



Annual Report

2009/2010

Our Vision:

A society where equality and diversity are respected, valued and embraced, a society free from all forms of racism, sectarianism, discrimination and social exclusion, where human rights are guaranteed.

Our Mission:

NICEM works in partnership, to bring about social change through partnership and alliance building, and to achieve equality of outcome and full participation in society.

In this document “black and minority ethnic communities” or “minority ethnic people” or “minority ethnic communities” or “minority ethnic group” means people whether they are settled ethnic minority (including Travellers, Roma and Gypsy) or settled religious minority (non-Christian faith), migrants (EU and non-EU), asylum seekers and refugees or other immigration status. It has an inclusive meaning to unite all minority communities.

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Strategic Priorities 2010-2015

1. To sustain, growth and change an environment that supports and enables individuals and groups from BME communities to participate fully in accessing their rights;
2. To mainstream and to monitor ethnic minorities into government policy and practice;
3. To raise public awareness on racism and multiple discrimination and bring about a positive change;
4. To address socio-economic disadvantage and systematic discrimination in education, training and employment for BME people; and
5. To deliver Strategic Plan 2010-2015 and build sustainability of NICEM.

Work in Progress:

1. Mainstreaming human rights and racial equality into government policy and practice

1.1 A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

(a) NICEM position on A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

NICEM supports a strong and inclusive Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, which is essential for enshrining the principles of human rights as the cornerstone of peace building in Northern Ireland. A high profile Bill of Rights with rigorous enforcement mechanisms would give a voice to those most marginalised in Northern Ireland's post-conflicts society. We welcome the opportunity that the creation of a Bill of Rights presents as a key step in acknowledging that conflict whilst moving beyond the traditional "two communities" approach in building a more inclusive and increasingly diverse society.

NICEM has been campaigning for a meaningful and all encompassing Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland for more than 10 years along with other civil society organisations. NICEM endorses the advice proposed by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the Secretary of State and regards it as the best option that we can have in this moment of time, though we acknowledge that there are some areas in need of improvement.

(b) NIO consultation on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and the UK Bill of Rights debate

Unfortunately the new Labour government tried to ditch the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland by extending the UK Bill of Rights and Responsibilities debate into the consultation document, which is irrelevant to the Northern Ireland process as it is guaranteed under the Belfast Agreement (international treaty) and voted for by the people on the island of Ireland. Constitutionally it has enshrined into the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our mini constitution for Northern Ireland.

The key part of the UK Bill of Rights debate is the constitutional reform to restrain the power of the Prime Minister (through the "Perogative Power" in the name of the monarch) as the result of the Iraq war and the potential repeal of the Human Rights Act, the main key achievement of the New Labour government on human rights protection for the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

In our "Position Paper" which we issued in mid-December 2009 we highlighted the following key issues:

- The Northern Ireland Office (NIO)'s consultation is an insult to civil society and all those involved in the Bill of Rights process over the last 10 years;
- In the spirit of the Belfast Agreement (1998), the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland cannot be lost within a Bill of Rights and Responsibilities for the UK;
- The NIO have failed in their consultation obligations;
- The NIO consultation will damage the Human Rights of the most vulnerable people in Northern Ireland rather than enhance them;
- NICEM believes that the Northern Ireland Office should revoke its current consultation document and issue one that adequately reflects the advice presented to it by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission on 10 December 2008.

We also wrote to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland on 7 January 2010 asking him to revoke the consultation document on the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and issue one that adequately reflects the advice presented to it by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission on 10 December 2008. We have also written a similar letter to the Shadow Secretary of State asking him to support our position.

NICEM submitted our own response to the consultation in early March. In this response we urged the NIO to revoke its consultation document and issue one that adequately reflected the advice presented to the Secretary of State by the Human Rights Commission on 10 December 2008. Due to the highly unsatisfactory nature of the NIO's document we did not comment on its substantive content and instead we outlined the reasons why the NIO failed in its consultation obligations. We presented a strong argument highlighting the fact that, in ignoring the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland, especially with regard to economic and social rights, the NIO consultation would effectively damage the Human Rights of the most vulnerable people in NI rather than enhance them.

(c) Campaigning

1. Annual Human Rights and Equality Conference

Our 12th Annual Human Rights and Equality Conference was held on Friday 12 February 2010 at the Wellington Park Hotel in Belfast. It concentrated on the debate on the NIO consultation document,

particularly in relation to economic and social rights and the economic downturn.

Our keynote speakers included Dr Catherine Donnelly BL, of Trinity College, Dublin, who provided a detailed analysis from Administrative Law of how the NIO was in breach of statutory requirements on consultation (the so-called 'Sedley requirements'); from human rights law of how the NIO undermined international human rights standards, in particular the equality principle; and finally from constitutional law of how the NIO ignore the constitutional challenges involved in the UK Bill of Rights and Responsibilities.

Another keynote speaker was Qudsi Rasheed, Legal Officer of Justice. His latest research paper "Report on devolution and human rights – a legal and political nightmare" highlighted the fact that any repeal or significant amendment of the Human Rights Act would prove difficult to reconcile with the current devolution framework governing Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The terms of the devolution settlements are therefore likely to prove a major challenge to any proposal for a UK-wide 'British' Bill of Rights.

Other speakers delivered important presentations including Monica McWilliams, Chief Commissioner of the NIHRC and Patricia McKeown, Regional Secretary of UNISON. The former chair of the Bill of Rights Forum, Chris Sidoti, also attended the event and publicly expressed his disappointment in the NIO consultation.

The event was attended by members of the BME sector, government representatives, political representatives, representatives of the business sector, the church sector and civil society more broadly.

The Human Rights Consortium had a significant presence at the event, which had been oversubscribed significantly. We had originally budgeted for 100 attendees but, in order to enable as many people as possible to attend this important event, we allowed an additional 40 places in the final week. As such we were able to secure a small grant from the Consortium to cover additional costs. Consortium mailers were put in every conference pack and the Consortium had a stall from which to distribute additional material. The debate generated by the conference, and the widely distributed conference papers, helped to inform the wider sector and generate more informed consultation responses to the NIO on the Bill of Rights.

2. Human Rights Consortium

The legal policy officer was a member of a delegation from the Human Rights Consortium who travelled to Washington DC in September 2010 to lobby congressmen and women, senators and influential political and economic figures in the United States in light of a congressional hearing which dealt with America's involvement and influence on peace talks and protection of human rights and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and Bosnia. The delegation reiterated the Consortium's long-term commitment to establishing a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland and called on the US for support in delivering on the Agreement. As a result of the visit, a letter, signed by a total of 20 Congressmen and women on a cross-party, bipartisan basis was created, the letter highlighted the value placed by the U.S. government on the importance of a Bill of Rights as a set of protections for everyone in Northern Ireland. The letter also called upon David Cameron to take 'action' on developing the Bill of Rights process by international Human Rights day on the 10th December 2010.

3. Complaint to Equality Commission

The Deputy Director, on 15 January 2010, put forward a formal complaint, under paragraph 11 of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, to the Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland regarding the NIO consultation document on the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. This complaint was rejected by the Commission in circumstances that NICEM finds most unsatisfactory. The issue of complaints to the Commission in relation to section 75 is part of a wider agenda, discussed below under the 'Equality Coalition'. However it was decided not to pursue the issue of complaints about the NIO document as they would not have fitted in with the emergent strategy towards complaints to the Commission. We will however be asking the Commission to explain the procedures which it followed.

Nonetheless NICEM did receive a response from the NIO, dated 3 March 2010, to its complaints. NICEM had complained that no screening exercise had taken place. An attempt was made by the NIO to refute this complaint on the basis of accompanying documentation that appeared to have been created on the Monday morning after the Friday upon which the complaint had been submitted to the ECNI and copied to the NIO.

1.2 Race Relations Order Review and the Single Equality Bill for Northern Ireland

NICEM has been pursuing its demand to have a formal review of the race Relations Order during the course of the year. As outlined in the 2008/09 Report, there was all party support for this review during the Assembly debate in May 2009. However there has been no movement from OFMDFM. The attitude seems to be, 'if we legislate on anything, we will have to legislate on everything, so we won't legislate at all'.

We have been actively following the debates in Westminster on the Equality Bill for Great Britain. On 25 June 2010, we held a workshop on the Equality Act 2010 in the Inns of Court, Belfast. The Deputy Director took the participants through the main provisions of the Act. We were delighted to have Declan O'Dempsey, BL, Cloister Chambers, London, with us. A thorough discussion of the implications of the Equality Bill for Northern Ireland took place.

In preparation for the Assembly elections in May 2011, we held a half-day conference, 'The Race Relations Order: Agenda for Change' on 5 November 2010. The first part of the conference was taken up with consideration of the Reasoned Opinion of the European Commission to the UK, in which the Commission set out its conclusions that the law across the UK does not satisfy the Race Directive 2000. There are also Reasoned Opinions in relation to other equality Directives.

It came to light, after the conference, that Departmental Regulations had been issued by OFMDFM in December 2009, to come into effect in January 2010. These Regulations go some way towards meeting the concerns of the European Commission, but in NICEM's view, still not far enough.

The conference also heard from the equality law consultant, Barbara Cohen, on various aspects of the Equality Act 2010. It is clear that NI equality law now lags far behind that in Great Britain. NICEM, in cooperation with the CAJ, will be actively pursuing the outstanding issues in the Reasoned Opinion with the European Commission and forcefully arguing, in the run up to the Assembly elections, that the Race Relations Order requires reform, in line with NICEM's key demands.

1.3 Cohesion, Sharing and Integration consultative document (CSI) and the Racial Equality Strategy 2005-2010 (RES)

At last the government announced that the consultation document CSI was out during summer time this year. The staff team was

extremely busy to attend 11 public meetings across the Province, as well as organised a number of consultation meetings, briefing sessions and facilitation for the ethnic minority groups. The bigger task is to write up what they discussed in each community group and identified their unique issues. As a result of our support and facilitation we got more than a dozen groups to make their submission which have the common part of the issues by the black and minority ethnic sector, as well as their community unique issues. The following groups attended our events and/or support and facilitation:

ACSONI
MCRC
Wah Hip Chinese Association
An Munia Tober
Belfast Islamic Centre
Polish Association (NI)
Belfast Islamic Centre Women Group
Omagh Ethnic Community Support Group
Strabane Ethnic Community Association
Women of the World, Enniskillen
Indian Community Centre
Alliance of Filipino communities
Northern Ireland Community of Refugees and Asylum Seekers
NI Pakistani Cultural Association
NI Muslim Family Association
NI Multicultural Association
Mandarin Speakers Association
CONNECT-NICEM and interpreters

We welcome the government's publication of the consultative document, which was overdue. It is the starting point to move forward. At the same time we need to stress that the consultative document is not currently workable as it outlines all the outstanding issues under an overarching framework without elaboration. It is a DIY document where stakeholders are asked to fill in the blanks. This can only be explained in terms of the limitations imposed by the need for the two main parties in charge of OFMDFM to agree on the contents of the consultative document prior to publication. If this is the case, then civil society has a key role to play in filling these blanks.

In our submission we provided a conceptual framework of the Council of Europe's rights based approach on Social Cohesion which defines Social Cohesion "is the capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation." (Report of the High Level Task Force on the Social

Cohesion in the 21st century). It emphasises society's capacity to manage differences and divisions and ensure the means of achieving welfare for all members with the following principles:

- Equal access to rights and resources, with attention also to vulnerable groups and dignity/recognition of individuals, as expressed through human rights;
- Sharing responsibilities crossing the public and private spheres;
- An activating approach (participation and reconciliation); and
- Managing the balance across interests, generations and domains of actions.

We agree the approach of the CSI Programme should be an overarching policy framework that brings all other policies that links to the goals of CSI. The CSI Programme, therefore, should provide a platform to accommodate all vulnerable groups, such as religious minority, sexual orientation, disability, women and different age group. We also propose the development of an "Anti-sectarianism Strategy" as the programme of action for the CSI Programme, alongside the development of the sexual orientation strategy, disability strategy and elderly strategy. This holistic approach will enrich and enhance the future CSI Programme.¹

In our view the Racial Equality Strategy (RES) is complement to the delivery of the aims and goals of the CSI through the six Aims and the annual Action Plans required from each department and their next step agencies, and vice versa. The same view to the current six Aims of the Race Strategy which is robust enough and should be continued. Therefore good relations under both the CSI and the RES will be strengthened.

Since the current RES is due to expire at the end of this year, NICEM, as well as the sector, including All Party Group on Ethnic Minority Communities, strongly feel that there is a clear need to continue the current Race Strategy whilst simultaneously either updated or developing a new one that based upon the current 6 aims. As the scale of the challenge on racism and the circumstances change since 2005, we really need a new Strategy to tackle the issues and problems ahead. As a matter of fact Annex 4 of the Race Strategy: priority areas for action identified during consultation (p.62-64), there is little progress since 2005. Most of the priority areas are still relevant by the end of 2010. Therefore we deserve to

¹ In Great Britain under the Single Equality Act 2010 the "Good Relations" duty extends to all vulnerable groups, whereas in Northern Ireland under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the "Good Relations" duty only covers race and religion.

have an effective mechanism and resources to deliver the priority areas for action.

We therefore demand that a new Racial Equality Strategy, covering the period 2012-2017, be developed and implemented from 2012 onward. The current Strategy should continue to be implemented until the new Executive approves a new one next year. There should be a process to engage all ethnic minority and religious minority groups to develop the new Strategy in order to create partnership and ownership.

1.4 All Party Assembly Group on Minority Ethnic Communities

We continue to provide secretariat support and advice on racial equality issues to the Assembly Group, which NICEM helped to establish in June 2008. There have been ten monthly meetings (except 2 months during summer recess). At each meeting, the average attendance from the Assembly was 4.5 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) (or their representatives) and the average attendance from the sector was 13 organisations (including NICEM).

The following groups gave short presentations on their work at the APG in this period: Bulgarian Association Northern Ireland, Indian Community Centre, Tuar Ceatha Barnardos, Chinese Welfare Association, Belfast Jewish Community, Multicultural Resource Centre, Northern Ireland Multicultural Association, Ballymena Inter Ethnic Forum and Omagh Ethnic Community Support Group, Derry Travellers Support Group, Egyptian Society NI, NI Pakistani Cultural Association, Baha'i Council NI, Wah Hep Chinese Community Association and Mandarin Speakers Association.

The issues discussed and actions had been taken included:

1. Roma crisis during the summer;
2. Follow-up of the Motion Debate on the Review of the Race Relations (NI) Order;
3. Racist attacks and letting & estate agents; the Racial Equality Forum;
4. OFMDFM restructuring and core funding for the sector;
5. NICEM employment research "Za Chlebem: The Impact of the Economic Downturn on the Polish Community in Northern Ireland" and proposed Motion Debate to set up an emergency "Crisis Fund" for migrant workers and the Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

6. Racial Equality Forum and the Shadow Forum;
7. Persons with Limited or No Access To Public Funds;
8. Human Trafficking;
9. Media Coverage of APAG Meetings;
10. Dormant Accounts;
11. Traveller Accommodation;
12. Census 2011
13. Membership of the APAG

1.5 Preparation for the intervention to the United Nations Committee on Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination on UK Periodical Report in 2011

(a) Northern Ireland Process

Following the Human Rights and Equality Training, provided by the Human Rights Centre, QUB, in 2009, was conducted with a view to equipping the sector for engagement in upcoming UK reports on the International Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCPNM). An additional training workshop took place on 5 February 2010. The purpose of this meeting for the black and minority ethnic sector was to discuss a joint sectoral response to the upcoming UK reports on CERD and the FCPNM.

The meeting consisted of a brief explanation of the purpose and function of the Conventions and the type of issues that are likely to be relevant. This was followed by a basic overview of the lobbying process at both international and European levels. A facilitated discussion then established the key issues facing ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland and the strategies that should be adopted to resolve them. These issues will be highlighted in a joint submission to be agreed on by all those involved.

The event was non-specialist and we encouraged all groups to attend, irrespective of any previous experience. At the meeting, it was emphasised that both of these Conventions have a great deal of significance for ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. We will encourage all community representatives to see this as an important opportunity to raise significant issues through the use of non-domestic mechanisms to pressurise the government to act.

As a result of the training a working group was formed to look further at the Conventions. A significant issue which arose as part of the second workshop, on 16 March, was that of the CERD

Committee's concern about the increasing racial prejudice against ethnic minorities, asylum-seekers and immigrants reflected in the media, and the lack of effectiveness of the Press Complaints Commission in dealing with this issue. Many participants felt that this was a significant issue. Consequently, an action plan was drawn up to look at this; an intern was appointed in July for an 8-week period (one day a week) to work specifically on this topic.

We also ran two identical training sessions on CERD for working group members on 21 May (in the morning) and 23 June (in the evening). More than 25 participants attended in both training sessions. Both training sessions were provided by Geraldine Scullion, human rights consultant, and were successful in informing participants and generating discussions that highlighted case studies relevant to various aspects of the Convention. A third training will focus on lobbying the UN Committee in Autumn 2010.

The Legal Policy Officer worked with two interns (one from the LLM in Human Rights at Queens and another, an LLM graduate from the Irish Institute of Human Rights) in order to collect case studies and relevant evidence in preparation for the Alternative Reports.

(b) National Co-ordination

Currently NICEM is also co-ordinating, and liaising with, Black and Minority Ethnic groups in Great Britain on a single UK CERD Alternative Report. The co-ordinating body is composed of NICEM, the Runnymede Trust, the 1990 Trust and the Glasgow Anti-Racist Alliance. The NI Alternative Report shall form the NI part of the UK-wide response.

The original hearing was scheduled in Spring 2011. After the national co-ordination intervention right after the General Election in May this year, the Secretariat of the Committee agreed to move the hearing to Summer 2011 as it will have more time to see what the new Coalition government policy impacting on racial equality in United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. We have serious concerns, too, whether the submitted report which has been outdated as the result of the new government policy, in particular the slice cut of the public finance that will have adverse impacts towards ethnic minority communities in United Kingdom and Northern Ireland.

1.6 UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination Informal Meeting with NGOs on "Interaction between NGOs and the Committee"

NICEM made the submission to the Committee in early July and the Executive Director made an oral intervention in the informal meeting with NGOs on 3 August 2010. The Committee highly appraised the work done from NGOs by providing their views through Alternative Report (previously called "Shadow Report") on racial discrimination in their country of origin. The meeting fostered the message on post Conclusion Observation monitoring or ongoing monitoring from the NGOs and the State Party.

1.7 Gender and Race

NICEM recognizes the compounded vulnerable position that ethnic minority women have in Northern Ireland, many lobbying, research and training programmes within NICEM have been developed with this explicitly in mind.

NICEM is an active member of OFMDFM's Gender Advisory panel, the role of the panel is to work in partnership with the Gender Equality Unit to assist in the development and monitoring of cross-departmental gender equality action plans in relation to the delivery of the Gender Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2006-2011. Despite several meetings and a workshop with representatives from Departments the action plans are still lacking in comprehensive and meaningful actions that will robustly address the needs of women of multiple identities. Following on from a successful lobbying trip to the UN at the last examination of the UK by the International Committee on the Elimination of Violence against women (CEDAW) in 2007, NICEM has played an important role in lobbying for the government's compliance with the concluding observations with regard to recommendations made for ethnic minority women. NICEM continues to have active critical engagement with the Government in relation their implementation of CEDAW and we participated in a recent seminar with the Government Equalities Office in this respect.

NICEM is also supportive of an End Violence Against BME Women strategy for the UK with a specific chapter on Northern Ireland, Members of the policy team recently participated in discussions in conjunction with Southhall Black sisters and the End Violence Against Women Coalition to develop such a strategy. NICEM recognizes that the capacity of BME women's groups to participate and campaign on policy issues is underdeveloped, it is a priority to actively ensure that BME women are given the opportunity to participate in and benefit from Human Rights trainings and discussions in order to enable them to develop a strong voice.

1.8 Racial violence and the recent Roma crisis in Belfast

Following the discovery of a Facebook hate group on 24 November 2009 (abusing Belfast rose sellers), mainly targeted at the Roma, the Communication Officer was interviewed by the BBC and reinforced NICEM's position on the protection of ethnic minorities made vulnerable by such groups. As a result of our complaint to the Police Service (NI) the Facebook closed down that social network.

1.9 Ethnic monitoring Pilot Project

The project "Ethnic Monitoring on Children Services" within NHS Trusts in Northern Ireland is now under way. A productive meeting involving the Southern and South Eastern Trusts was held on 13 October 2009. OFMDFM and Department of Health, Social Services and Public Security (DHSS & PS) were also represented. The outcome of the meeting was to set up a working group from the Trusts to explore the details of the work.

Following on from the first Working Group meeting in December 2009, the Southern Board and Trust has taken the lead in setting up the Ethnic Monitoring Pilot Project. The current membership includes the Southern Board and Trust, South-Eastern Trust, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and OFMDFM. The Belfast Trust will participate in the pilot.

The aim is to lead a pilot, and share learning, on the development of common Ethnic Monitoring information routinely available on the Child Health Care System, Community System (SOSCARE) and Hospital System (PAS) to promote equality and diversity within Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland.

The pilot aims to support the capacity to robustly capture critical patient/service user information, in particular information which relates to the diversity of patients and service users, to help the HSCB plan develop and enhance service provision to all members of the community.

To date, there are no accurate, common systematic or streamlined patient/service user profiling information systems that capture equality/ethnic data, in place in the Health and Social Care Board. Therefore, it is not possible, to accurately detail the diverse profile of people using health services.

This has serious implications for service planners and service providers who do not have accurate evidence to state that they are in compliance with equality legislation such as section 75 in Northern Ireland, and that their services are meeting health targets or that they are addressing issues of health inequalities. Furthermore, HSCB are required to improve and enhance the provision of public services to all communities, including minority ethnic communities.

There were 4 meetings (January to April) of the Working Group and 1 regional meeting in May to inform on the progress of the Working Group. There will be one meeting in October prior to the pilot.

Currently there are two levels of work on ethnic monitoring: central government and the Working Group pilot project. At the central government level, OFMDFM takes the lead on the agreed categories on ethnicity. In our Working Group the Southern and South-Eastern Trust have been engaged with DHSSPS to agree on the methodology to capture the complex community background on ethnicity in the above three piloted areas. We need to get the endorsement from the Department before we can start the pilot as their Research Department set the computing programmes on all data, such as hospital patient (PAS), Child Health System and the Care System (Children and Young People under care).

The first pilot will test the new ethnic /nationality questions in the new Child Health Book.

1.10 Employment Research on the Impact of economic downturn

(a) Research on impact on Polish community

We published and launched the research report in our last AGM. The recommendations in the employment research report were pursued during this reporting period.

Following the publication of 'Za Chlebem' copies of the report were distributed widely through formal and informal contacts. The findings and recommendations of 'Za Chlebem' were discussed at the November APG meeting that endorsed all the recommendations of the research report. It also agreed to put forward a motion debate to set up the "Crisis Fund" as the main recommendation of the Research Report.

In November copies of 'Za Chlebem' and a formal letter requesting a meeting based on its conclusions were sent to Ministers in the

following departments: Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Department for Social Development, Department for Employment and Learning and Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety. Copies of the research report and a letter requesting a meeting were also sent to the following Northern Ireland Assembly Committees: Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, Employment and Learning Committee, Health, Social Services and Public Safety Committee and Social Development Committee. In December a copy of 'Za Chlebem' were distributed to each of the MLAs at the Northern Ireland Assembly with a letter introducing the research.

The Executive Director and Research Officer held a meeting on 13th January 2010 with the OFMDFM Committee Chair and a member of the Committee. The Committee is supportive of our recommendation to set up a "Crisis Fund". It was agreed that the Committee will request the OFMDFM to set up an inter-departmental working group with participation from voluntary and community sector now, instead of setting up the same under the Racial Equality Forum as it will take at least 3-6 months to formalise the Forum's structure. The Committee also agreed our strategy to actively brief the Assembly Members through their individual political parties in order to have political buy-in before the full motion debate in Stormont.

A meeting with the Minister for Employment and Learning's special adviser and an officer of the Department took place on 28th January and was attended by the Executive Director, the Deputy Director and the Research Officer. The Research Officer set out the recommendations of the report and these were discussed.

The two Junior Ministers in OFMDFM suggested that NICEM should meet their officials first and the meeting is being arranged. The Minister of Health did not see a need for a meeting, as equality monitoring data will assist the process. The Minister for Social Development suggested we meet the senior officials on operational issues first. A meeting has been agreed on 16th February 2010.

A meeting with the Minister for Employment and Learning's special adviser and an officer of the Department took place on 28 January 2010 and was attended by the Executive Director, the Deputy Director and the Research Officer. The Research Officer set out the recommendations of the report and these were discussed.

The Minister for Social Development suggested we meet the senior officials on operational issues first. This meeting took place on 16 February 2010. The two Junior Ministers in OFMDFM suggested that

NICEM should meet their officials first and the meeting took place on 19 February. The Minister of Health did not see a need for a meeting, as the equality monitoring data project will assist the process.

A central recommendation of the report was the setting up of a Crisis Fund for migrant workers and their families. The progress made in pursuing this recommendation has already been set out under the All Party Group on Ethnic Minority Communities.

(b) Research on impact on Filipino community

The Research Officer has also been working on the preliminary stages of complementary research to the Polish community research project, this time examining the effect of the economic downturn on the Filipino community.

Representatives from the Association are considering a draft questionnaire, modeled on that used in the Polish research. We will arrange a meeting to finalise the questionnaire, and discuss on-line completion of the questionnaire, once the Research Officer is in post in mid-August.

1.11 Education Research: Educational, social and health needs for minority ethnic children and ethnic children and young people

Following the completion of the scoping paper and summary paper a number of meetings were organised throughout November and December with stakeholders in the education sector in Northern Ireland. Various members of the NICEM policy team attended these meetings and, during these meetings, the research project was introduced and discussed on the basis of the scoping paper.

The Policy Team met with the following organisations/departments to discuss the education research: ARK (University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast), Department of Education, National Children's Bureau Northern Ireland and Education and Library Boards representatives. The education research was also introduced during a general meeting with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to outline the Strategic Advocacy programme in December 2009 attended by Policy Team Staffs.

In January 2010 we organised the Research Stakeholder Group roundtables that will inform the survey questionnaire. A follow up paper, detailing discussions with the sector, was produced. It was sent to the consultant who produced a discussion paper and a draft

questionnaire for discussion at the roundtables. The roundtables took place on 27th January for NICEM member groups and 28th January for those stakeholders working in the education and youth work sector in Northern Ireland. Both roundtables were facilitated by the consultant and very successful. The questionnaire is being finalised.

The first Education Steering Group meeting was held on 31 March. The Steering Group approved of the progress of the research project and made useful practical suggestions on issues such as access to schools. A second Steering Group meeting was planned for 30 June but, in light of the recruitment of a new Research Officer, it was agreed to keep Group members informed of developments and convene a meeting later in the summer.

Meetings through member groups to pilot the draft questionnaire are being arranged over the summer holidays. DENI has identified 30 post-primary schools, on the basis of criteria supplied by NICEM to its Statistics Department. We also held a series of useful meetings with various stakeholders. Amongst the most useful was a meeting with Mary Kane, Schools Implementation Manager, C2k, which co-ordinates IT across the NI education sector.

C2k can provide the on-line questionnaire to these 30 designated schools and has recommended the second and third weeks of October as the best period during which to conduct the on-line survey. This on-line survey, undertaken by ethnic minority young people, will be followed by focus groups arranged through our member groups in November and December.

1.12 Policy Papers

We have developed the following policy papers recently:

- Ethnic Monitoring: Data Sources and Practices from GB;
- Review of the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997;
- Minority Ethnic Young People and Their Experiences of Disadvantage, Discrimination and Racism in Education and Social Service Delivery in Northern Ireland;
- Migrants; and
- Future Equality Law in NI

We are planning to publish the following papers by end of 2010:

- Hate Crime; and
- Inequality in Health

1.13 NICEM Policy Magazine "Minority Rights"

This is the continuation of our previous Policy Magazine "Mainstreaming". The new Magazine will publish 4 issues a year which focus on relevant and informative articles in accordance to the topical issues on human rights protection and racial equality. The first one was published in December 2010. During the year we published the following topics:

- Northern Ireland and the Roma: Challenging our Ethical and Legislative Boundaries;
- Vulnerable Migrant Workers need protection....now!

The forthcoming issue in September 2010 is "Ethnic Minorities and Health".

1.14 Public Interests Law Testing case

On 20 November 2009 the Development Officer/ Racial Harassment Adviser attended a stakeholder forum for the Public Interest Litigation Support service (PILS). The forum discussed several issues regarding the use and function of the PILS service. The forum also looked at potential obstacles and discussed strategies to overcome these.

We also continue to provide advice and support to our member groups and the wider population on issues around harassment, intimidation, employment, benefits and discrimination, etc. These are the potential mechanisms to get a testing case for the purpose of public interests law.

We are completing a Stakeholder Survey for the Public Interest Litigation Support (PILS) project. The Deputy Director and the Advocacy and Advice Manager have arranged to meet the Development Officer of PILS on 19 August for further discussion as NICEM wishes to be very much involved in the development of PILS and in its initiatives.

1.15 Section 75 Consultations

NICEM has been active within the Equality Coalition during the course of this year. The Coalition is an umbrella group which brings together NGOs with an interest in the equality agenda. It came into being in the late 90s, specifically to lobby on section 75 and to be a forum within which consultations on section 75 exercises could be coordinated.

This is an important year for the future success of section 75. The Equality Commission has produced a third edition of its Guide on Statutory Duties and is now requesting revised equality schemes from public bodies. NICEM, through the Coalition, has been actively involved in commenting upon a Model Equality Scheme produced by the Commission and is engaged with public authorities on the preparations for the action plans which the Commission recommends to append to their schemes.

NICEM has also been working through the Coalition to pressurise the Government to respect their equality duties during the spending cuts which will affect all parts of the public sector. The Executive Director, together with the Directors of the Children's Law Centre and the Law Centre (NI), wrote to OFMDFM on 14 September 2010 requiring it to set out the steps it was taking to make sure that these duties were observed. We finally received a reply dated 19 November, setting out various assurances from OFMDFM on the equality implications of the spending cuts.

Through the CAJ, Counsel's Opinion has been obtained on the steps which need to be taken by public bodies. We will be monitoring carefully each step which the Government takes to ensure that these key duties are respected and that ethnic minorities do not bear an unfair burden of the cuts, which have the potential to reduce substantially public services in Northern Ireland.

NICEM has responded only to priority consultations this year. Responses have been submitted or attended specific consultation meetings related to the following consultations:

Big Lottery Fund, Race, Disability and Gender Performance
Department of Education, Draft Community Relations, Equality and Diversity Policy
Department of Employment and Learning, Consultation Paper on Dispute Resolution
Department of Justice, EQIA on Justice Bill
Department of Social Development (DSD) Consultation, 'The Social Security (Equalisation of State Pension Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 Equality Impact Assessment'

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Indicators Of Equality Of Opportunity and Good Relations In Education
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, Draft Model Equality Scheme
Government Equalities Office, Consultation on Public Sector Duties
Libraries NI, Library Closures in Greater Belfast
OFMDFM, Public Assemblies Bill

We have also participated in a number of consultative forums and events as members of the following fora:

- All Party Group on Ethnic Minority Communities of the Northern Ireland Assembly
- Racial Equality Forum (OFMDFM Race Unit)
- Racial Equality Panel (OFMDFM Race Unit)
- Racial Equality Forum Sub-group on Immigration;
- Thematic Working Group on Migrants of the Department of Employment and Learning
- Northern Ireland Migration Advisory Committee Stakeholders Forum
- Promotion of Social Inclusion Working Group on Homelessness of the Department of Social Development
- Regional Equality Liaison Panel of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Security
- Queen's Award for Voluntary Services (QAVS) of the OFMDFM
- Asylum Co-ordinating Meeting of the UK Border Agency - Scotland and Northern Ireland Region
- Equality Coalition
- UNISON Northern Ireland Race Group
- Belfast City Council Migrant Shadow Forum
- Ethnic Minority Health Forum of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Personal and Public Involvement Steering Group of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- European Programme Advisory Group (Peace III and Interreg) of NICVA
- Joint Consultative Forum for Education Sector
- British Medical Association Patient Liaison Group
- The Gender Advisory Panel of the OFMDFM
- Ad-hoc Women's working group
- Women's National Commission
- Children's Strategy, Planning and Review Group of the OFMDFM
- Human Rights Consortium
- Inter Community Network, Northern Ireland Housing Executive

- Great Shankill Community Safety Network
- Independent Advisory Group, PSNI
- NI Anti-Bullying Forum
- NI Policing Board Reference Group
- East Belfast Independent Advice Centre
- Shared Future Housing Steering Group
- Village Focus Group
- Opting Out of Religious Education Research Advisory Group (Institute of Good Governance of the Queen's University of Belfast)
- BME Housing Forum (Northern Ireland Housing Executive)
- Hate Crime Thematic Group (Belfast City Council)
- Housing Executive Forum on Equality
- Police Ombudsman Working Group and
- Housing Rights Editorial Board

2. Public Awareness on Racism and Multiple Discrimination

'Legislation cannot change hearts and minds but it can stop the heartless.'

(Martin Luther King)

2.1 Anti-racism and Equality Training

Good policy and practice through education and training is one of our strategies to support the legal framework in standard setting. The law defines what is the minimum acceptable behaviour in our society. Policy and practice are the guidelines for the implementation of racial equality. Without education and training on policy and practice it is difficult to deliver good quality standards at all levels. Only education and training will guarantee the staff's support for racial equality on the one hand, and change the organisational culture through new policy and practice on the other.

An increasingly wide range of organisations and groups have actively sought to implement policies driven by standards of non-discrimination and promotion of diversity as a norm. NICEM has found it very encouraging to be asked to organise a series of well-attended training programmes, with a large range of participants including numerous policy-makers who display a personal commitment to ensure that cultural change, at organisational level, and attitudinal and behavioural change, at individual level, do indeed occur.

The general feeling also points to the importance of strong leadership, organisational support, additional resources and further training. Significantly, participants find that training results in an increase in staff confidence in handling anti-discriminatory and diversity practice issues.

Over the last 12 months we provided training to 10 organisations totalling over 300 participants. NICEM wishes to thank the following organisations, their partners and employees for working with us to achieve equality of opportunity and outcome through training:

Sligo Development Partnership
Health Service Executive, West
PSNI Belfast
University of Ulster at Jordanstown
Lisnasharragh High AEP Program
Young Adults Leadership Program, Omagh

Forthspring, North Belfast
Youth Justice Agency
Castlederg Youth Club
Department of Enterprise Diversity Group

We also trained the following organisations on public awareness on racism and/or diversity:

Magherfelt Borough Council
Grainne House Family Forum

We also conducted a three-hours "race relations law" training for the Queen's University of Belfast's Social Work students (both undergraduate and graduate programme).

3. Capacity Building Black and minority ethnic communities

3.1 Funding issues and support

The capacity building programme has continued with the BME sector in 2009/10. We continue to see a fall in funding opportunities available for the work of BME organisations, particularly those smaller BME groups seeking small pots of money.

The complexities of the application processes and the level of administrative capacity required for monitoring of the funding has meant that the Peace III programme funds for Northern Ireland have remained out of reach for the vast majority of minority ethnic groups. Despite the key themes of tackling sectarian and racism, only a small number of BME community organisations have been successful in securing funding through this programme.

Despite the struggle for resources, the BME sector continues to provide services to the members of minority ethnic community groups and support for those members, which are socially isolated and require signposting and support. NICEM staff have provided advice and support for small groups, developing their internal programmes, assisting groups in developing funding applications and ensuring that groups can monitor and evaluate their funded programmes correctly. The majority of our support over this period has been support to groups in managing their organisational development, staff management, human resources/personnel issues and financial management and reporting.

During the year we have provided direct advice, support for their activities and training programmes for the following committee members:

- Northern Ireland Multi-cultural Group
- Al-Nisa Association NI
- Indian Community Centre
- An Munia Tober
- Romanian Association
- Strabane Ethnic Communities Association
- Northern Ireland Muslim Families Association
- Northern Ireland Pakistani Cultural Association
- Portuguese Speakers Association

3.2 PQASSO – Practical Quality Assurance System for Small organisations

For number of years NICEM has been encouraging the use of the PQASSO quality assurance system for small organisations, as a tool for management and accountability to their stakeholders.

During 2009/10, NICEM conducted a number of awareness raising seminars on the introduction of the Charities Act (NI) 2008 legislation which will provide a framework for the regulation and accountability of the charity sector in Northern Ireland. The new legislation, together with the introduction of the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland, will have an important impact on the work and structure of the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. We took this opportunity to begin to prepare the BME sector organisations for the introduction of the regulations and delivered four seminars in Belfast, Derry, Ballymena and Strabane in order to encourage groups to start to think about what new procedures they may have to put into their organisations and how the registration process may impact on their work. Indeed for the smaller organisations there will a decision to be made on whether registration as a charity will be in their best interests, and what demands it may put on their volunteers. This may have implications for future funding opportunities, which they can pursue in the future.

This year NICEM is also a key partner in the establishment of the All Ireland PQASSO network. This network will support and promote the use of quality improvement mechanisms on the island of Ireland, with a particular emphasis on the use of PQASSO. The network has not been fully established as yet, but membership of the network will be open to the licensed PQASSO members based on the Island of Ireland. Three members of NICEM staff are licensed PQASSO members and are also trained and licensed peer reviewers for the PQASSO quality mark.

3.3 NICEM accredited training course on Anti-racism and Equality

In 2010, NICEM completed the development and registration of our new Open College Network accredited training programme on Anti-Racism, Equality and Diversity. We can now offer an Open College Network Certificate on Equality & Diversity which is delivered in the form of a two day course, and includes assessed work which will be submitted in the form of a portfolio following the completion of the course. The course's contents cover the issues of equality, attitudes, value, legislative framework and also include the application of equality principles to organisational development and operation elements which can be tailored to the needs of individual

organisations. Further information on the accredited training is available through the NICEM office, and full delivery will begin in 2011.

3.4 Media Training for Member Groups and staffs

Since the creation of the communication officer's post, a flexible, media-friendly approach has been developed in the organisation, for instance with the setting up of downloadable ready-made interviews on the website, podcasts, centralisation and coordination of media queries and interviews, etc. To manage each media opportunity as efficiently as possible, we have organised a series of media trainings to enable our staff and our member groups to take on media interviews with confidence. The training is an intensive one-day session with six participants per session, led by a prominent journalist/reporter. The first media trainings were led by Jim Dougal, and taken over by Henry McDonald of the Guardian after Jim Dougal's passing. We ran two trainings in September 2009 and March 2010 with 5 member organisations and 7 NICEM staffs. The third training will be arranged in November 2010 in Strabane.

3.5 Human Rights and Equality Training

The training was designed to raise awareness of the significance of the Human Rights and Equality discourse for Ethnic Minorities in Northern Ireland at a domestic, European and International level. As well as making people aware of their rights more broadly, the Human Rights and Equality Training was aimed at equipping the sector for engagement in upcoming UK reports on the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The seminars galvanised BME community representatives and brought home the importance of using such non-domestic mechanisms to pressurise the government to act.

Two training sessions were organised in partnership with the Human Rights Centre at Queen's University, Belfast. The first one took place in Belfast on Thursdays 6, 13, 20 and 27 August. The second training was held in Omagh Community House on the 8, 15, 22 and 29 October. The 2nd training gathered 20 participants from various member groups alongside Black and minority ethnic individuals involved in community work.

After each session of the training, the participants were asked to fill in evaluation forms, which were then compiled and shared with the Human Rights Centre's lecturers. The feedback was very positive. Belfast's training was followed up by a Practical Action seminar on 4

September, to discuss the possibility of a joint sectoral response to the UK reports on the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the European Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities. 13 representatives of NICEM member groups attended the seminar.

In 2010 we also ran a number of trainings in preparation for the ethnic minority sector to lobby the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (see section 1.5 above).

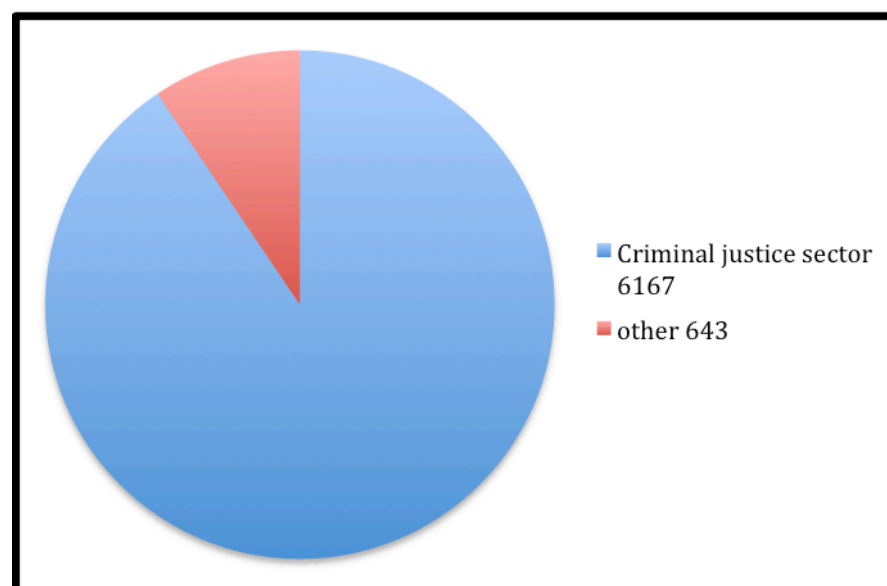
3.6 CONNECT-NICEM

April 2010 saw the end of the first full year of provision of interpreting services to the criminal justice sector in Northern Ireland. This has been a successful period for CONNECT-NICEM and we have a growth in service provision and a number of new staff members have joined the team.

Over the period we facilitated over 6,000 interpreting sessions, for agencies within the criminal justice sector but also for a range of customers from the wider public sector and the community and voluntary sector.

We have also worked closely with our customers over this period in order to improve our services and the skills of our interpreters. We provided detailed and regular statistical reports to our customers from the criminal justice sector, tailor-made to their specific requirements to allow them to review their use and demand within their services.

Statistics of interpretation sessions for 2009-2010



3.7 Training & Development

We continue to improve the skills and knowledge of interpreters in Northern Ireland. A key part of this role is to ensure that we keep updated on changes in relation to interpreting practices and provisions in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and the rest of Europe.

Three members of the CONNECT team attended the inaugural conference of the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association in November 2009. The event, held in Antwerp (Belgium), was the founding of the association, EULITA, which aims to bring together its membership as full members the professional associations and legal translators and spoken and sign-language legal interpreters in the EU member states as well as the general associations that include legal translators and spoken or sign-language legal interpreters among their membership.

Since the conference, the EU has adopted a new EU Directive on the Right to Interpreting and Translation in Criminal Proceedings. The quality of interpreter provision and training varies significantly across the EU and this new Directive aims to create a standard across the member states for the provision of interpreters in criminal proceedings. This will have important implications for interpreters, organisations providing interpreters and for criminal justice agencies across the EU. As the provider of interpreters to our criminal justice agencies in Northern Ireland we will be ensuring that our interpreters and the agencies are aware of changes taking place at the European level which will influence their work.

(a) Training delivery

During 2009/2010 we continued to deliver our level 3 Open College Network course in Community Interpreting. The course's contents focus on the skills, techniques and ethics of interpreting; it also involves information and input from a range of public sector services. During the period we delivered three training courses, two in Belfast and one in Lisburn to a total of 52 learners, who have since joined our service as interpreters.

One of our aims over the year, as part of our programme of continuous improvement of interpreters' skills, was to develop and deliver a new course in Community Interpreting but at a higher level than previously delivered in Northern Ireland. We have been successful this year in completing the development and registration of this course, and delivery began in October 2010. This course is significantly longer and explores issues, skills and techniques in more depth. Learners on the level 4 course are expected to display a higher level of skills, understanding and analysis in relation to the

techniques of interpreting and the issues surrounding interpreting. We will no longer be offering our Community Interpreting course at level 3.

In early 2010, we also ran the second of our specialised OCN training courses on interpreting with police services and a second course with a further 14 learners. A third course is planned for December 2010. As part of our continuous course development we will be developing new courses on interpreting in the courts, probation services and prisons in Northern Ireland.

In co-operation with the PSNI, a small number of interpreters also took a number of awareness-raising sessions on working with more specialised teams within the PSNI.

(b) Planning process

CONNECT-NICEM is currently undertaking a planning process to create our new business development plan for the next three years. The process will be completed by the end of 2010.

4. Support Vulnerable Groups in our Society

4.1 Development of advice and advocacy services

NICEM continues its commitment to providing advice services to the most vulnerable groups throughout Northern Ireland. This year has seen great changes in the social, political and economic landscape. Fortunately, we have been able to adapt and secure resources from funders in Atlantic Philanthropies and the Big Lottery Fund's "Reaching Communities" Programme.

These resources have brought some valuable and exciting resources allowing us to provide a more efficient and expanded advice service. This has improved our ability to meet an ever-growing demand for advice and advocacy to migrants and victims of racial harassment, discrimination and intimidation. Moreover, we are now able to provide immigration advice up to appeal stage with our new Immigration Advice Officer who came to post in May 2010.

Although there is an ever-increasing demand for our services and our advisors are managing large caseloads, we continue to be confident in the quality and ability of our advice and advocacy services to provide much needed support to the Black and minority ethnic population within Northern Ireland. The consistent caseload and requests for support and advocacy evidence the need for the Belfast Migrant Centre and the value of the work of our advisors.

4.2 Belfast Migrant Centre

In late April the Big Lottery informed us that we were successful in our bid to set up the Belfast Migrant Centre (under the name 'The Welcome House Project'). The Project is a consortium with UNISON, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Polish Association NI.

This is part of our medium-term funding strategy to provide direct advice and support to those vulnerable groups from an ethnic background, particularly affected by the impact of the current economic downturn. This is a three-year project with a budget of nearly £500,000 to employ a Project Manager, two bi-lingual outreach workers and a bi-lingual administrator. Atlantic Philanthropies have also agreed to use the salary costs of the Advocacy and Advice Manager as matched funding for the Project.

The new Centre will put all NICEM advice services under one roof (employment, benefits, housing, schooling, discrimination, immigration, racial harassment and racist attacks, immigration)

through our One-Stop Shop Service model. The Centre will be on the 2nd Floor of Ascot House and the official opening will take place on 8 December 2010.

Casework

The structure of our advice services has changed as it has expanded and as we prepare to open the Belfast Migrant Centre. We have hired a new full time Bi-Lingual Outreach Advisor and a Bi-Lingual Administrator; both posts began in August 2010. We now have a full-time Immigration Advisor, a full-time advisor for victims of racist harassment and discrimination, as well as an Advice and Advocacy Manager to oversee the advice services and co-ordinate the advisors. The Immigration Advisor has been providing immigration advice since 1 June 2010.

Training on the use of case management software, to manage our casework, took place on 27 June 2010 at Advice NI. This software was necessary as we are now dealing with a larger amount of enquiries and cases, and the software will assist in managing and generating reports about our advice work.

Bi-Lingual Outreach Advisors

We continue to provide a comprehensive advice and advocacy service to migrants and minority ethnic people from settled communities on a variety of issues including homelessness, access to benefits and welfare, employment, debt management, education, health and discrimination.

Before we secured the funding from the Big Lottery, one advisor was doing all of this work. In March 2010, she went on maternity leave, and we had two part-time workers from March 2010 to June 2010. At the end of June 2010, with the funding from the Big Lottery, we hired another full-time advisor who started in August 2010. Our advisor on maternity leave will be returning in November 2010. With two full-time workers in post we hope to expand our capacity and open another clinic (currently held every Tuesday from 9am to 5pm at the offices of the Polish Association NI, and every Thursday from 6pm to 8pm at 174 Trust in Antrim Road, Belfast).

With all the changes in workers and capacity we have continued the advice work and weekly clinics. The service has supported over 322 cases through comprehensive casework and short-term enquiries. The weekly clinic averages 10 – 20 enquiries per session. While the service users mainly comprise of people of Polish nationality, more nationalities are accessing the advice service including Venezuelan, Malawian, Spanish, Nigerian, Indian, Bangladeshi, Romanian, Lithuanian and other A8 and A2 countries. The service continues to

provide a high quality of advice and many cases have been successfully resolved through the work of our advisors.

August 2009 – July 2010 Statistics

Housing:	80
Benefits:	201
Employment:	77
Debt:	12
Education:	9
General:	105

Case Study 1

A family of A8 nationals had a damp problem and heating issue. They would have the heating on for 4 hours; the upstairs of their house would only reach 8 degrees. The family started experiencing health problems and became upset and depressed with the state of the house.

We called environmental health to assess the dwelling, and they concluded that the problem was the lack of insulation. There is no obligation on landlords to rectify this as condensation 'is a common problem' and therefore cannot be treated as evidence to declare a dwelling unsuitable; the justification was that if this was the case half of the houses in Belfast would be unsuitable.

Environmental health stated that they had no power to enforce any improvements of the dwelling, but their opinion was that the house was too cold.

We assisted with the contract being prematurely terminated, quoting all the issues, the opinion of the environmental health office and the fact there were minors involved. The family was released from their contract without penalty and was happy with the conclusion of the case.

Case Study 2

An EU national who was pregnant with medical complications had a problem getting access to support and was referred to us by one of our member groups. She had been referred to several places initially but because of the language barrier was not able to understand or take steps to get the support needed.

We attended the assessment for benefits interview on her behalf and were able to secure a maternity grant and benefits to support her until she was fit to work again. We were also able to secure

housing support and accommodation for her, which prevented her from becoming homeless.

Immigration Advisor

Our immigration advisor began in early May. Before she could begin advice work she had to apply for OISC exemption for NICEM. Unfortunately this meant that she was not able to give advice until June 2010. However this did allow the advisor time to settle in and network. Once we received our OISC exemption she began face-to-face advice and a telephone enquiry line.

Enquiries include people seeking advice regarding employer requirements under the Workers Registration Scheme to failed asylum seekers wishing to return to their country of origin. Since she has begun giving advice in June she has worked on 64 cases. The current caseload ranges from EEA applications, Points-Based-System work permit issues and spousal visas. There are both EU and non-EU nationals using the advice service, particularly since the tightening of immigration rules has meant that many workers and employers are being refused applications. While these will be the main areas of work, there are also a small number of cases that have an asylum element. As there is already an asylum support system set up in Northern Ireland we do not want to take on too many of these cases. However within the current system there are still gaps that mean some people will be left with no support and no other options. Our immigration advisor has been given leeway to use her discretion with these cases.

When the advice service officially began the level of enquiries highlighted the high demand for advice and representation. In the month of June the immigration advisor dealt with seven enquiries and closed them. She has an ongoing caseload of ten clients and there will be four new cases opening up as of the last week of July. There are also two pending enquiries, which she expects will need full casework services. Due to the high demand for the advice service our advisor has now set up an advice line on Wednesday afternoons from 2pm to 4:30 pm to answer enquiries.

Case Study

A non-EU national came to the UK to work as a nurse nine years ago and became a naturalised British Citizen. One year ago she applied for her children to join her in the United Kingdom, having established a safe and secure environment for them here in Northern Ireland. She did not have legal representation at the time of making the application and the application was refused. She approached NICEM requesting that we represent her in the appeal against refusal of entry clearance to the UK. We prepared her case

fully, obtaining a wide range of evidence, including letters from schoolteachers and the doctor in the country of origin. The appeal hearing has concluded and we are now awaiting the Immigration Judge's determination.

Advice and advocacy to victims of racial harassment, violence and discrimination

We continue to provide a comprehensive support and advocacy service to victims. This service continues to receive an average of 3-4 new clients each month. Due to the nature of these cases they often require long-term support, which means some of the cases can be active for two or more years. Additionally, after an attack many people face peripheral issues as a result and will often come back to us after receiving initial support to resolve these issues. In these cases this service and the Bi-Lingual outreach advisors work very closely together.

Since August 2009 there have been 40 new cases opened and the current caseload stands at 39. These cases range from compensation claims, housing and intimidation issues, physical attacks and verbal abuse, discrimination in employment, discrimination that is not related to employment, discrimination and racial harassment, and issues around debt arising out of intimidation from the home. The advisor has also been working with the Probation Service to provide one-to-one sessions to a youth offender around racism and prejudice.

We continue to offer support with discrimination cases, with the assistance of the Deputy Director, though we cannot provide representation at a Tribunal. Therefore, much of the support is in the initial stages as well as helping people with the mechanics of what they should expect at a Tribunal. We have worked very closely with the migrant support project run by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and they have been instrumental in helping us resolve several cases successfully.

The service has continued to operate with one advisor attempting to cover the whole of Northern Ireland, as there has been no funding to specifically employ someone for this work. However, in the beginning of July we were able to hire an advice worker that will help support the bi-lingual outreach worker until November and will be covering harassment cases as well. This will allow the service to run more efficiently and to help provide support to more people.

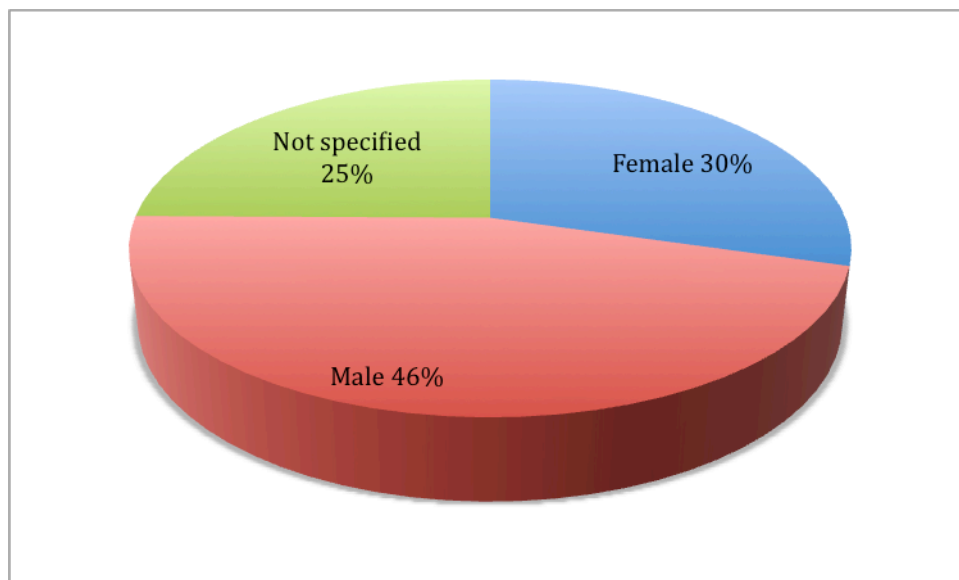
Case Study

An A8 national came to us after suffering a racially motivated attack. He had been returning home from grocery shopping when

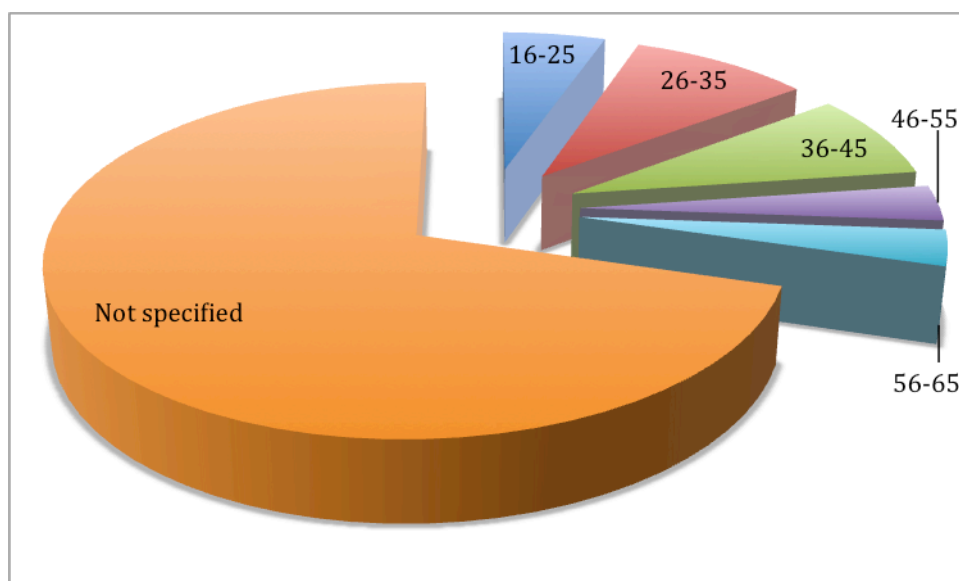
he was called a racial slur. A broken bottle was then thrown at him and he was severely beaten; as a result of the attack he lost vision in one of his eyes. A craftsman by trade, he was not able to work because of the injury and would now have a permanent disability. We were able to assist him in applying for compensation. Additionally, as a result of the injury he had lost his job and was in danger of losing his accommodation. We were able to secure housing support for him and other benefits to support him until he recovered and could look for employment

All Advice Services July – August 2010

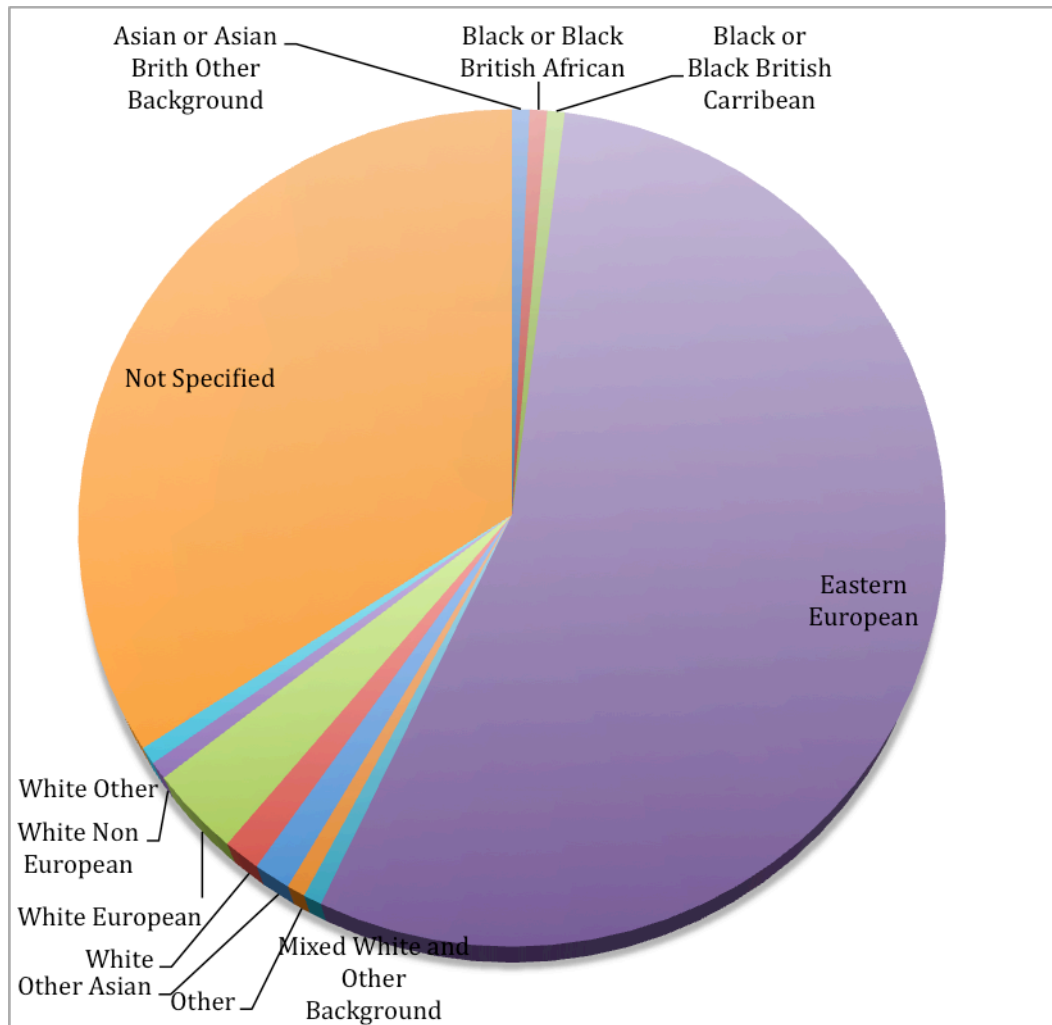
Gender



Age



Ethnicity



5. Networking and Partnership Building

Networking and partnership building have become one of NICEM's core functions along with promoting activities which pursue collective action on racial justice and equality. We actively use good practice to bring knowledge and experience to Northern Ireland and, at the same time, share our unique experiences and struggles. Networking also forms the basis of collective action through partnership building. Through our involvement and contribution, NICEM plays a significant role in networking and partnership building in the UK, on the island of Ireland, in the European Union and the Council of Europe.

5.1 UK Network

NICEM works in partnership with the key Black organisations in the UK focusing on human rights, race equality and capacity building. Our strategic concern relates to the following issues: Single Equality Act 2010 (in particular public sector duty), UK Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, EU Framework Directive on Services and the Commission of Equality and Human Rights. On the Single Equality Act and the EU Framework Directive on Services we work closely with the Discrimination Law Association (DLA). We invited the vice-chair of the DLA to speak at our recent seminar in September 2010. The Runnymede Trust, 1990 Trust and NICEM work in partnership to co-ordinate and to prepare the UK NGOs' Alternative Report and lobbying for next year's UK hearing under the UN Committee on the Elimination of any forms of Racial Discrimination. NICEM is also the Board Member of the UK Race Europe Network (UKREN). Our partners are as follows:

- Commission for Equality and Human Rights
- Discrimination Law Association
- UK Race Europe Network (UKREN)
- 1990 Trust
- Runnymede Trust
- Operational Black Vote
- Monitoring Group, UK

5.2 Irish Network

The North-South dimension is a key strategic consideration for campaigning for anti-racism on the island of Ireland. Due to limited staff and resources we were prevented from developing our work plans efficiently in the Republic of Ireland. Instead we focused on

responding to certain needs that we had identified. Based on the partnership working with the Ethnic Minority and Asylum Services of the Health Executive Service, West, we provided free training to our partner on Anti-racism and Equality in Action in May 2010.

We also conducted the same training with the Sligo statutory and voluntary sector in April 2010. The programme is run by the Sligo Development Partnership Company.

We agreed to resubmit a PEACE III 2.2 application to develop the capacity building skills of new migrant and local communities to tackle racism and racial hate crime in the North West region with the Cross-border partner, the Ethnic Minority and Asylum Services of the Health Executive Service, West, the NI Sikh Association (Derry), Strabane Ethnic Community Association, Omagh Ethnic Communities Support Group and Women of the World in Enniskillen. This partnership will strengthen our work in the region.

We continue to provide interpretation training and to assist our partners in setting up interpretation service systems that mirror our successful CONNECT-NICEM.

5.3 European Network

NICEM still plays an active role at the European level in terms of working with both the European Union and the Council of Europe on human rights and race equality.

Through the SOLID methodology we have developed locally a unique programme to support victims of racial violence (PEACE II plus project with funding from Community Relations Council). We have aligned with our partners, the Denmark Documentation Centre on Racism, the Latvian Centre for Human Rights, the People for Change Foundation and the European Network Against Racism (ENAR) to submit a joint funding application to DG Justice under the Citizenship Programme in April 2010. The result will be known in November 2010.

The Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities liaised with NICEM regarding their UK visit (including Northern Ireland) on the UK's 3rd Periodical Report. Currently we are preparing our report and look forward to meet the Advisory Committee members in early 2011.

We work in partnership with the following organisations:

- European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

- Human Rights Directorate of the Council of Europe
- Anti-Discrimination and Civil Society Unit of the DG Employment and Social Affairs of the European Commission
- European Fundamental Rights Agency
- EU Economic Social Committee
- Northern Ireland Executive Office in Brussels
- European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
- Public Interest Law Institute in Budapest
- European Roma Rights Centre
- European Roma Information Centre
- Article 1 in Netherland (the former LBR)
- Denmark Documentation Centre on Racism
- Open Society Justice Initiative
- Minority Rights Group International
- Latvian Centre for Human Rights
- KISA – Action for Equality, Support and Anti-racism, Cyprus
- People for Change Foundation, Malta

5.4 Northern Ireland

NICEM has established a strategic partnerships with organisations across the sectors in order to promote human rights and equality in Northern Ireland, covering issues such as Section 75, the Single Equality Bill, a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland, racial violence, asylum seekers and refugees, Irish Travellers and Roma, etc. These organisations include:

- All Party Assembly Group on Minority Ethnic Communities
- Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
- Committee on the Administration of Justice
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- UNISON
- Equality Coalition
- Human Rights Consortium
- Disability Action
- Coalition on Sexual Orientation
- Help the Aged & Age Concern
- Women's Support Network
- Women into Politics
- Save the Children
- Children's Law Centre
- Law Centre (NI)
- Childcare NI

- Youthnet
- Northern Ireland Youth Council
- Association of Independent Advice Centres
- Community Change
- Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
- NIACRO
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Red Cross (NI)
- St. Vincent de Paul
- Old Warren Partnership
- The Greater Village Trust

6. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Media and Communication Work

Last summer we appointed an external consultant to assist us to develop our Communication Strategy. The first draft was brought forward by the staff and the internal process to develop the final version has started. This is an important process as we need to ensure that our key audience is taken into account, and that our key messages and our image are represented efficiently. As a result a revised draft has been submitted and is currently under internal consultation.

Although we do not have a Strategy at present, we have been working pro-actively towards the following results and outcomes:

1. Press releases
2. Website development and updates
3. Online publications library
4. Facebook page and twitter feed
5. Coordination of media interviews
6. Proof-reading and standardisation of published materials
7. Quarterly policy magazine
8. Reinforcement of external communication: stands at events, presence and participation in media-focused meetings, etc
9. Pro-active communication with and information feeding to media professionals with increased opportunities to obtain positive coverage in the media
10. Development of promotional work and wider information work (branding, etc)

6.2 Annual Review and Planning

The Policy Team conducted a 2-day “Annual Review and Planning on Strategic Advocacy Project” on 15 and 16 December 2009. An external consultant, Blueprint Development, conducted a half day session on the review of the Logic Frame which forms the basis of the evaluation.

CONNECT-NICEM also appointed Blueprint Development in June 2010 to develop its 3 year Strategic Plan. Two stages will be implemented from autumn 2010. The first stage consists of meetings with individual members of staff of the CONNECT Team and meetings

with service users (interpretation contractors). The second stage will bring the staff of CONNECT-NICEM together to develop a future plan based on the information gathered at stage one.

6.3 Develop NICEM Strategic Plan 2010-2015

The draft Strategic Plan 2010-2015 has been developed during the summer of 2009 and was adopted by the Committee in September 2010. The Strategic Plan 2010-2015 was also adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 5 November 2009.

6.4 Induction of New Committee

The new Committee was elected at the Annual General Meeting on 5 November 2010 and the Committee in its December meeting also made the co-option members as well.

In order to bring the new Committee on board, we organised an Induction Programme on 15 and 16 January 2010 at the Hilton Hotel in Templepatrick for all Committee members and individual Advisory Committee members. It also gave the new Committee members the opportunity to understand NICEM's policies and practice.

6.5 PQASSO standards to improve Good Governance of NICEM

On 10 September NICEM held its annual PQASSO self-assessment day. The majority of NICEM and CONNECT-NICEM employees attended the session. The assessment day allowed everyone to identify priority areas of work for the NICEM Quality Task Group (QTG) to work on for 2010 and allowed people to express their desire to volunteer for the Task Group. An action plan has been drafted and the QTG will be meeting in January to start implementation.

The QTG met on 23 February in order to implement the PQASSO action plan and to prioritise issues and actions to take forward, including the review of the existing policy files to see what gaps require further work. At a further meeting of the group on 23 June, all policies needing to be reviewed were delegated out to task group members who will work on them in preparation for the next QTG meeting on 18 August.

We have been attending the PQASSO All-Ireland Group, which is comprised of a variety of groups throughout Ireland who practice PQASSO. The Quality Mark is not currently available in Northern Ireland. In highlighting demand to the Charity's Evaluation Services, we hope that it will be recognised soon. Once this has happened NICEM will apply to be assessed with a view to attaining the reward.

NICEM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (2009-2010)

Chair: Mr. Bobby Rao
Strabane Ethnic Community Organisation

Vice-chair: Ms. Monica Yang
Mandarin Speakers Association

Secretary: Zeshan Zafar
NI Multi Cultural Association

Treasurer: Justyna Samolyk
Polish Association NI

Other members:
Dr Khanyisela Moyo
Afro Community Support Organisation

Dr Saleem Tareen
NI Pakistani Cultural Association

Jet Tirol
Alliance of Filipino Communities in NI

Clea Devlin (co-opted from Jan 2010)
Portuguese Speakers Association

Dana Bruno (co-opted from May 2010)

Muhammad Al-Quaryooti (co-opted from
September 2010)
Belfast Islamic Centre

Advisory members: Ms. Eddis Nicholl
Ms. Anne Brown
Dr. Joseph Mwaura
Ms. Tansy Hutchinson

STAFF LIST (Sept 2008-August 2009)

Central Administration team

Executive Director	Patrick Yu
Finance/Administration Manager	Nuala Moynagh
Reception/Administrator <i>(from June 09 to July 2010)</i>	Agnieszka Wlodarska

Policy Team

Deputy Director	Barry Fitzpatrick
Legal Policy Officer	Helena Macormac
Communication Officer	Francoise Barlet
Research Officer <i>2010)</i>	Chris McAfee (<i>Leaver May</i>
Research Officer <i>2010)</i>	Eoin Rooney (<i>from August</i>
Administration Officer	Sophie Romantzoff
Development Officer & Advice Manager	Jolena Flett (<i>to May 2010)</i>
Immigration Advice Officer <i>June 2010)</i>	Ayesha Christie (<i>from</i>
Development & Advice Officer (maternity leave)	Marzena Graham
Development & Advice Officer <i>cover from Jan to June 2010 and maternity leave)</i>	Liz Connor-Kerr (<i>maternity</i>

Belfast Migrant Centre

Advocacy & Advice Manager <i>2010)</i>	Jolena Flett (<i>from June</i>
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Bi-Lingual Outreach Worker <i>cover for Marzena Graham from June 2010)</i>	Max Petrushkin (<i>maternity</i>
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Bi-Lingual Outreach Worker <i>August 2010)</i>	Alicja Matwiejczuk (<i>from</i>
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Bi-Lingual Administrator <i>(from August 2010)</i>	Agnieszka Wlodarska
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Capacity Building and CONNECT-NICEM Team

Co-ordinator of Capacity Building & Executive Director of CONNECT	Gabrielle Doherty
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Bookings Manager	Aruna Djalo
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Finance Manager	Stewart Robinson
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Development Manager	Sarah Maitland
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Administrator - Bookings	Katarzyna Gelger
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Administrator – Bookings	Ano Mario Vaz
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Administrator – Bookings <i>November 2009)</i>	Dominic O’Neill (<i>from</i>
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Administrator – Finance	Clair Dummigan
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Administrator – Out of Hours	Rumena Kostadinova- McCabe
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Administrator – Out of Hours	Michaela McClelland <i>(Leaver Feb 2010)</i>
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Administrator – Out of Hours	Tanja Tierney
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Internship

**Hong Kong University Social Innovation and Global Citizenship
internship:** Herbert Wong

Queen’s University of Belfast LLM Human Rights internship: Karen
McLaughlin and Emma Keating

Others: Louise Higgins and Christopher Toal

NICEM MEMBER GROUPS (2009-2010)

Afro Community Support Organisation Northern Ireland
Alliance of Filipino Communities Northern Ireland
Al-Nisa Association NI
An Munia Tober
Barnardos Chinese Lay Health Project
Belfast Islamic Centre
Bulgaria Association Northern Ireland
Craigavon Traveller Support Committee
Derry Traveller Support Group
Filipino Communities in Northern Ireland
Guru Nanak Dev Ji Sikh Community Association
Indonesian Association Northern Ireland
Indian Community Centre
Mandarin Speakers Association
Northern Ireland Muslim Family Association
Northern Ireland Committee for Refugees and Asylum Seekers
Northern Ireland Filipino Community in Action
Northern Ireland Multicultural Association
Northern Ireland Pakistani Cultural Association
Northern Ireland Sikh Association
Polish Association Northern Ireland
Portuguese Speakers Association
Derry Traveller Support Group
Omagh Ethnic Communities Support Group
Shah Jalal Mosque Bangladeshi Community Centre
Strabane Ethnic Community Association
Windsor Women's Centre Multi-cultural Group
Women of the World, Enniskillen
World Wide Women at North Down

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities
(NICEM)

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