



**A Review by BEMIS of Engagement by  
Volunteer Centres in Scotland  
with Volunteers from  
Diverse Ethnic Minority Communities**

**The Black & Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland  
38 Queen Street  
Centrum Offices  
LEVEL THREE  
Glasgow  
G1 3DX**

**Tel: 0141 548 8047  
Fax: 0141 548 8284**

**[www.bemis.org.uk](http://www.bemis.org.uk)**

**[mail@bemis.org.uk](mailto:mail@bemis.org.uk)**

**Tanveer Parnez & Marion Lacey**

## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Background to Review</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Evidence Reviewed</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. Key Findings</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. Conclusions and recommendations</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	
<b>Profile of respondents</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>	
<b>Extract from VDS Guidance</b>	<b>15</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the twenty one Volunteer Centres (VCs) who took the time to complete the postal questionnaire. This information is invaluable in terms of promoting best practice and in encouraging those VCs whose practice is less developed to explore new ways of working. We acknowledge that there are a number of VCs who did not respond to our postal survey but who do engage with their local ethnic minority communities. We would hope to also involve them in sharing their expertise and learning.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In March 2007 BEMIS undertook a Review of Engagement with Ethnic Minority Communities by Volunteer Centres (VCs) in Scotland. This was a follow-up to a previous piece of research carried out in partnership with Volunteer Development Scotland in 2004 entitled 'A Way of Life'. That report highlighted the lack of formal volunteering amongst the ethnic minority communities in mainstream organisations as well as within the ethnic minority voluntary sector. The 2007 study was designed to assess what progress had been made by volunteer centres in terms of addressing this issue.

46% (21) volunteer centres responded to the postal survey – seven predominantly rural and thirteen predominantly urban centres. The review focused on six 'indicators of engagement' with volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities - community profiling; recruitment; support to volunteers; support to organisations taking on volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities; monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place; and improvements identified.

## 2. Key findings

### *Overview*

- There is a wide variation in expertise and experience between the 25% of volunteer centres evidencing informed and productive engagement with volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities, and 55% of centres who confuse non-discriminatory practice with, e.g. "treating everyone equally".
- While the most progressive centres have policy and procedures for engagement and have developed action plans, other centres have not considered there might be a need which is not being addressed. This suggests that the guidance produced by VDS entitled 'Volunteering and Black and Minority Ethnic Communities: Top Tips' (see appendix) is not seen as being relevant to **all** volunteer centres.
- The most progressive centres demonstrate careful consideration of ways of designing and delivering services that are inclusive and allow volunteers from diverse communities to identify for themselves how they would like to be involved in volunteering.

### *Community profiling*

- Good knowledge of needs based on profile data complimented by close partnership working with ethnic minority organisations is linked to good monitoring and evaluation. This in turn links to the identification of areas for improvement, and being proactive in terms of recruiting volunteers from diverse communities, with well thought out procedures and support for them and for recruiting organisations.
- VCs are missing out in ethnic minority area profile or service user data collated by public sector agencies.

### ***Recruitment of Volunteers***

Being proactive in making contact with diverse ethnic minorities through outreach work was most successful. Linking to projects focusing on employment or learning was particularly effective.

### ***Support to Volunteers***

- Promotion of volunteering through ‘buddying’ and tailored personal development training was effective in encouraging volunteers from ethnic minority communities
- Feedback systems were also found to be effective in tailoring support to meet specific needs of volunteers.
- VCs that have no specific provision or policies in place were missing out in recruiting volunteers.

### ***Support to Recruiting Organisations***

- VCs with specific funding streams have been enabled to develop this work e.g. with asylum seekers.
- However other VCs have developed, through good feedback from volunteers, ways of ensuring that organisations provide appropriate support and are encouraged to recruit from diverse ethnic minorities.

### ***Monitoring, Evaluation and Improvement***

- Monitoring against targets as well as ongoing appraisals of volunteers’ experiences has provided useful information for further expansion of services to volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities
- VCs that do not undertake this type of work have therefore little information to further develop their services. Similarly linking to other voluntary and public sector agencies that monitor service uptake could also provide useful information for development of volunteering opportunities to a wider cross-section of the community.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

3. Although there may be resource issues there appears to be a lack of priority given to engaging volunteers from ethnic minority communities or to addressing race equality issues. Improvements are needed, through collaborative work with other public and voluntary sector partners and with ethnic minority communities themselves, on the following:
  - **Raising the game of VCs who are failing to review whether they are serving all sections of their communities**
  - **being proactive and creative in getting the message across to diverse ethnic minority sections of the community**
  - **Being transparent in terms of monitoring and evaluating the impact of VC policies and procedures for engagement with diverse ethnic minority communities.**
  - **Use of development staff, websites and newsletters, working with ethnic minority board members, and ‘piggy-backing’ on the promotion by public sector workers of individual’s rights to volunteer services.**

- **The provision of premises for evening and weekend meetings tailored to the needs of ethnic minority group members who work anti social hours.**
  - **Sharing best practice as members of cross-sectoral partnerships; seeking opportunities through community planning, to mainstream race equality on a cross-sectoral basis as part of community planning funded programmes.**
- 4. BEMIS in conjunction with VDS can facilitate and promote volunteering opportunities:**
- **Sharing best practice across VCs and promoting agreed standards.**
  - **Promoting joint seminars and training at a local level between key public sector agencies, VCs, CVS, and ethnic minority voluntary sector networks.**
  - **Sharing best practice with ethnic minority voluntary sector network organisations, across local authority boundaries, and focusing on specific issues such as personal safety and volunteering; volunteering and the needs of the ethnic minority elderly, carers, or young people.**

**A REVIEW BY BEMIS OF ENGAGEMENT  
BY VOLUNTEER CENTRES IN SCOTLAND  
WITH VOLUNTEERS FROM  
DIVERSE ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

**1. Background to Review**

- 1.1 In March 2007 BEMIS undertook a review of engagement by Volunteer Centres (VCs) in Scotland with volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities.

This followed a previous piece of research carried out jointly with Volunteer Development Scotland in 2004, and also a two year VDS project which ran from 2001 to 2003 – the Black and Minority Ethnic Volunteering project – funded through the Scottish Executive’s Active Communities Initiative. This project had as its aim “the recognition of key issues within the black and minority ethnic voluntary sector, and working to remove the barriers to black and minority involvement in the mainstream voluntary sector”.

The 2004 research report *A way of Life: Black and Minority Ethnic Diverse Communities as Volunteers*<sup>1</sup> highlighted the lack of formal volunteering amongst the ethnic minority communities in mainstream organisations as well as within the ethnic minority voluntary sector. And it found that there was “limited interaction between the Volunteer Centres and the BME diverse communities<sup>2</sup>; that current Volunteer Centre arrangements were failing the BME diverse community volunteers and projects; and that there was insufficient awareness of diversity and a lack of provision for cultural needs.”<sup>3</sup>

- 1.2 The 2007 study by BEMIS was designed to assess what progress had been made by Volunteer Centres since 2004 in terms of addressing some of the issues raised by this report, and as promoted by VDS in its guidance note ‘Volunteering and Black and Minority Ethnic Communities: Top Tips’ (see Appendix Three).<sup>4</sup>
- 1.3 This study is also part of a series of reviews undertaken by BEMIS between November 2006 and March 2007 focusing on how the voluntary (Councils for Voluntary Service [CVSs]) and public sector agencies are taking on board their responsibilities under The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This Act has shifted the race equality agenda by introducing a statutory general duty to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote equal opportunities and good race relations. While VCs are not bound by specific statutory responsibilities as bodies operating in the public arena there is an onus on them to promote good race relations – see CRE Guidance<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> C. Reilly (2004) *A Way of Life: Black and Minority Ethnic Diverse Communities as Volunteers*, Volunteer Development Scotland & BEMIS

<sup>2</sup> The term Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) diverse communities was used to indicate all the diverse groups within BME communities who were consulted, and not just mainstream religious and cultural groups within general awareness; however some of these groups would not identify themselves with the term BME.

<sup>3</sup> *A Way of Life* (p xii)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.vds.org.uk/information/docs/goodPractice/pdf1BME%20Top%2010%20Tips.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> CRE Voluntary Sector Guidance at [http://www.cre.gov.uk/duty/grr/voluntary\\_guidance.html](http://www.cre.gov.uk/duty/grr/voluntary_guidance.html).

### CRE Voluntary Sector Guidance

Voluntary and community organisations often promote good race relations directly in the services they provide, but can also work with or provide services on behalf of public authorities. Like other organisations, they are bound by the general prohibition of racial discrimination enshrined in the Race Relations Act 1976 (RRA). Unlike public authorities, they do not have a legal duty to promote race equality. However, their connections to the local community, and their ability to stimulate and support community participation, mean they have a crucial role to play in helping public authorities to promote good race relations. In certain circumstances, therefore, voluntary and community sector businesses may have a contractual liability for meeting certain requirements of the race equality duty: principally when working under contract to public authorities.

#### Steps you can take to promote good race relations

Advise and support individuals in exercising their rights and obtaining redress.

Establish standards of behaviour and an ethos of respect, reflecting shared values and promoting racial equality among staff and volunteers, and make provisions for any cultural needs your staff and clients might have.

Organise or support events and activities to celebrate diversity and promote understanding.

Make public your commitment to combat and eliminate racism, and put this commitment into practice.

Respond to incidents of racism and racial harassment in your own sphere of responsibility, including providing advice and support for victims.

Promote cooperation, shared values and responsibilities throughout your work and in the community.

- 1.4 The findings from the review of VCs will therefore also make reference in the final section to the conclusions and recommendations made by BEMIS in relation to the review of the engagement by CVSs, and by public sector agencies, of ethnic minority communities.

## 2. Evidence reviewed

- 2.1 This small scale study is based on a postal questionnaire sent to 46 Volunteer Centres (VCs). Twenty one VCs responded (46%) of which twenty completed fully the questionnaire - seven predominantly rural centres, and thirteen predominantly urban, distributed across Scotland as follows:

North of Scotland	4
North East of Scotland	3
Central Belt	4
West of Scotland	5
East of Scotland	3
South of Scotland	1

- 2.2 The study focused on six indicators of ‘engagement with volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities’:
- community profiling
  - recruitment
  - support to volunteers
  - support to organisations taking on volunteers

- monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- improvements identified

VCs were also asked to identify barriers to engagement on a four-point scale based on self-assessment of their agency as well as evidence provided of support and approaches taken. This qualitative information provides a snapshot of engagement with ethnic minority communities by VCs across Scotland

### 3. Key findings

#### Overview

- 3.1 There is evidence of consistent good practice by five (25%) of the VCs, and good practice in specific areas by a further four VCs (45%). The VCs that scored high in terms of community profiles, tended also to have good monitoring and evaluation systems in place, had identified areas for improvement, and were proactive in terms of recruiting volunteers from diverse communities, with well thought out procedures and support services both for volunteers and for recruiting organisations.
- 3.2 Another key factor in developing good practice was close working with other partners around diversity issues, either as a formal partnership such as a Volunteer Co-ordinator's Forum, or as part of a local Community Planning Partnership. Inviting organisations working with BME communities to become members of VCs also increased awareness of current issues and of relevant legislative changes.
- 3.3 Rurality does not necessarily appear to be a key issue as one rural VC is in the top three in terms of scoring high on all the indicators. However the majority of rural VCs (75%) provided little evidence of engagement with ethnic minority communities or with race equality issues. The reasons given by these centres included the following:
- Specific methods of recruitment for ethnic minorities are not used. We effectively recruit anyone.*
  - We don't treat anyone from ethnic minority communities any differently to anyone walking into the centre.*
  - We effectively recruit anyone.*
  - We have no recognised 'diverse ethnic minority groups' yet and therefore (addressing barriers) does not apply presently.*
  - In our centre we do not separate our recruitment campaigns by ethnicity. It is not appropriate for our area, and in fact would damage race relations.*

These views are however not confined to the rural VCs.

- Our methods of recruitment of new or lapsed volunteers are the same for ethnic minorities as they are for all other groups in the community. All volunteers, regardless of background, are offered support... We have found that very few ethnic minority individuals contact us.*
- We endeavour to make volunteering open to all and prefer not to put people in 'boxes'.*



*We do not promote faith based or political opportunities where volunteers are required to be of one opinion or belief. This would not be an 'equal opportunities' endorsement.*

Such comments may arise from a misunderstanding of the purpose of the survey, and confusion about the reference to diverse ethnic minority communities. However these and other comments suggest also a confusion between positive action and discrimination, as there appears to be an assumption that VCs would be limiting the volunteering opportunities open to members of ethnic minority communities if they acted differently.

### 3.4 **Community Profiling**

*Indicator: Area profile of ethnic minority population; list of organisations which focus on race equality or ethnic minority community needs; list of ethnic minority community venues; profile of volunteers by ethnicity; profile of volunteering opportunities by ethnicity, language or faith.*

Five urban and one rural VC have profiles of their local diverse ethnic minority communities, and also use this information for monitoring and evaluating their services. Information on organisations focusing on race equality or ethnic minority needs appears to be particularly valuable as a starting point for joint working and establishing good practice such as joint referral systems.

Six VCs do not have access to area profiles of ethnic minority populations. Yet most public sector agencies collate such information from the census. It's not clear why such information is not regarded as relevant, however this may be related in some cases to concerns about discriminatory practice.

*"We have an extremely small population of ethnic minorities in our area, and feel that they are generally regarded as individuals integrated in the wide community... We do not make a difference between any member of our community"*

### 3.5 **Recruitment of Volunteers**

*Indicator: Use of a variety of means to effectively recruit volunteers from ethnic minority communities*

Six urban and two VCs demonstrated a broad range of approaches to engaging potential volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities in volunteering opportunities geared to individual needs. The following are some examples:

- actively using 'advocates' or 'ambassadors' (from local ethnic minority communities) to promote the benefits of volunteering
- cross referral arrangements with a multicultural association, jointly produce a leaflet promoting volunteering to different cultures - the association is also a member of the VC
- established links with employment project for BME people and take referrals from them; workshops for ESOL<sup>6</sup> students and volunteer handbook targeted at BME workers

---

<sup>6</sup> English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

- visit the local school of English on open days, and work closely with the local university to ensure international students receive information on volunteer services as part of their induction programme
- collate a pool of volunteer case studies to help promote volunteering; use images of people from diverse backgrounds in promotional materials including the website; interviews on multi-cultural radio station
- targeted recruitment activities such as surgeries in key locations, host organisation premises, or for key groups e.g. asylum seekers/refugees; participation in job fairs targeted at ethnic minority workers
- the recruitment of ‘community askers’ to help identify the volunteering that is already going on within the ethnic minority communities while promoting the idea of volunteering to those that haven’t considered it yet

One rural VC identified the benefits of this type of recruitment to volunteers from diverse ethnic minority backgrounds:

*“Feedback we have received is how beneficial it is to undertake volunteering in terms of getting involved where they live and increased knowledge of their community, and the personal development this brings including integration and improved language/communication skills.”*

### 3.6 **Support to volunteers**

*Indicator: Successful provision of a range of support to potential and existing volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities.*

Four urban and one rural VC provided evidence of innovative ways of supporting volunteers from ethnic minority communities. The following are some examples:

- ‘buddying’ support to new volunteers
- named contact within the VC; offer tailored training workshops and tools e.g. Skillcheck and Personal Development Portfolio
- use of language identification charts in VC office, and provide interpretation services if required for initial interview
- use of feedback questionnaires to highlight additional support requirements.

Some urban VCs with significant numbers of asylum seekers have secured specific funding to support this work such as a childcare budget from the Home Office, and additional VC staff to provide support for the most vulnerable groups of asylum seekers.

The alternative approach to volunteers from ethnic minority communities by most of the remaining VCs is summarised in the following comment:

*“We work on the basis of them approaching us. We do not have a policy for attracting groups of individuals of an ethnic minority background to work with us or gain our support.”*

This suggests a lack of awareness of specific support needs of ethnic minority volunteers.

### 3.7 **Support to Recruiting Organisations**

*Indicator: Successful provisions of a range of support that can help organisations recruit volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities.*

Five urban and one rural VC provided evidence of intervention and support tailored to organisations recruiting volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities. This often took the form of capacity building and equal opportunities training. Other forms of support included:

- ‘buddying’ support to organisations
- The use of VC website – guidance on good practice; signposting organisations to projects that can provide specialist guidance;
- management committee training for ethnic minority committee members to strengthen their support role with volunteers; Investors in Volunteers Award scheme; Recruitment Fair to celebrate achievements by organisations in supporting volunteers, including members of ethnic minority communities
- feedback from BME volunteers on their experiences so can provide necessary support to organisations in addressing their issues
- special events for volunteer involving organisations to address real/perceived barriers to volunteering for key groups such as asylum seekers’ refuges in partnership with a range of organisations working with these communities
- Working with other voluntary sector members of community planning partnerships such as local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) to promote support for volunteering among ethnic minority communities.

It’s worth noting that an independent study of the views of partners of a Scottish urban VC found strong support for special efforts to encourage volunteering by local residents with an ethnic minority background.<sup>7</sup> The motivation of recruiting organisations for seeking support from the VC included the following:

*“Some dealt with a number of clients from ethnic minority communities and would like to offer more ‘peer’ support to them. Others felt they did not attract an equal share of minority group clients and needed to overcome this. Others just felt that principles of equality and inclusion were important.”*

### 3.8 **Monitoring and Evaluation**

*Indicator: Use of various methods to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of support for, and provision of, volunteering opportunities for members of diverse ethnic minority communities.*

Five urban and one rural VC were investing in ongoing monitoring and evaluation of services including assessing the impact on members of ethnic minority communities. All VCs hold information on the background of volunteers they are working with on a one to one basis. However these VCs also used other approaches to measuring the impact of their services. This included:

- follow-up interviews with, or questionnaires sent to, volunteers and volunteer recruiting organisations; 6 monthly self-appraisal reviews; equal opportunities monitoring forms signed off by volunteers
- monitoring against targets set by funders; tracking volunteers and case studies

---

<sup>7</sup> P. Taylor, *Priorities for Active Communities. Report of a consultation for the Volunteer Centre.* <http://www.volunteerglasgow.org/summary.pdf>

These are all examples of the use of monitoring to target service improvements and for these VCs there was a particular interest in looking at the differential impact on volunteers from ethnic minority backgrounds.

### 3.9 Improvement

*Indicator: Identification of a number of improvement measures in order to address the needs of volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities.*

Only two urban and two rural VCs reported on a range of areas for improvement. These included:

- production of action plan by VC Board; action plan developed by joint event with partner organisations with an interest in support for ethnic minority communities; seeking prioritisation of this issue within community plan
- recruitment of volunteer ‘ambassadors’ from within ethnic minority groups
- joint training for volunteers and organisations from ethnic minority communities with referral agencies
- working to ensure volunteering is prioritised by community planning partnership – focus on international students and migrant workers.

**A number of VCs commented that they were seeking “further advice and guidance from VDS on how to progress these matters”**

#### 3.9a Barriers

One VC identified the barrier of a BME representative group which was acting as a ‘gatekeeper’ and failing to pass on information to its member organisations or to meet with the VC to discuss joint working - possibly as a result of the volume of work that this organisation was involved in.

Other VCs commented on language issues and the lack of adequate interpretation services and costs of multiple translations. There were also felt to be cultural and knowledge issues which VCs found difficult to address, such as:

- differences in cultural definitions used by diverse ethnic minority communities e.g. what activities counted as ‘volunteering’
- lack of understanding and knowledge of the activities of ‘mainstream organisations’

**It’s worth noting the comment by P. Taylor in his report *Priorities for Active Communities*<sup>8</sup> that: “the idea of volunteering for an organisation where you have no previous connection may need more promotion, directly to people in ethnic communities.”**

One VC was exploring ways of tackling this barrier through linking in VC promotional work with other activities involving members of ethnic minority communities such as employment or formal/informal education/training programmes.

---

<sup>8</sup> P Taylor *ibid.*

## 4. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 This review provides a snapshot of the range of work being delivered on the ground by VCs. There a number of VCs committed to engaging ethnic minority communities in the review of their services, and in involving volunteers and recruiting organisations in identifying approaches to tackling barriers to involvement.

There is also evidence, as with the review of activities of CVSs, and of the public sector in implementing the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, that VCs across the network in Scotland are not utilising the expertise and best practice that is available within their own network. What characterises the nine VCs, whose best practice approaches have been highlighted in this review, is the willingness to work with other partners and to learn from members of ethnic minority communities how to make their services meet their needs for volunteering opportunities. The assumption appears to be made that this need does not exist, however this does not appear to have been tested either with potential volunteers or with organisations in contact with these communities.

- 4.2 The second main finding is that a distinction is being made between volunteering within BME organisations and volunteering for ‘mainstream organisations’. The comments by some of the VCs suggest that their role is to support volunteers being recruited to ‘mainstream organisations’ and that other forms of volunteering are outwith their remit. This distinction between types of volunteering is also reflective of the more general confusion (noted above) about the definition of ‘volunteering’ and may indicate that VCs are not sufficiently addressing support needs of BME organisations which are led by and involve volunteers from diverse ethnic minority communities.
- 4.3 The following are some of the key areas where the public sector is targeting improvements and where there may be opportunities for VCs, in conjunction with other voluntary sector partners such as CVSs, to be involved in joint work with ethnic minority communities in promoting volunteering opportunities.

**Being proactive and creative in getting the message across.** VCs have their own websites, newsletters and may employ development staff to work on an outreach basis. They are therefore well placed to be proactive in consulting with current and potential volunteers. There are opportunities for ‘piggy-backing’ on public sector initiatives such as: specially designed leaflets explaining individual rights to services including services delivered by volunteers, how to access volunteer services; the use of outreach workers for running one to one surgeries or open days in centres used by ethnic minority members (e.g. shopping centres).

**Being transparent in terms of implementation of policies and strategies.** Agencies with developed monitoring/evaluation systems and review of progress and obstacles to be tackled, appear to be successful in encouraging ethnic minority service users to get involved in service planning. Some VCs need to raise their game in terms of reviewing whether they are serving all sections of their communities, and whether they are linking up with other agencies in promoting best practice in race equality.

**Keeping colleagues informed.** There is evidence from some voluntary and public sector agencies that they are not always good at sharing learning across departments, and in keeping colleagues abreast of developments and initiatives. Similarly VCs are not always good at sharing their best practice across the network, or in seeking help financially, and in kind, to further develop this learning.

**Cross-sectoral partnerships** between public sector agencies at a local level, involving members of ethnic minority communities as equal partners, appear to work. Where the public sector is well placed to lead and to invest targeted resources, VCs can benefit both in terms of shared knowledge, and also in learning how to address service issues which have a bearing on race relations.

**Exploiting opportunities for extending contacts:** Public sector staff who work mostly 9 am to 5 pm find that engaging with ethnic minority workers who are self-employed or in industries involving anti-social hours working practices, is a challenge. Given that VCs undertake evening and weekend work they are well placed to establish contact with this section of the ethnic minority population by providing their own premises for meetings. They can also signpost to other meeting places in the community. There are also opportunities for ‘piggy-backing’ on the out-of-hours work of public sector workers as a way of promoting VC services.

**Research** in the sense of designing what information is collected, and how, and reflecting on the information that is collected, is critical to race relations. The more that VCs invest in this the more apparent may be the need to continually evaluate and improve on how they assess and review the needs of, and services provided to, ethnic minority communities. VCs that do not invest in collecting good quality information find this is a major obstacle to their work. Key to this is the use of databases of contacts and needs and resources which VCs have access to. Another is creativity in terms of getting feedback on the opinions and views of ethnic minority communities, which may be helped by closer links with public sector research and intelligence programmes of work.

**Mainstreaming:** The public sector identified the importance of agency-wide engagement strategies with managerial commitment at a corporate level, and supported by appropriate investment in terms of dedicated funding streams. Given the role of VCs alongside CVS in community planning, there may be opportunities for VCs to involve themselves in mainstreaming race equality on a cross-sectoral basis as part of community planning funded programmes. One route may be through advocating secondments.

- 4.4 BEMIS, in undertaking this review, is keen to facilitate and promote voluntary sector involvement in race equality work. The following are practical ways in which this might be achieved.
- **Sharing best practice across VCs:** A VC national workshop to show-case best practice, and examples of tools used, by urban and rural VCs for engaging a range of ethnic minority service users.

- **Sharing best practice with public sector agencies:** Promoting joint seminars and training at a local level between key public sector agencies, VCs, CVS, and ethnic minority voluntary sector networks to share learning and examples of best practice. This might be funded through community planning budgets, as well as public sector departmental or professional development training budgets
- **Sharing volunteering best practice with ethnic minority voluntary sector network organisations:** This is core to the work of VCs. In the same way network organisations can provide an input to capacity building and support to newly established ethnic minority groups. There is scope for further development of this work across local authority boundaries, and focusing on specific issues for ethnic minority communities such as personal safety and volunteering; volunteering and the needs of the ethnic minority elderly, carers, or young people.

4.5

**This review is only scratching the surface of what is happening on the ground. It does however suggest progress in development of strategic approaches by up to 45% of VCs. It also highlights the need to further promote best practice and learning between VCs. The role of VDS and BEMIS is critical to further developing the engagement of VCs with Scotland's ethnic minority communities.**

**APPENDIX ONE**  
**PROFILE OF VOLUNTEER CENTRE RESPONDENTS**

<b>Total number of VCs</b>	46
<b>Total respondents</b>	21
<b>Questionnaires completed correctly</b>	20
<b>Predominantly urban</b>	13
<b>Predominantly rural</b>	7

Aberdeen  
 Angus  
 Central Fife  
 (Kirkcaldy/Glenrothes/Leven)  
 Dumfries/Galloway  
 E.Ayrshire  
 Edinburgh  
 Fife (Cupar)  
 Glasgow  
 Inverclyde  
 Inverness  
 Midlothian  
 Moray  
 N.Ayrshire  
 Nairn  
 Orkney  
 Perth & Kinross  
 S.Aberdeenshire  
 Shetland  
 Stirling  
 W.Dunbartonshire  
 W.Loathian



**APPENDIX TWO**  
**EXTRACT FROM GUIDANCE PRODUCED BY VDS**

**Volunteering and Black and Minority Ethnic Communities:  
Top Tips**

**Recruitment and Selection**

1. Provide literature and information in different languages, or be able to provide information on where this can be found.
2. Match those who have put themselves forward to a suitable volunteering opportunity, and refer anyone who cannot be placed to another organisation.
3. Allow people to participate in their own way, rather than pigeonholing them into certain volunteering opportunities.
4. Students are a good target group as they are most likely to engage with organisations which do not have a BME focus.

**Volunteer Support**

5. Try not to make assumptions about individuals needs as volunteers, if you are not sure, ask.
6. Provide a variety of volunteering opportunities, and give volunteers the chance to change roles to keep motivation up.
7. Provide expenses to ensure that volunteers are not left out of pocket due to volunteering e.g. travel and childcare.
8. Have a scheme in place to recognise volunteer contributions in a non-financial way e.g. recognition events or certificates.
9. Provide exit interviews to volunteers leaving the organisation to gauge reasons for leaving which the organisation can learn from.

**Organisational Practice: Internal**

10. Take into consideration the variations in cultures and faiths across all work that your organisation does.
11. Ensure that staff dealing with volunteers are trained in diversity.

12. Take into account any needs of volunteers relating to faith and culture when putting processes for volunteering in place, e.g. same sex training.

**Organisational Practice: External**

13. Share knowledge and resources with other organisations such as; training, equipment and even volunteers.
14. Communicate your experiences in dealing with diversity with other organisations and encourage them to do the same.

(Extract from News Items, VDS Website)

<http://www.vds.org.uk/information/docs/goodPractice/pdf1BME%20Top%2010%20Tips.pdf>