



The Impact of the Economic Downturn on BAME Education Services

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Executive summary

The aim of this report is to present the interim findings of a mapping exercise that was carried out between July 2010 and February 2011 by MiNet. As London's only Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic third sector infrastructure network MiNet is engaged in a number of issues relating to regional policy development and London's BAME sector. MiNet currently works with its Advisory Group around BAME infrastructure, the recession and the Equality Act. As a result of the economic downturn, MiNet has been raising awareness of the increased difficulties faced by London's BAME third sector organisations and BAME population.

The report identifies areas where further research is needed into the effects of cuts on Black, Asian Minority Ethnic education services. It focuses on the work carried out by supplementary schools and other organisations whose work with BAME people is advisory and/or educational.

For BAME organisations working to supplement educational needs, a main concern is that funding cuts will have a particularly severe impact on the scope and type of provision they currently offer. Some specific effects are already being experienced by many of the voluntary sector organisations which were contacted for this report. Local Authorities also expressed concerns about the impact of cuts on BAME organisations, these have been hard to gauge except in general terms, although information and data provided by some authorities suggests that smaller, less well established voluntary sector organisations stand to lose the most. Furthermore, there are indications that in some Local Authorities BAME organisations will also be adversely affected by the cancellation of projects under the Building Schools for the Future programme.

Key findings

The findings are grouped under the following headings and discussed in terms of the main issues and strategies: cuts in funding; increased demand for services; issues around school attendance; concerns with accommodation and rent; where support is most needed. Also considered are the role of volunteers; entrepreneurial skills; some factors influencing funders. Other impacts of cuts in relation to BAME voluntary organisations are looked at with reference, where relevant, to the objectives of the Big Society.

CUTS IN FUNDING PUTS BAME ORGANISATIONS AT RISK OF REDUCTION IN SERVICES OR CLOSURE

- Small BAME organisations, or those which are less well established, have had to cease delivering services as they have not been able to absorb funding cuts of 25%.
- Older people with limited access to educational services, such as those attending Day Centres, are also thought to be vulnerable to cuts.
- In times of recession, less popular causes, such as work focusing on isolated groups, which may include children excluded from school or elderly people with cultural, social and educational needs that are difficult to meet, tend not to attract the same level of support from funders.
- Central government cuts in funding and reductions in grant allocations from local authorities have together resulted in BAME projects suffering cuts disproportionately.

AN INCREASING DEMAND FOR SERVICES UPON BAME ORGANISATIONS IS MARKED BY SIMULTANEOUS PRESSURE TO FOCUS ON THE MOST URGENT NEEDS

- Requests for specific types of help such as legal representation, advisory services, counselling and advocacy have increased from 2009/2010 to 2010/2011, with organisations voicing doubts that they may not be able to keep up with demand.
- Newly arrived communities have an urgent need to access education and language services, opportunities for which are reducing because of withdrawal of funding from ESOL.
- Increasing pressure to focus on crisis situations affects organisations' ability to offer more sustained support and preventative activities.

REQUESTS FOR HELP WITH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS, EXCLUSIONS AND APPEALS ARE GENERATING HEAVIER CASE LOADS AND A NEED FOR SPECIALIST ADVICE, WHICH IS STRETCHING LIMITED RESOURCES BEYOND CAPACITY

- In Central London, local authority cutbacks on advisory services are perceived as contributing to a rising number of requests for help with school admissions, exclusions and appeals which BAME organisations receive.
- A main issue for such organisations is the time taken to process applications. However, it is not the procedure alone which takes time, but the cases themselves, which need the attention of trained and experienced staff.

CONCERN ABOUT ACCOMMODATION AND RENT HIGHLIGHTS A LACK OF SUITABLE, AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY SPACE FOR DIVERSE EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

- Pressure to move premises outside the immediate community, either to expand in order to meet demand, or to cut costs, has a detrimental effect on retention of staff, volunteers and service users.
- Some supplementary schools which do not operate from mainstream school premises, or which need other accommodation because of increased rent or other reasons, have difficulty finding suitable space.
- Alternative space in community venues, that parents can afford, is a major problem for supplementary schools.
- Increased costs for training activities, such as the hire of venue, facilities and catering result in services being restricted to fewer events or even withdrawn all together.
- Although organisations may consider sharing resources, sharing space is not always appropriate due to the nature of their work, e.g. with vulnerable young or elderly people.

THE ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

- The impact of cuts on BAME organisations can be seen most keenly in relation to their ability to maintain or expand a workforce.
- Volunteers make a valuable contribution to the work of organisations but cannot be expected to replace skilled or qualified professionals.

- Training volunteers to expand their expertise in order to meet requests from those most in need of help, such as newly arrived and refugee communities, requires adequate, sustained funding.
- Some costs to cover expenses for activities supported by volunteers, such as Saturday schools, tutoring, advice sessions or counselling services may be found through applying, or raising fees, but the people most in need of help are precisely those least able to pay.
- There are legal and ethical issues around the expectations placed on volunteers, for example, those working with children and vulnerable adults, for whom CRB checks are required, or for volunteer mentors.
- Rules and regulations about what volunteers can reasonably be expected to do are inconsistent and standards can be difficult to enforce.

WHERE SUPPORT IS MOST NEEDED

- Where organisations have to focus on the most urgent cases, work they do which adds value in terms of social cohesion is likely to diminish - if not immediately, then over time.
- There is particular concern about continuity of provision, especially where knowledge and expertise has been built up.
- Organisations look for support in recognition of the work they do which mainstream education would otherwise have difficulty providing, such as additional language classes, helping to raise BAME school attainment levels and strengthening home-school links.
- Activities needing ongoing support include parental engagement, support for older children and teenagers, family counselling and advice services, e.g. for excluded pupils.
- Organisations need acknowledgement of their wider, societal role with newly arrived communities, young people with social and welfare issues, and those at risk of isolation.

DEVELOPING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS

- Sometimes a lack of skills - or a lack of confidence in promoting or articulating the skills on offer - jeopardises the chances of organisations making a case for funding.

- Becoming a Social Enterprise is not always relevant or appropriate unless there is good quality guidance and advice on what the process involves.
- Businesses should be explicit about their criteria for funding and their expectations of what they require from voluntary sector organisations.
- Local Authorities keen to develop global business partnerships might engage more with organisations such as Supplementary Schools, which have global links and which work with local communities.

FACTORS INFLUENCING FUNDERS

- In times of recession, potential funders may favour projects with a wider, more popular appeal.
- Attitudes and prejudices about less popular causes persist, and may be exacerbated.
- Organisations which have been successful in overcoming barriers can help by disseminating their experiences to others through networks such as BAME forums.

Introduction: background and context

Research reports indicate an awareness of a growing demand on the schools sector, e.g. in terms of rising applications, combined with the simultaneous reduction in funding for the forthcoming year (2011-2012) in some specific programmes. Since the Coalition Government took up office in May 2010, a number of changes in education policy have been introduced, with implications for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and organisations providing educational services. These include the curtailment of the Building Schools for the Future programme (2010), the lack of emphasis on race equality obligations in the Schools White Paper (2010) and the scaling back of the ESOL programme (2010). Alongside these changes are concerns that since the Spending Review was announced in October 2010, some local authorities have not conducted Equality Impact Assessments sufficiently prior to making cuts and that the effect of cuts on BAME voluntary sector organisations has been felt disproportionately compared with other voluntary organisations.

Put together, these changes indicate an unsettled time for BAME organisations and the communities they serve and form the basis for MiNet's ongoing exploration into the impact of cuts on education services. Where relevant, reference is also made to the Government's Big Society programme in relation to what is expected of local communities and the volunteer force and the type of support available for voluntary activity.

Looking first at Building Schools for the Future, in July 2010, BSF (initiated 2005) was scaled back by the Coalition Government¹. An equality impact assessment exercise, carried out in 2010 by the Department for Education on 657 schools whose projects were halted, found that the stoppage had:

‘inadvertently impacted slightly more on children who can be seen to be disadvantaged in terms of social deprivation, and as having English as an additional language compared to national averages; and also as having slightly higher rates of minority ethnic pupils and on learners with Special Educational Needs compared to national averages’ (DfE, 2010).

Turning to the Government's Schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching (December 2010), although attainment gaps and educational disadvantage are addressed, there is an apparent lack of emphasis on race equality and the duties of schools in relation to the Equality Act 2010. A specific area of concern identified by ROTA (2010) is with the role of

¹ Following a High Court decision in February 2011 that Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, had been unlawful in his failure to consult six councils prior to making cuts to BSF projects, there are indications that a number of projects, initially cancelled, will be subject to review.

voluntary and community sector organisations which provide alternative provision to pupils not in mainstream education:

‘While we believe emphasis should be placed on non-exclusion and making mainstream education as accessible as possible, we believe that where the only option is for pupils to be educated through alternative provision, it would be beneficial to have BAME VCS organisations with specialist expertise relevant to those who have been excluded positioned to provide alternative provision’ (ROTA, 2010).

For BAME organisations, especially smaller ones, a main concern is that they will be particularly hard hit. Recent surveys and data on the impact of cuts upon BAME communities, including the report of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission *How Fair is Britain?*, have served to reinforce this view (EHRC, 2010).

The London Councils Race and Equality and EMA Good Practice Network, in considering the White Paper also comment on the lack of any equalities dimension for BAME learners of English as an additional language (EAL) at a time when, London-wide, Ethnic Minority Advisory services are being severely cut back, without any apparent Equality Impact Assessments of this area. A representative of COMPACT, speaking at a conference for BAME VCS organisations in February 2011 cautioned that local authorities ought to make sure that they do their Impact Assessments thoroughly, or risk being subject to legal challenge². A concern is that some EIAs are of poor quality and are not being carried out with the seriousness demanded by the law.

In post-16 and adult learning, a concern shared by Supplementary Schools and voluntary organisations providing adult training focuses on withdrawal of funding for English as an additional/ second language (EAL/ESOL). In 2008, the London Skills and Employment Board noted that universal fee remission no longer applies to a broad category of people, including those with ESOL needs who have jobs, ‘which include many EU migrants [who] can no longer access free provision’ (LSEB, 2008). In 2010-2011, withdrawal of funding from ESOL at levels 1-3 in the National Qualification Framework is thought likely to affect many BAME learners’ training opportunities. In essence, access to a range of vocational courses requires evidence of English language competence at Level 3. Current arrangements state that:

‘ESOL provision does not attract automatic fee remission at any level. Learners will be expected to pay the assumed fee (50 per cent of the unweighted national funding rate in 2010/11) unless they are eligible for fee remission’ (BIS, 2010).

The Institute for Race Relations notes that from September 2011, central funding for ESOL may no longer be available for vulnerable groups:

² Croydon Up to Speed Conference, February 2011

‘People seeking asylum or so-called failed asylum seekers who have signed up for Section 4 support will be excluded from any kind of publicly funded language education. The position of migrant workers or the spouses of people temporarily settled in the UK remains unclear. Cuts in core funding and the Programme Weighting Factor (PWF)³ are likely to result in rising charges for language classes’ (IRR, 2010).

Doubts have been expressed by voluntary organisations providing adult skills and training for BAME learners that few local authorities will be prepared to help with the costs of ESOL provision and that for individual learners, fees may be prohibitive.

To verify whether or not this will turn out to be the case, e.g. through data collected by local authorities, is outside the remit of this mapping exercise, but merits further exploration, through looking at Pathfinders for example. Since 2009, under the New Approach to ESOL initiative, and with a heavy emphasis on local provision, a number of local authorities have been designated ‘Pathfinders’ with a remit to ‘identify the most vulnerable people in their neighbourhood who need to improve their English skills’. In London, these authorities are Camden, Ealing, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth and Westminster.

Patterns of education funding, and where cuts may fall, vary across local authorities. The question of whether BAME organisations might be disproportionately affected cannot be established easily, partly because data provided by some local authorities on grant awards to individual organisations may not necessarily distinguish whether the organisations work predominantly with BAME communities. One local authority Voluntary Sector Manager explained the problem thus:

‘We expect our funded organisations to support all our community, including those from BME communities. For example, a (named) organisation has a 70% incidence of supporting organisations from the BME communities, although it would not be categorised as a BME organisation’ (Borough F).

Early indications from some of the boroughs contacted suggest that across the sector, the expected impact of cuts is likely to be felt less keenly at the ‘early years’ end of the spectrum and more acutely with middle years, youth and adult education. However, in other local authority areas, such as Sutton, early years funding, including play development, has been the hardest hit, with many play development managers having been made redundant.

An example of possible implications for BAME organisations working mainly with older children and young adults, from a local authority where cuts in services had already started to happen, was given by a Commissioner of Children’s and Young People’s services, summarised here:

³ The PWF is a funding multiplier used to reflect the real costs of provision.

From 2010- 2011, all funding streams had been affected by cuts, albeit at different levels. A shift in funding patterns meant that organisations with an early years/pre-school focus would be prioritised. Organisations working across sectors were given renewed contracts for the work they did with early years, but not for the work with middle years and youth. Other organisations, which only work with middle years and youth, except for one, have all had their funding cut and/or contracts discontinued. None of the BAME-focused organisations work with early years. These organisations were alerted to the need to look to alternative funding sources (Borough B).

The Director of Children's Services in another local authority referred to a more widespread impact of cuts in relation to training and employment. In summary:

Reducing the number of teaching assistants would adversely affect educational opportunities for young women from the Bangladeshi community who are sometimes restricted in their opportunity to learn beyond school, especially for those with children. Some find work as primary school teaching assistants, which enables them to extend their horizons, e.g. through training and professional development. If teaching assistants are cut back, this particular group will be adversely affected (Borough C).

A loss of a sizeable number of bi-lingual teaching assistants would, if it took place, more than likely affect not just the workforce but pupils' attainment and warrants further dialogue, e.g. with schools most affected.

Regarding the overall impact of cuts across London, a local government expert speaking at a MiNet seminar on Children and Young People (March 2011) estimated that the deepest reductions in the share of overall public expenditure measures are likely to have the greatest impact on inner London boroughs, which are most dependent on grant from Central Government.

This was reflected in the experience of a Voluntary Sector Partnership Manager in an outer London borough, who reported that:

No first-tier services had been cut, but around fifteen second-tier organisations had been subject to funding cuts, with the highest cut around 13%. Funding allocated to a youth partnership was due to end in March 2011, but had been flagged for re-commissioning under Children's Services - although the outcome had not yet been decided. Borough D was thought by the Manager to be unusual in that it was not looking to make any significant cuts to voluntary organisations, including BAME organisations across any sectors.

The apparent lack of emphasis on race equality in the White Paper, the lack of ESOL provision, the apprehension that EIAs are not being conducted thoroughly and the perception that BAME organisations are being disproportionately affected by cuts, are themes which recur throughout this report. In summary, the following need to be

addressed: arrangements made by local authorities for carrying out EIAs and whether the information is easily available; information on the provision of ESOL and its operation at a local level; a clearer breakdown of information on grant awards to help distinguish BAME organisations.

Some suggestions for carrying out future work in these areas are offered in Recommendations for further research (page 36).

Aims and objectives

This mapping exercise aims to gather information about the effects of cuts in funding on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in the London area, in respect of education services provided by voluntary sector organisations. The exercise also aims to gather information about the pressures upon Local Authorities in respect of Childrens Services and Grants to the Voluntary Sector. The main objectives are:

- to make recommendations addressing concerns expressed by BAME organisations facing cuts to services
- to make recommendations which help to identify some specific steps which organisations can take to mitigate the effects of cuts
- to consider some possible determinants of successful funding applications

Methods

The information was gathered through desk research and fieldwork.

Telephone and face-to-face interviews were carried out with eight BAME organisations working in an educational capacity⁴, seven of which work with children and families and one which works with older people. A semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather information under broad headings of enquiry. The data from the interviews was analysed thematically, under the headings used in the interview schedules. As a follow up to this activity, a small number of illustrative case studies were carried out.

In conjunction with the interviews, 33 London Local Authorities were emailed questions relating to the anticipated extent and impact of education funding cuts on BAME organisations and future strategies. Thirteen responded, of whom six provided information and two agreed to telephone interviews.

During the course of this mapping exercise, information was regularly sought from BAME networks and forums across London focusing on how groups serving BAME communities perceive obstacles to funding and strategies to help maximise opportunities in a climate of cuts.

Additional insights into some of the challenges and opportunities facing supplementary schools were also gathered at ROTA's Conference on Educational Reforms on 28th February 2011. Feedback on the interim findings on the main issues for BAME voluntary sector

organisations affected by spending cuts was obtained at a seminar, Making the Case for London's Children and Young People (MiNet March 16th 2011).

Main findings

The findings are grouped under the following headings and discussed in terms of the main issues and strategies: cuts in funding; increased demand for services; issues around school admissions and application processes, e.g. for a range of services including supplementary classes, family counselling and advice/information; concerns with accommodation and rent; where support is most needed.

Other issues reported here that emerged from interviews and consultations, focus on the role of volunteers, entrepreneurial skills and finding out what influences funders. Some determinants of successful funding applications are considered. The final section presents recommendations and highlights areas for further research.

1. Cuts in funding

BAME organisations acting on their own, or those which are less well-established, may struggle to engage with enterprise. The expectation of Government, that when public funds are withdrawn the private sector will step in, is not supported by the experience of voluntary organisations who have already approached businesses. Larger, well-established organisations are not only better placed to survive a recession, but they have more expertise and contacts. The situation was summed up in the observations of a supplementary schools Co-ordinator:

Not all supplementary schools will experience the same degree of difficulty. For example, Chinese and Russian schools [in the local authority area] are well established and run by skilled and qualified people who can provide high quality services and can advise others. Less well-established schools may need to think of collaborative ways of working, e.g. building partnerships, diversifying their activities to bring economies of scale, coming up with distinctive and innovative ideas and even considering merging with each other, to share resources, premises, teachers and so forth, which can significantly reduce overheads and costs (Organisation M).

This view was similarly expressed by a Local Authority commissioner of childrens and young people's services (in Borough B) who doubted that smaller organisations, particularly those which run supplementary schools for specific communities, would be able to find funding.

'[Smaller organisations] will lose out precisely for the reason that they are so small and focused on specific communities. Future contracts will be larger and will go to bigger providers or groupings' (Borough B).

An organisation working with an Ethiopian refugee community which had experienced a loss of £10,000 per annum Local Authority funding, amounting to a 25% cut in funding overall reported having applied to alternative sources of funding, so far without success. It was felt by the volunteers running the supplementary school that difficulties had been exacerbated because the transition period between receiving notice of grant loss was too short to make effective arrangements (Organisation N).

Similar difficulties were voiced by people interviewed in other organisations. A cautionary note about building partnerships with private enterprise was expressed by one interviewee with regard to an added difficulty in having to overcome negative attitudes from businesses about funding BAME projects, particularly in a climate of recession (Organisation K).

This is further discussed in the section on articulating and promoting the work of BAME voluntary sector organisations.

In some local authorities, such as Croydon, initiatives to help BAME organisations gain these skills and link up with potential business partners who can offer support, is more developed than in others.

It should be mentioned though, that not all business link-ups succeed. The reasons for failure may be related to unclear objectives or misunderstandings of expectations on both sides. It appears that in some instances, there is a very limited understanding of the role and remit of BAME voluntary organisations. This reinforces the case for organisations to demonstrate and explain what they do and what they can offer to potential partners. Passing references have been made by BAME organisations, e.g. in Tower Hamlets and Redbridge, to successful and less successful business link ventures. Although this mapping exercise did not set out to explore the issue specifically, it would be worth taking a further look at some aspects of business link-ups such as the understanding and expectations of what is required, both from the point of view of voluntary organisations and from private sector partners.

Who to approach and how to put applications together to maximise chances of funding have been discussed within BAME networks, which suggests that although identifying the right funding bodies is important, funders themselves should provide better information on who or what they fund.⁵ A related difficulty is finding people willing to advise organisations on putting in applications. Organisation N reported that:

‘Regarding training, people are needed to act as advisors on funding applications. We have tried to get people on the basis that they will be paid a fee if the application is successful, but not many people want to work on that basis. Our volunteers are

⁵ BAME Forum, August 2010

invited to training courses, but many are not directly relevant to the needs of supplementary schools (Organisation N).

The position adopted by businesses, and in some cases, by local authorities, towards supporting BAME organisations was discussed in interviews. The view that some projects or causes are more 'attractive' to fund than others was voiced by some of the organisations whom we interviewed. However, this is difficult to substantiate without both sides of the picture, which was outside the scope of the exercise at the time interviews were conducted.

One of the problems, outlined by ROTA, is that, from a second-tier organisation and funder's point of view, many organisations fail to convince that money would be well spent. Another obstacle for funders is that opportunities are presented, but not responded to, indicating that organisations need to become less focused on cuts and more solution-oriented. Second tier organisations can be encouraged to provide better leadership and narrative of what is required, but at the same time, organisations seeking funding must be more responsive and adaptable. There is a need to establish whether the perception that some causes or projects are 'unpopular' with funders can be justified or whether there are other factors which influence choice. This could be explored with organisations and businesses which support voluntary sector organisations.

Another related, but more contentious issue to be explored through contact with funders, is that not all BAME sector organisations' work, or that of mainstream VCS sector, is of good quality. In some respects, cuts might be seen as a mechanism – or excuse - to weed out the least good. The risk is that over-zealous cuts may equate 'small' with 'not very good' and dispense with some of the smallest organisations, or those working with the most marginalised groups, without regard to the quality of the service provided.

It becomes even more important for BAME organisations doing good quality work, such as those whom we interviewed, to be able to evidence the impact of what they do. Although some organisations can, and do demonstrate the value of their work, others find it increasingly difficult to carry out regular and thorough evaluations of the sort which funders request. Where organisations are failing to meet – or to provide sufficient evidence – of high standard work, they should be helped to improve their practice and/or systems of accountability or else risk losing their funding. Second-tier organisations have a duty to make this explicit.

It was thought that for young people, those perceived as the most 'challenging', e.g. children excluded from school, those at risk of, or involved in criminal or anti-social activity or developing behaviours, e.g. drug and alcohol abuse, which may result in increased exposure to such activity, may receive less help in terms of representation/advocacy and counselling because of a lack of enthusiasm amongst certain funders for this kind of work. In the organisations we interviewed, there was a reluctance to identify funders by name, but it

appeared to encompass variously, statutory bodies and private sector businesses who had been approached for support. Organisations providing these services report being the 'least popular' in terms of funding (Organisation H). Those who work with newly-arrived communities, e.g. refugee groups, have concerns that educational and support work with particularly vulnerable young people will be curtailed (Organisation L, Organisation N).

This is backed up by recent evidence from the Refugee Council (October 2010) which has identified budget cuts of up to 40% for some organisations in London⁶. One supplementary school contacted which has worked predominantly with refugee families for over ten years, reported having to close all its Saturday classes in January 2011 as a direct result of funding cuts (Organisation N).

Although not within the remit of this mapping exercise, it would be useful to look at statistics from the Refugee Council and other organisations collecting data of this kind, alongside comparable statistics for the mainstream sector, which might help to reveal whether there is disproportionality and inequality in terms of where the cuts fall.

For older people from BAME communities, educational activities and courses are not necessarily culturally sensitive, or geared to needs, an aspect which has been considered within BAME network forums. An organisation interviewed thought that older people are vulnerable to losing local authority funding for social, educational or recreational needs, e.g. at Day Centres, on the basis that 'separate provision is not required'. In some Local Authorities, this perception has been reinforced.

The notion that older people can be accommodated elsewhere is not borne out by any persuasive evidence that this strategy works. In some cases where it has been tried, e.g. with elderly people from African Caribbean communities, it has been counter-productive. (Organisation K). A specific example was given by a Day Centre manager: elderly members of a predominantly African Caribbean centre had taken part in a joint activity with another local centre (with a mainly white membership) whose members expressed open resistance to socialising with black people. The Manager saw the problem of funding cuts affecting BAME communities within a wider context of ingrained racism:

'The reality of many people's lives is that not only do they face considerable financial problems, but they continue to encounter prejudice and discrimination... the state of race relations in Britain today is still poor' (Organisation K).

Tackling issues of racism in the older community has elicited BAME network forum responses focusing on strategies to encourage more educational outreach work. However, where educational projects are being cut back, it appears unlikely that additional outreach

⁶ 40% of Action for Refugees in Lewisham's supplementary schools budget is considered to be under threat. The French African Welfare Association in SE London has lost an after-school homework class due to staff cuts.

activity will be taken forward in any significant way. The problem still remains that in a recession, any strategy to help BAME communities deal with cuts in funding may need to recognise that prejudice itself is peculiarly recession-proof.

Although at the time of gathering information, details of the Spending Review had not been released to many organisations, Local Authorities were asked if they could estimate where budget cuts were most likely to fall (in respect of education services and the voluntary sector). There are some early indications, which require further exploration, that voluntary sector BAME organisations at both ends of the age spectrum are likely to be disproportionately affected.

Regarding children and young people's services, a number of Local Authorities drew attention to the effect of the new Pupil Premium funding mechanism on children from BAME backgrounds. From 2011, specific funding allocated to Local Authorities for raising BAME achievement will be replaced by the Pupil Premium. This will go directly to schools and will be attached to individual pupils assessed as being under-achieving. The Director of Children's Services in one local authority was concerned that this may create anomalies with some groups of children. To summarise:

In the Local Authority in question, Bangladeshi pupils comprise two-thirds of the school population. Such pupils now have relatively good levels of attainment compared with pupils of white UK background. If they are no longer regarded as under-achieving, there may be an argument that funds previously targeted at this group should be re-designated. The issue is that school achievement is not in itself a sole measure of disadvantage – Bangladeshi pupils are good school achievers, but frequently come from impoverished backgrounds and are sometimes limited in their opportunities to extend learning beyond school. The question depends on how the Pupil Premium is to be calculated and whether it will take into account factors other than school records, e.g. health, housing or other indicators of deprivation, such as unemployment (Borough C).

In Borough B, it was thought that the Pupil Premium would result in some 'broader support around learning' with after-school provision, clubs and so forth taking place in mainstream schools, but the 'voluntary organisations which had, in the past, provided this sort of service had now been told they would have to look elsewhere' (Borough B). As the Pupil Premium is rolled out, it will be important to continue monitoring impacts on organisations, as well as monitoring commitment to ring-fencing to ensure that it reaches the most disadvantaged pupils remains.

2. Increasing demand for services

Two main issues emerged: one, that requests for specific types of help have increased in the past year, with organisations struggling to keep up with demand; secondly, that newly

arrived communities have an urgent need for services, which they cannot immediately access. This is linked to a concern that funding priorities may inevitably change.

Along with concerns about the effects of the Pupil Premium, another educational reform resulting in a change in funding is the likely removal of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (ROTA, 2010). EMAG, previously administered under a separate funding stream, will henceforth be included in the main schools budget, with local authorities responsible for decisions on allocations, giving rise to concerns that in some areas it may reduce or diminish altogether. There is a strong case for continuing to monitor the impact of these educational reforms upon BAME organisations and the communities they serve. This was made clear from the examples provided to us from individuals interviewed and further reinforced by emerging evidence from a report by Children & Young People Together and Children England (2010).

There has been a noticeable increase in requests for help with legal representation, advisory services and counselling. Demand for advocacy services (for excluded children and their families) is estimated to have increased by as much as 20% in one organisation (Organisation H) and the role of other organisations (Organisation F, Organisation L) has expanded considerably from educational and cultural activities to counselling and advisory sessions, which, in the case of one group, (Organisation L) now have to be arranged on an appointments-only basis. The reasons for this expansion may be attributed to a number of factors which cannot easily be separated out, including cuts in funding to services which previously offered counselling and advice, more referrals from outside the area or a combination of these, and other changes. Children & Young People Together acknowledges that as statutory services reduce or close, demand may well shift to voluntary sector organisations, which, at a time of diminishing funding opportunities, could place heavy burdens on such organisations (Children England, 2010).

Where BAME organisations can demonstrate an increase in demand, e.g. through a user database or routine collection of statistics, this is an additional tool in making the case for support. It would also enable comparisons with other BAME organisations and with generic VCS organisations. However, it should be noted that some of the smallest organisations we interviewed pointed out that the requirement to collect, analyse, monitor and present statistical and other data, e.g. for grant applications and other purposes, took up a greater proportion of their time than it did for larger, or longer established groups. Smaller or emerging BAME organisations need better support for this type of activity, which at present is very limited. There appear to be few training providers, consultants or advisors able to offer their services free or at a low cost. In local authorities where it is known that business training help has been set up, lengthening waiting lists and short sessions are reported.

Refugees, asylum seekers and others from war zones (Afghanistan, and Somalia were specifically mentioned) are in serious need of support, e.g. accessing education, welfare and

legal services. An organisation working with first and second generation refugee families referred to the need for longer-term, ongoing support. (Organisation N). One of the problems facing such communities is that before they can access funds, e.g. to help set up supplementary schools, they have to have been established, with full accounts kept, for at least twelve months (Organisation M). This may result in funds being diverted away from some organisations, to meet the more visible or pressing needs of others (Organisation K).

In local authorities, there are undoubted tensions about meeting increasing demand on services from communities whose resources are thinly stretched. The Director of Childrens Services in one London borough (Borough A) indicated that requests were going up for early years support for Black and African families earning relatively low salaries, who were the main users of childcare services. If the authority were to increase childcare fees, this would become a problem for many such families.

It is of concern that in some other local authorities, the elderly population may find it more difficult to access social, cultural and educational activities and that some day centre services may close⁷.

3. School attendance: admissions, exclusions and appeals

There were two main areas of concern to BAME organisations: admissions and how to help families appeal against decisions where applications have been unsuccessful; exclusions from school and how to support families whose children are at risk of, or who have been, excluded. A third issue touched upon was voluntary withdrawal/non-attendance at school.

In respect of school admissions, children and young people from newly-arrived communities including refugees may not initially find a school place, and are at risk of missing out on schooling whilst waiting for admission. Research carried out by the Refugee Council suggests that refugee children often end up in Pupil Referral Units for extended periods of time whilst waiting for a place. Overall, it is thought that 'the use of PRUs as an alternative source of education is not appropriate' (Refugee Council, 2011). School admissions and the pressure for school places in London is reported to be greater than in the rest of the country. Data collected by London Councils in September 2010 predicted an increase in pupil numbers in London of 13% between 2009/10 and 2014/15 compared to 4% in the rest of England (London Councils, 2010).

With a rising demand for places, there is an attendant increase in admission appeals, giving rise to increased pressures on organisations which provide help and advice. Figures 1 and 2

⁷ Regarding education services for elderly people, at the time of writing this report, responses from local authorities were incomplete.

show the total number of appeals and the success rate against decisions for primary school admissions and secondary school admissions for England and for London.⁸

Figure 1: Appeals by parents against non-admission to local authority maintained Primary schools. 2008/2009

	Primary School Admissions	Appeals	Success rate
England	823,420	38,080	25%
London	130,440	6,030	10.9%

Source: Department for Education Statistical First Release. Admission Appeals for Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools in England 2008/2009.

Figure 2: Appeals by parents against non-admission to local authority maintained Secondary schools. 2008/2009.

	Secondary School Admissions	Appeals	Success rate
England	644,390	50,200	33%
London	86,310	8,280	15.2%

Source: Department for Education Statistical First Release. Admission Appeals for Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools in England 2008/2009.

It was clear that the BAME organisations interviewed partly attributed the rising number of requests for help with school admissions, exclusions and appeals, to some local authorities cutting back on advisory services. This was borne out by one Local Authority Children and Community services officer to whom we spoke, who outlined some specific difficulties. To summarise:

Many families coming to the borough (Borough E) are not fluent in English and need help finding their way round the school admissions system. This was provided by a Choice Adviser, who ran surgeries in three venues throughout the borough, whose

⁸ Telephone information from the DfE on 03/02/2010 indicated that a more detailed breakdown of data at individual level is not available. Figures on success rates of appeal for BAME people may, however, be obtainable from some local authorities.

post has since been cut. In the interim, families are provided with the admissions guidelines booklet, but they need extra support.

This need for extra support was alluded to by voluntary sector organisations and supplementary schools, some of whom endeavour to provide help, e.g. with language, or with appealing against decisions. Lacking fluency in English is a major barrier to parents navigating the school system and to their and their children's social and educational development. The role of smaller organisations offering help with language and advice on the school admissions and appeals system should be acknowledged and resources made available, a view substantiated by recent research studies on BAME choice in education, such as those conducted by the Runnymede Trust on educational disadvantage, and Action for Social Integration (2010).

There were also concerns from Local Authorities that a reduction in grant funding for mainstream provision would put greater pressure upon Supplementary Schools. An example was given:

For children without places, some mainstream provision, e.g. additional English classes, was available within the local authority, at KS3 and KS4, but grant funding has now ceased. The LA officer thought that in future, schools would be asked to make their own local provision but there would be 'nobody left who has an overview of needs' (Borough E). In such circumstances, families may look to organisations including Supplementary Schools, for help and advice.

Turning to the rising number of requests for help received by BAME organisations, the main issue is the time taken to process applications - whether it is requests for help navigating the school system, admissions to supplementary classes, help with appeals against exclusion or appointments for counselling and advisory sessions. The organisations interviewed kept records from which patterns and nature of request could be summarised or estimated – albeit at different levels of detail.

Given the increasing importance for organisations to be able to demonstrate rising levels of service use, future work evaluating demand is needed, particularly with smaller organisations which may be most vulnerable to cuts in funding.

There is a separate, but related issue about evaluation of quality of service which was not within the remit of this mapping exercise but which should also be addressed, not least because poor accountability mechanisms may result in funding being discontinued. The organisation ContinYou is developing internationally recognised standards for community schools.

It was reported by the organisations interviewed that often it is not the 'application' as such which takes time, but the cases themselves which need the attention of trained and

experienced staff. Organisations reported that staff now dealt with more cases, and/or cases which had become more complex. Data collected on school exclusions, broken down by ethnic group, shows a clear differentiation on exclusion rates:

For the period 2007/2008, the rate of permanent exclusion was highest for Gypsy/Roma (0.56 per cent of the school population), Traveller of Irish Heritage (0.53 per cent of the school population), and Black Caribbean (0.36 per cent) ethnic groups. Black Caribbean pupils are 3 times more likely to be permanently excluded than the school population as a whole.

The rate of fixed period exclusion was highest for Gypsy/Roma (18.71 per cent of the school population), Traveller of Irish Heritage (16.65 per cent) and Black Caribbean (11.06 per cent) ethnic groups.

Black Caribbean pupils are nearly twice as likely to receive a fixed period exclusion as the school population as a whole.

Caution is recommended in interpreting the data for Traveller of Irish Heritage children and Gypsy/Roma children due to potential under-reporting for these ethnic classifications.

Source: DCSF, 2009. Statistical First Release

The most frequent reasons for school exclusions are given for primary/secondary/special educational needs, but not broken down by gender or ethnic group. Although not within the scope of this mapping exercise, an analysis of the reasons given for exclusion, for the purpose of comparing groups, would be useful.

It has been noted by ROTA that educational reforms in the Schools White Paper include measures to remove authority from independent exclusion appeals panels to reinstate pupils whom they identify as having been unfairly excluded. There is a further expectation that the reforms, unless adequately risk-managed, will lead to increases in exclusions, which could, in turn, impact on requests for support from BAME organisations (ROTA, 2011).

ROTA has recommended that future work in this area should include an overview, from available statistical data, in increases in requests for support with exclusions received by BAME organisations.

For organisations facing funding cuts, which may result in them having to reduce the number of staff, or staff hours, the pressure of work becomes considerable. This is reflected in the examples below:

A co-ordinator of supplementary schools reported that the application process was becoming more competitive and more time consuming overall (Organisation M). Organisations which deal with specific cases such as appeals against exclusion, or which offer one-to-one or family counselling and/or advice sessions report both a

rise in the number of cases and an increase in the amount of time they spend in the associated paperwork and processing.

A support group leader (Organisation L) commented that administration and writing up of case notes had to be kept up to date. This is not something which volunteers can do, although other organisations rely frequently on volunteers to assist with office work, reception, computer technology and other areas (Organisation K).

An organisation dealing with excluded young people reported that caseloads had risen to 700 per year, up by 10-15% from previous years, and that the majority of appeals were with young Black learners (Organisation H).

4. Concerns about accommodation and rent

Supplementary schools have concerns about accommodation and rent, not least because they have to provide a suitable environment for young people. If they move out of local authority premises because of increased charges, finding alternatives in community venues, that parents can afford, is a major problem. Moving premises can have a detrimental effect on accessibility and retention of staff, volunteers and service users.

Two supplementary schools interviewed pointed out that families experiencing extreme financial hardship will not be able to pay for things previously provided free of charge, e.g. a hot meal for children attending supplementary schools, or transport if classes move outside the local area (Organisation J, Organisation F).

One organisation contacted had been particularly hard hit in that not only had they closed their Saturday school, which had operated from rented premises, but they had lost their office as well. Administrative tasks, volunteer training and other activities were now being run on an ad-hoc basis, posing particular difficulties for parents and others wanting to contact them (Organisation N).

Even where alternative premises are offered, they might not be suitable for purpose:

Sometimes a venue is offered to a supplementary school, but it turns out to be just a playground, with no facilities because of the cost of security, premises management, and supervision (Organisation J).

The issue of getting to another venue was discussed, not just in terms of practicalities, e.g. with teachers and parents preferring a school near to their homes because of transport and associated costs (Organisation M) but in terms of some young people feeling unsafe travelling outside their immediate neighbourhood.

This concern has been reported elsewhere (See Firmin *et al*, Building Bridges Project Report, 2008) more particularly in a 2009 survey of young people in London carried out by Catch-22:

‘Young people told us about specific places they feel unsafe...while out on the streets, on estates and new areas which they didn’t know, at bus stations, in markets, and outside of pubs. Many told us that they didn’t feel safe when out and about at night...why they didn’t feel safe... didn’t know people in new or specific areas...out by themselves... knife and gang crime and groups of people hanging around drinking in public areas’ (Catch22, 2009).

One organisation we spoke to agreed that for many young people, the problem of travelling to unfamiliar areas is more widespread than has been acknowledged, and has implications for specific BAME communities in restricting educational opportunities (Organisation J).

Another difficulty is costs for training activities, which may include venue hire, refreshments, equipment, facilities, speakers and delegates’ expenses and other associated charges, depending on the type of organisation and activity.

Although some organisations interviewed appeared doubtful of success in finding alternative premises, other organisations have been able to overcome barriers. One such organisation which has developed a number of strategies for working with mainstream schools emphasised the importance of demonstrating the added value to the school (Shpresa, 2011). The sustained effort in making these types of approaches to schools should not be underestimated.

Support is needed for smaller or less well established supplementary schools in developing strategies to encourage potential host institutions. At the same time, mainstream schools could be made more aware of the advantages of hosting. This is an area in which further dialogue with local authorities could be encouraged, to reinforce existing links with host schools and to promote hosting to other schools.

There is sometimes an issue of sharing space, which not all organisations see as viable due to confidentiality, or the nature of their work, e.g. with vulnerable young people. Some organisations do share space within their own premises, e.g. offering a mix of activities on site (Organisation G). However, where funding, which has been allocated to an organisation as a whole, is subsequently reduced or withdrawn, the whole range of activities offered at that place may be threatened.

Furthermore, finding an alternative, secure environment for older people to meet together is reported as fraught with difficulty.

An organisation providing a range of educational, social and recreational services for adults rejected the idea that elderly people could be directed elsewhere, eg 'to the local pub' (Organisation K).

5. Where support is most needed

Raising educational attainment and aspirations for BAME communities, whether children or adults, is a main aim of supplementary schools and similar organisations.

Organisations look for support in recognition of work they do, which mainstream education would otherwise struggle to provide. This is best summed as recognition of 'added value'. It is important in relation to funders' criteria for organisations to show that what they do is of benefit to a wider society. Numerous examples were provided to us, in terms of raising attainment, parental engagement, family support, counselling, advisory services and help with language. Some work undertaken, such as working with older children, was in addition to the work for which the organisations received funding.

Organisation N observed that supplementary schools can demonstrate the positive effect of their work in raising educational attainment:

'Pupils who attend the School are achieving exam grades which equal, or exceed those of children from the same community who attend only mainstream schools' (Organisation N).

However, the feeling was that even where evidence of raising educational attainment can be provided, it is 'in danger of being ignored' (Organisation N).

Another example was given of supplementary schools enhancing parental engagement by working alongside mainstream schools to draw BAME groups into dialogue with teachers:

'Where many teachers have insufficient time to develop strategies to bring in parents, particularly those from BAME communities, we have been able to actively engage parents through events such as international school, or information sessions on how the education system works, at two secondary schools in the local authority' (Organisation F).

A similar point was made by Organisation N, which thought there is a contradiction in policy on home learning and parental engagement:

'The Government has prioritised [parental engagement] but at the same time does not recognise the contribution which Supplementary Schools make in bringing this about' (Organisation N).

Supplementary schools can also provide support for older teenagers and their families:

‘There is a greater need for support for teenagers, particularly the post-16 age group. Latin American communities are concerned that young people are becoming confused and family/traditional values are getting lost. With teenagers’ increasing independence, family relations can become strained. We aim to support families and young people in maintaining good relationships’ (Organisation F).

Counselling services for excluded children are thought to help prevent further breakdown in relationships between children and families, and families and schools.

According to one organisation with whom we spoke, the effect of exclusion on families, and the subsequent appeals process, can damage family relationships and relations with teachers and schools. Cuts in funding will mean that help to support families, ‘such as through parental meetings and home visits will go and will not be picked up by other services’ (Organisation H).

It is clear that many organisations fulfil a wider societal role in addition to what they are funded to do. Their role in maintaining social cohesion should not be overlooked. The importance of the voluntary sector in helping to create and maintain good community relations and the need to recognise its contribution in terms of sustained funding was identified in a House of Commons Report (2004):

‘If an activity has been demonstrated to be beneficial to the development of social cohesion in a neighbourhood and its continued existence would be of benefit, then it should be considered for mainstream funding’ (House of Commons, 2004).

In 2006, the NCVO’s suggested actions included an increasing need for cross-community organisations, bridge building, dialogue and mediation (NVCO, 2006).

Evidence on the role played by the BAME sector in strengthening community cohesion is also presented in HEAR’s response to the consultation on community cohesion guidance (HEAR, 2008). An example of how organisations operate in this capacity was given by one supplementary school working beyond their brief with older children:

‘We work with young people in the 16+ age group with social and welfare issues, such as sexual health and teenage pregnancy, who may be at risk of isolation in their own families or communities’ (Organisation F).

The co-ordinator of a consortium of supplementary schools who was working in an advisory capacity identified other groups which were also being supported, including:

‘Newly-arrived communities with problems accessing health, welfare and education (Organisation M).

And a supplementary school developing a programme for older children in the community referred to working with:

‘Young people with behavioural and social difficulties and those at risk of being drawn into criminal activity’ (Organisation N).

It was also thought that teaching a language, which the majority of Supplementary Schools do, can bring wider communicative, social and cultural benefits (Organisation N).

The fear that cuts would seriously reduce the ability of organisations to contribute to certain types of preventative initiatives was summarised by one organisation:

The impact of cuts on some organisations which have worked to promote social cohesion will result in them no longer being able to meet requests from statutory bodies, e.g. social services, or the police, with whom they have engaged to help prevent escalation of social problems and to promote a sense of investment in the community (Organisation L).

The main message needs to be communicated that organisations must collect data and evidence that what they do ‘adds value’. Organisations interviewed are aware of this requirement but expressed frustration in being able to carry it out to the level demanded. More support is needed for organisations to develop good information gathering and evaluation methods which are not too burdensome to carry out, and for funders to be realistic in their requests for data, e.g. relative to the size of the organisation/staffing.

Where organisations can demonstrate that they work beyond the role for which they are funded, e.g. to promote social cohesion, or to fill a gap which mainstream organisations find difficult, local authorities and funding bodies should be encouraged to support and strengthen this role.

6. The role of volunteers: impact of cuts on BAME organisations in relation to the volunteer force and capacity to maintain or expand services.

‘Big Society is about...local communities taking over the running of things...to inviting charities to deliver public services’ (David Cameron, Big Society speech, 19th July 2010).

The role of volunteers is crucial to the aims of the Big Society programme, from social action and public service reform to community empowerment.

It is evident, from the interviews and fieldwork carried out, that BAME voluntary sector organisations are significantly involved with the communities they serve, and many with the wider community. However, far from feeling reassured that their work will be enabled and/or extended, many expressed doubts about their immediate future. This section reports some of their concerns.

Although acknowledging the contribution of their volunteer workforce in many spheres of educational activity, organisations contacted expressed concerns that volunteers cannot

take over the work of experienced and qualified staff, even if sufficient funds can be found for training and other costs. As the Director of an organisation providing support, including behaviour modification for young people with a range of problems affecting learning observed, it is necessary to have:

‘Qualified people with a range of skills, e.g. who know how to develop policies, relate to people and provide appropriate help’ (Organisation J).

This issue is of particular relevance in implementing the government’s Big Society initiative, as noted by CYP whose research has raised questions about what is and what is not feasible with a volunteer workforce. In addition to costs associated with management, support and supervision for volunteers, the CYP report notes that many services to young people and families require a certain level of professional expertise, e.g. in areas such as registration, safeguarding and inspection (Children England, 2010).

Apart from some legal issues for organisations working with volunteers, such as CRB checks for those working with children or vulnerable adults, there are ethical issues around the expectations placed on volunteers working, for example, as mentors, such as those discussed in the Youth Justice Board Guidelines for Mentoring. It is further thought that although volunteering as a socially useful and personally fulfilling activity is high on the Government’s agenda, there are inconsistencies and ambiguities about rules and regulations applying to volunteers and a perceived lack of accountability for enforcers of standards (MiNet, 2011).

A project worker from an organisation assisting Eastern European Roma refugees and migrants expressed serious doubts that volunteers could take over if funding is cut:

‘A notion such as that of the ‘Big Society’ – that volunteers can just step in – is political rhetoric. There is not even a sound economic argument for suggesting that it could be done.’

7. Developing entrepreneurial skills for voluntary sector organisations

Developing entrepreneurial skills/business skills has been explored in relation to organisations enhancing their chances of obtaining funding. There is a question of whether smaller BAME organisations lack the ‘entrepreneurial skills’ and business contacts to attract private sector funding. Opinions diverge on whether it is the skills themselves which are missing or whether it is a lack of confidence in presenting them/marketing them. ‘Not being good at the business side of things’ is thought to reduce chances of getting funding for some organisations but for others, ‘not being able to articulate how useful a group is within the community’ is the obstacle (MiNet London Funders South London Discussion forum, August 2010).

There are concerns that advice and support on developing 'entrepreneurial skills' may be inappropriate to needs, e.g. becoming a social enterprise. Not all organisations will be able to commit the time and resources required to make the business case for becoming a social enterprise, which can include doing a competition analysis, projections and forecasts. A possible solution for BAME organisations is to do a pilot study – which might be given funding support from sources such as UnlimitedUK Croydon (Up to Speed Conference, February 2011).

A related issue is developing business links. Although there are examples of successful business links, e.g. where community-based organisations have obtained support from local firms for specific projects, organisations also need to know about less successful experiences, so that time will not be wasted following unproductive leads (Greenwich BME Forum, November 2010). Businesses looking to assist voluntary organisations should be encouraged to be explicit about their criteria, e.g. preferred model, level and type of support, what is expected of beneficiaries, e.g. evaluating outcomes and what motivates businesses to engage with the voluntary sector (Federation of Small Businesses, 2007).

Further work in this area could be done by contacting organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses, which reports on local community links developed by businesses and the incentives and barriers for doing so.

Exploiting business links further afield is sometimes overlooked and may be worth investigating. Some local authorities and devolved governments are exploring how global links can bring opportunities for their areas. It is acknowledged that small, local organisations can help build resilience amongst poor and marginalised communities within and outside the UK (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2011). There may be a case for local authorities which are developing global links for business purposes, to engage with organisations such as supplementary schools which have global links and work with communities at a local level.

Other issues touched upon which need further exploration are that private enterprises do not fully understand the work of VCOs; that successful mergers with other small organisations, to strengthen 'skills-based bids' can be complex and need very good management; that not all business links succeed and that organisations need to be aware of what does not work.

8. What influences funders? Some perceptions and insights

A question frequently asked by BAME voluntary sector organisations seeking support is 'What are funders, including local authorities, looking for and how do they choose what to fund?' The type and amount of information and the criteria for eligibility provided by larger funding bodies and charitable trusts to potential applicants is generally clear and comprehensive, but can be subject to change. As grant allocations reduce, fewer or smaller

awards are available. As seen in previous sections of this report, BAME voluntary sector organisations are searching for new strategies to help them secure support or to identify new sources of funding, increasingly in the private sector.

Perhaps by far the most worrying apprehension expressed by organisations was a perception that during a recession, negative attitudes would be adopted by potential funders about BAME projects which did not present a positive, approved or socially reforming image. This may include projects where gaps in government funding have been identified, or those with relatively small attainable targets. For example, a BAME organisation serving a small, elderly community, well supported by grants from a variety of sources in the past, thought that during a recession, private sector funders would favour projects with a wider, or more popular public appeal.

There is a difficulty in gathering evidence to substantiate this and similar views, but one possible way may be to look at survey data on private enterprise partnerships with VCOs, or to approach selected businesses about what motivates them to offer support to some, but not other organisations.

It was thought that the 'whimsicality' of funders would have a serious impact on organisations dealing with some of the most disadvantaged or isolated groups. The founder member of one organisation observed that:

'Views of and provision for Black students and their communities suffer from a crippling combination of negative prejudice, destructive stereotyping and low expectations' (Organisation H).

This observation was reinforced by a perception that:

'Funding is tied to a view of Black people as a 'group in need of control' rather than a community of individuals who contribute to society through initiatives such as parent and teacher groups, weekend and supplementary schools' (Organisation H).

Again, with regard to impact on funding it was thought that when organisations are in competition for funds:

'Better established organisations - which tend to be mostly white- will be safer and have less difficulty attracting support...the reality is that there is a clear divide between black and white organisations in terms of who receives funding' (Organisation K).

For some organisations working with young people looking for employment, accessing firms offering work placements and enterprise schemes was reported at one BAME forum as being problematic, partly due to hard-to-shift perceptions from some employers and providers. Over time, it is thought that some organisations have been successful in

countering such obstacles and that their experiences might be disseminated to others through networks such as BAME forums.

The broader issue of ingrained prejudice against specific groups in society was also raised. The manager of a day centre reported that not only do older people face considerable financial problems in their daily lives, 'they also continue to encounter prejudice and discrimination'. Additionally, although some inroads had been made into combating racism regarding education and employment, it was considered that the 'state of race relations in Britain today is still poor' (Organisation K).

Illustrative case studies

This section presents three case studies showing the diverse impacts of cuts in funding, from various sources, upon three BAME voluntary sector organisations.

Organisation G has offered a range of services for the educational and welfare needs of African and African Caribbean families, including a lunch club, cultural and recreational activities, skills training and advice since 1997. The main source of funding is from the local authority, awarded to the organisation as a whole. Organisation G supports an education project (day school) for young people who have been excluded from school. The school takes place in a secure space on site, in premises rented from the council. Two teachers are paid out of the local authority's funding. The project was not expected to continue after March 2011. Apart from the issue of where day school children might find alternative provision, it was emphasised that the impact of closure would be felt throughout the community, with whom the organisation has developed a long-running relationship. Organisation G is presenting an appeal against closure.

Organisation N has worked predominantly with an Ethiopian refugee community since 1992. The after-school tutorial programme was scaled back in 2010 due to funding difficulties. Although the Saturday School continued to operate on an unpaid volunteer basis, a loss of local authority grant forced its closure in 2011, with an immediate impact on the children attending, five percent of whom came from outside the borough. This organisation had a good record of pupils achieving exam grades which equalled or exceeded the grades of children who only attended mainstream schools. An additional impact was the loss of office space, resulting in administrative tasks, volunteer activities and other services being run on an ad-hoc basis, posing difficulties for parents and others wishing to contact the organisation. It was thought that other benefits, linked to prevention of crime amongst vulnerable groups and behavioural and social aspects of the organisation's work, will be lost. The transition period between receiving notice of grant loss and losing the grant was too short to make effective alternative arrangements.

Organisation M assists with the development of capacity building, fundraising and project and service development for voluntary organisations and community groups, including supplementary schools catering for a wide range of communities across the borough. The Children's Fund, the main source of grant for some supplementary schools, has been cut by one third and will be withdrawn altogether in 2011. Alternative sources of funding such as John Lyons Charity, will not accept applications from individual schools, only partnerships. Small schools, or those which are not part of a funding consortium, are likely to be most severely affected and it is thought that some may face closure.

Discussion: some possible determinants of successful funding applications

At a time of recession, voluntary sector organisations are under increasing pressure to compete for funds. Many devote considerable time to the grants process and to persuading experienced people to help with business links and promotional activities. Regardless of how good they become at fundraising, there is a perception that the success rate is unlikely to change significantly over the BAME sector as a whole. Many fundraising strategies appear fragmented. This may be an indication that future energies might be more effectively focused on sector rationalisation. However, three strategies continue to emerge which may help leaders within the BAME sector to maximise chances of securing funding, namely partnership working; demonstrating added value; and articulating and promoting the work of BAME voluntary sector organisations.

Partnership working

There are a number of different models of partnership working. Some of these are described by CYP (2004). Within the context of this report, we focus on educational partnerships amongst voluntary organisations which come together for the purpose of strengthening their funding case. Some may also collaborate in other ways, e.g. sharing resources or premises or participating in joint activities, which can be shown to be effective in terms of building capacity and sustainability.

The National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (ContinYou) offers examples of supplementary schools which have made the transition from small and often informal settings to mainstream schools, with reported benefits ranging from a more stable learning environment to a mutually supportive working relationship with teachers and enhanced parental links⁹ (ContinYou, 2011).

The advantage of partnership working for attracting funding is considered to be an effective strategy for supplementary schools. Better established schools might join forces with others to promote innovative and collaborative ways of working, thus enhancing the smaller schools' chances of being funded.

⁹ One such School is Azza (Sudanese Saturday School in K&C) which is part of Kensington and Chelsea's Westway Development Trust. Azza is based at Middle Row Primary School, along with a number of other Supplementary Schools which share space and resources. It would be of interest to find out whether things have changed since the spending review, and whether there are pitfalls in this kind of partnership arrangement, as well as advantages.

At a conference on educational reforms organised by ROTA, NRC and the Runnymede Trust (ROTA, 2011), it was noted that forging partnerships frequently involves persuading mainstream schools of benefits otherwise unavailable to them. These might include language lessons, help with behaviour management, e.g. with pupils from specific communities newly arrived at the school, and parental engagement. A successful partnership model was described by a supplementary school working with the Albanian community, elements of which focus on making an offer, trading skills and agreeing to evaluate pupil progress.

However, there are some reservations about whether partnerships necessarily work to the advantage of smaller schools and organisations. In one Local Authority, it was observed that:

‘Some bigger voluntary service providers know about securing funding from other sources, but some smaller providers are community organisations and may find it very difficult to move into a partnership mode’ (Borough B).

A leader of an alliance of supplementary schools commented that ‘at present, organisations which fund supplementary schools, such as the John Lyons Charity, will not accept applications from individual schools, only partnerships’ (Organisation M). It was thought that ‘Partnerships can achieve more in terms of effectively applying for funds than individual groups’ (Organisation F). The leader of a supplementary school with previous experience of collaborating with other schools emphasised the value of sharing good practice and in getting together over joint grant applications, e.g. through a consortium (Organisation J).

The consortium model was referred to by the Coordinator of an alliance of supplementary schools as being an effective way for opening up opportunities for partnership and collaborative learning in future, albeit ‘tempered by competition’. In essence:

‘The opportunity for partnership depends on what the schools want to achieve. For example, if it works on a business model, then certainly it is a competition. If the intention is to help their communities and to contribute to the wider society, then there will be a tendency to work together and find alternative ways of working, to sustain themselves’ (Organisation M).

One of the recommendations from CYP is that organisations lobbying for funding might provide some case studies or ‘examples of partnership working where it works, especially between small organisations’ (CYP, 2010). To be able to demonstrate good practice in partnership working is considered essential by some funding bodies, such as John Lyons.

On the basis of this evidence, organisations should be aware that increasingly, funders require evidence of partnership working, e.g. for supplementary schools joining forces with

others to promote innovative and collaborative ways of working, thus enhancing smaller schools' chances.

Demonstrating added value

Where roles have expanded, organisations can turn this to their advantage. Examples of added value – where the work of an organisation has clear benefits to a wider community – may include forming links to other services, engaging parents, working with other statutory services or providing advice and training which cannot ordinarily be met in mainstream education.

The Coordinator of an alliance of supplementary schools described their expanding role in forming a link for accessing other services such as mental health, e.g. for people with cultural or language difficulties, or experiencing social isolation leading to depression and anxiety. It was thought that 'if funding for supplementary schools goes, the link will go...it will be breaking the chain' (Organisation M).

The role of parental engagement is considered to be an increasingly important aspect, as even where BAME children are doing well at mainstream school, teachers can find it hard to encourage parents into the school. Supplementary schools are in a position to offer support with engagement (Organisation M, Organisation F, Organisation N). As one organisation observed, 'Parents turn up at supplementary schools' (Organisation M).

There are other areas where supplementary schools can demonstrate added value. For example, supplementary schools which receive requests for help with fostered and cared-for children from Social Services can show there is demand for this type of activity. One such school had numerous referrals for support for fostered and cared-for children and had developed a 6-week summer programme – this, however, was likely to be curtailed after 2010 because 'although the demand was there, the capacity to fund it was not' (Organisation J).

Teaching mother tongue and additional languages can enrich the experience of young people and provide learning opportunities which they would not normally have in mainstream education. (Organisation N).

If training in advocacy for black parents e.g on governing bodies, can be shown to be effective (because most governors are not trained in advocacy) this can be disseminated to other existing organisations (Organisation H).

In light of the interviews, it is apparent that demonstrating added value, whether it is meeting additional social and welfare needs or playing a role in parental engagement or providing specialist training such as advocacy skills, should be a focus for BAME organisations in putting a case for continued funding.

Articulating and promoting the work of BAME voluntary sector organisations

In considering the need for BAME VCS organisations to promote themselves, it was found that in seeking to work with the private sector, support should be geared towards enabling children and young people to fulfil their aspirations and potential. Approaching private enterprise for support in addressing race equality *per se* tends to give rise to private sector concerns about limiting their market, for example.

The way BAME organisations express their work, and the need they are seeking to address can be crucial to success in attracting potential partners. This was emphasised at a recent conference for BAME organisations, at which a representative from the Big Lottery outlined the case for organisations to work to a business model, for example, and to become aware of the importance of marketing¹⁰.

In line with advice from funders, and with regard to organisations which have found successful ways of presenting their work, there is a need for the BAME sector to have time to develop skills in communication, marketing and promotion.

¹⁰ Croydon BME Forum Up to Speed Conference, February 2011.

Key recommendations

PARTNERSHIP WORKING CAN ENHANCE SMALLER ORGANISATIONS' CHANCES OF SURVIVING CUTS AND STRENGTHEN THEIR FUNDING APPLICATIONS

- There is a need for organisations to be aware that increasingly, funders require evidence of partnership working, e.g. for supplementary schools joining forces with others to promote innovative and collaborative ways of working, thus enhancing smaller schools' chances.
- Examples of successful collaborations, such as through the British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres (bassac) should be more effectively promoted and better support offered where mergers are recommended.

THERE IS A NEED FOR ORGANISATIONS TO DEMONSTRATE ADDED VALUE AND FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND FUNDING BODIES TO PROVIDE TARGETED SUPPORT AND ADVICE FOR LESS EXPERIENCED ORGANISATIONS

- Organisations need to demonstrate added value. For supplementary schools, this means showing that they meet other social and health needs and play a useful role in parental engagement and in providing specialist training, such as in advocacy skills for black parents on governing bodies.
- Organisations should systematically collect data and evidence to support the case that they fulfil a need or demand which would not otherwise be met. Small or emerging BAME organisations need better support collecting, analysing, monitoring and presenting statistical and other data to help strengthen grant applications.
- Where organisations can demonstrate that they work beyond the role for which they are funded, e.g. to promote social cohesion, or to fill a gap which mainstream organisations find difficult, local authorities and funding bodies should be encouraged to support and strengthen this role.
- It is recommended that where organisations are failing to provide sufficient evidence of high standard work, they should be helped to improve their practice and/or systems of accountability or else risk losing their funding. Second-tier organisations should make every effort to make this explicit.
- More support is needed for organisations to develop good information gathering and evaluation methods which are not too burdensome to carry out, and for funders to be realistic in their requests for data, e.g. relative to the size of the organisation/staffing.

WAYS OF ARTICULATING AND PROMOTING WORK SHOULD BE DEVELOPED WITH REFERENCE TO GOOD PRACTICE MODELS, THROUGH BETTER DIALOGUE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND MAINSTREAM INSTITUTIONS AND THROUGH SECOND-TIER SUPPORT FOR CAMPAIGNING

- There is a case for sharing good practice and getting together to build relationships when collaborating for grant applications and for encouraging communities to network more, to learn how to present their skills and to articulate the benefits of what they are doing. Models of good practice, such as those developed by Shpresa and promoted by the National Resource Centre (ContinYou), demonstrate innovative and successful strategies for securing resources, accommodation and support, which should be deployed by BAME organisations struggling with funding.
- Support is needed for smaller or less well established supplementary schools in developing strategies to encourage potential host institutions. At the same time, mainstream schools could be made more aware of the advantages of hosting. This is an area in which further dialogue with local authorities could be encouraged, to reinforce existing links with host schools and to promote hosting to other schools.
- There is a continuing need for campaigning. In this way, second-tier organisations, consortia of supplementary schools and other organisations with an educational role can raise awareness of what will happen to the communities they serve, and the implications for the wider community, if funding is discontinued.

THE IMPACT OF FUNDING CUTS ON THE SMALLEST VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS NEEDS MORE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION IF SERVICES SUCH AS THOSE HELPING PARENTS AND CHILDREN ACCESS MAINSTREAM EDUCATION ARE TO CONTINUE

- Local authorities need to acknowledge the role of smaller organisations offering help with language and advice on the school admissions and appeals system and consider making resources available for these activities, as recommended by the Runnymede Trust and Action for Social Integration.
- Local authorities making reductions of up to 25% across the board need to think more carefully about how this will impact on the smallest organisations, because although larger organisations may be able to spread the impact, small organisations will not be able to absorb cuts on this scale.

THE BAME SECTOR SHOULD DEVELOP BETTER COMMUNICATION, MARKETING AND PROMOTION SKILLS WHICH SECOND TIER ORGANISATIONS CAN HELP FACILITATE THROUGH BUSINESS LINKS AND CONTACTS

- Smaller BAME organisations may lack entrepreneurial skills and business contacts to attract private sector funding. Better coordination between infrastructure (second-tier) organisations to support business links would enhance knowledge of the sector and facilitate personal contacts for BAME organisations and for those considering becoming a Social Enterprise.
- Private sector organisations looking to assist voluntary organisations should be encouraged to be explicit about their criteria for support.

Recommendations for further research

Research should be directed towards the following areas, in order to continue monitoring the impact of cuts on education services. These areas are the effects of the pupil premium; arrangements for EIAs; provision of ESOL; clearer local authority information on grant awards; business support for BAME voluntary sector organisations and developing business links; evaluating demand and quality of service; reasons for school exclusions; provision of education services for older BAME learners.

- Depending on how the Pupil Premium is calculated, there may be a detrimental effect on resources available for specific groups of pupils. The impact of the Pupil Premium, both in relation to children from BAME communities, and in relation to BAME organisations such as those providing out of school activities, needs further examination.
- As the Pupil Premium is rolled out, it will be important to continue monitoring impacts on organisations, as well as monitoring commitment to ring-fencing, to ensure that it reaches the most disadvantaged pupils.
- There is a need to look at arrangements made by local authorities for carrying out EIAs and whether the information is easily available. Such information as can be found in local authority accounts documents or budgetary statements could be scrutinised over a period, e.g. 2010-2011/2011-2012.
- There is a need to gather more information on the provision of ESOL and its operation at a local level. This might be done through interviews with BAME organisations/leaders in selected Pathfinder London Authorities.
- There is a requirement for a clearer breakdown of information on grant awards to help distinguish BAME organisations. In local authorities where this is not clearly set out, this could be requested using an exemplar guide or template of the type already in use by other local authorities.
- There is need for further work to explore the perception from some BAME organisations that some causes or projects are 'unpopular' with funders or whether there are other factors which influence choice. This could be explored with organisations and businesses which support voluntary sector organisations.
- Further work on business links might focus on the understanding and expectations of what is required, both from the point of view of voluntary organisations and from business partners. It would be useful to consider barriers and enablers to forging

business links with selected BAME organisations and/or business skills providers or training agencies.

- This might be done by contacting organisations such as the Federation of Small Businesses, which reports on local community links developed by businesses and the incentives and barriers for doing so.
- Given the increasing importance for organisations to be able to demonstrate rising levels of service use, future work evaluating demand is needed, particularly with smaller organisations which may be most vulnerable to cuts in funding.
- There is a separate but related issue about evaluation of quality of service, which should also be addressed. This could be explored through better engagement with BAME organisations around the social impact of the work they do.
- An analysis of the reasons given for school exclusion, for the purpose of comparing groups, would be useful in the context of looking at cuts in funding for advocacy and appeals advice services.
- Future work on exclusions should include an overview, from available statistical data, in increases in requests for support with exclusions received by BAME organisations.
- There is a need for further analysis of the impact of cuts on education services for elderly people from BAME communities. There is insufficient evidence that if services close, their needs will be met elsewhere.

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