

Annual Report 2017 – 2018



AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Equality without Exception

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Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights

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AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
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AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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About Us

In 1991 the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria (the Council) was established by Muslim women for Muslim women. The Council was founded on the belief that meaningful change to the status of Muslim women could be achieved through the improved situation of Muslim women individually and by building their collective capacity.

In December 2012, the Council's name was changed to the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights to better reflect the Council's significant role as a human rights defender. This change recognises the singularity of our voice and work on Muslim women's human rights across Australia.

As advocates of Muslim women's rights, we are in chorus with a multitude of Muslims all over the world supporting a vision of Islam at its most progressive, immediate and pertinent to the challenges Muslim women face. Our work in Australia contributes to the already substantial work on Muslim women's human rights taking place across the world in Muslim and non-Muslim majority countries.

How do we see the world?

For the most part, Muslim women who migrated to Australia did so as heirs of a rich, pluralistic tradition, but also as bearers of significant disadvantage, discrimination and, at times, violence. In the context of our history, Islam has been both a liberating and oppressive force in

the lives of women, influenced by the vision and limitations of patriarchal society. Historicising how Islam was understood and brought to bear on the status of women testifies to the diversity and plurality of tradition and practice: there has not been one Islam in which all Muslims have participated, but a multiplicity of Islamic interpretations in which many people have lived.

The pursuit of justice and equality for Muslim women has been present to varying degrees in all historical periods and across all cultures and societies. While this pursuit has not always resulted in structural and institutional change, it has nonetheless featured as part of Muslim women's history. Today, all over the world, Muslim women are working and mobilising for change.

This global movement for parity is relevant to Australian Muslim women, whether immigrants or daughters of immigrants, because it brings us closer to the challenge of equality in our Australian context. We seek equality not only with Muslim men but with all Australian citizens.

How does our world view influence our work?

We take a non-religious, non-sectarian approach to our work and adopt a social justice lens to Islam when it is used to justify any infringement against women. This allows us to work with all Muslim women. We believe that there is not one view of Islam that represents all Muslims in Australia and, further, that the diversity of Muslims in Australia is a strength.

Our Strategic Intent

The Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights (AMWCHR) is an organisation of Muslim women working to advance the rights and status of Muslim women in Australia.

We believe Muslim women must be the impetus for change in their status as citizens.

The Australian Muslim community is characterised by diversity and hybridity, and not by a binding vision of Islam or what it means to be Muslim. We are therefore a non-religious organisation reflecting the sectarian, cultural and linguistic diversity within the Muslim community.

As an organisation committed to Muslim women and human rights, we will intervene when Islam is used to undermine the status of Muslim women with facts and informed analysis.

Our framework of understanding is the international Muslim women's movement for equality and dignity but our action and concern is focused on the local communities in Australia where Muslim women live.

We work for the rights of Muslim women by:

- empowering women's self-determination
- bringing a human rights approach to bear on issues of inequality and disadvantage
- working with individuals, the community and government to advocate for equality within the Australian context.

We aim to inspire positive action by others and aspire to continuously enhance the quality, impact and effectiveness of our work.

What are the core areas of work we undertake?

We prioritise practical assistance for women to improve their lives in tangible and measurable ways. We work with individuals, groups and service providers in the following areas:

- casework, referrals, secondary consultation and outreach
- advocacy
- community-based programs and service delivery
- capacity building
- leadership development
- policy development
- partnership projects.

We established the Australian Institute for Minority Women (the Institute), operating as the research and consultancy arm of AMWCHR. The experience of Muslim women as a minority has much in common with women's experiences within other minority groups. The Institute was created because we believed the expertise we formed working with Muslim women could be useful to all minority women. As well as providing an insight into the conditions and situations of minorities in Australia generally, the Institute seeks to build an alliance with other minority women in Australia as a gesture of solidarity. The Institute undertakes the following activities:

- research
- training development and delivery
- publications
- consultancy services.

Chair and CEO's report

This year has been a year of growth and change for the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights. We have substantially increased the services we provide to women, while also creating new programs and strategies that better respond to their needs.

This year we provided a vast number of services to Muslim women and community sector professionals across Australia. Our work with women continues through information provision in workshops and leadership and capacity building group-work sessions. The number of service users reflects the industriousness but not the innovative nature of our group-work staff, nor the uniqueness of some of the programs they've developed.

This year we have also established a casework arm to our organisation. Although AMWCHR has always provided one-to-one assistance to newly arrived Muslim women for settlement-related issues, this has been on a limited basis with limited funding. In 2018 AMWCHR received funding from the Victorian Government to provide casework support to Muslim women escaping family violence. This has been an enormously important development for us and the women we work with, because for Muslim women family violence is one of the most corrosive and damaging of human experiences.

We have continued to work throughout the state and nationally. At the state level our team has undertaken work in Swan Hill, Mildura, Shepparton and Geelong in addition to our usual work in Melbourne. Our group-work programs with communities and our training sessions

on Islam, diversity and family violence across rural Victoria have seen us develop strong and important networks and relationships across the state.

At the national level, we have undertaken research and advocacy, contributed to policy development, participated in advisory groups and undertaken media work on migrant and Muslim women.

Our international work has focused on human trafficking, political violence and networking with Muslim women and civil actors internationally.

Combating racism and Islamophobia has come to feature increasingly in our work as Australia continues to struggle with these issues in the media and in our parliament. We have worked to respond to these issues in the media but we have increasingly had to work hard to mitigate the impact of racism and Islamophobia – forms of violence – on the lives of women and community. It has been concerning how little awareness society has about the impact of prejudice on children. This is one of the many issues that demonstrate how important it is for minority communities and minority women to have organisations that reflect their needs and experiences. In this regard, we feel especially grateful that we have survived the increasingly problematic mainstreaming of community services.

We would like to thank all our partners in the work we do. Without our partnerships with other organisations and our donors, both government and philanthropic, we could not fulfil the important role we have in the sector.

Finally, a huge thanks to our extraordinary staff who serve the community with integrity and excellence. A big thanks also to our amazing Board members who in addition to careers with heavy workloads, and family and community commitments, make time to serve our community of Muslim women. In this past year, we have acquired new members to our Board, including Faiza Yunus, Marwa Khalaf and Inaz Janif. Unfortunately, we have also lost a key long-

term staff member, Nuzhat Lotia, who served with the Centre for 15 years and has moved on into a different part of the sector. She will be missed by all of us.

Congratulations to the staff and Board on an amazing year.

Tasneem Chopra
Chair

Joumanah El Matrah
Chief Executive Officer



Messages from the board

'I am extremely honoured to be a part of the Board of Management that oversees the many valuable programs, publications and outreach our organisation provides to assist Muslim women and their communities.'

Dr Anisa Buckley
Board Member



'I've continued to be involved in this organisation because it is one of the few organisations that genuinely centres women's rights as human rights.'

Tasneem Chopra
Board Member

'Being part of an organisation led by women that works to improve and elevate Muslim women is inspiring and an honour. The leadership and staff work extremely hard to make a difference and it shows.'

Inaz Janif
Board Member



'I am passionate about AMWHCR's valuable and innovative work in empowering Muslim women from diverse communities and advocating for their human rights. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute and work alongside this dynamic, ethical, and committed group of staff, board and volunteers.'

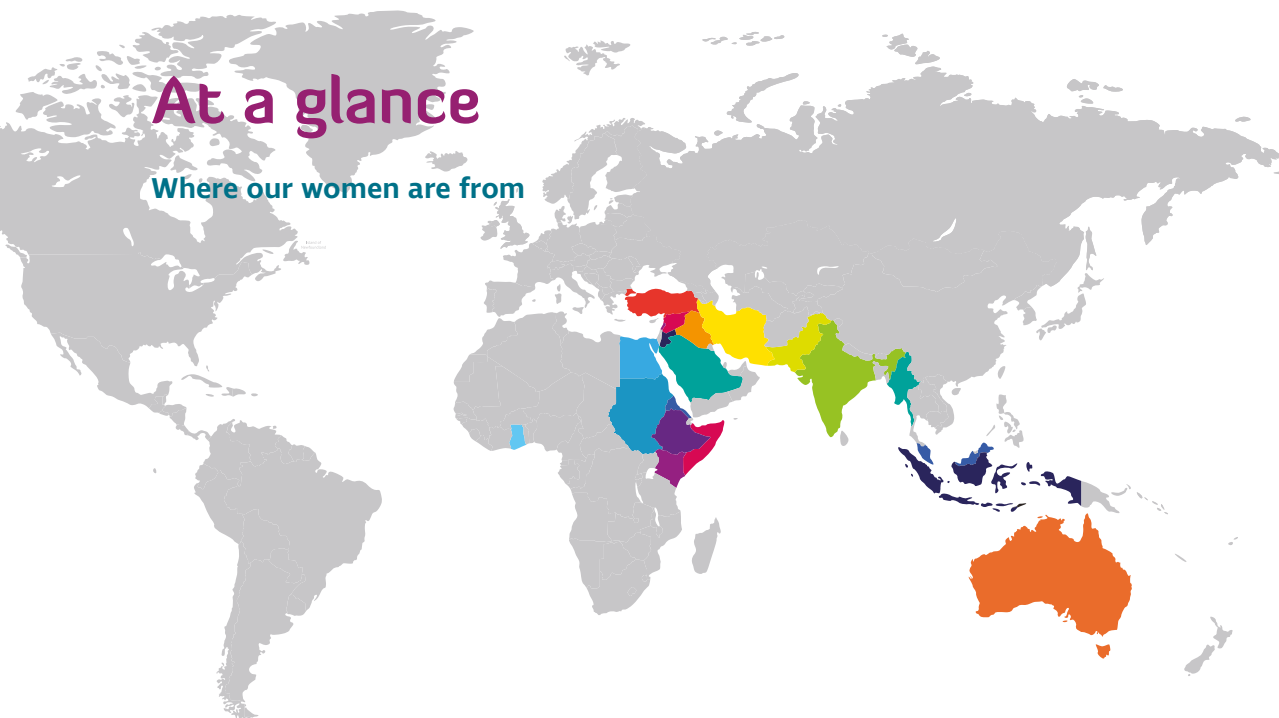
Rasheeda Cooper
Board Member



Some AMWCHR Staff

At a glance

Where our women are from



Services provided in 2017–2018		AMWCHR Workshops and training 2017–2018	Number of Sessions	Number of Participants
Individual support to women	996	Group-work sessions	217	2464
Secondary consultations	110	Peer support sessions	11	182
Community events	4	Leadership workshop sessions	85	722
Networking meetings	75	Education/training/presentations	20	600
Radio programs	13	Community consultations	8	84
Media	7	Information sessions	17	258
		Study skills sessions	13	51

Our core programs

Working with newly arrived Muslim women and their families.

Settlement Program

AMWCHR continues to provide settlement support to newly arrived Muslim women and their families, as they face the challenges of adjusting to a new country and cultural context and making new lives for themselves.

Our settlement work focuses on supporting Muslim women by promoting economic and personal wellbeing, independence and connectedness within the communities we work with, particularly in Melbourne, Geelong, and the Goulburn and Mallee regions. Building knowledge, confidence and self-reliance allows women to access mainstream services for their needs, including pathways to learning English, education and employment readiness.

We utilise a comprehensive range of strategies to achieve these outcomes including:

- consultation with communities
- information sessions, workshops and group-work programs
- radio programs and media presence
- promotion, advocacy and networking
- events such as conferences, expos and recreation days
- study skills for young women
- training for mainstream services
- collaboration with other service providers.

Consulting with women

As part of the Settlement Program, consultations with women are conducted to introduce them to AMWCHR and our human rights framework and, importantly, to identify the current issues women face and the settlement-related needs they have.

This year consultations with Muslim women of all age groups were conducted across Melbourne and in regional Victoria. Community consultations provide insight into issues facing newly arrived Muslims in Australia. Muslim women described significant challenges such as: adjusting to different parenting expectations in a new country; managing the stress of the migration experience; health and wellbeing issues including trauma and mental health; limited English language skills and access to English language classes; lack of employment opportunities; and marital issues including violence in the home. Young Muslim women identified isolation due to lack of social groups, feelings of disconnectedness to their communities, difficulties gaining employment, health and wellbeing issues, and family and intergenerational conflict.

These community consultations are invaluable to AMWCHR to ensure that services and training programs offered to newly arrived Muslim women are relevant to their needs.

Our core programs

Feedback from the community informs our understanding of women's issues and subsequently our program design.

Settlement and parenting

Through group sessions, we work closely with newly arrived Muslim women to assist them in their settlement process and to support their children as they settle into their new country. Newly arrived Muslim women can face obstacles to their parenting role because of limited access to and awareness of support services. This program plays a central role in assisting newly arrived women through group-work support, awareness and education. It aims to provide practical parenting support by helping mothers better understand available family, health and education support services, as well as strategies for effective communication and building healthy parent-child relationships.

In the past year, we have engaged with 500 participants from diverse backgrounds in collaboration with schools and community organisations across Victoria. Our sessions focused on: healthy discipline techniques; understanding difficult behaviour in children; understanding the school system in Australia; schools' expectations of parents regarding homework, sleep and meal schedules; understanding what constitutes child abuse and how the child protection system works; understanding teenage and adolescent development; setting boundaries; developing strategies for effective communication skills; developing positive relationships with children; gender roles; treating boys and girls equally;

and stress management for children as well as mothers.

Feedback for the program continues to be positive with many women forming strong friendships that continue to grow outside of the program sessions. Women who attended stated that their burden 'felt lighter' after being able to share their concerns with others. Women were comforted to hear about other support organisations available to them in their settlement journey. Across the various groups, mothers consistently reported they felt better equipped to understand their children's emotions and to try to identify the reasons behind difficult or disruptive behaviours.

Settlement and leadership development

Our leadership development group-work is aimed at building the capacity of newly arrived Muslim women through awareness raising and skill development so that women can better support themselves, their families and their broader community to help navigate settlement in Australia.

Over the year, 180 participants from a diverse range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds were engaged in capacity-building programs across metropolitan Melbourne and in regional Victoria. Our capacity-building work focused on: managing stress associated with settlement in a new country; the Safe Schools Program; understanding the impact of bullying, racism and Islamophobia; and schools' expectations of parents regarding children's behaviour.

A variety of issues were raised by participants, including managing conflict between parents and children, living with the trauma of war and dislocation, loss of native language and culture among children, and the financial burden and stress of settlement.

Women reported that the leadership development sessions improved their awareness and skills to resolve issues independently and helped them to step forward in supporting others in their family and community.

Rural settlement work

AMWCHR has been working with newly arrived Muslim women in Shepparton for over 15 years. This year saw the continuation of our work in Shepparton with Syrian and Iraqi mothers participating in the parenting and capacity-building sessions and group-work modules. We worked with women on settlement challenges such as parenting in a new country, understanding the education system and Australian law, particularly as it relates to family violence and disciplining children.

Areas of concern raised by the women included parents and children's mental health, difficulties learning English and understanding the education system in Australia. Some of the women are now enrolling in English classes and have expressed that coming to the women's groups has been a very positive experience for them. Feedback reflected the importance of our longstanding presence in Shepparton as well as our relationship with newly arrived community members. Many women expressed that they felt grateful for the information provided through

the program and found it culturally relevant and practical. Women reported that they felt they had a safe space to express themselves and their concerns.

Some of the women in the group and their families were also interested in setting up small businesses in Shepparton and asked for support from AMWCHR. AMWCHR facilitated and hosted a visit by the Shepparton women's group to Melbourne where they attended an information session on small business development, to understand the various aspects of setting up a small business. They were also able to visit a non-profit computer store to buy computers for their secondary school children at highly discounted rates. For most of them this was their first visit to Melbourne and they really enjoyed the day.

One-off information sessions

The settlement program also provides one-off information sessions for newly arrived Muslim women on a variety of topics relevant to their settlement needs. The sessions allowed clients to gain more information on particular issues, and established links with various agencies and contact persons for future support. Topics covered included: mental health for women and children and how to access appropriate services; racism, personal safety and complaint procedures; parenting in a new culture; communication between parents and children; orientation to the school system in Australia; Centrelink; the family visa system; the National Disability Insurance Scheme; and setting up small businesses.

Our core programs

This year, twelve information sessions were held with newly arrived Muslim communities, engaging 205 participants across Melbourne, Shepparton and Mildura with attendees representing a diverse range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds including Afghan, Iranian, Syrian, Iraqi, Turkish, Somali and Burmese.

We delivered sessions mostly in partnership with community service providers including headspace Dandenong, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Playfair Visa and Migration Services, Dandenong High School, Dandenong North Primary School, Holmesglen TAFE, SuniTAFE Mildura and Centrelink Mildura.

Overall, these sessions contributed to clients' personal capacity to manage the challenges of settlement and grow their independence. These sessions also increase access and ability to navigate service systems and contribute to building links between local service providers and newly arrived Muslim women.

Settlement and young women

This year we have continued to engage with young women from a broad range of schools and cultural backgrounds to support them as they navigate complex settlement issues alongside the usual challenges of adolescence. This part of our Settlement Program provides general settlement support for newly arrived young Muslim women, and ensures that young women's needs are adequately explored and addressed through group information sessions on living in Australia, leadership development, peer support and study skills.

Throughout the year, the program engaged 200 participants aged between 14 and 26 years across ten schools and community organisations including Collingwood English Language Centre's Craigieburn campus, River Nile Learning Centre, Hume Central Secondary College, Narre Warren South P-12, Fountain Gate Secondary College, McGuire College, Lyndale College and Chaffey College.

The program's activities aimed to support young women's health and enhance their sense of agency, self-esteem, wellbeing and self-care. Topics addressed through various activities included: healthy relationships; Australian laws and rights; career development; goal setting; the Australian education system; communication; conflict resolution skills; understanding family violence and early and forced marriage and more.

Our work with young women focuses on building young women's capacity and confidence to navigate services, support themselves and their families in settlement and to build their plans for their future. Young women requested support with understanding Australian laws, different support services available to them as well as the Australian education system.

The *Living in Australia* sessions utilise strengths-based work addressing the very early stages of settlement and this year focused on strengthening identity, self-esteem, self-awareness, building respectful relationships, confidence, building communication skills, understanding the Australian education system, personal strengths and goal setting/planning. The sessions enabled young women to focus on building their personal skills and explore issues

Our core programs

related to their settlement in Australia, as well as build connections with their peers. Young women attending the sessions expressed that they felt more connected and confident and had an increased sense of independence as a result of the sessions. Other young women expressed that they enjoyed the opportunity to connect with other young Muslim women at their school and build strong relationships with them, also reporting that their confidence had significantly increased since participating in the program. Teachers at participating schools were excited about the progress made by their students.

The *leadership* sessions look to the future and explore roles young women can develop for themselves and their community. These sessions focused on building leadership skills, communication, conflict resolution, self-awareness and identity, human rights and gender issues. The young women expressed how important it was to have the opportunity for honest and open discussions on topics that matter to them. Participants reported that the sessions were interesting and engaging and helped them build skills necessary for their future.

Peer support and study skills sessions are designed to equip our young people with skills to help in their education and goals. The study skills sessions covered topics such as stress management, time management, nutrition and sleep management as well as education and employment pathways. Young women attending the sessions reported that the sessions helped them understand ways to support themselves through their studies. The peer support sessions

invited a number of young Muslim women as guest speakers to share their own settlement stories, struggles and successes. The sessions provided an opportunity for young women to not only relate to the speakers but also hear first-hand that there are many different pathways. The speakers also addressed the many barriers they faced such as lack of English language, illness, lack of parental support and lack of understanding and support from their communities. These issues and barriers were similar to the issues the young women attending the sessions were experiencing. Participants expressed that the guest speakers had inspired them.

Settlement – Muslim Youth Leadership

The Muslim Youth Leadership program was aimed at creating strong effective leadership among young Muslims. The program was designed to support young migrant Muslims addressing issues such as disengagement within their communities, crime prevention and resilience through the generation of strong and effective leadership within the Muslim communities.

The program applied a leadership module developed to focus on self-awareness, leadership, community participation, human rights, gender issues, minority issues and building resilience. The aim of the program module was to enhance social connections as well as to develop strategies for ongoing discussion, conflict resolution and justice.

The project incorporated capacity-building of groups of young Muslims to better understand and challenge inter-sectarian issues that are being fuelled by global conflicts as well as to work with their peers and families to create positive and peaceful relationships.

This program provided powerful opportunities for young people to voice their personal challenges and gain insight through self-awareness and human rights frameworks, unpacking concepts of power and privilege, and developing natural leadership skills. Young people who took part in the program reported an increase in their confidence to tackle issues such as their sense of identity, community, and empowerment as well as skills for leadership, communication, conflict resolution and building peace.

The Muslim Youth Leadership workshops were conducted in Maribyrnong, Broadmeadows and Heidelberg working collectively with 138 young men and women. Sessions were delivered to

young people from diverse cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds.

Themes arose that showed many young Muslims feeling alienated and unheard. Many expressed feeling caught between political dialogues, inequality, racism and social/cultural expectations. The receptiveness to these sessions, the powerful dialogues generated and the improved sense of hopefulness reported back to facilitators is testimony to the important work being done. The connections that were made and the opportunities created have been impressive.

Participants involved in the program reported that sessions were helpful to their professional careers as well as their personal endeavours. Participants also expressed that the program assisted them to feel more confident, and that they are now able to advocate for themselves as well as build stronger connections with their peers.

Our core programs

Casework support and advocacy

Through AMWCHR's collaborative relationship with a broad range of service providers and our longstanding presence in diverse Muslim communities, the casework program has provided support to over 200 women. For the first time we have provided two streams of casework: settlement services and specialist family violence casework services. Our casework assists women to stabilise and enhance their lives by addressing the deep impacts of living with inequality, violence and disadvantage.

Settlement casework services

Through the Settlement Grants Program our well-established settlement casework services have been able to support women with their settlement needs. We worked with 71 clients over the year and supported a further 81 clients with short-term contact and support. The settlement casework has clear parameters of eligibility so as in previous years, we've supported women on humanitarian, refugee and family visas with low-level English skills and those living in rural and regional Victoria across a broad range of cultural, ethnic and linguistic contexts.

Our phone-based work allows women to call in, utilise a multilingual worker or an interpreter without barriers of mobility, privacy or accessibility. This way we can build a relationship with the client if needed or offer short-term support and solutions when appropriate.

In all of this work, we take a strength-based approach and always seek to inform women about their rights and opportunities within

community as well as through the mainstream services and institutions.

Our clients for both settlement and family violence casework tend to self-refer and know of the AMWCHR through word of mouth. We believe this speaks to the strong casework and group-work we offer women in the community. Our casework is particularly unique due to the emotional, culturally and religiously sensitive and calibrated approach to our casework support and the importance we place in working as advocates for our clients.

One of the most significant challenges for our clients is accessing and advocating for themselves within mainstream services such as Centrelink and the Department of Health and Human Services, navigating the availability of housing, disability and family supports; employment services; legal services; and mental health services. This role for caseworkers is often about vital advocacy, representing the complexity of a client's circumstance, overcoming language and mobility barriers and navigating overloaded systems with limited resources. Common challenges that drive contact with our settlement casework services include: poverty; limited employment opportunities; the high costs of housing; managing mental health; addressing grief, loss and trauma; and poor health. Through this advocacy and referral, we work with our clients to find realistic and supportive outcomes.

Case study

Amira contacted our service, moving from house to house, homeless after leaving her abusive partner. Her mental health was unstable after years of mental and emotional abuse from her partner since she arrived in Australia. Through word of mouth in her community, she heard about the AMWCHR and called to ask for some support. In building a relationship with a caseworker, she came to identify the impact of years of mental and emotional degradation on her sense of self and wellbeing. Working together, the caseworker identified there was also financial abuse occurring. Despite the separation, the partner was stealing her Centrelink payment and accruing a significant debt in her name by keeping her name on his lease and failing to pay the rent. Together caseworker and client addressed issues of housing, unemployment, financial counselling and financial independence, as well as a referral for a mental healthcare plan to support her recovery. The client has succeeded in stabilising her life with the support of casework intervention across a three-month period.

Case study

Amouna contacted our casework service desperately in need of some support. Incapacitated by mental and physical ill-health, much of the physical caring of her two younger disabled children fell on her eldest daughter. She became our client and worked with a bilingual caseworker, which led to her sharing some of her personal story for the first time since arriving in Australia three years earlier. She was widowed during war and struggled to cope with her own pain and immobility, and struggled as she was suddenly responsible for financial and emotional care of her three children. The shame of this struggle and her physical immobility had caused her to become significantly isolated. During the development of a relationship with a caseworker at AMWCHR, they identified the service provider for her disabled children was taking advantage of her lack of knowledge of the NDIS system and billing her at peak rates and for services not provided. The caseworker was able to contact NDIS on her behalf and report and resolve the issue and ensure that better supports came into place and reduced the burden on her eldest daughter. Referrals through to an AMWCHR parenting program has reduced her isolation and she has begun counselling to help process her grief and loss and support her mental health.

Our core programs

Family violence casework services

This past year has been an exciting one, receiving our first year of Specialist Family Violence funding for case management from the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services. This new funding acknowledges the important work of AMWCHR in working with Muslim women through providing information, referrals and emotional support as they navigate the family violence system.

With this funding, we step into the quickly evolving sector of family violence response, which is currently undergoing significant reform. We are contributing to the important voice of Muslim women in the sector – raising the profile of Muslim, migrant, refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse women and their unique challenges and risks of family violence.

For some of our clients the greatest challenge has been engaging with a system that is an expression of different values and priorities. For others, it has been the challenge of navigating the system itself, sometimes lacking in resources and viable options for women and children. Family violence services can be challenging to access for anyone, but many of our clients have the added difficulty of limited English language, limited mobility and personal strength, and in some cases no eligibility to access support services due to temporary visa status.

Some women have almost no choice but to stay in violent relationships, while many women are forced to choose between violence and a new life that limits them to poverty, visa insecurity and isolation from family and community. We are increasingly living in a society that believes these are unacceptable options for victims of family violence and we seek to make that a reality for our clients through advocating and supporting their access to legal, financial and housing services. An important part of our work has been building new networks and contributing to reform in the family violence sector through consultations, training and collaboration.

Over the year we worked intensively with 25 clients, providing them with specialist family violence casework support. We supported an additional 24 clients on a short-term basis.

The types of family violence experienced by our clients include physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, social and financial. In addition, we have clients experiencing violence such as forced and early marriage, denial of divorce, spiritual abuse, migration abuse and abuse perpetrated by members of the broader family. Much of this specialised work requires building cultural and personal rapport with clients while working and advocating to increase the mainstream's capacity to respond to the client.

Case study

Amina came to Australia with limited very limited English and a history of undiagnosed mental illness. Having three children over a period of five years, she did not attend English classes, partly due to lack of rights to access supports and services, but also because her husband intended to keep her isolated. She remained at home with very little social contact and had domestic duties regardless of health or wellbeing. During this time her husband subjected her to physical, sexual and psychological violence. As the violence and particularly the psychological abuse escalated, her husband often humiliated her in front of their young children. One day, her husband stated he wanted a divorce and called police to report his wife as abusive towards their three children. An intervention order was served preventing her access to her children.

She contacted AMWCHR, through community recommendations. She had an offer for one night more of accommodation through a family at her local mosque and had no rights to access any government payments, housing or health supports. No mainstream services could support her as she had no income, no exit plan possible and had been identified as a perpetrator. She was mentally and physically unwell, not eating due to poverty, shock and the trauma of being separated from her children.

Our family violence caseworker worked tirelessly to advocate for access to housing supports, financial and material aid and then worked closely with services to establish legal support and ensure this woman's story was heard in a court of law.

After months of intense support, mentoring, collaborating and advocating, the client was successful in gaining some access to her children, protection against her ex-husband with an intervention order, stable housing, mental health support and a court-ordered undertaking by her ex-husband to pay her property settlement from their home. Prior to contacting our service everyone was telling her that her only option was to return to her country of origin and forget about her three young children.

This work is representative of how women can be shut out of mainstream supports, and further victimised when perpetrators use religious, legal and social systems to continue oppression and abuse. Without that trust created in emotionally supportive casework, using a cultural lens to address systems of power and control, women can struggle to find a way into the support systems in place. AMWCHR works to facilitate this access for women.

Cornerstones program – Supporting mothers and children through parenting skill development

The Cornerstones project provides children and parenting support services to build the capacity of Muslim parents, strengthen relationships and build parenting skills in order to improve children's development and wellbeing.

In our many years of working with parents we know that the care and parenting of children can be a significant challenge for newly settled migrant and refugee communities in Australia. The impact of migration on families is profound and continues well beyond the initial five years of settlement. These sessions create a space for parents to voice their concerns and anxieties around parenting, to interact with and learn from other parents, and to learn new parenting skills and strategies to support child development, as well as their own wellbeing. These groups have served as a safe space for parents to openly discuss their concerns, with special care taken to ensure everyone was heard, including the fathers who attended some of the sessions.

This year Cornerstones has engaged with and supported 336 participants, both mothers and fathers, across Victoria, including in the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Hume, City of Moreland, City of Darebin, City of Whittlesea,

City of Moonee Valley and the City of Greater Geelong. New partnerships were formed with Al-Siraat College, East Preston Islamic College, and Fawkner Community House, while existing community partnerships were strengthened with Merri Community Health, Mt Alexander College, Afghan Women's Organisation, and Diversitat Geelong.

The formation of new partnerships with private Islamic schools was a significant achievement for the Centre during the year, and has allowed us to begin working closely with parents of students who have far less access to services than those attending public schools and who often represent socio-economically disadvantaged communities, with high levels of isolation requiring additional support.

Participant feedback for the program was extremely positive, with parents reporting that sessions helped them to connect with their children in meaningful ways and led to positive changes in their relationships with their children. Parents expressed that they valued receiving information that was based on practical skills and tools that work within their culture and religious traditions.

Developing new projects

For participation, agency and change

Project: Young Muslims for Human Rights

The enormous success of the Young Muslims for Human Rights project has seen its extension into this year. Our project takes a multilayered approach to Muslim students' experiences of exclusion and isolation, while building capacity in areas of leadership, social participation and advocacy. The Young Muslims for Human Rights project was a youth-driven initiative delivered to year 10 students at the East Preston Islamic College, with a focus on improving a sense of belonging and strengthening civic participation.

The project was developed in response to the increase in anti-Muslim rhetoric in the Australian community. Through initial consultation with the students, young Muslims voiced their concerns and confusion about being targeted for being Muslim and being racially vilified. Young men identified depression and isolation as key

concerns for them and requested support, while young women expressed a lack of confidence and a lack of social networks. Although most students were born in Australia, the students expressed that they lacked a sense of belonging and experienced a strong sense of alienation and isolation.

Often schools and communities are not sufficiently resourced to address issues associated with adolescent identity, religious identity, racism, discrimination and social inclusion in a meaningful way. In this regard, the project explored issues that are important to young Muslims, and helped them to develop strategies to support and improve their self-esteem and positive identity formation. The participatory interactive group-work process ensured that the issues raised by the students were identified and addressed through specialised and personalised group sessions and activities. We also worked



with teachers and parents to develop their capacity to support their young people and voice the challenges they face in educating and offering guidance.

The project involved a residential camp, followed by a series of sessions with students throughout the year. Sessions offered personal development and creative ways to unpack issues and experiences through physical challenge as well as creative approaches including meditation, art therapy, self-care, survivor challenges, kickboxing and martial arts, creative writing and an Aboriginal Spiritual Walk. These activities were aimed at increasing the students' confidence, identity, belonging, openness and vulnerability, building relationships with their peers and reducing their sense of isolation. Gendered identities and expectations were challenged in activities that gave young people the chance to see different strengths and characters come to the fore. Relationships developed between students, facilitators and teachers in these bonding processes have had a positive impact in the school community, creating greater understanding and respect.

The project aimed to address a variety of topics including team-building, self-care and self-awareness, confidence, behavioural change, emotional intelligence and communication skills. Sessions focused on wellbeing, reducing feelings of isolation, increasing emotional support, and building peer-to-peer support skills. Young people reported that the sessions clarified their own emotions as well as the emotions of their peers, and increased their confidence and their identity as Muslim Australians.

This year, the project was also piloted with year 6 students at East Preston Islamic College, covering topics including identity, diversity and skills development. The program was aimed at assisting participants to develop at an earlier age the skills required to overcome issues that arise as they become exposed to the anti-Muslim rhetoric within the public sphere. Through the project, AMWCHR worked with 15 students from a total of nine different cultural, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. This program provided new concepts and ideas to the young people involved. Through the creation of a safe space, participants were given the opportunity to understand and learn the various new concepts through games, arts and crafts and interactive activities.

Three capacity-building sessions with the teachers at EPIC are also planned for later in the year. To mark the completion of the project, a forum is planned for November 2018 to consolidate their learnings and share their artwork and poetry with peers, teachers and parents.

Through dialogue and representation with these young people within a safe space, understanding develops of the importance of social contribution, advocacy and self-belief. The students and teachers reported dramatically improved relationships and understanding of each other, reducing conflict and dysfunction within peer groups, classrooms and the broader school community.

Developing new projects

For supporting children to build better, inclusive futures

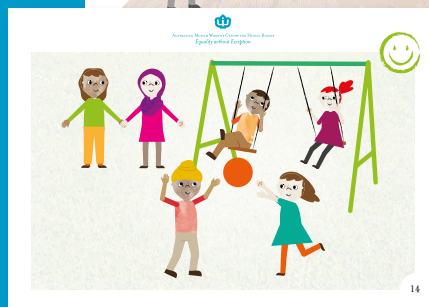
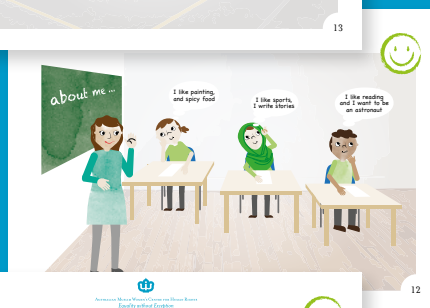
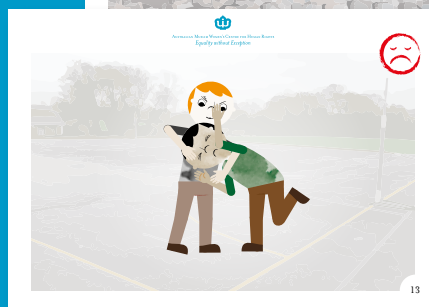
Project: Parenting for Peaceful and Diverse Society

This project was developed to work with Muslim mothers to build skills and tools that consciously incorporate ethics of justice, equality and a respect for and valuing of difference into their parenting style and interactions with young children.

During the initial community consultations that informed the development of the project, women wanted to build skills to promote equality and diversity. Women wanted to address difference and conflict with their children by using their families' pre-migration experiences. They also sought to challenge personal attitudes that are barriers to equality and amity, such as social biases and prejudices towards certain groups.

Delivery of this project continued into its third year in 2017–18, working extensively with Muslim women to develop parenting skills and tools that consciously incorporate values of amity, diversity, justice and equality into their parenting styles and interactions with young children.

The project was implemented as a series of regular, interactive group sessions with mothers of young children, and was divided into two parts. The first constituted the delivery of a module focusing on developing mothers' awareness and skills in order to instill values that promote diversity and equality in their children. The second module is an advanced program that was run with a selected group of women who



demonstrated leadership potential, to further develop their awareness and skills in promoting the project's values in the community to their peers and community, thereby contributing to community development. The focus on self-awareness was an essential component, allowing participants to explore, reflect on and ultimately challenge social attitudes that contribute to racism, cultural conflict, human rights abuses and violence such as prejudice (including their own) and negative stereotyping.

Throughout the year a total of 20 sessions have been conducted with Muslim mothers, with feedback continuing to be extremely positive and encouraging. Participants reported improvements in their awareness of human rights, peace and peace values, in particular the impact of the home environment, family messages and attitudes (such as prejudice) on children's world views and social behaviour. Secondly, there was greater understanding of gender-based discrimination as well as the importance of gender equality in creating an equitable and just society. Importantly, participants expressed that they had more confidence in addressing these issues with their children.

The pictorial toolkit developed for this project continued to receive positive feedback from

parents and schools, with some schools enlarging the cards and using them as posters with positive messaging to display around the school. This innovative feature of the project comprises 21 images – 15 of these depict children and adults from diverse backgrounds demonstrating peace values by interacting positively with each other in a range of settings. These settings show equal gender relations, compassion towards the elderly and disabled, caring for animals and the environment, and friendship among diverse groups. Other images in the toolkit depict healthy and unhealthy social behaviours to generate a conversation on such interactions and their impact.

The unique nature of this project and its recognition of the role of women and mothers in the prevention of all forms of violence and intolerance in society resulted in AMWCHR being invited to present the program at two different events. These included a dialogue in Semarang, Indonesia, entitled 'Building government–CSO partnerships: Implementing gender-based approaches to preventing/countering violent extremism'. The other invitation was from Monash University's Gender, Peace and Security (GPS) Department to present at their GPS Seminars, open to current students and faculty at Monash University.

Developing new projects

For safety and integrity

Project: Respectful Relationships

The Respectful Relationships project continued this year and worked to increase understanding and awareness of Muslim women regarding family violence and early and forced marriage. The project incorporated group-work programs for women, training for service providers and radio programs.

The project is guided by an experienced advisory group with members from Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Women's Legal Service of Victoria, Northern Legal Service and Arabic Welfare Inc. Three group-work modules (two for women – older and younger – and one for service providers) were developed as part of this project.

Women's groups

This year over 125 participants attended the group-work program covering a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds in Dandenong, Shepparton, Newport, Geelong and Craigieburn.

Many of the participants were not aware of their rights in relation to family violence and had limited knowledge about where to access support services for themselves and their children. As a result, many of the participants have reported an increase in knowledge and information about family violence, particularly the different forms of family violence and its impact. They also reported that they have increased their knowledge of the impact of early

and forced marriage and Australian law relating to the practice.

Some of the key issues discussed in the groups were the difficulties of leaving a violent relationship and community pressure to remain in relationships. Despite community awareness of family violence increasing, many participants feel that women are blamed for breaking up the family when they leave a family violence situation. Many women were interested in knowing where they could go for more help and what services were available to them.

Young women's groups

Sessions were also delivered to young women to increase their understanding of family violence and respectful relationships through focus on: self-awareness; marriage and its place in their lives; healthy and unhealthy relationships, understanding violence and abuse in a relationship; support services available; and the laws in Australia.

Throughout the year, the project engaged 110 participants from diverse backgrounds and was delivered across eight local government areas: Hume, Darebin, Casey, Maribyrnong, Wyndham, Shepparton, Geelong and Mildura. The participating schools and community groups included Hume Central Secondary College, East Preston Islamic College, Fountain Gate College, Narre Warren South P-12, Maribyrnong Young Women's Group, Baden Powell College, McGuire

College, Northern Bay College and Chaffey Secondary College.

Young women expressed that the program was valuable and necessary for their communities as these topics are not often discussed.

Project: Aware Marriage – A group-work project for Muslim women

Aware Marriage was a community-based awareness-raising project designed to prevent early and forced marriage (EFM) in the Muslim community across Victoria.

We developed and delivered group-work modules on early and forced marriage for Muslim women and young women (aged 14–18), and trained participants to deliver presentations to their community and peers on the impact of early and forced marriage.

The project reached more than 60 Muslim women with topics covering: building self-awareness and self-esteem; personal goals; emotional intelligence; exploring marriage, relationships and meaning in respective cultures and communities; features of a healthy marriage; definition of early and forced marriage; root causes of early and forced marriage; understanding consent; the impact of early and forced marriage on girls and families; and early and forced marriage law in Australia.

The project adopted participatory and experiential approaches which included brainstorming, interactive group discussions, presentations, personal sharing, and case studies.

Women expressed the need for change in community attitudes towards marriage and relationships, especially for young women. The women were very active in their community and were keen to share information on the effects of early and forced marriage and, in particular, to challenge the cultural norms that make it acceptable. Some reflected on their own lives and how their own early marriages prevented them from fulfilling their personal aspirations. Young women stated that the sessions provided them with an opportunity to discuss sensitive topics in a culturally appropriate setting, and contributed to their confidence to have difficult conversations with family members about marriage. Young women also reported that the sessions were helpful in building their understanding of the impacts of early and forced marriage on the individual as well as on the relationship.

Public talks were held around various aspects of early and forced marriage, presented by participants of the program to their peers. One woman spoke about the impact of early marriage on her own life and goals and provided an overview of EFM legislation. She also talked about the importance of community awareness and of changing attitudes and the need to understand the law so that children and parents are on same page. Another woman shared her experience and the importance of not seeing early and forced marriage as a religious issue but as a social issue. Young women spoke about the impact the program had on their lives and their understanding of early and forced marriage as well as healthy relationships. They also spoke about the importance of creating spaces for

Developing new projects

young Muslim women to discuss sensitive topics that are often taboo in their communities.

Project: Setting the Foundation – The Better Families Initiative for Australian Muslims

This project was a first-of-its-kind attitudinal change, community education and capacity-building initiative to prevent family violence and develop beliefs and attitudes that reject gender inequality and challenge attitudes and discriminatory behaviour towards girls and women.

The project aimed to be a model of collaborative practice in working with Muslim and CALD families using a preventative approach that is based on an understanding of the dynamics and psychology of Muslim families and utilises culturally appropriate, sensitive and effective techniques to improve marital/family relationships and prevent discord and violence.

The project commenced with a series of focus groups with Muslim women and young women from Arabic-speaking and Afghan backgrounds to explore their existing views around marriage, family and relationships. The focus groups informed the development of a program that focused on marriage, gender and healthy relationships in Muslim communities. Throughout the year the program was conducted with women across all age groups, reaching 80 Muslim women from Afghan and Arabic-speaking backgrounds in Melbourne's north and south-

east, particularly the City of Moreland, City of Hume and the City of Greater Dandenong.

Prior to the program participants were not aware of the different forms of family violence and had a lot of myths and misconceptions around what constitutes family violence. Some women in particular had questions around Islamic attitudes to family violence and were keen to enhance their knowledge as a protective measure. A majority of participants were not familiar with how the concepts of gender and gender roles and expectations can impact family violence. Many were unaware of basic human rights, or which services to access for family violence support. The project provided a safe space to talk about healthy relationships in an honest and culturally relevant manner with carefully developed activities to challenge attitudes, enhance learning and encourage critical thinking.

By the end of the program participants were able to identify the various forms of family violence very clearly through case studies, and particularly understand the more covert forms of violence that are often harder to identify. The young women from the Afghan group shared that these sessions should be compulsory for all young women and men, especially since they don't have access to this kind of information at home or in school. The session on gender and human rights was particularly empowering for young women, and they reported that they felt much more informed as young Muslim women and were better equipped to educate and support their peers.

Community feedback

'My children were saying before that I am a grumpy mum, but now they are calling me "soft mum" and I am very happy about that.'

'I like these sessions. I have learned a lot and have gotten employment because of the skills I have developed.'

'I learned about how to have empathy and patience with children.'

'Our girls marry very young [back home] but here in Australia it is different, they have more opportunities to study and work and we need to change our attitudes to early marriage.'

'We thought physical violence was the only form of violence but now we know there are other forms as well.'

'I didn't know where to go for help other than triple zero, but now I know about other services as well.'

'This training was really good. I have teenage boys and this information has been eye opening for me.'

'This training should be available to every young woman in Australia.'

'I understand the pressure women face from their families and how hurtful and damaging that can be to everyone in the family.'

'Learning about your rights should be offered in everyone's school.'

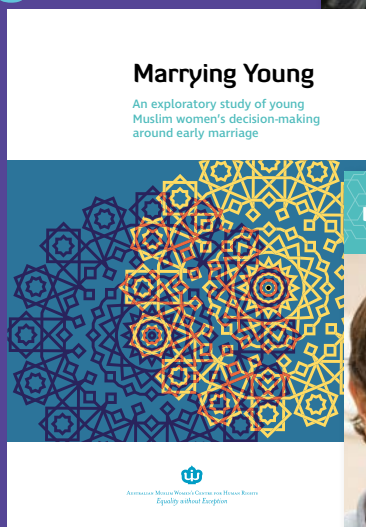
'This training was my favourite activity I have done at school.'

Community events

Launch of *Marrying Young* research project and Out-of-home-care information package

In 2017, with the help of Rosie Batty and Georgia Prattis, the AMWCHR launched two major project publications. The first publication, *Marrying Young – An exploratory study of young Muslim women's decision-making around early marriage* was co-authored by Georgia Prattis. *Marrying Young* was a culmination of two years' research work, interviewing Muslim young women and Muslim mothers on their views, beliefs and experiences of marriage. The report brought into sharp focus the impact of early marriage on women's lives and the challenges and obstacles young women face in determining their future.

The second project comprised three resource booklets/pamphlets on young Muslims and out-of-home care. Each booklet is designed for a specific audience: one for young Muslims who have gone into out-of-home care; another designed for professionals working with young



Caring for Muslim children in out-of-home care



Information for Muslim youth in out-of-home care

Caring for Muslim children in foster care



Muslims who have been removed from home and placed into care; the final booklet targeted foster carers who might have Muslim children placed in their care.

The publications of both projects have proved useful in guiding professional development and mapping the experiences of young Muslims.





Rosie Batty and Tasneem Chopra



Georgia Prattis and Tasneem Chopra

Parenting and Wellbeing Conference

AMWCHR hosted a Parenting and Wellbeing Conference at the Northcote Town Hall on 22 March 2018 which was attended by over 100 women from across Melbourne and regional Victoria. The conference aimed to provide an opportunity for Muslim women from diverse cultural backgrounds to come together and form social connections and networks and to provide information about parenting skills, while addressing the importance of self-care and wellbeing for their own health and the health and wellbeing of their families.

The morning sessions were focused on emotional intelligence, particularly in parenting. The conference commenced with keynote speaker Ann Hurley on 'Tuning in to kids' and 'Tuning in to teens' from the Mindful Centre (University of Melbourne). Ann focused on the importance of talking to children about feelings, emotional intelligence and why is it important, how can parents help their children, and emotional coaching.

After the keynote speaker, four concurrent workshops were held by the following facilitators:

- Dalal Sleiman, Settlement and Migration Adviser, Whittlesea Community Connections
- Munira Adam, Parenting Facilitator at Anglicare Victoria
- Tamara Hrabric-Krajcar, Program Enrichment Officer at Family Services, City of Melbourne
- Sara Mussa, Practitioner, Drummond Street.

All sessions were focused on emotional coaching and the importance of close relationships with children so that parents have greater awareness of their children's emotional world and can contribute to their children's wellbeing.

The women spent the afternoon learning about self-care and its importance for their families, which included activities such as yoga, art therapy, belly dancing and drumming workshops. Evaluations from the conference revealed that women were very happy with the content of the conference and its relevance to their cultural and day-to-day context.

Eid celebration



This year Eid celebration events were held in Dandenong, in collaboration with the Afghan Women's Organisation, and in Mildura with Mildura TAFE. The events were attended by over 350 women and children. The events included activities such as henna tattooing, presentation of health and wellbeing information and networking. The event provided an opportunity for women to meet one another and for newly arrived Muslim women to form social connections with more established members of their communities.

Developing new knowledge

Research

As part of its strategic vision, AMWCHR has been steadily building its research capacity to address issues that affect women's lives. In the last year we have continued work on two major research projects.

Fostering family resilience in Muslim families: Developing a flexible modular approach

This research and practice project aimed to develop and implement a pilot group prevention program for young people and parents from Muslim migrant backgrounds, to improve family resilience, wellbeing and sense of belonging, as well as capacity for community engagement. The project is being conducted in collaboration with Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health and is designed to be implemented in two phases. The first phase considers factors that influence the resilience of Muslim families, through a series of focus-group discussions with Muslim parents, children and community leaders. The second phase involves developing a pilot group prevention program, designed to foster family resilience and wellbeing. The pilot, based on recognised family resilience models, considers factors impacting on family resilience which have been identified by the Muslim community. Development of the program includes an evaluation of the model at the completion of the program.

In its first phase, the project conducted focus groups in the northern and south-eastern suburbs with Muslim parents, children

and community leaders from a variety of backgrounds to explore the barriers and facilitators to family functioning and resilience. Findings from the focus groups informed the development of a 12-session program with families on settlement issues and stress, issues of identity and belonging, stress management, communication between family members and social engagement.

The program was designed with a residential component to ensure that both parents could consistently attend the sessions. Some of the sessions were combined sessions with parents and children together and some were held with parents and children separately. AMWCHR worked with two groups of families from the northern and south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Parents had arrived in Australia as refugees and most of their children were born in Australia.

A family intervention program of this kind has been a first for AMWCHR and for the Muslim communities involved. The experience and feedback from the groups participating has been very positive. The sessions on problem-solving and conflict resolution have given the families more tools and skills to enhance communication and family interaction. The sessions on stress management have also been helpful, as while most of the time parents and children can identify stress, they have few resources to manage it effectively.

The continuation of the Family Resilience project will see the delivery of the family intervention program with the second group of families in the latter half of 2018.

Increasing access to trauma-informed care for CALD and Muslim women affected by violence

The trauma-informed care project has been funded by the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, and is being conducted in collaboration with Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health. The project aims to investigate barriers and facilitators to accessing trauma-informed care for women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Muslim backgrounds who have experienced interpersonal violence.

The study begins with exploring CALD women's experience of help-seeking and service providers' practices across a range of sectors including health and community support, through a series

of focus group discussions with CALD (primarily Muslim) women and a survey of service providers. The second phase involves an assessment of the implementation of a trauma-informed model of care adapted to the needs of CALD women. The implementation will involve the provision of training and consultations with staff in Geelong agencies.

Collection of data for the first phase continued in 2017–18 with in-depth interviews with women from CALD and Muslim backgrounds exploring their experiences of accessing services along with interviews with practitioners and service providers regarding their practices when working with women who have experienced violence.

Throughout the year consultation and networking with a number of agencies in the Geelong region has occurred to introduce the project and strengthen the network of service providers who will participate in the pilot workshop in 2019.

Building the sector

Education and training

Delivery of training and education sessions continues to be a key component of our work. In the last year, over 500 workers from various organisations and services have participated in our training sessions. These sessions seek to improve service delivery to Muslim communities and are an important part of our capacity-building strategy. Topics include basic sessions on understanding Islam and Muslims, Islam and the media, Islamophobia, refugees and unemployment, early and forced marriage, and family violence and Islam.

In the last year, education and training has been delivered across metropolitan Melbourne as well as in Geelong, Mildura, Adelaide and Canberra. Participants included social and community workers, volunteers, academics, councils, Australian Federal Police, teachers, health workers, and workers from the welfare and community legal sectors.

As part of the Respectful Relationships project training was delivered to service providers on family violence and early and forced marriage, with a focus on how these two forms of violence affect Muslim women and their communities. The training sought to provide professionals and service providers with the knowledge and tools to facilitate in their work with Muslim clients.

This year training workshops on working with emerging communities and family violence were held with Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council in Mildura, Family Violence Network in Mildura, and various service providers through Whittlesea Council and the Lighthouse

Foundation. The training sessions were attended by social workers, family violence caseworkers, psychologists, outreach workers and management staff.

The feedback and evaluations received from participants across all of these workshops was extremely positive, with attendees sharing that they were able to learn about the diversity of Muslim communities and were able to ask questions without being judged. Service providers reported having a better understanding of Islam and family violence, as well as early and forced marriage. They also reported that they are better able to work with Muslim clients and respond to clients more effectively and understand their own biases and prejudice.

Service-provider feedback

'This training touched on a number of things that will help me re-evaluate my thought process.'

'I will be more willing to work with CALD clients as I feel more informed.'

'Well-presented information. Very knowledgeable presenters. They didn't "other" the Muslim communities.'

'This training and other cultural competence training should be mandatory.'

'Thank you for giving me a greater understanding of Islam, culture, religion and especially experiences of women living in Australia and the difficulties they face.'

Contributing to public discourse

Media

Community language radio

Over the last year 3CR and AMWCHR collaborated on the third iteration of their successful Radio and Human Rights training for Muslim women aged between 15 and 25 years of age. This year an evaluation of the program was funded by REDI Deakin. The program discussed ideas of identity, social justice and activism, and weaving them into radio and podcast programs. This project allowed us to create a safe, nurturing group that welcomed discussion on a range of issues from within Muslim community and broader experiences of Australian society. These creative dialogues flowed through to developing content and performing short radio segments.

Participants generously shared the complexity of navigating social spaces from different intersections – Muslim, female, women of colour, queer, intellectual, spiritual and political.

This program worked as a refuge for all involved, somewhere safe enough to question religion, community, family, and even self. With that freedom came inquiry and creativity.

Respectful Relationship radio programs

The Respectful Relationships program provided information on radio about family violence and early and forced marriage in community languages to reach a wider audience. Five radio programs were aired this year in Arabic, Persian and Dari, through SBS radio.

The radio programs enable AMWCHR to provide information not just to women attending our sessions, but also to ensure that other men and women in the various communities who listen to radio programs are also aware of the issues.

Print media

AMWCHR facilitated four media articles and news appearances published/aired in the last financial year. The articles and programs discussed human rights violations, domestic violence, and Muslim women's access to divorce in Australia.

The aim of these articles and media appearances is to give community readers and listeners an understanding of the emerging issues and needs of Muslims and Muslim women, and how they affect their settlement in Australia.

The Guardian

'The harassment of Sam Dastyari is something we recognise and dread'

www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/11/the-harassment-of-sam-dastyari-is-something-we-recognise-and-dread

The Guardian

'Lebanese PM Saad Hariri's suspended resignation is only cosmetic'

www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/23/lebanese-pm-saad-hariris-suspended-resignation-is-only-cosmetical

Visual media

Tasneem Chopra

ABC, *The Drum*



Presentations and conferences

'Building government–CSO partnerships: Implementing gender-based approaches to preventing/countering violent extremism', Monash University, Semarang, Indonesia

'Early and forced marriage as trafficking challenge', Bali Process Government and Civil Society Roundtable, Bali Process Working Group on Trafficking in Persons and the Red Cross, Thailand

'Radicalisation', Question Time, The Wheeler Centre, Melbourne

'Marrying Young: Early and forced marriage research outcomes', Symposium, The Agency of Muslim Women in the Australian Context

'The Toxicity of Hyper Masculinity and Abuse of Power in Leadership', Symposium, The Agency of Muslim Women in the Australian Context





Building Government-CSO Partnerships, Semarang, Indonesia



Symposium, The Agency of Muslim Women in Australia

Advisory committees, networks and consultations

1. The Annual National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery, Australian Government Attorney General's Department
2. AMES Australia: HSS Local Area Coordination
3. Moreland Multicultural and Settlement Services Network
4. Hume Multicultural Workers Network
5. North East Region Settlement Planning
6. Parenting Education Network
7. Victorian Forced Marriage Network
8. Whittlesea Settlement Planning Committee
9. Victoria Police Muslim Reference Group
10. Domestic Violence Victoria Members Network Meeting
11. Family Relationship Centre Cultural Consultative Group
12. Maribyrnong Workers with Young People's Network
13. Community Resilience Community of Practice Group, Department of Premier and Cabinet
14. EQUAL Network
15. The Harmony Alliance: Migrant and Refugee Women for Change
16. Forced Marriage Stream Pilot Evaluation Reference Group, Australian Red Cross
17. Council for Australian Arab Relations, Department of Foreign Affairs
18. The Annual National Roundtable on Human Trafficking and Slavery, Australian Government Attorney General's Department
19. Bali Process Government and Civil Society Roundtable, Bali Process Working Group on Trafficking in Persons and the Red Cross, Thailand
20. Community Service Panel Victoria, Churchill Fellowship

Special thanks

Our donors

Federal Department of Social Services
Federal Department of Home Affairs,
formerly Attorney General's Department
Victorian Department of Premier and
Cabinet

Victorian Department of Health and Human
Services

Victorian Multicultural Commission

Helen Macpherson Smith Trust

Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation

RE Ross Trust

Reichstein Foundation

Sidney Myer Fund

City of Greater Dandenong

Moreland City Council

REDI Deakin

VicHealth

Our collaborating organisations

3CR Community Radio

Afghan Program SBS Radio

Afghan Women's Association of Victoria

African Women Australia (AWAU)

African Women's Council of Australia (AWCoA)

Anti-Slavery Australia, University of Technology
Sydney

Arabic Program SBS Radio

Arabic Welfare Inc

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC)

Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking
in Humans (ACRATH)

Australian International Academy (AIA)

Ballarat Community Health Service

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

Barwon CASA

Barwon Child, Youth and Family

Bendigo Health

Benevolence Australia

Broadmeadows English Language School

Brotherhood of St Laurance

Catholic Care Dandenong

Carlisle Primary School Cranbourne

Centrelink

Charles La Trobe P-12 College

Child FIRST (DHS)

Child Protection (DHHS)

Chisholm Institute

City of Darebin

Cohealth North Melbourne

Dandenong North Primary School

Dandenong South Primary School

Dandenong High School

Darebin Community Health Centre (DCH)

Deakin University

Dianella Community Health

Diversitat

East Preston Islamic College (EPIC)

Ethnic Communities Council of Shepparton
(ECCV)

Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program (FARREP)
 Fawkner Community House
 Family Relationship Centre Broadmeadows Foundation House
 Fountain Gate Secondary College
 Gippsland Multicultural Services
 Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE (GOTAFE) Shepparton
 Halal Food Project
 Headspace
 Hume Central Secondary College
 Hume Interfaith Network
 Holmesglen Institute Dandenong
 InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence
 Islamic Council of Victoria (ICV)
 Islamic College of Melbourne
 Kildonan Uniting Care Shepparton
 Plenty Valley Community Health
 Launch Housing
 Lyndale Secondary College
 Mallee Family Care (MFC)
 Maternal and Child Health Service (through Mildura Rural City Council)
 McGuire College
 Merri Community Health Services
 Mildura English Language Centre
 Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH)
 Myriad Consultants
 Narre Warren South P-12 College
 Neami National
 Newbury Child and Community Centre
 New Hope Foundation
 Noble Park English Language School
 North Geelong Secondary College
 Northern Community Legal Centre
 Northern Bay College
 NSW Department of Family and Community Services
 Orygen Youth Health
 Pascoe Vale Girls College
 Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health
 Reach Foundation
 River Nile Learning Centre
 Rise Refugee
 Royal Women's Hospital
 Salvation Army
 Stand Up
 Settlement Council of Australia
 Sirius College
 Springvale Rise Primary School
 Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) Broadmeadows
 Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (SMECC)
 TAFE Mildura
 Victorian Cooperative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups (VICSEG)
 Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC)
 Women's Health West
 Women's Legal Service Victoria
 Yarra Community Housing

Income and expenditure statement for the year ended 30 June 2018

Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights Inc. ABN 57 347 235 363

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Income		
Grant income	1,279,214	960,236
Interest received	4,419	5,033
Management fees	119,505	88,605
Other income	9,901	20,241
Total Income	1,413,039	1,074,115
Expenditure		
Communications expenses	–	–
Depreciation and amortisation expense	1,405	1,320
Finance, audit and accounting fees	37,409	32,516
Insurance	7,427	9,570
Office overhead expenses	26,252	21,144
Premises expenses	57,924	52,543
Programming and planning	421,964	151,157
Staff related expenses	27,723	95,775
Staff salaries, wages and on-costs	783,343	620,109
	1,363,447	984,134
Total Expenditure	1,363,447	984,134
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the association	49,592	89,981

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018

Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights Inc. ABN 57 347 235 363

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash at bank	933,873	714,397
Term deposit	269,973	265,730
	1,203,846	980,127
Trade and Other Receivables		
Accounts receivable	27,500	44,027
Prepayments	34,198	1,236
Security bond	17,153	10,002
	78,851	55,265
Total Current Assets	1,282,697	1,035,392
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Office equipment - at cost	23,494	19,359
Less: provision for depreciation	(12,973)	(11,229)
	10,521	8,130
Total Non-Current Assets	10,521	8,130
Total Assets	1,293,218	1,043,522

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018

Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights Inc. ABN 57 347 235 363

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current Liabilities		
Trade and Other Payable		
Accounts payable	123,934	22,120
Accrued expenses	9,306	2,075
GST payable	(3,320)	21,485
PAYG withholding tax payable	–	7,356
Superannuation payable	20,809	16,207
	150,729	69,243
Deferred Income		
Grants received in advance	636,584	519,593
	636,584	519,593
Employment Entitlement Provisions		
Provision for annual leave	69,443	56,190
Provision for long service leave	51,028	72,120
Provision for time in lieu	14,801	5,335
	135,272	133,645
Total Current Liabilities	922,585	722,481
Non-Current Liabilities		
Employment Entitlement Provisions		
Provision for long service leave	–	–
Total Non-Current Liabilities	–	–
Total Liabilities	922,585	722,481
Net Assets	370,633	321,041
Equity		
Accumulated members funds	370,633	321,041
	370,633	321,041

The financial information contained in this annual report has been extracted from the Association's statutory financial report for the year ended 30 June 2018 as audited by Collins & Co.

A copy of the full statutory accounts is available upon request to AMWCHR.

Statement by members of the board

Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights Inc. ABN 57 347 235 363

The Board 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 Board the financial report as set out on pages 2 to 7:

- 1 Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights Inc. as at 30 June 2018 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- 2 At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights 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 Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

Chairperson



Tasneem Chopra

Treasurer



Rasheeda Cooper

Dated this 30 day of November 2018



AUSTRALIAN MUSLIM WOMEN'S CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
Equality without Exception

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