

O.M.A.H.A.I

is a not-for-profit, non-governmental international organization that is dedicated to fostering the processes of universal education among all people, with the goal of encouraging women and children to contribute their talents to the peace, security and well-being of humanity.



O.M.A.H.A.I

*O*ngoing Opportunity for Growth

*M*anpower Development

*A*dvancing Education

*N*eeds-based Improvements

*B*uilding Capacity

*A*dvocate Awareness through Individual-Community Engagement

*H*uman Rights Sustainability

*A*ccess to Services and Learning Programs

*I*nnovative Training Strategies

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Building bridges between cultures have never been as essential as it is being witnessed nowadays in the twenty-first century across all cultural civilizations. Building inner and outer bridges within and among cultures are vital to World Peace. Education lies at the heart of our world's collective efforts to constitute a firm foundation for united humanity. The education of Women and Children stands in the very heart and soul of this firm foundation. Europe in general and the Nordic countries, in particular, are standing on the front-line of joining forces with the world's collective efforts to build bridges between cultures. Europe is privileged for achieving indispensable advanced knowledge and practice in installing a firm foundation for united humanity. This imperative learnedness has placed Europe in general and the Nordic countries in particular on a pathway which has no turning back.



O.M.A.H.A.I is a non- profit- organization that is standing on the front-line of providing expert insights into designing and launching well-grounded sustainable programs of growth. The education of Women and Children stands in the very heart and soul of O.M.A.H.A.I sustainable programs of growth. O.M.A.H.A.I is joining forces with the world's collective efforts to build bridges between cultures through its advanced consultancy services and, more significantly, through its advanced sustainable programs of growth. In addition to the consultancy services, there are three distinct programs among the distinguishing programs to sustain growth :

- **Educational programs for women**
- **Educational programs for children and junior youth**
- **Language and cultural courses**



Our expertise has grown through our educational specializations as well as decades of professional experience of working with individuals and groups that are placed on the Otherness spectrum. Our personal experience as the Otherd, our professional education and knowledge, and our skills which we have gained through working with the Otherd are the base for our passion to build inner and outer bridges between individuals, societies, and cultures. In order to respond to the requirements of growth, to maintain focus on the educational process that propels progress, and to establish a strong community-building effort, O.M.A.H.A.I is offering a complex system that involves dividing each educational program into cycles and stages.



O.M.A.H.A.I is a non- profit- organization that is standing on the front-line of providing expert insights into designing and launching well-grounded sustainable programs of growth. The education of Women and Children stands in the very heart and soul of O.M.A.H.A.I sustainable programs of growth.

Mission Statement: To constitute a firm foundation for united humanity, building inner and outer bridges within and among cultures lie at the heart of O.M.A.H.A.I sustainable programs of growth.

Goals and Objectives: O.M.A.H.A.I is joining forces with the world's collective efforts to build bridges between cultures through its advanced consultancy services and, more significantly, through its advanced sustainable programs of growth.

Philosophy: The Education of Women and Children stands in the very heart and soul of O.M.A.H.A.I sustainable programs of growth.

O.M.A.H.A.I services: In addition to the cultural, educational and language consultancy services, there are three distinct programs among the distinguishing programs to sustain growth :

- Educational programs for women
- Educational programs for children and junior youth
- Language and cultural courses

Building bridges between cultures have never been as essential as it is being witnessed nowadays in the twenty-first century across all cultural civilizations. Building inner and outer bridges within and among cultures are vital to World Peace. Education lies at the heart of our world's collective efforts to constitute a firm foundation for united humanity. The education of Women and Children stands in the very heart and soul of this firm foundation. In order to respond to the requirements of growth, to maintain focus on the educational process that propels progress, and to establish a strong community-building effort, O.M.A.H.A.I is offering a complex system that involves dividing each educational program into cycles and stages.

Through its programs of growth, O.M.A.H.A.I is offering a new educational model that helps in building inner and outer bridges of cooperation between all the three main sectors: individuals, organizations and society/societies. To achieve this goal, O.M.A.H.A.I has developed a coherent system for sustainable programs of growth that the main three sectors, individuals, organizations and society - cooperate equally with each other in designing and implementing this system. We propose developing:

a) Coherent system

b) Sustainable programs of growth

c) Equal cooperation between the main three sectors: individuals, organizations and society/societies



Each individual from the founding board members team has a life-long-personal experience of being placed on the Otherness spectrum. Each one of us has professional experience in working closely with individuals who are being placed on the Otherness spectrum. Because of our personal and professional experiences of Otherness we are highly qualified in offering distinctive and unique specialized services towards strengthening the “ Otherd” inner-wings. Our expertise has grown through our educational specializations as well as decades of professional experience of working with individuals and groups that are placed on the Otherness spectrum. Because we have been placed on the Otherness spectrum, each one of us has experienced imprisonment in the societal dungeons and because we have been working with the Otherd, each one of us has developed deep thorough understanding and knowledge of the soul breaking forces that paralyse the Otherd into various grey shades of nihilism. Our personal experience as the Otherd, our professional education and knowledge, and our skills which we have gained through working with the Otherd are the base for our passion to build inner and outer bridges between individuals, societies, and cultures.



Kristín Ólafsdóttir

I am a Primary School Teacher and a mother of two children. I grew up in a small fishery town in the West fjords of Iceland which is an area of a great cultural diversity. I studied Biology in the Faroe Islands and participated in AIDS educational project in Botswana.

Education: MA in educational studies with focus on reading and reading difficulties

B.Ed in education

B.Sc in Biology





Guðbjörg Ottósdóttir

I am a lecturer in social work in Iceland, specialising in migration and multi-cultural social work. Prior to becoming a lecturer, I worked for many years as a social worker with migrants and refugees in Iceland. I have conducted research related to migration, disability and care with adults and children migrants, both in Iceland and the UK. I have a keen interest in issues of human rights and the promotion of equal opportunities to education and welfare.

Education: Ph.D in Human Geography

MA Sociology

BA in Social Work





Hoda Thabet

I have been working as an educator and cultural consultant with the Ministry of Welfare (Iceland) for the group of women and children refugees in Iceland. I have been working closely with the Ministry, the town councils , the kindergartens and the schools in addition to Iceland's Red Cross and the local organizations - to ensure the effective delivery of the designed programs and achieving the desired set of goals.

Education: PhD in Comparative Literature (Women studies)

MA in Modern Arabic Literature

MA in English Literature

BA in Arabic (Major) and English (Minor)

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Programs

1- The educational programs for children and junior youth are divided into 4 Cycles. Each cycle includes four stages:

- a) Language proficiency
- b) Intellectual proficiency and Mindfulness
- c) Creative proficiency through Art, Music, and Sport
- d) Community Service projects

Junior Youth Empowerment Education (Arabic/Persian), each cycle(100 hrs) .

2- Animator training courses to work with children and Junior youth (80hrs)



Features and Benefits

Two factors require particularly careful thought about junior youth-refugees. First, the effect of negative social forces on their communities has led to the spread of various social ills that have a profound influence on how these young people view themselves and society. Second, they are heavily affected by the behaviour of adults towards them. However, there is a critical window of opportunity between the ages of 10 and 14, before their concepts and attitudes crystallize. Through this program, we seek to build bridges across cultures by increasing the number of refugee-junior-youth with a deep knowledge and understanding of their role in participating in building up their communities.



This program for the refugee children offers innovative lesson plans in a nurturing environment by designing interactive settings in which they can connect with their inner-self, discuss ideas, form a strong understanding of their collective-global identity and build their capacities to contribute to the sustainable development of their communities here in Iceland and in their homeland, if they choose to return one day. Some of the materials are concerned with developing language skills and the power of expression, some address mathematical concepts, while other materials seek to prepare them to approach the investigation of social and spiritual reality in a scientific manner.



It engages the junior youth refugees in

- Collaborative games,
- Songs,
- Music,
- Mindfulness
- Physical activities

Together the group studies materials from a curriculum which has been developed to introduce critical moral concepts and simultaneously enhance the member's power of expression.

-In the group, bonds of friendship, love and a sense of a common goal are established.

-The junior youth group serves as an environment of mutual support for its members, one in which they can develop the spiritual perception and patterns of thought and behaviour that will characterize them as youth.

-The group learns to listen, to reflect, to make decisions and to act on their decisions. meditation helps children to:

- Mindfulness helps them to

Improve their ability to self regulate their behaviour

Improves emotional intelligence

Helps their attention span, focus and learning

Improves sleep patterns (see Calm Kids)

Process and release trauma

Reduces anxiety

Supports healthy brain development

Support the rest and digest phase of the nervous system
(reducing stress)

-With these skills, they are able to analyse together the constructive and destructive forces in society and learn how to channel their energies toward improving the conditions of their community.

One aspect of the group is to study texts with stories of junior youth around the world which the junior youth refugees can relate to and apply certain concepts to their own lives.

Another aspect is the service component. In this component, the junior youth come up with ways to complete selfless acts of service that have a twofold moral purpose. This essentially means that they are not only empowered to take charge of their own moral and intellectual growth, but to simultaneously contribute to the well being of society.

Also, many other activities take place such as music, yoga and mindfulness, sport, recreational activities and various arts. The content of the material is simple yet profound. Far from preaching to junior youth on how they should be, the program

helps them discover moral and spiritual realities for themselves, assisted by animators.

Activities: The group members meet weekly where they study character development themes, develop the power of expression, discuss difficult issues with peers, create art, play cooperative games, engage in healthy recreation and plan and carry out service projects.



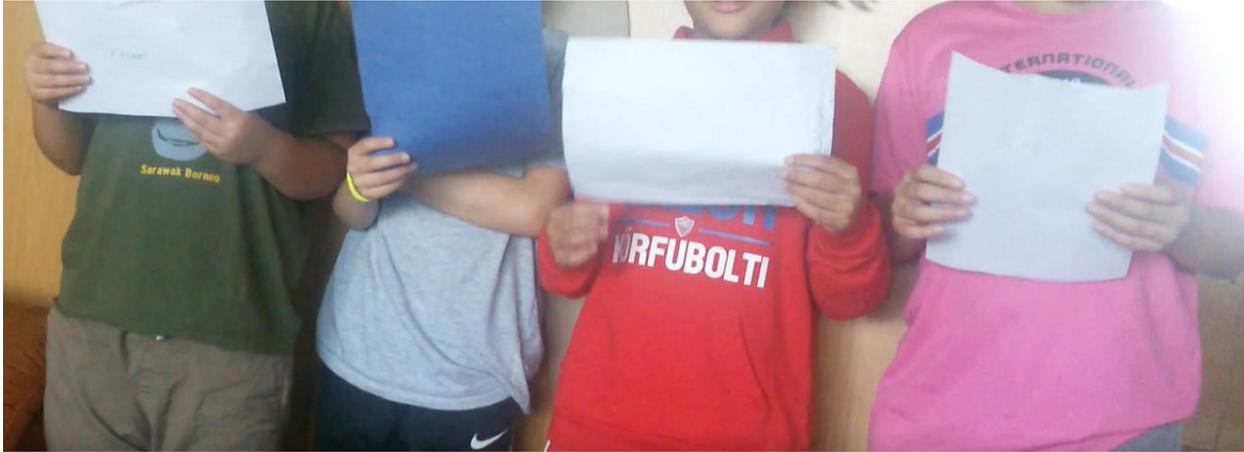
The curriculum: it constitutes a story with certain moral concepts, on which the junior youth consult. This helps them in developing the ability to express themselves and their thoughts. The materials have been developed, piloted and adopted in junior youth groups around the globe. Their relevance goes beyond cultural or religious boundaries, and they seek to help junior youth develop an intellectual and spiritual framework with which to approach their path in life.

Service: the junior youth discuss and decide on service activities as a group. Acts of service that the junior youth perform for their neighbourhood will depend on the needs of their local community. Examples of these service activities are the following: cleaning the local park, planting trees and flowers, helping in special-need houses, visiting the elderly. Extra activities: different forms of arts and crafts, sports, yoga, and mindfulness.



These are the Objectives of Junior Youth Refugee Empowerment Education

1. Enhance their power of expression
2. Develop the ability to make positive decisions
3. Engage in acts of service to the community



The Evaluation of each objective is as follow

1. **Enhance the Power of Expression:** The Junior Youth Empowerment Project empowers junior youth by enabling them to positively express themselves with precision and clarity. The Junior Youth Empowerment Project improves the junior youths' abilities in the following areas:

- Literacy and vocabulary
- Reading and writing
- Comprehension
- Ability to give presentations
- Artistic expression
- Critical thinking

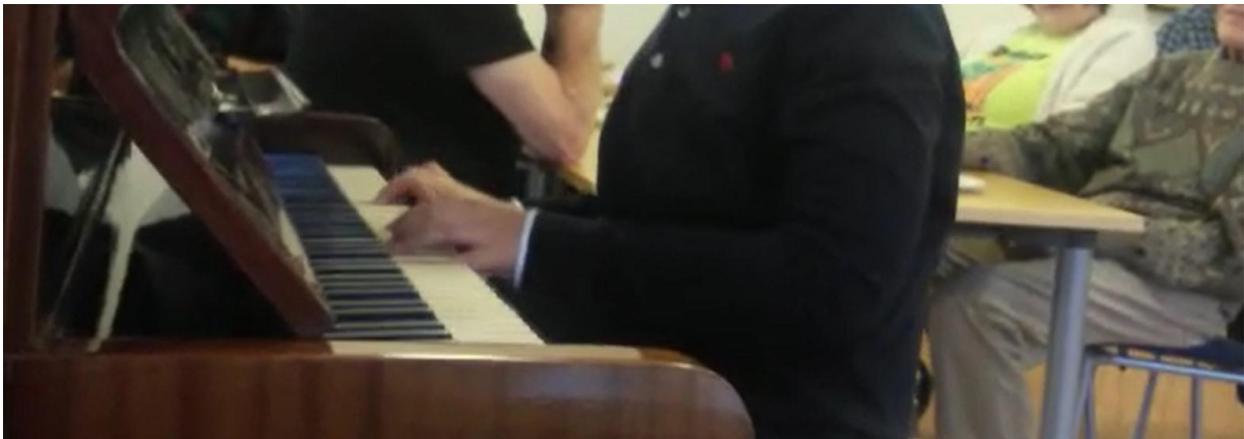


2. **Capability to Make Positive Decisions**: The Junior Youth Empowerment Project empowers junior youth by giving them the analytical tools to understand the implications for choices that confront them every day, and it enables them to express positive choices through speech and action:

- Complex situations are analysed in the texts
- Method of action-reflection is used



3. **Enhance their Capacities for Service:** The Junior Youth Empowerment Project empowers junior youth to actively participate in the transformation of their neighbourhood and community. The Junior Youth Empowerment Project utilizes service to enable these young people to realize their capacities to the fullest and use them for the benefit of themselves and others. Building skills by doing service in the neighbourhood is a vital component of the group. Ideas for the service come from within the group and the youth participate fully in the planning and implementation of the service projects.



Empowerment of junior youth refugees results when:

- They understand their own capacities to make a difference.
- They have the qualities, attitudes, insights, and knowledge to consistently make, and confidently express, positive decisions despite social pressures.



3- The educational programs for women are divided into 4 cycles. Women Empowerment Education (Arabic/Persian), each cycle (200 hrs).

Each cycle includes four stages:

- a) Language proficiency (Mother tongue and the host-country second language) and Information Technology proficiency**
- b) Intellectual proficiency and Mindfulness**
- c) Empowerment projects such as Art, Music, and Sport**
- d) Community Service Projects**

The key to free women from the Othered cultures is to speak their culture and their language. One way of speaking the Otherd cultures is through acknowledging a place for their culture

within our cultural borders prior to enforcing ours on them. For example, illiterate cultural women do not lack talents and skills but only lack reading and writing skills. To empower a cultural female, we must first acknowledge her skills and offer her the needed space in our culture to grow roots. Secondly, we must acknowledge her fundamental right to literacy. Prior to Icelandic-language programs, she needs to learn reading and writing in her own language.



Features and Benefits

a) Language proficiency (Mother tongue and the host-country second language)

The Mother -Tongue literacy must stand at the heart of any educational programs that are designed to address the teaching process of a Second-Language to illiterate individuals. Teaching a Second-Language to illiterates requires following special methodologies that differ from those methodologies that are used in teaching a Second-Language generally. It is important for Educators and Teachers; especially in the West, to note the fundamental requirements that necessitate establishing new forms of Teaching-Learning process of a Second-Language to those who are illiterates. In order for an illiterate individual to learn a Second-Language, this person needs to master at least the basics of reading and writing in his/her native language. The

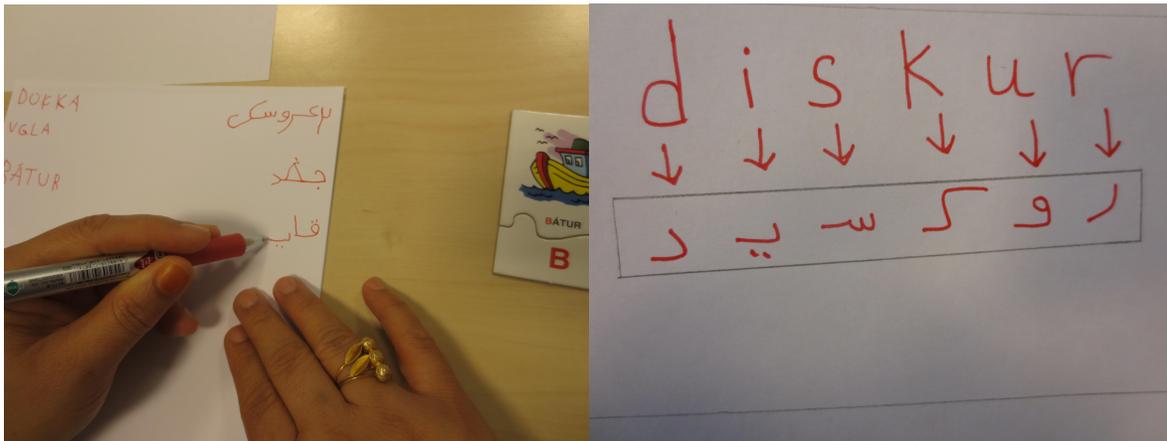
Mother -Tongue literacy is the cornerstone in any educational process that aims at building personal capacities whether in the West or in the East. Furthermore, Academic researches show that literacy in the “Heritage Language” has a strong positive impact on learning another language.



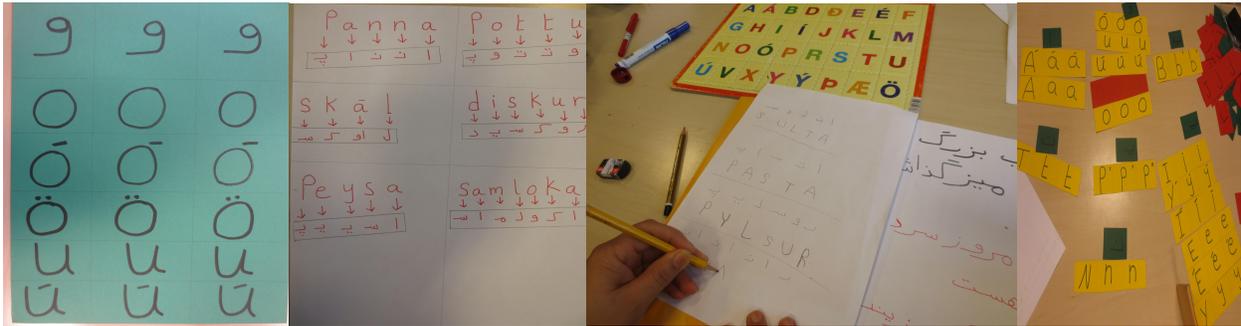
ا	ن	ى	ث	ت	پ	ب
A Á Æ	N	E É I Í Y Ý	P	T	P	B
æ	n	e é i í y ý	p	t	p	b



In the first two weeks, the learning shall only concentrate on the mother-tongue language until the student becomes familiar with this group of letters in her language. In this week, the student will need to go through a lot of practice to hold the pen, draw dots and lines. Then the student starts learning how to connect the horizontal and vertical lines “|” “_” to shape the first group of letters. By the end of week 1, the student shall become familiar with the first group of letters without expecting him/her to be able to write them from memory. A lot of practice should be done during lesson time and no homework should be given to the student at this stage. In addition, it is important to have the alphabets hand-written and not printed so the student feels comfortable with his/her handwriting and confident of his ability to learn. Perfection is not what we are aiming at, and the student should receive this message clearly. One way to do this is through having the letters and the words in the first few months hand-written.



At the end of 150 hours, the student is able to read full sentences short and long in her mother-tongue language. The student is also able to write full sentences short and long in his/her mother-tongue language. As for the second-learned-language, the student shall be able to read short and simple words. Words that have more consonants than vowels are usually easier for the student to read since the number of vowels in the second-learned-language (which is Icelandic) is much more than the mother tongue language (Persian/Arabic). In this stage, the student is not able yet to read the second-learned-language independently. The student shall continue relying on the mother-tongue-language to recognize the letters and the sound to read vocabularies in the second-learned language.

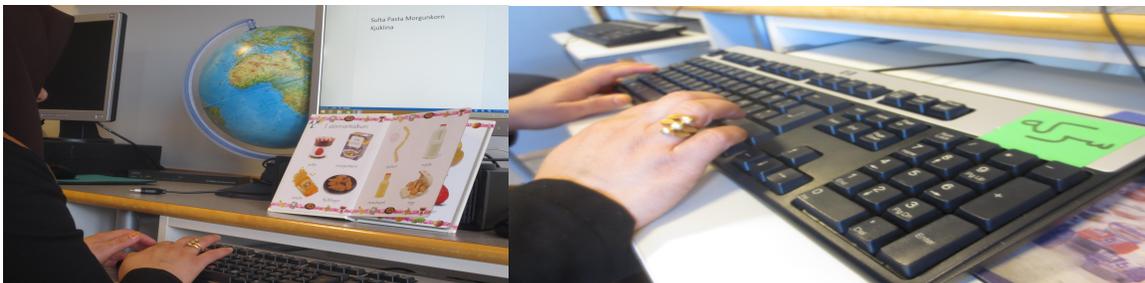


b) Information Technology Proficiency

After 150 hours of intensive learning for the mother-tongue and second-language, the student is well trained and capable of recognizing most of the alphabets (consonants and vowels) in both languages through the recognition of the sounds in the second-learned-language is fully pronounced in accordance the sound system of the mother-tongue- language. Hence, **it is possible to train the student on the basics of using a computer**. This step helps to boost the student's confident in her abilities to learn new skills such as reading and writing. Also, adding computer skills to the learning methodology at this stage will encourage the student to continue her learning development with the same enthusiasm that she started the process with. Learning two languages that differ drastically in their sounds and writing systems is a challenging process. Therefore by the end of 150 hours, the student might feel exhausted, bored or start doubting her abilities to master the reading and writing of both languages: the mother-tongue and second-language.



Therefore, it is important to add computer learning skills at this stage so for the student to realize the fruits of her efforts that its outcome leads her to start this new stage of learning. The computer training, in the beginning, is only used as an additional tool for the student to learn writing simple vocabularies in the second language. At this stage, the student continues relying on her mother-tongue to recognize the sounds of the second-language. Therefore it is advised not to confuse the student with the original sounds of the second language, especially the vowel sounds, as the aim is to connect the student with the second-language through relating to her mother-tongue. In this stage, first the student practice typing capital and small alphabets on a Word sheet. Then gradually the student is trained to read vocabularies then she is asked to type those vocabularies on a Word sheet. Gradually, the student will be asked to type a vocabulary by listening to its pronunciation without consulting her notes.



4-Language courses (Arabic/Farsi)for the non-speakers of Arabic/Farsi (*Adults and Children*) 60 hrs

Intensive First Level

This intensive course focuses on developing proficiency in the Arabic language/Farsi language. It begins with the learning of script and phonology and works rapidly into a wide range of situation-based texts and topics that build vocabulary, grammar, and general communicative competence. After successful completion of this course, the students will have grasped the basics of how the language operates. They will also be able to have simple interactions and exchange basic personal information. The course is based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing, and these are built on as learners progress through their studies.



Program Syllabi

Greetings	Personal Pronouns
The alphabet: spelling & pronunciation	Basic Grammar
Vocabularies/Nouns	Prepositions
Asking and giving personal information	Forming questions
Describing people, things and places	Numbers
Talking about jobs and professions	Possessive articles



5- Advanced consultancy services in the following fields:

- a) Education (Children and Adults)**
- b) Culture (Building Bridges)**
- c) Language (Translation and Interpretation)**
- d) Issues related to child care and child abuse**

6-Specialised Educational courses in the following areas:

- a) Otherness and Displacement**
- b) Culture and Traditions (History, Customs, Music, Festivals, Language, Literature and more...)**



The question is: why we are welcoming immigrants and refugees to Iceland? What is our aim in doing so? We have to be clear about our aim to evaluate the services that we are offering. We have to evaluate the outcomes of our services and always check the numbers because numbers speak. In order to evaluate our services and the outcomes of those services these questions need concrete answers based on the statistics:

What is each individual's national origin, cultural background, and religious beliefs? What is each individual's marital status? For females, we need to know if she has been mutilated and whether her daughter is being mutilated or will be mutilated in the future? What is the level of institutional education for each individual: adults and children? What language/languages each individual master? What occupation/job each individual used to have prior to arriving in Iceland? What skills each individual have? We need to have complete statistics on the number of males, females, and children. We have immigrants (from where?) We have refugees (from where?) We have people that receive approval to live in Iceland under the family reunification program (from where?)

In order to achieve the goals that we are aiming at, we need to answer these questions for both individuals and groups, because it is only then that we can design our programs for integration.

Who we are Saving - Serving - Empowering

Woman: How to address her cultural identity as a (Wife - Mother - Sister - Daughter)

Man: How to address his cultural identity as a (Husband - Father - Brother - Son)

Child: How to address his/her cultural identity and his/her current needs

Junior Youth: How to address his/her cultural identity and his/her current needs

Youth: How to address his/her cultural identity and his/her current needs



In order to Save - Serve - Empower we need to understand

- **The Cultural Identity:** (Region- Country - Religion - Costumes - Cultural Habits Food- Language - Education - Cultural Class system, Fear and etc....)

- **Current Needs** : (Keeping connected to their cultural identity - Education (formal and informal)- Language (mother tongue and the second language) - Building trust - Developmental projects that is related to their existing skills , and etc...)

- **Future Vision:** What is the Goal (**Save, Serve, Empower**)? Where each individual is going to be in 5 years? (Designing Empowering programs for each and every individual that addresses his/her *cultural identity, current needs and future success*)



The sustainable programs of growth that O.M.A.H.A.I is offering are unique and distinctive in their characteristics. With our educational specializations as well as decades of professional experience in working with individuals and groups that are placed on the Otherness spectrum, O.M.A.H.A.I programs of growth are offered with higher levels of proficiency and expertise. O.M.A.H.A.I's programs of growth are sustainable programs designed to empower and bridge between individuals and cultures.



Europe in general and the Nordic countries, in particular, are standing on the front-line of joining forces with the world's collective efforts to build bridges between cultures. Europe is privileged for achieving indispensable advanced knowledge and practice in installing a firm foundation for united humanity. This imperative learnedness has placed Europe in general and the Nordic countries in particular on a pathway which has no turning back. The main question is: Why we are welcoming immigrants and refugees to Iceland? What is our aim in doing so? We have to be clear about our aim to evaluate the services that we are offering. We have to evaluate the outcomes of our services.



Challenges from both sides: Cultural misunderstanding - Language barriers - Fear - Mistrust- The concept of Freedom (what is freedom?)- Group identity vis Individual identity (what is group identity and how it affects the individual identity/freedom) - Projects (sustainable developmental projects vis what so-called Popcorn activities/events).The problem is that we offer help and service with this ideology: How to offer my services without losing what I am focusing on which is my personal gain and my cultural interest. The real question is, can I/We (the nation) be the only sole winners? Can I create a safe place for myself and my child if the entire world is falling apart and moving on a fast track towards annihilation? Can I? How? The answer is: No, I/We can't.



The alternative path is to expand our vision towards another question. The question which we shall be focusing on is: How do we all win? To answer this question, O.M.A.H.A.I is offering a new educational model that helps in building bridges of win-win cooperation between all the three main sectors: individuals, organizations and society/societies. To achieve this goal, we need to develop a coherent system for sustainable programs of growth in which the main three sectors, individuals, organizations and society - cooperate equally with each other in designing and implementing this system. O.M.A.H.A.I is offering: **a) Coherent system, b) Sustainable programs of growth, and c) Equal opportunities for cooperation between the main three sectors.**





Building Bridges?



With [Social Development Projects](#), we are serving the same mass of population whether they reside on this side of the ocean or the other side of the ocean.

When they are at the other side of the ocean, they are titled under-developed mass of citizens of this or that land.

However, if they succeed in crossing the ocean of death, then this same mass of the population is called Refugees.



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O.M.A.H.A.I

- O**ngoing Community Involvement
- M**aximum Development
- A**ccessible Education
- N**on-Formal Education
- B**uilding Capacity
- A**ssessing Assessment Through Educational Community Engagement
- H**uman Rights Sustainability
- A**ccess to Services and Learning Programs
- I**nnovative Teaching Strategies

Building Bridges?
OR
Drowning in the
FLOOD?

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