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Restoring Relationships Project

Addressing hate crime through restorative justice and cross-sector partnerships: a London study

Race on the Agenda

Post conference report

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Introduction

On 8th April the UCU Conference Unit saw the launch of the second phase of Race on the Agenda's Restoring Relations: Addressing Hate Crime through Restorative Justice and Cross-Sector Partnerships: a London Study. Over 100 people attended the conference representing a wide range of statutory bodies and Third Sector organisations from London and across the UK.

The Restoring Relationships Project (RRP) is a London-wide multi-agency cooperative initiative, which aims to help reduce Hate Crime. The project started in June 2006 and is run by Race on the Agenda (ROTA), a social policy think-tank that has been active since 1986. ROTA works with London's Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities towards achieving social justice by the elimination of discrimination and promotion of human rights, diversity and equality of opportunity. ROTA achieves these aims by informing London's strategic decision-makers about the issues affecting the BAME Third Sector and the communities it serves and by making government policy more accessible to London's BAME organisations.

The RRP aims to reduce the potential for hate crime and assess the applicability of restorative justice with hate crime in London as a means to conflict resolution and prevention of racist violence. The study provides guidance and actively encourages a multi-agency solution by promoting effective partnerships between mainstream criminal justice agencies and Third Sector groups.

Central objectives of the conference were to present and gain feedback on the main findings and recommendations of the project whilst also providing an opportunity for various stakeholders to liaise and network. This report will be used to evaluate whether the conference achieved its central objectives in addition to utilising comments and advice from delegates to contribute to future work ROTA intends to continue in this area. All findings will also act as an integral source of data as ROTA move forward in representing BAME communities in London.

This report has been structured around four main sections: an initial summary of speeches, an overview of the RRP, its main findings and recommendations, a summary and evaluation of the conference and workshops.

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Opening Plenary

Giulia Liberatore & Anthony Salla, Hate Crime Policy Officers, Race on the Agenda (ROTA).

Giulia opened proceedings by providing an overview of the project and how the research has taken shape over the past two years. A clear description of the primary aims of the project was offered which included an account of the research methodologies used and the core deliverables. Giulia then moved on to briefly contextualise hate crime and its causes which allowed for a framework of understanding for the following speeches; further details regarding the project aims, research methods and deliverables can be found on page 5 of this report.

An account of the key findings and recommendations from the project was then conveyed by Anthony. This gave specific focus on the current shape of restorative justice practice in London and the importance of the third sector in carrying out this work. Consideration was also offered on some of the challenges facing restorative justice programmes. An explanation of the challenges faced in tackling the whole umbrella of hate crimes was also brought to the fore to accentuate both the long and short term strategies required to tackle hate crime. A more in depth discussion of the main findings and recommendations can also be found on page of this report.

In response to the findings and recommendations one delegate questioned elements of difference and sameness when considering hate crimes per se and how closer attention needs to be focused towards incidents that involve immigrants and asylum seekers. In reply to this it was stated that problems do persist with relation to the word hate crime as incidents that may not be regarded as a crime should be awarded equal concern as the causes and motivations that can lead to any incident can be the same. It was also agreed that closer attention does need to be focused towards immigrants, asylum seekers including the newly arriving migrants from Eastern European countries as the report stressed the vulnerability of these groups.

Another delegate queried the involvement of perpetrators within advocacy work and mediation and also whether people who have been hate crime perpetrators were involved within the report. Here it was replied that each individual had been a hate crime perpetrator at one time or another at some level. It was also brought to people's attention that perpetrators of more severe crimes are involved in advocacy work in places such as Bermondsey.

Finally, one delegate felt that restorative justice (RJ) was not marginal from the work that was taking place on the east coast of England in Hull. As the report was London based it was not possible to comment on the work that had been undertaken in Hull and it was made clear that RJ still operates predominantly within the shadow of the law within the Third Sector in London.

An Overview of the Restoring Relations Project

Background

Aims of RRP

- To reduce hate crime in London Boroughs by encouraging stakeholders to concentrate resources on types of crime, types of victims and perpetrators and geographical areas.
- To produce models for short term conflict resolution and long term prevention.
- Forge and maintain multi-agency partnerships between Third Sector organisations and statutory bodies.

Methodology

Phase 1: Desk based research.

Phase 2: 20 in depth face-to-face interviews and the Youth Advisory Group (YAG).

Phase 3: Specialised training, policy and awareness raising.

Funding

Phase 1: City Parochial Foundation & Safer London Foundation.

Phase 2, 3, & 4: Safer London Foundation & Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Partners

Phase 1 & 2 were carried out in partnership with Independent Academic Research Studies (IARS).

Phase 3 training was commissioned from the London Action Trust (LAT).

Deliverables

- To produce evidence based report to provide recommendations to reduce potential for hate crime in London.
- Create a toolkit with best practice examples and a directory of case studies of organisations working collaboratively across sectors to reduce the potential for hate crime.
- To create manuals for face-to-face and online specialised training based on project findings.
- Policy awareness raising programme including newsletters, events, face to face meetings with regional decision makers and relevant policy and practitioner groups.
- Updates on opportunities (networking events, funding, projects) that allow Third Sector and statutory agencies to work together.

Key findings and recommendations from RRP

Presented here is a brief overview of the findings presented at the conference. If you would like a copy of the full report please use the contact information at the rear of this report.

Defining Hate Crime:

- It is widely understood that constructing and making operational any definition of hate crime poses a huge challenge which has ramifications in real life for reporting, prosecuting and convicting a person.
- Respondents and YAG members agreed on the fundamental components of prejudice and difference, though interpretations become less distinct when dealing with criminal justice language at one end of the scale and community level conflicts towards the other end of the scale.
- Within any definition there needs to be clear acknowledgement of the fluid nature of hate crime for any preventative initiative to be successful.

Victims of Hate Crime:

- Though the project confirmed the work of previous studies in that the most prevalent of hate crimes committed are those with racial motivation, the work did suffice to highlight that hate crimes do occur in any direction and can be spatially determined
- Due to levels of misunderstanding, which are sometimes induced by the media, asylum seekers and refugees were believed to be particularly vulnerable to attacks
- For progress to be realised there is a requirement for significant improvement in levels of reporting whilst the progress witnessed in third party reporting needs to be continuously monitored for consistency across London.

Perpetrators of Hate Crime

- The traditional profiling of hate crime perpetrators needs to be questioned as the typical image of a white working class male offender is thought to be no longer viable or useful for understanding contemporary hate crime in London
- When considering the prejudice that underlines many people's belief and attitude across the spectrum of hate crimes it is clear that

preventative work must not tackle the consequences, but rather seek to tackle the proximate cause that leads to the occurrence of a hate crime.

Causes of Hate Crime in London

- Common characteristics that are thought to underpin many of the causes of hate crime: ignorance, deprivation, isolation, misunderstanding and an unwillingness to engage with the community.
- Due to the rich diversity of people (racially, ethnically, linguistically and faith) London possesses a unique challenge when seeking to tackle causes of hate crime as recognition must be given to segmented structure of the population.

Partnership working

- Hate crime is an extremely nuanced phenomenon that can impact in dynamic ways which requires an approach that will make use of all agencies and cannot be dealt with by independent agencies alone.
- There is a significant requirement for capacity building. Partnerships that have shared information and made good connections with statutory agencies have experienced success.

Supporting Community Based RJ programmes

- Restorative justice offers one form of dialogue to tackle the root cause of hate crime and it is crucial this work continues in the third sector due to levels of mistrust in the criminal justice system and also due to the detailed knowledge and expertise local organisations possess about their clients
- Third sector organisations that offer valuable, and arguably irreplaceable services to the BAME community can maximise their utility and longevity if they link with existing structures such as the police and their local authority.

Prevention – The Key to Combating Hate Crime

- Due to the multi-dimensional nature through which hate crime can impact any strategy needs be holistic combining both short and long-term initiatives.
- Addressing and identifying problems at a young age is crucial. The best place where this can be done is in schools, youth clubs and youth led organisations as children's minds are susceptible to new ideas.

Keynote Speakers

Bennett Obong, Project Manager, Race Hate Crime Forum, Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA)

In his speech, Bennett Obong brought attention to the current work being undertaken by the MPA London Race Hate Crime Forum drawing focus on the key purposes of their work: to reduce and prevent race hate crime, to improve confidence and satisfaction of victims in the reporting of race hate crime, to promote consistent service across London and to identify and establish good practice. In working towards achieving the purposes of the Forum, Mr Obong stressed the need “to improve coordination between agencies and to improve the effectiveness with which offenders are brought to justice” within the criminal justice system.



Through presenting a table of the statutory organisations included in the multi-agency partnership, which constitutes the Race Hate Crime Forum, Bennett provided an understanding of some of the actors required within any partnership before moving on to emphasis particular key areas that future work should look to address. Such areas included improved community accessibility to services, consistency of service delivery for the MPS compliance with Standard Operating Procedures and use of powers.

Current problems that run consistent throughout different aspects of the race hate crime forum such as the collection of data, partnership working, third party reporting and information sharing include inconsistency in support to victims, unclear protocols for the sharing of information, the flagging of information being inconsistent, good news not being shared and victims and witnesses not being kept informed. Mr Obong ended his speech by highlighting the usefulness of restorative justice for hate crime cases due to its ability to “find positive solutions and encourage offenders to face up to their actions”.

Elena Noel, Hate Crimes Project Manager, Southwark Mediation Centre

Elena Noel's speech served as a perfect complement to those made by Bennett Obong and George Mills in providing a real and practical insight into the proficiency of RJ and cross-sector working when dealing with hate crime.

Elena found her point of departure by offering an account of her own personal journey as a mediator. This held great significance for the event as she was able to draw attention to the transformation in attitudes towards RJ and multi-agency work, from a time when "the idea of the voluntary sector and the statutory sector working together to tackle hate crime was simple ludicrous – pure insanity" to now, when she works in "partnership with and referrals are generated from Southwark Anti Social Behaviour Unit, housing, community development, housing associations, Safer Neighbourhood teams, faith groups and community groups".



It was encouraging to see the interest of the audience as Elena stressed how she is still struck by the corrosive impact hate crime has upon individuals, families and communities and the way the incidents she has often experienced over a number of years have degenerated: "When I began this work it was largely abuse (racial or homophobic), eggs being thrown and damage to property, now the extremes are live cockroaches, rotting meat, used sanitary towels with racial abuse put through people's letter boxes".

Amongst the many crucial and captivating remarks Elena made during her speech were those that focused on the reasons people want to use RJ. Elena highlighted four of the core reasons which included: people wanting to know

why they have been targeted, perpetrators seeing themselves as victims, people seeking guarantees that an incident will stop and also the issue of people living together and having to face each other daily in the community. For the members of the audience who had little or no knowledge of RJ Elena presented an example that sufficed to underpin RJ's ability to deal with hate crime through describing a case study whereby inimical relations between three young black females in education was translated into a favourable set of circumstances.

When discussing the role of cross-sector work Elena accentuated the passion, vision and insight that is apparent in the successes she has witnessed by agencies combating hate crime, thus resonating somewhat strongly with the central findings from the RRP report. While her emphasis on the need for cohesive relationships between agencies was paramount as she reiterated that no single agency alone can tackle hate crime.

Lastly Elena underlined two critical points, in that as a mediator she does not only explore the incident, but the attitudes and values that underpin certain actions and (2) that she is by no means disillusioned or naïve to the notion that RJ is a stand alone panacea. Once again this draws parallels with the RRP report as it is indicative of the long and short-term approaches that are required to make progress in the fight against hate crime.

George Mills, Senior Policy Officer, London Regional Team, Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)

George commenced by explaining the overarching plan of the Equality and Human Rights Commission and its purpose to incorporate the work of the three previous Commissions whilst undertaking new responsibilities within its remit, these will all include: gender, disability, race, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation and human rights. He proposed that a central objective would be to “build a credible and independent Commission that will function to map out particular areas where equality is an issue so they can be analysed and targeted with policy”. Working to this end he believes would go some way to improving life chances and reducing inequalities



It was proposed by George that EHRC will serve as a meaningful leading body as they can function to collate vital data and thus serve as crucial centre of intelligence with knowledge on actual or potential equality based conflict and human rights issues. This he contends can be operationalised by “developing and managing regionally based stakeholder relationships with public, private and third sector bodies”.

The strong commitment to combating hate crime that George believes the EHRC possess, combined with an effective legal framework that recognises and supports the different experiences of hate crime, can bring about

positive change. Whilst it is also essential that the government continues to work towards a code of practice for the Criminal Justice System to effectively deal with hate crime alongside an agreed protocol for recording hate crime, in addition to an efficient and workable model to deal with perpetrators

Workshop Findings

Please note: the opinions and points raised here are those raised from members in the workshops. However, they are not necessarily a reflection of the views of the whole group.

Workshop 1: Multi-agency partnership working

Mick Tubb, Development Officer, London Action Trust

This workshop was created to discuss and identify the factors thought to be necessary for a multi-agency partnership to be successful to combat hate crime. Through identifying a model with best practice examples the objective was to open dialogue on particular recommendations on how partnerships can be forged and supported in London. The group also sought to analyse the various barriers and solutions in policy and practice to multi-agency partnership working in London.

Overview of points discussed:

- Prospects for a pan-London strategy
- The challenge presented by the commissioning of services
- The value of consultation
- Case study from Lancashire police, CALM Mediation and Merton

Prospects for a pan-London strategy

Consensus was weighted towards the necessity for a multi-agency partnership to help tackle hate crime in London. It was thought to have potential as it can strengthen the voice of the VCS and develop greater channels of communication. This would create an opportunity for genuine communication between grass roots level agencies and policy, but also from policy downwards. A pan-London strategy was also thought to be effective for consistency in levels of reporting whilst adopting thematic hate crime groups as part of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships' (CDRPs) could act as a very effective means of crossing over various partnerships (Merton example below shows how this has worked).

The MPA: Race Hate Crime Forum was thought to be “really useful for agencies to engage with and a model to learn from”. Capacity is however essential for the longevity of a model of this type whilst there is a requirement for this model to be advertised further. Issues of funding were raised and a robust and collaborative approach from the Third Sector bodies was thought to offer “greater force and impetus for any partnership to work”. The group noted that any multi-partnership should consider the inclusion of funder’s, the media as well as businesses.

The challenge presented by the commissioning of services

The gradual increase in the commissioning of services by the public sector is thought to present a particular dilemma for smaller organisations that may not have the capacity to meet specific demands. This places limitations on the extent to which small organisations can engage and a possible solution could be the creation of alliances between small to medium organisations for the purposes of bidding.

The Value of Consultation

Consultation with local level organisations was thought to hold potential as an effective method to obtain knowledge that is available at the community level. Inevitably there are a number of issues with consulting as a process for extracting information, nevertheless there is a requirement to ensure that consultations meaningfully engage with groups that possess key information as this is a process thought largely to be absent. It was felt that “organisations that have the ‘know-how’ do not always have the capacity to engage in consultations” and communication and in certain areas there is no second tier of support to facilitate such a process.

Case from CALM Mediation, London

Within Calm mediation there are some volunteers trained by the police on mediation techniques. The “police will be selective in who they filter through onto the reconciliation programme and if they complete the programme they consider giving them a caution rather than putting them through the courts” (if they are over 18 and admit to the crime). This programme is not only thought to be effective, but it also provides a key example of the benefits to shared training between the police, probationary service and third sector.

Case from Merton, London

In Merton there is a thriving Third Sector. The Community Engagement Network (CEN) enables effective links between the grass roots and policy levels. If there are issues related to policy the CEN invites the local authority to the CEN and this works really well and gives the VCS the opportunity to contribute their views, for example, to Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs).

Case from Lancashire police

Within one borough of the Lancashire Police Force they have adopted a thematic hate crime partnership CDRP which provides some solutions to issues surrounding multi-agency partnerships. Within this system the police deliver hate crime training, they can provide direction to agencies working in the field whilst doing preventative work with perpetrators.

Workshop 2: A youth perspective on hate crime in London

Chetna Mavadia, member of youth advisory group (YAG), Department for Sustainable Development

Workshop 2 was led by a ROTA participant from the Youth Advisory Group (YAG) of the current project. An outline of the key findings and recommendations from the YAG report was provided to allow the workshop members to discuss how these and associated issues can be addressed and potential challenges in doing so. The discussion encroached upon the various actors that can play vital roles as part of any approach to tackle hate crime.

Overview of points discussed:

- Existing problems at a youth level
 - Role of authorities
 - Media
 - Accessing young people
 - Funding
 - Community Centres

Existing problems at a youth level

It was agreed that for RJ to move forward and be promoted as an alternative methodology outside of traditional approaches offered through the criminal justice system that this “should not be police led”, largely due to the levels of mistrust that youngsters hold in the police force. It was strongly argued that gang members and young people in general need a contact that can be thought of as approachable and the police at present do not provide this option. At the same time it is important that there are more activists who are prepared to go out to various areas that are ‘hotspots’ for hate crime like Thamesmead and communicate with youngsters and collect valuable information.

A number of members were vocal about the negative reports constantly in the media as this is thought to lead children to think we perceive them as criminals. Here it was agreed that there needs to be a complete overhaul in the way children are represented, with the aim not to criminalise them, but to work with them and promote success stories. It was thought that by empowering and supporting young people this may serve to break down balance of power which often leaves young people powerless. There certainly needs to be more involvement of young people – “forums for young people that involve young people”) as it is their voice that needs to be represented, although we must avoid tokenism.

A primary hurdle that must be overcome for many organisations that have a desire to work with young people is that of gaining access. It is often thought

that getting past the 'gatekeeper' (head teacher) can prove immensely complicated. Gaining access is not only crucial for information dissemination, but important as RJ has proven to work well in education – Lambeth being a prime example of this- and such practice needs to go wider. People that have expertise and experience on important issues pertinent to hate crime should be able to share their knowledge with young people and train teachers as one participant stated that “teachers are clueless” ...”who come across these issues do not know how to deal with them”.

Issues surrounding funding and the setting of realistic timeframes for newly set up projects is also considered to be important. It was felt that it is often the situation that an innovative project will be set up and will take some time to become established only for funding to be stopped limiting any positive impact. Therefore more realistic time frames need to be sought that will allow for good projects to prove their ability and when possible for its good practice to be replicated.

Furthermore, one participant voiced concern “about egos”, as certain organisations seem only to promote their agenda and organisation name. The participant referred to this as the 'I' syndrome when there are a number of organisations competing for a small pocket of money. It is important we move away from this as the focus should be on 'we' and how a group of actors can work cooperatively towards shared objectives. This issue was further developed as members advocated the multi-agency partnership as extremely useful for sharing tasks whilst also to ensure groups are not isolated in the work they are doing. Newham council was thought by one member to be a good example of agencies working together.

Community centres were thought to hold value in most areas for bringing different groups together. There is however a need to ensure that new developments and redevelopments incorporate some form of community feature within designs whilst there is also need to ensure that these centres are not dominated by single groups as some community centres can be faith based. Further, existing and established community centres need to have their work monitored as some members contend they do not advertise their services appropriately to the target audience.

Workshop 3: Addressing hate crime through restorative justice.

Luke Roberts, Lambeth Council Restorative Approaches Co-ordinator,
Lambeth Children and Young People's Service

This workshop engaged discussion on the value of using restorative justice as a means to address prejudice and hate crime in London. Best practice examples alongside recommendations were provided by Mr Roberts about RJ's ability to function in schools and amongst youth. The group focused on particular challenges to RJ's usage and made recommendations on various points that would need to be considered before any upscale in RJ.

Overview of point discussed:

- What is RJ?
- What is hate crime?
- Case Study 1: RJ and covert prejudices
- Case Study 2: RJ and its limitations
- Case Study 3: RJ and complex situations
- Challenges to RJ approach.

Subsequent to providing a brief account of the origins of RJ, Mr Roberts used the following definition to allow an understanding of RJ and its basic components as a concept and mechanism for reconciliation:

“Restorative Approaches is an ethos that places the value of relationships at the heart of resolving the conflict, this is a process that involves acknowledging thoughts and feelings, understanding, and learning to create harmony, in a fair and empathetic way”.

Emphasis was placed on how RJ can bring victims and offenders together to repair and encourage reconciliation, but also the importance of labels, both as a dehumanising tool for those harmed by Hate Crime. Thus, finding a common ground between all parties was seen as being essential for fostering empathy and building relations.

Case Study 1: RJ and covert prejudices

This scenario involved conflict between two young people that resulted in only one individual being arrested, this happened to be the young black youth and not the white youth. Evidently the parents of the black youth suspected covert racism in the way in which the situation was dealt with but proceeded to attend a meeting involving the police and the other young person and their family. An important aspect of this case is that it manages to draw attention to some of the ambiguities in particular situations where it may not be possible to distinguish clearly between the actual offender and the victim. The case-study highlights that participants may suspect underlying cause of conflict that relate to Hate Crime when no clear reason is evident. Therefore, the

challenge for restorative justice is to explore perceptions when dealing with covert prejudices that institutional responses may not be able to address.

Case Study 2: RJ and its limitations

Within this set of circumstances a parent with mental health issues has been excluded from a school for racially abusing an Indian-Caribbean care-taker, resulting in the care-taker wanting to quit his job due to consistent abuse. Though in this situation the care-taker has agreed to meet, the aforementioned dynamics of this case shine light on the potential limitations of RJ to function in certain environments where people will have different psychological needs. This raises important issues for restorative practitioners in developing adequate preparation and clarity of the process to ensure participants are fully able to understand and participate in restorative meetings.

Case study 3: RJ and complex situations

This case study involves a young lesbian Muslim who has been ostracised from social groups and has also experienced taunts in the classroom because of her sexuality. The case is further complex as the girl has not informed her parent about her sexuality as she fears their response. Once again this case study brings to light a very delicate situation where the involvement of certain parties, such as the parents, has to be given extreme thought. Age was thought to be crucial point in this case whilst the wishes of the child should also be significant. This raises the issue of drawing on a supportive community to support victims of Hate Crime, where this is not possible how restorative justice can be used, particularly if the victim wishes to go ahead with a meeting.

Challenges to RJ approach

Other potential areas where RJ may encounter difficulty were thought to involve domestic violence as it is not always possible to obtain a full understanding of the dynamics of family life and important background characteristics. On a different note, it was felt that by bringing family issues to the fore and bringing together people's beliefs this can unite a society. A fundamental challenge for RJ at all age levels is cooperating with individuals whose identity is based on violence and those involved in drugs as there is thought to be a mind frame that will not be accepting or mentally stable to fully appreciate what RJ has to offer. Final challenges involved issues of class amongst facilitators as whilst traveller communities were thought to pose a particular obstacle due to their transient nature.

Workshop 4: Hate Crime in London

Giulia Liberatore, Hate crime Policy Officer, ROTA

Within this workshop issues were brought under discussion with specific reference to hate crime in the context of London. Through drawing upon recommendations made in the report discussion gauged upon the causes and consequences of hate crime in London and its impacts on London's BAME community. Recommendations were also sought on the requirements for changes in policy and practice needed to address hate crime.

Overview of points discussed:

- Defining hate crime in London
- Problems with third party reporting
- Solutions to hate crime in London: Gaps in policy and practice

Defining hate crime in London

The group agreed that for the battle against hate crime to be won any definition needs to be a "holistic one that encompasses everyone". This would include and consider race, faith, sexual orientation, disability, those exposed to multiple discrimination because of multiple identities and those belonging to majority groups. The ACPO definition of hate crime was thought to offer a good point of departure:

"Any offence/incident committed against a person or property which is motivated, in whole or in part, by the offenders bias against a race, colour, religion, gender disability, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. It may also be where a person is targeted or selected because of their status, group characteristics or affiliation"

It was clear during discussion that many issues remain over the definition of hate crime and what should and should not constitute a hate crime. It was agreed that people who have been victimised or targeted because they belong to a certain group, or because they are perceived to match the identity and characteristics of a certain group that any incident against them should be given equal attention. It was felt that such characteristics and identities that can be used to differentiate people provide impetus for somebody to offend, this can be based on assumptions, ignorance, misunderstanding, reinforcement of negative stereotypes or even competition over resources.

Moreover, another area believed to require further clarity is the stage when a hate crime actual becomes a crime. Although it is accepted here that any prejudice should be tackled before it escalates to inimical levels, questions were raised as to whether hate crime should incorporate incidents that are not actually categorised as a crime. Whilst it was also thought that during any reporting of an incident that it may prove helpful to document whether the

incident resulted from the offenders own inner motivations or whether the incident was aggravated.

Problems with third party reporting

Although one workshop member provided an instance where the London transport police were able to prevent a Jewish boy from being repeatedly bullied on a bus, which was described as a success story, reservations were held due to the isolation of the victim subsequent to the incident and absence of any punishment that entails constructive ends - for the perpetrator(s).

Third party reporting was thought to bring with it a number of other problems, such as people not being aware that the process is anonymous which was thought to breed unnecessary levels of mistrust. Another member from a community organisation judged confusion over where to go to report an incident and the lack of awareness that an incident can be reported.

Solutions to hate crime in London: Gaps in Policy and Practice

When seeking solutions consensus was reached on the notion that “partnerships need to be continuously maintained whilst forging new networks of communication and cooperation”. There was thought to be a fundamental need to build positive relationships with the police whilst urging people to report incidents from the start - not only when they become serious crimes. This can be addressed to a great extent through partnership solutions between the Third Sector and statutory agencies. Another approach thought to enable progress would be a rethink of the “tick-box” reporting systems that are currently in place that may serve to “hinder the facilitation of recording incidents”. Suggestions were therefore made for an end to the 1-stop-shop rules operationalised by the government as this is thought to have a negative impact on people accessing services.

As identified in the main report for any system to work will require the police force to investigate hate crime incidents more consistently. There would also need to be flexible policies that can adapt to the rapidly changing and transient community in London as references to different races change regularly as increasingly more groups enter. Some members felt that local authorities need more autonomy and should be more pro-active at the grassroot level. Hate crime was thought to be a topic some local councils do not take seriously enough whilst they do not provide appropriate levels of support to the third sector who deal with it. This brought about the question of whether the local council should have so much responsibility when more autonomy and resources could be directed to third sector organisations.

Conference Evaluation

To assist with the evaluation of the conference it was requested that each delegate complete an evaluation form. The evaluation form asked for people's opinion on various aspects related to the overall running of the conference, with questions about the quality of speakers, the delegate packs, the content and quality of workshops, event organisation and opportunity to network. Presented below is an illustration from the feedback received whilst on page there is a detailed table of the delegate responses to the questions posed (37 delegates completed evaluation forms: BAME 3, other third sector 15 and other agencies 19).

How useful did you find the conference?

91% of respondents felt that the conference was either good or excellent. We were particularly pleased with this overall response rate but understand that improvements can be made in certain areas. One aspect a number of people believed to be crucial was that it was free of charge and did not therefore exclude vital organisations.

Networking:

83% of respondents rated the opportunity to network as being either good or excellent. Many people stressed how the conference provided real networking opportunities though it was felt that more time could have been allocated for this at certain periods during the day.

"I thought the conference was very informative and useful – didn't know that much about RJ before - feel better informed now"

"Great day, fabulous speakers, warm, welcoming atmosphere to what could have been a negative subject, thanks, well done"

"a much needed conference with opportunities for real networking – many thanks"

Speeches:

89% of respondents believed the content and range of speeches to be either good or excellent. It was encouraging that all the speeches were well received though a small number of people thought it may have been a better option to have had one less speaker to create more time for networking and workshops.

"the speakers were really inspirational, great to listen to colleagues who are passionate about what they do"

Event organisation, refreshments, venue and delegate pack

89% felt that the actual organisation of the event, taking into account the structure of the day, was either good or excellent. We are however concerned with the responses that we received from a significant number of delegates with reference to the refreshments and the layout of the venue.

“by having a slightly wider selection of food that was cooked properly”!

“Would have appreciated some interactive work (would have been seated in rows) before lunch to facilitate networking”

More specifically, only 47% of respondents felt that the food was either good or excellent as many people were unhappy with the quality and variety of food and snacks available with some people suggesting that a different venue should have been selected. Only 65% of respondents believed that the venue was either good or excellent which was largely due to the inconvenient layout of the centre which proved somewhat impractical when people were directed to the dining hall and to the workshops. Respondent’s feedback to the usefulness, content and clarity of the delegate pack was much more promising as 94% rated this as either good or excellent.

Workshops:

85% of respondents rated the usefulness of the conference as either good or excellent. We found this to be particularly positive as the workshops form an integral part to the conference and it can sometimes be difficult to balance the interests of different people and the organisations they represent equally between different groups. Once again the main criticism voiced against this part of the day was the limited amount of time delegates had to share their opinions. Notwithstanding, some delegates were concerned that groups were at times dominated by a small number of people and more could have been done by the facilitators to prompt dialogue from the people who may appear more reticent.

“May be more time given over to the workshops as I felt that just as the discussions got interesting the workshops ended”

“In terms of the workshop, more of the silent participants need to be encouraged to speak and the more vocal ones asked to allow others to participate”

Areas for improvement:

The major areas that will be offered greater consideration when organising future events is the amount of time allocated to networking, workshops and speeches. A concern that ran consistent through much of the feedback was that people would have appreciated more time to interact with other organisation members.

A small number of people were concerned that not enough attention was given to making the definitions of hate crime and restorative justice more clear, whilst others believed the overall utility of RJ could have been conveyed more fully. Though we take all feedback into consideration there is understandably a requirement to target as much of the audience as possible. This will evidently involve going over topics that will be more familiar to some members than others. One final remark was made with

“Was a bit concerned that the message given was that RJ is about restorative conferencing when it is about so much more”

“more positive example of youth crime prevention”

“definitions of terms should be made clearer”

reference to the under-representation of certain minority ethnic groups, such as newly arriving from Eastern European countries. Indeed, ROTA will endeavour to research in more depth organisations that can potentially attend future events with the aim to reflect better the population of London’s BAME community.

Moving forward: Action

ROTA has a particularly keen interest in the actions and decisions delegates intend to take in light of the information and networking opportunities that were available at the conference. From the feedback provided by delegates a list has been outlined below of the key areas delegates acknowledged they will take action to make change.

Campaigning and advocacy

Many delegates were certain they will disseminate the findings to other members to promote RJ as a mechanism for dealing with hate crime. Others felt the conference will act as a spring board for them to continue looking for innovative practices to combat racism whilst many thought the conference was crucial for keeping hate crime at the forefront of people’s minds. One member in particular stressed how he would utilise ROTA’s report with the objective of implementing RJ practices across the council for which he works.

“I intend to seek approval from my own organisation to explore the possibility (with partners) of expanding the use of RJ to deal with hate crime”

Networking

The intention of a number of delegates was to develop and reinforce partnerships with other organisations and bodies. Many delegates emphasised their desire to contact individuals, to network and forge links with established bodies and other third sector organisations that may prove effective for them to make progress.

“Forge links with some of the organisations/groups represented, share some of the themes from today’s presentations”

Using the findings

A significant number of delegates made reference to their intentions to apply the findings from the conference within their workplace or even to ensure that their daughter’s school are taking appropriate measures in terms of equality, RJ and racism. Other delegates stated that they will review policies in their place of employment whilst one other member said they would make attempts to build on the information they have acquired from the conference to re-examine their anti-bullying strategy and seek opportunities to involve Third Sector organisations.

“I will further research RJ/mediation and explore how it could be implemented in the case work I do”

In terms of taking this work forward and using the data that has hitherto be obtained, ROTA will now use the findings from the report and the feedback gained from the conference to continue meaningful work in this area. ROTA’s work will involve forging and sustaining multi-agency cross-sector partnerships within London that can work collaboratively to combat hate crime. In addition ROTA is currently evaluating the successes of its recent hate crime training with the intention for further training to be provided in the near future.

Conference Evaluation

How useful was the conference?

Not answered	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent	Total
4	0	3	20	10	37

Please rate how useful you found the following aspects of the day.

	No answer	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent	Total
Event organisation	2	0	5	25	5	37
Workshops	11	0	4	19	3	37
Delegate packs	2	0	2	27	6	37
Networking	2	0	6	23	6	37
Refreshments	1	3	16	12	5	37
Venue	0	1	12	19	5	37
Speeches	0	0	4	19	14	37

How would you rate the workshops?

Not answered	Poor	Adequate	Good	Excellent	Total
7	0	6	19	5	37

These figures have been calculated as a percentage of the total number of delegates who actually answered the question as being poor, adequate, good or excellent.

Acknowledgements

ROTA would like to express their gratitude towards all who participated on the day for sharing their views and contributing to the successes of the conference.

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Our appreciation is also forwarded to the keynote speakers, Bennett Obong, Elena Noel and George Mills for offering their time to provide helpful insight into their areas of expertise.

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Contact details for report

If you require any further information about the research that was undertaken or would like a copy of the full report please contact Anthony@rota.org.uk. Alternatively you can visit our website (rota.org.uk) where a full copy of the report can be downloaded.

Delegate List

Abdul Swaleh	Individual
Afiz Khan	Borough Intelligence Unit
Albert Mukendi	International Congolese Rights
Alexandria Burch	Independent Academic Research Studies
Amanda Little	London Development Agency
Aneta Holder-Veazy	Calm Mediation
Anita Compton	Greenwich Borough
Anna Packer	London Civic Forum
Aysha Esakji	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Aysha Esakji	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Belinda Hopkins	Transforming Conflict
Bhumika Patel	Youth Advisory Group, ROTA
Cally Lewis	RJ Essex YOT
caroline newton	London Borough of Lewisham
chetna mavadia	sustainable development commission
Chris Brill	Equality Challenge Unit
Clodagh O`Reilly-Boyles	Safer London Foundation
Damian Wilcock	Southwark Council
Daniel Marcus	Union of Jewish Students- Hillel
David Dalgleish	Croydon Council
David Thomason	Cheshire Constabulary
Dean Atta	Writer, Actor, Poet, Workshop Facilitator
	GREENWICH COUNCIL FOR RACIAL EQUALITY - RACIST ATT
DEV BARRAH	London Development Centre for Mental Health
Dorothy Kousoulou	London Councils
Doug Flight	Lewisham Youh Offending Team
Dylan Green	Chinese Information and Advice Centre
Edmond Yeo	Southwark Mediation Centre
Elena Noel	London Borough of Southwark
Eva Gomez	Camden Council
Faiza Chaudary	LVSC
Feride Baycan	Cambridge Education @ Islington
Finn Mackay	CALM
Fiona Shipley	London training and resource centre
Fiona Jamieson	Lemos&Crane
Francis Bacon	MHT
Francisca Ubogagu	Merton Racial Equality Partnership
Frank Anti	Holy Trinity Brompton
Grace Williamson	Restorative Justice Consortium
Harriet Bailey	Genesis PDAT Ltd
Harry James	City Parochial Foundation
Helal Abbas	Metropolitan Police
Helen Orros	Race Equality Partnership Kensington and Chelsea
Isis Amlak	PATH National ltd
Jack K	LASA
Jacky Moran	Restorative Solutions
Janet Clark	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Janice Fong	Cheshire Constabulary
Jez Taylor	Lancashire Constabulary
John Rigby	Victim Support
Judith Edwards	I Dared to Say No
Kadara Kursum	

Karen Skaith	Westminster City Council
Kate Lloyd	Civic Watch
Kaunchita Maudhub	London Borough of Enfield
Kaur Kiranpal	British Sikh Consultative Forum
Keith Stewart	Journeyman Training
Kelly Barber	Partnership for Young London
Ken Capewell	Lothian and Borders Police
Keyasue Smart	
Kjartan Sveinsson	Runnymede Trust
Laura Jack	Newham Council Hate Crime Team
Lewis Parle	Independent Academic Research Studies
Liz Dixon	London Probation Service
Lorraine Shaffer	Institute of Family Therapy
Lux Ndarajal	Bexley Council for Racial Equality
Malika Hamiddou	Community Interpreting, Translation and Access Ser
Marc Blanchette	Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit
MARK MILLAR	RESTORATIVE SOLUTIONS
Mark Pinchin	Church of Scientology
Mark Roe	Greater London Authority
Mary John-Baptiste	Greater London Authority
Maxine Edwards	Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit
Murad Qureshi	GLA
Nadia Crichlow	Parentalk
Nadine Bailey	London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
Nathan Winch	Greater London Authority
Neena Samota	Nacro
Omer Altaf	Bluebeat Police and Community Warden Centre
Paul Taylor	Victim Care Worker YOT
Peter Dunn	The Griffins Society
Phelicia Agugu	Southwark Stakeholders Forum
Rachel Griffin	Victim Support
Rizwan Sheikh	UNISON
Ryan Honeyman	Revolving Doors
Sandra Beeton	AOPM
Sanju Karthikeyan	Action for Blind People
Sarifa Patel	Parents for Inclusion
Satvinder Buttar	Hounslow Racial Equality Council
Shelley Perera	Metropolitan Police Service
Su Kingsley	Strad Consulting
Sue Sanders	Schools OUT LGBT History Month
Sujeevan Ponnampalam	Community Safety Unit- London Borough of Enfield
Suresh Grover	The Monitoring Group
Suresh Grover	The Monitoring Group
Susan Gregory	YOS SCF
Tarsem Singh	Sikh Welfare Research Trust
Tele Amuludun	Individual
Tim Brogden	London Voluntary Service Council
Vernon De Maynard	Individual
Yvonne Nugent	Hammersmith and Fulham BME
Yvonne Okiyo	London Borough of Lambeth

