

Guiding Hands in a Foreign Land

Community Research into:

**Community and Infrastructure Needs Of
Black & Minority Ethnic,
Newly Arrived,
Refugee & Asylum Seeker,
Faith,
Gypsy & Traveller
Communities in Slough**

**Building Bridges
Additional Support Program for Change Up**

**Slough Race Equality Council
March 2006**

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Executive Summary

It is difficult to summarise the interaction and communication of over one hundred days of consultation with local communities and do justice to each and every one of those participants and contributors.

With the above in mind key factors include:

- Minority communities in Slough are extremely diverse in their heritage, faiths, culture, ethnicity and their needs.
- They have multiple social, health, educational, housing and economical needs.
- Newer arrivals to the town have greater needs including language, knowledge of their rights and understanding what services are available to them.
- There is anger and frustration amongst the most isolated and excluded, that their needs are not being met.
- Many communities are proud and work very hard to help themselves and their own communities to settle into life in Slough. Many are educated and want to work and provide for their families.

Much work needs to be done to support all voluntary community organisations in Slough, but in particular Minority communities who often need greater support for their basic needs before there can be any work done on developing infrastructures.

The main consortia Infrastructure Development Plan, must include dedicated and focused work on the needs of the Black and Minority Ethnic communities. The I-CAN network may be able to help with this in the future, however it is a new network supported by the SREC and currently unfunded.

A full time capacity building officer dealing with first tier needs is vital for the town.

Community Researchers

Slough Race Equality Council employed 8 local people as Community Research Consultants on a sessional basis to outreach and engage local communities. They have shown commitment, courage and initiative throughout the project, from the training, to outreach and carrying out complex and sometimes difficult meetings with groups and individuals across Slough. Slough is very proud of their achievements and hopefully other organisations will now invest further into using their skills and training up more local people to become Community Consultants!

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Our sincere gratitude again goes to all our participants - **all individuals and community groups** for their tireless efforts which they put in the co-ordination, communication, logistics on the ground, and the warm reception. We would like to acknowledge the assistance of the rest of the community groups/members, individuals and families, who were very helpful throughout the research process.

Some of the communities we contacted in Slough:

- Gypsies & Traveller
- East & Central European
- Middle Eastern
- North and East African, - Central, West and Southern Africa,- African Caribbean
- South East Asian, - South Asian

Definition of 'Communities'

The term 'community' suggests Individuals and groups from a particular ethnic or national background. This does not necessarily mean there is cohesion or homogeneity within these groups, let alone structured community and voluntary sector groups. Many 'categories' set by the government actually have different languages, ethnic groups, cultures and religions, and may even have come from a background where they are at war with another group labelled in the UK as being the 'same' community. SREC uses this term lightly to suggest both individuals and groups from a particular background but makes no assumptions of similarity or differences between them.

Ethnic monitoring or community categories used in this research have been deliberately widened beyond the census. Indeed many Census categories such as 'Black African' are wholly inaccurate, distorting and mostly ineffective in extracting useful information for identifying disadvantage, discrimination or service access. SREC has advocated the use of self-definition when recording racial or ethnic background/ identity.

'Faith Communities' is also difficult and controversial category. The majority of people from all backgrounds would say they have a faith, many of which it is integral to their daily life, but would not necessarily separate them from people of other backgrounds or ethnicity. However, there are distinct Faith organisations providing frontline and infrastructure services to their communities and often Mosques and Churches are seen as the Hub of a community. Likewise Islamophobia is becoming a tangible and serious issue for Muslims in Slough. Thus SREC has focused on this as a separate issue but notes that it cannot be extrapolated from other identity issues.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Newly Arrived Communities. 'Newly arrived' includes both Refugees and Asylum Seekers and also people who have emigrated and settled in Slough for other reasons.

Participatory Learning & Action (PLA) Methods - Training was given to the researchers on how to use the Participatory Learning Action (PLA) tool to involve the participants by Kate Grant and John Rowley from Staffordshire University. All qualified with an NVQ (2) in Participatory Methods.

"PLA is an approach using creative and innovative tools and techniques, to directly involve and engage people, whatever their background, knowledge or literacy levels. PLA values the knowledge and experience of local people and their ability to come up with solutions about issues and problems that affect them. Many of the research methods used in PLA are visual and creative opportunities for local people to participate in discussions at a level they are comfortable with."

Responses from local communities about the Change Up Research - Respondents noted that from the outset, Change Up has not been designed to meet the needs of such minority communities and people feel that they are again being lumped together as one community. To most, the concepts are abstract, language is jargon, structures irrelevant, national Hubs too far away, and it is being perceived as either a funding source or a talk shop. Even with grass roots participatory involvement, people felt that there was too much consultation and not enough action.

'Do not ask when you do not want to hear the answer' (eastern European)

Many communities' representatives (especially groups) I spoke with took this opportunity to express their feelings of frustration over this whole process of any 'authority' asking them about their needs and problems.

Communities' Hierarchy of Need - Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that basic food, shelter and safety needs must come first before more complex community systems and structures are

formed. New, deprived and disadvantaged communities in Slough show this to be true, and this must be taken into account when developing communities and VCO infrastructure.

'If you need a whole research project to find out that people need jobs and homes and understanding then you have been probably living on a different planet.'

Few BME VCOs in Slough are formalised or structured with governance procedures and funding. Most BME VCOs and RCOs in Slough are informal groups or merely individuals who are empowering themselves and their communities to take action against their difficulties and try to assist their communities to access basic services. As one small group stated, *'We seem to be doing the work of the public services for free'* (Somali respondent)

There must also be an acknowledgement first of these basic needs in addition to the support needed to bring these individuals and new groups to the point where Infrastructure becomes relevant.

Social and Community Needs

Many BME VCOs are either a group of individuals or loosely structured. Many start through concerns that their Communities do not get access to local services such as housing, employment education, safety and health. Indeed, the research unearthed mostly concerns about **social community needs** for their communities and their organisations, so these are detailed and tackled in addition to VCO Infrastructure needs as defined by Change Up.

N.B. The following points are only a snapshot of some of the issues and needs raised by respondents.

EDUCATION

- Lack of understanding about UK systems
- Waiting lists for school places – both primary and secondary
- Need for extra support for children underachieving and excluded
- Development and support of after-school clubs that seem to exist and run in isolation and without support from education service providers
- Need for training for volunteer community 'teachers'
- Need for positive role models across different communities

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

- Many thousands of people from BME communities are living in economic poverty in Slough. Many are in debt.
- Need to recognise the importance of building programmes around the learner, including More courses could be run in community based locations
- told that they are 'overqualified' for many positions they feel capable of managing.
- Language barriers are seriously impeding job access:
- *'...I want to work but I can't because I don't have National Insurance Number...I can't get National Insurance when I don't have a job...'* (Polish respondent)
- *'....Work Permits should be given to asylum seekers'* (Albanian/Kosovan respondent)

HEALTH

- Lack of interpreters - Use of children friends or family as interpreters
- Difficulty registering and getting appointments with GPs

- **Mental Health** is another area where people are unaware of or cannot access appropriate help.

HOUSING, WELFARE & BENEFITS

- lack of interpreting big issues at Job Centre Plus
- lack of accessibility to benefits advice
- form filling very time consuming and confusing – public services should provide assistance
- EU new arrivals unable to get mortgages as they are not seen as sound borrowers because of their 'unstable' leave status
- There are extremely concerning housing issues arising across all BME communities, particularly for those newly arrived who are being exploited by private landlords and housing associations
- Sub-standard accommodation
- Housing benefits shortfall
- Problems shrugged off by One Stop Shop
- Increase in destitution of asylum seekers
- Need for emergency night shelter
- *The rate of illegal eviction is very high among Somali Community.*
- *Assaults committed by landlords against Somali tenants is very common*
- Lack of permanent sites and stopping places for gypsies and Travellers

POLICING AND CRIME

- Lack of interpreters with police
- Difficulties at front desk
- Feeling that crime and anti-social behaviour in the community is rising because people have very little money and youth have little else to do.
- Drugs and prostitution are of particular concern

IMMIGRATION & LEGAL SERVICES

- Bureaucracy – confusing, complicated, delays
- *'...to sort out for example Job Seekers Allowance can take sometimes like two months. And what do you do? You don't eat for two months?...'*
- difficulty accessing **legal aid or free legal advice**
- Lack of understanding of rights as a foreigner
- **'Second-class'** status while being asylum seeker/refugee/immigrant (restrictions on employment, education etc.).

RACISM AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Racism and discrimination is occurring across the town and in various direct and indirect ways. There is also racism within minority communities against other communities, and feeling like they are isolated, oppressed. Specific instances of direct verbal abuse and attacks were commonly mentioned but commonly lack of confidence in reporting.

Islamophobia is real and tangible for Muslims in Slough, with attacks and verbal abuse, being called 'terrorists' for wearing hijabs and even Sikhs having their turbans pulled off them.

LANGUAGE BARRIERS

- **Need for Widespread INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION in Public Services**
- Language barriers play a role on many different levels.

▪ ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES

- Waiting lists
- Language, culture and gender specific classes requested from all communities
- Lack of funding for books and travel

CULTURAL, HERITAGE & LEISURE ACTIVITIES (arts & sports)

BME VCOs generally want to develop services, events and venues to retain their languages and cultural traditions and to celebrate important religious and cultural days in their own way. With no free council community facilities or youth centres, and with no dedicated LA community development officers, they are struggling and most have to pay for venues, events and activities from their own funds.

WOMEN

Women of most newly arrived communities are even more excluded some with limited education and without work they look after young children and for many are afraid to leave their homes and find it difficult to access female only activities and English classes.

Women from more established communities are keen to find respectable well paid work that can fit into their family lives –flexible hours and part-time work

YOUTH

All BME VCOs are concerned particularly about increasing social and cohesion issues for their youth. Many parents are concerned about the rise in numbers of youth involved in drugs and related issues of crime.

There is lack of accessible facilities for all young people, but also culturally sensitive environments for young women and girls.

“The youth and community centres sit empty for most of the week and we aren’t allowed to use them unless we pay loads of money. Why can’t they given us the centres to run we would make sure they were busy every day of the week”

INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS OF DIVERSE FRONTLINE ORGANISATIONS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CAPACITY BUILDING

All BME and new Communities felt that they were central in building a voluntary and community sector, but needed dedicated support, advice, guidance to help build their visions and turn them into reality. This is community development and is the critical underpinning to the success or failure of any VCS in Slough in the next 10 years.

In Slough the SREC and SCVS have identified three different levels of need to support and develop the Community and Voluntary Sector, some of which precede VCS Infrastructure needs of Change Up and which must be fulfilled in order to sustain a voluntary sector at all. Tiers 1 & 2 are at critical point in Slough and therefore Slough will focus on Community Development as a key Infrastructure Service in its own right.

1st Tier Community Development: Support for individual volunteers and community activists to become empowered and confident to take forward community activities and advocate for others. This very often precedes the formation of a VCO through bringing others together to form a group. Many BME community activities at this stage in Slough.

2nd Tier Community Development:: Support and capacity building for Community groups to emerge, grow, develop, and become successful. Most BME VCOs are small and newly emerging groups that cannot access sufficient community development support in this regards.

3^d Tier Community Development:: (*Change Up*) Provision and co-ordination of VCS infrastructure services. This applies to a few large VCOs in Slough only.

- Meaningful community development work as needed – with sustained funding for Community Development workers to outreach and assist capacity building of groups. Long term work and equal partnership critical as trust takes a long time and can be lost quickly

Commitment to Community Development in Slough as a necessary and invaluable tool is essential. There will be NO sustainable communities without full & comprehensive community development infrastructure and support. Community Development should be the basis of developing a culture of enablement and empowerment for VCOs, this is particularly necessary when dealing with BME VCOs and communities.

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Funding is by far the main issue that all BME, Faith VCOs and RCOs mention as the most important to them and the main barrier that is holding them back from developing and delivering services to the communities.

In addition to requesting support from capacity building officers and funding advisers, issues that respondents focused on included:

Financial Management of Projects and Organisations

Lack of understanding:

- of need for Full cost recovery
- of how to develop a history of good financial management
- Treasurer's responsibilities (often Treasurers in small organisations do not have confidence in financial matters – or the Chair, frontline delivery officer and Fundraiser is the same person!
- Understanding how to manage and record Income & Expenditure

Funding needs for BME VCOs

- Necessity of **LONG TERM CORE FUNDING** – including administration costs, premises and management.
- Likewise **CONTINUATION FUNDING of successful VCO projects** is crucial
- provision of **funding to enable better sustainability and improvement/development of services by BME VCOs**
- **SEED CORN/START UP FUNDING:** Because of the stringent and difficult bureaucracy, many BME VCOs decide to remain as volunteers and are unable therefore to access funding to do their work.
- **Grants for small groups and individuals** such as Community Champions have been very successful in assisting the development of BME VCOs
- All groups cited that they needed Funding for staff: *“People who are running groups want to be paid”*
- Long term funding should not be dependant on ‘emergency’ or ‘unpopularity’ of situation it should be based on needs of the community
- Need for financial assistance to get groups to grow especially to meet the basic organisational financial need such as Telephone bills, Volunteers expenses and to pay staff

Fundraising Information, Support, Training and Advice

With a two year CEMVO project, a few organisations have been assisted to develop their infrastructure, policies and practices which has enable them to access better funding, However, as yet another short term project, this service is coming to an end in June 2006. There is a need to mainstream this service as a full time permanent role.

Other funding issues

Funding criteria often excludes BME 'FAITH/RELIGIOUS' VCOs from the outset, when they provide crucial outcomes and benefits and development of local BME communities.

Competition for funding Local Grants means few are successful. More established organisations get repeat funding and new ones get small one off grants if they are lucky.

Lottery Funding is considered Haraam (illegal) for some Muslims as it is rooted in gambling.

Need to RING FENCE resources for the BME sectors

Increase availability of local points of funding access

Easier application process – language barriers, plain English and jargon not understood.

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- Most BME VCOs recognised that in order to deliver their aims and objectives use of IT is inevitable. As well as high need for IT they reported also low access to solutions regarding IT problems.

All groups had ICT needs, including

- Basic equipment e.g. PCs, printers, internet access, software, anti-virus protection
- Many VCOs requested provision for a open computer centre with a computer literate worker so that the organisations can use it any time without the fear of being responsible for the safety of equipment (Communities are not aware of ICT resources at SCVS)
- Training and Expertise
- Affordable/free professional IT consultants/volunteers providing advice, maintenance and other services for IT needs of VCOs
- *'...IT support, maintenance can not be delivered on voluntary basis, it needs to be professional, and volunteers don't have time to answer all the demand for help...'*

Assistance with Information Needs

- Gathering and delivering information
- Publicity & Marketing
- Advertising, leaflets
- Information about other groups and services
- Useful links needed
- Some requested an advice centre where their voice can be heard and this should be in more cultural and sensitive environment.

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Volunteers are usually the only workforce that BME VCOs have. Volunteers sometimes work more hours and unsocial hours than paid workers can work. These volunteers have made a huge contribution to the service delivery of the VCS, without whom, these organisations and groups would not exist.

But these organisations can give very little back to their volunteers except experience. And with no funding, most BME VCOs have no guarantee of their existence, yet practically all BME VCOs in Slough rely on volunteers to deliver any kind of service. This works fine for a while, but this

statement underpins the fundamental problem with expecting VCOs to remain volunteer-led indefinitely.

“...how long do I volunteer (for the project) five or ten years? No, that will have to change (to a paid position)...”

- Sustainability and retention difficulties – keeping volunteers interested and motivated and losing volunteers to paid employment. Many BME VCOs state that after even many years of relying on volunteers, they need to pay their volunteers to be sustainable.
- Lack of funding to give volunteers expenses, remuneration
- Skills, time and resources needed to Support and manage volunteers
- Recruiting difficulties, creating **more awareness** about the **sources available for taking volunteers** or organisations that support volunteering – *“There is a need of volunteers and sources of volunteers need to be promoted more, as community groups don’t seem to know much about them”*
- There were widespread concerns in getting the younger generation involved in volunteering
- Volunteer training and development plans - *We need more opportunities for training and specialised courses for the volunteers*
- Lack of understanding for need of Insurance
- Appropriate committee members with a diversity of skills

ACCOMODATION & ACCESS TO FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND PREMISES

Premises, Facilities and Office Space

Lack of premises is a major issue from most BME VCOs.

Even for those very few that have been forthright in getting applications and letters of support, they have struggled to pay the SBC rent and still find the premises is unsuitable for their purpose, scruffy and unfurnished.

Many hope they could share facilities and premises but do not know where to go to make this happen

Lack of access to community and youth centre facilities – especially for those unfunded and volunteer based groups – doing activities funded out of their own pockets, which is unsustainable

Childcare

Lack of crèche facilities slough-wide

Lack of awareness about SureStart and other childcare providers

There is a shortage of registered childminders within specific community groups.

GOVERNANCE

- The term Governance is rarely understood, particularly by developing VCOs.
- Many of the BME voluntary community organisation have stated that they need skills, training and development for their management committees
- Organisations vary from informal without any documentation or policies to formal registered charities.
- Need for Training and support officers to help existing and new organisations understand and develop their :
 - Project Management
 - Organisational Management
 - Strategic Planning
 - Understanding needs of clients
 - Developing vision and direction
 - Understanding about the need for core standards

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Needs in all organisations to assist the development of their 'workforce', which includes volunteers, paid staff and management committees and trustees.
- Majority of the organisations do not have paid staff and so they do not see how they can develop their workforce.
- Need for support for fund raising to gain paid workforce
- Requests for free training to develop skills
- Those who have accessed SCVS and SBC community training have found it useful. Particular requests for more fundraising training.
- But still lack of awareness of what free training is available
- Community Training Partnership is un-funded and SCVS struggling to keep this going and SBC Community Training says it can offer any training to groups over 8 people but this project is also unsustainable

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

- All organisations would like to do more for their communities
- However most of them are stretched to breaking point, working long hours and still not able to meet all the needs of their communities
- Again with out funding, volunteers and other resources, the organisations do not have the necessary skills to improve

PARTNERSHIPS & NETWORKS

"I wonder some times if this small room is the Slough Borough Council customer service centre because we are doing the jobs suppose to be doing by statutory bodies. We filling housing benefit forms, housing registrar forms, school enrolment forms, JSA forms, child tax credit forms, plus all the consumer problems.

All the time we receiving telephone calls from statutory bodies saying can you interpret for us or can we send this person we don't understand what they want. It could be better if each department sent hear a worker to help these service users. We did not get any support from council, or no funding for our core projects which can secure our sustainability.

It could be better if our expertise can be integrated into the council work force, this will save time, money and resources and service users will have better choice and care... It is very hard to get co-operation from statutory bodies, although we doing job for them."

In Slough, many BME VCOs perceive that they:

- have no real partnerships with public or private sectors
- have poor relationships with other BME VCOs
- have strong connections with the communities they serve
- are excluded on boards of every sector
- have no representatives on any influential decision making body
- have no real power or influence
- can deliver appropriate services if they are given resources (But concerns too - (e.g. VCO doesn't want to work like a business like the private sector)
- Have been denied access to opportunities, funding, information and knowledge about changes.
- Could Share facilities, buildings
- Miss out on hearing about opportunities for funding and/or training. In addition they are too busy fire fighting helping people in the community to be able to make time for this vital linkage of working in the town.

Other issues of partnership raised:

- Unequal power of influence of different partners
- Lots of Bureaucracy in public sector
- Is it what you know or who you know!
- Is our Independence compromised?
- Scepticism about conflicts of interest and political agendas
- Different cultures and ways of working in different organisations
- Perception of lack of support from SBC, SCVS and SREC in some communities, others have found them useful.
- Community volunteers and activists often feel isolated and unsupported. Some have found the newly set up Inter-Community Activists Network (I-CAN) useful and want it to continue (estimated £10,000 per annum to develop and support the network for near future)

SBC

- Various issues – request for more direct and practical support from BME VCOs
- Lack of direct communication
- SBC dominates agenda and meetings – the Local Strategic Partnership *is* SBC?

SCVS

- Information, Outreach, development & capacity building work valuable - need for more 'practical service delivery' in this area
- Many different communities commented that the door is a severe barrier to access. Wish to talk directly to someone not through the intercom.

SREC

- Many people did not know of the existence of SREC or about their rights in the area of racism
- Empowerment training and Community Champions Fund seen as valuable

Acknowledgements

Community Researchers

Our sincere thanks must go first to the people who made this project happen – our Community Researchers. This report is made up mostly from evidence, comments and views that they have individually reported on. (Although we are unable to reference every quote and comment, you know who you are!) Copies of their individual reports are available on request. They have shown commitment, courage and initiative throughout the project, from the training, to outreach and carrying out complex and sometimes difficult meetings with groups and individuals across Slough.

Slough is very proud of your achievements and hopefully other organisations will now invest further into using their skills and training up more local people to become Community Consultants!

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Community Participants

Message from the Community Researchers...

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Participatory Methods Trainers

Thanks to two wonderful trainers, **John Rowley** and **Kate Gant** who brought new creative ways of engaging, involving and listening to people in Slough. You were patient and innovative with us and are welcome anytime!

Colleagues

Thanks to the SREC and SCVS Teams who all contributed in many different ways to this project. You know who you are! In particular, to

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Jonathan Blackburn, Warren Feagins
Development Workers Naweeda, Davina, Mary, Jesal
and the SREC admin team Krissy and Nadeem

Also special thanks to **Liz Hill** who recently passed away, but was passionate about helping people in Slough and made our PLA training so much more fun!

Thanks also to **Su Ormerod** from CCB for her tireless work with Gypsy and Traveller communities and for her expertise and insight into this project.

Abbreviations

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
NAC	Newly Arrived Communities
R&AS	Refugees and Asylum Seekers
C&EEC	Central and Eastern European Communities
RCO	Refugee Community Organisation
VCO	Voluntary Community Organisation
FDO	Frontline Delivery Organisation
IO	Infrastructure Organisation
CR	Community Researcher
SREC	Slough Race Equality Council
SCVS	Slough Council for Voluntary Services
SRS	Slough Refugee Support
SVB	Slough Volunteer Bureau
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
CCB	Community Council for Berkshire
CEMVO	Council for Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations
GOSE	Government Office South East
SBC	Slough Borough Council
LA	Local Authority
SPCT	Slough Primary Care Trust
GP	General Practitioner
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action (Methods and tools used)
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
PC	Personal Computer
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
CARROs	Community and Race Relations Officers (Police)
PC	Personal Computer
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages

Concepts and Terminology in this report

Definition of 'Communities'

The term 'community' suggests Individuals and groups from a particular ethnic or national background. This does not necessarily mean there is cohesion or homogeneity within these groups, let alone structured community and voluntary sector groups. Many 'categories' set by the government actually have different languages, ethnic groups, cultures and religions, and may even have come from a background where they are at war with another group labelled in the UK as being the 'same' community. SREC uses this term lightly to suggest both individuals and groups from a particular background but makes no assumptions of similarity or differences between them.

Ethnic monitoring and community categories used in this research have been deliberately widened beyond the census. Indeed many Census categories such as 'Black African' are wholly inaccurate, distorting and mostly ineffective in extracting useful information for identifying disadvantage, discrimination or service access. SREC has advocated the use of self-definition when recording racial or ethnic background/ identity. SREC has a best practice briefing on ethnic monitoring in public service delivery (Available upon request)

Monitoring is still however a sensitive and misunderstood issue. In fact many communities (particularly African and Caribbean) commented that they felt ethnicity or the term 'black' can be used against them as a form of racism and discrimination and suggested that identity depends on culture not colour as it hinders their development. African participants felt that their identity depended on culture, and that continent and country should rather be used instead of colour. SREC notes it is important to specify how ethnic monitoring information will be used or shared and that it should remain anonymous and used only for positive action purposes.

'Faith Communities' is also difficult and controversial category. The majority of people from all backgrounds would say they have a faith, many of which it is integral to their daily life, but would not necessarily separate them from people of other backgrounds or ethnicity. However, there are distinct Faith organisations providing frontline and infrastructure services to their communities and often Mosques and Churches are seen as the Hub of a community. Likewise Islamophobia is becoming a tangible and serious issue for Muslims in Slough. Thus SREC has focused on this as a separate issue but notes that it cannot be extrapolated from other identity issues.

Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Newly Arrived Communities

'Newly arrived' includes both Refugees and Asylum Seekers and also people who have emigrated and settled in Slough for other reasons.

Slough Refugee Support is the main frontline VCO supporting refugee communities that could serve as a specialist Refugee infrastructure organisation, although there are numerous FDOs emerging across communities. This research has not been extensive enough to gain information about all newly arriving communities in Slough but provides good anecdotal evidence to show that all infrastructure plans for both VCO and public services must seriously acknowledge the extent and diversity of their service users/communities in the area.

Concept of Voluntary Sector

Difficulties also arose during interviews when using the word **voluntary organisation/work**. It is well established within British society but it does not make much sense for people from communities such as Central and Eastern Europe where voluntary sector is a new concept, and systems and sectors are different.

Introduction to Minority, Newly Arrived & Excluded Communities in Slough

Gypsies & Travellers

Humans traditionally in history have been nomadic or transient, and currently Britain is (debatably) free to move around. Yet people in Britain who are nomadic have serious difficulties to access basic services and face serious racism and discrimination on a daily basis even though they are protected as a distinct ethnic group within society.

This category of 'Gypsies and Travellers' is abstract, and encompasses many very diverse peoples, who must not be lumped together as one community. Many would self-define themselves in different ways, for example, some might be '**English Gypsies**', '**Roma Gypsies**' or '**Travellers of Irish Heritage**'. This category might also encompass people who live in **caravans**, in **mobile homes**, who work on **Fairgrounds** or who 'continuously cruise' on **boats** or who are from a centuries-old cultural heritage of boating and trading culture. Other might include people who live and work to repair **roads and motorways** and live a transient life.

Some people might wish to call themselves 'Travellers', some are beginning to own the 'Gypsy' heritage but others reject the label of Travellers or Gypsies. Although 'Western based', their dress, cultures, values, languages, gender roles, celebrations and ways of life can be very different. Experience has shown that it can be difficult, valueless and even counter-productive to force different communities to work together.

There are no legal stopping places, although Travellers frequently visit the area. There is one residential site in Datchet, and many individuals have been forced to settle into houses in the area which has its own difficulties. It is unknown how many sites there are across Berkshire, when there are private sites that are unaccounted for. CCB may have some mapping information through their accommodation project.

Some group together as fairly large 'communities' and others are merely individuals or families, often unaccounted for and ignored by society. Some traditional Traveller communities have strong family units, and sibling relationships, spend time together and often live a simple lifestyle. Some are nomadic and some are settled. They may have different social structures and may be livelier than the traditional British accepted norms. Some communities live by a 'cash or trading culture' which again is misunderstood and out of context for outsiders. Yet suspicion is often unfounded as many pay taxes, including council tax.

Some Travellers are very visual and use a lot of non-verbal communication and will assess others and make decisions based on visual evidence and small details. There is a huge issue of trust of outsiders and feelings that people are there to question them and take their knowledge. However it is a wrong, even racist assumption that Gypsies and travellers are either illiterate or unintelligent – many are very educated, although not in the traditional way, and although problems of educational under-achievement do exist, the wider community could learn a lot from their honour, creativity and inventiveness.

Gypsy and Traveller communities are rarely organised into formal VCOs and rather support themselves in informal ways. With problems of illiteracy and in talking with partners and dedicated outreach workers with these communities, it was clear that the language and agenda of Change Up had no relevance, no tangible results or resources for these communities in the format presented by the government. Plus, with such short term work over 5 months, it was clear that there would be limited gain and a huge negative impact on these people, even creating further

barriers, raising expectations that could not be fulfilled and infringing their privacy in the name of 'ticking a box' gaining information about social and community needs that are well documented.

Many people feel they want to be on the periphery of today's society and feel their culture is being eroded. As the government already has much information on the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, the question was asked 'why ask questions you know the answers to?'

Change Up and Infrastructure needs are irrelevant to them. Change Up provides another formalised structure or system that Gypsies and Travellers will find hard to fit into. Services and the Change Up agenda should check its agenda to ask whether it is aiming for integration or stopping their way of life.

Central and Eastern European Communities (C&EEC)

Slough participants in this research included people from **Kosovo (Albanian), Poland, Romania, Roma Gypsies, the Czech Republic, Hungary and other places.** However, there is also evidence of people from the following countries currently living and newly arriving in Slough: **Slovakia, Moldova, Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia), Ukraine, Former Yugoslavia (Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia) and Russia.**

It must be noted that it is important to further research the geographical-political and national status of people from Central and Eastern Europe and to get it right. As there have been wars and important political changes in this part of the world in recent years, the national and ethnic identity of people is just as important to them as for anyone else in the world. For example, although Kosovo is not an independent country, people might self-define themselves as being from such. It sends a very negative message to people from C&E Europe when we do not acknowledge that Yugoslavia no longer exists, that Ukrainians are different from Russians or that there is no longer a Czechoslovakia. More critical, it is important for public and voluntary services to acknowledge their differences and needs.

With over 90% of participants being born and brought up abroad and most also being newly arrived, there is little real knowledge about these 'communities' in British society. People from C&EEC also do not identify themselves as 'community'.

'What do you mean by Romanian community? Community...it's always my friends and people I know...' (Romanian respondent)

'What is that Hungarian community? Do you mean Hungarian people living here?' (Hungarian respondent)

Some countries of Central and Eastern Europe became in 2004 part of European Union, some are currently still outside the EU. Most participants came from 'ex-communist' countries, which then became 'Socialist' after the Second World War, abandoning it around 1989-1990.

There is no common language or culture for C&EEC despite similarities. Central and Eastern Europe region covers countries with Christian as well as Muslim religions as majority indigenous faiths.

Roma Gypsies

Roma Gypsies and Travellers also do not necessarily identify themselves as one group/community but rather as several communities. Most in Slough have come from Romania but this is not their only country of origin. Roma Ethnic groups are spread throughout Europe and the whole world. They are commonly defined as similar in ethnic origin and culture but are actually not common in country of origin or language.

Roma may be nomadic as well as settled depending on particular community and its tradition. They have a wide range of different religious backgrounds, and appear to have become Pentecostal in recent times. Although in Romania there are differing regional groups of RG who have 'historical differences', in Slough they get along.

Although Roma speak Romanian, they prefer to speak their own languages which have many dialects although in Slough they can communicate with one another adequately.

Like British and Irish Travelling people, there is no formal level of organisation within this community as the informal organisation of families or sites is strong enough. At the same time it makes it more difficult for 'outsiders' to approach community and help them benefit from what is available. Roma families are traditionally large and RG marry young. Size can range from 5-20 people.

As visible minorities, for centuries, in Europe (from 15th century) Roma have been seen and defined as foreign/strange in each and every country and society, and as minorities have faced profound, ideological opposition from majority cultures. Even though the current regime in Romania is outwardly accepting of Roma, they still wish to leave the country.

An estimated 800 - 1,300 Romanians live in Slough. Roma Gypsies make up only 30% of the total local Romanian population since mass deportation in 2002. (70% Romanian Nationals) The Asylum Team still assists many unaccompanied minors.

Romanian Nationals

If Romania joins the EU which many expect it to in January 2007, many more Romanians will come to Slough with work permits. Since Slough already has a significant Romanian population, it is likely that those entering the UK will come here in order to live alongside relatives, friends, and acquaintances.

Religions are estimated as 86% Romanian Orthodox (Christian), 5% Roman Catholic, 3.5% Protestant, 1% Greek-Catholic, 0.3% Muslim and 0.2% Jewish. The national language is Romanian.

There are no Romanian VCOs.

Polish Communities

Anecdotal evidence suggests that around 1,000 (approx. 200 families) settled in Slough after World War II and over the last 6 years (and especially since May 2004 EU expansion) the number of newly-arrived Polish communities, that have arrived could be as much as 6,000. The latter population however fluctuates since most are economic migrants – many of them stay here during the summer period and then return to Poland. Although ethnic groups within Poland may also speak their own languages, the population generally speaks the Polish language.

There are a few established Polish community groups and Church, but the new Polish community is yet to organise itself to any formalised groups.

Middle Eastern Communities

There are individuals and families in Slough from the following Middle-Eastern countries: **Afghanistan, Iraq, Kurdish people (from Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran), Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.** Many are newly arrived, and are here for a variety of reasons. Some, like the Kurds, are refugees fleeing oppressive regimes, others fleeing economic and social hardships.

Afghans in Slough have also come from many years of war and oppression. With very committed volunteers working to try to bring an estimated 5 different ethnic Afghani groups together and provide support to these isolated people. This group has no resources, funding, premises but has enthusiasm and hopes to secure premises, funding, volunteers and support training for volunteers and management committee.

Likewise, an emerging Arab Welfare Association which typical of many other BME VCOs is constituted charitable organisation managed by volunteers, but with no funding, resources, office space or paid staff.

North and East African Communities

There is a sizeable and growing East African community in Slough from **Eritrea, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan & Tanzania**, plus families from Northern African countries like **Algeria**. Most of these are refugees and asylum seekers fleeing war torn countries. A few Somali and East African volunteer-based VCOs are struggling to survive and support thousands of newly arrived people in Slough.

Somalia

Anecdotal evidence suggests over 3,000 Somalis live in Slough, the first arriving around 1999 and the first British-born Somali was most likely born in 2000. Again, no official statistics exist. Family sizes can range, with one Somali suggesting the average no. of children per family is 4.

The National language is Somali which is written using a modernised roman script. Arabic is also in use, whilst English and Italian are also spoken by some, plus other languages such as Dutch or French, particularly if those people have lived in those countries previously. Some minority groups have their own languages. It is Somali however which acts as the common language amongst the peoples of Somalia.

Somalis have fled around the world seeking refuge from over 40 years of civil war in Somalia (IND report). Those who are trying to settle and build a new life in Slough are struggling to make ends meet.

Somalis in Slough are mainly Sunni Muslim (although these have tribal and cultural differences) small Roman Catholic minority. Somalis come from different clans, geographical locations, and have various tribal, cultural and political differences, and these can undermine community cohesion, and therefore, as with any 'nationality', Somalis must not be lumped together as 'one community'. Somali VCOs reflect this.

There are a few Somali and East African associations and new Sudanese group all volunteer-led, unfounded or with seed funding and aiming to serve different purposes and meet different needs. Yet still, services and Funders are struggling to see why there should be different Somali groups. Each Somali VCO/ RCO should be supported to exist and develop in its own right.

Central, West and Southern African Communities

Although the African continent is often seen as one continent – as in the census categories – this is misleading. The very diverse African communities are not often familiar with each other's backgrounds, although some cultures and traditions are similar, for example, food, dress and marriage customs. In Slough there are different dialects and languages spoken, but English is commonly understood.

In Slough there are **West African** people from **Ghana, Togo, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Niger, Senegal and Guinea, plus others**. Nigerians, Ivory Coast, Ghana and Togo are inter-related and share similar traditions.

Central and Southern African communities encountered by the Researchers included **Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Malawi and South Africa**, although there are other countries also represented locally. Both **black and white south Africans** have been arriving in Slough since the end of Apartheid over 10 years ago and more recently from Zimbabwe due to land ownership issues and political asylum.

As with most BME communities, again, no official statistics of the African population in Slough have been collated by any local or central source. However, sizeable populations exist without acknowledgement. For example, it is estimated that almost 5000 Ghanaians live in Berkshire.

All African communities strive to find employment and are proactive in supporting their own communities to survive. There are a few small and emerging African Community groups.

African Caribbean Communities

The African Caribbean communities make the largest minority of the Black or Black British communities (4.96%) in Slough. Of which it is estimated between 2% and 3% of Slough's population identify as having a heritage from various islands in the Caribbean live in Slough, including **Anguila Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts, St Lucia, and others**. Each has its own distinct cultural identity and flavour, which the people are very proud of and wish to retain. The Caribbean Communities have been in Slough since the 50's and are now second or third generation UK born citizens.

These communities had for decades been the back bone of the NHS in the town and in recent years there has been a marked reduction in numbers of younger generations choosing the NHS as a career choice.

Some Churches are seen as the 'hub of the community', and there are various African Caribbean VCOs, mostly self-sufficient, focusing on young people, mentoring, education, and faith groups.

There are also a growing number of members of the African Caribbean community converting to Islam and Slough has an established group of followers of the Nation of Islam.

South East Asian Communities

South East Asian residents include **Chinese, Japanese, Filipino** and others and again, incorporate extremely diverse cultures, languages and traditions.

Filipino Communities

Even though the Community Researcher for this area came from Southeast Asia they did not know all the different cultures and traditions. The **Philippine** archipelago is divided into three parts, Luzon in the north, Vizayas in central part and Mindanao in the south. And there are 87 dialects all together – the Researcher knew four of these, her national language being Tagalog. English language is the medium of instructions in schools. There is an estimated 40 - 50,000 Filipinos in London and a rough estimate of Filipinos in Slough is 1000 including those who just arrived recently although some have been in Slough since 1970.

According to CFMW (Commission for the Filipino Migrant Workers) by: Ms Teresita C. Leus, Pilipino migrant workers came to Britain in large numbers during the 1970's, in a response to a short lived labour shortage during this boomed period. According to the UK Department of Employment, 20,226 work permits were issued to Filipinos between 1968 and 1980. Some 47 % of the work permits were issued for those who came to work in the hospitals and welfare homes as hospital auxiliaries, catering workers and to nurse trainees.

Some Filipinos have language barriers but many speak English. A couple of new VCOs are emerging as trusted people are beginning to lead.

Chinese Communities

Chinese communities are commonly much excluded and pride themselves on being self-sustaining. They do not usually mix with other groups for various reasons. They often group themselves together and trusted persons become leaders. These include Chinese and Japanese. Even with dedicated outreach work, Chinese communities were difficult to speak to. A familiar Chinese, Mandarin speaking outreach worker is often the key to building trust. Older people particularly suffer from isolation.

According to The Times newspaper (Jan 27, 2006) Chinese are one of the fastest growing ethnic minorities. There are an estimated 1000 Chinese across Berkshire, with a sizeable population in Slough. Chinese are generally an isolated community and are absent from any decision-making bodies.

There is one VCO, Chung Wah Chinese Association (CWCA) which was formed around 1994. It has an active committee numbering over 20 with active working sub-groups i.e. sport, welfare, women, youth and singing. CWCA has a membership of around 1,500 (families/individuals total from Berkshire and many from London). The group works in education running its own Chinese School and also provides informal advice to members of the Chinese community. Again the group is self-sustaining.

South Asian Communities

The largest minority communities in Slough are the South Asian communities (28% of the population: *census 2001*) in Slough of which are 50% are **Indian** and 43% are **Pakistani**. Slough also has the largest population of **Sikhs** in proportion to geographical area in the UK. There are also many **Sri Lankans**, **Bangladeshis**, and sometimes **Afghans** will classify themselves as Asian.

Contrary to popular belief, the communities are extremely diverse, and although some people have settled in Slough, were born in lived all their life in Slough, even having up to three generations in Slough, there are still newly arriving people coming to Slough today from South Asia.

The Pakistani community include **Kashmiri**, **Mirpuri** and **Punjabi**, and with smaller numbers from Sind. Majority are **Sunni Muslims**, with smaller numbers of **Shia Muslims** and **Christians**. The Pakistani communities have been arriving in Slough since the 50s and 60's and were followed by waves of **East African Indian Asians** from Uganda and Kenya in the 70's. There has been a stark contrast in the economic and education success of the latter groups and the former settlers. The East African Indians arrived as refugees to the UK with skills, qualifications and middle and upper class aspirations. The Pakistani communities arrived as invited migrant workers from Rural areas such as Mirpur and the Punjab and during the 60's and 70's worked primarily in the manufacturing industries of the Slough Trading Estate have not been as successful in education or economically.

There are well established two larger and several smaller Mosques and two Gurdwaras, plus a Hindu Mandir, all of which have grown substantially over the years and been funded by their own communities.

There are dozens of South Asian community organisations, some of which have been running since the 60's and 70's others which started in the 90's. Many women's organisations are informal and completely voluntary, but serve to support women who wish to socialise through many activities, either prayer, singing, dancing, yoga, health or organising days out and visits to the seaside, or theme parks.

Faith Groups

Slough is made up of over 50% of Christian communities and yet many of the Churches remain unfilled on Sunday mornings. There are large numbers of African and/or African Caribbean attendees at Church. The Second largest faith in the town is Muslim (13.5%) followed by the Sikh community just over 9%. Hindus make up 4.5%, Buddhist 0.25% and Jewish 0.12%. The Mosques and Gurdwaras continue to be busy on Fridays and weekends respectively. There is a Faith forum in the town which was set with the support of the Local Strategic partnership – Slough Focus. It is early days, however they have already begun to work together to consider the benefits of networking and meeting regularly in the spirit of valuing one another's faiths with respect and tolerance. Difficulties remain regarding sustainability, without anyone taking a lead to ensure the continuation of such forums, there is a danger that the forum could be lost.

Other Excluded Communities in Slough

Each day it is possible to find yet another family, groups or individuals from a new corner of the world. The research has identified **Portuguese, Burundi, Kurdish, Indonesian** and many more individuals who need support and help.

Current Situation for BME VCOs (Operational Environment)

The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community consists of around 6.7 percent of the total population in the United Kingdom (UK), with almost two fifths of this population concentrated in the North East of England (SCRI and BECON, 2004). According to this research, ethnic minorities experience numerous disadvantages compared with other groups. This crosses all areas of deprivation, including levels of employment, low incomes, housing, health and crime. Within this context, BME voluntary organisations play an important role in empowering and representing the interests of the BME community, dealing with issues of discrimination and racism, combating social exclusion, enabling civic engagement and capacity building, the later of which is the focus of this report. However, these organisations face their own challenges.

Key Challenges Affecting The BME Voluntary Sector

According to publications by the Northern Rock Foundation (2002, 2003a,b, 2004a,b), the key challenges facing the BME voluntary sector include finding accessing capital and structural funds and staffing, especially considering the growing demand on these organisations.

Funding

In terms of funding, BME organisations receive their funding from the Local Authorities (49%), Community Foundations (43%), Community Funds (32%) and individual donations and sponsorship (30%). According to the NCVO (2004), BME organisations are facing a funding crisis due to a lack of permanent contributions by funding organisations. Furthermore, local authorities, the primary source of funding for BME organisations, are providing few grants, requiring larger sums to be raised through fundraising (2004). In London, a London Development Agency funded project is explicitly working to train BME organisations in fundraising techniques to improve the poor profile that these organisations have in the wider community.

Staffing

The vast majority of BME organisations, 82 percent of those surveyed rely on voluntary workers as opposed to paid hands. With annual income levels of less than £5,000 in 28 percent of cases and 42 percent receiving less than £20,000, it is perhaps not surprising that so few paid staff work in the BME sector. Furthermore, BME organisations experience a lack of training opportunities for staff, with some 58 percent receiving no training due to a lack of any training budget. It is suggested, based on the fact that a high proportion of BME voluntary organisations have not long

been in existence, that the future prospects of BME organisations may rest on their receiving a high level of policy assistance and support (Northern Rock Foundation, DATE). Clearly, capacity building in the BME voluntary sector is a serious issue that must be addressed. Slough BME organisations reflected a similar picture to the National study.

Challenges In The Wider Voluntary Sector

The challenges facing BME organisations can be seen in the wider voluntary sector. According to the NCVO survey of salaries and employment in the voluntary sector, labour turnover continue to increase. Figures in 2002 saw a 10.7 percent turnover rate, largely caused by staff resignations rather than redundancies, which are still relatively rare. It is estimated that voluntary organisations spend 43% of their funds on staff although retention still costs at least £4301 per employee (NCVO, 2004), highlighting the detrimental cost of employee turnover and importance of retention. Skills shortages appear to be continuing to cause recruitment problems, which are reported by half of those engaged in recruitment in the sector. Over 9 out of 10 voluntary organisations undertook recruitment activity in the preceding 12 months, with 59.5% of those surveyed reporting retention problems. Retention was again most difficult for managers and professional staff due to inadequate salary levels and competition for managers and other staff from public and private sector organisations, as well as career and personal development needs, lack of promotion prospects and risk of short contracts.

Slough REC and Specific Infrastructure services for BME Communities

Slough Race Equality Council has rich history of planning strategically and working in partnership with diverse communities and organisations in the town. However the acceleration of community development during the last two years both with community champions funding and with the Slough Engaging and Empowering (SEE) project has meant that several hundred people from many communities were helped at the first tier level, where individuals could begin to translate dreams into small realistic projects. Communities were trained in personal development and empowerment. In addition the SREC furnished individuals with new skills to become effective community activists in the town, many of these people going to gain further funding, training and development. In addition several are now ready for second and third tier support.

Unfortunately with the loss of funding - in spite of two funding bids - the SREC will no longer be able to provide Infrastructure support for BME community groups aside from the complainant aid and interpreting service.

There is a slim window of opportunities with the interim funding of £4100 to do some further work. The main threat remains who will carry out the day to day operational work; whilst the SREC can continue to champion the needs of the BME communities it cannot provide the same level of intense support and development.

The SREC will strive towards identifying sources of funding to continue some of the ground breaking work carried out by the Community Development Unit. The impact of the staff redundancies, and the closure of the work which has been prominent and proactive in the community have lead to rumours that the SREC was closing down, even though there are still more than a dozen members of the SREC team. The affect on the BME community's perception is that there is no one to help them.

Racism, Discrimination, Race Equality Legislation and Access to Services

There has been much progress in the town over the last year to address inequality and racial discrimination. With the advent of the Race Relations Amendment Acts, the SREC has witnessed a flurry of activity, Race Equality Schemes, action plans and much monitoring. However, even where extensive training and partnership work has been carried out, the BME communities

continue to suffer. In particular in accessing, benefits, housing, jobs, education, schooling and health services.

There are clearly language needs in the town and the SREC received numerous complaints about statutory services not having sufficient interpreting services to meet their basic needs. Communities have to rely on friends or children to act as interpreters sometimes with very poor outcomes. Sometimes the written assertions do not match the service delivery at the chalk face. It would be easy to highlight some organisations here; however, they have not been listed simply because there are issues of varying degrees with all service providers, statutory, private and voluntary.

It is vital that each organisation has mechanisms to hear the complaints and then follow up with real action to change.

BME Compact Code Of Practice

Following 1998, a BME Compact code of practice was introduced in order to help BME voluntary sector organisations find ways of working together with other community groups and public bodies to improve their services to the community (NCCP, 2004). The code of practice would help BME organisations come together to improve the provision of training and support for the sector as a whole, to develop fundraising and capital investment and build capacity. It is hoped that where BME voluntary sector organisations can work with the local compact (2005) so that they can overcome two of the main challenges they face: funding and staffing.

Background to Purpose Of Research

The voluntary and community activity is a crucial part of public life, connecting people and helping them to shape their communities. The Government's Change Up programme is to identify the voluntary and community sector needs.

The HM Treasury's 2002 cross cutting review of the role of the voluntary and community sector in service delivery recognised that the sector and Government the capacity of voluntary and community organisations.

Change Up's aim is that by 2014 the needs of frontline voluntary and community organisations will be met by support which is:

- available nationwide
- structured for maximum efficiency
- offering excellent provision
- accessible to all
- truly reflecting and promoting diversity
- sustainably funded

Implementation of Change Up is supported by Home Office investment of £80 million from 2003-2006. Investment is made at national, regional, sub-regional and local levels, with the bulk of investment going through the regions to support sub-regional and local initiatives benefiting organisations on the ground.

There are three spending programmes, with investment made in stages. The aim of investment is to catalyse modernisation of infrastructure provision in order to improve its sustainability, quality and research in line with the high level objectives set out in Change Up.

Progress on a national level

Since the framework's launch, much has been done to modernise infrastructure, embed quality and improve reach; the following are just a few examples:

- The majority of projects funded through the £8 million early spend programme are complete and will deliver key learning for the main programmes.
- Across the Government, Change Up investment has been integrated with the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) programme to improve support services for the rural voluntary and community sector to combat social exclusion.
- Public services Programme is also underway, targeting investment throughout Government to build capacity in the field of older health and social care, correctional services, ethnic minority provision and parenting support. (Home Office Web Site).

Research Aims and Methodology

Aims of Research

The funding crisis facing the BME voluntary sector is clearly central to its future success and survival. However, the purpose of this research project is to address the issues and concerns which the BME organisations/groups face in Slough.

The Community Research objectives were:

- To reach a wide range of BME communities and BME VCOs that work with socially excluded and 'hard to reach' communities in Slough.
- Assess current infrastructure and capacity building support available/accessible to BME communities (to include knowledge, skills, structures, resources and other needs to fulfil their potential).
- Enable BME communities and VCOs to identify their infrastructure and capacity building needs.
- Assess potential of change and growth in such communities &/or BME VCOs
- To understand and focus on the issues and concerns faced by the BME organisations/groups and communities in Slough.
- To identify the Infrastructure Needs of these organisations and groups
- Strategies and recommendations which may be devised to support the BME communities overcome the issues faced on a day-to-day basis.
- To raise awareness of the value and roles of BME communities and BME VCOs

Sampling

The study was conducted among the community members selected through purposive and random sampling plus outreach by the Community Researchers, targeting community leaders, community activists groups, religious leaders, individuals, families and other village elders.

Over fifty groups and some two hundred individuals were involved in the research.

BME Representation & Involvement In Change Up

The research extensively sought out BME groups and individuals from a wide cross section of communities. I-CAN, the inter community activist network, has become a catalyst for involvement both with its own destiny, but also considering becoming a voice of BME individuals in the town. Notwithstanding the above it is important to note that many BME groups still have a long way to go before they are truly mainstreamed into Change Up, or effectively influential in the town services.

During the research, the networking meetings and the conference, BME communities have clearly demonstrated they want to be involved, engaged and represented but that they also want funds, training and jobs so they can become independent.

Community Researchers

In order to reach the communities effectively and to invest in local skills and knowledge, rather than simply employ a consultant who did not know and understand Slough's communities, SREC decided to train up and employ local people for a short term contract and working on a flexible basis. This was a management challenge and took more time and resources but was absolutely worthwhile, bringing rich and accurate detail into the picture and leaving a legacy of skills within the community.

Researchers found they were more 'approachable' as they had a similar background, sometimes the mother language and the background knowledge, understanding of those groups.

Participatory Learning & Action (PLA) Methods

Training was given to the researchers on how to use the Participatory Learning Action (PLA) tool to involve the participants by Kate Grant and John Rowley from Staffordshire University.

Community researchers' comments on PLA:

'This training gave the relevant skills required to achieve this research project. The tools used were very practical and allowed the participant, organisation, groups and /or community to have the 'power of the pen', which in-turn allowed the participants to express their thoughts and feelings about the organisation/group and how they deliver services to the local community. The PLA training gave a great insight for the researcher by identifying these useful tools, which are allowing the process to become more comprehensive. The reasons why these tools became useful within this process, was mainly because it also allowed the participants time to think and while addressing issues and concerns, participants were able to recall on other such concerns relating to the organisations/groups and community.

PLA is an approach using creative and innovative tools and techniques to directly involve and engage people, whatever their background, knowledge or literacy levels. PLA values the knowledge and experience of local people and their ability to come up with solutions about issues and problems that affect them. Many of the research methods used in PLA are visual and creative opportunities for local people to participate in discussions at a level they are comfortable with.

PLA methods incorporated simple pictorial questions which enabled me to ask the same thing many times, each time exploring different aspect of the questioned area while keeping respondents focused challenging him/her/them to think about problems in slightly unusual ways. The tools also served as an easy introduction to the researched areas actively engaging respondents to participate and 'create' their own answers. Another advantage also lies in transforming complex issues into understandable diagrams which make the presentation of the result clearer without need of editing irrelevant /danger of editing relevant information.

Overall Findings & Strategic Priority Areas

Before Infrastructure: The Hierarchy of Community Needs

Many minority and newly arrived communities are so disadvantaged that their basic social, community and human functions are not being met. So how is Change Up or VCO Infrastructure needs relevant to them?

Responses from local communities about the Change Up Research

Respondents noted that from the outset, Change Up has not been designed to meet the needs of such minority communities and people feel that they are again being lumped together as one community. To most, the concepts are abstract, language is jargon, structures irrelevant, national Hubs too far away, and it is being perceived as either a funding source or a talk shop. Even with grass roots participatory involvement, people felt that there was too much consultation and not enough action.

'Do not ask when you do not want to hear the answer' (eastern European)

Many communities' representatives (especially groups) I spoke with took this opportunity to express their feelings of frustration over this whole process of any 'authority' asking them about their needs and problems.

'What this really is its just governmental bullshit, there is not going to be anything practical coming out of it...'(Romanian respondent)

'Everyone has this kind of 'project' (consultation), for that money we could teach so many children.'
(Polish organisation)

'Everyone who talks to us is just ticking their box-we've done the job, that's it but for communities nothing ever happens unless they do it and really go for it themselves'
(Romanian respondent)

Community Organisations as well as individuals were very careful in participating this research; some of them were very reluctant to give information most especially the minority groups. Probably due to some experienced in the past, the expectations of every individuals or community groups that were not met in the previous research that has no informative results.

Communities' Hierarchy of Need

Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that basic food, shelter and safety needs must come first before more complex community systems and structures are formed. New, deprived and disadvantaged communities in Slough show this to be true, and this must be taken into account when developing communities and VCO infrastructure.

'If you need a whole research project to find out that people need jobs and homes and understanding then you have been probably living on a different planet.'

Few BME VCOs in Slough are formalised or structured with governance procedures and funding. Most BME VCOs and RCOs in Slough are informal groups or merely individuals who are empowering themselves and their communities to take action against their difficulties and try to assist their communities to access basic services. As one small group stated, *'We seem to be doing the work of the public services for free' (Somali respondent)*

There must also be an acknowledgement first of these basic needs in addition to the support needed to bring these individuals and new groups to the point where Infrastructure becomes relevant.

Social and Community Needs

Many BME VCOs are either a group of individuals or loosely structured. Many start through concerns that their Communities do not get access to local services such as housing, employment education, safety and health. Indeed, the research unearthed mostly concerns about **social community needs** for their communities and their organisations, so these are detailed and tackled in addition to VCO Infrastructure needs as defined by Change Up.

Education

Newly Arrived Communities

- Lack of understanding about UK systems
- Waiting lists for school places – both primary and secondary
- Need for extra support for children who have not been to school or who have limited education
- Support for children who are excluded from school
- Need for better home-school liaison with BME communities
- Different communities have different needs
- Development and support of after-school clubs that seem to exist and run in isolation and without support from education service providers
- Better links needed with schools - Use 'extended schools' and 'every child matters' agendas to raise awareness and funding
- Do the schools and LEA even know what VCO After-school clubs even exist!??
- Need for a base for voluntary education workers
- Need for training for volunteer community 'teachers'
- More flexible access to teacher training and conversion teaching qualifications for people with overseas qualifications
- Need for positive role models across different communities

African Caribbean

- Disproportionately Underachieving and exclusions
- Not impressed by a lot of Sloughs schools, many parents are taking their children out of Slough to Maidenhead after the first school
- Schools such as S&E-problems, pupils' negative influence and teachers and parents lack communication, teachers do not stay at the school for long, move around a lot.

“School is killing the spirit of my son; it should be a place of nurturing and encouragement”
a Caribbean mother

Somali & East African

- Newly arrived Somali women have difficulties understanding the school admissions procedure and it appears that even with the help of East African VCOs, to liaise with the LEA, they still cannot get school places.
- Some respondents believed that some Somalis haven't received a decent education in Somalia for over 40 years due to the civil war and its implications. They estimate that many young Somalis who arrived in Slough have been in transit for up to 5 years and so the idea of them 'fitting-in' to the national curriculum at the age of 11 is naïve. This has been conveyed to the LEA. Need to support VCO based after-school classes both formally and informally. Examples given include more Language assisted classes, and other educational support is needed to assist and mentor under-achieving children.

- Young students are increasingly dropping-out of education which exposes them to crime more – groups can be often seen wandering around in the High Street.
- Need for extra ESOL classes and bilingual support in the classroom (to deliver all national curriculum subjects i.e. better English will equal better all-round attainment). Suggestions to fund and support teaching volunteers are provided by local suitably qualified people from their own communities
- The enrolment/admissions process for newly arrived communities needs to be demystified and consultation with communities should be ongoing so that children can get the most out of the system. (LEA consultation group effective)

C&EEC

For many respondents from C&EEC the British educational system not understandable as most C&EEC countries education is still much unified, mainly state controlled, free of charge and strictly compulsory. Situation where schools choose their pupils and young need to take out loans in order to improve their qualifications.

Respondents mostly talked about **access** to education with difficulty with placing children to schools.

‘...We have kids here who haven’t been to school for five months because no one wants to take them.’ ...Because they don’t want Polish kids...’ (Polish organisation)

Bureaucratic barriers to higher /further education:

‘...I have a friend, she is very talented, but she can’t do anything she still doesn’t have her ILR (Indefinite Leave to Remain), she can’t study, she can’t look in the future and she is very stressed...’ (Albanian/Kosovan respondent)

Polish people also noted that their prominent issue is also that schools do not seem to want to enrol their children because it affects that school’s statistics re: overall achievement of pupils / league tables. A good practice example was given where St Anthony’s school gives lots of signposting info and does a lot of form filling on behalf of parents. Polish families often prefer their children to attend Roman Catholic Schools.

Roma Gypsy

Roma Gypsies are not enrolling due to several factors. Their parents, culturally speaking, do not see education as important and since they do not aspire to it themselves, they see no reason why their children should. One VCO member tried to act as a translator in a supplementary classroom environment but paperwork and general bureaucracy meant that this was not practical. LEA is not doing enough to resolve this which means that most if not all RG children are not engaging with educational provision.

RG children want to be in the same classes as other RG children and this is not always possible because of geographic issues and age differences.

Educational welfare officers do undertake house visits, where they encourage RG families to allow children to attend with limited success. Families ‘guarantee’ they will send children to school but most often do not. Even when they do, the children usually attend for a few days and then stop attending altogether. A suggestion was made to resource, a dedicated officer to offer long-term support to RG children and their families with a view to introducing them to educational opportunities, supporting them, mentoring them and assisting with translation issues.

British and Irish Gypsies and Travellers are similarly seriously disadvantaged in the educational system, most of whom are not registered at school, with very poor attendance rates (perhaps the worst of any minority) and with limited services from the LEA. One respondent noted, *‘There must*

be a shift in the LEA's thinking towards provision of tailored services and enforcement of educational rights.'

Home tutoring is critical

What about Post 18 education When they "become nobody's concern?"

CCB runs an outreach education project using buses. It took 2 years to get a bus on one site plus hard work from dedicated workers. Perceptions of previous projects where the LA pulled out without any notice have damaged trust. The potential exists for Change Up to do more in setting up dedicated projects.

Employment & Training

Overall findings:

- Many thousands of people from BME communities are living in economic poverty in Slough. Many are in debt.
- Need to recognise the importance of building programmes around the learner, including making training learning available at places and times convenient to learners, acknowledging cultural backgrounds, and tailoring programs to meet their needs.
- There are very practical issues such as refugees not wanting, or being able to complete the application forms necessary to get on the programme in the first place. A lot of work needs to go into reassuring these users and trying to help them get over their distrust of authority.
- Educating frontline staff is also another issue which needs to be tackled. Often they are unaware of how to deal with refugees and can be patronising or dismissive. Awareness raising training needs to happen.
- More courses could be run in community based locations although they may be developed in conjunction with local colleges.
- Many BME communities and VCO members noted the serious under-employment of qualified people. This points to Racism and discrimination in employment due to different backgrounds and misunderstanding of overseas qualifications.

We were deprived training and promotion due to prejudice and racism (South East Asian)

- Many Somalis who are educated have been told invariably that they are 'overqualified' for many positions they feel capable of managing.
- Some respondents wanted an access training or resource provision which enables educated people with overseas qualifications and skills to successfully plug into local employment opportunities. This would allow them to 'make use' of their qualifications. Although one VCO initiated discussions with TVU, this has not been followed-up.
- Language barriers are seriously impeding job access:
'...if your communication skills are good that can change your life...' (Polish respondent)
- Bureaucratic restrictions or conditions on asylum seekers, newly arrived (not English references or work experiences) are preventing work at all.

'...I want to work but I can't because I don't have National Insurance Number...I can't get National Insurance when I don't have a job....' (Polish respondent)

'...Work Permits should be given to asylum seekers' (Albanian/Kosovan respondent)

- Unemployment is rife amongst refugees who have Leave to Remain and are entitled to Work. One VCO initiated discussions with the Job Centre regarding some sort of 'training' to enable people to access employment opportunities but progress is slow
- Lack of interpreting in the Job Centre Plus has become a big issues for many communities, including Somalis, Romanians, Pakistani, and others, and is hindering access to benefits and employment opportunities (not all work requires English language)
- Encourage and facilitate people to up grade their skills.
- Local service providers should make it a priority to recruit people from LOCAL communities into their organisations

Roma Gypsy

The language barrier presents the major problem whereby the range of courses offered in Slough are not suitable for Roma people. Only a few Roma speak English sufficiently to be able to exploit opportunities. Encouragement of ESOL take up particularly for Roma would help.

Another respondent noted that educational training may not be taken-up by Roma due to cultural attitudes and prejudices regarding education. A support group for RG mothers would be positive whereby they could meet whilst bringing along their children. However, it is most likely that 'outsiders' would need to be involved because the RG community is not proactive when it comes to self-help projects. YOT previously held such a women's regular session. Women engaged successfully and cooked, did shopping, accessed health awareness material etc.

Health

Overall findings in health:

- Lack of interpreters are the key issue raised in access health services. Use of trained and accredited interpreters is essential. Consistency and standardisation of procedure is desperately needed.

Concerns include:

- Use of children as interpreters
- Refusal/lack of access to qualified, confidential interpreters
- Using friends or family members
- Difficulty getting appointments with GPs (particular note with Somali, Roma and East European communities)
- Difficulty registering with GPs
- Refusal by Reception staff to register people who don't speak English
- Difficulties in some hospital departments (although some perceived as good – A& E, maternity)
- **Mental Health** is another area where people are unaware of or cannot access appropriate help. Specialist services may also be needed for refugees and asylum seekers (e.g. Post traumatic Stress disorders, torture, fleeing persecution). (Discussion paper available from SREC).

- African Caribbean respondents noted that mental health problems are common in the Black community, local hospitals don't cater for Black culture, their needs/language etc
'Groups of people, who have had bad experiences, will pass this onto others in the community resulting in a negative perception of the PCT'
- Complaints that GP's surgeries are full, perception of racism in GPs surgeries
BME VCOs would also like to see Health Awareness workshops take place in the community.

Gypsies and Travellers

Without adequate accommodation, gypsies and travellers face great difficulties in accessing and registering with GPs. Health Needs Assessment required across the board.

South East Asian/Filipino communities, many of whom work for the hospital mentioned National Health Service issues:

- *lack of funding*
- *Under staffed, difficulty in making appointment when you really need one.*
- *Lack of beds and hospital closure.*
- *Hygiene due to cut down budget.*
- *Need for more doctors and money for the clinics.*
- *Need for trained and well experienced hospital managers and ward managers.*

Welfare & Benefits

Newly Arrived Communities

– Form filling very time consuming and confusing – public services should provide assistance, including interpreting assistance if needs be. People are losing their benefits and being thrown out of their homes because the public services will not provide interpreters or assistance with the forms. SREC has had complaints from at least 5 different BME communities and meetings with senior managers but the situation persists.

Most new communities are also experiencing a lack of accessibility to benefits advice (i.e. language issues), and small VCOs end up having to come and interpret for free. VCOs complain that they spend most of their time doing this. As a direct result of lack of interpreting, people have to subsist without benefits for a number of months sometimes. Somali and East African VCOs see many people who have no benefits at all. They believe that there should be at least one Somali-speaker employed at the Benefits Centre.

Romanian/Roma

It appears as if there are very few if any Romanians on benefits due to the EU work permit regulations. However, neither are they able to get mortgages as they are not seen as sound Borrowers because of their 'unstable' leave status here in the UK.

Housing

Overall findings for BME and Newly Arrived Communities

- There are extremely concerning housing issues arising across all BME communities, particularly for those newly arrived who are being exploited by private landlords and housing associations
- Sub-standard accommodation
- Problems shrugged off by One Stop Shop
- Environmental health issues
- Housing benefits shortfall – how can people pay rent when it is higher than housing benefit

- Lack of information about housing rights
- Housing services not accessible – OSS, SHOC, REAP – need for interpreters
- Increase in destitution of asylum seekers
- Need for emergency night shelter
- Form filling assistance services required

Somali & East African

Somalis live mainly in Chalvey, Farnham Road, Manor Park, Cippenham and the outskirts of Langley and Baylis; mostly expensive, unstable and private tenancies. According to one VCO, not one Somali owns a house in Slough or runs/owns a local business. Another VCO believes 85% of East Africans are privately housed and live in cramped conditions. Also, very few Somalis have received council houses despite the fact that VCOs believe they are highly eligible. Comments included:

- *The rate of illegal eviction is very high among Somali Community.*
- *Assaults committed by landlords against Somali tenants is very common*
- *Lack of prosecution of those continue committing illegal eviction and assaults, from police, housing, shelter, lawyers, (there are evidence of no of cases)*
- *Housing registrar in Slough Borough Council should be intervened.*
- *Illegal evictions should be stopped and perpetrators should be brought to book.*
- *Exploitation of landlord in private rental housing which is common in Slough should be stopped.*

Case studies on housing

One family had their water supply cut off to force them to leave their home. Another had their belongings thrown out on to the street. When the family complained to the Police, the Police came out and was joking and laughing with the landlord and did not help the family. A single mother was harassed for extra money for weeks, which she did not have. Eventually when she made a stand she was threatened with death if she did not leave the premises, the landlord refused to give her deposit back and she has gone into hiding.

One VCO stated that over 150 families who have gone to SBC's One Stop Shop for advice have actually ended back at the VCO; either referred back there by SBC or out of exasperation.

'Every day when we complain to the council about the problems of the landlords they peak to them same language, and officers came back to us and blame every thing to us though we did not participate the discussions.'

Romanian/Roma

Likewise for C&EEC communities they have no choice of accommodation and live in expensive and overcrowded private tenancies. Roma Gypsies who have very big families find it especially difficult. Because of high rent, Romanian Nationals who are here with work permits, still find that they must share their housing with as many others as possible in order to be able to afford it i.e. 3 bedroom house being rented by three couples who have a bedroom each and share a communal kitchen and living room. Similarly to East African communities, Romanians did not know one Romanian that owns a house in Slough or runs/owns a local business.

African Caribbean

- People often come into the church for a place to sleep at night, directed to shelter and Salvation Army also help as they have a soup kitchen-church is looking into getting a soup kitchen-no funds at present.

South East Asian

- Housing problems (*Long waiting list*)
- Need of Advice Centres (*They don't know where to seek advice and information*)
 - *Council houses long waiting list.*

- *Too much council tax.*
- *The council always threatens the people taking them to court for the delayed payment of council tax.*
- *More houses and flats for people.*

Gypsies & Travellers – sites & housing

The pressures on land in Slough are exacerbating racism, prejudice and tension. There is one residential site in Datchet which is a positive step, but various stopping places are used and people find they are moved on very quickly. Indeed the reporters have witnessed racism about these people from senior ranks within local services. There is an absolute need for legal stopping places and permanent sites, plus acknowledgement of service needs (such as refuse disposal which causes huge racist backlash) in all areas for Gypsies and Travelling people. The money needed for this is tiny compared with the resources used to build new homes for the settled community.

Lack of committed resources has meant that some sites become ghettos, with no health and safety, no facilities, no rubbish collection, no services at all. After selling most council properties to their tenants and only a few thousand private houses left as social housing, perhaps there could be an opening of dialogue to discuss shared ownership of sites or other innovative ways of allowing Gypsies and Travellers to live as they have always done but with rights and respect.

Those people forced into social housing are facing many difficulties, the actual housing itself being culturally inappropriate. Housed travellers often feel isolated and don't fit in. Neighbours do not understand them, do not like their dogs (which are working animals and left outside as such) and do not understand that having bonfires is a traditional way of bringing their communities together. SREC has had many cases of racism, discrimination and violent attacks on children and adults from these communities, particularly for those of Irish heritage who are more visible minorities. SBC needs to open a dialogue with travelling people, monitor and provide support services for these needs. However, with a huge lack of trust, and experiences from CCB show that there is a need for dedicated, skilled Gypsy Traveller outreach/development workers, who can develop a long-term relationship with these people. It took one worker over two years of continuous work with one site to be accepted and trusted as an ally not a 'spy'.

Accommodation needs assessment needed. Information already collated at CCB.

There could potentially be a Berkshire-network as communities move across the county, but political boundaries create barriers to effective working with these communities. The Berkshire CVSs, partnering relevant LA officers and perhaps led by the skilled worker at CCB could then identify and manage gaps and difficulties in the 'system'.

Policing & Crime

Newly Arrived Communities overall findings

- Lack of interpreters with police
- Difficulties at front desk
- Some departments are better (CID, Hate Crime) than others
- Some complain about discrimination and racism from the police.

African Caribbean

Feel that crime in their community is rising because people have very little money and youth have little else to do. Drugs and prostitution are of particular concern
Some Black gang culture coming from London.

East African & Somali

VCOs are concerned about levels of crime amongst Somali youth. They also believe that drug-use, and that doesn't just mean qat and cannabis, is rapidly increasing amongst their youth. Some want qat made illegal as they feel it holds back Somalis and affects families i.e. men spend lots of hours stoned and don't spend time with families. However, qat is strongly entrenched within Somali male culture. VCOs are hoping to forge a closer relationship with the local police through meetings.

Roma Gypsy

Perception of host community of Roma gypsies being criminals. No adequate ethnic monitoring and no evidence that crime is disproportionately high in this community or indeed whether police targeted this community. Crimes reported were only petty theft and suchlike.

South East Asian

- Filipinos and Chinese are concerned about 'Drugs, alcohol and anti social behaviour most especially during school holidays.
- Concern of a lack of youth centres and youth activities

"People don't feel safe in going out even in the middle of the day... "Slough is getting worst it was not like in the old days even you leave your door open 24 hrs it was safe, now even you double lock everything they can get in. You go out it's not safe as well, lots of mugging. It's frightening. ...Kids vandalise cars, police doesn't care."

Immigration & Legal Services

Asylum Seekers and New Communities

- Delays and problems with passport renewal, particularly for asylum seekers who use VCOs for help, including cases where passports have been taken and never returned.
- Respondents talked specifically about **bureaucracy** connected with immigration status and how that affects every day life. Lengthy processing of forms deciding about basic life needs, their complicated not easy to understand character and amount.

*"...to sort out for example Job Seekers Allowance can take sometimes like two months. And what do you do? You don't eat for two months?"
(Romanian respondent)*

- **Injustice** seen in some Home Office decisions and consequently difficulty accessing **legal aid**.
- Lack of free legal advice and unscrupulous lawyers claiming legal aid but not doing any work for them as clients
- Lack of understanding of rights as a foreigner, limitations, and rules etc.
- **'Second-class'** status while being asylum seeker/refugee/immigrant (restrictions on employment, education etc.).

*"...so they (Home Office) are telling you go back, they are sending people back to Albania-go it's no danger to you....and when you look at Home Office website they say it is not safe for British people to go to Albania, it is dangerous, not recommended, but it is safe for Albanians?...They don't know about what the life is like there."
(Albanian/Kosovan respondent)*

Romanian

Many Romanian & Roma people have expressed disgust at the way, very recently, a big and well known family who have lived here for over 7 years, was deported without notice. No information was given to SRS who were assisting this particular family. As far as is known, no correspondence was sent directly to them regarding this action. A minor who is now being supported by SBC was left behind.

Filipino

Some Filipinos who have been here for a long time stated they had difficulties getting visas for their families to visit

Racism & Community Cohesion

Racism and discrimination is occurring across the town and in various direct and indirect ways. There is also racism within minority communities against other communities, and feeling like they are isolated, oppressed. Specific instances of direct verbal abuse and attacks were commonly mentioned:

Filipino

Experienced various instances of racism may be many but willingness to report seems to be lacking due to lack of confidence

Roma Gypsy

Many Roma Gypsies feel that they are rejected from some of the town's pubs because of their ethnic background. Lot of racism around begging

British and Irish Gypsies and Travellers

experience racism and high tension across the board, from local people and from service providers (local Police are named many times as blaming them even when they are victims of racism), in leisure services and pubs, in their neighbourhoods and in the street. There is a need for cultural interlining and understanding of differences between groups. The negative media should also play a role and VCS could influence this positive mission.

Somali & East African

Suggestion to involve local people as race equality officers to deal with equality and discrimination against their own communities
Community cohesion more an issue for Somalis being accepted by other host communities, rather than issues within the community.

Asian

Feeling of a lack of integration between the people of the same community. There is a clear need of relationship building and looking beyond the boundaries of personal issues.

*"We are not together enough, **people still fight** over the fact that they are from different parts of the same country. (Pakistani respondent). "Religious places are fighting with each other." (Muslim woman)*

Islamophobia is real and tangible for Muslims in Slough, with attacks and verbal abuse, being called 'terrorists' for wearing hijabs and even Sikhs having their turbans pulled off them. One Asian man mentioned that as a Muslim he felt "suffocated by the media"

Language Barriers

Language barriers play a role on many different levels.

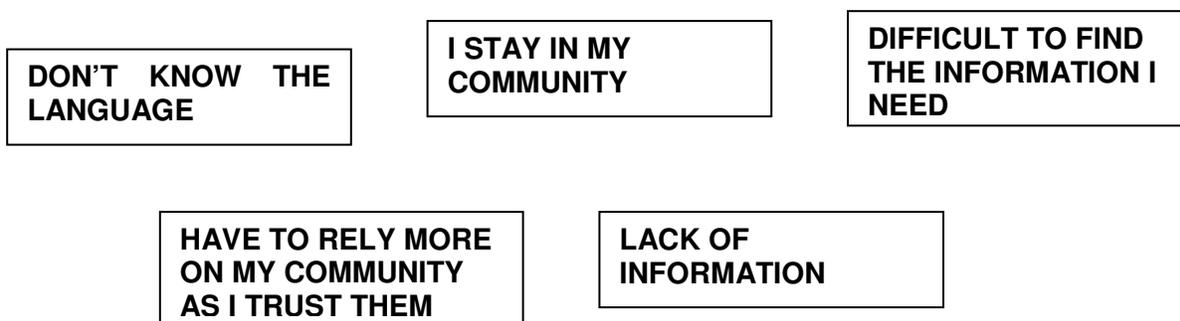
- Not accessing information because of the language barrier
- Limited access to interpretation/translation services-professional interpreting is paid, statutory organisations do not usually have in-house interpreters or bilingual speakers for new communities
- Not enough resources or interest within some communities in improving English language skills.

Chinese

As with many BME VCOs, one respondent described how the Chinese community is in dire need of a 'support and advice service' run by those who can speak Mandarin, or at least for services to provide Mandarin interpreters. This is needed to assist those Chinese community-members who need information and support regarding housing, employment, training opportunities etc.

C&EEC

Respondents described kind of a vicious circle of exclusion through language and cultural barriers:



"...The problem with Polish people...big community in Slough...most speak Polish on High Street."
(Polish respondent)

Need for Widespread INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION in Public Services

- Bilingual staff of statutory organisations or/and community consultants are keys for co-operation and improvement.
- Key agencies noted by various communities that are not providing interpreters and preventing access to various services are Job Centre Plus and Wexham Park Hospital

English Language Classes

- Waiting lists
- Language, culture and gender specific classes requested from all communities
- Lack of funding for books and travel

Cultural, Heritage & Leisure Activities

BME VCOs generally want to develop services, events and venues to retain their languages and cultural traditions and to celebrate important religious and cultural days in their own way. With no free council community facilities or youth centres, and with no dedicated LA community development officers, they are struggling and most have to pay for venues, events and activities from their own funds.

It is important to note that there was a contrast between new arrival communities who focused mainly on educational recreational activities for young people, and housing, employment and isolation for adults whereas the more established communities commented more about improving the quality of their own lives with sports, health and social activities. It is only after communities have had their basic needs met are they able to think about improving the quality of their lives. In addition many were concerned about the lack of facilities and for young people to keep them away from potential petty crime and drugs.

Middle Eastern communities

Find that they struggle to deliver social and cultural activities as they are competing with a high cost of living and of renting property. They would like to maintain their culture and teach their language to young ones and *fit their lives into the UK*. Specific activities mentioned include:

- Arabic language
- Islamic Religious celebrations
- Community Advice centre
- Social club for Women and English classes

There used to be community centres open to different communities to use but appear to be closed unless specifically booked and paid for. There is great resentment towards SBC from many communities about the lack of community facilities. Have to use their personal revenue to conduct volunteer community based activities. Couple of established groups have offices but not venues needed for cultural activities.

African Caribbean communities have been asking for a community centre for years and are keen to develop sports, arts, music, and social events.

Women

Women of most newly arrived communities are even more excluded as with limited education and without work they must look after young children or are afraid to leave their homes and find it difficult to access female only activities and English classes.

This affects Pakistan, Indian, Sikh, Somali, East African, Afghani and other communities

Many BME VCOs feel that women's activities and education are major areas where progress must be made. There is a need to provide support, integration and education to these women in different forms.

All groups feel that crèche facilities are needed, especially for ESOL and adult learning.

A couple of women's projects were started by individual women with help to access the Community Champions Fund but are unsustainable due to the lack of support and dedicated funding required. One project led a cultural and dance activity project with hundreds of women attending. Another started a Mum's club.

SRS runs a successful crèche but resources and space is limited.

Young People

All BME VCOs are concerned particularly about increasing social and cohesion issues for their youth.

Somali VCOs would like to have a Somali Youth Group and perhaps a Youth Forum but are not receiving adequate assistance to set this up. And they need a venue or youth club to host it. There

have been several occasions where Somali youth have been involved in incidents with other groups of youth/ethnic groups.

Romanian and Roma

Dedicated volunteers run a successful Roma youth group in partnership with a youth club. Romanian language skills are needed for work with Roma Gypsy minors who are here alone due to deportation of their families. Issues of petty crime with some youth.

South East Asian youth

Concern about anti-social behaviour and lack of youth groups, clubs and facilities especially during school holidays and after school hours).

African Caribbean youth

Caribbean VCOs are very eager to get funds and resources to sustain projects particularly for young people who are facing disproportionate educational underachievement, exclusion from school, and also increasing drugs & crime issues. They want to involve the youth more through sports, arts, music and social activities and trips outside Slough to inspire them.

Young people still complain of racism from different groups, including stereotyping from the police. They feel that there are no youth services or centres for them to go to, and then when they meet on the street they are targeted by police and get criminal records for loitering which seriously hampers their development and esteem.

Community Development & Capacity Building

All BME and new Communities felt that they were central in building a voluntary and community sector, but needed dedicated support, advice, guidance to help build their visions and turn them into reality. This is community development and is the critical underpinning to the success or failure of any VCS in Slough in the next 10 years.

In Slough the SREC and SCVS have identified three different levels of need to support and develop the Community and Voluntary Sector, some of which precede VCS Infrastructure needs of Change Up and which must be fulfilled in order to sustain a voluntary sector at all. Tiers 1 & 2 are at critical point in Slough and therefore Slough will focus on Community Development as a key Infrastructure Service in its own right.

1st Tier Community Development: Support for individual volunteers and community activists to become empowered and confident to take forward community activities and advocate for others. This very often precedes the formation of a VCO through bringing others together to form a group. Many BME community activities at this stage in Slough.

2nd Tier Community Development: Support and capacity building for Community groups to emerge, grow, develop, and become successful. Most BME VCOs are small and newly emerging groups that cannot access sufficient community development support in this regards.

3rd Tier Community Development: (*Change Up*) Provision and co-ordination of VCS infrastructure services. This applies to a few large VCOs in Slough only.

Current Provision

Where do individuals and community organisations currently seek help in Slough?

- Local public services, Local Authority
- Slough Race Equality Council (SREC)
- Slough Borough Council (SBC)
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Slough Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS)
- Thomas Gray Centre (TGC)
- Aurat Enterprises
- Groundwork Thames Valley
- East Berkshire College (EBC)
- Age Concern
- Local Solicitors
- Friends, and/or individuals who could read or write English
- Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary sector Organisations (CEMVO)

Dedicated 1st Tier services

SREC has had an extremely successful Community Empowerment program to support individuals (1st Tier) and has enabled over 50 individuals and small groups to access the Community Champions Fund but due to short term funding and lack of workers has to close both projects in March 2006. As of 1st April 2006, there is no dedicated 1st Tier community development provision in Slough.

Aurat Enterprises runs a successful personal development and training program for individual BME women.

SREC has facilitated the early organic development of I-CAN (Inter-Community Activists Network), which is bringing individuals who work/volunteer within the VCS Sector with diverse local communities together for support and development. There is urgent need for resources to support this network after September 2006. I-CAN could present many opportunities for strengthening and linking some BME VCOs in Slough with Change Up opportunities.

Dedicated 2nd Tier Services

A few years ago, SBC cut all Community Development services as they are 'Non-statutory' and although has resident participation officers; groups must align themselves with the Tenants and Residents Association agenda. There is a critical Community Training project which has short term funding only.

There are now limited resources to support groups only (2nd Tier) at SCVS, and these are short term/ project funded only.

Dedicated 3rd Tier Services?

The Change Up Consortia could be in a good position to co-ordinate Community Development in Slough.

Principles and Services of Community Development

Although 'best practice' solutions are not always transferable, the following principles and services are key to a Community Development Infrastructure provision in Slough:

- Public sector and VCS systems do not allow for different structures within communities. Therefore, Infrastructure must be built around them and their way of life and structures. This infrastructure is needed firstly within the Local Services, then within the Voluntary sector to meet the need of these communities, namely
- Dedicated, skilled outreach workers working from the inside first (1 person cannot really cover more than 2 sites)
- Understanding their level of needs, how the communities work and their way of life and work on their needs first
- Meaningful community development work – committed to long term work and equal partnership as trust takes a long time and can be lost quickly
- Need to empower them to share their voices and get involved in a way that suits them –
- Empowerment to do the work themselves (not do it for them, although they need guidance)

Nothing regarding these communities could work if they are not involved and practical outcomes are not visible. (Czech respondent)

- Cannot organise them in the traditional way or change them into something they don't want to be.

- Support & guidance to develop their group
- Guidance and assistance to access services to develop all 7 infrastructure areas
- Assistance to access funding to develop their group.
- Information and support- for example, Outreach packs
 - Contacts, numbers, organisations who can provide training, support, development, advice, and Funders
 - Awareness of the existing services.
 - Using Plain English
 - Translated information
- Referral and help to access services – e.g. education workers
- Capacity Building must be focused on a one-to-one basis with groups and regular meetings with action plans in place.
- Confidence and empowerment to develop the group
- Use different participatory tools and verbal approaches to work with these communities – NB consultative processes can in themselves damage relationships with these groups
- Relevance of projects to them, on their terms
- Empower and pay them to deliver projects themselves
- Be aware of the potential impact and/or benefits to them
- Plan for long term capacity and resources
- Can take a long time to bring people together for meetings (one example took 8 months but the outcome was positive now meeting bi-monthly!)
- Require funding for future consultation and involvement of Gypsy and Traveller communities
- Plan services and support to fit them
- Build relationships and trust first
- Long term follow up required

Recommendations For Community Development

- Commitment to Community Development in Slough as a necessary and invaluable tool is essential. There will be NO sustainable communities without full & comprehensive community development infrastructure and support. Community Development should be the basis of developing a culture of enablement and empowerment for VCOs, this is particularly necessary when dealing with BME VCOs and communities.
- There is absolute and critical need for more dedicated community development workers in Slough, for both 1st and 2nd tier, particularly to target positive action support initiatives for the new, deprived and isolated communities. SCVS has evidence to show there is a potential need for at least 5 posts just to support small and emerging groups in addition to VCO community development workers. Such development work requires highly skilled workers, a lot of time and effort, with participatory and culturally appropriate methods of engagement.
- There is critical urgency for Central, regional and Local Government to acknowledge that Community Development is an essential, valuable and efficient resource and should instate Community Development as Statutory Functions for every local area. The voluntary sector

is very capable of undertaking community development roles, but must be resourced with funding and support on a long term basis.

- Many BME and newly arrived VCOs will be providing some forms of community development and should be supported to continue and develop those through long term investment and support. This will help to bridge the gaps in infrastructure support to the BME VCO sector. Some particular areas of concern that require proactive community development programs and infrastructure support include:
- Specialist knowledge and support may then be required to assist such communities. Further training needs are implied with this work – indeed for all Community Development Workers – for example to include cultural awareness training, relating to understanding the identities, issues and inequalities faced by their local minority communities, race and community relations issues, legislation and solution. Local Race Equality Councils can assist with this kind of support but will have resource implications in order to provide such training free to VCOs.
- There may be a **need of an umbrella** to co-ordinate different projects happening in Slough
- Few of the respondents expressed that there is lots of **duplication** going on and so many organisations offer similar kind of services.
- There is a **need for networking events** so those organisations can find out about the different funding available.
- Responsiveness to local differences and gaps in BME VCO infrastructure can be lessened by involving local BME communities and employing BME staff.
- In order to better engage and support BME VCOs, Public and VCO infrastructure organisations must adopt a **‘bottom up’ community development approach** and work through, not over, existing community structures – that is:

**TO THEIR AGENDA
ON THEIR TERMS
IN THEIR TIME
AT THEIR PLACE
AT THEIR PACE**

Further Issues for VCO support services:

Slough CVS

- Better access to community development officers and organisations. There is a need for open and easy access to the premises of support organisation like SBC and SCVS. Communities felt that SBC’s new reception system was very bureaucratic, threatening and inaccessible. Of SCVS, respondents mentioned frequently SCVS’s premises and officers were physically inaccessible:

“Rather than pressing the bell and then answering all those questions or waiting for somebody to come down to collect you, there should be a non intimidating access.”

“It is very difficult for a common man to have an access to the SCVS offices as they have got no open reception and it can be intimidating.”

Slough REC

Caribbean groups perceived that SREC did not fully engage enough with them or represent them, although historical factors remained barriers for some. Outreach workers at SREC found that many wanted to work independently, they wanted to be able to access funding so they could employ their own workers to help their own communities.

For newer arrivals many communities felt that the SREC had been a life line for them and gave them many opportunities to develop themselves and to learn about what services were available to them.

Many other BME communities do not know about their rights not to be discriminated against and were happy to hear there was an organisation that could help them. More information is needed to publicise the work of SREC as many groups and individuals had not heard about the SREC.

Funding & Financial Management

Funding is by far the issues that all BME, Faith VCOs and RCOs mention as the most important to them and the main barrier that is holding them back from developing and delivering services to the communities. In addition to capacity building officers and funding advisers, issues that respondents requested focus on included:

Financial Management of Projects and Organisations

- Understanding how to develop a history of good financial management
- Receipts & the audit trail, Policies and processes, and managing Finances of the Organisation
- Treasurer's responsibilities (often Treasurers in small organisations do not have confidence in financial matters – or the Chair, frontline delivery officer and Fundraiser is the same person!
- Understanding how to manage and record Income & Expenditure of organisation/project (book-keeping)
- How to allocate costs to projects and do budgets
- Understanding Accounts and who does what?
- Petty cash & bigger expenses, Salaries
- Independent auditing and annual audited accounts
- What is Full Cost Recovery and how does it relate to us and our projects? (Securing funding for – or 'recovering' – proportionates overhead costs, as well as the direct costs of projects.)
- Management committees are not equipped with the necessary skills to pursue any projects which require financial support.
- Need for Financial Training for Trustees

Access to Funding & Resource needs for BME VCOs

- Sustainable Funding, Long Term Core Funding! Developing, expanding and sustaining income for VCOs, not just project based.
- Funding for staff
- *"...People who are running groups want to be paid"*
- Long term funding should not be dependant on 'emergency' or the 'unpopularity' of a situation
- *"...funding for our project for young people spare time activities was cut down because we are not such a problem any more"*
- Need for financial assistance to get groups to grow especially to meet the basic organisational financial need such as;
 - Office space
 - Telephone bills
 - Volunteers expenses
 - Paid staff
 - Train personnel
 - Office equipment

"We want to take women for trips in the summers so that they can meet other people and come out of their depressions but we need funding for that"(Muslim respondent)

"Funding would be required, there will be expenses like telephone, postage cost, info gathering etc. don't know any sources of funding"(Indian respondent)

Faith communities

Funding criteria often prevent faith groups from applying from the outset regardless of their activities for disadvantaged BME communities. Funders have a lack of understanding. For example, as the community school is within the Mosque, the authority will not release any funds as they will not fund any Places of Worship.

Fundraising Information, Support, Training and Advice

- With a two year CEMVO project, a few organisations have been assisted to develop their infrastructure, policies and practices which has enable them to access better funding, However, as yet another short term project, this service is coming to an end in June 2006. There is a need to mainstream this service as a full time permanent role.
 - Where are the right funding sources?
 - writing applications
 - meeting the criteria for grants
 - skills needed
 - support
 - confidence
 - relationships with Funders
- Practical, specific and professional support in fundraising for org. - consultancy (possibly involvement of business sector).
- Financial support for already existing effective projects and services rather than demand for 'innovative' brand new projects.
- Need to monitor funding
- Access to information on available funding
- Help with filling up application forms
- Fundraisers – volunteer, confidence and skills needs
- Some organisations have expressed that there should be an **ongoing support** which means even after getting the funding there should be support in place to help with preparing the accounts and help in allocating the money appropriately.
- Voluntary organisations feel that local Council is not supporting them enough. Few of the organisations are accessing funding from the council but the amount of funding has shrunk considerably over the last few years.

“Funders do not publicly announce that there are funds available, people who do not go to the networking events, they miss out”

Diversifying Funding Sources

Good practice example – one VCO has entered into a contract with the Learning and Skills Council, having trained 2 people to offer employment/training advice not only to the local Somali/East African community but to any members of the newly arriving communities. In return for seeing a specified number of clients they receive funding. Public service providers should look for opportunities to support VCOs in this way. VCOs could also explore the viability of sub-contracting other groups to send you clients if reaching target numbers

Training and support is needed to understand the sources and application processes for:

- Start up funds for new organisations
- Funding for individuals and 'pre-groups' (e.g. Community Champions)
- Grant funding
- Trust funds

- Private Sector involvement
- Donations
- Subscriptions
- Generating income, social enterprise businesses
- Procuring contracts
- Becoming a charity
- Home Fundraising ideas

Competition for Funding

As previously noted, Somali and East African groups come from diverse backgrounds and aim to do different activities. However, Funders and the LA see them as competing for the same funding. This 'competition' is undeniably leading to Funders and support organisations becoming 'wary' of funding/assisting one group over another; this issue may hold back the development of the various Somali groups, and therefore community at large, unless tackled.

Awareness should be raised about the difference in the groups and acceptance that these groups have a right to exist separately. Also these groups need help to see where they are duplicating projects and outcomes and work together where possible

There is also a perception that there is discrimination and a lack of openness and accountability in tendering for funds.

Local Grants

Officers with experience in managing Community Champions and Global Grants noted that locally managing small funds is a key experience to developing the capacity of smaller community organisations. However, a great deal of resource needs to be committed by the intermediary body to make the funds truly accessible and then ongoing support when the grant is being managed to deal with the issues around project management, dealing with a bank account, monitoring and evaluating work. Intermediary organisations usually are awarded a maximum of between 10-20% of grant funding for administration, which is wholly insufficient when you are trying to support individual groups to access the funds.

Support Needed For Individuals & First Time Grants: Experience From Delivering Slough Community Champions Fund

SREC has been an intermediary organisation for the Community Champions Fund (through Government Office South East GOSE), and has in only three years (2003-6) supported over 70 local individuals and new/emerging community groups to apply and for this, and 51 to become successful. SREC, unlike any other intermediary in the South East, also empowers community beneficiaries to sit on the decision panel. However, all this work is extraneous to the basic grant administration duties (only basic administration costs are funded) and as the majority of the development work is not funded and is not sustainable beyond March 2006. The following activities have been identified as crucial specialist support that is required to enable and empower local people to start to undertake community activity of their own or get access to small grants:

- varied publicity to different communities – in different formats and translated
- personal outreach and engagement of individuals, encouragement and linking their passions and volunteering to the belief that they are entitled to go for a grant to enable them to progress and do more or become more impactful
- one-to-one support to show them how to turn their ideas into a project and help them put this into written format and complete the application form appropriately (average of one to two hours per project)

- Individual application responses giving detailed feedback about their application, next steps for development, conditions of grant, suggestions for signposting and support needs
- Workshops to link up community projects and award grants, plus learning sessions to understand basic elements of running and managing and accounting for their community project
- Ongoing individual support throughout the project delivery, and assisting them to fulfil the project management requirements of monitoring their success (personal and project) and financial accountability (an average of 5 one-to-one contacts required per community Champions project)
- Administration and financial processes to distribute and account for the community grants
- Enable and empower local communities and completed Community Co-ordinate a cross-community 'People's Panel'
- Capacity build individuals to understand the processes and requirements of judging and making decisions about grant-giving and enable them to become a judge on the Panel
- Help the individuals access 2nd Tier support to develop and structure their group, meet their community needs, develop further projects and get further funding

Specific Local Community Experiences

Funding for New Communities

Need assistance in access to interpreters

Need help to become self sustaining financially, access to small and larger grants to enable paid outreach work with their communities

African Caribbean

Perception across both African and Caribbean VCOs that public services use their ideas for new projects for themselves and then do not fund or involve the BME VCOs. E.g. one group working directly with local people stated "when they bid for a health based project from a mainstream health organisation (PCT), they received a letter that their application was successful only to hear later their idea was used to create a job post within the PCT and the project then failed because the post holder could not reach the planned target group".

Also a perception that funding has been sought 'on the backs of the Black community' and when received that they have not benefited.

Wish to have assistance to help them "become more eligible to receive funding"

Perception of a lack of support, alienation from the current organisations in Slough, including SBC, SCVS and SREC, and feeling that they do not represent them. Historical issues from years back are still causing barriers in communication with these communities.

One Church finds a lot of people coming in for advice on visa, health etc or for a place to sleep overnight. No facilities/funding for this.

African

All groups experience serious funding shortages.

Requests for Budget planning workshops/training

All basic resourcing of volunteers, training, expenses etc these needs are currently met by members and individual friends.

The bank do not led them money as well as council and other mainstream agencies also do not help unless you know someone within the council.

Asian

Many Asian groups are aware of the need to apply for funding through the grants process and have done so.

Some groups perceive that 'white' community VCOs have big offices, yet their funding applications are turned down.

Slough Borough Council & Funding

Perceptions that political affiliation and bureaucracy is biasing funding decisions

"Funding is dependent on the council, needs of the people are never looked after...."

..There should be a non-political way of deciding about funding. There is a lots of Political interference - if you are a member of a certain party then only you will get funding" Indian male

- ✚ No communication with SBC
- ✚ Application rejected each time from SBC
- ✚ SBC always dictates

Groups asking for £2000 and was given £500 which did not meet their needs and have to do their own home fundraising for the rest remaining £1500 from other trusts to enable them implement the project. Budget planning is one of the obstacles facing the BME. - Most newly formed groups either under-budget / over-budget the project and this affect the efficient running of the project.

Lottery Funding is considered Haraam (illegal) for some Muslims as it is rooted in gambling. Although mixed responses: *"Won't work with National lottery, were offered some funding last year but turned it down"*(Muslim respondent 40s) *"If lottery funding is being used for a good purpose then it should be used"* (Muslim respondent 30s) *"Lottery funding is haraam in our religion so don't want to Apply for that."*(Muslim respondent 60s)

Middle East

Again, typical of many BME VCOs, they sustain their activities themselves. E.g. Weekend Arabic classes of 100 children costs them £600.00/month alone.

- ✚ No vision/direction of organisation
- ✚ Community wants organisation to develop properly

Recommendations for Funding

- There must be much more significant recognition by government of the value and importance of funding VCO sector in general, and added value of specialist infrastructure organisations, including those that deal with BME communities/VCOs
- Local mainstream organisations, infrastructure bodies and Funders should be encouraged/directed to **RING FENCE resources** for the BME sectors, particularly where there are proven inequalities and disadvantage, to include capacity building, in consultation and planning budgets and as part of service delivery budgets.
- Recognition of the necessity of **LONG TERM CORE FUNDING** – including administration costs, premises and management. A Minimum of 5 years is necessary for project funding to be effective, critical for planning, development and fruition of activities involving BME and excluded communities. Short term funding and increased bureaucracy is limiting the effectiveness and takes up valuable development and working time of a many VC organisations.

- Likewise **CONTINUATION FUNDING of successful VCO projects** is crucial. Lack of continuation funding for successful VCO projects is damaging and much valuable work is lost. It takes 3 years often for a new project just to begin bearing fruit and gaining momentum, and then often funding is stopped. For example, a recent BME Women's project (successful but only funded 3 years) ran empowerment training, was over-subscribed and still receives requests to continue and extend the remit of the training. Requests to support the women in developing an infrastructure and capacity building network particularly for BME Women in Slough were unfulfilled due to the funding ending. This still remains a potential need.
- There should be more provision of **funding to enable better sustainability and improvement/development of services by BME VCOs**. The current focus on immediate quantitative outcomes is misleading and unhelpful. Again, the 'development' focus is missing and widening the gaps between large 'bureaucracy-clever' VCOs and 'small but nevertheless effective' VCOs, (of which most BME VCOs fall into in Slough). The latter therefore continually get left out of funding and resource allocation.
- **SEED CORN/START UP FUNDING:** Because of the stringent and difficult bureaucracy, many BME VCOs decide to remain as volunteers and are unable therefore to access funding to do their work. Recognition of those talented volunteers that are not registered VCOs in the funding streams would be valuable. Funds for individuals like Community Champions should be increased and cover every geographical area. This is also essential to develop and grow the VCO sector, and encourage volunteering while developing project management skills essential in the VCO sector. BME communities are often the most unfamiliar with British bureaucratic systems and practical application through management of a small fund while being relevant to their own work is an excellent learning process.
- **Grants for small groups and individuals** such as Community Champions are excellent – in terms of access by groups through local intermediaries that know the area and the diverse communities, in terms of value for money – so many volunteers in all communities, that need only small seed funding often to produce a large amount of work with local communities and in terms of building communities' trust, confidence, skills (in project management, budgeting, community work, communication with local services, volunteering, involving local people in projects and more). Again, short term availability to funds such as Community champions restricts the potential of this extremely valuable resource.
- Slough has many, many individuals who do unending unpaid voluntary work with their own communities, but are not linked to any formal committee or registered VCO. For example, out translation service trains local people to act as interpreters, but many organisations and services still refuse to provide interpreters to communities. These community interpreters still carry out volunteer work interpreting unfunded. E.g. one interpreter spends over £200 per month on his mobile phone bill, but cannot access any financial support.
- Funding criteria often excludes **BME 'FAITH/RELIGIOUS' VCOs** from the outset, when they provide crucial outcomes and benefits and development of local BME communities. For example, mosques have no VCO infrastructure support in developing their community activities, projects and supplementary school classes. Greater flexibility and outcome-focused objectives would assist in working more closely with these BME VCOs.
- BME and Newly Arrived Communities, small community welfare organisations are not aware of either the availability of funding for them (small groups grants etc) neither are they aware or proficient in the processes, action planning, budgeting, various bureaucracy and policy development required to access such funding.
- Fairer & more consistent access to funding – Ensure BME have a fair share of resources. This implies better ethnic monitoring (& publication) of funding allocations and outreach research to

identify current inequalities of provision of facilities and services. Unfortunately, Contracts and fragmented service delivery is contributing to inconsistent funding arrangements and exclusion of BMEOs and communities remains a deepening issues. Attention to practical & local implementation on government Funding Codes and BME codes could be very beneficial.

- Traditional centralised funding points can be difficult to access and understand for BME communities. **Increase availability of local points of funding access** - for example, use generic and specialist infrastructure VCOs to be intermediaries for delivering funding. Of course these VCOs must have adequate capacity building and resources to be able to deliver on this, but are more likely to reach the 'hard-to-reach' communities where VCOs are most needed. This would also impact on the kind of support available to BME VCOs – recognition of the increased time, effort, skills & knowledge required to deliver these imperative infrastructure services in needed.
- Lessen jargon associated with project management and funding bureaucracy
- Loosening bureaucratic hurdles will increase the dynamism of VCOs as they are less constrained and disempowered. For example:
 - Matched funding requirements very difficult for deprived communities (where VCOs do their best work).
 - Proportionate systems to the amounts given should be considered –
 - Regulatory bodies - Levels of registering as formal VCO/charity to be more flexible and appropriate – again language difficulties – very traditional English skills required
 - For example, to allow VCOs to be “working on their constitutions”
- Easier application process – language barriers, plain English and jargon not understood. Assistance at every stage to assist individuals to apply – time consuming but necessary and effective – SREC has undertaken proactive assistance for individuals to apply for Community Champions funding – this has proven to be invaluable – although a very simple form, people are inhibited by application forms and need assistance in transforming their ideas to action plans and budgets. A high percentage of those who sought assistance did put in an application and were successful.
- Clear, plain English guidance and assistance needed to budget and account for grants
- Positive targeting of BME and newly arrived groups in publicity of funding – this should include translation of leaflets. Localised and proactive publicity is essential to raise awareness of availability of funding to BME and newly arrived communities.

Information, Communication & Technology (Ict)

Most BME VCOs recognised that in order to deliver their aims and objectives use of IT is inevitable. As well as high need for IT they reported also low access to solutions regarding IT problems. There is expertise needed for IT area which these organisations do not have since their priority is work for community. Respondents mentioned:

Equipment

'...the level of IT in voluntary organisations should be the same as in private sector, businesses but the difference should be that the cost should be paid with support of public sector...'

- PC's (& upgrading them)
- Adequate software
- Up to date anti-virus protection
- Internet Access
- Networking – Internet and Intranet
- Printers
- Photocopier
- Fax machine
- Telephone
- Intercom system for security and convenience
- Security Systems
- Need for website development and updating
- Capacity building - £ needed!
- Where VCOs do have ICT, it is often donated by volunteers is out of date.

Open Access to ICT Premises

- Many VCOs requested provision for an open computer centre with a computer literate worker so that the organisations can use it any time without the fear of being responsible for the safety of equipment (Communities are not aware of ICT resources at SCVS)

ICT support can be provided by having an open access place with the I.T. equipment and computer literate worker so that community groups can use it for their ICT needs without worrying about the security of equipment as we don't have sufficient premises for that.

Training, Expertise & Maintenance

Affordable/free professional IT consultants/volunteers providing advice, maintenance and other services for IT needs of community voluntary org.

'...IT support, maintenance can not be delivered on voluntary basis, it needs to be professional, and volunteers don't have time to answer all the demand for help...'

- Troubleshooting and maintenance of computers
- Advice on purchasing IT for voluntary org.
- Economic distribution of funds for IT strategy within the org.
- Separate fund for IT maintenance in the budget of org.
- specific IT support for voluntary org. with understanding of their needs
- training on practical IT problems
- Setting up Websites
- Learning to use software and e-mails
- Support when things go wrong (Maintenance costs)
- Delivering Presentations, skills and equipment

- Software, Spreadsheets
- Maintaining databases
- Requests for Women only computer classes
- ICT access in VCOs for their clients

Assistance with Information Needs

- Gathering and delivering information
- Publicity & Marketing
- Advertising, leaflets
- Information about other groups and services
- Useful links needed

Information packs about VCS infrastructure and community development support services

Information packs about Slough public service access points – named officers and numbers

Welcome to Slough pack for newly arriving communities – guide to services and rights

The above to be translated into various community languages as needed

Lack of information who are the existing groups to help.

*“There is a **lack of information of services being offered**. I have been living in Slough for many years but still don’t know about all the services. There is no such leaflet, which I can pick up to have information about different services. It’s very difficult for new arrivals.” (Muslim woman in her early thirties*

African communities go further, requesting:

- Advice centre where their voice can be heard and this should be in more cultural and sensitive environment.
- Social centre to interact and form association with other National groups.
- Information to be passed under the letterbox in their home to know what goes on in the community e.g. relevant information.
- BME representatives at community meetings concerning the development of their community.
- African radio station to advertise themselves and sell their good services and potentials.
- 24 hours confidential telephone services for enquiries.

Interpreting and Translation

Assistance to translate VCO support leaflets into local community languages

Requests for translated information of public services available in the town.

Volunteer Recruitment & Development

Volunteers are usually the only workforce that BME VCOs have. Volunteers sometimes work more hours and unsocial hours than paid workers can work. These volunteers have made a huge contribution to the service delivery of the VCS, without whom these organisations and groups would not exist.

For example, a Somali VCO states,

Voluntary Organisations working with these communities are under funded mainly managed by volunteers and unemployed professionals. These organisations have no resources to sustain their services, although they are doing very important job to provide help and support, and meeting multiple needs in ways not only give these communities and users a voice, but also the means to tackle themselves the underlying causes of their problems.

But these organisations can give very little back to their volunteers except experience. And with no funding, most BME VCOs have no guarantee of their existence, yet practically all BME VCOs in Slough rely on volunteers to deliver any kind of service. This works fine for a while, but this statement underpins the fundamental problem with expecting VCOs to remain volunteer-led indefinitely.

'...how long do I volunteer (for the project) five or ten years? No, that will have to change (to a paid position)...'

Issues raised include:

Lack of funding to give volunteers expenses, remuneration

Some kind of monetary reward should be made available for volunteers

Skills, time and resources needed to Support and manage volunteers

There is a need of motivation to encourage the manpower to lead and accept responsibilities

Recruiting difficulties, diversity of volunteers

There was a mixed response about recruiting Volunteers. Some of the older organisations responded that there was not such a big issue of Volunteers as through the years they have developed relationships and now they can get volunteer support from within their contacts. But new organisations expressed a need of volunteers and they were highly interested in getting them trained in various areas. The researcher found that community groups are not very well aware of these organisations, which can help in providing volunteers.

There were widespread concerns in getting the **younger generation involved** in volunteering their services and creating **more awareness** about the **sources available for taking volunteers** or organisations that support volunteering

There is a need of volunteers and sources of volunteers need to be promoted more, as community groups don't seem to know much about them.

"No body is ready to lead; there is an element of laziness" (Muslim Female)

Volunteer training and development plans

We need more opportunities for training and specialised courses for the volunteers

There is a need of training for the volunteers so that they can learn new skills and can gain something out of their volunteering.

“For our organisation, there is a need of training in Domestic Violence for the volunteers” (Muslim female)

Sustainability and retention difficulties – keeping volunteers interested and motivated and losing volunteers to paid employment

Time commitments – need to work and support their families

We cannot retain volunteers because volunteers often come and go to get paid jobs.

Losing experienced volunteers unexpectedly results closure or our service users to suffer.

Although Mosques are popular with volunteers. The Mosque has many volunteers who have a passion to support in the delivery, management, maintenance and of the running of the Mosque.

Lack of understanding for need of Insurance

Appropriate committee members with a diversity of skills

Partnerships & Networks

"I wonder some times if this small room is the Slough Borough Council customer service centre because we are doing the jobs suppose to be doing by statutory bodies. We filling housing benefit forms, housing registrar forms, school enrolment forms, JSA forms, child tax credit forms, plus all the consumer problems. All the time we receiving telephone calls from statutory bodies saying can you interpret for us or can we send this person we don't understand what they want. It could be better if each department sent hear a worker to help these service users. We did not get any support from council, or no funding for our core projects which can secure our sustainability. It could be better if our expertise can be integrated into the council work force, this will save time, money and resources and service users will have better choice and care... It is very hard to get co-operation from statutory bodies, although we doing job for them."

The above quote was common to BME VCOs in Slough, and highlights both the complexity and seriousness of the barriers and concerns in communicating with and role of partner organisations and public services.

- BME VCOs have partnerships with:
 - Other VCOs
 - Public Sector
 - Private Sector
 - Communities they serve
- VCO inclusion or often EXCLUSION on boards
- VCO being influential in decision making
- Unequal power of influence of different partners
- Competition? E.g. Funders confused by more than one group in a community
- Building partnerships
- Sharing facilities, buildings
- Campaigning, lobbying – depending on nature of business some may even have to take cases against partners
- Lots of Bureaucracy in public sector
- Effective, appropriate service delivery
- VCOs access to
 - Information
 - Opportunities
 - Funding
 - Facilities
 - Knowledge about Changes
- Is it what you know or who you know!
- Independence compromised?
- Conflicts of interest
- Different cultures and ways of working in different organisations
- (e.g. VCO doesn't want to work like the private sector)
- Resistance to change
- Commitment
- Motivation/ agendas of different people

Asian

- Lack of support from Slough Borough Council (SBC) and Slough Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS).
- Suggestions included:

- To set-up a voluntary sector development unit within SBC which actually supports organisations with premises, funding and specific capacity building training on a one-to-one basis with groups.
- To support groups in identifying key issues and concerns so that a partnership approach is established to tackle such key issues
- To receive support from SCVS but to take away the bureaucracy in meeting key personnel and to have an open door policy
- For SCVS to support and help on a one-to-one basis BME organisations with funding applications, charity status, policies + procedures and not to signpost to other agencies.
- To set up a Slough BME consortium run by the BME organisations and representatives on the consortium from SCVS, SBC, SREC and other public and voluntary sector organisations.

East African/Somali VCOs to work together and allowed to exist separately.

Advocacy, Representation & Involvement Of BME VCOs

In Slough, BME VCOs:

- *have no real partnerships with public or private sectors*
- *poor relationships between different BME VCOs*
- *strong connections wit the communities they serve*
- *are excluded on boards of every sector*
- *have no representatives on any influential decision making body*
- *have no power or influence*
- *can deliver appropriate services if they are given resources*
- *Have been denied access to opportunities, funding, information and knowledge about changes.*

Currently most partnership have hardly any representation from BME, faith or other groups. Even where there is it is usually tokenistic

In absence of adequate representation there is a need for an advocate for all communities, but efforts and resources must be found to enable participatory involvement in different ways, at all stages of the Change Up developmental process.

Must go out into communities, onto Gypsy sites and consider specific outcomes and decisions and how communities can be involved (See consultation ladder)

Relating to both Social /community needs and Infrastructure needs (which could amount to the same thing in some cases), each minority, 'hard-to-reach' or excluded community should be explored in turn separately and positive action initiatives explored and resources where possible, some communities would require dedicated partnership work. A promising example could be *Gypsies and Travellers*, as most services have limited capacity, remit or resources to work with Gypsies and Travellers

Gypsies & Traveller Communities

Partnership links could be made with the following:

- Traveller Education Consortium
- Traveller Education Trust
- LEA Traveller services

- Social Services
- National Gypsy Council
- Gypsy Law Reform Coalition
- Traveller Times website links
- Community Council for Berkshire – Gypsy Traveller and Parish Planning projects (also developing a Gypsy Traveller Consultation toolkit)
- Site managers
- ‘Head person’ within Gypsy Traveller communities
- Milton Keynes has professionals working with Gypsies and Travellers
- Windsor LA – housing, sites
- Local Housing Associations
- Police – CARROs

C&EEC partnerships

Mainly statutory organisations such as NASS, IND, Job Centre Plus, Council, My Council, schools were seen particularly as distant-regarding quality of the relationship although organisations liaise with them (regularly or occasionally). Respondents mentioned **lack of interest** in communities and their specific needs as a reason. **Language barrier** was also seen to be blamed for ineffective networking with them.

Need for partnership with similar community, voluntary organisations was point out as a way to **advocate** for community and the work org. does. Need for **influence** on decision making was also spelled.

‘We are self -supportive, we do not want any help from outside, from council...’
(Polish organisation)

‘Polish people must help themselves, don’t think council will, much....’
(Polish respondent)

I.e. lack of trust?

- Better involvement of community org. in decision-making, more communication. More forums or other bodies in order to influence decision-making.
- Bilingual staff in organisations that liaise regularly with community org.
- Community Consultants helping where direct co-operation is difficult or impossible.

African – partnerships

- All groups interviewed did not have links with other big organisations. Many provide services for their members mainly from their homes.

Information reaches them in distorted situation. As such researchers suggest that the mainstream organisations genuinely should help the BME groups to grow and develop – this recognition will help the BME groups to get dedicated volunteers to help.

Some groups are interested in partnerships with public services to deliver projects to their communities. They mention this will give them creditability to deliver be more effective services and help them to grow as social enterprises

- They want proper distribution of power resources as well as facilities.
- The need other big organisation to guide them to develop constitution
- They want the community to break barriers at the work force in which banks, private and local authority offices are dominated by a certain majority group.

Slough Council for Voluntary Services (SCVS):

- All through the interview with groups, families, leaders and individuals, there was an acknowledgement of the existence of the SCVS as the information service provider but expressed concern on the lack of practical service delivery.
- This conclusion is based on the fact that group members felt the delay of their progress/development is due to lack of first-hand practical services.
- A group claimed they gave up chancing the SCVS for a practical advice as the SCVS continue to claim they did not have enough staff to provide the services and could not wait anymore.

Slough Race Equality Council (SREC)

Many members of the community were not even aware of the existence of Slough Race Equality Council and Slough Council for Voluntary Services. Slough Borough Council is familiar and popular council for them. Apparently, those who are already involved in running their groups or organisations were the only few who knew Slough Council for Voluntary Services and Slough Race Equality Council's activities helping the community.

Slough Borough Council (SBC)

- No support from SBC
- No communication
- SBC dominates agenda and meetings
- LSP is SBC?
- Negative body language
- Political Agenda / Party

Other Statutory

GP advisors in Mosques – more of this?

South East Asian communities

- They need more interactions among different organisations and faith groups.
- They need the support to work in conjunction with other groups and increase support from local authorities.
- Lack of information and communication between community groups and the developers and Funders.

Filipino

Lack of time to participate

- *Due to busy work duty.*
1. Lack of information and recourses.
 2. Lack of awareness concerning how to develop our community and the local services.
 3. They only go to the familiar places like shopping centres and work place.
 - Need Acknowledgement from the local community stressing the presence of the Filipino Community in the locality of Slough.”
 - By joining and interacting to different community developments organisations.
 - Interacting to BME local groups.
 - Advertising strategies.
 - Volunteering to different organisations.

Asian

More involvement of groups in the decision making process as the important needs of the community

There is a need of making information clearer and more involvement of community groups in consultation process.

“Council needs to be more aware, need to make information more clearer and more relevant e.g. Extended leave leaflets, needs to be made more relevant, there should be a dialogue with the community groups also, take advice from more groups, try to engage them more”

The researcher found out that there is a **lack of Partnership working** between the **small community organisations** that were interviewed. On the other hand organisations, which are properly set up, and working on a wider basis do work in partnership with other organisations. There is a clear need of **promoting Partnership working and creating an umbrella**, which can co-ordinate all the different projects happening in Slough. Lots of Organisations showed their desire of working in partnership but they feel that there is a **link missing** and there is **no body to initiate it** and promote networking events. Few of the organisations expressed their interest of **sharing the premises with two to three other organisations** to overcome the problem of affording a venue. There is a clear **need of training to promote Partnership** working and a strong need of linking all the organisations together so that they all can benefit from each other. There is a **lack of awareness** also in terms of the knowledge of the other voluntary organisations that are working in Slough

“Not working in partnership but can do much more if join together...need an organiser to initiate the dialogue”

“We are very happy to share premises with 2-3 other groups”

Even within a same community there is a lack of partnership working between different organisations, there is a clear need of awareness and relationship building.

Partnership with ESOL providers

Joint funding bids; attend functions and seminars so others know about PWA. Willingness from others to work with PWA.

Recommendations For Partnership

- **Partnership issues** - particular issues and concerns have been identified by public services, LSP and organisations trying to communicate and work alongside VCOs and communities
 - Communication
 - Lack of involvement, lack of effective consultation
 - Unequal partnership – public sector led, their agenda, their time, their issues and at their pace. Need for VCO involvement in early decision making
- Small VCOs are often overlooked and overwhelmed by the large public sector and VCO infrastructure organisations – both through size, issues and language of communication. Small specialist VCOs that service particular issues of communities should be equally included in tendering, funding and partnership mechanisms at a local level, and acknowledged at a central governmental level.
- There must be commitment from all chief officers (or public services and VCO infrastructure organisations) to implement and be accountable to local compact agreements with VCOs. Infrastructure organisations could play an extremely valuable role in the promotion, implementation and actual use of the Compact and assist VCOs to liaise with public sector on their rights and

responsibilities, partnership, funding, consultation and other essential relationships and functions between VCOs and public services.

- VCO infrastructure should include investment and support in developing BME Umbrella bodies – again with the principles as set out above (on their terms, at their pace etc.) These could themselves in time provide specialist infrastructure knowledge and services to local communities, but take years to develop successfully and effectively, again requiring highly skilled community development practices.

Local business partnerships including Slough Leadership Challenge, Slough Business Community Partnership and Human Resource Forum all confirm there are critical issues of recruitment and retention of BME people in most organisations, plus the issues of under-representation of BME communities both at more senior levels of employment, plus in accessing services, in interaction and consultation with services and other race equality indicators are poor. Again, links with BME VCOs and communities are poor.

Accommodation & Access To Facilities, Equipment & Premises

Childcare

There is a shortage of registered childminders within specific community groups. One group was unable to fully utilise an awarded grant because although they had the funding to pay for childcare they could not find suitable childminders. WEA and Sure Start partnership have started to develop new courses to link ESOL to childcare issues as a first step towards working for registration and the new neighbourhood nurseries will also start to alleviate some of this shortfall, but this remains a serious impediment to FDOs and service users.

Office Space/ Premises

Lack of premises is a major issue from most BME VCOs both in the critical need for office space and for premises to hold community activities and events.

Most BME VCOs operate from their own private homes and this presents serious barriers in developing their organisations and their activities. For example, it presents difficulties even in recruiting volunteers.

Even for those very few that have been forthright in getting applications and letters of support, they have struggled to pay the SBC rent and still find the premises is unsuitable for their purpose, scruffy and unfurnished.

One organisation commented: *"At the moment we have makeshift office space which is not enough necessary activities, some of the activities we remove chairs and people sit on the floor even winter"*

Recommendation:

There should be serious practical action taken to provide shared office space and access to community premises free of charge for new and emerging community groups.

Many people have suggested VCS sharing a building, even gaining the capital through funding to purchase a Voluntary Community Sector building that could house various groups together, each proportionately sharing running costs and overheads depending on income, usage and size of group. This could potentially be a co-operative, community-led venture.

Governance

- The term Governance is rarely understood, particularly by new and developing VCOs.
- Many of the BME voluntary community organisation have stated that they need skills, training and development for their management committees
- Organisations vary from informal without any documentation or policies to formal registered charities. Whilst many knew or had formal documents these did not translate into operational guidelines for quality assurance, which many funding organisations require.
- Need for long term volunteers and paid staff to ensure continuity and stability of services
- Need for Training and support officers to help existing and new organisations understand and develop their :
 - Project Management
 - Organisational Management
 - Strategic Planning
 - Understanding needs of clients
 - Understanding roles and responsibilities
 - Core standards

Workforce Development

Slough's Community Training Partnership is un-funded and SCVS is struggling to keep this going
Critical need to co-ordinate what is available in Slough and promote access (including FE colleges and Extended Schools projects like that in Slough & Eton)

Cannot provide training requested by groups

SBC Community Training says it can offer any training to groups over 8 people but this project is also unsustainable

- Needs in all organisations to assist the development of their 'workforce', which includes volunteers, paid staff and management committees and trustees.
- Majority of the organisations do not have paid staff and so they do not see how they can develop their workforce.
- Need for support for fund raising to gain paid workforce
- Requests for free training to develop skills
- Those who have accessed SCVS and SBC community training have found it useful. Particular requests for more fundraising training.
- But still lack of awareness of what free training is available
- Community Training Partnership is un-funded and SCVS struggling to keep this going and SBC Community Training says it can offer any training to groups over 8 people but this project is also unsustainable

**“How can we develop our workforce when we have no funding to employ anyone!” a
Somalian man**

Performance Improvement

- All organisations would like to do more for their communities
- However most of them are stretched to breaking point, working long hours and still not able to meet all the needs of their communities
- Again without funding, volunteers and other resources, the organisations do not have the necessary skills to improve
- Most newly arrived communities want to learn, to develop themselves and to contribute and help to make a difference but most of all they want paid jobs.

Other Issues relating to Change Up

It is vital that the detailed work of the Community researchers is not lost. This report summarises eight people's work and equates to over 100 days of quality interaction and communication with Slough's community groups, organisations and individuals. It has been condensed to 'fit' the Consortia's Infrastructure Development plan, however a concerted effort needs to be made by the Consortia and the local strategic partnership – Slough Focus to ensure that the key issues raised by the communities are addressed in their annual plans. In addition it is vital that feed back is given to the many communities that have participated to ensure their future cooperation and faith in service providers.

With the end of funding for Change Up co-ordinators and desire to set up regional forums without the valuable links that have been made by the co-ordinators and the researchers, there is definitely going to be a huge vacuum in town and across the South East Region until new funding can be secured.

Comments by Community researchers:

"Change Up cannot develop BME communities, but can help the BME communities to develop themselves"

"Change Up should join hands, sink and swim together with BME communities.

"How needed is Change Up!!!!"

APPENDICES

Participatory Tools used – available on request
Census figures/ Demography of Slough – see attached
Briefings monitoring and community involvement including consultation ladder – available on request
Report on ICT needs for Slough see attached
Photographs from I-CAN network - see attached

List of some of the Communities and Voluntary Organisations consulted.

Filipino Community, Filipino nurses
Generic – neighbourhood
Our Lady of the Roses Prayer Group
Multi faith forum
Anglo Filipino Association
Slough Filipino Community Association
Slough faith partnership
Filipino community (south east)
Chinese community
13 South Asian community groups targeting women from Pakistan and India and two individual women from African origin
Ramgharia Education and Cultural Centre (RECC)
Pakistan Welfare Association (PWA)
Kashmiri Cultural Society
Bedari Services
Stoke Poges Lane Mosque
Humjoli
Indian Women Association
Sri Lankan Muslim Association
Slough Community School
Afghan Welfare Association
East African Youth Group of Slough (EAYGOS)
Redemption Church Group
Empowering Minds
Mr Boadi and Group (Ghanias)
Children and women in Need
Disability Matters
Means of Survival and Development
Individual – Kenya
Individual – Zimbabwe
Individual – Nigeria
Survival
West Indian Peoples Association
Individual – Anguilan Community
Individual – African Caribbean community
Individual - Nation of Islam
Berkshire Somali community
Roma community
Gypsy and Traveller communities
Albanian and Kosovo community
Polish community
Refugees and Asylum seekers from East Africa such as Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea. Plus three groups from the Middle East Iraq, Palestine, Kurds from Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran

Arab Welfare Association – included people from Middle East and North Africa, such as Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Syria, Sudan, Jordan, Lebanon, Dubai, Iraq, Kurds, and Palestine.
Individuals from Morocco and Burundi
I-CAN – Inter Community Activists Network
SREC staff, in particular SEE (Slough Engaging and Empowering) project, as well as the Racial harassment and training Officers
