



MEWSO

Middle Eastern Women & Society Organisation

Volunteering **Impact
Report**

2022-2023

Registered Charity: 1150129

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This report is designed by Amaara Venkataraman

INTRODUCTION

Happy Volunteers' Week to #Mewso_Amazing_Volunteers!

As a huge thank you to our incredible network of volunteers, we are launching our first-ever Volunteering Impact Report. This report recognises and acknowledges the significant contributions made by our volunteers between May 2022 and April 2023, showcasing how their involvement positively impacted our work and the lives of our service users.

In this report, we also present a snapshot of the Annual Volunteering Survey results and highlight the improvements we have introduced to the volunteering programme at MEWSO. The aim is to encourage more volunteers to join us on our journey of empowering women and helping them rebuild their lives.



A WORD FROM OUR TEAM...

On behalf of the entire team at MEWSO, I want to express my deepest gratitude for your invaluable contributions. Your hard work, dedication, and unwavering support have made our communities stronger, more caring, and more inclusive. You have touched countless lives and brought about positive change that will be felt by staff as well as our service users.

As we move forward, let us continue to embody the spirit of volunteering and compassion. Let us strive to uplift and empower those who need our help. Together, we can build a world where every person feels safe, valued, and supported.

Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart for your remarkable efforts. Your selflessness and dedication have made a lasting impact on the lives of many. You are true champions of change, and I am honoured to stand beside you in this noble cause.

Thank you, and may your compassion continue to inspire us all.

Halaleh Taheri
*Founder and Executive
Director*



A WORD FROM OUR TEAM...

They say “Volunteers are love in motion” and I can proudly state that this embodies the spirit of MEWSo volunteers. Whether it is an online or face-to-face volunteering role, a client-facing or behind-the-scenes one, the love, compassion, dedication and commitment of our volunteers has touched everyone working at MEWSo and the women we serve – something we’re truly grateful for.

We are inspired by their passion for empowering vulnerable women and amazed by their genuine desire to not only be ‘attached’ to one aspect of MEWSo’s work, but to build a relationship with the charity as a whole by going above and beyond their roles.

To [#Mewso_Amazing_Volunteers](#), we promise that we will always ensure that you have the best volunteering experience with us, and I hope in the next few pages, you will feel how much gratitude and respect we have for each of you who has given time and put an amazing effort into supporting our cause. I also wish this report will inspire others to join us on this rewarding journey.

When we dream of a world where every woman is treated respectfully and equally, this is not wishful thinking! It’s our vision that we are currently working on, and we will achieve it with the support of our current and future volunteers.

We look forward to continuing our story with you and welcoming new volunteers on board so that together, we can turn MEWSo’s vision into reality!



Loris
***Volunteer Engagement
Manager***

WHO ARE OUR VOLUNTEERS?

HOW DID OUR VOLUNTEERS HEAR ABOUT US?



57
VOLUNTEERING APPLICATIONS IN 2022

UNIVERSITY WEBSITES



35%

NATIONAL VOLUNTEERING WEBSITES



22%

EMPLOYER SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING



3%



40% OF MEWSO VOLUNTEERS HOLD MORE THAN 1 VOLUNTEERING ROLE

WORD OF MOUTH



20%

MEWSO WEBSITE



15%

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



5%



70%
OF VOLUNTEERS HAVE PREVIOUS VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

45% OF OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE STUDENTS



42% OF VOLUNTEERS SPEAK A COMMUNITY LANGUAGE

Check out the diversity of our volunteering family!



12% of MEWSO volunteers have a disability

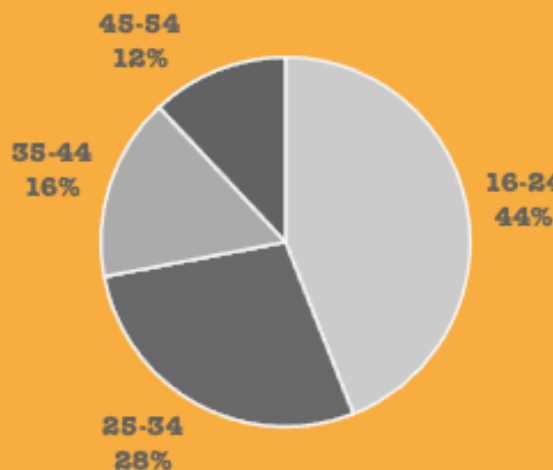


25% MEWSO volunteers belong to the LGBTQ+ community



88% of MEWSO volunteers are from ethnic minority backgrounds

AGES OF VOLUNTEERS



GENDER IDENTITIES OF OUR VOLUNTEERS



90% identify themselves as women



4% identify themselves as non-binary



6% prefer not to say

HOW OUR VOLUNTEERS MADE A DIFFERENCE THIS YEAR?

THIS YEAR, WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF WORKING WITH 29 INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEERS WHO SELFLESSLY DEDICATED THEIR TIME, SKILLS, AND EXPERTISE TO OUR CAUSE. SOME COMMITTED A FEW HOURS PER MONTH, WHILE OTHERS VOLUNTEERED MORE REGULARLY ON A WEEKLY BASIS. REGARDLESS OF THEIR AVAILABILITY, EACH VOLUNTEER'S CONTRIBUTION WAS INVALUABLE AND GREATLY APPRECIATED.



270

VOLUNTEERING
HOURS CONTRIBUTED



29

VOLUNTEERS BETWEEN
MAY 2022 - APRIL 2023



AREAS OF IMPACT

DELIVERING ENGLISH CLASSES



Our volunteers have helped improve the communication skills of over 30 women every week from refugee and ethnic minority backgrounds by teaching them basic and conversational English. This has fostered their social integration and boosted their confidence.

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

Volunteers have helped in organising workshops and community events, enabling our women to socialise, have fun, and improve their skills. They have also taken on administrative duties, providing crucial support to our team.



SOCIAL MEDIA & CAMPAIGNS



Our volunteers have enhanced our social media presence by posting updates about our work and creating relevant social media content. This has raised awareness about our campaigns and helped us reach a wider audience.

BEFRIENDING

Volunteers have helped reduce clients' social isolation and boost their mental health by providing 1-1 weekly practical and emotional support as part of the befriending service.





ONE-OFF VOLUNTEERING

Our volunteers have put an amazing effort into one-off volunteering opportunities, such as lending us a hand at the Iftar social gathering, our Annual General Meeting, and the new office move. They have also undertaken interpretation roles to overcome communication barriers with our clients and provided emotional support by escorting some of them to court hearings.

TRUSTEESHIP

We cannot forget the pivotal role each one of our trustees plays in shaping MEWSo's strategic direction and ensuring that we deliver our services in the best interests of all beneficiaries. This year, our trustees have reinforced their engagement with MEWSo by expanding their involvement and setting up different sub-committees to help with areas around governance, fundraising, communications & marketing, allowing us to take steady and effective steps toward achieving our goals.



LGBTQ+ PROJECT

Volunteers have supported the delivery of our newly launched LGBTQ+ project by assisting the Project Coordinator with workshop ideas and organising focus groups. This has helped us create a safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ people.



ADVICE SERVICES

Volunteers have helped our advisors provide high-quality domestic abuse and welfare advice by writing supporting letters for clients and providing signposting information.

OUTREACH WORK

Volunteers have expanded our reach to women in need by supporting our field visits to asylum seekers to assess their needs and promoting our services in the community.



QUOTES FROM OUR STAFF

I would like to thank all our volunteers for their time and energy in supporting disadvantaged women from our communities. We value your skills and dedication and we want you to know that you make a huge positive impact on women's lives



ELLIE
Fundraising Manager

Our wonderful volunteers have made a significant impact this year, as they do every year. But in particular, with the help and advice we've had from the Board of Trustees when upgrading MEWSo's brand and logo; with our efforts to promote our training programme, and with sharpening our impact on social media. Thank you, all. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed and are so very much appreciated

AUDREY
Communications
Coordinator



I want to express our sincerest gratitude to our amazing, dedicated volunteers. Your unwavering commitment to our cause has profoundly impacted our workshops, campaigns, and services. I am humbled by your compassion and inspired by your dedication to promoting a better life for vulnerable women

AMAN
Campaign
Coordinator



THANK YOU FROM OUR CLIENTS

"The English teacher volunteer is very good, considering that I have gone to two colleges so far and the teacher there cannot communicate well with students. I learn a lot from these classes, and the teacher is patient, very approachable, and gives us a chance to talk and choose the lesson topics, which is very helpful for us."

English class attendee

"I can't find the right words to describe the amazing help my befriender has given me. I feel everything is OK when I speak with her, and she's full of energy, empathy, passion and optimism. I thank God that I met my befriender; she helped me become a stronger, more confident, and independent woman, and thank you is not enough!"

Befriender

"I enjoy speaking with MEWSO volunteers a lot! They are very nice, friendly people, and I feel at ease when I chat with them about my life and the struggles I'm facing. I look forward to meeting them again at future events"

Workshop participant

A glimpse of MEWSo volunteering programme

To achieve our vision of a world where every woman is empowered, treated equally and protected from abuse, we need ongoing support from volunteers from all walks of life. Volunteering with us can be a life-changing experience that not only benefits our clients, but also impacts our volunteers in many positive ways, ensuring their time with us is a time well spent.

The Seven Pillars of MEWSo's volunteering programme

1

Flexibility

Our volunteering roles fit around volunteers' schedules and circumstances.

4

Support

From day one, volunteers receive continuous support from the team to perform their roles effectively.

2

Inclusivity

Our roles are accessible to all, and we strive to create an inclusive environment where everyone is treated equally.

5

Engagement

We actively seek volunteers' input on different aspects of our work and involve them in decision-making.

3

Recognition

We always recognise our volunteers' work to ensure they feel motivated and valued.

6

Meaningful

Our roles are carefully designed to be balanced, impactful, and resonate with volunteers' interests and lives.

7

Development

We provide opportunities for volunteers to improve their skills and support their professional and personal development.

We ask. We listen. We act

In response to the feedback received from volunteers, this year we have:



-Improved our internal communication with volunteers by establishing new ways to share short notice and one-off volunteering roles.

-Involved more volunteers in our campaign work to raise public awareness of women's rights worldwide.

-Created opportunities for volunteers to meet and connect with MEWSo employees and service users.

-Offered volunteers various training opportunities delivered by MEWSo staff and external professional trainers.

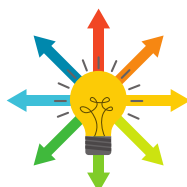
98%

of volunteers are satisfied with their volunteer experience



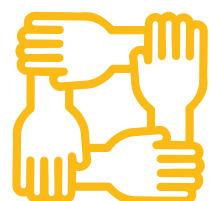
88%

of volunteers reported that MEWSo enabled them to make a positive contribution to the society



95%

of volunteers feel a part of a supportive community



HOW DID WE IMPROVE OUR VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME?

1

Expanded our recruitment activity to build a diverse base of volunteers who represent the communities we serve.

2

Launched monthly volunteer-led group enabling volunteers to feel they're part of a community besides promoting shared learning.

3

Introduced the Wellness Action Plan (WAP) adapted from the mental health charity, Mind, assuring volunteers that their mental health is a priority to us.

4

Developed Volunteer Management Guidelines for staff to help them identify their needs for volunteers' support.



HEAR THE STORY BEST FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS

Why do you volunteer at MEWSo?

I feel that my education comes with a responsibility to give back to society, especially women from Middle Eastern backgrounds who may often be less supported in different areas such as the UK.

I really cherish MEWSo's core objective of fighting for women's rights. As a woman with a South Asian background myself, I relate to the issues faced by Asian women and am glad to be able to help at a charity where my work makes a difference.

I volunteer at MEWSo because my role is tied to the greater meaningful efforts given to support women in need through their difficult circumstances.

Because I believe in the mission of the organisation and in working to contribute to a sense of community within a big city like London.



What do you like about volunteering at MEWSo?

I really appreciate the support from MEWSo and the effort put into their volunteers; I also feel that volunteers are really appreciated at MEWSo. Additionally, I enjoy seeing the clients every week and seeing their determination.

I like volunteering at MEWSo because it offers me a role that is personalised to my needs, flexible and helps me strengthen my skills while also making a great impact.

The kindness and genuine nature of every interaction with staff, co-volunteers, and clients.

The part I enjoy the most is meeting the team; I was really not expecting everyone, without exception, to be this kind and helpful, even with struggles unrelated to my role at MEWSo. I also really appreciate that the volunteer programme is as well thought-out as it is, it shows that the well-being of the volunteers is a priority for MEWSo



What would you say to anyone thinking of starting volunteering with us?

I think this is a great charity to volunteer for! You will get to meet wonderful people and contribute to making a small difference in their lives.

I would say just go for it without hesitation, everyone is so lovely, and you can clearly communicate your preferred time to commit so that you can be placed in the role that best suits your situation. MEWSo is a wonderful community to be a part of, and the whole process since day one has gone as smoothly as possible.

If you want to be a part of a welcoming, warm, and meaningful organisation, do not hesitate to join MEWSo.

There are diverse opportunities available for you, and you can always rotate! Everyone is down-to-earth. MEWSo's volunteering team is extremely understanding and approachable for anything and everything professional and personal.



Feeling inspired?

Join our wonderful network of volunteers by keeping an eye out on [our volunteering page](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all the volunteers who have supported MEWSO during the last year. Your combined efforts and dedication inspires us every day and enables us to do the work we do and be the organisation we are today ... and our hopes are even bigger for the future!

THANK YOU TO...

Mina, Farzane, Anika, Eiman, Sanya, Nouha, Yara, Maryam A, Donia, Aamarah, Haohan, Afsaneh R, Afsaneh I, Maryam B, Yijing, Nadine, Ella, Riyan, Lucheng, Elif, Nihal, Kathryn, Nina, Houda, Sharmeen, Kun

Our Management Committee:

Guilene, Thelma, Maria, Dina, Behnaz, Rejna, Cordelia

Corporate volunteers:

The Media Trust

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much”

**Get
Involved!**



<https://www.mewso.org>



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MEWSorganisation



@mewsorganisation



@MewsOrg

Offices

Andover Community Centre

55-57 Corker Walk,
Andover Estate
N7 7RY

Open: Mondays &
Wednesdays, 10am-
5pm.

Church Street Neighbourhood Centre

Cherwell House,
Penfold Street,
London NW8 8PT

Open: Wednesdays &
Thursdays 10am-5pm.