The Pied Piper



The BME third sector and UK race relations policy

Asif Afridi and Joy Warmington
Edited by Alun Severn

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This book is about the black and minority ethnic third sector* – its historical roots, the socio-political context in which it operates, the present challenges it faces, and its future development.

It is written for anyone wanting a better understanding of the BME sector and especially for those who want to understand why the sector has developed in the way that it has.

We hope it will offer a useful resource for BME third sector organisations (BME TSOs) themselves, and for anyone involved in working with or supporting the sector. But most of all, we hope it will prove stimulating, provocative and enjoyable – a good read as well as a good resource.

In it, we argue that the development needs of the BME sector are different, but that the reasons for this are more complex than is generally understood. These needs arise, we argue, not from some culturally-determined lack of capability, and not even from a clear case of 'unequal development', although the sector does reflect the wider discrimination and disadvantage of British society and therefore this is a factor. The central issue is that the purpose, shape, developmental trajectory and even the 'identity' of the BME third sector has been determined largely by its unique sixty-year relationship with UK race relations policy.

From their earliest origins, BME third sector organisations have been a tenacious and determined response to the experience of racism and discrimination. But at various times – typically during periods of intense crisis in race relations – the BME third sector has also been a beneficiary of political and financial state 'patronage'. This has undoubtedly created opportunities for the sector and has helped secure it a degree of legitimacy and credibility.

But by assigning narrow roles to the sector – niche service provider, community representation, 'equalities', inclusion of hard to reach groups – public policy has not just shaped but also limited the sector's development. We believe that an understanding of this is central to any vision of where the sector might go in the future.

* We follow the same definition of 'third sector' as that used by the government: "...non-governmental organisations that are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives. It includes voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, co-operatives and mutuals..." and includes housing associations. www.communities.gov.uk/communities/thirdsector

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Beyond Survival

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Notes on terminology

Some of the terms used in this publication require both explanation and qualification. What follows is not intended as a definitive guide to how and when these terms should and shouldn't be used; rather, it is a plea to recognise their complexity and treat them with care.

BME

'BME' – Black and minority ethnic – is a term in widespread usage, and has been for many years, but it is not without its critics. Some feel it puts an unnecessary emphasis on skin colour, and prefer the 'colour-free' term Minority Ethnic Group; others feel that it fails to specifically reference Asian groups, hence the increased use in the past year or two of the term 'Black and Asian Minority Ethnic' (BAME). But equally, many White ethnic groups do not feel included in either construction.

The fact is, all such labels are unsatisfactory and tend to be used as a matter of convenience until a better or less contested term takes their place.

Black

The term 'black' arose as a conscious and political reclaiming of a previously derogatory term during the struggles of the US civil rights movement and was subsequently adopted in Britain for similar reasons. In the UK the political usage of the term frequently indicates solidarity or affiliation with those who have suffered colonial or racist oppression by the British state. A subsidiary message may also be the desire to see a united community comprising all those who regard themselves as 'black'.

Racism and race

There is no single, agreed, uncontested or definitive definition of racism, but here are some differing views of racism to consider. Racism is...

- Prejudice – the learned beliefs and values that lead an individual or group to be biased for or against members of particular groups.

- The favourable or unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their perceived or ascribed 'race'.
- A very specific term to describe the beliefs of Hitler and the Nazi Party in pre-second world war Germany.
- Deterministic beliefs about the differences between various ethnic groups.
- The belief that there is a hierarchy of human races, with differing skills, capacities and attributes which largely determine cultural and/or individual behaviour.
- Power plus prejudice.
- Having power to subjugate groups of people.
- Capitalising on 'less developed' cultures for economic gain.
- The belief that some human beings are naturally superior to others.
- A natural reaction to difference.
- The consequence of the fight for scarce resources.

In this publication we use the term racism to describe the belief that certain 'racial groups' are superior to others. Tempting though it might be to reduce racism to an essential behavioural pattern, it is more accurate to describe it as the result of a complex interplay of individual attitudes, social values and institutional practices.

Activists and anti-racist campaigners have also developed the theory of 'overt' and 'covert' racism. Overt racism, according to Stokely Carmichael, consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury or the violent destruction of property. This type of racism can be recorded by television cameras and can frequently be observed in the process of commission. The second form of racism "is less overt, far more subtle, and less identifiable in terms of specific individuals committing the acts", but "it is no less destructive of human life". This covert racism "originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than the first type".[1]

While racism may manifest itself primarily as 'colour racism' it is worth remembering that in the most horrendous instances of ethnic conflict in recent times – a decade of war in the former Yugoslavia throughout the 1990s, and the Rwandan genocide of 1994 – both victims and perpetrators were the same 'colour'.

Institutional racism

Racism can be expressed in the actions of groups and individuals but it can also manifest itself in the behaviour of institutions as 'institutional racism'. The definition of institutional racism most commonly used today is the one produced by Macpherson, in his report for the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry:

> *"Racism in general terms consists of conduct or words or practices, which advantage or disadvantage people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. In its more subtle form it is as damaging as in its overt form. Institutional Racism consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour, which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."*[2]

Race

Racism assumes the existence of different 'races' and for some years now 'race' has been a contested concept. Although the term is used extensively in this publication, it is *not* used in the sense of different biological 'races'. As the Human Genome project has demonstrated, different genetically distinct races do not exist in this world in a biological sense – human beings are made of the same 'stuff'. One of the effects of the Human Genome project, as two US academics have recently pointed out, has been to reinforce our understanding that 'race' as biology is fiction, but racism as a social phenomenon is very real.[3]

The historical roots of 'race' – and hence of racism – are social, political and attitudinal, a means of delineating different groups and defining who has power, authority, status and privilege. One writer has described 'race' as "what happens when ethnicity is deemed essential or indelible and made hierarchical."[4]

And of course, the very existence of racism is sometimes contested – perhaps because even to talk about the issue makes us feel uncomfortable. Certainly many of us do fear being perceived as racist or being 'unwittingly' racist, and while understandable this does sometimes lead to defensiveness and a degree of reluctance to explore racism honestly and openly.

Ethnicity

Since the 1980s, 'ethnicity' has increasingly been recognised as a more accurate and appropriate term to differentiate between groups of people. Social scientists, who reject the existence of 'races' of people, prefer the concept of ethnicity and ethnic groupings. However, as with other concepts, it is difficult to find consensus regarding a precise definition of ethnicity. Most definitions that exist categorise an ethnic group by reference to some combination of the following characteristics: language, religion, 'race', ancestral homeland, culture/way of life, geographical or national origin/s, skin colour.

Many social scientists have argued that if we have to classify human beings then the idea of ethnicity/ethnic groups is the least unsatisfactory way. It is more flexible and adaptable than other approaches, and can accommodate changes in people's perceptions about the groups to which they belong. Above all, they suggest, it recognises that social divisions between such groups are created, maintained, altered and challenged by humans and are not the inevitable product of supposed biological or cultural differences.

But it could be argued that the term 'ethnicity' crept into common usage in our everyday world without a great deal of discussion about its definition and consequently there is still considerable confusion regarding the usage of the term. For example, 'race' and 'ethnicity' are often still perceived to be one and the same thing and the terms still frequently used as if interchangeable. For many, too, ethnicity remains 'coloured' – i.e. it is assumed to be a polite, 'politically correct' way of referring to people who are not white.

Culture

The term 'culture' is open to numerous interpretations. A 1952 study identified 164 different definitions of the term.[5] It has meanings

linked to the arts and humanities (high and low culture; popular culture), to anthropology (patterns of human knowledge, belief and behaviour), and to sociology (shared attitudes, values and practices that characterise an organisation or social or ethnic group). It has less benign interpretations in extreme nationalism.[6]

In equalities thinking, culture tends to refer to the beliefs, values and practices associated with a particular social group. The term tends to be used extremely loosely, however – "people from different ethnic backgrounds or cultures" – and does require some care. The notion that ethnic groups have a specific, definable 'cultural identity' arising from shared beliefs, values and practices frequently leads to widespread misconceptions and stereotypes. Amartya Sen, the Nobel Prize-winning Indian economist, has noted that western notions of ethnic 'cultures' tend to accentuate the most "culturally conservative" characteristics because these conform most readily to our idea of how an ethnic community should behave.

Sociologists argue that what defines culture is that it is learnt and it is shared. A society's culture will define the values and behaviour deemed acceptable and these will be taught and modelled explicitly and implicitly via primary and secondary socialisation. However, they have also illustrated how culture varies both across and within societies, as well as varying over time – so culture is dynamic, rather than static.

Faith

The increasing importance of 'faith-based' third sector organisations in public policy would occupy a book in itself. The trend began in the US during the George Bush presidency when Bush passed executive orders (i.e. without congressional approval) in January 2001 establishing an Office of Faith-Based & Neighbourhood Partnerships in the White House and dramatically widened the role faith-based and community organisations could play in delivering federally-funded social services.

Since then we have seen a similar emphasis on faith-based organisations in UK social policy too. Faith-based organisations in the third sector are not new, of course, and churches, mosques and temples have a

long history of running voluntary services in social care, welfare and education, to name just a few areas. In the past, however, the fact that such initiatives were run or hosted by faith organisations was almost incidental. Current policy seems to favour faith-based initiatives precisely because they are faith-based and this emphasis is new.

Paradoxically, this emphasis on 'faith' has gone hand-in-hand with an increasingly ambiguous usage of the term as it relates to equality and diversity. 'Faith' has become the new 'black' – an inaccurate descriptor of ethnicity. For some – from whatever minority or majority community they may come – faith is a centrally important part of their identity. But this is not universally true. While there are no hard and fast rules, we believe it is better (and more accurate) to use the term 'faith' to refer specifically to the religious beliefs, practices and affiliations of a person or community and to avoid using it as a surrogate for ethnicity.

Notes

1. Carmichael, S., & Hamilton, C V., Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America, pp. 2-6 (New York: Vintage Books, 1967).

2. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an Inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, The Stationery Office (1999). http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm42/4262/4262.htm

3. See Smedley, A & Brian D., Race as Biology Is Fiction, Racism as a Social Problem Is Real, American Psychologist (Vol. 60, No. 1, 16-26, January 2005). http://www.apa.org/journals/releases/amp60116.pdf

4. Fredrickson, G M., Racism: A Short History, Princeton University Press, USA (2002).

5. Kroeber A. L. and Kluckhohn C., Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions (1952).

6. Political thinkers and especially the post-war cultural studies movement have also used the concept of 'cultural hegemony' to explain how the values, interests and ideology of one social class or group can permeate other groups and come to dominate them.



The history of the BME third sector

In this chapter we argue that it is politics, and British race relations policy in particular, that have had the most enduring impact on the shape, nature and purpose of the BME voluntary sector, and that recognition of this is central to understanding why the sector has developed in the way it has since the post-war period.

one

Setting the scene

Defining characteristics

From its earliest beginnings, the BME third sector in Britain has been defined by three main characteristics:

- **Self-help and self-organisation** – a preparedness to do for ourselves what British society cannot or will not do for us.
- **Mutuality** – supporting those community members already here and providing for new arrivals. And
- **Political resistance** – collective efforts to counter the experience of British racism and discrimination and to build up alternative community provision.

While the growth of the sector is most strongly identified with post-war immigration and the ensuing policies designed to 'manage' and mediate increasing social and cultural diversity, black community action in Britain can be traced back as far as the eighteenth century. For example, when two black men were imprisoned in Bridewell for begging in 1773, it is said that they were visited by "upwards of 300 of their countrymen" and that the black community contributed to their upkeep while they were imprisoned.[7] From as early as the latter half of the eighteenth century, then, mutual support amongst black communities becomes apparent in the historical record.

Windrush and the new British working class

In the immediate post-war years, the British economy was short of labour and turned to its former colonies for willing hands. On the 22 June 1948, Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury and 492 Jamaicans disembarked. In the following two decades, a number of industries actively recruited new workers from overseas – both London Transport and the British Hotels & Restaurants Association did, for example – with fares to Britain being lent and subsequently repaid through wage-packet deductions. Ten years after Windrush docked, Britain had a new West Indian community some 125,000-strong.

From the early-1950s, immigration from the Indian sub-continent also grew – again, explicitly encouraged as a means of bolstering the British

workforce and British economic competitiveness – and by the end of 1958 Indian and Pakistani communities in Britain totalled about 55,000 people. A new black- and Asian-British working class was being shaped – and all of these new arrivals were British citizens, the 1948 Nationality Act having granted UK citizenship to citizens of Britain's colonies and former colonies.

The rise of British racism

But these new communities were met by a nakedly racist society, Rachmanite slumlords,[8] a widespread colour bar – both in the better accommodation and in skilled jobs – widespread racism in the trade union movement, increasingly racist immigration legislation, and largely unchallenged racist attacks.

Attacks rose to a peak in 1958 and 1959. In 1958 the most prolonged rioting was in Notting Hill – five nights of what amounted to organised pogroms against the black and Caribbean communities – but there were disturbances elsewhere too, notably Nottingham. Then, on the 17 May 1959, Kelso Cochrane, a carpenter from Antigua, was stabbed to death in Kensal New Town by a gang of white men. Like Stephen Lawrence's murder thirty-four years later, investigating police officers initially denied any racist motive; and as with Stephen Lawrence, no one has ever been convicted.

But the Kelso Cochrane case has other contemporary echoes. Stephen Lawrence's murder prompted the McPherson Report; Cochrane's murder prompted the first government enquiry into UK race relations – chaired by Amy Ashwood Garvey, the first wife of Marcus Garvey. A more enduring legacy which has kept Cochrane's spirit alive is the Notting Hill Carnival. His murder was largely responsible for carnival, a gesture of defiance and community solidarity which is now world known.[9]

Respectable racism

But the government continued to see the black presence rather than white racism as the root of Britain's 'race problem' and in 1962, following powerful campaigning by Conservative MPs in the Birmingham Immigration Control Association, the first Commonwealth

Immigrants Bill became law. Later described as "the decisive turning point in contemporary British race relations", the Bill limited not just the number of immigrants able to enter the country, but also – through implementation of an 'employment voucher' scheme – their status, citizenship rights, and length of stay. "Blackness," one historian has noted, had become "officially equated with second class citizenship."[10]

This was followed in 1968 by the Labour government's Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the primary purpose of which was to restrict entry into the UK of Kenyan Asians holding British passports.[11]

The racist heat was turned up further during the notorious 1964 General Election campaign in Smethwick in the West Midlands when Labour Foreign Secretary Patrick Gordon Walker was defeated by the Conservative Peter Griffiths running on an openly racist ticket. Billboards in Marshall Street in the Smethwick ward of the constituency carried Griffiths' key campaign message in giant print: "If you want a nigger neighbour vote Labour." The one most visible on entering this L-shaped working class terraced street was on the gable-end of a house adjoining St Paul's Church, opposite the entrance to the local grammar school; a BBC outside-broadcast unit filmed the segments of the poster being pasted into position.[12]

"...foaming with much blood"

But this was not as hot as it would get. On the 20 April 1968, Enoch Powell, Conservative MP for Wolverhampton South West, delivered what has become known as the "rivers of blood"[13] speech to the West Midlands Area Conservative Political Centre in The Midland Hotel, Birmingham. The main target of Powell's bile was not immigration per se but the Labour government's 1968 Race Relations Act, a belated (and at best half-hearted) attempt to limit the naked and widespread discrimination which existed, even in public provision such as council housing.

Within days of the speech Tory leader Edward Heath sacked Powell from the Shadow Cabinet but thousands of British workers – dockers, factory workers, porters from Smithfield market – went on strike and marched in his support. In the aftermath of Powell's speech – as after the Smethwick General Election campaign – racist attacks across the country increased.

"Liaison and conciliation"

In the wake of the 1962 Immigration Act, the government established a National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NACCI).[14] This advisory quango of its time was supposed to co-ordinate the work of local 'multi-racial' organisations – immigration advisory councils, friendship groups and consultative committees.

When Nadine Peppard, the first NACCI national co-ordinator, took up her post, she found that relatively few local groups existed – maybe as few as fifteen in the whole country – and that those that did were unevenly distributed. Moreover, they were effectively voluntary organisations and hardly any – perhaps as few as four – received public funding.[15] This state of affairs led some to conclude that the government's commitment to the NACCI (and to the Race Relations Board, established at around the same time) was mostly token. Others were more fiercely critical, but from a different perspective: "To ordinary blacks, these structures were irrelevant: liaison and conciliation seemed to define [black people] as a people apart who somehow needed to be fitted into the mainstream of British society – when all they were seeking was the same rights as other citizens."[16]

Struggles against racist employment

During this period – and of necessity – Britain's black and Asian communities were learning to organise. On the industrial front, black and Asian workers were beginning to assert themselves against racist employment practices and there were a string of significant strikes, largely unreported in the press at the time, and largely unsupported by the 'white' trade union movement (although there were honourable exceptions, especially at the local level).

Black and especially Asian workers, often dependent on the support of local organisations, communities and temples – on food donations, local shops that would extend credit, and even in some cases politically sympathetic landlords who would defer or even waive rent payments – began to battle for the same pay and conditions as their white co-workers.[17]

The 1950s – early voluntary sector provision

But Britain's new black and Asian communities were also learning that what the state could not or would not provide, they could provide for themselves. In 1964/65, NACCI's co-ordinator toured the country encouraging local authorities and others to form immigrant co-ordinating committees where they didn't exist and to support and strengthen those that did, and by mid-1965 there were over thirty such committees, around one-third of these with full-time officers and funding either from a local authority or a social services department.

While some of these groups were new, others were built on existing organisations, some of which predated the government's official 'voluntary liaison committees' initiative, having been set up by local communities as early as the mid-1950s.[18]

Significant numbers of these 'voluntary liaison committees' eventually evolved into 'official' Community Relations Councils. Nottinghamshire CRC's origins, for example, lay in the merger of the Commonwealth Citizens Consultative Committee and the Commonwealth Citizen's Association.[19] In time, many of these emerging associations started to provide other welfare services too. Independent voluntary sector provision, much as we recognise it today, had begun.[20]

A toxic tide of racism, oppressive policing and fascist politics

But neither the government's National Advisory Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants, nor the growth of a more grassroots-based movement of 'international friendship committees', nor indeed successive waves of race relations legislation could stem the rising and increasingly toxic tide of British racism, oppressive policing and fascist politics. This continued unabated throughout the 1960s and 1970s, as did racist attacks of mounting ferocity. Nationwide, far-right and fascist groups were also increasingly active, frequently targeting their activities in neighbourhoods with the highest BME populations, and in the capital often flanked by units of the then notorious Special Patrol Group (SPG).

In April 1979, New Zealand-born teacher and anti-racist activist Blair Peach died after a beating administered by SPG officers at an Anti Nazi League demonstration in Southall to oppose a National Front election meeting.[21] The jury in the Peach case returned a verdict of death by misadventure. Peach's body was not buried until the 13 June 1979. 10,000 people joined his funeral procession.

New Cross

But worse was to follow. On the night of the 18 January 1981, a black birthday party was taking place at 439 New Cross Road in London. A devastating fire killed thirteen young people and injured almost thirty. Given the racist activity in the area – both the National Front and British National Party were increasingly active – the immediate assumption was that the fire was the result of an arson attack and within days a New Cross Massacre Action Committee was set up. The police investigation announced, however, that there was no evidence of arson and that the fire was believed to be accidental. The initial inquest in April 1981 – and a subsequent re-examination of the case in 2004 – returned open verdicts.

But the Action Committee's vigils, demonstrations and weekly mass meetings had involved thousands – a mass mobilisation that helped contribute to a growing militancy and self-assertion in Britain's black and Asian communities. In a matter of just a couple of months the significance of this would be evident.

Britain's black communities explode

In early 1981 Metropolitan Police had launched Operation Swamp 81 in Brixton, during which 120 officers using new 'SUS laws' stopped and searched almost 1,000 people – overwhelmingly black – and arrested over 100.[22] Decades of impoverishment, discrimination and oppressive policing came to a head and in April 1981 Britain's black communities exploded. While Brixton was the epicentre, between April and July of that year there were uprisings in Southall, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, and smaller scale revolts in a number of other cities and towns. With hindsight it can be seen that the uprisings of 1981 and 1985 (the latter in Brixton again, following the police shooting of Cherry Croce, a black woman, during a house search), along

with the miners' strike of 1984/5, brought Britain as close to an insurrectionary situation as it has ever been in the post-war period.

The government's response to the 1981 uprisings was the public enquiry led by Lord Scarman. Scarman moved quickly and his report was published before the end of November 1981. It found unquestionable evidence of the disproportionate and indiscriminate use of 'stop and search' powers by the police against black people and as a consequence a new code for police behaviour was put forward in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

"There are in Britain a score of Brixtons"

But it can be argued that the Scarman Report had even longer-lasting consequences for the BME voluntary and community sector. Scarman had drawn attention to the need to tackle discrimination and racism, to increase employment opportunities, especially for black youth, and to counter urban decay and inner city decline and disadvantage, and in the years following the Scarman Report access to funding which specifically targeted BME-led organisations, programmes and initiatives was seen to increase. There was an immediate increase in the government's Urban Programme spending, rising to £270m in the 1983 financial year, with rises too in other funding sources targeting ethnic minority disadvantage, such as Section 11 funding.

Speaking in the House of Lords debate on the Scarman enquiry, Lord Elystan-Morgan noted that no response to this crisis could afford to ignore its "central factor" – racial disadvantage. "There are in Britain a score of Brixtons," he said. Suddenly, it seemed, everyone, including Britain's ruling class, was awake to the challenge of racism.[23]

How policy-makers understand the BME voluntary sector

For many, the foregoing will be 'old news'. Nonetheless, it has been important to spell out this wider political and social context because within it, we can already begin to see two key trends that have shaped the BME voluntary sector and which continue to inform policy-

makers' present understanding of it. For the sake of shorthand, let us call these: challenging racism; and 'ethnic representation'.

To some degree, these are in tension. The commitment to challenging racism is 'autonomous' – an independent expression of self-organisation and solidarity shared by many BME organisations. But the latter, 'ethnic representation', is largely a policy-makers' convenience, a desire on the part of the state and its institutions to arrive at a neat, orderly version of diversity, and a means of engaging with BME communities that can be demonstrated to be inclusive and collaborative. Both are key drivers in the development of the BME sector, however, and merit more detailed examination.

Challenging racism

Historically, BME third sector organisations in the UK have developed primarily as a response to racism – a means of challenging and protesting, of providing services where the state has failed, and of developing self-identity and community solidarity. Many BME organisations have been at the forefront of significant campaigns for social justice and for many this has offered a more credible and meaningful route into political activism than any of the main political parties.

Other organisations have led social and cultural initiatives – carnival, black history, black writing, and especially black music – and these too have played a decisive role in mobilising BME communities.

But a key problem for the BME sector is that in a society preoccupied with denying its own racism it will always to some extent be isolated. Consequently, BME organisations have found it difficult to forge the kind of broad political allegiances across class, party and ethnic divides that for decades have been a mainstay of 'white' voluntary sector campaigning – the landmark campaigns that launched household-names such as Brook Advisory Centres, Shelter, Child Poverty Action Group, and Crisis.[24]

But this isolation has also had consequences for BME third sector service delivery. For example, it is very rare to see African Caribbean and Asian organisations collaborating in order to extend their reach

and maximise services, rare too to see BME and 'white' organisations working in partnership. But such partnerships are not only perfectly plausible, they are also increasingly necessary – a route for third sector providers to strengthen their own prospects for growth and survival, while also improving their offer to local communities.

Ethnic representation

Historically, policy-makers and institutions have encouraged a 'representative' role for BME organisations, encouraging them to act as conduits to, and mediators of, BME opinion. So entrenched is this practise that policy-makers and politicians since the early-1960s have come to regard it as the natural way to 'do business' with minority groups. This also offers policy-makers another advantage: when necessary, BME organisations act as a vital buffer between the state and black communities. In return for this 'representative' role, the state has frequently been both a financial and political 'patron' of the BME voluntary sector. But there is an unspoken quid pro quo involved: this patronage buys society a kind of immunity to charges of racism. The early 'immigrant associations' – sponsored and encouraged by the state – were an example of this relationship.

It is also evident, however, that this desire for BME organisations to offer a means of engaging and representing BME communities is a cyclical occurrence and closely follows crises in race relations. First in the early-1960s, following the Notting Hill race riots and the sense of crisis that Powell's speech created in the political class; again following the inner-city uprisings of 1981 and 1985; and now – in the wake of 9/11 – the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and especially the 2005 London suicide bombings, the role of BME voluntary and community organisations as representatives and mediators of minority group opinion has risen up the political agenda.

Many organisations, of course, have welcomed this influence and, for some, it has represented a significant shift from the margins to the mainstream. But many smaller organisations take a more cynical view. They have watched the exponential growth in 'strategic' and 'representative' networks and have seen many organisations – BME and 'non-BME' alike – successfully reposition themselves as key public

sector partners. To some this represents selling out. The feeling that the third sector currently comprises insiders who know how to play the system and outsiders who don't has never been stronger.

But the longer the BME sector conforms to policy-makers' stereotypes of what it is and what it is able to achieve, the longer its role will be limited, to an extent pre-determined. For over a decade now government policy has emphasised a central role for the third sector in public service delivery – a direction of travel evident since publication of the profoundly influential Deakin Commission report on the future of voluntary action in 1996.[25] Subsequent policy documents have served to dramatically reinforce this thinking.[26] Yet despite this there is still a widespread view amongst policy-makers and public service commissioners that BME third sector organisations are only really capable of providing specialist culturally-sensitive services to BME communities. They are special, in this view, because of their 'BME-ness', but limited by this too.[27]

While some BME providers are satisfied with this depiction – it describes a niche they aspire to fill – there are increasing numbers that aren't, and for these organisations the notion that they are (and can only ever be) providers of specialist, limited services to their 'own' communities is a straitjacket, a kind of 'ghetto-isation', a recognition of their ethnicity but at the expense of their excellence.

This close relationship with government has had a price, then, and there are some who believe the sector is currently reaping what it has inadvertently helped to sow.

Black communities in action

Case studies of BME third sector organisations

Wesleyan Community Care Ltd

From church women's group to independent care provider

Wesleyan Community Care (project) Ltd (WCCP) began life in 1983 as the social arm of the Wesleyan Holiness Church in Handsworth Birmingham. Incorporated since 2000 the organisation provides day care and Sheltered Housing primarily for elderly and disabled ethnic minority people. The project operates within a 5-mile radius of its present location in North Birmingham, focusing in areas such as Handsworth, Soho, Aston, Perry Barr, Ladywood and Winson Green.

The organisation was originally established as part of the outreach ministries of the Wesleyan Holiness Church to the local community. This came about as an initiative of the church minister and its Women's Department, responding to a survey carried out by "All Faith For one Race" and a government-sponsored national survey with which this conincided, which indicated a need for day care services for elderly people from African Caribbean backgrounds in North Birmingham. WCCP was set up to address this need for culturally sensitive services for African Caribbean elders many of whom were experiencing loneliness and isolation, disability and lack of appropriate services.

From small beginnings WCCP has now moved on to become a company and a registered charity with its own legal structure and management committee. Services are provided Monday to Friday which includes Day Care Activities, Meals on Wheels, Sheltered Housing and Training for Social Work Students.

WCCP shows what a small determined group can achieve. The organisation now employs 9 paid staff and 12 volunteers and at present receives funding support from Birmingham City Council Social Care and Health Directorate and Supporting People Department.

Wesleyan Community Care has become a vital lifeline for older people and their carers living in deprived areas in the heart of Birmingham. As the organisation develops, with this comes the added challenge of sustainability. The future of WCCP will lie in its ability to plan its services carefully both to generate and attract funding and to continue to work in partnership with other organisations.

www.equip.nhs.uk/Support/group/2350/details.aspx

Watford African-Caribbean Association

"Meeting those needs which were not being met by statutory bodies"

WACA has been operating for 33 years and is one of the longest running black-led organisations.

"We set up to meet the educational, social and cultural needs of the African Caribbean community in and around Watford, in particular those needs which were not being met by statutory bodies," explains Michelle Parsons, one of WACA's workers. "The Association began in the 1970s as a self-organised group of volunteers, who would meet in each other's houses. In the early days one of the important things they had to do was educate statutory bodies about the different perspectives of the African Caribbean experience."

The Association has worked consistently to extend and improve the services it is able to offer and current projects include a culturally appropriate luncheon club, which started because of the lack of culturally appropriate meals-on wheels services; Creative Minds, an arts, crafts and cultural project for younger people; and a supplementary school, to develop the confidence and competence of African and Caribbean children and enhance their self-esteem.

Health advice and supporting elders and carers is a also a big area of work for the Association and as well as supporting people with diabetes, for over twenty years it has also run a Sickle Cell & Thalassaemia Support Group.

"Support for elders is a really important part of our work," says Ms Parsons, "and our elders project, as well as providing cultural and social activities designed to help our older members stay physically and mentally active, has also produced two books – 'Our legacy in our own words' and 'Childhood memories' – writings which captured the immigration journey to Britain of the elders involved. The elders group loved being involved in this work and it also fitted in with our wider educating and informing role."

From those early days of a few volunteers the organisation has changed almost out of all recognition. With funding from Watford Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, and the Lottery Heritage Fund, WACA now has a turnover of around £192,000 a year and employs 11 paid staff and over 40 volunteers.

But one thing hasn't changed, says Ms Parsons: "Educating and informing statutory bodies about how things are done from a non-English perspective and helping them meet the needs of the African and Caribbean community more effectively – this is still a core part of what we're here for."

www.watfordafricarib.org.uk

Telford West Indian Association

Grassroots voluntary action

Originally set up in 1975, TWIA gained charitable status in 1982.

"Originally there were no services for the Caribbean community in Telford," explains Verley Blisset, the chair of trustees, "so volunteers got the first services going and initially the most important area of work was providing advice and legal help – advice on housing, passport and citizenship applications, and legal advice on how to report racist incidents. Gradually our membership grew and over the years we've developed new services – active volunteering opportunities for young people from 7-18 years old, an over 50s club where older people can share Caribbean food cooked by younger people, homework clubs providing support for young people and a computer club with 6 laptops."

TWIA now provides facilities and services to all groups, and acts as an umbrella organisation providing arts, culture, education, support, buildings, space, sports and economic regeneration.

"One area where we haven't changed much, however, is in our dependency on willing volunteers. We're still a very small organisation – our income is less than £10,000 a year – and although we have had a paid full-time worker in the past few years we found we weren't able to sustain the necessary funding."

www.equip.nhs.uk/Support/group/2489/details.aspx

Notes

7. Fryer, P., Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain (London 1984). Black slaves were brought to Britain not just by slaver captains but also by those returning from colonial service – planters, administrators, and army and navy officers. Although figures are disputed, it is thought that by around 1770 there were between 14,000 and 15,000 black people in Britain, although contemporary sources claim a figure as high as 20,000 for London alone. It has also been argued that the 'core' black population fluctuated significantly throughout the eighteenth century but was unlikely to have been greater at any one time during this period than about 10,000, as disease, starvation and ill-treatment checked its growth.

8. Perec (Peter) Rachman, a Polish Jew, fled Nazism and arrived in Britain as a refugee immediately after the war. He died a self-made property millionaire in 1962, his name synonymous with the unscrupulous, exploitative slum landlordism he did so much to pioneer in Paddington and North Kensington. Many of the earliest Commonwealth immigrants, denied accommodation elsewhere, were amongst his tenants. To Rachman they were profitable commodities to be crammed into the numerous condemned properties he owned.

9. See: HISTORYtalk, a community history newsletter, Issue 5 December 2004. http://www.historytalk.org/Newsletter/Newsletter5.pdf

10. Fryer, P., op. cit.

11. "This measure," said Smethwick Labour MP Andrew Faulds at the time, "makes racialism respectable… That a Socialist Government should be responsible fills me with shame and despair." Cited in Fryer, ibid.

12. See Fryer, P., but for an exhaustive account of the Smethwick campaign and its political and social context see Foot, P., Immigration and Race in British Politics, Penguin Special (London 1965).

13. While always referred to as the "rivers of blood" speech, what Powell – ever the classics scholar – actually said was, "As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'."

14. The NACCI was an unpaid, part-time advisory body without legislative powers. Its successor body, the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (1965-1968), was also voluntary. See Williams, F., Social Policy: A Critical Introduction, pp. 89-91 (Polity Press 1997).

15. Foot, P., chapter 10, "Multi-racial organisations", p.222.

16. Sivanandan. A, Race, Class & the State in Race & Class XVII/4, reprinted in A Different Hunger (Pluto Press, London 1982).

17. There were strikes at Rockware Glass, Southall, Courtauld's, Preston, Coneygre Foundry, Tipton, and the Midland Motor Cylinder Company and Newby Foundry, West Bromwich, to name just some. Fryer, Peter, p.386, ibid.

18. See Foot, P., pp.222-3, and Fryer, P., p.383. See also the useful Caribbean Studies Black & Asian History archive (CASBAH) project at the Institute for Commonwealth Studies which details the various committees that comprised the forerunners to the Race Equality Council. http://www.casbah.ac.uk/cats/archive/138/PROA00002.htm

19. See Nottinghamshire County Council http://tinyurl.com/nottsCRC

20. Foot, P., op. cit., p.223. Nottingham's Commonwealth Citizens Consultative Committee, for example, also at one time sponsored a housing association, as did Leeds International Council.

21. At its height during the period 1977-81, the ANL was one of the largest, most active and most militant anti-racist movements the UK has ever seen, bringing together black, Asian and white activists from a huge range of organisations to combat the growing threat from fascist groups. There are interesting eye-witness accounts of the Southall events on writer David Renton's website: http://www.dkrenton.co.uk/anl/southall.htm

22. For an excellent 'timeline' of the 1981 events and their context see: http://www.channel4.com/history/microsites/U/untold/programs/riot/timeline.html.

23. Scarman's report had said: "The evidence which I have received…leaves no doubt in my mind that racial disadvantage is a fact of current British life. It was, I am equally sure, a significant factor in the causation of the Brixton disorders." Lord Elystan-Morgan, speaking in the House of Lords debate on the Scarman enquiry, added: "[Racial disadvantage] is a disease deeply embedded in the life of our community... No sincere approach to this crisis can avoid or seek to minimise this central factor." While welcoming the additional Urban Programme money Elystan-Morgan also noted that changes in the rate-support system in the preceding two years had stripped £500m-£600m from inner-city budgets. Hansard, 1403, Lords Sitting, 4th February 1982. http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1982/feb/04/brixton-disorders-the-scarman-report

24.For a fuller account of the origins of major charities in social justice campaigns of the 1960s see Curtis, H & Sanderson, M: The Unsung Sixties: Memoirs of Social Innovation (Whiting & Burch Ltd, 2004).

25. Robb. C, (ed), Voluntary Action: Meeting the challenges of the 21st century, NCVO (1996). Originally published as the final report of the Commission on the Future of Voluntary Action, a non-governmental commission established by NCVO in 1996 and chaired by Prof. Nicholas Deakin. Since republished in an expanded edition (2005). http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/uploadedFiles/NCVO/Policy/voluntaryaction2005.pdf

26. See, for example, The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery: A Cross Cutting Review, HM Treasury (2002).

27. Even the most recent policy documents repeat a similar line. Tackling Race Inequalities: A Discussion Document, CLG (Feb 2009), says: "The Black, Asian and minority ethnic community and the voluntary sector have a long history in providing specialised services to communities that could not always access mainstream services. It is frequently these organisations that best understand how to reach communities and what actions need to be taken to deliver specific programmes." http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1155456.pdf



Immigration: the engine of Britain's race relations policies

Immigration control has long driven Britain's race relations policies. Each successive wave of increasingly draconian and discriminatory immigration law is typically accompanied by new race relations and equalities legislation which strives to be yet more inclusive and conciliatory. The two are inextricably linked: immigration control legislating discrimination into the system, and equality laws seeking to legislate it out. It is a schizophrenic relationship and a continuing source of the profound mixed messages that characterise British attitudes to 'race', to colour, and to how British society regards 'the other'.

This chapter looks at key milestones in immigration legislation and explores the wider impact of these laws, including the way they have influenced public opinion.

two

The current picture

It must first of all be emphasised that Britain remains a relatively homogenous country dominated by a White British majority. Slightly over 92% of the population describe themselves as White, with the BME population comprising some 8% of the whole population, about 4.6 million people, substantially more than 40% of whom were born in this country.[28] The largest minority group is Indian (2%), followed by Pakistanis (1.6%), Black Africans (1.2%), Black Caribbeans (1%), Bangladeshis (0.6%) and Chinese 0.4%).[29] Those from mixed heritage backgrounds are a growing group and make up about 1.1% of the population.

Diversity and demographic change in the population are more evident looking across generations, however. Almost 20% of children under 16 are from minority groups, with around 3% of mixed heritage. About 9% of children live in families containing mixed or multiple heritages. Overall, the minority groups also tend to be younger than the majority White British population: nearly a quarter of White British are aged 60 or over, but only 16% of Black Caribbeans, 11% of Indians and less than 10% of the other minority groups are in this age-band.[30]

Despite an established presence in Britain that pre-dates the first waves of post-war mass migration by several hundred years, Britain's black and minority ethnic communities are characterised by disproportionate levels of poverty, social exclusion and discrimination. 70% of Britain's BME population lives in the 88 most deprived local authority districts.

Immigration legislation

The British Nationality Act 1948

As we have already seen, the early migrants to this country came mainly from the new commonwealth countries, following the war (see chapter one). But, within months of the first Jamaican settlers

arriving on Empire Windrush, the *British Nationality Act 1948* was passed. This was the first piece of legislation relating to immigration and introduced the concept of British citizenship. While it distinguished between British subjects who were citizens in the UK, and those who were citizens in the commonwealth, it retained automatic rights of entry, settlement and work in Britain to both groups.

The Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962

Concerns regarding large-scale commonwealth immigration continued to mount and in 1962 the *Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962* became law, thus setting in place the first immigration controls designed specifically to restrict immigration from the commonwealth. This further sharpened distinctions between Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKCs), who had close ties to the UK and were free to enter, and those who no longer had such ties and were therefore subject to immigration control.

The Act also introduced a work voucher system, which had the effect of "tailoring immigration to the needs of the UK economy".[31] The use of work vouchers was aimed at controlling migration to the UK, and particularly at curbing the increase in immigrants' dependants settling in the UK.

The Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968

The 1962 Act was followed by the *Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1968* which introduced the 'patriality' clause. This submitted everyone to immigration controls, except those who had one parent or grandparent naturalised or resident in the UK.

This legislation was seen by many as openly discriminatory, even at the time, designed primarily to prevent a further influx of Kenyan Asians who were fleeing ethnic cleansing under the 'Africanization' policies of Kenya's newly independent government (see 'Respectable racism', chapter one).[32]

The Immigration Act 1971

But further tightening of the legislation was to follow. The *Immigration Act 1971* reflected three years of unremitting agitation by Enoch

Powell, who was now lobbying for a Ministry of Repatriation and a "programme of large-scale voluntary but organised, financed and subsidised, repatriation and re-emigration" of commonwealth settlers.

These tough new laws virtually ended 'primary immigration'.[33] The only migrants – black migrants, it must be emphasised – now able to enter Britain were those coming to do a specific job for a period of no longer than twelve months in the first instance.

The Act also, and for the first time, placed enormous powers in the hands of police and immigration officials. Suspected illegal immigrants could be arrested without a warrant. Immigrant workers could be deported at the home secretary's discretion if this was thought "conducive to the public good".

Coming in the same year that the first *Race Relations Act* became law, the *Immigration Act 1971* established what has since become a familiar two-step: inclusive, anti-discriminatory equalities legislation backed-up with tough, discriminatory immigration laws.

Immigration and asylum

On the day that the *Immigration Act 1971* became law, the UK entered the European Union. One of the cornerstones of the EU is free movement, not just of goods but also of workers and their families. But with 27 member states now in EU membership, an estimated 1.4m asylum seekers in the EU and after a decade of war and ethnic cleansing in the republics of the former Yugoslavia – the gravest war crimes on European soil since the second world war – this internationalist vision of freedom of movement has begun to look rather different to UK policy-makers.

As a consequence, in more recent years, there has been a massive increase in legislation aimed principally at controlling asylum seekers rather than immigration per se. Border security and the 'war on terror' have also played a key role in shifting the debate away from migration and towards homeland security and the intervening years have seen the introduction of the following asylum and immigration legislation:

- The *Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993*
- The *Asylum and Immigration Act 1996*
- The *Immigration and Asylum Act 1999*
- The *Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002*
- The *Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) Act 2004*
- The *Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006*
- The *UK Borders Act 2007*, and
- The *Border, Citizenship and Immigration Bill 2008-9*, which is currently awaiting its second reading. This would transfer some powers from HM Revenue & Customs to officials of the recently created UK Border Agency.

Shaping public attitudes to immigration and migrant communities

The early 2000s saw a concerted campaign against asylum and refugees by the tabloid press and for a period it seemed there was no legislation tough enough to assuage public animosity towards asylum seekers. To tabloid editors, foreigners were more intrinsically suspect than they had been in decades, and Britain was a 'soft touch' for any foreign national seeking a cushy life on benefits. The depths that the right-wing press in particular plumbed will not easily be forgotten. But was this scandalous campaign against the most vulnerable migrant groups intrinsically different to the staple anti-immigration racism served up by the tabloid press? Writer, journalist and editor Roy Greenslade believes it was, for several reasons.

While showing "obvious continuities" in their treatment of migrants, Greenslade believes the tabloids' anti-asylum campaign also exhibited subtle but important differences. For the first time, he argues, editors sought to portray asylum seekers, irrespective of their race or creed, as different, a separate minority group having "nothing in common with settled migrant communities". In doing this, Greenslade says, the tabloids consciously sought to scapegoat refugees and asylum seekers, blaming them for a range of social ills – "levels of crime, the liberalism of the welfare state, the housing shortage and an apparently

overcrowded island" – while also seeking to forge a united anti-asylum viewpoint "between the indigenous white population and second and third generation Afro-Caribbean and Asian immigrants". The very phrase "asylum seeking" was turned into a term of abuse: asylum seekers and refugees were interlopers that everyone could despise.[34]

While the racist hysteria about asylum that was evident on a daily basis in the early years of the decade has died down somewhat, immigration and asylum law, the pressures of globalisation, post-industrial decline and more recently the global financial crisis have created conditions in which it was inevitable that the immigration debate would be almost entirely recast.[35]

The focus of the anti-immigration lobby has moved away from earlier concerns – such as sheer numbers, and competition for jobs (although with recession this latter factor is back on the agenda again) – to rest instead on shared values, social cohesion and the pressure on public services. As one recent report put it: "...what is now highlighted is not competition for work between migrants and long-term settled residents but rather competition between communities for access to welfare support and public services, including education and housing. Racialised hostility and community divisions are seen as at least in part related to questions about perceptions of fairness and entitlements in the allocation of scarce resources within the welfare state."[36]

Changing patterns of immigration

New white communities – Eastern European

With the enlargement of the European Union in 2004 and 2007 the rise of immigration from Central and Eastern Europe has become a new focus of attention.[37]

Home Office figures suggest that a cumulative total of 510,000 East Europeans from the eight countries that joined the EU in 2004 had come to work in Britain by the end of September 2006. The largest single group comprises Polish workers. They are thought to make up about seven in ten Eastern European workers in Britain, although numbers have declined somewhat over the past couple of years, with

some Poles returning home as the UK economy has gradually entered recession. The next largest group is Slovakians. The smallest groups are from Estonia and Slovenia,[38] followed by Bulgaria and Romania.

In many respects, the experience of these new EU migrants reflects that of Britain's first post-war Caribbean settlers – low-paid jobs, poor housing, unscrupulous landlords, discrimination, settlement in areas of multiple deprivation. But there are some marked differences too.

The settlement and working patterns of the new EU migrants, for example, are quite different to those of the first generation Caribbean and Asian migrants to this country.[39] For the first time in decades, London has ceased to be the primary destination for new arrivals, certainly amongst those from the EU states. The hospitality industry, catering, food processing and especially the agricultural sector have contributed significantly to these new patterns of settlement, with rural locations such as East Anglia, south-west England, and Herefordshire – in some cases localities previously unfamiliar with large-scale immigration – experiencing the arrival of large numbers of EU workers.

The other problems faced by EU migrants are familiar, albeit given a fresh twist as a consequence of these new settlement patterns. In terms of housing, for example, in 2007 almost 60% of migrant workers in the West Midlands were living in private rented accommodation. In Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire 21.5% were found to be living in caravans (compared with an average of 6.5% of other groups in the same region). Almost 60% of councils across England have reported concerns regarding the "appalling and overcrowded conditions" of migrants' accommodation, with many migrant workers feeling afraid to complain because of the frequency with which accommodation is tied to employment.[40]

As with first generation Asian migrants, language and schooling are also key issues for Eastern European migrants – again with an additional overlay of difficulties in rural locations. In Herefordshire, for example, the number of English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupils rose from 88 in 1998 to 340 in 2007. These new pupils are distributed across more than half the schools in the county and are

also therefore isolated learners. In Staffordshire, almost half of the 400 newly arrived pupils in 2006-7 were Polish, and Staffordshire reported its worst school attendance figures, directly as a result, it is thought, of parents failing to understand the UK education system and taking their children out of school for extra long holidays. There are also reports of increased levels of bullying and white-on-white racism in schools.[41]

There have also been concerns not just about low pay but also about the treatment of migrant workers by gangmasters and contractors. Evidence also indicates that some UK employers target Eastern European migrants for "low paid and precarious jobs unacceptable to UK workers".[42] Rising numbers of Eastern European migrants have also fallen into destitution, most noticeably in London. In 2005-6, the Audit Commission found that accession state nationals comprised up to half the recognised street drinkers in Hammersmith, one in five of rough sleepers in Westminster, and half the occupants at the rolling night shelters run by central London churches.[43]

But the key difference, perhaps, is that these groups are White and consequently have featured little in the government's community cohesion policies. One recent report said: "...the Home Office still emphasises minority ethnic communities as the core building block of diversity policies...the emphasis on community cohesion remains linked to race equality, with the risk that some new immigrant communities are ignored."[44] But this also creates a further concern: the identification of cohesion as a primarily 'BME issue' also sends the negative message that it is BME communities who are responsible for eroding community cohesion. Again, this runs the danger that it is the black presence, rather than white racism, that is seen as the problem.

While new migrant communities always experience new 'racisms', it must be acknowledged that they may contribute to discrimination too. Certainly, recent research suggests that EU enlargement is 'importing' racism into Britain. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, for example, has found some Eastern European migrants hostile not only to other European migrants – sometimes as a consequence of historical or class tensions in their countries of origin – but also

to other ethnic minority groups, especially relating to skin colour. Some are unaware that Britain is a multicultural country. "I had not thought that this place was so multicultural," one Ukrainian woman interviewee told a Joseph Rowntree Foundation researcher. "I did not know that there were black people. For me it was a disaster as I had seen them only two-three times in my life. I was also warned I should not use this word 'negro' but just to say 'black'." The same research notes, however, that during the course of the study some participants "formed more positive attitudes through experience in the UK".[45]

New black communities – the Somali diaspora

But the new white migrants of Central and Eastern Europe are not the only new arrivals in Britain. Somalis fleeing their war-torn homeland, where conflict has been almost constant since the collapse of the government in 1991, have also been arriving in Britain in larger numbers in recent years. The 2001 census recorded around 45,000 Somalis resident in the UK, but other estimates suggest that the actual figure could be double this, or even six times higher according to one source.

Partly because of international concerns regarding Somalia's status as a 'failed state' – fuelled further by widespread public perceptions that the internal disputes and lawlessness of Somalia have travelled with refugees into the diaspora – Somalis have become perhaps the most demonised of recent arrivals. This adds to the exceptional hardship Somalis – and especially young Somalis – face.

Icar (the Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees at London's City University), believes that the experience of Somalis in the UK differs greatly to comparable communities that have fled war zones. "The politics and power struggles in Somalia [have] had an impact on the coherence of the communities within the diaspora," says Dr Chris McDowell, head of Icar. He believes that the Somali community lacks a cohesive identity because of "the Somali tradition of nomadic and collective identity – what you are part of informs who you are," he says. "In Somalia, you are part of something, part of a clan along with your family, your co-religionists. If you remove that anchor, because these groups are not recreated, then people feel adrift."

This lack of cohesion in the Somali community is having a direct impact on its ability to develop and fund the kind of welfare provision that can assist significantly in the process of integration – services such as language teaching, advice and guidance, and social support and welfare. Unified communities have a much better track record of accessing state and charitable funds, but in the Somali community numerous small and underdeveloped organisations are competing with each other.[46] They also face competition from more established BME organisations – organisations that have had twenty or thirty years to find their way round the funding environment and understand it well. A clear case, if ever there was one, for greater collaboration and partnership between the established BME third sector and those seeking to build up community organisations for the first time.

Notes

28.UK National Statistics, source: Census 2001.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk:80/hub/people-places/people/identity/index.html

29. Platt, L., Ethnicity and family: Relationships within and between ethnic groups: An analysis using the Labour Force Survey, Equality & Human Rights Commission (January 2009). http://tinyurl.com/LucindaPlatt

30. Platt, L., op cit.

31. Ratcliffe P., Race, Ethnicity & Difference, imagining the inclusive society, p.51, Open University Press (2004).

32. The legislation provoked deep cabinet splits. Cabinet papers released since quote the then Commonwealth Secretary, George Thomson, saying that "to pass such legislation would be wrong in principle, clearly discrimination on the grounds of colour, and contrary to everything we stand for."

33. The immigration of people other than dependants for the purpose of working and settling. See Hansard written response, HL Deb 20 October 1980 vol 413 c1746WA. http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1980/oct/20/primary-immigration

34. Greenslade R., Seeking Scapegoats: The coverage of asylum in the UK press (Asylum and Migration Working Paper 5), Institute for Public Policy Research (May 2005). http://www.ippr.org.uk/ecomm/files/wp5_scapegoats.pdf

35. Scare stories about asylum seekers are not new, however. They began – to our shame – in the late nineteenth century as Britain sought to close its borders to thousands of Jews fleeing persecution and anti-semitic pogroms throughout Eastern Europe. Indeed, arguably the first UK 'immigration controls', the Aliens Act 1905, were passed specifically to limit Jewish migration to this country.

36. Hickman, M., et al, Immigration and social cohesion in the UK: The rhythms and realities of everyday life, London Metropolitan University for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2008).

37. In 2004, Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia joined. On 1st January 2007 Romania and Bulgaria also joined. Three candidate countries, Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, are part of continuing accession negotiations.

38. Migrant workers: What we know, BBC (2007). http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6957171.stm

39. See Bauere, V., et al, Migrants from central and eastern Europe: local geographies, Migration Research Unit, University College London for ONS (Autumn 2007). http://tinyurl.com/q58k6f

40. Regional Migration Scoping Exercise, West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (Jan 2008).

41. WMSMP, op. cit.

42. Anderson B., et al, Fair Enough? Central and East European migrants in low wage employment in the UK, University of Oxford for Joseph Rowntree Foundation (September 2006).

43. WMSMP, op. cit.

44. Eugenia M. and Black R., East European immigration and community cohesion, University of Sussex for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2007).

45. Spencer S., et al, The experiences of Central and East European migrants in the UK, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford for Joseph Rowntree Foundation (May 2007) http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/experiences-central-and-east-european-migrants-uk

46. See Somalis struggle in the UK, BBC (May 2006). http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/5029390.stm



The shape of the BME third sector

The prominence that the third sector now has in government policy has significant implications not just for individual BME organisations but also for the levels of 'sector intelligence' – data and information regarding size, scale, nature, key trends and development issues – available about the BME third sector generally. Put bluntly, there is simply too little. This chapter examines why, and also explores the consequences this lack of information may have for the BME third sector.

three

The rise of the third sector

In recent years government policy has emphasised a growing role for the third sector in regeneration, public service delivery and strengthening civic society.

This is a direction of travel which has been evident in public policy for over a decade now, and can in large part be traced back to the recommendations made in the profoundly influential report of the Deakin Commission on the future of voluntary action and the voluntary sector.[47] Subsequent publications, such as the Labour Party policy document *Building the Future Together*,[48] the Voluntary Sector Compact in 1998,[49] and *The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery*,[50] and key initiatives such as the ChangeUp programme, the Capacitybuilders and Futurebuilders funds, and establishment of the Office of the Third Sector within the Cabinet Office in 2006, are milestones in a decade of policy aimed at transforming the third sector landscape.

The need for 'sector intelligence'

This unparalleled emphasis on the third sector has brought with it a massively increased demand for better 'sector intelligence' – data and information about the scale, nature and characteristics of the third sector. Overall, however, the sector has struggled to meet this need, partly because of a lack of resources, partly because some of these new requirements pose genuine methodological difficulties, but mainly because historically the sector has been antipathetic to 'wasting' money on research that could be invested in frontline service delivery. Rightly, many would argue, social mission has taken precedence over sector intelligence.

The BME third sector – a paucity of sector intelligence

While improved sector intelligence at the local and regional level remains a problem, nationally two 'industry standard' sources have emerged – NCVO's annual *Voluntary Sector Almanac*, and the online charities directory (on which much of NCVO's analysis is based), GuideStar.

And yet sector intelligence about the BME third sector specifically remains a vexed issue and what is available lags significantly behind that which exists for the third sector overall. There are a number of well-acknowledged reasons for this.

Research conducted in 2007 by Voice 4 Change England (V4CE) highlights these difficulties.[51] Put simply, four distinct problems can be identified. First, where data does exist it rarely offers a breakdown by ethnicity. Second, what does exist in the way of national or regional mapping data is almost all too dated to be of continuing use, and there are major issues to do with comparability. Third, adequate investment in BME sector intelligence has been lacking. And fourth, there are very real methodological difficulties in that no single definition exists of the term 'BME organisation', and there is no standard, accepted method of identifying BME organisations.

This last point merits some explanation. Even leaving aside for a moment the philosophical question of whether an organisation can be said to have an ethnicity, 'BME organisation' means different things to different people. For some, a BME organisation is one that primarily serves people from BME communities. For others, a BME organisation is one where a majority of the people involved in its leadership and management are from BME communities. And for others, a BME organisation is one whose staff or volunteers (or both) are predominantly from BME backgrounds.

None of these definitions is fundamentally wrong and clearly being a 'BME organisation' does have something to do with staffing, management, service delivery, client groups, and origins of the organisation. What the definitions illustrate above all else, however, are the difficulties inherent not just in categorising individual organisations, but in establishing the existence of a BME sector that is distinct and definable from the rest of the third sector. They also help explain why there are such widely differing interpretations of what the BME third sector is for and what it is capable of.

What is known about the BME third sector?

So what is known about the size of the BME third sector? To date, there have been only a handful of national-level BME third sector mapping studies completed and so the picture is scant.[52]

However, by combining what data does exist a broad picture can be extrapolated. Previous estimates have put the size of the BME third sector nationally at somewhere between 5,000 and 11,000 organisations.[53] Limited regional mapping data indicates a somewhat larger figure: about 15,000 at the lower range of estimates, and around 17,500 at the higher end.[54]

There is some evidence to support a figure at the lower end of these two estimates. GuideStar, for example, lists 8,823 BME 'charities' operating in England. If, as previous research has suggested,[55] only 57% of the BME third sector organisations operating in England are registered as charities, then extrapolating accordingly would suggest that BME third sector organisations *of all kinds* total about 15,500. But even this best estimate involves a huge amount of educated guess-work.

It is not just the size of the whole BME third sector where a lack of accurate intelligence can be seen. There is little data regarding the income or staffing levels of BME third sector organisations, and even less that enables any comparisons to be made between their financial performance and that of their non-BME counterparts. However, it is known that over half of all third sector organisations have an income below £10,000 a year[56] and BME third sector organisations are thought to be heavily represented in this income band (with all that this suggests in terms of scale, low numbers of paid staff and dependence on volunteer effort). Nationally, however, the average BME third sector income is thought to be around £150,000.[57]

Extraordinarily, given the government's emphasis on the third sector as a provider of public services, there is virtually no dependable data regarding the 'delivery capacity' of the voluntary and community sector – i.e. its capacity to meet service demand. This is even truer of the BME third sector.

What information is available regarding the service sectors in which BME organisations operate suggests that they are heavily represented in advice and advocacy provision, social welfare and health services (including mental health, services for children and young people, and elderly care and support), housing and accommodation, and education and supplementary schooling.

While sector intelligence is not the be all and end all, information is power and in the current climate, where so much rests on being able to shape and respond to policy and contribute to government agendas, the BME third sector needs all the power and influence it can legitimately amass. Better sector intelligence, then, is vital in order to enable the BME sector to operate on an equal footing with the rest of the third sector, to define and evidence the distinctive value it brings to society, and to strengthen its role as a strategic agent for those it seeks to serve or represent.[58]

Arguably, grounds already exist for better ethnicity monitoring – by funders, public bodies, and service commissioners – both in the existing Race Relations Amendment Act (2000) and the new Single Equality Bill, but especially in the new duties public authorities now have to consider socio-economic inequalities in all aspects of their services, funding, and policy-making. While the BME third sector should not allow itself to be entirely dependent on sector intelligence produced by public bodies – it should be creating its own sector intelligence – the fact remains that if public bodies were meeting their statutory responsibilities as regards equalities monitoring, then our understanding of both the BME third sector and the communities it serves would be significantly better than it currently is.

The BME third sector – struggling to overcome its historic disadvantage

At various times – typically coinciding with periods of crisis in race relations – the British state has chosen to engage with and support BME third sector organisations, both financially and politically (see chapter one). But this has not resulted in an even or equal development of the BME sector, as recent research has demonstrated.

There is also evidence that the wider socio-economic inequality of Britain's minority ethnic groups – 70% of whom live in the 88 most deprived local authority districts – translates into an unequal BME voluntary and community sector, where inexperienced, under-skilled and under-resourced BME organisations compete unsuccessfully for scarce resources with their more experienced and more established mainstream counterparts. National voluntary sector survey data from the NCVO Voluntary Sector Almanac has long recognised the tendency in the general charitable sector

for the bulk of income to be concentrated in the hands of a relatively small proportion of 'super charities' (see chapter five). But the BME sector has a much greater proportion of small and medium sized organisations and it is thought that as high as 60% have annual incomes below £10,000.[59]

Research also shows that BME organisations face more acute barriers in delivering government targets, are often poorly positioned to benefit from or rise to the challenges of the new market-led environment, are struggling to meet the increasingly complex demands of tendering and commissioning, and have proven to be amongst the most vulnerable organisations as local councils have shifted towards more strategic funding and centralised service commissioning.[60]

There is further evidence of clear inequalities when examining the levels of funding secured by BME third sector organisations. In 1999, for example, small BME organisations (those with turnovers below £5k) secured only around 3% of available charitable funding,[61] and in 2003, despite BME communities making up around 6% of the population, BME third sector organisations were only able to secure 2.3% of available lottery grants.[62]

Many will argue that the evidence points more towards 'unequal development' rather than outright discrimination. Nonetheless, it is clear that what we see happening in the BME third sector represents a microcosm of the socio-economic disadvantage evident amongst the wider minority ethnic population. The detrimental impact of decades of racial discrimination has clearly played a part in this, proving as corrosive to the wellbeing of minority ethnic communities as it has been to the sustainability of the organisations they have sought to develop.

Notes

47. Robb. C, (ed), Voluntary Action, op. cit.

48. Building the Future Together – Labour's policies for partnership between Government and the Voluntary Sector (1997).

49. http://www.thecompact.org.uk/information/100020/100212/history_of_the_compact/

50. The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery: A Cross Cutting Review, HM Treasury (2002).

51. V4CE BME Third Sector Mapping Project, brap for V4CE (2007). V4CE's synopsis of this research, Bridge the gap: What is known about the BME third sector in England (2007) is available at: http://tinyurl.com/BME-VCS-BridgetheGap

52. Reid, M., The black and minority ethnic voluntary and community sector: a literature review, Ethnic Minority Foundation, 2004

53. Bridge the gap: What is known about the BME third sector in England (2007). Op. cit.

54. V4CE BME Third Sector Mapping Project, brap for V4CE (2007). Op. cit.

55. McLeod, op. cit.

56. NCVO, Voluntary Sector Almanac, NCVO (2006).

57. Taylor, M., & Hoyle, I., Finding the funds: the results of a survey investigating the experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) voluntary and community organisations in their search for funds, Active Communities Unit (2003).

58. The Black and Minority Ethnic Voluntary and Community Organisations Compact Code of Good Practice (2006) says: "…the [BME] sector brings distinctive value to society. In particular it enables BME individuals to contribute to public life and supports the development of active thriving communities by providing opportunities for voluntary and community action…An effective partnership with Government is an essential part of ensuring that the BME voluntary and community sector is able to develop its full potential as an important contributor to society and a strategic agent of those it seeks to represent."

59. See Professor Craig, G. et al, Building capacity in Black and Minority Ethnic Organisations: An evaluation of the national capacity-building programme of the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (2007). http://www.cemvo.org.uk/downloads/publications/NCBP_Evaluation_Report.pdf

60. Trends all borne out by the Advantage West Midlands-funded R2O programme, as detailed in chapter 5. The significance of the R2O programme lay in its being a business-focused support programme for BME third sector organisations rather than a generic capacity-building programme and consequently its findings are somewhat richer and more detailed regarding the business development challenges faced by BME voluntary and community organisations and in particular the problems they face in adapting to the new market-driven environment that has emerged in the third sector in recent years.

61. Patterns in charitable trust and foundation funding of black and minority ethnic beneficiaries in the UK, CAF (1991).

62. Next steps in voluntary action. An analysis of five years of developments in the voluntary sector in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, Centre for Civil Society & the National Council for Volunteering Organisations (2003).



‘Managing’ diversity: the changing face of equalities thinking and practise

This chapter examines British race relations policies and the dominant ideas they have employed in more detail. It also looks at the impact these policies have had on shaping the role of BME third sector organisations and the types of opportunities available to them.

four

‘Managing’ diversity

British race relations policies do not offer a strict chronological progression, and although in this section we look at the dominant ideas that have shaped these policies – assimilation, integration, anti-racism, multiculturalism, community cohesion, and the role of religion and faith organisations – it should be understood that at various times they have overlapped or even merged into each other. Indeed, many would argue that in some cases there are only linguistic differences between them.

Nonetheless, as a means of offering a quick overview of how successive governments have responded to increasing ethnic diversity in British society, this analysis holds good and certainly helps to explain why and how certain ideas and concepts have held sway at various times in British policy-making.

Assimilation

For almost two decades, the government response to immigration in the immediate post-war period was marked by a kind of laissez-faire approach.[63] It was not seen as necessary that society (or its institutions) should change to reflect the profound transformation taking place in British society, of which Britain’s new multi-ethnic communities were arguably merely one aspect. No special social policy was required, differences in race and culture were played down for fear of arousing even greater hostility than already existed in the majority community, and there was an underpinning assumption that new citizens from the colonies would be ‘assimilated’. They would be incorporated into British society and in the process of assimilation would change to meet the prevailing norms.

“Trainee whites”

In this assimilationist view, blacks and Asians were “trainee whites” and assimilation would eventually help them to become as close to white citizens as possible: foreign cultures would be transformed but England would remain “imperiously impervious”.[64]

Then as now, the education system was the primary test-bed of race and equality policies and the main obstacle to rapid assimilation

was identified as English language skills and overcoming the 'culture shock' it was assumed many new migrant children would be experiencing. The emphasis was therefore on the teaching of 'English as a second language' (ESOL) to immigrant children, often in specialist language or reception centres which also provided some basic social support. It was assumed that once these language and 'cultural' problems had been remedied the children would then be subsumed within the overall school population as swiftly as possible.

Official policy, however, was not entirely laissez-faire. 'Dispersal' was seen to be a key problem and "as much for political as educational reasons" an official policy of dispersing immigrant children between schools was encouraged in an effort "to 'spread the problem' and avoid any school becoming predominantly immigrant in character". Speaking in the House of Commons in 1963 the then Minister of Education said: "If possible, it is desirable on education grounds that no one school should have more than about 30 per cent of immigrants... I must regretfully tell the House that one school must be regarded now as irretrievably an immigrant school. The important thing to do is to prevent this happening elsewhere."[65]

But this officially sanctioned need for English language teaching and associated support also presented a key opportunity for BME organisations and the BME third sector played a major part – and has continued to do so – in providing ESOL and associated support, often in specialist settings, such as for women only, or in faith-based organisations. Latterly, such provision has become much more professionalised and accredited, but many BME organisations still see themselves as having a primary responsibility to help their 'own' community members take a fuller and more active part in society.[66]

Integration

It was not until 1977 that the Department of Education & Science acknowledged the need for a curriculum that could meet the needs of "this new Britain", arguing that the education system itself should change – both in response to the changing nature of society and to the differing educational needs of minority ethnic pupils.[67]
This new approach was more 'integrationist' in outlook. It at least

attempted to give some recognition in schools to the backgrounds of ethnic minority children and sought to develop both an educational system (and wider social attitudes) in which these differences were respected, catered for and integrated into the system.

The need for teachers (and others) to have an awareness of the backgrounds of ethnic minority pupils was acknowledged in official policies and publications from the late 1960s onwards. In order to foster this increased awareness, the integrationist phase was characterised by a proliferation of 'relevant information', such as in-service courses on 'life in the countries of origin', visits to India or the West Indies and an increase in the number of books and other materials depicting ethnic minorities in their 'native surroundings'.

But this approach too had its critics, both inside the educational establishment and outside in wider society. As one educationalist has noted, the integrationist approach recognised cultural difference but lacked the "systematic and sustained action [which] is necessary to dismantle racism". Entrenched racist attitudes and structural and social inequalities were left unchallenged.

More damningly, the subsequent Committee of Enquiry report, "Education for All" (1985)[68] regarded both the assimilationist and integrationist educational approaches as "undesirable", "unworkable", "misguided" and "ill-founded". The report concluded that the emphasis of official educational policy was almost exclusively on ethnic minority pupils as immigrants from other countries rather than as an integral part of British society, despite there being by this time increasing numbers of British-born second-generation children, and that in many cases inaccurate or damaging stereotypes – many of which persist today – were being created or perpetuated.

Anti-racism

By the late-1960s and early-1970s it was increasingly evident that the policies of assimilation and integration had not achieved their aims. On the one hand, there were increasing numbers of children from BME communities whose educational needs were not being met; and on

the other, neither had BME groups simply 'disappeared' as they were assimilated into the majority community. For activists and educators alike the educational system became the frontline in anti-racism.

Some of the contributions to this debate – such as Bernard Coard's *How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System* – created shockwaves that continue to resonate today.[69] Coard's groundbreaking research found that black pupils in the Inner London Education Authority Area were being routinely dumped in 'ESN' schools – schools for the 'educationally sub-normal'. 17% of children in ordinary schools were from BME groups, but in ESN schools this figure was 34% – and four out of five were children of West Indian origin.

But more importantly, neither assimilation nor integration had done anything to stem a rising tide of racist hostility and violence or the growth of organised far-right political groups.

Outside the educational system, this continuing failure to challenge racism resulted in a huge number of social and political campaigns as community organisations, cultural groups, and educational and political activists took up the banner of anti-racism. This anti-racist activity took different forms. For some it was grassroots activity to combat the rise of far-right groups and racist attacks; for others it was cultural activity to assert black identity, or political mobilising against police brutality; and for others still it was the production and promotion of specifically anti-racist educational materials.[70]

In many respects, coinciding with the rise of multiculturalism (see below) and post-Scarman, this period was a high-water mark for many black and Asian organisations, especially those involved in cultural activities and the arts. Local authority grant support was high and for many relatively easy to come by. Monitoring and funding criteria were 'light touch' and it was infinitely easier than it is today to develop 'autonomous' projects, especially those with a cultural and educational dimension, and get them funded.

How much this scatter-gun approach to third sector funding actually achieved may now, in retrospect, be questionable, but for a decade or more it made for a vibrant and vigorous third sector environment where

many began to learn organisational and fund-raising skills for the first time. Talented and energetic people flocked into the voluntary sector. It was a place where things could be made to happen. It was an alternative culture, an alternative politics – and also, eventually, an alternative model of service delivery. It was during this period that many BME third sector organisations began to provide what the state failed (or chose not) to provide.

Again with hindsight, it was too good to last. This flourishing grassroots activity would gradually be supplanted by an increasingly formal contract culture, the rise of voluntary sector 'professionalism' and an increasingly bureaucratic emphasis on public service delivery, quality thresholds, financial transparency and accountability. Of course – and many in the sector now argue this – with public money comes public accountability, and this is undoubtedly true. But equally, many share the deep underlying feeling that in the transition to professionalism and a formal relationship with the state and public sector something valuable has been lost.

As well as burgeoning cultural activity, the 1970s and 1980s also saw a pronounced growth in the provision of voluntary sector 'supplementary schools' – an idea that Coard had first advocated, in fact. Within a short period there were estimated to be over 150 such supplementary schools, the vast majority established by concerned parents and community groups in the wake of Coard's tireless speaking engagements up and down the country in the months following publication of his book. A new dimension had entered the debate on ethnic minority education – BME communities themselves had begun to voice their own concerns about their children's education. The notion that BME communities and their organisations could and should 'supplement' state educational provision as a means of addressing educational underachievement and systemic failure continues today.

Multiculturalism

The advent of multiculturalism as a distinct strand of official public policy did not happen overnight but it has shaped UK equalities thinking and practice for the past twenty years.[71]

Basically, multiculturalism began life as an educational approach that it was felt might offer a more successful route to addressing BME

disadvantage in the educational system than either assimilation or integration had. Put crudely, neither assimilationist nor integrationist approaches had sought to change, improve, or render the educational system less racist; their underpinning rationale was that it was BME children themselves who would be changed to fit the system.

By valuing, respecting and indeed *teaching* the merits and mores of other cultures, multiculturalism tried to offer a different approach in which 'difference' would be identified and 'celebrated' rather than absorbed or expunged. The curriculum would change. The system would change. There would finally be an attempt to meet the needs of *everyone* in the 'new Britain'. This at least was the theory. In practice, things were very different, but even so it should be acknowledged that multiculturalism was conceived as a progressive idea – that Britain, rather than a single homogenous culture, could and should be a society of multiple cultures, none less valuable than another, and each valuable *precisely* because of the difference of its contribution.

In retrospect, multiculturalism can be seen as an idealist policy. It failed to recognise that, for many, cultural 'difference' – whether religion, food, clothes, appearance, traditions, language – would be precisely what made them uncomfortable, precisely what fuelled their anxiety about a society in rapid transition, precisely what they despised and had no desire to reach an accommodation with. And while 'celebrating diversity' may come naturally to a black and Asian elite that has benefitted from multiculturalism, to many white, black and Asian working class youth the concept is meaningless, a tokenistic insult: "Celebrate what? This life? All that talk is for guys like Trevor Phillips and Paul Boateng with their expensive suits and white ways."[72]

Nonetheless, multiculturalism has been perhaps the most pervasive and longstanding of the frameworks we have available for 'managing' cultural and ethnic diversity, the closest this country has had to a post-war consensus on 'race'. But it is increasingly argued that what began as a recognition of diversity has inadvertently elevated cultural and ethnic differences to the point where they become defining characteristics, dividing and confining rather than uniting

communities. Ultimately, we have become defined by what sets us apart rather than by the shared humanity we have in common.

But it is recent events that have – literally – blown the multicultural consensus apart. Taken together, the Bradford, Burnley and Oldham riots of 2001, the 9/11 attacks and their aftermath, and the London tube bombings of the 7 July 2005 have prompted the biggest re-evaluation of British race relations in a generation and have also dramatically changed the terms of the debate.

Official disquiet regarding multiculturalist policies was first articulated in the Cantle Report[73] – the enquiry into inter-communal disturbances that took place in the three northern former textiles towns of Bradford, Burnley and Oldham during the summer of 2001, the "worst racial violence since the 1980s", the BBC reported. Cantle's report traced the roots of this violence to the profound segregation and polarisation of these northern working class communities. Their "separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks," the report concluded, "means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives." In particular, the report drew attention to the widely perceived unfairness and exclusion created by the practice of allocating regeneration funding along ethnic lines: everybody, even those who benefitted, felt that they were losing out to someone else, that another community was getting the best deal.

The 9/11 attacks in the United States of course raised tensions massively, but it was the London tube and bus bombings of the 7 July 2005 that became Britain's defining moment. Our 'celebration of diversity' mantra seemed suddenly shockingly empty, deluded even.

Trevor Phillips, then chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, said that Britain was "sleepwalking into segregation" and that multiculturalism had produced policies in which "we are becoming strangers to each other and leaving communities to be marooned outside the mainstream". If we didn't act soon, he claimed, Britain would be

more racially divided than New Orleans, where Bush's catastrophic handling of the Hurricane Katrina disaster left the poor, elderly and predominantly black working class to manage their own evacuation.[74]

Phillips' remarks left some puzzled and many angered – how could Britain's most prominent race equality campaigner consider multiculturalism suggested separateness and was no longer useful in modern Britain? But the press, media and politicians fell into step. They recognised the death-knell of multiculturalism when they heard it.

It can be seen, then, that the overall policy of multiculturalism was informed by two main factors. First, it was a response to a crisis in black schooling; and second, as chapter one covered in some detail, it was a response to a crisis in social control – the inner-city uprisings that rocked British cities in 1981 and 1985.

From these roots, multiculturalism came to pervade every aspect of UK race relations and for many years it produced an environment in which the BME third sector thrived. Funding was routinely allocated on the basis of cultural and ethnic 'difference' and the identification of specific 'ethnicised' needs, and this offered BME organisations a reasonably secure route for accessing resources. It is true, however, that ethnicised funding did produce a kind of 'separatism'. Why should BME communities work together or collaborate to share resources and facilities when it was easier to make the case for 'our own' community centre, 'our own' employment advice programme, 'our own' community nursery? Certainly, it created competition *between* ethnic groups for funding.

But multicultural policies also offered BME communities some degree of power and influence. For many years the accepted orthodoxy was that BME communities could – and should – be represented by their 'community leaders'. This was a key tenet of multiculturalism and 'representation' by ethnicity (or 'faith', as we explore below) rather than by expertise, knowledge or skills is still prevalent. The fact that such an arrangement depends on leaders who are frequently self-selecting, unable to represent the views of all of their community

– especially youth and women – and may, as one writer has noted, be concerned primarily with perpetuating their own patriarchal control was and continues to be conveniently glossed over.[75] Some also fear that this system of representation by ethnic leadership, as well as perpetuating the unaccountable and 'conservative' powers of community leaders, has constrained the natural development of communities, leading to a kind of 'cultural stagnation'.

Multiculturalist policies have also frequently resulted in convenient stereotypes about BME communities. Amartya Sen, for example, the Nobel-winning development economist, has consistently criticised the stereotyping inherent in "cultural identities". Cultural identity begins, he argues, with good intentions – giving people room to express themselves – and ends up assigning them an identity "which has been determined by the authorities". Being defined by one group identity over all others, Sen says, "interferes with people's freedom to make their own choices".

Sen, who witnessed at first hand the communal violence that marked India's independence in 1947, is also more aware than most of the grave dangers inherent in reducing people to narrow, lazy categories. 'Reductionist' high theories, he has said, often inadvertently lead to "the violence of low politics".[76]

"Race, cohesion and faith"[77]

While events since the millennium have created a new consensus that "multiculturalism hasn't worked",[78] paradoxically they are also pulling UK race relations policy in two sometimes opposing directions.

On the one hand, the 2001 riots in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham put community cohesion and the quest for a sense of shared national identity at the centre of public policy. But on the other hand, the 2005 London bombings and continuing fears about 'home-grown' Islamist terrorism have placed an unprecedented emphasis on 'faith'. Consequently, the role of 'faith-based' third sector organisations now has a significant profile in both government policy-making and in the sector's own plans and lobbying.[79]

While faith-based organisations have of course always been involved in social and voluntary action, in recent years they have tended to

be seen primarily as a sub-set of the voluntary sector, their 'faith' incidental to their social and voluntary work. But this new focus on faith seems to value the contribution of faith-based organisations specifically because of its religious basis. For some, this fuels concerns that civil society is being further 'desecularised'. Others consider that the increasing usage of 'faith' as a shorthand replacement for the three quite different descriptors of 'race', 'culture' and 'ethnicity' indicates a potentially dangerous confusion in government policy.

Of course, 'faith-based' funding – just like the 'ethnicity-based' funding that preceded it under multiculturalist policies – presents opportunities for the sector. It is hardly surprising, especially in the present economic climate, to see organisations seizing these opportunities with both hands. But this is about more than just funding. This emphasis on faith also legitimises those who wish to influence public policy specifically from a religious perspective and the longer-term consequences of this are potentially more serious.[80]

Notes

63. Literally 'let it be', let it alone – applied particularly in economics laissez-faire has come to mean the absence of state intervention.

64. Alibhai-Brown, Y., Imagining the New Britain, p.164 & 266, Routledge (New York 2001).

65. See section 2.3: Education for all: Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups ('The Swann Report') (DES 1985). http://tinyurl.com/swannrep This policy of dispersal was further reinforced in a Dept of Education & Science circular (No. 7/65) which said: "It will be helpful if the parents of non-immigrant children can see that practical measures have been taken to deal with the problems in the schools, and that the progress of their own children is not being restricted by the undue preoccupation of the teaching staff with the linguistic and other difficulties of immigrant children." The Swann Report notes that a "'problem-centred' approach to the education of ethnic minority pupils – which has we believe continued to underlie thinking and policy making in this field ever since – was thus officially sanctioned and articulated for the first time."

66. Since the July 2005 London bombings, however, English language proficiency has taken on a new political dimension, with demands that imams in mosques should be proficient in English and preach in English. Imams who are still preaching in the language of their country of origin, it is felt, cannot properly engage the young and can therefore do nothing to counter the radicalisation and politicisation of young worshippers. The Labour peer, Lord Ahmed, who became the UK's first Muslim peer in 1998, has said that a new national advisory and training body is needed to train imams already in the country and impose bans on those who cannot speak English or understand the culture. "They need to pass exams… In fact, I would go as far as to say that if they don't learn English within a certain period then they shouldn't be allowed to deliver sermons." http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6275574.stm

67. Cited in Willey, R., Race, Equality & Schools, Routledge (London, 1984). "Our society is a multi-cultural, multi-racial one and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding of the different cultures and races that now make up our society." (DES 1977.)

68. Section 2.10, Education for all (1985), op. cit.

69. Coard, B., How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System (1971). (Republished in Tell It Like It Is – How Our Schools Fail Black Children (ed. Brian Richardson, foreword by Doreen Lawrence: Bookmarks/Trentham Books London, 2005.) Bernard Coard, a Grenadian academic and teacher, was living in London when his book was originally researched and published. It is a debate that Coard still follows and contributes to passionately, but from a prison cell in Grenada. Coard returned to Grenada in the

1970s and joined Maurice Bishop's New Jewel Movement. Coard – along with other members of a so-called 'Coard faction' – was sentenced to death for his alleged role in the coup and subsequent murder of prime minister Bishop in 1983, which provided the justification for the US invasion of Grenada that President Reagan had long been waiting for. Coard's sentence was subsequently commuted to life imprisonment. http://tinyurl.com/GdnRace. See also, Why I wrote the 'ESN' book, Guardian, 05/02/05: http://tinyurl.com/GdnSchools.

70. The Development Education Centres movement played a key role in promoting anti-racist educational practice and in producing and distributing materials and teaching resources, but so too did black and radical publishers and bookshops. See White, S., et al, A Meeting of the Continents: The International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books 1982-95 – Revisited, New Beacon Books (2005). http://www.georgepadmoreinstitute.org/publications

71. Some trace the birth of a more multicultural approach to education and race relations back to the then Labour Home Secretary Roy Jenkins who said in 1966 that integration should not be seen as "…a flattening process of assimilation, but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance."

72. Quoted in: Alibhai-Brown, Y., After Multiculturalism, The Foreign Policy Centre (2000).

73. Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team, chaired by Ted Cantle, Home Office (Dec 2001). http://tinyurl.com/CCreport

74. "Katrina is the anti-9-11. Nine-eleven stunned the United States into patriotic fervour at home and imperial rage abroad; Katrina has stoked deep national divisions and widespread international derision. Disasters, whether natural or man-made, and Katrina is both, are revelatory mirrors that expose a society's subterranean fissures…" The Political Wrath of Hurricane Katrina, Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, The Black Commentator. http://www.blackcommentator.com/150/150_zeleza_katrina.html

75. See Arun Kundnani writing for the Institute of Race Relations in The death of multiculturalism (April 2002). http://www.irr.org.uk/2002/april/ak000001.html. The IRR's always more radical analysis suggests that 'ethnic leadership' models were consciously used by the British state to create a "parallel society" with its own "internal class leadership, which could be relied on to maintain control".

76. Identity crisis, The Guardian 18/02/06. http://tinyurl.com/GdnReligion and http://tinyurl.com/SenReview

77. The formulation that the Department for Communities and Local Government uses to describe this strand of its work. http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/racecohesionfaith/

78. See Multiculturalism hasn't worked: let's rediscover Britishness, Patience Wheatcroft, The Daily Telegraph 26/02/09. Many views have been more thoughtful and less extreme than the Telegraph's "tyranny of political correctness", but the broad point still applies: the 'collapse' of multiculturalism as a doctrine has created an unprecedented debate about what it means to be British and what national values British society should be seeking to uphold. http://tinyurl.com/britishness

79. Space does not permit an in-depth analysis of government policy that includes reference to faith-based organisations and their role in cohesion, public service delivery, and promoting social capital, but all of the following government policy documents reflect this growing emphasis on faith:

- Our Shared Future: the report of the independent Commission on Integration and Cohesion (COIC: 2007). http://tinyurl.com/Our-final-report
- The Government Response to the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (Communities and Local Government: Feb 2008). http://tinyurl.com/coicresponse
- Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power (The Community Empowerment White Paper) (Communities and Local Government: 2008). http://tinyurl.com/commsincontrol
- Face-to-Face and Side-by-Side: A framework for partnership in our multi faith society (Communities and Local Government: 2007). http://tinyurl.com/FtF-SbS
- The Future Role of the Third Sector in Social and Economic Regeneration (HM Treasury and Cabinet Office: 2007). http://tinyurl.com/rolethirdsector
- Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: The Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion (Home Office: 2005). http://tinyurl.com/ImpOpp
- The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery: A Cross Cutting Review (HM Treasury: 2002). http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/ccr_voluntary_report.htm

Also of note: Jochum, V., et al (eds), Faith and Voluntary Action (NCVO: 2007); and Edwards, R., Believing in Local Action: Successful partnership working between the faith sector and local infrastructure organisations, Church Urban Fund/NCVO/Communities & Local Government (June 2008). http://www.cuf.org.uk/Believing_in_Local_Action.aspx

80. It is significant that the Faith Based Regeneration Network considers it important to assess the degree to which "faiths have been successful in accessing mainstream government funding programmes" as well as targeted funding such as the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund and the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund. Not "what kind of organisations" have been successful, note, but "which faiths". http://tinyurl.com/cewmod



Current challenges of the third sector 'environment'

This chapter examines the steps BME organisations will need to take in ensuring their own future sustainability and impact and considers the strategic and political environment here at the end of the 'noughties' that will have to be taken into consideration. The issues covered here are by no means exhaustive but are of particular importance to BME organisations.

five

Current challenges

Grants vs. contracts

There is now unequivocal evidence that what public sector and government funding the third sector does receive is currently far more likely to be in the form of fees for the delivery of contracts than it is grant-aid. In 2001/02, grants represented 52% of all government funding for charities; by 2004/05 this proportion had declined to 38%. During this same period, however, the proportion of income derived from fees rose from 48% in 2001/02 to 62% in 2004/05, and for the first time in 2006 fees outstripped grants as the main source of *all* third sector income (53%).[81]

But money is also getting tighter. Government funding for the voluntary sector has grown by only 1.5% since 2001 and in addition the rapid transition from grant support to competitive contracts has favoured larger organisations, with around 37% of government funding being scooped by organisations with a turnover of £10m or over. In contrast, small organisations – those turning over up to £10,000 a year – are thought to have secured only around 0.4% of such funding. Even organisations with an income of up to £100,000 a year are struggling. Over 86% of the sector falls into this category but these organisations generate only 7% of the sector's income.[82] During the same period the sector has also seen a new 'premier league' of super charities evolve – eighteen major charities now dominate the sector and account for one-eighth of its entire income.[83]

This transition from grants to contracts has been happening progressively for much of the past decade and is evident at the local as well as the national level. A large-scale study of 90 local authorities in England conducted in 2007 for the Finance Hub confirmed that funding for the third sector is now available *primarily* from local authority commissioning rather than through grants.[84] Whether resources previously dedicated to grant support are simply disappearing or are being 'rolled up' into commissioning budgets could not be determined due to lack of available local authority data, but there is certainly anecdotal evidence to suggest that this is the case.[85] Clearly, the third sector's ability to respond to the demands of an increasingly market-driven environment will continue to be a key issue for the foreseeable future.

The public contracting environment constitutes a complex 'supply chain' which often impedes or stifles good work which is being done in improving public sector contracting.[86] As well as declining grant-aid, growing competition and the increasingly demanding quality thresholds and qualifying criteria associated with public sector contracting, this shift from grants to contracts is also creating other problems for third sector organisations:

- Many organisations report problems in generating sufficient surplus from the 'restricted' funding associated with public sector contracts. This limits their ability to invest in the business and grow capacity. The current funding climate has also had a negative impact on both the range and volume of services the sector is able to deliver. In 2005 alone, one-third of ACEVO's 2,000 members had to close services due to an inability to fund them.
- Progress by local authorities and central government departments in implementing Full Cost Recovery has been much slower than anticipated. In 2007 a survey of 4,000 charities carried out by the Charity Commission revealed that:
  - Only 12% of contractors manage Full Cost Recovery in every case from the contracts they secure, and 43% never manage full-cost recovery.
  - Many state contracts are under-funded and are being subsidised by charitable donations – possibly in breach of charity law.
  - Two-thirds of public service contracts are still offered for only 1 year or less with only 13% lasting more than 3 years.[87]
- Organisations are increasingly concerned that a dependence on fee income from contract delivery is having an impact on their ability to stay true to their social mission. In 2007 almost half of 4,000 surveyed charities said their activities were determined more by funders' criteria than their own mission.[88]
- The new funding environment also brings with it greater financial management and administrative burdens: organisations have had to get better at accounting for and apportioning their core costs across a number of different budgets and income streams.

These trends have in some cases had a disproportionate impact on the BME third sector. For example, the *Routes to Opportunity* project (R2O), a recent BME third sector support programme funded by Advantage West Midlands, revealed that many BME organisations face particular challenges in becoming 'contract-ready' and in competing on an equal footing with other organisations in the public contracting marketplace.[89] In particular, the R2O programme illustrated that:

- Public purchasers' attitudes towards and perceptions of BME organisations continue to present a major obstacle. Many still see BME TSOs primarily as representing and giving voice to BME communities rather than having access to the full range of tendering opportunities for service delivery, including service delivery beyond the specialisms of their 'own' communities of origin.
- Public purchasers are also working in an environment in which conflicting public policy aims are frequently evident. While the vast majority of purchasers may perceive distinct benefits in commissioning services from the BME sector, in practice purchasing decisions are still driven primarily by considerations of cost and providers' ability to meet financial thresholds and other pre-qualifying criteria.
- 'BME specialism' also presents both an opportunity and a threat for BME TSOs. Such specialisms may open the door to delivering 'targeted' public services but at the same time this leads many public purchasers to view BME organisations as 'niche providers' – able to deliver for minority communities but not yet ready to deliver mainstream services.
- Many public purchasers still see BME organisations in 'deficit' terms, believing them lacking in confidence and aspiration, in business, management, financial skills, and in overall organisational capacity.
- Competition is fierce in this new market environment and is a key issue throughout the third sector at present. But BME organisations face strong competition on a number of fronts. Not only do they face the sector-wide competition which exists from private sector providers, large voluntary organisations, major charities, and the emerging 'hybrid' providers, such as Community Interest Companies in the health sector,[90] they also face competition from 'generic' voluntary organisations which seem better able to convince public purchasers that they can deliver

to both majority and minority communities. And in addition to this, BME providers also face a dramatic decline in targeted funding as a consequence of the government's reappraisal of 'single identity funding'.[91]

- BME third sector organisations in the shires and rural areas face particular difficulties: they are often isolated and geographically dispersed; they face problems in accessing appropriate development support; and they are serving communities with rapidly changing demographics and, in some cases, increasingly significant social cohesion problems.

Infrastructure Support

How BME third sector organisations successfully navigate and reposition themselves in this emerging third sector marketplace, then, is a key issue and central to this is access to infrastructure support that is sufficiently responsive to their needs.[92]

While there have been big strides in understanding the geographical limitations to infrastructure support, there is still much that isn't known about other kinds of inequality in infrastructure provision. Recent research conducted by the national Performance Hub has explored this to some degree, however, and some trends are now evident.[93]

For example, although attempts to 'equality monitor' the beneficiaries of voluntary sector infrastructure support are patchy, it is nonetheless evident that many BME frontline organisations do not take-up infrastructure support, even when it is available. The precise reasons for this vary. Some groups (especially those from new arrival or refugee communities) are simply not well networked and don't know what support exists. For others, the lack of take-up relates more to the support model on offer – it may be insufficiently flexible in terms of time or delivery; it may be inadequately 'customised' (i.e. not reflective of the organisation's real-life needs or developmental circumstances); it may simply not offer enough investment of either time or support to make a worthwhile impact. In these scenarios it can be argued that BME organisations that choose not to use existing infrastructure support are voting with their feet.

But some BME organisations also seem disinclined to take-up other more advanced forms of support too. For example, the Performance Hub research identified that BME organisations were less likely to take-up support on strategic and performance improvement (PI) issues. Many BME frontline organisations said they were simply too busy; others that they preferred to focus on what they saw as more practical assistance that would help with the day-to-day running of the business – such as support with HR and personnel issues, or project management. In these cases it seems it was the relevance of PI itself that was in doubt – and in retrospect it can be argued that 'selling' performance improvement to the sector presented the Hub with a gargantuan marketing task which far outstripped its resources.

However, another extremely important message also emerges, and that is that BME organisations were looking for support that reflected a full understanding of the political, economic and social realities that have shaped the BME third sector and were not confident of finding this amongst existing support providers or the Hub's contractors. Indeed, the wide variability of available support emerges as a major problem in virtually all studies of voluntary sector infrastructure support.

There is also a key issue regarding how infrastructure providers demonstrate quality. This is especially so in the provision of infrastructure support to the BME sector. At present, to be considered a 'BME specialist' in support provision it is sufficient to simply state that this is the case.

There is no benchmark or 'quality standard' setting out what a specialist BME infrastructure offer should look like. We believe there should be and that developing and supporting BME organisations requires 'cultural competence'. By this we do not mean cultural 'sensitivity' – such as the provision of community languages, or a prayer room, or appropriate meals and refreshments, although this too is often necessary. We mean competences in the sense of a full and informed understanding of the social and political circumstances that have shaped the BME third sector environment and which continue to play a major part in determining its future development and direction. BME infrastructure support must be founded on a full understanding of the strategic environment in which the BME third sector operates.

The adoption of a culturally-competent model of infrastructure support would require a major re-examination of the common assumptions that are made about working with BME organisations. It is commonly assumed, for example, that when providers share the same ethnic identity as their clients this lends a particular authenticity and legitimacy to the support offer. While 'looking the same' may be important to some, the Performance Hub research indicated that very many BME frontline organisations consider 'ethnic identity' a quite marginal concern and are much more interested in whether the infrastructure support on offer is informed, fit-for-purpose, and fully conversant with the developmental circumstances in which the BME third sector has evolved. Competence is more important than ethnic origin.

Another key trend in the provision both of infrastructure support and the funding available for capacity-building is a tendency for this to be geared towards the aspirations and requirements of policy-makers rather than being third sector-led. Obviously, in a policy climate which places such great emphasis on the third sector's role in public service delivery – and in a time of deep recession – there is a certain inevitability about this.

Being contract- and investment-ready are clearly critical considerations for a huge number of third sector organisations, as is support to enable mergers and collaborative working, and it is vital that these are part of the specialist business support offer for the sector.

But appropriate infrastructure support also needs to reflect the sector's social and political values, and its historic involvement in campaigning, social justice and advocacy.

Indeed, with a mounting emphasis on community cohesion and the new responsibilities public authorities have under the Single Equality Bill to promote race equality and address socio-economic inequality, it is arguable that the sector's campaigning and social justice roles will assume renewed significance and constitute an important part of the offer it can make to public sector partners.[94]

Cohesion, super-diversity and single identity funding

As chapter four explained, recent events have prompted a major reappraisal of multicultural policies and in June 2007 the Commission on Integration and Cohesion published *Our Shared Future*, proposals for "building communities' own capacity to reduce tensions and create opportunities for more integrated and cohesive societies."[95] The report was primarily concerned with setting out practical ways in which local authorities could help to promote cohesion and integration.

In May 2008 the government published *Cohesion Guidance for Funders: Consultation*, an important part of its response to the Commission.[96] This consultation document set out government's view that funders "should not automatically award grants to third sector activities organised on the basis of 'single identities'" (i.e. single ethnic, cultural or religious groups), but should consider "how their funding can be used to provide opportunities for interaction". While funders would not be prohibited from supporting projects targeting specific communities, where these do occur funders should ensure that they are not inadvertently divisive and should seek an appropriate balance between activities that build "relationships and links between people from different backgrounds" and those which support "particular groups alone."

The report caused a considerable outcry amongst BME groups and in some funding circles. The primary concern, of course, was the loss of funding specifically aimed at particular disadvantaged groups. But there were other concerns too. Some of the language and concepts employed in the report – such as 'social capital' and 'bridging and bonding activities' – were at best vague and at worst widely contested, and many felt this increased the potential for misrepresentation and confusion.

Nonetheless, it is clear that BME organisations will need to consider how they respond to the issues this debate has raised. A key challenge to the policy has been the fact that without services for single identity groups (of the type provided by many BME third sector organisations), excluded communities would not receive sufficient support because mainstream public services are failing them.

In this scenario, some argue that specialist, 'single group' provision is needed on a transitional basis until such time as mainstream services adequately support all sections of the community.

Yet it is also clear that with increasing diversity – 'super-diversity', as it is becoming known – funding cannot possibly be available for services or facilities created for each and every ethnic group, and there will need to be a level of 'rationalisation' to support a wide range of excluded or marginalised communities. Also, as approaches to equality change and there is a growing emphasis on 'pan-equality' – a consideration of all of the factors that can disadvantage an individual – organisations will be encouraged to think outside of the conventional boxes of 'identity', identifying and responding to examples of multiple discrimination.

There will also need to be more critical reflection on the role BME organisations play in filling the gaps left by unequal and at times discriminatory public service provision. However unintentionally, this supports the status quo. Of course those missing out on public service provision will continue to require additional specialised services, and for the foreseeable future it seems likely these will be delivered by BME frontline organisations; but such provision also needs to be accompanied by stronger campaigning as well as new third sector/public sector partnerships to improve the quality *and* equality of public services. This is a more sustainable approach.

Notes

81. NCVO Voluntary Sector Almanac, 2006 & 2007. http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/press/releases/?id=5126

82. NCVO Voluntary Sector Almanac 2007, op. cit.

83. Economic & Social Research Council, charitable giving in the UK: http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/facts/Charitable_giving.aspx

84. The Decline of Local Authority Grants for the Third Sector: Fact or Fiction? Brap for The Finance Hub (March 2008). http://www.financehub.org.uk/research/default.aspa

85. Lack of data regarding patterns of local authority spending with the third sector – and especially disaggregated figures that would offer a better understanding of the 'market share' being achieved by the BME third sector – has been identified as a key issue by other research conducted for the Finance Hub. One recent report recommended that the Finance Hub should work with funders of all kinds, including local authorities and the independent funding sector, to help them develop guidelines for Race Equality auditing and profiling of funding outcomes and meet their legislative responsibilities under the Race Relations Amendment Act (RRAA) 2000. See BME VCS Policy and Advocacy – a research report for the Finance Hub, Voice East Midlands for the Finance Hub (June 2006). http://tinyurl.com/BMEpolicy-advocacy

86. "Good funding practices adopted by central government departments are generally not preserved where there are complex chains of intermediaries, passing funding from central government through non-departmental public bodies and executive agencies, layers of regional and local administration to local Third Sector Organisations." See Working with the Third Sector: Report by The Comptroller and Auditor General (HC 75), National Audit Office, sect. 2.13, p.21 (June 2005).

87. Stand and Deliver: The future of charities delivering public services, Charity Commission (2007). http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/library/publications/pdfs/rs15text.pdf

88. Stand and Deliver, op. cit.

89. The Routes to Opportunity programme. For the two years to end-March 2009 brap was the accountable body and managing agent for a £1m West Midlands-wide capacity-building and business skills programme aimed at BME third sector organisations, funded by Advantage West Midlands. The programme was an acknowledgement that the BME third sector needs to be able to compete more effectively for new and emerging public sector contracting opportunities and improve their prospects for income-generation and sustainability. Central to this is addressing the historical disadvantages and discrimination that have frequently impeded the successful long-term development of BME-led third sector organisations and this is a core aim of R2O. http://www.brap.org.uk/content/view/256/310/

90. Third Sector Online (08/08/07) reported on Hull Teaching PCT's plans to create a new community interest company called City Health Care Partnership (CHCP). With a projected budget of £37m, and 1,200 staff from the PCT, CHCP will be 10 times bigger than any other third sector organisation in Hull. "When ministers called for the voluntary sector to deliver more public services, they did not expect large public sector bodies to spin off their service-providing arms and establish them as third sector organisations." The public sector by another name? Andrew Burnell, Third Sector Online, 08/08/07. http://tinyurl.com/ThirdSectorOnline

91. In 2008 the Dept for Communities and Local Government (CLG) issued guidance to funders emphasising the need for funding decisions to be based primarily on supporting cohesion and integration rather than activities that target 'single groups'. See Cohesion Guidance for Funders: Consultation, CLG, February 2008. This debate is ongoing. http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/cohesionfundersconsultation

92. The government's ChangeUp programme defined 'infrastructure' as: "The physical facilities, structures, systems, relationships, people, knowledge and skills that exist to support, develop, co-ordinate, represent and promote frontline organisations." http://www.changeup.org.uk/overview/introduction.asp

93. Afridi, A., The Performance and Race Equality Project: A Report, brap for the Performance Hub (Sept 2007). http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/publications/publication.asp?id=9070

94. The Single Equality Bill was published on the 27th April 2009. See the Equality & Human Rights Commission website for resources and briefings about the Bill: http://tinyurl.com/SingleEqualityBill

95. Our Shared Future, op. cit. http://tinyurl.com/Our-final-report

96. Cohesion Guidance for Funders: Consultation, CLG (May 2008). http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/cohesionfundersconsultation



The future of the BME third sector

Throughout this work, we have focused on the social, political and economic factors that have shaped the BME third sector. This final chapter looks at where the BME third sector is today and makes some predictions for the future.

six

The BME third sector 'journey'

Historically, the BME third sector has been driven by policies which have primarily been about 'fit' and 'fix'. The early emergence of the sector was driven by a need to help BME communities 'fit' into British society, as was explored in some detail in chapters one and four. More recently, however, the emphasis has been on BME third sector organisations being able to offer a 'fix' for specific social problems, such as building community cohesion, increasing inter-faith activity, working with disenchanted youth, or providing culturally-specific non-mainstream services. This has tended to split and fragment the sector, with older and longer-established BME organisations concerned very much with campaigning and championing the cause of BME communities in the face of a 'discriminatory' society, and newer, more recently established BME organisations whose purpose has been shaped primarily by public policy initiatives and related funding opportunities.

The result of this historical development has been a BME third sector which is diverse and divergent both in its 'identity' and purpose, with very little apparent common ground. As a consequence, some argue that a single, homogenous 'BME third sector' – distinct, with some degree of uniformity in its attitudes, purpose, political positions and priorities – cannot really be said to exist and that the term offers convenience rather than consistency.

This may well be true, but there is something that does bind the BME third sector together, that does offer some commonality, and that is the consistent use that the state makes of it, 'appropriating' the BME third sector as part of its response to discrimination within our society. A widespread assumption continues to prevail amongst policy-makers that BME voluntary and community organisations are how race equality gets 'done' – and this is true even of those organisations that have never considered themselves as working to an explicit race equality agenda.

In truth, the sector has always had a 'chicken and egg' relationship with the state. Would the sector exist without the presence of discrimination? And would it continue to exist if it wasn't for the fact that it serves a purpose which is partly endorsed by the state?

The role of being 'experts' on behalf of BME communities is an identity which is both ascribed to and prescribed for the BME third sector; but it also one that is chosen and protected by many in the sector, a source of legitimacy, influence and authority.

In strategic terms this presents the sector with challenges. It is constantly 'pigeon-holed' and this sometimes means that the real extent of its purpose and abilities are under-estimated. It is also difficult for the sector to see for *itself* where its real purpose and energies lie. And, as chapter five explored, the preconceptions of policy-makers can be one of the biggest obstacles to the BME sector realising its full potential – nowhere is this more evident than in the current 'third sector commissioning' debate. The BME third sector has to work extremely hard in order to 'punch above its weight' and assert its capabilities in mainstream provision.

In the final analysis, then, it might be most accurate to say that what gives BME third sector organisations some commonality – their common experience of the social, political, economic and cultural circumstances in which they have grown up and the relationship they have to British race relations policy – also to some degree divides them.

These factors have not created a *politically* homogenous sector, but rather one in which there are competing tactics, strategies and approaches to discrimination. This can be seen in responses to the April 2009 Single Equality Bill. While some organisations have welcomed the Bill's broad approach to unifying and harmonising anti-discrimination legislation, others continue to voice concerns that it will merely water-down opposition to colour discrimination. Many equality campaigners feel that this is especially dangerous in a society that historically has always sought to deny its racism – a society in which key institutions may be 'institutionally racist', but only ever as the result of a few bad apples or of inadvertent discrimination, never as a consequence of the wholesale racism of British society.

Defining 'success'

Differing views of 'success' is one of the issues that the BME sector is most likely to fall out about. Depending on the origins of the organisation, beliefs and ideologies can be poles apart. This leads to widely divergent

views regarding what constitutes 'success', whether in terms of addressing inequalities in service provision, or making more general progress regarding race equality. While some organisations continue to believe very much in a cultural 'fix' to addressing discrimination – the provision of culturally-specific services, for example – others believe it is necessary to adopt more explicit anti-discriminatory strategies (challenging the provision of mainstream and statutory providers, for example). Both may be 'right' or 'wrong' at any time and very rarely are these beliefs held up for reassessment.

In addition, work with BME communities suffers greatly from what are often knee-jerk reactions to extremely limited equalities data. There tends too to be a general under-interrogation of available data.

In the absence of dependable data there is also a tendency for BME communities to be over-researched and over-consulted. This often distracts from the real work of designing and delivering services and interventions that work.

But there are in any case widely differing views in the sector about what successful interventions should look like – interventions that 'work', that drive positive and sustainable change and improvement.

Some BME organisations argue that inequalities in services (and in the outcomes those services achieve) lie in providers' lack of understanding of BME communities – a deficit in cultural awareness. Others argue that real, lasting service equality will only happen when BME communities themselves take a lead role in the design and delivery of public services.

But overall, there is little systematic debate about such issues. To ask why an organisation (or even more pointedly an entire sector) exists, what it intends to achieve and how, are fundamental strategic questions that go to the heart of how we operate and why. Paradoxically, these are questions that are rarely asked of the BME third sector – we have been cast in the role of 'BME experts', and are presumed to already know the answers to these and similarly complex questions. But this does not mean we should let sleeping dogs lie. An open and honest debate need not necessarily rock the foundations on which our legitimacy rests, as long as the sector seizes

the initiative and sets the terms for its own re-examination. Challenging as it might be, it is profoundly important that such a debate does take place.

BME third sector organisations – only as valuable as the state determines us to be?

The current emphasis on third sector delivery of public services has added to this complexity. In the debate about 'success', about 'what works', the BME third sector is rarely an equal partner. It has neither the time nor the resources to engage in the kind of social research that is required and is therefore engaged in a debate whose parameters have already been determined by the key statutory providers. As a consequence, the sector is all too often passive in the interrogation of its purpose and outcomes.

In this respect – and many will consider this at best an uncomfortable truth, at worst a defeatist claim of 'victimhood' – the sector's legitimacy depends to a huge degree on state patronage, the worth and value of its actions determined by what policy-makers endorse as successful.

While it is essential that the sector can and does satisfy its purchasers, funders and customers, it is vital too that it is able to satisfy itself and the communities it serves. We urgently need to set our own benchmarks for success – and meet and exceed these.

Impact assessment – the growing demand for 'evidence'

There is no doubt that more objective means of assessing the third sector's impact are long overdue, but in recent years 'third sector commissioning' has pushed this issue much further up the political agenda than would otherwise have been the case.

The signs that evaluating impact is of growing importance are now all around us. Speaking to the Guardian in February 2008, the then-Minister for the third sector, Phil Hope, said that all third sector organisations must be prepared to measure success, commenting: "To those organisations that don't want to, I say, 'So why are you here, then?'"[97] Hope's remarks also reflected growing

demands for greater transparency in the charitable sector and the introduction of a 'public benefit test' in the Charities Act (2006).[98]

More recently, the government announced that the Office of the Third Sector (OTS) was investing £350,000 in the development of more standardised methods for measuring Social Return on Investment (SROI). OTS believes this will help public purchasers assess the social benefits of the services they buy from the third sector, while also encouraging those who want to invest ethically in social and not-for-personal-profit enterprises.[99]

BME organisations will of course have no special dispensation excusing them from impact assessment, and nor should they. But SROI and related techniques do have particular implications for the BME sector and these are rarely explored. For example:

- What constitutes 'admissible evidence'? If you are working in a discriminatory society, its services – and indeed its service commissioning procedures – may continue, however inadvertently, to be discriminatory. SROI will not help identify discrimination, nor will it help address it.
- Value for money or notional financial value are not and should not be the only or primary measures of successful services and interventions. We also need to know whether a service or intervention has produced the *right* outcomes. Has it addressed the problem originally identified? Are the service outcomes equitable, or are they perpetuating disadvantage?
- There is also an acknowledged skills deficit in how services are commissioned to ensure 'equality-proofed' outcomes. While SROI may help in attributing a financial value to service outcomes, this is not a measure of their equality. Nor will SROI necessarily identify or measure the quality of the service commissioning decision – i.e. has the *right* kind of service been devised and purchased?

This should not be seen as special pleading for the BME sector, rather as genuine issues that currently fall outside the parameters of the Social Return on Investment debate.

"The best way to predict the future is to create it"

So said US business thinker Peter F Drucker. In this closing section we look at how we can work together to create a future that is more favourable for BME communities and the organisations that serve them.

Making the transition

Chapter five examined some of the learning from the *Routes to Opportunity* (R2O) programme, in particular detailing the difficulties that many established BME organisations are having in positioning themselves successfully in this new market environment.

But for many new and emerging BME organisations the present environment presents even greater problems. Too many BME organisations have become divorced from their political roots. They are children of 'grant' funding, ham-strung by a legacy of state patronage that ideally they need to free themselves from. Furthermore, the terms of this patronage are changing dramatically. Just because you were once 'in favour' doesn't mean you always will be. It will not be easy, but for the sake of the sector's sustainability and effectiveness it is vital that more organisations do navigate their way as far as possible towards a financially – and politically – independent future.

The sector also needs to extend its role, assert its capabilities and create a space for itself, its services and the communities it serves in the mainstream. And it needs to speak out with a stronger and more united voice when or if the mainstream fails BME communities.

Informed, culturally-competent infrastructure support that understands the circumstances in which the BME third sector has arisen and the social and political factors that continue to shape and in some cases limit its development has a vital part to play. Our organisations need to be stronger, more able and more nimble, more sophisticated in their understanding of the marketplace and ready to modify their practices and business models in order to survive.

But it is also important to emphasise that the BME third sector needs to assert its independence from both state and 'market'. Just like the rest of the voluntary and community sector, BME organisations have a right to autonomy and self-determination, pursuing their own goals and aspirations. These may not be goals and aspirations that the public purse wishes to fund, but this has always been the case and the committed always find ways of doing what they believe in. Independence is essential to third sector organisations. It is what underpins the unique place they have in civil society. For BME organisations, it is about more than just being 'open for business', or securing funding: it is about continuing a 'fight' for equality which began over five hundred years ago when people of colour first stepped on to British soil.

The merry-go-round

We will continue to see the 'merry-go-round' effect – BME third sector organisations utilised time and again as the 'latest' way of dealing with 'the other'. Whether muslim youth, new migrants and refugees, faith and cohesion, or gun crime in BME communities, BME organisations must be wary of being appropriated as government's preferred mechanism for 'outsourcing equality'.

Yes, of course it is enormously flattering to have this kind of credibility and – at least for some – the resources that come with this. But remember: such a close relationship with the state can also bring with it a loss of credibility in the eyes of our own communities. There is no single, simple answer except: be vigilant, think carefully, and think of your reputation.

Representation = comfort zone

The role played by BME third sector organisations in community representation has been covered elsewhere in this book (chapter four). Utilising BME organisations and 'community leaders' as intermediaries between the state and communities is politicians' natural comfort zone. We must not let it become ours too.

It is now increasingly recognised that community leaders cannot speak for entire ethnic communities, even assuming that such homogenous communities existed – and we must remind ourselves that BME organisations can't either.

Realising our shared roots

Throughout this book we have sought to make it clear that the BME third sector is diverse and divergent. It does not have a single, shared political position, it does not act in unity, it rarely if ever presents a united voice. But nonetheless, much of the sector does share a common experience of discrimination – the social, political, economic and cultural circumstances that in the first place made our efforts necessary and have continued to shape us.

All too often we forget this. Organisations revel in and emphasise their 'difference'; they play the 'race card' because it offers what is often the only route they have to influence and resources. We don't need to import this kind of divisiveness into the third sector – there is already more than enough division. We need to act with a little more unity, realising our shared origins and the circumstances that have created the sector that we are today.

Losing territory

Those organisations more directly concerned with equality issues, racism and campaigning will continue to face especial difficulties in the third sector of the future. The BME third sector faces a particular dichotomy: many policy-makers, and indeed government generally, believe that 'race equality' is the *default* position for virtually all BME organisations – i.e. that race equality is what BME organisations 'do'. And yet there is no funding that enables organisations to undertake specifically anti-racist/anti-discrimination work. In addition, many believe that in any case the 'territory' for such work is shrinking, eroded by initiatives such as the Single Equality Bill and a gradual shift away from colour racism in most areas of public policy.

Those who wish to continue such vital work will have to develop innovative business models which enable them to do so. In some cases this may mean 'cross-funding' anti-racist work – investing the surpluses from your income-generation so that you can resource 'unpopular' work which cannot be funded in other ways. In the jargon of today's market, anti-racism cannot be 'monetised'. We have to invent our own business models that will make it possible.

Changing expectations

We must also anticipate change. Over the coming years it is likely that we will start to see a significant shift in the expectations and aspirations of many BME communities. Alongside the poor, disenfranchised inner-city black communities – which for so many years have been, and must also remain, our core constituencies – we will also see the rise of a black middle class, younger, more aspirational, less concerned with the struggles of the past. The relationship between these individuals and the state will be different and much less likely to be mediated primarily by the relationship they have to public services.

We will also continue to see the rise of new minority communities that are not black, and whose primary experience of discrimination is not necessarily one of colour racism (see chapter two). There are implications too in the fact that the fastest growing ethnic group in the UK currently comprises those of mixed heritage.

Alongside a continuing reassessment and critique of multicultural policies (see chapter four) it is also likely that public policy will have an increasing emphasis on white working class disadvantage. And what of the Obama effect – perhaps we will also see a general raising of black self-belief and a new-found self-confidence?[100]

Taken together these factors point towards a new and different community politics to those that have been the staple of many BME organisations in recent decades, and a new interpretation of equality. It is our firm belief that this will necessitate a new and more inclusive approach to equalities (paradoxical as that may sound) – an equality that looks and feels fair and that works for everyone. The most pressing challenge as the century progresses will be not just how we act towards minorities, but how we act fairly and decently towards each other as *human beings*.

In a time of worldwide economic crisis and what are forecast to be some of the deepest and longest public spending cuts in the UK since Thatcherism, the state will not be able to spend its way out of discrimination. It will have much less room for manoeuvre and will not, as it has in the past, be able to 'buy' the compliance

of BME communities, or the support of BME organisations. This too could have a profound impact not just on how equalities are practised, but also on the *kind* of equalities that are practised.

The future of UK race relations

And what does the future hold for UK race relations? Here, a number of fascinating scenarios come into play.

Public confidence in our elected representatives has sunk to an all-time low, fuelled by the collapse of the banking system, bail-outs for financial institutions, massive job losses, public spending cuts, and public anger over MPs' expenses. This loss of credibility amongst our political leaders could prompt a 're-politicisation' of the BME third sector, a reassertion of its core values of social justice and a much greater emphasis on campaigning and voluntary effort. If so, this could also mark a retreat from the kind of 'professionalisation' that has dominated the whole of the third sector over the past ten to fifteen years.

We may also find that the continuing usefulness of many BME third sector organisations in their present form is at best questionable, at worst untenable. The decline in 'single group' funding, the rise of super-diversity and major demographic changes both in populations and in immigration patterns are dramatically changing the context in which 'BME organisations' as a concept once made sense. Increasingly too, the emphasis is shifting away from the old 'BME agenda' of the 1960s and 70s to one of how to deliver a fairer and more equitable society. If it is to have a future in ten or twenty years, the BME third sector will need a major rethink about its tactics and purpose and an honest and open re-evaluation of what it has achieved for BME communities in the course of the last thirty to forty years.

We are also witnessing a shift from equality as a 'BME issue' to equality as a structural, society-wide issue. In May 2009 the Department for Work and Pensions issued figures revealing that Britain is now a more unequal country than at any time since modern records began in the early 1960s.[101] An absolutely critical issue over the coming years, then, will be not just BME inequality but inequality per se. Of course this doesn't mean that BME

inequality will go away, or that colour racism will cease. But these factors will take a different place in the overall picture, with a further narrowing of the territory which BME organisations have historically claimed as their own.

The fact is, there are no successful models that show us how inequality can be 'managed' out of the system. Over the next few years all eyes will be on the US and the new Democratic administration of America's first black president. But as 'Obamania' subsides, scrutiny will rest not on the grace and relaxed charm of America's First Family but on what the president does about the growing inequality which is driving deep fissures through American society. The actual picture is very far from the American Dream:

- The infant mortality rate for babies of black women is 2.4 times the rate for babies of white women and 3.3 times more black women die in childbirth than do white women.
- Life expectancy for the white population exceeds that for the black population by 5.1 years.
- Approaching 20% of black Americans have no health insurance compared to just over 14% of the rest of the population.
- Almost one-quarter of the black population live below the official poverty line – more than twice the proportion of white families.
- Unemployment amongst minorities is twice that of the rest of the US labour force and the total median income of black families is a third lower than that of white families.
- The black prison population is almost six times higher than the white – almost 11% of the black male population aged 30-34 is locked-up.[102]

It remains to be seen what impact the 'Obama effect' can have on such entrenched and growing colour-coded inequality.

A final word

It would be remiss of us in closing not to express our hopes for the BME sector and to emphasise its continuing importance. The current third sector environment is not an easy one – but

then the environment for BME organisations in Britain has *always* been difficult. Despite this, we have frequently succeeded.

But our job is not yet complete. The terrain may be shifting, but there is still a need for organisations that will not settle for a version of equality that badges or labels BME communities merely as a means of excusing their status as second-class. There is still a need for organisations that are determined to value individualism and talent while also preserving the concept of 'community'.

And there is still a need for organisations determined to forge a future for both BME and 'white ethnic' communities centred on the premise of hope, increased opportunity and increased equality for all citizens. That, we believe, is the new agenda for BME organisations and the challenge to which we must all rise.

Notes

97. Spreading the Glue, The Guardian, 06/02/08. http://tinyurl.com/c52epl

98. The Charity Commission has issued guidance on Charities and Public Benefit: http://tinyurl.com/2fdkhg. The Community Interest Company (CIC) legal structure introduced in 2005 also requires CICs to accompany their annual accounts with a 'community interest statement' describing what they have done, who they have helped and how, and what is being done with any profits.

99. "SROI is an approach to understanding and managing the impacts of a project, organisation or policy. It is based on stakeholders and puts financial value on the important impacts identified by stakeholders that do not have market values." See the SROI Network: http://www.sroi-uk.org/. In May 2009 the SROI Network launched A Guide to Social Return on Investment, Nicholls, J et al (Cabinet Office/Office of the Third Sector): http://tinyurl.com/SROIdownload

100. Researchers in the US have documented what they call an Obama effect. A performance gap between African-Americans and whites on a 20-question test administered before Obama's nomination all but disappeared when the exam was administered after his acceptance speech and again after the presidential election. New York Times (22/01/09) http://tinyurl.com/acwxrj

101. UK's income gap widest since 60s, Larry Elliott and Polly Curtis, The Guardian, 08/05/09. http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/may/08/poverty-equality-britain-incomes-poor

102. Reuters. Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services/CDC; U.S. Department of Justice; U.S. Census Bureau. http://tinyurl.com/quw3ra



The Pied Piper

The BME third sector and UK race relations policy

The story of the Pied Piper is a folktale, dating back as far as the early 1300s. It describes the plight of a small town infested with rats. The townspeople strike a bargain with a rat-catcher – a mysterious piper who claims his magical music will lead the rats out of the town. He plays and the creatures follow. The town's problem is solved.

But the townspeople renege on their deal and refuse to pay the piper. He returns, intent on punishing the townspeople for their dishonesty, and this time his music is even more powerful: all the children of the town – except one who cannot hear and one who cannot run quickly enough – follow the piper and are never seen again.

The Pied Piper is a deceptively simple morality story – of honesty and dishonesty, contracts and trust, deception and revenge. It may seem an odd title for a book that charts the relationship between the black and minority ethnic third sector and UK race relations policy, but the old tale resonates strongly with the issues discussed here.

Have BME organisations in Britain been following a 'pied piper'? If so, who is calling the tune? Has British race relations broken its contract with the BME third sector? And where is British race relations policy heading – are future generations already lost? This is a thoughtful book for thought-provoking times and will be of interest to anyone concerned with the challenges of 21st century diversity.

brap
making equality work for **everyone**

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