



Central Jersey Masjids Meeting Survey Qualitative and Detailed Report

The Central Jersey Masjids Meeting took place on July 30, 2023, at **Masjid Al-Wali**, bringing together representatives from approximately **33 Muslim organizations** from Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, and Union counties. The primary objective of the gathering was to discuss proposed activities for Muslim Heritage Month in Schools, Libraries, and Community events. The meeting aimed to foster collaboration among various Muslim organizations, enabling them to support and share resources to make Muslim Heritage Month a successful and impactful event in the local community.

Leadership:

- **Leadership Representation:** The meeting was marked by the presence of 50+ representatives from different organizations, each bringing unique perspectives and insights.
- **Contact Accessibility:** Contact details, including phone numbers, were provided for representatives, highlighting the importance of maintaining open lines of communication for future collaborations.

Strengths and Weaknesses:

- **Diverse Strengths:** The organizations listed various strengths, such as voter registration, outreach, community inclusiveness, and youth engagement. Each strength uniquely contributes to the fabric of the community.
- **Common Challenges:** The weaknesses identified by the organizations were varied, including the need for more manpower, financial assistance, and greater community outreach. These shared challenges present potential areas for joint initiatives and mutual support.



Dreams and Goals:

- **Community Aspirations:** Dreams expressed by the organizations were diverse, encompassing better community unity, youth saving, and building new mosques, to establishing Islamic educational institutions.
- **Organizational Objectives:** Goals were equally varied among organizations, including voter outreach, Islamic education, youth leadership, and community development.

Detailed Insights:

- **Strengths:** The strengths noted range from specific capabilities like 'Dawah,' 'Grant Writing,' and 'Web Development Services' to broader concepts like 'organization,' 'volunteerism,' and 'community development.'
- **Weaknesses:** Challenges highlighted include 'financial assistance,' 'needing more congregants,' and 'IT Support,' indicating areas where collaborative support could be beneficial.
- **Dreams:** Dreams like 'unity of Muslims,' 'having a masjid in each NJ town,' and 'being a leader in the local community' reflect a strong desire for growth, visibility, and influence in the wider community.
- **Goals:** Goals such as 'youth development,' 'educate & spread the message,' and 'unite on one calendar' show a forward-looking approach focused on education, unity, and community involvement.

Analysis:

- **Engagement and Participation:** The survey responses reflect a highly engaged and participatory community eager to build upon the success of the meeting.
- **Focus on Practical Outcomes:** The emphasis on regular, thematic, and actionable meetings indicates a community-focused approach, aiming for tangible results and communal growth.
- **Communication and Collaboration:** The recommendations for improved communication channels and inclusive representation show a keen interest in fostering a cohesive and well-connected Muslim community in Central Jersey.
- **Community Cohesion Amidst Diversity:** The meeting highlighted the diversity within the Central Jersey Muslim community, both in organizational focus and individual aspirations, with a pronounced emphasis on unity, education, and civic engagement.
- **Addressing Common Challenges:** The shared challenges present opportunities for joint initiatives, pooling resources, and sharing best practices among the organizations.

Recommendations for Future Meetings:



- **Diverse Suggestions:** The survey elicited a variety of recommendations, reflecting the dynamic needs and perspectives within the community. Key suggestions include:
 - **Regular Meetings:** Proposals for monthly or bi-monthly meetings, with a rotation across counties, indicate a desire for sustained engagement.
 - **Theme-Based Discussions:** Some respondents suggested having themed discussions or talks in addition to regular agendas.
 - **Meeting Structure:** Suggestions for smaller committees to address specific issues and idea-sharing sessions reflect a desire for more focused and productive meetings.
 - **Inclusivity and Representation:** The importance of ensuring representation from all communities and ethnicities was emphasized, along with the inclusion of all Imams from every center.
 - **Actionable Takeaways:** Respondents desired more actionable outcomes from the meetings, suggesting assignments for masjids and forming committees on education, community affairs, and diversity.
 - **Enhanced Communication:** A centralized communication platform, like a WhatsApp group or a website, was highlighted to facilitate constant communication and information sharing.

Meeting Success and Continuity:

- **Overall Success:** The survey revealed that most respondents perceived the meeting as successful. This indicates a positive reception and a sense of accomplishment among the participants.
- **Continuation of Conversations:** All respondents, barring one, expressed a desire to continue these conversations. This unanimous interest underscores the community's commitment to ongoing dialogue and collaboration.

Summary:

The survey following the Central Jersey Masjids Meeting reveals a community that is both satisfied with the outcomes of the initial meeting and eager to continue this momentum. The suggestions for future conferences highlight a desire for regular, inclusive, and action-oriented gatherings with improved communication and collaboration. These insights provide a roadmap for future initiatives to strengthen the bonds within the Muslim community, enhance civic participation, and nurture the next generation of Muslim leaders in Central Jersey.