



## **Mapping Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Engagement in Every Child Matters (ECM) Developments in London**

*"If I spend lots of hours in strategy, who delivers the service?"*  
**BAME VCS Project Worker**

**Produced for:  
MiNet and VCS Engage**

**Prepared by:  
Simon Tanner  
Research as Evidence**

October 2007

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Background information</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix One</b>	<b>VCS Engage Strands Overview</b>	<b>29</b>

## **1 Background information**

In July 2006, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES<sup>1</sup>) provided £3m to fund a new programme to strengthen the engagement of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) working with children in the planning and the delivery of services for children. The accountable body for this programme is a consortium lead by the National Children's Bureau (NCB), other partners on the consortium are the National Council of Voluntary Childcare Organisations (NCVCCO), National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS), National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), Family Welfare Association (FWA), Parenting UK and National Children's Homes (NCH). The programme is funded until March 2008.

### **Aim of the programme**

The overall aim of the programme is to enhance, extend, and sustain the engagement of the children's services' VCS in the planning and the delivery of children's services.

### **Objectives**

1. Increase capacity of the VCS to engage in children's trusts<sup>2</sup> at the strategic level, in needs analysis, planning and commissioning
2. Contribute towards the increased confidence and skills of the VCS to enter the children's services market and compete with other providers on a level playing field
3. Encourage collaboration and co-operation across the VCS and with strategic partners and providers in both the public and private sectors

### **Activities for the Programme**

The activities of the programme are organised into seven strands:

- A. Supporting the strategic engagement of the VCS in children's trusts
- B. Supporting VCS engagement in service delivery - encouraging shared approaches
- C. Supporting VCS engagement in service delivery - developing differentiated approaches
- D. Infrastructure development
- E. Developing a comprehensive communications strategy
- F. Governance
- G. Evaluation

**(for more details about the strands please see Appendix One)**

---

<sup>1</sup> Now the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

<sup>2</sup> Children's trusts are partnerships between different organisations who provide, commission, or are otherwise involved in delivering better outcomes for children and young people. Further details can be found at: <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims/childrenstrusts/>

## **The London Picture**

During the summer of 2006, the Third Sector Alliance (3SA) of the London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC) undertook a mapping exercise of the local borough based VCS infrastructure in London. This aimed to identify local support structures for the VCS involvement in the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda.

This report<sup>3</sup> identified that there were between 110 and 500 children and young people's groups active in each of the 31 London boroughs<sup>4</sup> that responded to the survey. These groups provide a range of services and support for children across London. Feedback from this report noted that the Every Child Matters agenda has been a challenging one for the voluntary and community sector to keep up with, with many boroughs having a range of partnership groups, strategies, and routes to involvement.

The report highlighted that structures worked well where there was:

- **An effective and wide ranging network** to support communication with local groups and to elect representatives
- **Support for representatives** on boards and forums, including policy support, training and briefings to help them to understand the agenda and to take forward VCS involvement, and
- **A dedicated staff resource** to support VCS involvement, support network development and communication and support.

The report identified that some boroughs have well established and effective networks with good VCS involvement in the ECM agenda. Alongside this there was support for local representatives and effective staff offering a good range of support to local groups. However this was not replicated across all boroughs and while some boroughs were in the process of developing these structures, other boroughs had no defined plans in place for infrastructure development.

Additionally, resourcing for this work was fragmented. In a few boroughs, statutory authorities (the Local Authority, PCT or both) recognised the value of this infrastructure and provide fairly stable and ongoing support for this work.

## **Overview of this Review**

This review aims to build on the work completed to date and provide more specific feedback about the capacity building needs of the sector to engage with the planning and commissioning of children and young people's services for Children's Trusts. Its focus is Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) VCS engagement in the ECM agenda.

The report defines BAME as a term to refer to all groups who are discriminated against on the grounds of their race, culture, colour, nationality or religious practice. This definition includes but is not exclusive to those people of African, Asian, Caribbean, Irish, Jewish, Roma and South East Asian descent.

---

<sup>3</sup> Samuels, M. (2006) VCS Engagement in Every Child Matters: The London Picture, LVSC, London. Available at: [http://www.lvsc.org.uk/shared\\_asp\\_files/uploadedfiles/6b569d44-13a0-4f0c-8218-6da9dc9aa4e3\\_children'sinfrastructure-mappingfinal.pdf](http://www.lvsc.org.uk/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/6b569d44-13a0-4f0c-8218-6da9dc9aa4e3_children'sinfrastructure-mappingfinal.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Responses from two boroughs were not received.

## **VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

The review was commissioned by MiNet<sup>5</sup> at the behest of, and with support from VCS Engage as part of a series of work to develop a more BAME inclusive ECM agenda in the London region. It builds on previous work conducted on VCS engagement in Every Child Matters and seeks to address some of the gaps highlighted by the previous work.<sup>6</sup>

The focus on the BAME VCS arises because it was highlighted as an area for priority work by wider research findings<sup>7</sup> illustrating that such organisations are finding it difficult to engage in the new forms of public service delivery advocated by the Government's public service reform agenda. ECM represents a critical aspect of this reform seeking to restructure Children and Young People's services to ensure that new partnerships between organisations are formed to ensure children and young people's services meet the five ECM priorities<sup>8</sup>. BAME VCS organisation engagement will be critical to its success to ensure that wide ranging needs are fully addressed by service delivery because the VCS can bring real benefits to public service delivery across a range of policy areas, including ECM<sup>9</sup>.

To this end the review seeks to identify:

1. Knowledge and awareness levels of ECM amongst BAME VCS organisations in London
2. Engagement routes for BAME VCS organisations in ECM
3. Key challenges and barriers to BAME VCS engagement in ECM
4. Capacity, training and infrastructure needs to support BAME VCS engagement in ECM
5. Appropriate BAME VCS engagement models to aid implementation of report recommendations and capacity building activities.

The review work focuses on BAME VCS experiences in six London Boroughs – Camden, Greenwich, Havering, Hillingdon, Merton, and Tower Hamlets. These were chosen to give a range of perspectives: providing inner and outer London views, identifying areas of different CVS development, and areas noted for previously high levels of activity between the local authority and the VCS. However, resource limitations mean we were unable to

---

<sup>5</sup> MiNet - (Minority Network) is the regional network of networks of the BAME voluntary and community sector for London. MiNet's focus is on strengthening the voice for London's BAME VCS in the development of regional policy. MiNet is hosted and supported by ROTA – Race on the Agenda. Further details can be found at: <http://www.rota.org.uk/pages/about/minet.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Samuels, M. (2006) 'VCS Engagement in Every Child Matters: The London Picture' LVSC/3SA, London. Available for download at: [http://www.lvsc.org.uk/shared\\_asp\\_files/uploadedfiles/6b569d44-13a0-4f0c-8218-6da9dc9aa4e3\\_children'sinfrastructure-mappingfinal.pdf](http://www.lvsc.org.uk/shared_asp_files/uploadedfiles/6b569d44-13a0-4f0c-8218-6da9dc9aa4e3_children'sinfrastructure-mappingfinal.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Tanner, S. (2005) 'Linking Services for BME Homeless Individuals' OSW and ROTA, London. Available at: <http://www.osw.org.uk/info/libraryrecord.asp?rqsID=276> and Tanner, S. (2007) Common Themes on Commissioning the VCS in Selected Local Authorities in Greater London, London Councils. See: <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=20082&cat=933> for copy to download.

<sup>8</sup> That Children and Young People stay safe, are healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being. For more detail see <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/aims/>

<sup>9</sup> Wilkinson, D. (2007) 'Adding Value, Being Richer: Lessons from Northern Rock Foundation's Money and Jobs Programme' Northern Rock Foundation, Newcastle. Available at: [http://www.nr-foundation.org.uk/news/news\\_Aug07.html](http://www.nr-foundation.org.uk/news/news_Aug07.html)

**VCS Engage** - *Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda*

conduct enough interviews to be able to note if the differences between the boroughs were direct contributory factors in levels of BAME VCS engagement in ECM. Despite this the report will highlight those areas that the evidence collected suggests may contribute to the noted levels of BAME engagement.

This report outlines the main findings of the review and the resulting recommendations. It is intended to be used by individuals already with VCS organisations (not necessarily those representing BAME communities) looking for assistance to engage in the emerging ECM and commissioning agendas at local and sub-regional level, infrastructure bodies tasked with enhancing delivery opportunities for VCS organisations, statutory bodies including local authorities, regional governance bodies, and those working with the wider BAME sector.

Recommendations from the review work follow in **Chapter 2**. Subsequent chapters provide brief details of the methods used to collect the data (**Chapter 3**) and detailed findings (**Chapter 4**).

## 2 Recommendations

Recommendation	Organisations Involved
1. Further concerted efforts are needed to raise ECM knowledge and awareness levels of BAME VCS organisations to ensure such levels are more consistent across the sector	London Development Agency (LDA), London Councils, London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC), Government Office for London (GOL), local CVS, BAME 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations and all 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.
2. Awareness and knowledge raising activities need to be targeted and tailored to the needs of the smallest BAME VCS organisations	LDA, London Councils, LVSC, GOL, local CVS and all 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.
3. BAME VCS organisations should be encouraged and supported to proactively engage with ECM commissioners and strategy boards and mechanisms should be put in place to monitor this activity in line with the Government's Third Sector Action Plan <sup>10</sup>	Local authorities, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), LVSC, local CVS, Race on the Agenda (ROTA/MiNet), and all 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.
4. An engagement model building on existing good practice and involving tailored outreach and capacity building work should be actively considered as the minimum standard approach to BAME VCS organisation engagement in ECM	London Funders, Local authorities, PCTs, local CVS, and all 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.
5. All engagement activities must be underpinned and make direct reference to the principles for wider VCS engagement in public service delivery advocated in the Government's Third Sector Action Plan <sup>11</sup>	LDA, London Councils, LVSC, GOL, local CVS and all 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.

<sup>10</sup> The Third Sector Action plan provides a detailed framework for the increased involvement of the VCS in the delivery of public services. The plan can be downloaded at:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_service\\_delivery/](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_service_delivery/)

<sup>11</sup> The Third Sector Action plan provides a detailed framework for the increased involvement of the VCS in the delivery of public services. The plan can be downloaded at:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_service\\_delivery/](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_service_delivery/)

**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

Recommendation	Organisations Involved
<p>6. Further development work is needed with BAME VCS organisations with high levels of ECM knowledge and awareness to help them engage in service delivery opportunities. Development work needs to adhere to the principles outlined in work by the NHS<sup>12</sup> and the Audit Commission<sup>13</sup></p>	<p>Local authorities, PCTs, BAME 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations, local CVS, and all 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.</p>
<p>7. All attempts to engage BAME VCS organisations with the ECM agenda should be developed in direct consultation with, and be led by the wider BAME VCS</p>	<p>Local authorities, PCTs, BAME VCS, local CVS, and all 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.</p>
<p>8. Increased work with faith-based BAME groups should be investigated as they remain an underutilised resource for the engagement of BAME communities by the CVS and local authorities</p>	<p>Local authorities, PCTs, Faith bodies, local CVS, and all 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations, London Civic Forum.</p>
<p>9. BAME representative groups should seek a more active brokerage and advocacy role with commissioners to disseminate BAME VCS expertise more widely and foster and facilitate multi-agency working and partnership development</p>	<p>ROTA/MiNet, local CVS, and all 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations.</p>
<p>10. Increased access to inter-agency and multi-agency training opportunities needs to be provided to BAME VCS groups to provide joint training and specialist skills development across those groups</p>	<p>Local authorities, PCTs, BAME VCS, School for Social Entrepreneurs, local CVS, all 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Organisations, and the Skills for Care Network of organisations including the Childcare Workforce Development Council (CWDC).</p>

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.networks.nhs.uk/157.php> for more details.

<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/reports/PRESS-RELEASE.asp?CategoryID=&ProdID=98446EE4-4BA5-4FDA-B536-24B00689BBBF> for details



### **3 Methods**

Data collection was conducted using a qualitative approach. This approach was adopted because of the level of detail required from responding organisations on their understanding and knowledge of the ECM agenda; their role within strategic planning and/or delivery of ECM services; any capacity and training issues, and the need to identify engagement models.

The methods used to collect information included telephone and face to face interviews, as well as discussion groups to collect and collate the required information; and the data collection work was conducted in three phases. All respondents were asked to speak in confidence and no individuals or their organisations have been attributed to particular responses to maintain this confidentiality.

The three phases of data collection involved:

- **Phase 1 – Mapping and Identification of BAME VCS Organisations.** A critical challenge for this kind of work is identifying the most appropriate organisations to interview. The author's previous work across the BAME VCS has highlighted the difficulties that can arise. Commonly, such organisations are characterised by their small size, with a heavy reliance upon volunteers to provide resource for service planning and delivery. This can mean that they are extremely 'time poor' and requests to respond to surveys, take part in interviews, or discussion groups is particularly difficult because it can seriously affect their ability to deliver their core business.

To overcome this, the review work sought to use a range of sources to identify key organisations that would be able to give detailed perspectives on BAME VCS engagement in ECM activities, as well as ensuring that all ethnicities covered by the BAME definition were given an opportunity to contribute to the research. This involved consultation with ROTA/MiNet, Borough Children's Trust Representatives in the six target boroughs, LVSC/3SA, VCS Engage stakeholders and London Councils to identify borough, cross-borough and London-wide BAME organisations to interview.

This 'mapping' work was conducted using a standardised interview schedule that not only sought contact details for organisations to interview but also collated some initial views from the respondents by telephone on some of the key challenges faced by BAME VCS organisations in their engagement with the ECM agenda. This included their assessment of knowledge levels of the BAME VCS of ECM and key barriers preventing their full engagement. Once identified through the mapping work, telephone contact was made with each identified organisation and interviews requested as part of phase two of the data collection.

**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

- **Phase 2 – Interviews with Selected BAME VCS organisations.** A mixture of face to face and telephone interviews were used to collect information on BAME VCS engagement with ECM, challenges, barriers, capacity, and support issues they face, , and routes and models for engagement. In most cases respondents were happy to conduct interviews over the telephone, but three respondents consented to face to face interviews.

A total of 30 interviews were conducted using a standard interview schedule. **Table 1** overleaf shows the breakdown of these interviews by organisation type.

**Table 1: Targeted and Achieved Interviews**

<b>Type of Organisation</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Local BAME VCS Organisations	24	21
Children and Young People Lead Contact <sup>14</sup>	6	6
Cross Borough Organisations <sup>15</sup>	2	2
London Wide Organisations	5	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>

There was a minimum of three interviews with local BAME VCS organisations in each of the six boroughs. To address problems of response encountered during the interviewing further contacts were sourced from interviewees for other BAME VCS organisations to be contacted.

There are however, important methodological and strategic considerations that arise from the difficulties experienced gaining response particularly with local BAME VCS organisations. Many were found not to possess message taking facilities so in five cases it was not possible to make any contact. Consequently these organisations are most likely to be excluded from any ECM or other policy work. Whilst not just a feature of all BAME VCS organisations it is a barrier to inclusion. Statutory agencies need to therefore ensure that multiple forms of consultation via telephone, mail, networks and community links are utilised to allow an equal opportunity for all groups to participate in consultation or delivery opportunities.

Responses were received from organisations working directly with, or representing individuals from the following ethnic groups: African, Asian, Caribbean, Irish, and South East Asian. Time and resource availability, as well as non-response by some organisations contacted meant it was not possible to get the widest possible coverage of all the communities encompassed by the BAME definition.

Despite these problems, the themes raised by interviewees are consistent both across organisation types interviewed and with findings in other research on the BAME VCS sector<sup>16 17 18</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> This includes contacts in CVS or the Local Authority who were the identified lead for children and young people matters including strategy and programme and project delivery.

<sup>15</sup> These include those organisations that were working across two or more boroughs.

<sup>16</sup> See BTEG (2007) 'Every BME Child Matters' available from: <http://www.bteg.co.uk/Downloads/CES/EBMECM%20REPORT.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> See Tanner, S. (2007) Common Themes on Commissioning the VCS in Selected Local Authorities in Greater London, London Councils. See <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=20082&cat=933> for copy to download.

- **Phase 3 – Stakeholder Workshop and Interviewee Focus Group.** Phase three work was also used to further triangulate the emerging findings from the telephone interviews where group participants were asked whether emerging analysis was an accurate interpretation of experiences of the wider BAME sector in the ECM agenda. Two discussion groups were held to discuss the interim findings and implications for recommendations from the work. The stakeholder workshop involved MiNet, VCS Engage Stakeholders, representatives from the Government Office for London (GOL), London Councils, the London Voluntary Sector Council (LVSC) and a representative of the West Indian Standing Conference (WISC).

The focus group involved selected interviewees from Phase 2 interviews across each of the six boroughs and those from cross borough organisations. A total of ten individuals were invited to the group. Due to a variety of circumstances turnout was poor.

The workshop and focus group were used to verify findings across the interviews conducted in phase 2 and discuss their key implications for future work by the interviewed organisations and future work by MiNet and VCS Engage.

---

<sup>18</sup> Tanner, S. (2005) 'Linking Services for BME Homeless Individuals' OSW and ROTA, London. Available at: <http://www.osw.org.uk/info/libraryrecord.asp?qslID=276>

## 4 Findings

The research methods generated a wealth of qualitative data that has been organised through an analysis framework focused upon addressing each of the aims of the review work identified in **Chapter 1**.

The following sections deal with each of these aims in turn and highlight responses across all respondents. Where possible, quotes are used from the interviews (all interviewees) to support points made and further reference is made to other literature and research studies that help understand, or support the issues raised.

### Review Aim 1: Knowledge and awareness levels of ECM amongst BAME VCS organisations

Knowledge and awareness levels of ECM amongst local BAME VCS organisations are highly variable. Analysis of the interview and discussion group findings<sup>19</sup> enabled a broad typology to be developed of knowledge and awareness levels that shows some of the stages that organisations have reached, and their subsequent engagement in the ECM agenda. **Figure 1** shows the typology below:

**Figure 1: ECM Knowledge and Awareness Levels of Interviewed BAME Organisations**

<i>Knowledge and Awareness Level</i>	<i>Example Quotes</i>	<i>Examples of Operational Impact</i>
Very Low	<p><i>“Can you tell me what ECM is all about?”</i></p> <p><i>“Isn’t it about CRB checks?”</i></p>	None as yet
Low	<i>“We understand what ECM is focussed upon but need to know more”</i>	Seeking more information, but yet to alter services
Medium	<i>“We understand the agenda well as we get regular briefings from the council and the CVS”</i>	Want to explore implications and potential involvement in delivery, beginning to alter services
High	<i>“We’ve been involved in consultation and needs analysis work, have a very good understanding of what ECM means to us as an organisation, and our services incorporate the ECM aims”</i>	Already engaging in strategy at local authority through involvement in CYP strategy boards or sub-committees, services cover ECM principles, young people involved in service delivery.

Source: Analysis of BAME Organisation Interview Responses

Answers given by a majority of the local BAME VCS organisations (16 out of 21) showed that they had very low or low ECM knowledge and awareness levels. However, almost all the remaining five local BAME organisations identified that they had high ECM knowledge and awareness levels. Responses from cross borough, and regional organisations showed a much stronger awareness and understanding of the ECM agenda.

<sup>19</sup> This covers all the interviews both at a local, sub-regional, and regional level.

**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

This finding supports previous work<sup>20 21</sup> that has highlighted the generally low level of policy awareness amongst BAME VCS organisations, and the subsequent low levels of involvement in policy delivery that results from this. Later sections will highlight some of the reasons for these low levels of knowledge and awareness but our analysis also highlights (**Figure 2** below) some of the contributory factors identified by analysis of all the interviews completed for this study.

**Figure 2: Examples of Contributory Factors in BAME ECM Knowledge and Awareness Levels**

<i>Very Low or Low Knowledge and Awareness</i>	<i>Medium or High Knowledge and Awareness</i>
Having to use own resources to find and collate information	Receiving regular written and electronic updates
Small number of staff covering all activities of the organisation	Staff designated to lead
CVS still in development phase	CVS well developed
BAME organisations have limited awareness of consultation and commissioning practice in the local authority area	CVS resourced to provide tailored support to BAME and wider VCS in key policy areas
BAME organisations reactive to opportunities arising	BAME led networks well established
Local authority strategies under development or recently implemented	Local authority has long term, developed consultation and engagement strategy
	BAME representatives present on children and young people strategy boards and sub-committees
	BAME organisations proactive in seeking engagement with statutory organisations

Source: Analysis of local BAME Organisation Interview Responses, and other organisation responses

It is important to note that not all the contributory factors highlighted in **Figure 2** were found in all examples. In particular, local BAME organisations were keen to highlight that they felt it was their small size and limits on resource availability (many relying on volunteers) that was a significant factor in their abilities to be knowledgeable and aware of policy and service delivery matters, not just in ECM, but across the wider social care, health, and education fields. Indeed, such concerns were concurred by the sub-regional and regional organisations we spoke to.

Furthermore, the factors highlighted above were not seen as being unique to local BAME VCS organisations as they were factors that impacted upon all local VCS organisations.

<sup>20</sup> Ainger, A. (2007) 'Mapping Exercise of Black and Minority Ethnic Infrastructure Organisations in the East Midlands' VCS Engage (East Midlands Region), July 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Tanner, S. (2005) 'Linking Services for BME Homeless Individuals' OSW and ROTA, London. Available at: <http://www.osw.org.uk/info/libraryrecord.asp?rqsID=276> and Tanner, S. (2007) Common Themes on Commissioning the VCS in Selected Local Authorities in Greater London, London Councils. See <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=20082&cat=933> for a copy to download.

## **VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

One respondent identified some of the reasons for this stating:

*“BAME organisations are more likely to be operating as the smallest VCS organisations reliant upon volunteers for service delivery, administration and management. This isn’t that much different to the wider VCS sector, it’s just that more BAME VCS organisations tend to be smaller”*

The greater likelihood that BAME VCS organisations will be of this type and the issue of their relatively smaller size goes some way to explain previous research findings mentioned earlier showing lower engagement levels for the BAME VCS in many areas of public service delivery, not just in children and young people’s services.

In essence, our findings show that local BAME VCS organisations, because of their predominantly small size, are more likely than local non-BAME organisations to need the kinds of support and development advocated in existing Government strategies on the VCS to improve their knowledge and awareness of, and engagement in, service delivery, commissioning, and needs analysis work<sup>22 23</sup>. Importantly, the findings above have begun to illustrate that where such support and development is made available then local BAME VCS organisations can undertake more effective engagement activities because knowledge and awareness levels are improving.

However, despite the early stage of development of service delivery under the ECM agenda, our interviews with 21 local BAME VCS organisations did not identify any of them currently delivering ECM services, or with specific knowledge of large numbers of other local BAME organisations involved in such service delivery. The small size of the sample for this work means that this finding should be treated with caution. It does not mean that there are no local BAME VCS organisations currently delivering ECM services, but it does illustrate that where examples may exist many are not known about across the local BAME VCS, or wider VCS.

As the ECM agenda moves forward opportunities will arise for delivery to BAME communities by local BAME VCS organisations, but the critical challenge is the routes to local BAME VCS engagement that are utilised and facilitated to undertake this, and whether they ultimately lead to improved service delivery because BAME VCS organisations are engaged.

### **Review Aim 2: Engagement routes for BAME VCS organisations in ECM**

The interviews asked respondents about what routes to engagement they had been involved in, both from the perspective of the local BAME VCS organisations themselves, and other organisations including local authorities, cross borough organisations, CVS, and London-wide organisations.

The review’s findings show that there were two critical factors that underpinned the more successful engagement routes.

---

<sup>22</sup> Office of the Third Sector (2006) ‘Partnership in Public Services: An Action Plan for Third Sector Involvement’ London, December 2006. Available at:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_service\\_delivery/](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_service_delivery/)

<sup>23</sup> DCSF (2007) ‘Third Sector Strategy and Action Plan’ DCSF, London. Available at: <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/thirdsector/>

**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

These were:

- **Early involvement** – Local BAME VCS organisations interviewed for this work highlighted that their most satisfactory engagement with ECM, and other policy areas, occurred when they were involved at the earliest stages of development or scoping of the policy area involved. Whether involving strategy development, needs analysis work or wider consultation, organisations highlighted that satisfaction came from the sense that something happened as a result of their engagement and this was most likely when they were engaged at the outset of an activity.

As a result, local BAME VCS organisations were not being presented with final draft policies or proposals for action, but were engaged more in identifying needs, strategy and service gaps and being asked to contribute directly in imparting their knowledge of their community as a way of addressing this identification process. Consequently, the organisations feel they are able to shape policy, rather than react to policy decisions already made and feel a valued part of the process not a 'tokenistic' attempt at reflecting local diversity. Key ways in which this was achieved included having local and sub-regional BAME VCS representatives on children and young people strategy groups and sub-committees, requesting information from organisations as part of needs analysis activities, and organisations participating in initial consultation exercises related to scoping policy needs or gaps.

- **BAME led** – Accompanying early involvement was the need to ensure that local BAME VCS organisations had some form of ownership over the engagement route that reflected cultural, ethnic, local circumstance and sensitivities.

This meant that local BAME VCS organisations were seen to be shaping the engagement route in line with their own needs for how the process or practice was adopted, but they were also offering a strong steer for which organisations, individuals, and parts of their local communities were engaged and involved. In particular interviewees highlighted how this was a clear mechanism to avoid 'the usual suspects' being engaged and widened the opportunity for other cultural or ethnic groups to be represented in engagement activities.

A number of interviewees in local BAME VCS organisations highlighted that they felt that they had experienced situations where more vocal, or more long established, BME VCS organisations always seemed to be engaged in consultation or commissioning exercises without others equally as knowledgeable being engaged.

Examples of this engagement route saw the nomination and election of strategy group representatives by local BAME VCS organisations, and the facilitation and maintenance of locally BAME led networks and forums.

## **VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

Whilst the two factors above were the key common factors in successful engagement routes commonly expressed across the interviews, other routes were also mentioned, although by a minority of respondents. These included:

- Outreach work with local BAME VCS organisations conducted by CVS and local authority staff to raise awareness and engagement in consultation exercises and commissioning workshops
- Dedicated CVS staff to work with statutory agencies to raise awareness of wider VCS including the local BAME VCS
- Grants to foster community network development
- Proactive work by local and sub-regional BAME VCS organisations themselves to engage directly with key staff in statutory agencies
- Review of language used to describe project and other activities to ensure a wider audience can understand and contribute to practice and process described
- Tailored and individualised support programmes on an organisation by organisation basis to support engagement throughout the process
- Induction and support programmes for local and sub-regional BAME VCS representatives to ensure contributions and active participation can be achieved.

### **Review Aim 3: Key challenges and barriers to BAME VCS engagement in ECM**

The findings show that routes to foster engagement deliberately tackle the key barriers and challenges faced by local BAME VCS organisations in their engagement in ECM activities. The interviews with all respondents asked in detail about the nature of these challenges and barriers and the sections below highlight the key areas identified by interviewees, as well as ways in which the issues raised might be addressed.

The key challenges and barriers to local BAME VCS engagement in ECM include:

- **Availability of organisational resource** – with small organisations, particularly those totally reliant on volunteers, there is always an inherent conflict between operation, strategy development, and delivery. This was amply illustrated by one local BAME VCS organisation respondent who stated:

*“if I spend lots of hours in strategy who delivers our services”*

This means that such organisations have to make key decisions about the level of engagement they will adopt with particular areas of work. As a result they will prioritise available resources on the basis of the importance and relevance of the activity to the organisations aims and objectives. Earlier findings show that a majority of the local BAME VCS organisations we interviewed have low or very low levels of ECM knowledge and awareness and therefore will find it hard to justify to themselves their need to stretch further resources to engage with this agenda. However we have already seen that as ECM knowledge and awareness levels rose operational impacts occurred, and were also more likely to be noted by other organisations.



**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

Funding arrangements were also mentioned for instance with one year funding agreements making it hard for organisations to retain experienced and skilled staff.

**Addressed by:** Extra financial resources to fund additional activities with longer funding periods as advocated in the Action Plan for Third Sector Involvement<sup>24</sup> and the Compact (1998) between Government and the VCS<sup>25</sup>. This would include adhering to principles to ensure full cost recovery for VCS organisations delivering public services<sup>26</sup>. It could also include recruitment of additional staff and volunteers to undertake engagement activities aimed at raising awareness and knowledge of ECM to alter organisational priority setting. Furthermore, where BAME organisations are engaged a programme of induction and other support to representatives to ensure full value gained from participation to enhance the sense of 'something to contribute' by the individuals involved.

- **Additional expectations of VCS organisations:** a number of local BAME VCS organisation interviewees identified how they felt they had had to respond in greater detail to information requests, risk and financial assessments by statutory agencies because of their VCS status. There is a perception that such requests are different from those made of those not in the VCS. Such experiences are not uncommon<sup>27</sup> and given the resource constraints identified above can act as a particular barrier to engagement by local BAME VCS organisations, especially the smallest of organisations who account for a significant proportion of the BAME VCS sector.

Interviewees also highlighted how significant staff turnover in local authorities can also reduce the numbers of staff in those organisations who have direct experience of working with the local or sub-regional BAME VCS. Loss of these staff removes particular organisational expertise and experience that can help the statutory agencies view the local and sub-regional BAME VCS more positively as a group of organisations that have a track record of successful delivery and engagement across policy fields, not just ECM.

**Addressed by:** Full local implementation of the principles of third sector commissioning as advocated in the Action Plan for Third Sector Involvement<sup>28</sup> and

---

<sup>24</sup> Office of the Third Sector (2006) 'Partnership in Public Services: An Action Plan for Third Sector Involvement' London, December 2006. Available at:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_service\\_delivery/](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_service_delivery/)

<sup>25</sup> The Compact covers an agreed set of principles between the Government and the VCS about how their relationship will be managed, maintained and sustained. More details and copies of the documents can be found at: [http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100020/about\\_the\\_compact/](http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100020/about_the_compact/)

<sup>26</sup> Full cost recovery is the process of costing activities to include the appropriate share of overhead or indirect costs, as well as the direct costs of delivering a service. Further issues related to full cost recovery (FCR) were raised recently by Cherie Booth who identified that requirements of the Human Rights Act may mean that a failure to ensure payments by local authorities and other public bodies in line with FCR may be in contravention of the act. See <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/News/644760/Disability-body-weighs-legal-advice-Cherie-Booth/> for further details.

<sup>27</sup> Public Accounts Committee (2006a) 'Working with the Voluntary Sector' 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2006 House of Commons, London. Available at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmpubacc/717/717.pdf>

<sup>28</sup> Office of the Third Sector (2006) 'Partnership in Public Services: An Action Plan for Third Sector Involvement' London, December 2006. Available at:

[http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third\\_sector/public\\_service\\_delivery/](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/public_service_delivery/)

**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

the Compact (1998) between Government and the VCS<sup>29</sup>, and more direct engagement between statutory organisations and BAME VCS organisations will help address some of these issues.

- **Community and cultural barriers** – these barriers refer again to the knowledge and awareness levels of some groups around project delivery and policy issues around ECM. Interview respondents across all the organisations interviewed pointed out that some principles of monitoring requirements, project delivery, and assessment criteria were sometimes completely new concepts to them. Indeed some approaches to engagement – discussion groups, consultation forums are not always suitable for the cultural sensitivities of some ethnic and cultural groups. Examples in this study were given around Somali and elderly Chinese groups. These highlighted that some groups and communities may not be prepared to share detailed information on community needs with statutory agencies because of issues of pride, secrecy, or even embarrassment. Concerns were also expressed by some respondents that some community representatives did not feel that their English language skills were as strong as they needed to be to cope with the challenges of dealing with the technical and acronym-heavy language used across the wider regeneration and community development field.

It is a sensitivity to these issues that needs to be built into engagement strategies to ensure that all communities are given a fair chance to contribute, and that ways of contributing are provided that are sensitive to the challenges faced by some groups. This sensitivity will need to avoid conflating race, ethnicity, faith, and culture but also seek to challenge communities to engage to ensure that the full principles of ECM can be achieved, and are not undermined by any beliefs, practices, or cultural perspectives that go against the underlying principles of the ECM. This may require significant capacity building with groups and communities, to improve understanding of what the ECM agenda is trying to achieve, and show how a much wider set of cultures and communities need to be involved to ensure the principles of ECM can be attained in the fullest possible sense (**see also** the following section on local BAME community representation).

**Addressed by:** widening community group representation on strategy and consultation groups. This might include more explicit engagement with a wide set of BAME representative groups including faith-based, culturally and ethnic specific organisations and service providers. Additionally, direct engagement between statutory organisations and BAME VCS organisations, and significant capacity building work across statutory organisations and BAME VCS organisations to raise levels of understanding of the ECM agenda and how a wider range of cultures and communities need to be involved, and identify and implement ways they might be best involved and engaged.

---

<sup>29</sup> The Compact covers an agreed set of principles between the Government and the VCS about how their relationship will be managed, maintained and sustained. More details and copies of the documents can be found at: [http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100020/about\\_the\\_compact/](http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100020/about_the_compact/)

- **Lack of local BAME community representation** – this set of barriers was focussed upon a number of factors identified by interviewees across all the interviews completed. Most commonly this occurred around specific assumptions about existing engagement arrangements. Some respondents identified that some grassroots agencies do not always understand fully the needs of the 'communities' they purport to represent and might only have a very limited view of many of the issues faced by that community.

A situation identified by one BAME VCS respondent thus:

*"they might be a Chinese Community Group but do they really understand the whole of that community and have the skills to engage and represent them effectively"*

Furthermore it was also suggested that a lack of local and sub-regional BAME VCS representation might also be the result of further assumptions on the part of statutory agencies (local authorities, Primary Care Trusts). This has arisen because some local BAME VCS organisations have seen examples<sup>30</sup> of statutory agencies assuming that because a group represents an African community they are able to reflect accurately the needs of all 'Black' groups when in fact these needs vary across different Black or other BAME groups.

This is a particularly important factor and barrier, given that the Mayor of London's Equalities<sup>31</sup> work highlights that London's population is made up of 42 communities of people, born outside the UK, who number in excess of 10,000 people. These groups will have needs which without representation may not be addressed in ECM, or other policy areas, and therefore service provision particularly across the ECM agenda may not adequately reflect the needs of all communities in London.

Respondents across all those interviewed noted that there is particularly limited representation of new and emerging communities across London - refugees and asylum seekers<sup>32</sup>, and migrants from the expanded accession states of the European Union. Many of these new groups have not been able to organise themselves adequately to engage effectively with ECM developments and delivery, and therefore service provision may not be appropriate to all communities.

**Addressed by:** Wider community group representation on strategy and consultation groups, more direct engagement between statutory organisations and BAME VCS organisations, and more regular review of the community 'make-up' of local authority areas including research on the needs of 'new' community groups and effective dissemination to strategic decision makers. Consideration may also be needed of funding small 'emerging' groups and organisations to foster the

---

<sup>30</sup> This includes information gathered from discussion groups with BAME organisation representatives at an NCB conference on BAME involvement in Children's Trusts on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

<sup>31</sup> London Equalities Commission (2007) 'The State of Equality in London' Mayor of London, London. Available at: [http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities\\_commission/docs/state-of-equality-in-london1.pdf](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities_commission/docs/state-of-equality-in-london1.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Mayor of London (2007) 'London enriched: The Mayor's Draft Strategy for Refugee Integration in London' estimates that 6-7 per cent of London's resident population (0.5 million) are refugees and asylum seekers. For more details see:

<http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/equalities/immigration/docs/ref-int-strategy.pdf>

quicker engagement of 'new' and 'emerging' communities as the diversity of local and sub-regional areas evolves over time.

- **Lack of information on ECM developments** – the final area highlighted by local BAME VCS interview respondents focused upon the difficulty some local organisations felt they had in getting information about ECM developments within their local area. This concern has long been expressed<sup>33</sup> in relation to commissioning opportunities across policy areas not just ECM. The review findings here show that ECM knowledge and awareness levels are low across many of the local BAME VCS organisations interviewed, and it is many of these organisations who are identifying that there is a lack of information about ECM activities that is being made available to them. Sub-regionally and regionally, knowledge and awareness levels of the ECM agenda were higher.

Many local BAME VCS organisations interviewed indicated they were unsure where to find such information and had difficulty understanding the full relevance to their organisation of much of the material they were able to identify.

**Addressed by:** Wider community group representation on strategy and consultation groups, improved signposting of local authority and other statutory organisations ECM activities, and greater dissemination through electronic, written, and presentation media of BAME tailored ECM information through VCS infrastructure organisations. This additional provision of tailored information on ECM policy issues would be developed deliberately for BAME VCS organisations to raise knowledge and awareness levels and identify operational changes required of organisations to participate further in ECM. Particular details on this will be discussed in later sections.

#### **Review Aim 4: Capacity, training and infrastructure needs to support BAME VCS engagement in ECM;**

The findings above and the respondents themselves gave further details of the capacity, training, and infrastructure needs to be addressed to support BAME VCS engagement in ECM. Although presented here from a study of local, sub-regional and regional BAME VCS experiences, the needs highlighted here will also help the wider VCS in its engagement with a significantly changing policy landscape, political drives to engage the VCS more, and the continued implementation of commissioning for future public service delivery<sup>34</sup>.

#### **Capacity Needs**

The local, sub-regional, and regional BAME VCS sector has clear capacity needs to be addressed to support its engagement in ECM strategy and delivery. Our review work shows the key areas to be:

- Further grant funding targeted at increasing staff capacity to engage in ECM activities across local, sub-regional, and regional BAME VCS organisations

---

<sup>33</sup> Tanner, S. (2005) 'Linking Services for BME Homeless Individuals' OSW and ROTA, London. Available at: <http://www.osw.org.uk/info/libraryrecord.asp?rqslID=276> and Tanner, S. (2007) Common Themes on Commissioning the VCS in Selected Local Authorities in Greater London, London Councils. See <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=20082&cat=933> for copy to download.

<sup>34</sup> Tanner, S. (2007) Common Themes on Commissioning the VCS in Selected Local Authorities in Greater London, London Councils. See <http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/doc.asp?doc=20082&cat=933> for copy to download

## **VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

- Additional grant funding for childcare, other caring costs and expenses to enable more volunteers to participate in ECM engagement activities
- Additional tailored capacity building targeted on an organisational basis to work with local BAME VCS organisations. Work would tackle the range of administrative, management, monitoring, and delivery challenges faced by individual organisations and work with organisations to extend their capacity to engage with ECM activities

### **Training and Information Needs**

Whilst local BAME VCS respondents highlighted that they are already aware, or have participated in, a range of training initiatives including workshops, conferences, seminars, and training courses there remain a number of key areas where further training and information provision for local BAME VCS organisations might be developed. These include:

- Lobbying and advocacy work with public sector commissioners
- Understanding policy drivers behind ECM and the influences on commissioning activity
- Understanding children's trusts and emerging service delivery models across the ECM agenda
- Organisational reviews of aims and objectives and identifying the relationship of these to the ECM agenda
- Bid and commissioning response writing, including responding to statutory information requests through the development of risk assessment, financial control, monitoring and evaluation practice
- Proactive VCS engagement with statutory agencies
- Developing effective consultation and needs analysis responses
- Partnership development skills
- Conducting community group consultations
- Presenting and marketing a VCS organisation
- Facilitating and maintaining community networks
- How to develop and maintain multi agency partnerships
- How to be an effective community representative on ECM strategy boards and sub-committees.

A critical element within addressing these training and information needs is the modes and methods of delivery. Several respondents locally and sub-regionally highlighted

## **VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

challenges and barriers to training participation because of the timing and location of the provision.

When scheduling such activities, detailed consideration must be given to who might be excluded by scheduled sessions during regular office hours; how childcare and other caring responsibilities might be covered; how organisations will be covered for the lost staff resource; and how outcomes and information might best be shared across local communities and networks of organisations, particularly for those organisations who may struggle to attend traditional forms of training provision requiring a significant time investment. The critical challenge will be how to identify mechanisms by which other VCS organisations with greater time and other resources might best disseminate training outcomes and information to other resource 'poorer' organisations.

### **Infrastructure Needs**

Responses to capacity and training needs will require further developments of infrastructure. Responses in the discussion groups highlighted that further work on infrastructure will be required to aid the engagement of local BAME VCS organisations in the ECM agenda. These needs to be addressed include:

- Continued strengthening and capacity building of local CVS ECM support and development work
- Provision of dedicated children and young people service support staff in each local authority, including development support to facilitate locally specific infrastructure to underpin ECM engagement activities and ensure an active role for local BAME VCS organisations in that activity
- Further work is required to foster local BAME-led network development including the fostering of partnership working between and across community groups in local authority areas. Our review findings show that there are many local BAME VCS organisations who are unaware how they might join such networks and how they might foster them. Support can be provided via community empowerment network staff, and specialist development officers within existing CVS set ups
- There are clear needs for tailored services that can broker, and advocate on behalf of local and sub-regional BAME VCS organisations. These tailored services need to be targeted at organisations seeking to engage with the ECM agenda and seek to support organisations for a time until they feel their capacity and capabilities have been developed enough to proceed on their own. Generic approaches, whilst useful for raising awareness of developments needed, have yet to be of real assistance in the implementation of what specific organisations might require. Existing infrastructure does not currently address such needs as widely as is needed and there may be scope for further infrastructure developments to provide this kind of support
- In addition to local BAME-led network development, further infrastructure support is needed to lobby, facilitate and provide support for local BAME-led participation and representation on children and young people strategy boards and sub-committees. Even where local BAME VCS representatives are in place further support is needed to widen the cultural and ethnic groups represented by such individuals. This could include support for representatives to gain and collate a wider variety of community

**VCS Engage** - *Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda*

views on ECM developments, or seek to identify ways in which further local BAME groups might join these groups and sub-committees.

A critical way in which these infrastructure needs will be addressed again focuses upon how delivery will occur. Local BAME VCS organisations did not identify any particular preferences for delivery by particular agents – local CVS, other community networks, London-wide or sub-regional agencies. However, they were keen to emphasise that delivery approaches should be tailored to the circumstances in particular local areas and seek to build on existing local BAME VCS engagement infrastructure rather than creating further new structures to take things forward.

**Review Aim 5: Appropriate BAME VCS engagement models to aid the implementation of report recommendations and capacity building activities.**

Work for this review has highlighted a number of models of VCS engagement that will aid the implementation of capacity building work across the BAME VCS.

The first model overleaf has been identified from our interview responses, whilst other models have been identified by literature review work conducted as part of this study.

---

**Model 1: Camden Council BAME VCS Engagement**

---

***Background and Description of Activity***

The children and young people's plan has been running since 2004 and the BAME VCS has been involved from the earliest stages. BAME VCS representatives were involved in the interim board for the strategy.

Since the beginning of 2006, Camden sought to strengthen BAME involvement by seeking greater numbers of BAME representatives not just on the main strategy board, but also on sub-committees around key themes for the local authority.

It was decided that the BAME sector would be allowed to nominate representatives for these posts and that the BAME sector would be invited to vote on those they wished to represent them. Camden Voluntary Action Council (VAC) managed the process on behalf of the council.

Elected representatives are offered detailed inductions on the strategy and how the board operates, they are given further support through Camden VAC to ensure they can adequately represent a wide range of communities across Camden and contribute effectively to board and committee meetings. Representatives are also offered financial support for their time to attend meetings and have their travel expenses covered.

***Why is it a good way to engage the BAME VCS?***

- Early involvement at outset of strategy development
  - Representatives feel valued and able to contribute effectively to meetings and committees
  - Costs for organisations supplying representatives are covered
  - Nomination and selection of representatives has been driven by the sector
  - Representatives note they are listened too and actions have resulted including changes to the overall children and young people plan that resulted from recent review and consultation exercise.
-



---

**Model 2: Tailored Capacity Building<sup>35</sup>**

---

**Background and Description of Activity**

The Rosehill Surestart Children's Centre in Derby has recognised that sustainable services for local people means sustained projects run by the community. Through two specialist community development/ outreach workers they have worked with grassroots community organisations. The work with groups takes place over a long time period, to help them develop constitutions, plans and so on. The work requires a lot of organisational 'hand holding' to 'walk with them' as they develop their ideas. During this time ongoing support is provided to enable the organisations to deliver the service they wanted to create, but they are also drip fed information and knowledge about strategic processes and agendas as they have done it, such that groups have been empowered to lobby the local authority about children's services.

This kind of personal support takes a long time, but it is the key to developing people and ideas into sustainable organisations and programs. Working at the grassroots level with individual families they can also act as a bridge between communities and higher level infrastructure organisations.

**Why is it a good way to engage the BAME VCS?**

- Provision of tailored support flexible to the emerging needs of supported organisations
  - Lasts as long as the organisation needs
  - Wider policy issues and implications can be shared at the most relevant times during service planning and delivery
  - Organisational confidence and capability is built up over time and at a speed that suits the organisation, its available resources and needs at particular stages of its own development
- 

---

<sup>35</sup> Example adapted from: Ainger, A. (2007) 'Mapping Exercise of Black and Minority Ethnic Infrastructure Organisations in the East Midlands' VCS Engage (East Midlands Region), July 2007. See <http://surestartrosehill.com/> for the website for the Rosehill Children's Centre.

---

***Model 3: Supporting Procedure Development<sup>36</sup>***

---

***Background and Description of Activity***

The Nottinghamshire Community Foundation has recognised that groups are struggling with children protection issues and has worked to support these organisations by providing training in child protection issues.

This means they don't have to refuse to fund groups that don't have the required knowledge and procedures but might be able to provide the kinds of services required by users. As a result of conducting the training themselves the Community Foundation has supported a range of providers who might not otherwise have received funding and thousands of individuals have benefited from this training over the last few years, further building the capacity of the VCS to deliver in the East Midlands.

***Why is it a good way to engage the BAME VCS?***

- Expertise and specialist skills and understanding are shared more widely across the sector
  - Potentially good providers are not prevented from service delivery on the basis of procedural considerations
  - Skills development can be tailored to the specific needs of the commissioning organisation
- 

---

<sup>36</sup> Example adapted from: Ainger, A. (2007) 'Mapping Exercise of Black and Minority Ethnic Infrastructure Organisations in the East Midlands' VCS Engage (East Midlands Region), July 2007.

---

**Model 4: Providing Tailored Support Across the VCS<sup>37</sup>**

---

**Background and Description of Activity**

The National Outcomes Programme 2007 – 2009 (NOP) run by the Charities Evaluation Service (CES) is the second phase of a successful Lottery-funded programme that aims to assist voluntary and community sector organisations to demonstrate the contribution they make. This aim is addressed by the provision of a phased, cascade programme of training, information, and mentoring for voluntary and community sector organisations to provide them with tailored one-to-one support. Support is provided by individuals called Outcomes Champions who work with around ten VCS organisations at any one time.

These support arrangements aim to ensure the sustainable development of the skills and abilities of voluntary and community sector organisations to identify, monitor, and report on the outcomes of their work more effectively and prepare the wider voluntary and community sector for the future advent of outcome related funding regimes.

The first National Outcomes Dissemination Programme ran successfully from 2003-2006. This innovative programme was designed to build capacity within the voluntary and community sector in respect of outcomes monitoring. In June 2006, it was 'Highly Commended' at the Charity Awards 2006 and the programme exceeded its key delivery targets by training 74 Outcomes Champions (target 65) and delivering free outcomes training to 1,100 personnel from over 700 Voluntary and Community Organisations (target 500).

It is intended that the two phases of the programme will create a legacy of expertise to last well beyond the lifetime of the programme, and underpin wider engagement of the VCS in commissioning of public service delivery.

**Why is it a good way to engage the BAME VCS?**

- Expertise and specialist skills and understanding are shared more widely across the sector
- Organisations work with an individual over a long period of time building trust and understanding between the parties
- Although targeted at improving approaches to outcomes measurement across the wider VCS, the model would work across networks of BAME VCS organisations seeking to engage in ECM agenda activities

---

The findings outlined in this report show that there is still much work to do to ensure the fullest possible involvement of the VCS, particularly the BAME VCS, in ECM activities. This work is already beginning and the recommendations in **Chapter 2** provide clear insights into actions needed to help take this agenda forward. Critical within this is the further advocacy, brokerage, and facilitation role that VCS Engage and MiNet can take in this to develop and help deliver information sharing, training and development, and ultimately commissioning opportunities for the BAME VCS in London. Only in this way can

---

<sup>37</sup> See [www.outcomesonline.org.uk](http://www.outcomesonline.org.uk) for more details of the evaluation of the first phase work and outlines of future phases of activity.

**VCS Engage** - *Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda*

the ECM agenda then hope to deliver truly 'user led' services for children and young people that appropriately reflect the needs of the diverse London population.

## Appendix One VCS Engage Strands Overview

### **1. Engagement of VCS in Children's Trusts at the strategic level**

#### **a) Training and advice for VCS organisations in the strategic planning and commissioning process**

Following on from three regional consultation events, VCS Engage is hosting training sessions to help VCS organisations understand strategic planning and commissioning within the Every Child Matters (ECM) framework.

There are two training sessions being offered by VCS Engage:

##### **ECM and Your Service**

A two-day training session designed to contextualise the ECM agenda and assist organisations in re-modelling their services in relation to the 5 ECM outcomes.

##### **Managing Your Environment**

A one-day training session examining how VCS organisations can manage their environment through representation, partnership techniques, managing change and resolving conflict.

The pilot training will be carried out in June 2007, the full training programme will begin in September.

#### **b) Support for Local Authorities (LAs) in auditing the effectiveness of their engagement with the VCS**

The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) has completed a baseline study, mapping the level of VCS involvement in the development of CYPPs and highlighting examples of good practice within 11 LA areas. The programme will use the findings from this report to develop case studies that explore methods of good practice and promote models for effective engagement.

VCS Engage is also working on a self-evaluation protocol based on Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA's) stocktake survey, which will help LAs evaluate their current level of engagement with the VCS. Where the evaluation identifies areas for development, the programme will provide individual support to authorities around strengthening collaborative approaches. Piloting of the assessment tool will commence over the coming months.

Regional Development Managers (RDMs), co-ordinated by the National Council for Voluntary Child Care Organisations (NCVCCO), are situated within each of the nine Government Office regions. Their primary role is to establish links and strengthen relations between local VCS organisations, Government Office and LA representatives.

### **2. VCS engagement in service delivery: encouraging shared approaches**

#### **a) VCS skills audit**

VCS Engage has commissioned the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to undertake a skills audit of the VCS in relation to contracting and service delivery. The

**VCS Engage - Supporting Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure and the Engagement in the Every Child Matters Agenda**

audit will look at the extent to which VCS organisations have the skills and knowledge needed, to effectively bid for contracts and secure the commissioning of their services.

The results from the audit will help to establish areas where VCS organisations require further support, and will inform the development of training modules to address the identified skills gaps.

**b) Horizontal and vertical integration**

VCS Engage has commissioned Rainer Rathbone and ICAN, to identify and refine models of collaborative working (horizontal and vertical integration). VCS Engage will deliver seminars for VCS organisations, to examine the findings and explore how they might translate into practice.

**c) Social enterprise**

VCS Engage is working to identify effective examples of social enterprise (SE) within the VCS. The programme is hosting a national conference in September and will be developing materials for VCS organisations on use of the SE model.

**3) Responding to differentiated markets: ensuring all sectors within the CYP's VCS are able to successfully engage in the new framework**

Support will be developed and tailored for 'hard-to-reach' organisations within specific sub-sectors of the VCS. The sub-sectors include; parenting, residential care, children with disabilities, youth services, black and minority ethnic service providers and extended schools.

**4) Development of a strong and sustainable VCS infrastructure**

The RDMs within each of the nine Government Office regions are assisting with the development of local VCS infrastructure networks, and are working with local VCS organisations to identify ongoing support and infrastructure needs.

The RDMs are also supporting the strategic involvement of the VCS within the planning and commissioning process, and are working to support increased co-ordination between the Government Office and the VCS.