

# Consultation Response

## January 2010



# MiNet's Response to the Mayor's Draft Economic Development Strategy for Greater London

## About MiNet

MiNet (Minority Ethnic Network) is London's only Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) regional Third Sector network set up to promote and support the effective engagement, contribution and influence of the BAME Third Sector as partners in regional policy development and implementation for the benefit of the diverse communities across London. Since 2002, ROTA has hosted MiNet, and remains to be its accountable body. As a network whose core work involves the strategic coordination, support and advocacy of other pan London and sub-regional BAME networks, MiNet welcomes this opportunity for the interests and concerns of London's BAME Third Sector to be used to inform the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy (EDS). MiNet was the only London BAME organisation to respond to the Mayor's Proposal and would like to thank the policy makers at the Greater London Authority (GLA) for taking into account the concerns expressed in MiNet's response.

## Methodology for this Response

All research carried out and recommendations made by MiNet is evidence based in the sense that everything we do is informed by the views and real life experiences of BAME communities, and the organisations that are set up to serve them. MiNet is a network of over 500 BAME organisations, including both frontline service delivery and infrastructure bodies. It is through these established networks that MiNet collects evidence and consequently takes forward this evidence to inform London's key stakeholders. This consultation has been informed by MiNet's standing Advisory Group who feed in their knowledge and expertise to ensure the work of MiNet is an accurate portrayal of the BAME Third Sector. MiNet consists of the following member organisations: Black Neighbourhood, Renewal and Regeneration Network, Community Matters, Race on the Agenda, Federation of Irish Societies, Refugees in Effective Action

Partnership, Organisation of Blind Africans and Caribbean's, The Selby Trust, Africans Unite Against Child Abuse, Croydon BME Forum. This consultation has also been informed by the work of Camden BME Alliance and the London Gypsy and Traveller Unit.

## About this Consultation

The opportunity to inform and influence the Mayor's EDS for Greater London is welcomed particularly at this juncture in time in the trust and anticipation that evidence will be absorbed within the formulation of the final EDS Strategy. Consequently this will work towards offering reassurance that measures are taken to reflect the needs of London's BAME population. MiNet understands and acknowledges many of the challenges London must continue to overcome to remain a world city which must be balanced across economic and social facets. Therefore, this consultation locates the importance of the current economic situation and the future difficulties which can potential emanate from this within the long standing social problems which must be prevented from deepening. As this response has been informed by evidence-based research carried out covering various policy areas across London, the issues are current, and bring to the fore the valuable role of the BAME Third Sector in serving communities who struggle daily. The economic situation is not only important for the significant number of people employed in the BAME Third Sector but also the communities they reach. Therefore the opportunity for these issues to inform planning at a strategic level is well received by London's BAME Third Sector. Any feedback on this response will be appreciated by our members.

## BAME Third Sector Recognition

A major concern throughout the Draft EDS is the limited scope for the inclusion of the Third Sector in the Mayor's plans, and no specific mention of London's BAME Third Sector or other equality Third Sector organisations. The Mayor's role to improve services, in particular housing and health, whilst also encouraging social inclusion and community cohesion and reducing worklessness, will involve the BAME Third Sector immensely. This is principally the situation taking account of the duration of years for which the EDS is proposed to cover (2010-2031), as by the year 2028, eight of London's 32+1 boroughs will have majority BAME population. Moreover, a culture and legacy need to be created from the EDS which will suffice for the life of the document and be relevant to London's population over the next twenty years. For the EDS to be realistic in achieving this, recognition of the BAME Third Sector should be embedded throughout.

Additionally, although the EDS is designed to improve the economic conditions for London, it is also adequately poised to work towards addressing the nuanced challenges for London's BAME and equality groups and should not exacerbate the status quo. Recognition of the BAME Third Sector as a partner is therefore essential to underline the importance the Mayor attributes to addressing inequalities and fostering cohesive communities for London's most disadvantaged.

## 1. London World Capital of Business

London presently holds an advantageous position as it continues to thrive as a destination for premier businesses to locate. The EDS proposes to enhance and build on this success and reputation and London's strong economic past as a method for weathering the financial downturn. However, in addition to the competition London faces from other newly emerging world cities and within the context of the present recession, there also exists the conundrum of tackling existing inequalities in London, which presents a further significant challenge to London's ability to compete. This is apparent in the need to address disparities, such as income, experienced by BAME groups and targeting policies accordingly (discussed further in Chapter 4), to help to maximise the contribution of all Londoners for London to compete more effectively on an international stage.

Furthermore, the ability to present London externally should not mask over the problems internally and the potential problems which lie ahead. It is therefore important to consider in more detail, what the anticipated impact of the Draft EDS proposals will be for London's equality groups. The current recession and previous economic recessions were followed by successive rounds of economic restructurings which have particularly impacted on London's BAME and equality groups (ROTA, 2009). They have given rise to structural unemployment within deprived working class communities and especially among BAME communities in London.

Moreover, to maximise the likelihood of the EDS fulfilling the Mayor's ambitions there is need for more emphasis to include the benefits from the vibrancy and dynamism London offers. This needs to be emphasised through partnership arrangements and also the future marketing of London to reflect all of London's communities and equality groups. This will work towards encouraging the movement of economic opportunities from the promotion of cultural sectors and activities, and the promotion of services centred on diverse cultural and social activities.

## 2. Improving London's Competitiveness

The main thrust of the Mayor's Draft EDS pivots on harnessing the strengths of the public and private sector and fostering greater collaboration between each. Although the Third Sector is mentioned in this chapter it is only referred to for its size, rather than its value or expertise. Moreover, although the Draft EDS should be assessed on its ability to bring returns in investment in a strict economic sense, this must be balanced with the extent to which it promotes equality, diversity and community cohesion through successful formation of public policy. If the EDS does not acknowledge the unique role the BAME Third Sector plays in reaching BAME communities thus improving London's competitiveness, (e.g. by encouraging small and medium enterprises), this will place fundamental limitations on honestly reaching the above public policy objectives.

Historically, there has been a noticeable level of neglect for outer London and the Draft EDS draws attention to the importance of investing in outer London boroughs. Previously, boroughs like Merton have missed out as at an aggregate level it is a borough which appears comparatively affluent, even though there are isolated pockets of severe deprivation which exist at ward level where the BAME population is starkly over-represented. Any policy driven focus on outer London should also be balanced with targeted policies for Inner London which also continues to have some of the most dramatic forms of poverty and social exclusion and is also an area where a substantial proportion of BAME groups live.

Furthermore, any discussion on improving London's competitiveness should ultimately allude to the skills required to support London's growth sectors, and how this can be drawn from London's BAME population where there is considerable under-representation. The difficulties many of London's BAME population encounter in trying to benefit from the advantages, both socially and economically, available in London is unacceptable, and counterintuitive when considering the precepts of being competitive. It also runs counter to breeding social cohesion. An example of this is when London's BAME population have continuously struggled to establish small or medium enterprise (SME's). SME's are viewed to be the preferred method through which many BAME people chose as their path of (self) employment. Reasons for this vary from experiencing discrimination in the workplace, not feeling comfortable with established working patterns whilst it is also an example of innovation. However, many obstacles have to be overcome for BAME communities who want to set up businesses with evidence suggesting it is particularly difficult for this group. For example, a recent report (Skyers, 2006) found evidence of obstacles to business start-ups as a result of limited access to advice and a lack of knowledge about financial products and services that comply with Sharia Islamic Law.

### 3. Transforming to a Low Carbon Economy

The Draft EDS places a large emphasis on the private sector being the catalyst for developing new technology and producing renewable forms of energy, and thereafter partnership with the public sector is viewed as a method for this to reap greater rewards. Indeed this focus on using private sector expertise is crucial and the scale of the public sector to allow technology to be utilised is equally important. However, it would appear that more focus and consideration needs to be afforded to how certain groups can benefit from this technology to ensure greater impact overall. For example, recent research as highlighted the potential impacts of a burgeoning elderly BAME population from a lack of resources being targeted effectively. There is a clear need to ensure enhanced strategic policy coordination in respect of services for elderly people, firstly to ensure BAME elderly groups are receiving information and thereafter supported to be fuel efficient, and secondly to ensure they do not suffer from fuel poverty.

Recent research has also drawn attention to the structural constraints and communication barriers (Dorigo, 2009) which limit the inclusion of London's BAME population in "green initiatives". For example, in line with Ostrom's principle of participation in rules setting for successive collective action (1990:90), Sierra Leoneans mistrust of local government highlights the need for alternative institutions, such as BAME umbrella groups, not only to mediate but to ensure that the voice of minority groups is taken into account. On the other hand, given the importance of the family unit for the Latin American community, fewer meetings in air-con offices, or pubs, and more workshop-type activities for the whole family might lead to their greater engagement in green initiatives. Research has revealed that BAME groups' participation in green initiatives can be inhibited by underlying poverty and inequality (of access to services, of voice). Against this backdrop, it is arguably logical to make reference to the role London's BAME Third Sector can play to ensure maximum impact and that London's BAME population does not miss out.

### 4. Extending opportunity to all Londoners

Although London holds the fortunate position as a premier business location, London also holds the unenviable title as the most socially and economically polarised city in Europe (Skyers, 2006). When disaggregating data for the region at a number of levels deeply entrenched differences which are strongly delineated by race and ethnicity can be found. To begin to address these underlying differences there is a need for the Draft EDS to strengthen its approach to ensure the objective of addressing worklessness and deprivation is at least realistic. This chapter highlights areas pertinent to London's BAME population, particularly across employment, education, health and housing.

## 4.1 Addressing BAME Worklessness: Recession

Locating the present recession in the context of the difficulties London can expect to encounter with unemployment over the coming years is crucial. Indeed, the initial focus of much attention in the current economic downturn has been on the plight of middle classes and those losing their jobs within the financial sector, and in many ways more appears to be known about the impact of the recession on businesses rather than communities. This has been problematic and obfuscates a deeply entrenched problem which has been exacerbated amongst London's most marginalised communities.

Furthermore, although there is often a belief that deprived areas will not suffer because there is a supposed culture of not working and dependency therefore of benefits, this is dangerously misleading. Evidence, both historical and recent, puts this fallacy to rest, as Davies (2008) notes even in areas with high claims of Job Seekers Allowance the majority of people of working age are not claiming such an unemployment benefit. Even in Westminster in 2009, 20 per cent of the working population were claiming JSA which was one of only 9 communities nationwide with highest levels of JSA being claimed. Moreover, in both the 1990/91 and 2008/09 recessions, unemployment increased most in the communities where there were high proportions of manufacturing workers, where people lived in rented homes and areas which already had high unemployment (Tunstal, 2009). Such data is also supported by recent research carried out by Muriel and Sibieta (2009), displaying the high concentration of impact in areas already deprived. The obvious reason this is important to the EDS, is due to deleterious role high unemployment can have to any economic strategy, especially if not carefully taken into consideration.

In the knowledge that unemployed people are twice as likely to experience poverty than the average person (Smith and Middleton, 2007), and that it is the communities which are already deprived who are suffering most, one can understand how there is a role for the GLA and London's BAME Third Sector to play. Especially when considering London's BAME population are disproportionately overrepresented in these communities. This is even more important when research has clearly stressed that unemployment rates for people from minority ethnic groups rises faster than average unemployment during recessions (Berthoud, 2009). Additionally, Richard Berthoud's (2009) study leads him to predict, for example, that the proportion of Bangladeshi's and Pakistani's will rise by nearly 7 per cent, concerning when 47 per cent are already unemployed. This is a pattern which has been repeated in past recessions (Smith 1977, Jones, 1993) with ethnic minority unemployment rising faster than white unemployment.

Moreover, there is a requirement for the EDS to capture this and embrace London's BAME population as a diverse group and respond adequately to the nuances within. As BAME unemployment accounts for 50% of the workless

population in London, and 58% of children in workless households are from BAME groups a detailed and specific focus is required. The BAME Third Sector can play a crucial role in this and should be encouraged and supported to carry this out, which is especially timely with the arrival of the Flexible New Deal Scheme. Presently, indications suggest the Third Sector will play an integral role in encouraging the unemployed back into work as part of the Flexible New Deal Scheme, and with this potential transfer of emphasis the Mayor can here enforce his role to advocate on behalf and for the inclusion of the Third Sector towards welfare reform.

#### **Case Study: Local Employment Access Projects (LEAP)**

This case study provides an example of the long term cost-benefit of supporting a holistic approach to addressing worklessness by supporting a specialist BAME Third Sector organisation, and therefore specialist services more generally. This project is similar to many run across London, such as Seedtime in Barking and Dagenham, which generate equally positive results for their own client group. The case study is about Local Employment Access Projects (LEAP), which London Development Agency possesses knowledge on. LEAP is a black-led charity based in Kensal Green, North West London, which aims to transform people's lives by giving them the skills and motivation they need to get work, remain employed, and flourish. LEAP became a registered charity in 1996 with four main objectives:

- To empower participants and help them develop the soft skills, attitudes and behaviours employers in the entry-level job market are seeking.
- To be connected with real jobs, which motivate those who are sceptical about compulsory employment schemes.
- To assist London residents and LEAP users, who are ineligible for mainstream employment programmes because they do not qualify for state benefits, have not claimed benefits for long enough, or are recent arrivals to the UK.
- To improve job retention, so that those who are placed into jobs can use them as a springboard into continuous employment.

Since its inception, LEAP's 20 staff have helped more than 4,000 people to find work. Around 80 per cent of LEAP's clients are from ethnic minority backgrounds – mostly of African or African Caribbean origin – and most are 25 years of age or older.

In 1999, LEAP launched STRIVE, its flagship employment and empowerment programme, which combines 'tough love' with skills training, employment placement services and ongoing support. STRIVE is based on a powerful technique aimed at creating a no-nonsense environment where excuses are unacceptable, and in which participants are provided with tools to begin viewing themselves as marketable adults: not as victims. The programme aims not only to equip participants with essential skills, but also challenges the underlying behaviours and perceptions that prevent clients from getting and keeping jobs. As LEAP state on their website, "We believe in the people we serve. We care too much about them to watch them conform to the basest stereotypes that could be attributed to them, without challenging them to consider themselves in an altogether more positive light."

STRIVE is a three-week intensive course followed by up to two years' job search and placement assistance. The programme is based on four core principles, one of which

includes attitudinal training which challenges negative beliefs and behaviour and aims to improve self-confidence and motivation. Another vital component of the programme includes a post-programme follow-up.

**Week 1** of STRIVE focuses on shifting attitudes and behaviour. Programme staff shift attitudes and behaviour by, figuratively, holding a mirror up to participants, thereby making participants aware of what they do and how they do it. For example, staff may highlight the negative tone of voice a participant uses in response to a question. Staff also establish ground rules with consequences, to help shift attitudes and behaviour such as requiring people to be on time, and permitting three late arrivals before asking a participant to leave the programme. Participants are also asked to pay fines for breaking rules. The first week sets a framework for the rest of the programme.

**Week 2** focuses on teambuilding. For instance, participants are asked to work in small teams, which have been put together by LEAP staff, based on personalities and participation styles. As part of their teambuilding, the participants will work in sub-groups with a variety of different people to hold mock interviews. Throughout the exercise, participants get practice working in a group – expressing views effectively, listening to others, coming to agreement.

**Week 3** focuses on job seeking skills. An employer, who has vacancies, visits this portion of the programme and does a presentation introducing themselves, discussing the importance of dress codes, the do's and don'ts of interviewing, and professionalism on the job. During the week, participants also get support in preparing a CV, completing a mock application form and further preparation for interviewing. LEAP is distinctive in its tough-love approach, which is well-demonstrated in at least three ways by the STRIVE programme:

### **Employment Services**

After completing the STRIVE programme, graduates are matched with an Employment Services Officer. Through a series of one-to-one sessions, for as long as it takes, the pair identify and address the client's barriers to employment, which may include childcare, language needs and/or housing problems. They also identify and aim to secure a job for the participant that matches his/her skills, experience and requirements. During the process, previous employment is reviewed, aspirations for the future are considered and an agreed action plan to get their desired job is developed and implemented. This tailored approach is central to LEAP's effectiveness. It depends upon a strong relationship between the Employer Services Officer and the client as the multiple barriers to employment that clients are often dealing with are sensitive, such as inappropriate self presentation and drug rehabilitation. The strong relationships which staff are able to form with clients are due, in part, to the staff's ability to empathise with clients because many have been through what some of the clients are experiencing.

Several staff are STRIVE alumni. Staff are also able to form strong relationships with clients because of staff continuity; there is very low turnover among LEAP staff. LEAP believes that employers (as well as jobseekers) are their clients. Staff members do presentations to employers on the STRIVE programme, establishing a rapport and a source for vacancies. They also attend job fairs, employer association meetings, networking sessions and carry out cold calling. Participants also look for job opportunities. As a result of the combined efforts of stakeholders involved in this programme, **70 per cent** of STRIVE graduates secure employment. Between 20 and 25

are placed every month, and after two years, **84 per cent** are still employed.

More information on LEAP'S work can be found at [www.leap.org.uk](http://www.leap.org.uk). Information from this case study was obtained from the Employability Challenge.

## 4.2 Addressing Worklessness: Addressing Structures

The skills deficit among London's BAME population is noticeable, with improvements required to increase provision. For instance, Black Caribbean, Black British, and Bangladeshi groups are much less likely than other BAME groups to have achieved qualifications at Level 4 and above and as an example, 74% of Bangladeshi people of working age in London have no qualifications (Poorman-Skyers, 2009). Although significant efforts are required to ensure London's BAME population have adequate skills to meet the future needs of London's various sectors and emerging industries, stronger efforts are needed to ensure those with necessary skills are not disadvantaged. This is particularly important as evidence still points towards BAME people suffering the ethnic penalty. Further, research has suggested even when females have performed well in respect of educational attainment, those from Pakistani, African Caribbean, and Bangladeshi communities are still struggling to enter employment in comparison to their White British counterparts, therefore facing discrimination and poor economic prospects. MiNet accepts that the EDS alone cannot reconcile all the difficulties associated with the demand and supply sides components of employment for London's BAME population. Nevertheless, this is ultimately where the selection of partners to address barriers of economic participation and inclusion is paramount. The BAME Third Sector clearly has a role to play here, in addition to partnerships with public and private sector.

## 4.3 Addressing Worklessness: Housing and Homelessness

The Mayor's London Housing Strategy and the EDS cannot be viewed in isolation when attempting to reduce unemployment for groups who are most marginalised. There is an inextricable link between living in a stable environment which is conducive to your own cultural needs, and holding down a permanent place of employment. Moreover, evidence suggests that adequate provision of pitches facilitates the move for travellers from itinerant to static employment in a culturally/socially appropriate way. The employment prospects of Gypsies and Travellers have historically been very poor in London, due in part to an inadequate supply of suitable accommodation. At the last count, in July 2007, there were 535 Gypsy and Traveller caravan pitches in London. Against this background, MiNet strongly urges the Mayor to reconsider the aims set out in the Draft Housing Strategy to ensure greater synergy with the EDS and to contribute to the Mayor's aim of "extending opportunity to all Londoner's".

Furthermore, in early 2009, the Mayor's office produced the London Housing Strategy and the Draft London Plan. Both these documents include targets for building new Traveller sites in London. This was the result of a complex and exhaustive process, as a consequence of the 2004 Housing and Regeneration Strategy Act intended to analyse the need and thereafter increase site provision appropriately. Despite the figures provided from London Borough commissioned Accommodation Needs Assessment, which identified the need for 811 new pitches, the Draft London Plan has only and "arbitrarily" committed to the target of 538. Not only does a target of 538 raise questions over the London Plan and EDS to suffice the lifetime of the period each document intends to cover, the "arbitrary" decision also places the needs of housed Travellers subordinate to those living on sites. This is very divisive for the London Traveller Community, counter intuitive based on the aforementioned Accommodation Needs Assessment, whilst also running counter to social cohesion.

MiNet also recognises the need for there to be designated transit pitches which will improve itinerant work directly. The Plan proposes 40 of these spread over London. MiNet believes emphasis should be given to this target, to its delivery and management.

Additionally, the Mayor's Draft Housing Strategy aims to promote a more diverse housing supply to help meet the varied equality requirements among different communities. In particular, there is a growing need for more intermediate housing options for young people who are potentially first time buyers, and for households with large families which tend to be from particular BAME communities. Local housing strategies that have failed to cater for this diverse market demand continue to fuel a miss-match between supply of housing and demand. The results are a disproportionately high level of overcrowding, families in temporary accommodation and unsuitably designed sheltered premises.

Similarly, increased focused is required on addressing issues of homelessness. A 2007 ROTA report (Visible and Hidden Dimensions of Homelessness) highlighted that over 50% of homeless people in London come from BAME groups. For example, refugees and asylum seekers, gypsy and travellers and Irish homeless, are BAME groups highlighted as having specific needs, such as being institutionalised. Key recommendations of the research, involved supporting equitable partnerships to develop and allow full engagement of the usually much smaller BAME organisations, and the support for a pan-London network to act as a broker between BAME and mainstream homeless organisations. Needless to say, this has not been facilitated. If the Mayor is serious about the priority to extend opportunities to all Londoner's, and within the spirit of addressing worklessness, recommendations made within documents such as Accommodation Needs Assessment must have greater synergy to achieve greatest potential.

## 4.4 Addressing Worklessness: Adequate Provision for Refugees

There are many nuanced levels of need among London's BAME population. Despite this, the Draft EDS refers to refugees only once as a distinct group, which is unacceptable considering their distinct needs and the contribution they can potentially make to London's economic future. Firstly refugees need to be recognised for the unique position they fall within, and policies should be targeted appropriately to encourage their economic inclusion. The needs of refugees can vary immensely from more established BAME groups, along variables such as marital status, parenthood, social class, level of education, work and personal history.

Moreover, many refugees are highly qualified with skills highly attuned to the demands of the London labour market, but due to a range of barriers in relation to the accreditation of overseas qualifications, language barriers, and the reluctance of employers to hire employees with refugee status, they are concentrated in low paid employment or are unemployed (GLA, 2002). Additionally, the inability of many refugees to speak fluent English can restrict their access to employment and training opportunities as it impacts on functional literacy and numeracy skills. This must therefore be reflected in the EDS to ensure that refugees can benefit positively from the full range of proposals.

Furthermore, the EDS have acknowledged the importance of the ability to be able to speak English for participation in both society and the labour market. However, despite the fundamental need for people who do not have English as their first language needing to engage in social and economic structures, the EDS follows the provision offered by LSC which narrowly focuses on supporting employability, and leaving local authorities responsible at a local level. This has resulted in quality ESOL courses not being promoted as a priority within the Draft EDS. The EDS therefore needs to be informed and act on data gathered from the London Strategic Migration Partnership to work towards a London wide vision that reflects migration patterns. A London wide vision will also help to ensure cross borough provision for London's BAME population and communities which are not coterminous with borough boundaries. To improve the "life chances of all" good quality ESOL provision is essential. Additionally, for progress to be made, the EDS must foremost have synergy with the GLA Refugee and Immigrant Integration Strategy.

## 4.5 Addressing Worklessness: BAME Disabled People

The role of the BAME Third Sector in helping to reduce worklessness among London's BAME disabled, and thereafter the natural impact this will have on reducing worklessness, needs to be recognised within the EDS. The strong link

between disability- physical, sensor and mental well -being – and poverty, is well documented, which essentially results in disabled people having a lower quality of life, both economically and socially. This includes access to: appropriate health and social services and housing, to welfare benefits and income, and to employment and education. In addition to being disabled, there are other factors for disabled people from BAME communities which compound their situation. These come externally from wider society, and internally from within their own community. BAME disabled people also have to deal with the stigma attached to any kind of disability from within their own community, with pressure to be 'normal' – resulting in disabled people and their families hiding their disability (JRF, 2007).

Furthermore, only when one can begin to understand these cross cutting dimension can problems begin to be understood and thereafter tackled. The BAME Third Sector is renowned for having a developed understanding of the issues faced by these communities and also for having a direct link to these communities and helping them back into work. It is fundamentally apparent therefore that this role not only needs to be recognised, but more importantly resourced and supported through appropriate policies.

#### 4.6 Addressing Worklessness and Tackling Child Poverty: Childcare Provision

The Draft EDS proposes that one of the methods it will adopt to help reduce levels of deprivation will be to channel resources and policy focus towards addressing child poverty. With this in mind, MiNet would like to recommend that increased efforts are invested into reaching higher standards for childcare and devising a strategic apparatus for this to happen.

Key bodies across London and nationally need to recognise parents as being derived from a heterogeneous group with many nuanced practices of childcare which are in some ways dictated by an individuals culture. Further, as many of London's BAME population come from an array of new and emerging communities, it has been recorded that even when BAME parents reach an income threshold and can finance childcare, they may go on to face discrimination by childcare providers who are challenged by the impact of diversity in terms of race, faith and religious belief on their work (Bunglawala, 2008). Tackling child poverty means addressing childcare provision and laying down standards that ensure services are appropriately and sensitively delivered for children from all backgrounds. The provision of flexible and accommodating childcare provision, rather than standardised provision, should therefore be an integral part of the EDS to extend opportunity to London's BAME population and equality groups positively.

## 4.7 Addressing Worklessness and Tackling Child Poverty: Supplementary Schools

It is accepted that the Mayor's role in directly influencing skills provision is limited for young people aged 14-19. However, the Mayor must play a greater role in coordinating work across boroughs not just with selected mainstream schools, but also with supplementary schools. Bearing in mind the role of the EDS to contribute towards social cohesion and the economic well-being of Londoners, and the objective of reducing child poverty, supplementary schools must be involved within the EDS.

Moreover, supplementary schools play a vital role within society in developing the education of children from diverse backgrounds, particularly those from BAME communities. The services provided by supplementary schools range from classes on subjects in the national curriculum at GCSE levels, as well as cultural studies and mother tongue and English language classes including ESOL. The benefits to London that supplementary schools provide include that of contributing to social cohesion, both within communities through fostering positive intergenerational relationships and between diverse communities. Supplementary schools have a strong reputation for raising educational achievement levels of children and young people, especially those from deprived communities, and strengthening cultural and ethnic and British identities for those children and young people attending classes through boosting their confidence and motivation to achieve well. Within Camden alone there are at least 16 supplementary schools run by Bangladeshi, Somali, African Caribbean, Kosovo/Albanian, Egyptian, Ethiopian and Russian based in community halls, places of worship, temples mosques, and in mainstream schools.

Considering the key role supplementary schools play in raising educational achievement, increasing employment opportunities, preventing children and young people from getting involved in crime and contributing to the reduction of child poverty and therefore working towards the Every Children Matters, there is a clear argument for greater recognition of their role. More importantly, there is a need to ensure policies are oriented to increase the likelihood supplementary schools can survive through the provision of accessible facilities, encouraging partnership within mainstream schools and involving them within the coordination of the Draft EDS has planned for academies.

The Mayor also needs to strengthen partnerships with supplementary schools to address work towards addressing health inequalities. A recent report identified that organisations which are least likely to be involved in health activities are supplementary schools. It concludes that a targeted programme of delivery of health promotion activities in supplementary schools would help address health inequalities. According to the 2001 census, 43% of children and young people in Westminster are from BAME backgrounds, with the majority of these attending supplementary schools at some stage of their childhood. Therefore, reaching out

to those children through their schools has the potential to positively contribute to the health and wellbeing of those children and their families.

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