IAM Talk Crib Sheet

The notes below can be used as a template talk for discussing IAM and can be tailored to suit the audience. You do not need to include everything, but stats and information is provided if you would like to contextualise your talk. You can use this to give a basic 5min talk with just a few examples, or a full 20-30min lecture where you can go into depth in a variety of areas.

General things to cover:

1. Welcome and introduction to IAM
2. Understanding Islamophobia
   a. Overt manifestations (hate crimes, online abuse etc)
   b. "Hidden" and structural forms (employment discrimination, counter-terror legislation etc)
3. New challenges of 2021
   a. Continued impact of COVID 19
      i. Islamophobia and inequality from COVID
      ii. Contributions of Muslim communities
   b. Racism and looking back at 20 years since the start of the long War on Terror
4. Ways to tackle Islamophobia
   a. Legislation
   b. Government/industry initiatives
   c. Community empowerment
   d. Wider community engagement
5. How to get involved in ISLAMOPHOBIA AWARENESS MONTH

Suggested content		Additional information
Welcome	Introduce IAM	
Introduce IAM	IAM is held every November and involves Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC), local councils, journalists and local media outlets, councillors and local MPs, mosques, universities, schools, community organisations, and others.	
	The aim is to raise awareness of Islamophobia, to encourage better reporting of hate incidents to the police, and to highlight the contributions of Muslim communities to the UK.	
Understanding Islamophobia	Islamophobia encompasses far more than hate crime on the street. In reality, it should be understood as having two parts:	
	Part One - The overt part: Islamophobia is a prejudice, aversion, hostility, or hatred towards Muslims - This includes obvious things such as hate crime, street harassment, verbal abuse, and online abuse.	**Online abuse:** An August 2021 study found over 410,990 tweets that were considered to be derogatory and anti-Islamic in four months, which linked Muslims to the spread of COVID-19.
		Hate Crime: The total number of religiously aggravated hate crimes recorded by the Home Office in 2019/2020 was 6,822, which translates to around 131 offences every week and 19 offences every single day. Meanwhile, statistics also indicate that half (50%) of religiously aggravated hate crime offences were targeted against Muslims. As such, Muslims are by far the most likely group to experience a religiously motivated hate crime.

		Bullying: Childline reported a sharp increase in calls following attacks in London and Manchester in 2017, as well as bullying linking young Muslims to the spread of COVID-19. Children as young as nine reported being called terrorists and enduring abuse and threats of violence. Meanwhile, the charity also noted that girls who wear the hijab had frequently been victimised for their religious dress, with some expressing a desire to self-harm as a result of the cruel treatment they had received.
	Part Two - The "hidden" part that effects all Muslims both as individuals and as collective groups: that is the discrimination that excludes or limits Muslims' equal exercise of fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.	**Employment:** 1 in 8 Pakistani women have been illegally asked about marriage and family aspirations in job interviews, compared to 1 in 30 white women, demonstrating the levels of preconceived bias and racially and religiously shaped assumptions that Muslim women face.
		Employment: Research has shown that CVs submitted under a non-Muslim name are three times more likely to be offered an interview than those with a Muslim name.
		Media: studies have demonstrated that there are 21 negative references to Muslims within British media output for every single neutral or positive reference.
		Media: A study by MCB found the Mail on Sunday had the most negative coverage of Islam, with 78% of its stories featuring Muslims having negative themes – above an already-high industry average of 59%.

		Counter-terror: PREVENT has been heavily criticised by experts, academics, activists, and politicians across all sectors of public life. The concerns primarily centre around its lack of evidentiary basis leading to inadequate training, discriminatory application and the marginalisation of Muslims.
		Counter-terror: The Government-led PREVENT Review has been widely criticised due to its appointment of William Shawcross to lead the review, due to his previous Islamophobic comments and support of the War on Terror. A group of more than 500 Islamic organisations pulled out of the review, and an alternative community-led review has been set up, with the active support of MEND.
		Counter-terror: PREVENT is famous for its level of false-positives (ie. people who are reported but are then deemed to not be requiring any intervention). In 2019/20, of the 6,287 individuals referred, 1,487 (24%) were referred for concerns related to "Islamist extremism" – the largest group after "mixed, unstable or unclear ideology", and 1,387 (22%) were referred for concerns related to "right-wing extremism". However, only 697 (or 11%) received CHANNEL support in 2019/20.
		Counter-terror: Schedule 7 has long been criticised for its role in facilitating the disproportionate and discriminatory targeting of Muslims and members of ethnic minority groups, who make up almost **80%** of those detained under Schedule 7, despite constituting just 13% of the population. Indeed, an EHRC **report** found Pakistani men were 154 times more likely to be stopped at UK ports and airports than white people.

New Challenges	2021 has seen new arising challenges, from COVID 19 to the pernicious continued influence of the long War on Terror, and increasing instances of Islamophobia around the world, including France, India, and China, to name but a Few	
COVID 19	COVID 19 has brought new challenges and new faces to Islamophobia	International conspiracies connecting Muslims to the spread of the coronavirus continue to abound. At the same time, groups in the UK have popularised these conspiracies on social media, with counter-terrorism police recently investigating far-right groups accused of "trying to use the coronavirus crisis to stoke anti-Muslim sentiment"
		Specifically, social media sites are replete with insinuations that Muslims are flouting lockdown measures, with mosques featuring prominently in unsubstantiated claims that Muslims are continuing to hold communal gatherings.
		Tommy Robinson shared a video on his Telegram channel allegedly showing British Muslims attending prayers at a "secret mosque" in Birmingham.[1] The West Midlands police subsequently dismissed these claims. However, the video had been watched more than 14,000 times[2] and continues to be shared as evidence of Muslim communities allegedly undermining the British state.
	All the while, Muslims have been at the frontlines serving their communities throughout the pandemic.	As of the start of the pandemic, 124,715 doctors are employed in the NHS, of which nearly 13,000 were Muslim, comprising approximately 10% of the total medical workforce, and approximately 17% of those doctors where the religion was declared. For a community that makes up 5% of the national population, Muslims are clearly over-represented in the medical workforce.

		This overrepresentation is sadly reflected in the deaths in the NHS and medical workforce due to COVID-19. The first doctor to die in the COVID-19 crisis was Dr Habib Zaidi, 76.
	MEND's work through the pandemic	MEND's work nationally
		Include examples of local community action during COVID
20 years of the Global War on Terror	This September has not only seen 20 years of the start of the 'War on Terror' but the hasty withdrawal of Western troops from Afghanistan and the fall of the country back into the hands of the Taliban. The disastrous impacts of Western militarized foreign policy continue to be felt worldwide.	
	Whilst the withdrawal of Western troops from Afghanistan may seem to close one theatre in the long War on Terror, disastrous counterterror policies continue to blight Muslim communities globally, including in Europe and the UK. The continued securitization of Muslim minorities, the spread of Islamophobic surveillance practices and Artificial Intelligence, the continued prevalence of anti-Muslim tropes in media and politics, grows still – spurred on by the language of counterterrorism. This has emboldened the Far Right, encouraged populist policies against migrants and made Britain a more hostile and dangerous place for Muslims and minorities.	
	At this ignominious anniversary, MEND have hosted critical discussions on how Muslims can tackle counterterror-based Islamophobia, worked to support the development of a community-led alternative review to PREVENT, highlighted malicious groups which normalize Islamophobia, and continue to build links across faith, human rights and other civil society groups to protect those vulnerable to the excesses of the security state.	

Moving forward	Any discussion about Islamophobia is obviously going to appear negative as the challenges facing Muslim communities cannot be denied. However, Islamophobia awareness month is also about offering solutions.	
	To solve a society-wide problem, a combination of legislative change, Government and industry initiatives, Muslim community empowerment, and wider community engagement is required.	
	Legislative Changes:	**Press regulation**: The levels of discriminatory and inaccurate reporting in the press is of vital concern as it directly impacts the views of the general public. Therefore, policymakers must commit to the full implementation of the Royal Charter on press regulation and the commencement of the second part of the Leveson Inquiry, including an investigation into the prevalence of Islamophobia within the media.
		Counter-terror legislation: The Government must commit to independently reviewing all counter-terrorism legislation enacted since 2000 with a view to curbing the encroachment of counter-terrorism policies on civil liberties.
		Incitement to religious hatred legislation: Considering the disparities between the protections afforded for racial and religious hatred, it is essential to review the 2006 Racial and Religious Hatred Act with a view to strengthening legal protection afforded to religion and equalise it with those granted to race.

		Primary legislation to deal with social media offences and online hate speech: The Government should consider primary legislation to deal with social media offences and work with social media companies to protect free speech while developing an efficient strategy to tackle online hate speech.
	Government and Industry Initiatives:	**Racial and religious equality:** In the context of Brexit, attention needs to be given to supporting human rights and the principles of the EU Equal Treatment Directive to advance protection against discrimination on the grounds of religion to education, healthcare, housing, access to goods and services and social protection, within UK law post-Brexit. More must be done to tackle racial and religious equality that has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
		Employment: The barriers to Muslim economic empowerment is an area that needs to be tackled by both governmental and industry initiatives designed to address religious, racial and gendered discrimination in the workplace through targeted interventions at all stages of recruitment, retention and promotion, including through the use of name-blind applications.
		Media and broadcasting: There needs to be an emphasis on promoting positive and normalised images of Muslims within media and broadcasting. It is also essential that support is given to educative and industry initiatives designed to attract Muslim and BAME individuals into the spheres of journalism and broadcasting.
		Political exclusion: Public figures must show greater maturity and responsibility and take care not to cause hysteria for the sake of political popularity and agendas.

		Crime and policing: Areas in need of government support include: **1) Tackling the high number of Muslim prisoners through schemes to facilitate rehabilitation, cut re-offending and develop pathways for social inclusion. 2) Launching research into the underlying reasons for the disproportionately high numbers of Muslim prisoners, including issues of socio-economic deprivation and structural issues within the judicial system. 3) Supporting educative and industry initiatives to attract BAME individuals into the police force.**
	Muslim Community Empowerment:	Muslims themselves have a responsibility to ensure that they are engaging with processes of democracy to overcome the challenges they face. As such, there are a number of ways in which British Muslim communities may be empowered to play their full role as civic actors. Strategies to achieve this include:
		Supporting educative and industry initiatives designed to attract Muslims and BAME individuals into the spheres of politics, civil service, media, and broadcasting.
		Placing greater emphasis on educational programs aimed at empowering minority communities to be actively engaged within politics and media.
		Encouraging grassroots and community-led movements to overcome barriers to reporting hate crime and encourage maximum reporting of Islamophobic incidents to the police.
	Wider Community Engagement:	
	Islamophobia, like all forms of hatred, is an issue of social justice, and therefore, it is inherent upon	· Promoting greater awareness of Islam. · Promoting greater inter-community engagement.

	every member of society to contribute towards ending it. As such, there are certain areas that should be addressed:	· Prioritising PSHE and PSRE in the national curriculum to prepare young people for life in a diverse and pluralistic society.
		· Developing training programmes and resources for teachers focussed on tackling bullying based on race, religion, disability or sexuality.
		· Developing teaching materials to educate young people on the dangers of Islamophobia, racism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and other forms of hatred.
		· Supporting community and school-led programmes that encourage cultural exchange between pupils of different racial, religious, ethnic and other backgrounds.
		· Supporting academic freedoms and initiatives to decolonise education, whilst giving greater emphasis within the national curriculum to shared histories and the contributions of minority communities in building our society.
How you can get involved in IAM	Discuss how audience can get involved in IAM locally	