

Annual Report

April 2019 - March 2020

ABOUT MASS ACTION

MASS Action is a registered CIO that believes in collective action and solidarity for change. Central to our work is centring the needs of migrants and asylum seekers by providing financial and logistical support through collaborations with projects that align with our core values. A big part of this is that projects are led by, or aim to centre and amplify the voices of those with lived experience of migration and asylum systems. We are proud to collaborate with projects that recognize the importance of community, building non-hierarchical relations and maintaining financial transparency. As well as our work with partner projects, a priority for the association is advocating for political change and the free movement of people.

OUR MISSION

To support grassroots projects that provide dignified and sustainable initiatives for migrants and asylum seekers. To increase awareness of the social, economic, political and ecological factors which cause migration thereby challenging negative public perceptions on the movement of people.

CORE VALUES

- Equal rights regardless of legal status, nationality, religion, gender, age, sexuality or any other identity marker.
- Honest and dynamic engagement with the communities we work with
- Breaking-down hierarchies that are not just around us but between us
- Financial transparency and efficiency
- Collective action to challenge and overcome violent migration policies and border regimes

HISTORY

MASS Action was founded by nine individuals who felt frustrated by the lack of access to funding for small grassroots initiatives doing impressive work with very little resources . We saw how hard it is to juggle running amazing and impactful projects alongside applying for funding and maintaining social media campaigns. Donors, whether they are individuals making small donations, or big trusts giving out grants, are usually attracted to large scale projects with quantitative results. We can understand this, but we also felt there was a huge need to increase funding for projects that focus on social impact through building relationships and communities. Where small donations have a big impact. We registered with the UK Charities Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2018 and since then have been working with three partner projects to provide funding to sustain their operations as well as logistical support and advice.

MEETING OUR OBJECTIVES

Our idea for bringing about change is based on an understanding that we need financial redistribution to projects who are facilitating sustainable and dignified initiatives as well as collective action against violent migration policies. This was central to the inception of the association, we wanted to advocate for a new way of viewing the movement of people to challenge and overcome negative discourse. In this past year of operations we have prioritised fundraising to provide stability for partner projects.

We achieve our objectives in three ways:

1. First, by granting money to and fundraising on behalf of projects we are either partnered with or consider within our supporting scope. We are currently fundraising through grant applications as well as online fundraisers
2. Second, MASS Action raises awareness of issues around migration more broadly. We do this with regular posts on Facebook and Instagram, sharing reliable news sources and publishing longer informative social media posts that reflect the reality of being a migrant or asylum seeker in the UK or more generally in Europe.
3. Finally, we connect people working in migration across the globe in order to build stronger alliances and share skills around how to organize. As part of this work, we plan to facilitate bi-annual workshops and networking days for activists working in the field of migration. We feel it is more crucial than ever to build networks of solidarity and strategies of resistance, and we look forward to having the capacity and means to organise several of these events a year.

The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the charity commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the trust's aims and objectives in planning future activities.

PROJECT FOCUS

Following on from our first year of operations we have since partnered with one further organisation taking our number of partners to four. Additionally we have recently vowed to create an online fundraiser for an additional group, we have included a summary of their activities below. What is important to us, is that although each of these projects have different goals, they all share our values of solidarity.

Khora

Khora is a self organised collective of individuals, registered as an association in Athens, Greece. It began in 2016 when a group of volunteers working in Lesvos came to Athens and opened a community centre. Contained within an eight-story building, Khora Community Centre provided a vast array of services that aimed to meet both short and long term needs of migrants, asylum seekers and locals in Athens. This included food, clothing, education, legal support, information sharing and signposting, safe spaces for children and women, creative workshops and a whole host

of other events. More than anything, what Khora offered was a feeling of community, a friendly environment that welcomed everyone, without judgement or labels. Sadly the centre had to close down in 2018 due to building licencing issues. After a long search Khora found 2 new spaces to add to the already existing Free Shop space. One of these new buildings houses the Khora Asylum Support team, a makerspace group called The Beehive, The United African Women Organisation and a music space. The other building houses the activities of the Khora Kitchen and Cafe.

Mazi Housing Project

Mazi is a housing project which provides a home to six displaced young men who are in Athens on their own and were previously homeless. Mazi, meaning together in Greek, speaks to the sense of community and support central to the initiative. The project is aimed at a group that is often ignored by both governments and NGOs: young men. The project challenges cycles of dependency by empowering residents to overcome social exclusion through holistic and collaborative support. Without housing in Greece you cannot access vital services including non-emergency health care, registered employment, financial support, a bank account, public education, or even a public transport card. While minors are given a certain amount of support, many young individuals find themselves in a highly vulnerable position when they turn eighteen and are suddenly no longer able to access this support. A safe, secure house can provide protection not only from exposure to crime, violence, drug abuse and sexual exploitation whilst living on the streets but also allows these young men to go to classes, get a job, receive financial support and build basic autonomy.

Kids Klub

Kids Klub creates safe play and learning spaces inside informal living spaces in Athens. Kids Klub consists of a team of volunteers who run daily play and learning sessions for children. The aim of Kids Klub is to provide spaces (classrooms, family spaces, outside playgrounds), for children and their parents to come to play and to learn. Through the long term connections made within these family spaces, a supportive community of parents, children and volunteers is established.

Syrian Greek Youth Forum

The Syrian and Greek Youth Forum (SGYF) – an international activism movement in Athens, Greece. They work to support community-building activities, provide pathways to employment, and to contribute and participate in research to find and implement sustainable solutions for an inclusive society.

Silent University

The Silent University Copenhagen was founded in 2017 by a group of migrants, asylum seekers and allies with European citizenship. They are a solidarity-based knowledge exchange platform that challenges the institution of formal education. They demand that the lived experience of oppression and knowledge is appreciated and amplified. Their work is based on the recognition that if we are to succeed in working towards anti-racist social change, to strengthen the fight for mobility justice, spaces of dialogue across our own activist spaces must be fostered. Throughout their practice, they aim to always centre Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Capacity Building

- Advertised, interviewed and selected four new trustees

Fundraising + Events:

- Sarah Cycle ride through Spain raised £700 for Khora and £730 for Kids Klub
- Third Space zine launch in Copenhagen and London raised a collective £403
- Ryan and Heloise honeymoon cycle raised £1225
- Subtle Sounds Meditation Festival raised £194 for Kids Klub
- Raise 2nd Birthday raised £350
- Live music night fundraiser (Jelly Cleaver, Mushy P + Diggish). Raised £210
- Bridge the Channel pop-up shop - raised £730
- Fundraising gig (Edinburgh - July 2019) - Raised £467
- Fran and Alison cycle ride raised £536 for Khora
- Community Meal and bingo fundraiser (Glasgow - November 2019) - Raised £400
- Open Mic Fundraiser (Edinburgh - November 2019) £468
- Ash spoke on behalf of MASS Action at Threads Radio about funding in the refugee sector, for their Refugee Week broadcasts.
- Amplifying Resistance: an event bringing together groups campaigning for free movement/migrant rights at DIY Space for London to share resources and knowledge, in the interests of supporting each other to better uplift those we work in solidarity with.

Projects Supported:

- Khora received £3107 raised through two online fundraisers. This money was spread across the Asylum Support, Beehive (makerspace) and Kitchen/Cafe branches of their project.
- Mazi received £5136 as the gift aid part of the donation they received in the previous financial year. They also received an additional £2700 as part of a separate grant application to make up their funding gap.
- Kids Klub received £3110 to go towards the building of a playground at a camp outside of Athens.
- SGYF received £2955 in order to secure the purchase of a van to help them to carry out their wide range of activities.
- An online fundraiser has been started on behalf of Silent University in order to cover travel costs of camp residents to-and-from rehearsals for a production documenting their experience. As this is still in the fundraising stage no money has been granted out as of yet.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Strategic: This is the biggest risk area that cuts across areas such as capacity, partnerships, the evolving developments within the sector, government policies, and funding/fundraising challenges. Although capacity has fluctuated, there is considerable change taking place internally, that makes predicting the future is difficult. The funding landscape is also dramatically becoming more challenging, and MASS Action continues to monitor these trends and takes an agile approach to its areas of work and adapts to changes. The organisation is proud of its flat structure, allowing operational team members to work collaboratively and have the autonomy to make decisions on their own to solve operational issues. Yet this does present some obvious challenges, at times the organisation may find it challenging to address and resolve issues quickly and decisively. Ultimately, a balance needs to be struck between a flat structure that offers less bureaucracy than a traditional organization hierarchy, and the implications of slowed down decision-making processes.

Operational: For a small organisation like MASS Action that relies on volunteers, there are several operational risks. The more important ones revolve around creating a good enabling environment for team members to be able to manage their capacity, while ensuring the delivery of important projects. In addition, we have some key partners we support, but without significant presence on the ground that play such an important part in smooth operational support and relationship building.

Financial: Both unrestricted and restricted funding impact directly on financial risks. Since the vast majority of funding we raise is on behalf of partners, it is very difficult to build strong reserves to support our future operational costs. Consequently, we need to maintain a healthy financial culture based on accountability. MASS Action needs to apply good accounting and financial principles going forward, especially in considering whether our future fundraising should include a percentage contribution to our overheads/core costs. We should consider setting an unrestricted income target in the coming year.

Compliance: This is a medium risk area, the most important areas where MASS Action needs to ensure that it is compliant include GDPR, safeguarding, and areas of donor reporting. MASS Action has some systems in place to manage most of these, but we need to strengthen and evolve our policies to ensure there are clear roles and responsibilities, and ultimately accountability to individual, institutional and project stakeholders.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITY

The charity's trustees are responsible for ensuring the preparation of the trustees' annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and its compliance to all legal requirements. They are also responsible for safeguarding the reputation of the charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud or other irregularities. The Trustees take pride in maintaining the integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity website and other social media.

TRUSTEE COMMENTS

Having spent a large part of the first year focused towards establishing the charity we anticipated the second year would enable us to shift our capacity towards working in aid of our main objectives. This would allow the members of our team, with the diversity of background and approach to the topic of migration, to establish and achieve aims within our overall progression.

There was a requirement from the AGM to build capacity within the trustee board, thus the first few months of the year were dedicated towards this. We received a range of excellent applications from candidates, which led to the addition of four new trustees: Abdulsalam, Josie, Samah and Ash. We really believe we have strengthened the depth of our experience and knowledge within the team. Thanks goes to the previous trustees for all their work up till now and we wish them luck going forward.

Following this it has been great to see how we have adapted our functionality considering the varied locations of our team members. Examples of this are displayed through the creation of a series of online fundraisers to support our partner projects and their specific goals. These were largely successful and also brought us in contact with two new projects that required support, the Syrian Greek Youth Forum and Silent University.

The diverse locations of our team members also allowed us to fundraise in new locations in the UK, in Edinburgh and Glasgow, several successful fundraisers were organised and we began to make links and build relationships with new projects and people.

Further dedication of our resources this year led to the creation of knowledge sharing opportunities between projects that share similar aims. An example of this was the workshop 'Amplifying Resistance', where groups from across the UK that campaign for free movement / migrant rights were invited to a series of talks to further the importance of collaboration within our area. A member of the trustee board also participated in a discussion held by threads radio regarding 'capacity building and funding within the refugee sector'. We hope to continue to create and participate in similar discussions going forward.

The trustees are content with the financial review that is presented. We have continued to keep running costs very low in proportion to the money granted to projects. This further indicates the lesser requirement for reserves due to our lack of operational expenditure. We are happy with this

but are clearly becoming more aware of the potential need to spend more to support people's capacity and to further our fundraising goals.

Financial review: Charity income was £53,612.30 for the financial year ending 31st March 2020 compared with charity income of £24,008.34 for the financial year ending 31st March 2019. Total expenditure of £21,327.81 for the financial year ending 31st March 2020 compared with expenditure of £21,727.68 for the financial year ending 31st March 2019. Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action 2019-2020 financial year total fund balance was £34,565.15

Acknowledgements: We would like to take the opportunity to thank all those that have been involved in MASS Action. Whether that be members of the team, the projects that actualise the objectives we seek to support, or funders that support us.

We would firstly like to show appreciation that all chose to direct their fundraising efforts through MASS Action, either with specific aim towards a partner project or just to support our general objectives. Thanks to those organising cycling fundraisers: Sarah, Ryan and Heloise, Fran and Alison. We understand that these fundraisers don't just require physical commitment but also a frequent and regular drive to attract donations. Thanks to Janna, Josie and Natasha, members of the operations and trustee teams for organising the variety of fundraisers. The hard work to bring together a team and execute such a variety of different fundraising instances is impressive. Thanks to all those that have donated, whether it be to online fundraisers or just through our website. Thanks also belong to the trustees of Britford Bridge Trust for their large donation which will go towards supporting our work in the coming year.

We must also extend thanks to all of our partner projects. These groups actually realise our aims and objectives in a tangible sense. To Mazi Housing Project, Khora and Kids Klub for continuing the work they do and suggesting and evolving to the changes that affect migrants in Greece. We are also very excited to have started working with the Syrian Greek Youth Forum and Silent University. Both of these projects are incredibly inspirational regarding us and our objectives as they represent exactly what we want to support. We hope we can continue to be a beneficial partner in all these relationships going forward.

Regarding the contributing members of MASS Action, either as trustees or operations team. We would like to thank you for the year of work. The great flexibility with which everyone participates is appreciated and we hope we continue as we proceed forward.

Josie Dibnah



Calum Frost



LOOKING AHEAD

Looking to the future, we will continue to further the impactful work of MASS Action, by building on the successes of all the activities carried out this year and incorporating key learnings. To enable us to do so, we have summarised the main steps we will be taking to enable us to sustainably grow in five categories:

1. People and structure:
 - As our capacity has fluctuated throughout the year, we intend to build a more robust working group system, within each we will have several volunteers.
 - Building our volunteer base will allow us to engage in our activities more effectively, and will help us to build relationships with other projects and organisations.
 - We will ensure overhead costs are covered for all volunteers.
2. Outreach and Engagement:
 - Through our first open funding call, we are hoping to reach a broader range of projects, both within Greece and the UK.
 - Depending on the success of the funding call, we intend to integrate it into the future activities of MASS Action.
 - We intend to expand our social media presence through more regular posts relating to events, news and advocacy.
3. Fundraising:
 - In order to facilitate the open funding calls we intend to create a Grant Application working group. This will allow us to focus on securing funds through grant-giving bodies as well as through our fundraising events.
 - We will ring-fence a percentage of unrestricted funds to cover any operational expenses, determined by our predicted overhead costs.
 - Develop clear guidance on what organisations we are willing to apply for funding from.
4. Projects:
 - Continue to increase the number of projects we support and diversify the geographical distribution of projects
 - Continue to work closely with supporting projects beyond fundraising activities.
 - Develop a clear Monitoring & Evaluation framework to support with an efficient MEL.
 - We will develop a robust process for launching open calls and will define specific criteria to support with the shortlisting process.
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5. Networking and advocacy:
 - Given the success of the Amplifying Resistance workshop, we intend to organise more advocacy events, this will allow us to further develop our networks with other projects campaigning for issues around asylum and the movement of people.

- We will center people with experience of the asylum system as well Black, Indigenous and People of Colour when organising advocacy events.
- We will continue to work with projects and people across the UK and Greece. We hope to build a stronger, more diverse network with projects in multiple locations to share perspectives and grow collectively.

Within the last quarter of this financial year MASS Action received a large £30000 donation from a family relation of a charity trustee. Initially this donation was intended to go towards overhead costs regarding the charity. More specifically we were planning to recruit two paid positions within the operations team. As time went on we decided for a variety of reasons to not proceed with this as the intention of the donation. This was due to our lack of capacity to support the necessary means for paid positions. Also with the onset of the Covid-19 Pandemic we noticed the need for support for projects within the field of migration. Thus we decided to organise an open funding call for projects working in the UK and Greece. We aimed to support 10+ projects with an average grant size of £3000 each. We aimed to support projects that were small and worked within communities with diverse aims to further the lives of those in a state of migration. By August of the next financial year after going through the 121 applications we received we granted out a total of £33335 to thirteen projects.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action

I report on the financial statements of Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action ('the Charity') for the year ended 31 March 2020 as amended which are set out on pages 1 to 11.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

As the Charity's Trustees of Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity and Action you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Regulations.

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of Migrant and Asylum Seeker Solidarity And Action as amended are not required to be audited and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your Charity's financial statements as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My investigation was conducted in accordance with the Charity Commissioners' General Directions. An examination comprises a review of the charity's accounting records, bank statements, and a comparison of the financial statements to those records. It also includes taking into account any odd items or disclosures in the financial statements, as well as asking for explanations from you as trustees. Because the processes used do not offer all of the evidence that would be needed in an audit, no opinion is given as to whether the financial statements present a "true and fair view," and the report is confined to the items listed below.

Independent Examiners' Statement

In connection with my investigation and all amendments done, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- The accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 30 of the Charities Act; or
- The accounts were inconsistent with the accounting records; or
- The accounts did not comply with the accounting requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I don't have any worries, and I haven't found anything else during the examination that should be brought up in this report so that the accounts can be understood properly.

Regards



Oladele Olayiwola (Accountant)

FINANCIAL REVIEW

SECTION A: RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

MASS Action Statement of Financial Activities (Receipts & Payments) April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

	Total	General Fund (U)	Chamomile (R)	Khora (R)	Mazi (R)	Play Up! (R)	Silent University (R)	Syrian Greek Youth Forum (R)
<i>Receipts</i>								
Income and Endowments	526.05	526.05						
Income from Charitable Activities	78.59	78.59						
Income from Donations and Legacies	13,584.97	5,088.61		3,410.44		2,655.79	343.56	2,086.57
Gift Aid Claimed	39,422.69	30,793.31			7,173.76	900.00		555.62
Total Receipts	53,612.30	36,486.56	0.00	3,410.44	7,173.76	3,555.79	343.56	2,642.19
<i>Payments</i>								
Expenditure								
Charitable Activities	18,957.95	1,950.00		3,107.00	7,835.76	3,110.00		2,955.19
Charity Management & Administration								
Bank Charges	1,540.00	1,500.00		20.00				20.00
Volunteer Expenses	829.86	829.86						
Total Payments	21,327.81	4,279.86	0.00	3,127.00	7,835.76	3,110.00	0.00	2,975.19
All Receipts	53,612.30	36,486.56	0.00	3,410.44	7,173.76	3,555.79	343.56	2,642.19
All Payments	21,327.81	4,279.86	0.00	3,127.00	7,835.76	3,110.00	0.00	2,975.19
Transfers Between Funds	0.00	-333.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	333.00
Net Movement in Funds	32,284.49	31,873.70	0.00	283.44	-662.00	445.79	343.56	0.00
Total Funds Brought Forward	2,280.66	1,618.66	0.00	0.00	662.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Funds Carried Forward	34,565.15	33,492.36	0.00	283.44	0.00	445.79	343.56	0.00

Josie Dibnah



Calum Frost

