



# CONNECTING COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

**Save the Date**

**5th of June**

**The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London SE11 5RR**



# An overview

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- The Connecting Communities conference took place on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023.
- It was a full-day, in-person conference based in London with over 60 participants
- The conference involved:
  - A keynote speech by Meena Smallman
  - Presentations involving 4 by & for organisations;
  - Two main workshops involving panel discussions



TIME	AGENDA	SPEAKER
09:30 - 10:00	Registration	
10:00 - 10:10	Welcome and Introduction	Nikki Dhillon Keane
10:10 - 10:25	Why engagement with Faith Institutions and leadership is important in the fight to end violence against women	Mina Smallman
10:25 - 10:35	Trauma, healing and connecting communities	Nikki Dhillon Keane
10:35 - 10:45	Launching the Spiritual Abuse Guidance: The missing slice of the power & control wheel	Gisela Valle
10:45- 11:00	Q&A	Panel
11:00 - 11:15	Break	
11:15 - 11:30	Community-based prevention efforts: barriers, gaps and opportunities - <b>The Traveller Movement</b>	Aoife Detaney
11:30 - 11:45	Community-based prevention efforts: barriers, gaps and opportunities - <b>Al Aman</b>	Hanan Bibikir
11:45 - 12:00	Community-based prevention efforts: barriers, gaps and opportunities - <b>Respond</b>	Luthfa Khan
12:00 - 12:30	Q&A	Panel



TIME	AGENDA	SPEAKER
12:30 - 13:30	<b>Lunch</b> <i>Lunch will be provided</i>	
13:30 - 14:45	Workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Working with Faith Leaders Panel:</b> Inclusive Mosque Initiative, Black Churches Domestic Abuse Forum and Gurdwara Aid</li><li>• <b>The Weaponisation of Faith and VAWG Panel:</b> Sara Kirkpatrick, Sikh Women's Aid and FORWARD</li></ul>	
14:45 - 15:00	Break	
15:00 - 15:45	Plenary and Reflections	Huda Jawad & Mandy Marshall
15:45 - 16:00	Closing remarks and thank you	Aasifa Usmani



# The agenda

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# An overview of the feedbacks

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- We asked eight to reflect on the positives and the lessons learned
- An average of 24 participants responded
- Overall, very positive and many impressed with the organisation
- Below of the summary for each questions

# Feedback/evaluation questions

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We asked participants the following eight questions:

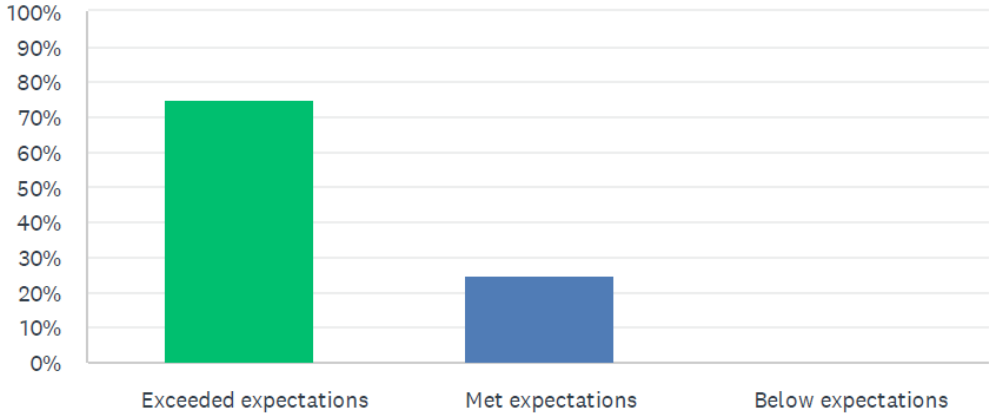
1. What did you like about the Connecting Communities Conference?
2. Is there anything that could have improved?
3. What workshop did you attend?
4. If you attended one of the two workshops, please provide your key thoughts and takeaways from it

# Feedback/evaluation questions

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6. Overall, how would you rate the Connecting Communities Conference?
7. Would you attend future events held by The Faith & VAWG Coalition?
8. What topics would you like to learn about/discuss in future events organised by The Faith & VAWG Coalition?
9. How did you find out about the conference?
10. Do you have any further comments and/or questions?

# Q1. Did the Connecting Communities Conference meet your expectations?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Exceeded expectations	75.00% 18
Met expectations	25.00% 6
Below expectations	0.00% 0
TOTAL	24

Presentation last saved: Just now

# Q2. What did you like about the Connecting Communities Conference?

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It touched on important issues that need the communities to connect together to resolve them	Role of faith leaders workshop
Brilliant speakers, range of topics, solutions/positivity focused.	Connecting with other VAWG orgs activists, sharing the rich experiences within the coalition and beyond.
Hearing about the specialist DA work of other organisations and networking with other professionals.	Everything especially the talk on DV and Autism
Meeting other participants. Hearing about various groups	The presentation and conversations shared
Being together as a faith and VAWG community. There is strength in numbers. Hearing from a variety of speakers	Meeting other campaigners and the quality of the conversations. Often vawg conferences are spaces where people share the awful cases they're dealing with which is understandable given how few spaces there are to process and offload but these rarely move the conversation forward. This conference moved the conversation forward.

# Q2. What did you like about the Connecting Communities Conference?

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Very inclusive	Range of speakers
All good!	The variety of speakers were excellent (and the food was fantastic)!
Everything. It was very inspiring and I learned a lot. We are making waves!	Great speakers, impressive organisation, important topics
Space for connection and reflection hearing from a range of voices	Inspirational women and amazing organisations. Learnt a lot of valuable insights to take forwards in my work.
Hearing from Mina Smallman and the workshops	Presentations and the workshop on engaging faith leaders - both panellists were incredibly knowledgeable and inspiring.
Such interesting speakers, everyone was friendly and welcoming. Really enjoyed the workshop and the more informal Q&A after the discussion	Engaging and inspiring speakers
So engaging and the speakers were great!	The quality of speakers The networking opportunities presented

# Q3. Is there anything that could have been improved? [Answered: 22 Skipped: 3]

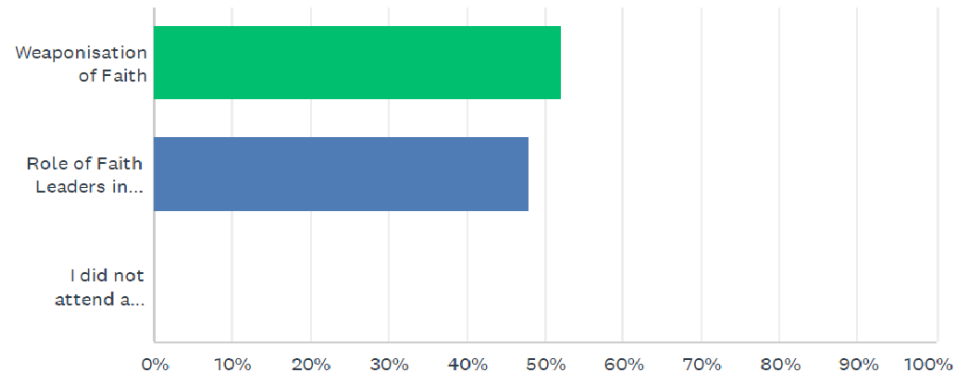
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Perhaps more structured time to talk to others - group tasks in workshops, for example?	Sometimes it was difficult to hear some of the speakers due to the microphone levels
<p>Couldn't always hear, even with microphone. Change layout so that speakers can see screen and speak towards audience</p>	<p>More cakes 😊; Ran out of cake :( More cakes!</p>
<p>Fewer presentations and more time for discussion.</p>	<p>Food, haha</p>
<p>I'd strongly recommend that the next conference also has a hybrid access option to enable wider access for those who may be unable to travel and attend in person.</p>	<p>More time</p>
<p>Better directions to the venue!</p>	<p>No. Perhaps make it bigger next time &amp; invite wider sectors.</p>
<p>Perhaps a different venue. The space used in 2020 was brilliant and allowed for more networking.</p>	<p>It would be great to be part of all the workshops</p>
<p>Tech issues in the AM, however I realize this was beyond anyone's control. Some of the speakers could have been better prepared as well.</p>	<p>7 X no/not that I can think of</p>

# Q4. What workshop did you attend?



Answered: 25 Skipped: 0



CHOICES	RESPONSES
of Faith	52.00% 13
eaders in Preventing VAWG	48.00% 12
I a workshop	0.00% 0
ents: 25	

# Q5. If you attended one of the two workshops, please provide your key thoughts and takeaways from it

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empowering women to break the silence about faith abuse	It was chaired very well and the audience got time to contribute and discuss and offer critiques too.
Key thoughts: the faith leaders who will have the greatest effect aren't always the "official"ones, they're often the volunteers and sideliners.	Engaging faith leaders is essential to bring about sustainable change. We all have power indifferent ways. It takes time. Use scriptures
It was a really informative session and gave guidelines on the best way to engage with faith leaders	Issues around Understanding of Domestic abuse in faith leaders, limited work around spiritual abuse services
Key themes affect women of all faiths	The safety and voice of survivors comes first and must never be lost
Amazing networks working to improve faith responses to VAWG.	Really interesting food for thought and practical ways to move forward
Faith can be both a source solace or can be be used as a weapon of abuse	Excellent panel
Felt there should have been a call for action	Very insightful. Made me think about what I can improve in my work to reach out to faith communities

# Q5. If you attended one of the two workshops, please provide your key thoughts and takeaways from it

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-The need for Faith and VAWG literacy in all faith communities/institutions.  
-Faith Leaders vsthe perception/lack of knowledge of uneven playfield...when addressing VAWG.  
-Allow/facilitate/ help survivors tell their stories. themselves.  
-Spiritual consent and spiritual grooming/engineered consent ( something to bear in mind when helping survivors).Fitting/appropriate terminologies.

Engaging faith leaders is about assisting them and encouraging them to learn. Everyone has the right to safety. Children have the right to a safe home.

The commonality of experiences across a range of faiths and ways to work with faith leaders and those experiencing spiritual abuse

Very good workshop with lots of very insightful and thought-provoking content

It is interesting to hear panelist's with different backgrounds/perspectives but similar, overlapping themes

Great speakers with provoking ideas that has made me go off and think more of utilising theirideas.

# Q6. Overall, how would you rate the Connecting Communities Conference?

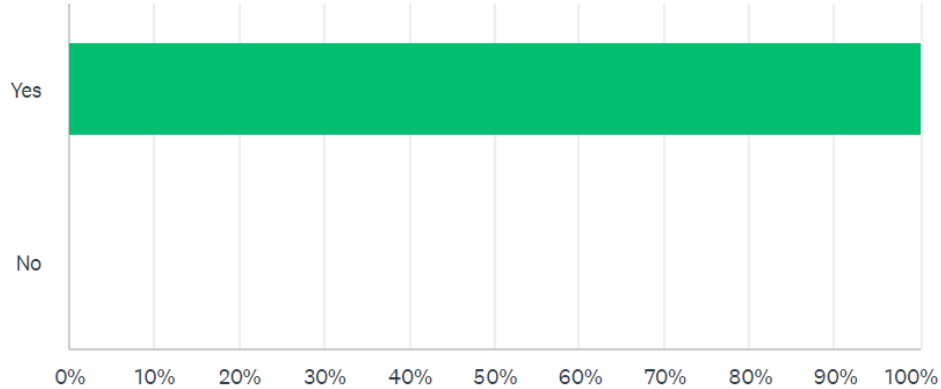
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4.5★  
average rating



	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	45.83% 11	54.17% 13	24	4.54

# Q7. Would you attend future events held by The Faith & VAWG Coalition?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	25
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		25

# Q8. What topics would you like to learn about/discuss in future events organised by The Faith & VAWG Coalition?

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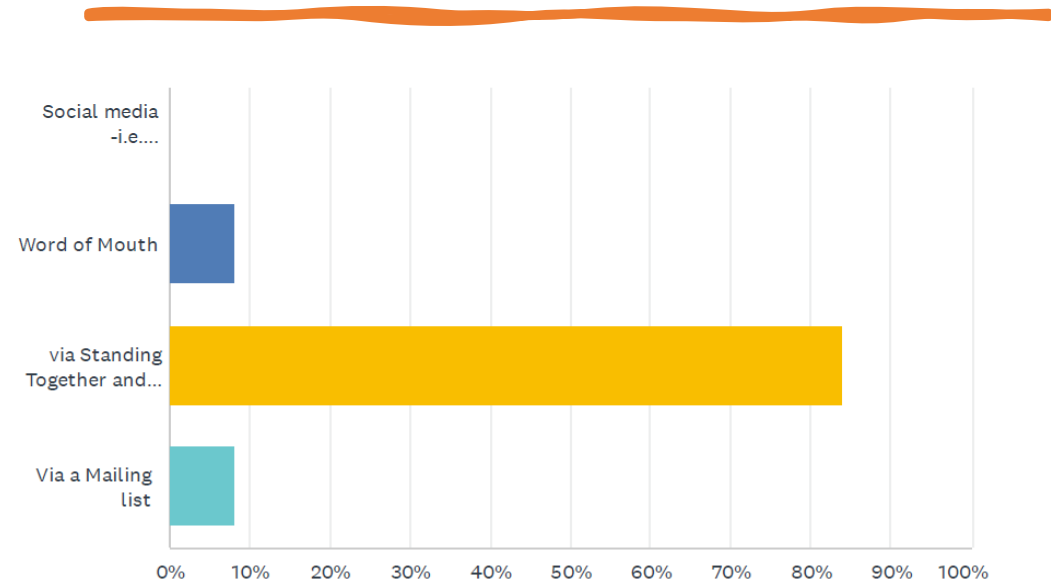
how can the religious agencies work together to support survivors without judgement or blame	Trauma-informed approach with survivors Self care/avoiding burn out Having a religious leader panel
It would be great to brainstorm how our organisations could work together. Sharing funding stream knowledge. Sharing successes and challenges	More on theology and more on the infrastructure that survivors need eg housing and health which the faith sector must also consider.
Being made aware of specialist training opportunities supporting women of faith	Difference between spiritual & faith based abuse, practical guidance
Preparing VAWG professionals from faith backgrounds	Weaponising faith and the long term Mental Health impact on women and girls.
Harmful practices	Engaging perpetrators
Guide on how to consult with faith leaders/groups	Families and faith

# Q8. What topics would you like to learn about/discuss in future events organised by The Faith & VAWG Coalition?

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<p><b>What practical action can we take together?</b> <b>Can we gather evidence together from our different sectors to strengthen the case for our collective voice? We need to be able to present evidence supported by facts.</b> <b>Could each group tell us about any form of evidence gathering they are/could be participating in?</b></p>	<p><b>The coalitions work in contributing to wider systems change</b></p>
<p>How statutory agencies can do more around faith and domestic abuse</p>	<p>How we can engage perpetrators and have these difficult conversations with men outside of the community including the government.</p>
<p>Regulation Advice provision 6/5</p>	<p>Unsure!</p>

# Q9. How did you find out about the conference?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Social media -i.e. Twitter/Facebook etc.	0.00%	0
Word of Mouth	8.00%	2
via Standing Together and/or Faith & VAWG Coalition	84.00%	21
Via a Mailing list	8.00%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>25</b>

# Q10. Do you have any further comments and/or questions?

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<b>well done and thank you for organising this important event.</b>	Thank you, it was a great day.
Thank you for all the work you do towards giving us a voice	The team did a great job and should be proud
Great food and a good conference pack. Fantastic event with many take aways	Thank you! Well thought and organised event.
No thank you (5x)	Thank you for an incredible conference!
Keep up the good work	

# Q10. Do you have any further comments and/or questions?

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**Would you be able to put something together by using this structure of coalition, where religious versus and all religious content(possibly misinterpretation of domestic abuse) by every single religion is explained**

**I'm so happy to have attended this conference! I've learned a lot**

It was brilliant. Thank you!

Great conference with lots of fantastic speakers. Great lunch as well!

Really enjoyed this conference, looking forward to more to come

Thank you for this wonderful and informative conference!