



Supporting communities,  
enterprising minds and active citizens

ANNUAL REPORT JUNE 2013 TO MAY 2014

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## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SECRETARY**

The success of ACCM (UK) this year has seen its operations and demand increase and its service delivery expanding very quickly due to the move to new offices and increase capacity of staff and volunteers. As Secretary I can proudly state that the current healthy state of the project is due to the leadership of our Director with the support and inspiration of her team of staff, volunteers, users, supporters and funders. As a member of the Board of Directors / Trustees, we have seen our duties and responsibilities expand as new projects and funding have been secured. On behalf of my fellow Board members I would like to say we are delighted to be part of these new developments.

Key to 2013 to 2014 year was the success of securing new small but essential funding from St Andrews Church, Panacea Fund and Bedford Borough Council and the increase on the number of Volunteers has enabled the project to continue delivering services to achieve our aims and objects.

The Away Day held in September 2013, enabled Board of Directors to get to know staff and volunteers better, listen to their views, interests and concerns about current and future of the project. The afternoon session facilitated by the External Trainer helped to challenge our own stereotypes and views to seriously project the future of ACCM (UK), what we expected to achieve and how we would achieve them in the next five years. Surprisingly we were all in agreement on major strategic issues including long term sustainable funding, reaching out to more hard to reach and vulnerable communities and setting up of one stop shop. This information will contribute to our Business Plan that is currently under review by the Director with the support of the Cranfield Management Trust.

This financial year, 2013/14, saw an increase in demand for our services and an expansion in delivery of activities, events, strengthening of our existing and expansion in our networks and partnerships. The organisation supported and advised new cases including 6 cases of male child sexual abuse, increasing numbers of our users, especially Asian women, seeking help and support for depression or mental health issues. Our success in 2013/14 events was also due to our strong work partnership with other organisations some new others existing such as MIND, NHS, the Council Relate, Guru Ravidass Community Centre and Samaritans. The organisation encouraged by the Government's current promotional initiative continues to build on its on-going work on tackling illegal harmful traditional practices around the UK.

Our now expanding provision of ESOL and IT is due to our working partnership with Bedford College that is offering student ESOL and IT Tutors for our growing demand. This relationship works well for our users as the Tutors gain work experience and our users gain new skills and knowledge especially those who are not entitled to free Lifelong Learning support. We continue to maintain good working relationship with Workers Education Association (WEA) who continues to provide some of our ESOL sessions in Queens Park and Cauldwell Wards.

ACCM (UK) work and good practice has contributed to various Government and local authority consultations the Home Office FGM Consultation and drafting of FGM E-Learning website programme and review of the health of Bedford Communities. ACCM (UK) has

played an important in some of the Home Office's FGM consultation with the final report to be released in July 2014 and a Research Study report funded by the Home Office on the FGM Data in the England and Wales was also being undertaken by City University and Equality Now and final report due out in June or July 2014. The campaign to make Forced Marriage (Civil) Act 2007 in June 2014 to make forced marriage a criminal offence is to be welcomed and will enable ACCM (UK) to advice our clients on the alternatives available.

We continue to develop and support our established overseas partnerships in Europe and Africa and hope to develop work and strong relationship with local communities in these countries when funding resources are secure. The Director is now a Board member of EURONET – FGM a Brussels based organisation.

As Directors we help feed in and support ACCM (UK) with information from our own professional work areas such as the Secretary is part of various Forums on FGM, one of the Directors is survivor who also works closely with grassroots communities by providing training and information to parents and communities, the Treasurer refers users to our project and the Chair provides legal advice.

The Board is still excited about the Bedford Borough Council's interest in ACCM (UK) and their interest in wanting to support us by providing a property for office space. We will continue to support the Director and her team in the negotiations with the Council to ensure that the initiative of developing Woburn Road offices in a community hub is achieved. The challenge is to secure funding to make this happen.

In the long term, I am happy that our work and progress is in line with a number of Coalition's Government's policies that have emerged and we will continue to monitor these to keep in touch with funding sources. As Board members we will ensure that that we continue to be proactive and provide support for staff and volunteers to develop new services and secure new sustainable long term funding to meet the needs of our increasing beneficiaries. Our new partnership with Bedfordshire University will enable us to evidence our work through appropriate research, evaluation and reporting. We are also currently looking into securing Quality Mark Assessment either through PQCASSO or ISO901. This will improve ACCM (UK) standing with Funders and contracting for public contracts.

On behalf of my fellow Board members, I would like to thank the Director, volunteers, users and supporters and most importantly our funders especially Big Lottery, St Andrews Church and Bedford Borough Council, who have made it possible for the project to continue being successful. I look forward to committing myself as Secretary and serving ACCM (UK) for another successful and fulfilling 2013/14.



Dr Comfort Momoh MBE  
Secretary

Reflections from the Director

*A very successful year*

The year 2013 to 2014 was a very exciting, challenging and very successful year for ACCM (UK). ACCM (UK) expanded its work outside Bedfordshire into Luton and Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. Our work with grassroots communities at all levels expanded due to our move to our strategically position new offices at Woburn Road. We now users and beneficiaries visiting our offices to either participate in our activities, seeking information or receiving services including counselling for mental health, domestic abuse, issues or previous child abuse problems.

The Away Day held in September 2013, enabled Board of Directors, staff and volunteers to get to know each other better and discuss the future of the project. Aides by an External Trainer we were able to review ACCM (UK) and what we expected to achieve in the next five years. There were surprises but Directors, staff and volunteers mostly agreed as to what we expected of and from ACCM (UK). This information was valuable for our Business Plan that is currently being reviewed by the help of the same External Trainer from Cranfield Management Trust.

Our main funding from Big Lottery Fund and Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales was supplemented by new grants from Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation, Award for All, Bedford Borough Council and St Andrews Church of whom we are grateful, enabled ACCM (UK) to continue doing what was best for our beneficiaries. Although most of our work in 2013 to 2014 concentrated on building on existing programmes and need we were able to develop new work with new groups such as setting up Italian Senior Citizens Group, The Ghanaian Group, and The African Caribbean Youth Group, all of whom meet at ACCM (UK)'s offices and supporting the Conduit Day Centre to keep residents active. The Gambian Girls and Women's Group in Birmingham is another of our new groups established in 2013/4. We have continued to expand our health and wellbeing activities to include diabetes, more gentle exercises for senior citizens such as yoga. ACCM (UK) is the only Charity in Bedford working closely with Italian community and helping set up new African and Caribbean groups.

I am proud to say that ACCM (UK) initiated and was lead organiser in planning and organising major events, Bedfordshire Suicide Prevention Day events in September 2013 for health professionals and for the public, in partnership with MIND, The Samaritans and the NHS. Following on to the successful 2013 International Women's Week (IWW), we were lead organisers in 2014 IWW that involved other Bedford women and groups. Sadly, due to little commitment from other women and groups ACCM (UK) has decided not to organise future major IWW events but will instead concentrate on running activities to celebrate our existing women's groups and voices.

As a Director I would like to welcome our new Chair, Pamela Gomez, who joined ACCM (UK) in September 2013 as an observer but took over as Chair in February 2014. Pamela brings vast knowledge and skills in business administration, law and human rights that are crucial in ACCM (UK)'s aims and objects. We have expanded our workforce with new volunteers as some have left for new paid or volunteering elsewhere and one became part time paid employee. My day to day running and management of the office duties have now been reduced as the Administrative Officer has taken over most of them including management and supervision of Volunteers and book keeping of project finances. I can now concentrate on

more strategic roles including fund raising, supporting beneficiaries with complex cases and delivering training to professionals and other groups. The challenge for me as Director is to ensure we secure new long term sustainable funding through tendering for delivery of public or private services due to the expanding demand for our services and increasing need.

We continue our work in providing ESOL for non-English speaking migrant communities and IT for beginners. This work is being undertaken in partnership with Guru Ravidas Community Centre and we hope that most of the learners will be able to achieve advanced English leading to paid or volunteering work. Many of our learners are women many of them have no status as UK citizens and this learning will enable them to secure British Citizenship so they are independent of their husbands and families. We now have waiting lists for all our ESOL and IT courses and we are hoping to recruit new trainers from Bedford College to help support our new recruit's classes in 2014 to 2015.

Our relationship with Bedford Borough Council is getting stronger and stronger. Our move to Woburn Road is enabling us to start talks as to how to make use of the offices. There is suggestion that ACCM (UK) may take over, with the Council's support, the whole building and run and manage the Conduit Day Centre services based on ground floor in the near future. Talks on this subject are still in their infancy.

On the tackling harmful traditional practices front there has been serious media and Government interest in the child and forced marriage and female genital mutilation issues during the year. ACCM (UK) was involved in various consultations including the Home Office's FGM consultation with the final report to be released in July 2014. The new Research Study, long overdue new estimate on prevalence of FGM in England and Wales, funded by the Home Office is currently being undertaken by City University and Equality Now with final report expected around June or July 2014. The campaign to make Forced Marriage (Civil) Act 2007 in June 2014 to make forced marriage a criminal offence is to be welcomed and will enable ACCM (UK) to advise our clients on the alternatives available.

The campaign to eliminate female genital mutilation has also speeded up with the Government giving £35 million towards tackling FGM overseas, mainly in Africa. The NSPCC has also set up a Help Line 0800 028 3550 for victims or those at risk to phone in for advice or information. My concerns remain that there is little support including funding for smaller local grassroots, UK FGM campaign groups outside London, and majority of them led by survivors themselves outside London. On the positive side some of the FGM campaign is helping to make the culturally sensitive subject easier to talk about publically locally.

As one reads through the report it will become clear, that as a project, 2013 / 14 has been a busy year with new challenges and that we have undertaken a lot of work and achieved more than we expected especially reaching out to minority men from all backgrounds and Italian Community.

### ***Looking at the future***

Securing new long term sustainable funding especially public contracts to deliver public services will enable us to engage with more hard to reach communities to make a difference to their lives. We will continue to develop our established work partnership with statutory service providers and professionals to work even more closely together to develop services that

are more user-friendly, accessible and relevant to majority of disadvantaged communities in Bedfordshire and surrounding regions. This will enable us to develop and expand our services, especially recruiting new volunteers from our increasing user pool, to enable us to take over a property to turn it into a Community Hub.

Our links with our international partner continues to grow as we now work closely with other European NGOs including EURONET – FGM. We continue to support our African partners in Uganda including Rural Child Care Uganda (RUCCA) based in Uganda despite not being successful in securing funding to help kick start programmes. Our new links with two UK Universities, Bedfordshire and Institute of Education, will help raise our profile and improve our funding applications especially with Department for International Development DFID that funds overseas work in Africa. This partnership will be important.

With the project now growing, with a team of dedicated staff and volunteers supported by a great team of Trustees we hope to have a successful but challenging 2014/15 year. This will only be possible with full support from our users, supporters, funders and everyone who uses our services.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sarah McCulloch'.

Sarah McCulloch  
ACCM (UK) Director

## **THE PROJECT SO FAR**

### **What we did**

The Trustees / Directors continued to oversee the whole project, managing of finances by monitoring, authorising payments, checking all payments are in order, signing cheques and responding to communication relating to the project. The Board met at least 4 times a year at our Bedford offices or talked over tele-conferencing with each other or used email or telephone to communicate with the Director and staff to manage the project and ensure work was progressing effectively and achieving our aims. The Chair and Treasurer always dropped into the office in person to talk to staff, the Chair attends some of the events to ensure they are being run effectively and meeting our aims and health and safety. A new Chair was elected as previous Chair Rimas Morris resigned for personal reasons and ACCM (UK) is grateful for her support since 2008 from initial project set up. We would like to thank Rimas for all her support and commitment and leading ACCM (UK) to what it is today and wish her all the best for the future.

The organisation was in its second year of Big Lottery Fund – Reaching Communities and third year of Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales grant. We also secure further small grants from Awards for All £10,000, St Andrews Church donated £1,000, Bedford Borough Council gave us £2,000 for work improving men's health and Panacea Fund awarded us £5,000 to work with users with mental health and depression in Bedford.

Bedford Borough Council appreciates the work ACCM (UK) does and enabled the project to move to 3A Woburn Road, a Council owned property statically positioned and meets our needs and has benefited our users due to this location a promising issue when we decide to develop it into a community hub.

### **Working with Beneficiaries:**

1,360 beneficiaries have benefited from our activities and work (650 migrant women, 65 men, 200 people from other communities and 85 children and young people). This number includes 250 ladies who attended Bedfordshire International Women's event held during the week of 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March and a conference for Somali women in Manchester with 110 women attending held August 2013 and 50 ladies attending a Gambian Families event held on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2014. 60 of the women and 20 men attended various conferences and events held with other partners including Bedfordshire Suicide Prevention Conference.

31 victims of hidden domestic violence were supported, 16 of these were of Asian background, 4 from white and 11 were of African Caribbean background. 4 of them with a total of 9 children were supported into referred to refugees.

We supported 6 men of Asian background who were victims of historic child sexual abused by mainly male family members. One of the men is one of a family of three siblings who have benefited from our services as they suffer drugs and alcohol abuse and severe withdraw symptoms as they try to rebuild their lives, obsessive compulsive syndrome and mental health problems caused. Although, majority of them are now adults, they say they have never sought any help due to shame, humiliation and fear of being rejected by family and community



members in the name of HONOUR and to protect the family reputation in the community. They are now receiving various forms of support from ACCM (UK) in collaboration with other service agencies but authorities are currently not involved as victims do not want this to happen. We feel that eventually after receiving relevant help and they become comfortable to talk about their ordeal they may want authorities to be involved and perpetrators brought to justice as many of these men are still alive and living in the community.

Our capacity to listen, provide positive support and working with other service providers such as Independent Domestic Violence Association (IDVA) to improve the position of victims because we are trusted has seen increasing numbers of victims of domestic violence, forced marriage or fear of female genital mutilation or those who have already been subjected to these practices coming forward.

2013 and 2014 has seen female genital mutilation become news item with huge Government, media, locally and national publicity to support the FGM campaign. This has enabled ACCM (UK) to see a surge in requests for training from professionals and communities needing advice and support. The following awareness activities and information giving have been undertaken on FGM:

- Throughout the year we have supported 45 individual victims of female genital mutilation, some of whom needed counselling and treatment to repair the damage. Five of these require support letters for their asylum claim.
- In 2013 and 2014 we have seen an increase from new communities such as from Ghana, The Gambia, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malaysia seeking help and advice.
- In Birmingham ACCM (UK) has helped The Gambian Community to set up a Women and Child Care Group to start campaigning against violence against girls and women. They held their first event on April 2014 funded by ACCM (UK) with 100 families attending.
- Held three events in Birmingham with the Somali community during the year with average 70 women attending on each event.
- Provided training for two days in Glasgow for communities, professionals and service providers on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013. Over 110 attended over two days. Continuing to provide support and information via email.
- Continued to participate on Government Forums to share and provide information on good practice and community views
- Trained 3 schools in the year with over 200 staff attending on female genital mutilation issues.
- Undertook information awareness giving to over 60 parents in two schools on female genital mutilation in Manchester and Northampton.
- Organised and provided training to 350 professionals in partnership with other agencies including Safeguarding Teams, Health and the Police on female genital mutilation.
- Provided information for media publicity including support 6 students with their studies on FGM
- Recruited and trained new 5 champions / volunteers to support new community groups in Milton Keynes, Manchester and Birmingham
- The Director was elected to the Board of the European FGM Network based in Brussels
- The Coalition had made available £35 million in aid towards fighting and campaigning against FGM in African and other overseas FGM practicing countries.

In June 2014 the current Forced Marriage (Civil) Act 2007 will be changed to Forced Marriage Criminal Act 2014. ACCM (UK), other agencies and victims have lobbied the Government to make Forced Marriage a Criminal Offence instead of Civil Offence that was not working to deter families from forcing their daughters or sons into forced marriages. ACCM (UK) is a member of the Forced Marriage Forum that meets at the Foreign and Commonwealth Offices to debate and inform Government on issues relating to forced marriage.

Over 125 women have benefited from our parenting, health and wellbeing programmes. It was established during some of the health and wellbeing sessions that 11 ladies suffered from anaemia and were not aware they had this problem. 8 who said they had diabetes were advised how best to manage their problem through better diet and change of lifestyle.

36 women and 9 men have benefited from ESOL to be able to speak English. 4 of these have secured paid employment and 2 have started formal education. 3 ladies, who previously never went out, never spoke English, are now fluent, have become close friends and go shopping together on public transport to Luton. Majority of our Asian students have been in the UK for over 5 years but not secured their leave to remain independently and are now undertaking English and IT to enable them to undertake their Citizens Tests. These programmes are being delivered in partnership with Guru Siri Ravidass Community Centre and sessions delivered by Bedford College ESOL Tutors or Trainees.

Over 37 people in the year have undertaken computers for beginners and are now able to use Skype to communicate with friends and family overseas, shopping on line, send emails and pay their bills on line. Majority are learning IT to be able to undertake their Citizenship Tests. These programmes are being delivered in partnership with Guru Siri Ravidass Community Centre and sessions delivered by Bedford College ESOL Tutors or Trainees.

### **Bedfordshire Suicide Prevention Awareness**

In partnership with Bedfordshire NHS, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Samaritans and MIND, led by ACCM (UK) we organised a joint Bedfordshire Suicide Prevention Conference with over 80 people attending. This is in line with concerns that there were high suicides amongst young men, especially amongst the Polish community, and older women in Bedfordshire.

### **Children's Centre's**

Working with 4 Family Centres, some of them were previously Sure Start Children's Centres now run by 4Children Group, to provide activities for parents including sewing, relaxation, health eating, nutrition and parenting. This is ongoing partnership as we are able to reach to those hard to reach parents from disadvantaged backgrounds who never use these services for their benefit. Over 60 parents currently attend some of our activities at different centres.

### **Bedfordshire International Women's Week**

We organised Bedford International Women's Week 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2014, titled Bedford Women's Voices, for the second year in a row, in support with other women's groups. Many

activities including talks, health checks, activities such as dancing, Yoga, career and confidence building were part of the week celebration held in five venues around Bedford. On Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March saw 80 women from all walks and backgrounds including Councillors attending a dinner and dance Gala to end the celebrating Bedford Women's Voices. There was a strong sense of bonding with women who now want this to be an annual event that will bring women together. New women's organisations and individuals have come forward with many suggestions and offering to participate in the future events. However, ACCM (UK) felt overwhelmed with the costs and little capacity to deliver this event and have now decided that it will not organise this event again in the future as a Bedford wide event but will only do so for existing users of ACCM (UK) services.

### **Italian Senior Citizens Group**

We helped set up Italian Senior Citizens Group after Stroke Consultant and a stroke victim contacted ACCM (UK) to help run activities, talks and events for women. After the first Health and Wellbeing Event men also showed interest in being part of the group hence the Italian Senior Citizens Group being established with a Board of its own. We now have over 80 attending and they love yoga, tai chi, armchair exercises and dancing with yoga being their favourite as feedback shows it helps them to relax and sleep.

### **Ghanaian Family Group**

In the year we have had talks with young mothers who complained about their husbands working long shift hours and rarely at home or spending time with their children. There was also concern that the deaths of young men were due to their lack of time to visit their doctors. This has prompted the Director to set up and support a Ghanaian Family Group that meets every once a month to make friends, talk about diaspora, share ideas and discuss issues of concern. ACCM (UK) has also started giving talks on various subjects including health and wellbeing, sexual health, HIV /AIDS and health checks on sexually transmitted diseases. There are now nearly 40 people attending. We hope that the success of this group will lead to more family groups setting up to help young men.

### **Guru Ravidass Community Sabha Centre**

ACCM (UK) is supporting three other organisations to develop their programmes. One of the organisations, Siri Guru Ravidas Sabha Community Centre, is in talks with ACCM (UK) to develop partnership working including to setting up a Community Hub r Centre. It is anticipated that if partnership agreement can be reached, joint funding will be sought to build a centre and expand our joint work. So far Big Lottery has shown interest in supporting this strategy of a Community Owned Centre. Talks are on-going.

### **Other**

- a) We continue to support our sister FGM Action Group in Northamptonshire that we helped set up and train to start campaigning against FGM and other forms of honour based violence against girls and women in 2011. They have developed Terms of Reference and have over 12 Volunteer Community Champions working directly in the communities. The FGM Clinic at Northampton Maternity Hospital is currently on hold due to the trained

midwife leaving her post and two new Midwives are yet to train. We anticipate this will take place in early 2015.

- b) We still work closely with South Essex Partnership Trust (SEPT) who now helps provide mental health support services to some of our users. SEPT also organised a Domestic Violence conference in Queens Park Community Centre for professionals supported by ACCM (UK) and the Director was one of the main speakers on female genital mutilation. Over 80 people attended including minority men. Feedback, was that of shock on the subject of female genital mutilation, ‘never heard of this practice..’ said one of the candidates.

In total ACCM (UK) Trustees, staff and volunteers attended over 200 events, training sessions and meetings over the year. Majority over 57% were training sessions to improve our skills and knowledge on various subjects related to our work.

### **Government Policy**

ACCM (UK) is a member of various Cross Government Forum including FGM Forum, FM Unit and Domestic Violence.

House of Commons Home Affairs Committee is undertaking a consultation on Female Genital Mutilation to draw up an Action for the UK Action towards tackling the practice in the UK. The Committee is looking at what is working well on the ground and ACCM (UK) has submitted a report. The Final Report will be out in July 2014 in time for the Girl Summit.

Girl Summit Conference is being organised by the Department for International Development as part of the government £35million programme towards eliminating FGM on countries of origin. This event is supported by other Government Departments including the Home Office to bring together international organisations, Governments, activists, diaspora and UK campaigners to draw up agreement(s) in how to eliminate child and forced marriage and female genital mutilation in a generation. This event will be held in London.

Since Forced Marriage (Civil) Act 2007 was introduced there has been campaigns from victims and some campaigners, including ACCM (UK) that the Act should be made a Criminal Offence as the Civil Act was not working. Some campaigners such as Karma Nirvana have argued strongly that forced marriage the Civil Act was not strong enough as a deterrent and that families were flouting the law as victims were too frightened to go to the authorities. They felt that a more robust criminal law would be more appropriate.

### **How our information and good practice will be shared**

The results from our work and good practice are being shared at all levels, with the community, professionals, service providers and policy makers through:

- Training and giving out information at meetings, training and events organised either by ACCM (UK) or other agencies.
- Setting new community groups such as the Italian Senior Citizens and Gambian Family Groups enables us to raise awareness and share information about our work and other agencies.
- Attending meetings and sharing information and good practice especially at cross Government Forums that we are members of
- We share our information with Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and any other Local Authorities; NHS Commissioners, service providers, local Councillors and MPs who are interested in our work.
- We have participated in international, National and Local Consultations or Policy reviews on violence against girls and women, health and social care during the year.
- The Director took part in current Government Consultation on Female Genital Mutilation Action Plan 2014.
- Our updated website now has most of the information about our work. We are still reviewing the information and updating it as it becomes necessary. The Annual Report will be put on our new website and will be made available at request as well as at events where we have a stall.

## **Opportunities and challenges**

### Opportunities:

Securing Big Lottery Funding continues to enable to have access to more small but crucial funding opportunities for the organisation to expand its work.

With staff and volunteers now established in their posts we are have capacity to expand and offer more events and activities on different issues of interest or concern to different communities enabling us to reach more beneficiaries and make a bigger difference.

Our partnership with Bedford College and WEA continues to grow with more ESOL and computer sessions planned for new areas such as Cauldwell and Kempston. We now have large numbers in Queens Park and Castle undertaking Citizenship course as well as their knowledge of English and Computers develops. Our next plan is to extend our partnerships into other areas such as adult skills and social media.

The IT and social media sessions that have continued have seen women in particular become so proficient in using social media especially internet and Skype. We intend to develop our current beginners' sessions into advanced with our new partnership with Bedford College. In partnership with Guru Ravidass Community Centre we are planning to develop Citizenship sessions targeting older minority women to enable them to gain independence and formal leave to remain in the UK.

Our work relationship with service providers and statutory bodies such as the Clinical Commissioners, Public Health teams, Local Authorities, Bedford Hospital, Terence Higgins Trust and South Essex Partnership Trust (SEPT) continues to grow. We now work closely with them enabling them to be main speakers or to run some of our events and activities. Being part of our service delivery has enabled them to engage and to reach out to grassroots communities on public health issues or if they want to raise awareness about a current health or social concern. We still organise and run joint conference and events and ACCM (UK) is often lead organiser.

We continue to receive ongoing training and information requests from service providers and statutory services professionals especially on illegal traditional practices which have been in the media and the Government has been sending out new guidelines.

Our work and partnership with large Charities based, such as MIND, Relate and Citizens Advice Bureau, who run services for communities but struggle to engage with minorities continues to grow. Our move to 3A Woburn Road has enabled us to be closer to large charities especially MIND based at 3 Woburn Road. We have been able to refer clients, mainly those needing counselling for depression, to each and make use of each other's facilities for the benefit of our users.

We continue our discussions with the Council with regarding developing 3A Woburn Road into a Community Hub for community use.

### Challenges:

Since moving to 3A Woburn Road demand for our services, support and information has increased especially from local communities putting a lot of pressure on our current staff, volunteers and funding resources. Also our work outside Bedfordshire is currently not being funded and yet we get a lot requests from users and professionals for support, training and information. As in 2013/14 we will endeavour to help as much as possible.

The challenge now is to secure long term funding to enable us to develop a community hub, continue delivering our work to our vulnerable users. The funding environment is now complex and difficult for smaller organisations like ACCM (UK) that has to compete with large Charities. At the same time majority of grants now go to large Charities who then sub contract small charities to deliver the work on a results basis making it impossible for us to bid for such programmes. We are confident we will succeed in securing new long term funding and we just have to continue applying and talking to potential funders. We are also looking into establishing partnerships with other agencies so we can apply joint funding to deliver work that is similar and this is the best way forward for ACCM (UK).

## ACCM (UK)'S FINANCES AND GRANTS

### Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31st May 2014

Statement of Financial Activities and Income and Expenditure  
Account

| Notes   | Unrestricted<br>Funds | Restricted<br>Funds | Total<br>Funds<br>2014 | Total<br>Funds<br>2013 |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|   | £                     | £                   | £                      | £                      |
| <b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>                                 |                       |                     |                        |                        |
| Activities in furtherance of the<br>Charity's objects     |                       |                     |                        |                        |
| Grant Receivable  | 1                     | 5711                | 106942                 | 112653                 |
| Fees and Bank Interest                                    |                       |                     |                        | 86212                  |
|   |                       | <u>5711</u>         | <u>106942</u>          | <u>112653</u>          |
| <b>Total Incoming Resources</b>                           |                       | <u>5711</u>         | <u>106942</u>          | <u>112653</u>          |
| <b>Resources Expended:</b>                                |                       |                     |                        |                        |
| Cost of activities in furtherance<br>Of Charities objects |                       |                     |                        |                        |
| Direct Charitable Expenditure                             |                       | 2253                | 9239                   | 11492                  |
| <b>Management &amp; Administration</b>                    |                       |                     |                        |                        |
| Office Rent and Services                                  |                       | 20                  | 7607                   | 7627                   |
| Salaries  | 3                     | 0                   | 71075                  | 71075                  |
| Training  |                       | 0                   | 714                    | 714                    |
| Accountancy and Professional fees                         |                       | 2609                | 3926                   | 6535                   |
| Volunteer Expenses  |                       | 5                   | 3319                   | 3324                   |
| Travel & Subsistence                                      |                       | 28                  | 2758                   | 2786                   |
| Other Administrative                                      |                       | 374                 | 6451                   | 6825                   |
| Staff Miscellaneous                                       |                       | 464                 | 1079                   | 1543                   |
| Depreciation  |                       | 134                 | 728                    | 862                    |
| <b>Total Resources Expended</b>                           |                       | <u>5887</u>         | <u>106896</u>          | <u>112783</u>          |
| <b>Net (Expenditure)/Income<br/>For the Year</b>          |                       | -176                | 46                     | -130                   |
| <b>Total Funds at 1st June 2013</b>                       |                       | 4162                | 12083                  | 16245                  |
| <b>Total Funds 31st May 2014</b>                          |                       | <u>3986</u>         | <u>12129</u>           | <u>16115</u>           |
|   |                       |                     | <u>16245</u>           | <u>18626</u>           |



## **Future plans and work in progress**

### **Hopes and aspirations**

1. We will continue fund raising until we have satisfactory reserves for long term sustainability of our work programme and to expand our staff and volunteer resources to achieve our goals and objects.
2. Our long term aim is to continue lobbying Bedford Borough Council to secure funding and support to establish a health and wellbeing centre providing support services, information and running activities for BME and other vulnerable communities and anyone who needs help in Bedfordshire and beyond. The centre will provide somewhere safe for girls and women who are victims of abuse or fearing abuse to seek help, talk to someone in confidence and gain valuable information.
3. We will continue to provide training, information, keep up the campaign in the UK and overseas on tackling harmful traditional practices until young people and women are safe and free from all forms of harm.
4. There is a strong need to develop work around children and young people as there is no such service in Bedford in particular supporting African Caribbean children and young people. We have established a small group but now require funding to employ a Youth Project to develop this work. This is area we hope we will secure funding support from BBC Children in Need or from the Government sources.
5. Apply for new grants to support parents locally and from other regions including Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester and Birmingham. There has been an increase in requests for help from other regions to provide support to parents struggling with parenting issues or don't understand Safeguarding policies or don't know why their children are getting ASBOs. There are serious concerns, especially the Somali community, many of the parents have sons in prison, need information, support and want to protect younger siblings.
6. Continue running parenting, health and wellbeing events to tackle health, social and economic inequalities. ACCM (UK) believes that communities or individuals who are healthy or have information to make health decisions will improve their social and economic status as they seek training or employment whether through volunteering or paid work.
7. Continue lobbying and supporting the Government and Local Authorities to improve facilities and services for victims of harmful traditional practices and all form of violence so victims can live a health, safe and economically active fulfilling lives.
8. Build on existing and creating new partnership for better working partnerships to improve the position of those who are most vulnerable in the community especially girls and women.
9. To recruit and train more community champions are trained and equipped to continue working with their communities.
10. We will continue to see funding to develop our new area of work with men as there is definite need relating to child sexual abuse, mental health and drug problems. In the mean time we will continue to recruit volunteers to support our current work.
11. Continue to support Northampton Maternity Hospital in developing FGM Clinic
12. Develop our working partnership and relationship with Guru Ravidass Community Centre to form a legal bidding partnership to apply, tender or bid for joint funding or contracts.
13. To continue reviewing and improving our website and other project information.

## Musings from staff and volunteers

### Reflection Reports

This year we have been very busy, bringing more relevant activities and talks to the different communities.

We still listening to them, getting to know them more; about their needs, their doubts, and their thoughts, though this is something that has taken us time as it is not easy, we have more people coming to us asking for help and I feel happy to see that we are helping more and more and how we are recognised out there for our work.

Though I am more involved in the smooth running of the office, I have been helping the Project Worker facilitating some of the activities, giving me the opportunity to get to know the clients and see how we can help them and how happy they are after the activities, (listening comments like: “Thank you for all that you do for us, Thank you for the talk really has helped me with information that I didn’t know, seeing happy faces”), and for them to get to know the staff at ACCM (UK)

I can see the progress that we have this year, new groups, and more people coming to us for help, getting to know more organisations that can give them help and we can refer them to.

Though still so much to do we are here reaching out for those that need our help. Hope we can get more funding to carry on helping the community.

Jimena Galeno  
Administrative Officer

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I joined ACCM (UK) in 2013 as a Volunteer and in May 2014 I was offered a paid PART Time post as Project Worker – Tackling Health Inequalities Project.

I have really enjoyed myself working with passion with ACCM (UK).

I have to thank Sarah for seeing the ability in me and offering me the position in May 2014. Sarah is very passionate with her work and is always there for everyone who needs help and support.

My journey so far as a Volunteer on health and equalities project has been wonderful and fulfilling. I have been undertaking mostly outreach work supporting current Project Workers and Sarah. I have undertaken work within Bedford grassroots communities, trying my level best to provide support and information, especially to minority ladies. In partnership with staff and other Volunteers we have organised and run health and wellbeing sessions which involved exercise and health talks. I have supported the project to mobilise and encourage hard to reach and vulnerable ladies to attend ACCM (UK)’s programmes and activities for their benefit.

I attended many health talks for the communities that helped me learn a lot about these issues, needs and concerns for the communities especially such as diabetes, stroke, cancer and parenting. I also helped organise own events including a talk on depression enabling ladies to understand what depression is and how to cope and prevent it. It was very useful for all and the feedback was great as it helped them to understand how to cope and what to do if it happened to them or anyone else they knew.

I also have helped some victims of domestic abuse, who also suffered from isolation and mental health issues.

Now that I am a Part Time paid Health and Inequalities Project Worker, my aim for the roles and duties is too develop my new acquired skills and knowledge to better help and serve the communities in Bedford including working with men.

It has been great so far working with ACCM (UK) as it is a great charity and should always be there as its always been there for the people in need.

Rehana Kosar  
Project Worker – Part Time – Tackling Health Inequalities

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I first met Sarah back in December 2013 because I was interested in being involved in setting up a women's centre in Bedford as there isn't one.

I decided to join working with ACCM (UK) because Sarah has a vision of setting up a drop in centre for families and I can see how this is a long term project which will develop into a women's centre that has a solid foundation.

Since working with ACCM (UK) I have taken part in International Women's Week sessions. I have led a few parenting sessions and been part of some fun games sessions at a local day care centre for the elderly.

I am hoping to develop the parenting sessions in the coming year with a better understanding of the families we work with. I can see how a 10 week course could lead onto further, more in depth courses on each particular subject, should a need be identified.

I would like to develop some budgeting/money regular drop in sessions. I would also like to have a parent's support group up and running, (which the parent's would ultimately lead themselves-supporting each other). I think that both these would lead to empowering families.

Susan Throssell Hunt  
Volunteer

## INDEX

### Some of the Photos from some of our activities, events and conferences - 2013 / 14

Health and wellbeing – nutrition and healthy eating sessions



Health and wellbeing talks including diabetes, demetia, mental health, obesity, HIV / AIDS, Sexual health, stroke and heart disease, self defence, confidence and self esteem etc.



Talks on heart disease and diabetes



Group counselling



Exercises and Mind Games



Mind games for Conduit Day Centre



Mind games



Exercises



Yoga – relaxation – very popular

Other Activities: Christmas event and massage relaxation



**International Women's Week – Talks and Gala: 2<sup>nd</sup> to 8th March 2014**



Talk on 'Who is Me'



Talk on 'Confidence and What it Means to be a Woman'



Some of the delegates at the Diner and Gala party



Feeling Happy at Diner and Gala party

**\*\*\* The above photos are some of those from events where participants gave consent to be photographed for project use in our documents.**

## **Feedback from an Independent Evaluator on some of our activities – February 2014**

### **Quotes provided by ACCM (UK) from participant feedback from Health and Wellbeing these programmes include:**

- “I feel much lighter! I much prefer to walk then go the gym for hours, I will definitely take up walking with friends. It a shame I never tried this before with family and friends gave me an opportunity to catch up on myself”
- “The most I walk is 10 minutes, I get really tired and out of breath, I enjoyed the Walk but in future I think I will go with my friend to walk more locally, I know it will benefit my health”
- “Can’t wait for the summer to come so I can come here again, Thank you”
- “It has been so good to get out the house! I never leave the house without family to travel this far, it has been fun, although I am tired”
- “By the end of the year we should have our own walking groups”
- “Thank you for giving me the confidence to start thinking about exercising again”
- “Why is there no other groups doing this? I can bring my friends next time”
- “For me it’s very difficult to open up and talk about my problems! Going on the walk really helped me focus on myself, I didn’t realise how beneficial and what a difference just walking can make on my health. I promise myself I will try and walk more often with friend and be healthier. Thank you“
- “I feel free, I danced around the centre today after the session because it’s so good to get out and feel happy”
- “I get so tired that I sleep all night, something I have never done before. I am looking forward to the next sessions”

### **One-to-one support**

Evidence has also been provided by ACCM (UK) of successful outcomes from intensive one-to-one client support:

- “The majority of clients were victims of domestic violence who suffered depression or mental health who received counselling. One of the men was domestic violence abuser with drug problem. He was supported by a Councillor and his GP to quit the drug abuse, and is no longer abusive. His wife comments “... he has never given me a smile, he now gardens something he has never done before and has started taking the boys (three sons) swimming...I can’t thank you all enough as our lives have changed for the better...”
- “Three women have been sent to refuges and are divorcing their abusive families. One young mother has turned her life around is much happier after threatening to throw all her abusive extended family out of the house if they continued with the abuse. For now they are behaving!
- “I have supported a client who due to domestic abuse, health implications and living in an overcrowded home with relatives was extremely isolated and had no confidence. With our support the client is now successfully housed and now feels independent, bringing her confidence up. She is now able to smile and live freely as she is no longer controlled by her abusers, has a safe place she can call home and is cooking for herself and going for walks.
- “We have supported a client who has a family history of severe mental health issues, the client was unable to trust professionals and felt she could not go to any professionals to seek help and advice. This left her feeling extremely depressed and isolated. Following the

support we have given her she is now much more confident within herself, able to talk about her Schizophrenia openly and ask for relevant help when needed. As a result of our work the client is able to walk into town and spend time in the library which she thoroughly and this has empowered her to be a happier person and make her own decision and have something to look forwards to.

- “Another client had several health issues and felt she was unable to access health services or expresses her concerns due to language barriers and self-confidence issues. Due to our positive engagement, she is now able to express her concerns fully, and we are able to support her by representing her and ensuring she is getting access to services she is entitled to.”

### **One-off events**

Positive feedback was provided from all events. Comments / outcomes made available by ACCM (UK) for this report included:

Italian Women’s Health Event:

- “Why has no one ever done this before?”
- “...my husband died four years and no one has ever spoken about bereavement and what it means to family or told me where I can go for help until today...”

### **International Women’s Week:**

- Health Checks identified four people with undiagnosed diabetes, high blood pressure and referred them to their GPs.
- Those providing relaxation sessions such as massage and stress related talks have been invited to continue providing sessions
- More women now want to go swimming in women only organised sessions
- All who attended the dinner, dance, music and other entertainment want more to enable them to socialise, meet and make new friends

### **Suicide Prevention Awareness event:**

- Most of the GPs said they were not aware of the work of the Samaritans, especially that they visit victims and can stay for any time – the Samaritans offered to visit GP surgeries and support their patients in order to release them to do other jobs, and this was very much welcomed by GPs.
- Some families of victims or survivors complained that Bedfordshire was not doing enough and that services were not well coordinated – the Bedford Borough Council representative announced that a Strategic Team had just been set up to address the issue, and ACCM (UK)’s Director was invited to join this group.

### **Feedback from stakeholders**

Response from our online stakeholder survey (Appendix B) about the value of ACCM (UK)’s work in addressing health inequalities was overwhelmingly positive. In answer to the question ‘Based on your own experience and/or that of your clients (as applicable), how valuable do you think ACCM (UK)’s work is in addressing health inequalities in parts of Bedford?’, 17 people



responded 'very valuable'; 1 'quite valuable'; and 1 'don't know'. Nobody responded 'not very valuable'.

General open-ended responses (optional) included:

- "ACCM plays a key role in addressing health inequalities in Bedford"
- "ACCM is doing great work to help the community as a whole and are a very friendly organization to work with"
- "Flexible hours to suit me and clients"
- "We need groups like this to help with the health inequalities agenda in Bedford. Engagement and empowerment is key for hard to reach groups and ACCM UK can help to reach the BME groups that we have. I would like to see more multi cultures employed by the group"
- "A fantastic group of people whose enthusiasm and commitment to addressing health inequalities in Bedford is inspiring. I am delighted that Bedford Cancer Awareness Champions are invited to attend and support many of their health events"
- "Having instructed several classes and given treatments at events I can see that the needs of the community they are trying to help are many-fold. Encouragement to help become healthier can only be a bonus, the classes enable people to learn how to deal with stress and relax .This is vitally important for health maintenance particularly in less affluent communities"
- "These ladies use empathy, imagination and enthusiasm to engage the service user in adopting a healthily lifestyle"
- "ACCM UK is run by a group of very kind, hardworking people who care about the health and well-being of all communities. Their professionalism I witnessed when helping to organise the Italian Women's Day was incredible. I have enjoyed working with them very much and look forward to doing so again in the future."

\*\*\* Full report of the Evaluation of our Activities is available on our website or a hard copy is available on request from [info@accmuk.com](mailto:info@accmuk.com)

**FUNDED AND SUPPORTED BY:**



**St Andrews Church, Cauldwell**

**Bedford Borough Council**

**AND MANY MORE**

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