNDS		
Unrestricted	1,927	3,060
Restricted	6,908	7,330
	<u>8,835</u>	<u>10,390</u>



FUNDERS/DONORS

Tower Hamlets Mainstream Grants
 (Social Services, Education Directorate, Community Development Resources)
 City Parochial Foundation
 Action for Bow
 Comic Relief
 Verein Zur Bekaempfung Von (Austria)
 Individual & Anonymous Donors:
 Microsoft Communities Learning Awards
 Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
 Challenge Fund
 Jack Petchey Foundation
 Henry Smith Foundation
 City of London Trust



**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
& STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS**





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Company Number: 4062558