



2010

A REPORT TO THE UMMAH
On the Work of The Muslim
Alliance in North America



JANUARY 2009 – JUNE 2010

Released: OCTOBER, 2010



A LETTER FROM IMAM SIRAJ WAHHAJ



Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, members of the ummah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), members and supporters of MANA,
As-Salaamu 'Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu.

It is with a great sense of gratitude to Allah, that the Diwan of MANA presents the following document, which we have entitled “A Report to the Ummah on the Work of MANA”. It is the answer to the question “What has the Muslim Alliance in North America been doing since its’ first conference?”

The short answer is that we have been working hard. Over the past almost three years we have been leading, following, teaching, learning, talking and listening. We have been trying—though not always succeeding—but constantly striving, and accomplishing through sincerity and work what we have dedicated ourselves to: *The Mission of MANA*. As our Deputy Amir, Imam Al-Hajj Talib ‘Abdur-Rashid said to us in his Ramadan message, one thing that we have not been doing well enough is reporting our progress to the Muslim public. This document—an overview of our programmatic activities—is the beginning of a correction of that fault, *insha’Allah*.

Upon reading these pages you will learn that we’ve been able to institute MANA programs and initiatives for: healthy marriage (focuses on building strong families), community reentry (helps formerly incarcerated Muslims), SHARE Centers (offers a variety of social services) and a Healing & Reconciliation Program (works to unite the hearts of Muslims) that is slowly but steadily picking up steam.

And there’s more to come. After you’ve completed your reading of this report, Imam Talib will conclude with an indication of where we are heading--with Allah’s help.

It is our prayer that this accurate account of our work will inspire all who read it, and move you in heart and mind to pray for our collective success, dedicate or re-dedicate yourself to the mission of MANA (which is uniting and up-lifting indigenous Muslims in America with dignity) and to also regularly donate money towards that end.

Together we are all needed to envision a better, more stable and prosperous future for our people. We pray that Allah will inspire us to continue to work together in His Cause, asking continuously for His forgiveness and seeking His guidance.

Your brother in Islam,



Imam Siraj Wahhaj



MANA'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

MAJLIS ASH-SHURA (in alphabetical order)

The Shura is the governing body of MANA. The Shura sets policy and direction, approves the annual action plan and budget, and elects the Amir, Deputy Amir and Diwan. Shura members have a renewable term of 3 years. The Shura elects its own members. Some members as indicated by * ended their service this year for various reasons.

- Hodari Abdul-Ali, Businessman and Activist (DC)
- Luqman Abdul Haqq, President, Universal Companies (Philadelphia)
- Johari Abdur Malik, Director Outreach, Dar al-Hijrah (VA)*
- Jihad Abdul-Mumit, Chair, SHARE-Richmond (VA); Activist
- Khalil Abdul-Rahman, Imam (Greensboro, NC)
- Asim Abdur-Rashid, Imam, Masjid Mujahidin (Philadelphia) , Amir, The National Ummah
- Talib Abdur-Rashid, Deputy Amir, MANA; Imam, The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood (NY)
- Tahir Abdullah, Amir, Jama'at of Shehu Uthman dan Fodio (Pittsburgh)
- Mutawwaf Abdush-Shaheed, Imam, Masjid Al-Mu'min (Cleveland)
- Abbas Ahmad, Imam, First Cleveland Mosque (Cleveland)
- Luqman Ahmad, Imam, Masjid Ibrahim (Sacramento); Writer
- Qasim Ahmed, Imam; Founder and President of Islamic Learning Institute
- Amir Al-Islam, Professor, Zayed University (Abu Dhabi)
- Umar Al-Khattab, Imam, Masjid al-Mu'mineen (Indianapolis)
- Nadim Sulaiman Ali, Imam, Community Mosque (Atlanta)
- Ihsan Bagby, Professor, University of Kentucky, Imam Masjid Bilal
- R. Mukhtar Curtis, Chaplain, Bureau of Federal Prisons (MI)
- Khalid Abdul-Fatah Griggs, Imam, Community Mosque (Winston-Salem)
- Altaf Husain, Former President MSA-National; Ph.D. Social Work*
- Anwar Muhaimin, Imam, International Muslim Brotherhood (Philadelphia)
- Aneesah Nadir, President, Islamic Social Service Association; Ph.D. Social Work
- Rami Nashashibi, Executive Director, Inner-City Muslim Network (Chicago)*
- Joshua Salaam, member of Native Deen; Youth Director, ADAMS Center (VA)
- Faheem Shuaib, Imam, Masjid Waritheen (Oakland)
- Halima Toure, Professor, York College of CUNY; Board Member, MIB (NY)
- Siraj Wahhaj, Amir, MANA; Imam, Masjid al-Taqwa (NY)
- Hud Williams, MBA student, Georgia Tech; former Youth Director, ADAMS (DC)

MANA DIWAN (Executive Committee)

The Diwan executes the action plan, approved by the Shura; oversees all functioning of MANA.

- Siraj Wahhaj, Amir of MANA - Imam, Masjid Al-Taqwa (NY)
- Talib Abdur-Rashid, Deputy Amir/General Secretary of MANA; Imam, The Mosque of Islamic Brotherhood (NY)
- Qasim Ahmed, Chairperson, Development Committee, MANA ; President, Islamic Learning Institute (Florida)
- Nadim Sulaiman Ali, Imam, Community Mosque (Atlanta)
- Amir Al-Islam - Professor, Zayed University (Abu Dhabi)



- Umar Al-Khattab – Director of Outreach and Masjid Development, MANA; Imam Masjid al-Mu'mineen (Indianapolis)
- Ihsan Bagby, Professor, University of Kentucky
- Halima Toure – Chairperson, Finance Committee, MANA; Professor, York College of CUNY

MANA Staff

- F. Qasim Khan, Director of Special Events
- Waheedah Muhammad, Operations
- Aqil A. Sabur, Financial Consultant

MANA TASK FORCES AND COMMITTEES

- SHARE Network
- Community Reentry Initiative Advisory and Resource Committee-Ismail A. Aleem, Director
- Healthy Marriage Initiative Task Force-Aneesah Nadir, Director
- Fiqh Research Council
- Social Justice Task Force-Khalil Abdul Rahman, Chairperson

MANA'S MISSION STATEMENT

"To empower indigenous Muslims and enhance the quality of Muslim life in North America by networking with communities and individuals to translate their needs and aspirations into relevant and sustainable partnerships, programs, and institutions."

MANA'S GOALS AND RELATED PROJECTS

- Community Activism: to advocate and work for just and righteous remedies to ills impacting North American society in general and Muslims in particular. Existing projects:
 SHARE Network
 Community Reentry
 Social Justice
- Masjid and Leadership Development: to establish the strong presence of viable, healthy and dynamic Muslim communities, neighborhoods and institutions that meet the religious, social, economic and political needs of Muslims in this land.
 Outreach and Masjid Development
 Healthy Marriage Initiative
 Fiqh Research Council
- Dawah: to call humanity actively and systematically to the life-giving message of Islam with wisdom and beautiful teaching.
- Muslim Unity: to bridge the cultural, historical and ethnic gaps that exist within the Muslim community.
 Healing and Reconciliation Campaign



SHARE (Services for Human Advancement and Resource Enhancement)

Background

At MANA's First Annual Conference in 2007 a proposal for the creation of SHARE Centers was discussed. SHARE Centers are envisioned to be social service and advocacy centers that address the social and economic needs of Muslims and our urban areas, developing a wide-spectrum of programs to uplift and empower the inner-city communities.



Initial Development

1. In 2008 five SHARE Centers were established: Atlanta, Detroit, Indianapolis, Newark and Richmond (VA). Abu Jamal Teague was appointed the Director of SHARE Centers in December, 2007. A model SHARE Constitution was devised and the first act of every SHARE Center Board was to agree to the Constitution.
2. After the Boards in the five cities were formed in 2008, a team of trainers, including Abu Jamal Teague, Aneesah Nadir (Director of Healthy Marriage) and Khalifah Ramadan (Consultant on Grant Writing and Strategic Planning) conducted four workshops in each city throughout 2008: Board Development, Project Development, Strategic Planning and Grant Writing.
3. In 2009 SHARE Lexington was formed and SHARE Richmond officially disbanded.

SHARE Activities

SHARE Network

- Officially launched the SHARE Network in October 2009. The Network consists of five SHARE Centers and six other Muslim-based social service organizations (IMAN (Chicago), Community Empowerment (Pitts), Peace in the Hood (Cleveland), Muslimat al-Nisaa (Baltimore), Masjid Al-Islam (New Haven), Native Sun (Columbus).
- Conducted Case Management training in Indianapolis in June, 2009.
- Kyle Ismail appointed National Director of the SHARE Network in October, 2009. In May, 2010 he resigned.
- Obtained grant of \$120,000 over two years (for 2011-2012) from Islamic Relief.

SHARE Indianapolis (Ismail A. Aleem, Chairperson)

- State-wide mini-conference on reentry and prison dawah was organized in Indianapolis in 2009.



- Mentoring program and support group (Sirat al-Mustaqim) for formerly incarcerated brothers was instituted in 2009 and continues to meet.
- Organized two Welcome Home events for recently released brothers and sisters
- Partnership relation was established with Masjid al-Mumineen and a portion of their building was donated to SHARE to be used as transitional housing for formerly incarcerated brothers and a SHARE office.
- Food pantry opened.
- In 2009 obtained small grant to help in establishment of a community organization.

SHARE Atlanta (Khairiyyah Faiz, Chairperson)

- Four Healthy Marriage workshops held between 2009 and 2010.
- Co-sponsored *12th Annual SUIHS Interfaith Health Conference* held October 9-10, 2009.
- Organized “Days of Dignity” program for Islamic Relief in 2009.
- Sponsored the MANA Atlanta Regional Conference in 2010.
- Organized signing of the Healthy Marriage Community Covenant by seven prominent local Imams.

SHARE Detroit (Akil Fahd, Chairperson)

- Initiated Health Task Force Health Fitness Challenge in two local masjids.
- Organized six events around healthy marriage between 2009 and 2010: three Healthy Marriage workshops, two “focus group” discussions on healthy marriage and a Youth Forum on marriage.
- Assisted in “Days of Dignity” program of Islamic Relief in 2009.
- Met with Muslim chaplains in the western part of Michigan; met with Detroit Imams
- Adopted Huda Clinic as partner project of SHARE and obtained dentist equipment that allows Clinic to start providing dental services.
- Sponsored the MANA Detroit Regional Conference in 2010.
- Organized signing of Healthy Marriage Community Covenant by twelve prominent local Imams.

SHARE Lexington (Ihsan Bagby, Chairperson)

- Obtained usage of storefront (former Masjid Bilal)
- Secured grant to renovate the building.
- Renovation to be completed October, 2010.
- Grand opening scheduled for December, 2010.
- A team of doctors has agreed to and is planning for free clinic at SHARE Center.
- Community Reentry committee started work in 2009 by collecting information on resources available in the city/state and designating a mentor for formerly incarcerated inmates.



- Community Reentry activities officially began in June, 2010 when the first formerly incarcerated inmate entered the program.

SHARE Essex County (inactive since the illness of Abu Jamal Teague in late 2009)

- Conducted Islamic Relief's Day of Dignity activities in Newark during Ramadan in 2009.
- In 2009 obtained with Crescent Social Services the former Islamic Center of East Orange (a three-story building) for SHARE Essex County site.

Community Reentry Initiative

Background

At MANA's First Annual Conference in 2007, a proposal for a national Community Reentry Initiative was presented, and endorsed. The Community Reentry Task Force was re-named Community Reentry Initiative Advisory and Resource Committee (CRI-ARC), and Ismail A. Aleem was appointed Chair.

Activities

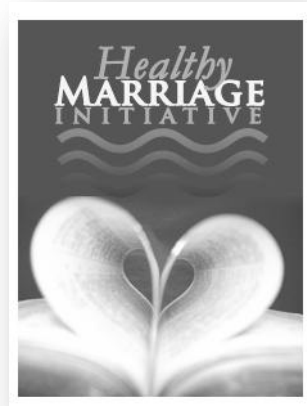
- The CRI-ARC developed a "Guidelines for Establishing a Community Reentry Initiative in Your Community."
- Presentations on the Reentry effort were made by Ismail A. Aleem to all the SHARE Centers in 2008.
- Presentations on the Community Reentry Initiative were made in various cities including Winston-Salem, Raleigh, Chicago, Minneapolis, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati.
- A Community Reentry Committee was formed in Dayton-Cincinnati in October, 2009.
- An Ohio Reentry Mini-Conference was held in Columbus in February, 2010.



Healthy Marriage Initiative

Background

The Healthy Marriage Initiative was launched in 2007 at MANA's First Annual Conference. A Task Force was formed and Dr. Aneesah Nadir was appointed Chair.



Activities

- Presentations on Healthy Marriage Initiative were made to all the SHARE Centers in 2008.
- SHARE Detroit, Atlanta, and Indianapolis have adopted the Healthy Marriage Initiative and together have organized about 12 events from 2009-2010.
- Masjid al-Islam in New Haven, CT has adopted the Healthy Marriage Initiative and has held two events under the title of MANA's Healthy Marriage between 2009 and 2010.
- Masjid al-Islam's women's group with MANA organized a sister's retreat in April, 2010 and Dr. Aneesah spoke and conducted a workshop there.
- MANA's Regional Conferences in Detroit and Atlanta witnessed the signing of the Healthy Marriage Community Covenant by numerous prominent Imams. Follow-up with training programs in pre-marital advisement is being planned for 2010.

Healing and Reconciliation

Background

At a Diwan meeting in 2008, there was decision to initiate a Healing and Reconciliation Campaign. A Healing and Reconciliation Task Force met in June, 2009 and agreed on a plan for the Campaign.

Activities

- The South Florida organizing committee for the 2010 MANA Florida Regional Conference decided to focus on Healing and Reconciliation as the conference theme. Out of the Conference a South Florida Committee for Healing and Reconciliation was formed.
- The Committee has been working since then and has initiated the "brothering" of two prominent masjids: Masjid al-Ansar (indigenous) and Islamic Foundation (immigrant). The masjids first joined in an "Amin" celebration at Islamic Foundation in June, 2010. Since then, they have sponsored joint Ramadan iftars and shared Jumah minbars.



- The South Florida for Healing and Reconciliation continues to meet regularly to plan joint activities.
- Dallas, Detroit, Southern California and Chicago have all shown interest in a Healing and Reconciliation Campaign.

Regional Conferences

Atlanta Regional Conference (April 10, 2010)

- 230 registrants. Program included main speakers: Siraj Wahhaj, Zaid Shakir, Aneesah Nadir, Faheem Shuaib and Qasim Ahmed.
 - Location: Holiday Inn Select
 - SHARE Atlanta was local organizing committee
- Highlight: signing of Healthy Marriage Community Covenant by local Imams

South Florida Regional Conference (May 1, 2010)

- 250 registrants. Program included main speakers: Talib Abdur-Rashid, Faheem Shuaib, Qasim Ahmed, Hamza Perez, Abdullah Madyun, Daoud Bojang and a dynamic concurrent program for young adults
- Location: Hilton Deerfield Beach
- Local organizing committee constituted the new local Healing and Reconciliation Committee.
- Highlight: expression of intent to start a local Healing campaign and the expression of local Muslim leaders to come closer together.

Detroit Regional Conference (June 5, 2010)

- 100 registrants. Program included main speakers: Siraj Wahhaj, Faheem Shuaib, Ali Suleiman Ali, Nisa Muhammad, Aneesah Nadir
- Location: Muslim Center
- Highlight: signing of Healthy Marriage Community Covenant by local Imams

Masjid Development

Background

Although a Masjid Development Task Force existed on paper, there were no activities until Umar Al-Khattab was appointed Director of Masjid Development in 2009. The goal of the Director and Masjid Development is twofold: (1) meet with leaders of all the masjids associated with MANA and to listen to their concerns and recommendations; (2) begin formulating best practice recommendations for masjids.



Activities

- From 2009-2010, Imam Umar has visited and organized programs in Milwaukee (twice), Detroit, Cleveland, Dayton, Columbus, Cincinnati, and Chicago.
- In 2010, Imam Siraj Wahhaj has begun fundraising for the development of inner-city masjids. The first such event was in Dallas for Masjid al-Islam.

Fiqh Research Council

Background

In 2008 the Fiqh Research Council was formed. The purpose of the Council is to: (1) provide fiqh opinions on issues relevant to American Muslims, (2) develop standards for Imams, (3) organize or cooperate with educational programs that will train Imams and (4) develop material for new Muslims. Dr. S. Abd al-Hakim Jackson heads the Council; and the “secretary” for the Council is Abdullah Ali, instructor at Zaytuna.

Activities

- First meeting of the Council took place at MANA’s 2nd Annual Conference and an agenda for 2009 was agreed upon.
- A subsequent meeting held in January, 2010 at Zaytuna Institute in California was attended by Dr. Abd al-Hakim Jackson, Imam Zaid Shakir, Imam Faheem Shuaib, Dr. Ihsan Bagby and Ustaz Abdullah Ali. At that meeting, an outline for Imam Standards was successfully agreed upon. The group also agreed to expand the circle of Imams and scholars involved in developing the standards and a subsequent meeting was planned for some time in 2010.

Social Justice Task Force

Background

The Social Justice Workshop developed a comprehensive set of resolutions at MANA’s 2007 Conference and a Social Justice Task Force was created. Imam Khalil Abdur-Rahman (NC) was recently appointed Social Justice Task Force Chairperson. Goals for the Social Justice Task Force include: development of a political agenda; advocacy for social, economic and environmental justice; focus on political prisoners--especially Imam Jamil Al-Amin and the inhuman use of 24-hour lock down in super-max prisons; and development of means for political education of the Muslim community. At the October, 2009 meeting of MANA’s Majlis al-Shura, it was decided to activate the Social Justice Task Force and hold a seminar on the imprisonment of Imam Jamil Al-Amin.

**Activities**

- A Seminar on “The U.S. Prison System: Muslims and Human Rights Violations” was held in February, 2010 at Howard University. The primary focus of the Seminar was the inhumane practice of 24-hour isolation in Super Max prisons and segregation units. Speakers included: Mahdi Bray, Executive Director, MAS Freedom; Bonnie Kerness, Coordinator, Prison Watch, American Friends Service Committee; J. Soffiyah Elijah, Deputy Director, Criminal Justice Institute (CJI) at Harvard Law School; Masai Eehosi, International Committee in Support of Imam Jamil Al-Amin; Corey Saylor, Legislative Director, CAIR; Karimah Al-Amin, Attorney and wife of Imam Jamil Al-Amin; Ramsey Clark, Former U.S. Attorney General; Jihad Abdul Mumit, Activist and Performance Artist; Natsu Taylor Saito, Law Professor, Georgia State University and Mauri Salaakhan, Executive Director, Peace and Justice Foundation.
- A similar seminar was held at the Riyaadah on July 10, 2010. Speakers included: Muhammad Ahmad (Max Stanford), Karimah Al-Amin, Jihad Abdul Mumit, Bonnie Kerness, and Masai Eehosi.



A CONCLUDING MESSAGE FROM IMAM TALIB



Dear Believers:

As-Salaamu 'Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu.

We of the MANA Diwan hope and pray that you have found this most recent report (the first one was distributed at our 2nd national conference, in Philadelphia) to the Ummah, informative and inspiring. As you can see (as someone once said), "Reports of our demise have been greatly exaggerated". We apologize that we were not able to get this document out during the last week of Ramadan as we had hoped, but you can nonetheless look forward to our first annual financial report by the end of this year, *insha'Allah*.

Over the past six months we have begun an internal re-organization of MANA's Diwan, in our quest for greater efficiency and productivity. As a temporary measure, my office and responsibility as the Deputy Amir has been combined with that of the Office of the General Secretary.

Dr. Ihsan Bagby, who served the Ummah in North America as MANA's General Secretary for several years with dedication and zeal, continues to work as a member of the MANA Diwan. His wife Sister Waheedah Bagby, MANA's Operations Director, continues to serve diligently in an administrative capacity.

We have formed a Financial Committee, and Dr. Halima Toure is its Chairperson. Further we have retained Tijaarat Associates Inc. (Philadelphia, Pa.) under the outstanding leadership and experience of Brother Aqil Abdus-Sabur, to steer our ship economically aright with their great expertise in financial management.

Imam Qasim Ahmed – a dedicated student of, and assistant to, the late Imam W.D. Mohammed (May Allah forgive his sins and reward him with Jannat, *amin*), has become a member of the Diwan. He is also the Chairman of our Development Committee.

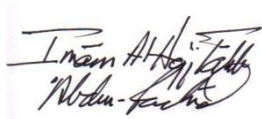
Imam Umar Al-Khattab is now heading our MANA Masjid Development Task Force. Other administrative and technological changes are underway with the help of Allah. Further, MANA Headquarters is now being moved to New York City.

This past summer, the MANA Diwan conducted a most enlightening survey amongst the younger generation of indigenous Muslim leaders in America, in order to gain an objective view of the MANA network and vision. We are now embarking upon the same amongst indigenous imams and other Muslim leaders.

The MANA train roared out of the station with that first, glorious 2007 conference in Philadelphia. Although we hit a few “speed bumps” on the way, our progress has been steady over our first three years, *Alhamdulillah*. We are now, with the help of Allah, organizing ourselves to take MANA to a higher level of performance.

By Allah’s Grace, MANA remains a network with a noble cause. We are striving to serve Allah and humanity with sincerity and an ever-increasing excellence. We pray as well as work, and we prefer work to talk. We invite you to join us as we seek the promise of our Lord, and fulfillment of the destiny of our ancestors.

Yours in Islam,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Imam Al-Hajj Talib 'Abdur-Rashid".

Imam Al-Hajj Talib ‘Abdur-Rashid
Deputy Amir/General Secretary
MANA

