

SUBMISSION TO
CENTRAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS UNIT
ON NEW TSN

An agenda
for targeting social need and
promoting social inclusion
in Northern Ireland

3 NOVEMBER 1998

INTRODUCTION

1. The Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) is a voluntary sector, membership-based umbrella organisation representation of minority ethnic groups and their support organisations in Northern Ireland. NICEM is committed to collective action informed by people's experience and analysis of their circumstances. In pursuit of equality of opportunity and equity of treatment, NICEM works for social change in relation to racism and in particular to the elimination of racial discrimination.
2. NICEM welcomes the publication of the consultation paper : New TSN - An agenda for targeting social need and promoting social inclusion in Northern Ireland. As a general principle, we support any government policy or action which fulfils its international obligations, in particular those economic and social rights under the International Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), as well as the domestic measures such as the Children (N.I.) Order 1996, the Race Relations (N.I.) Order 1997 and the Policy Appraisal for Fair Treatment..
3. NICEM also welcomes the consultation paper which is the first time in history that government recognises the travelling community "may suffer particular types of disadvantage" (p.3) in Northern Ireland. It also recognises "some groups have additional needs, which, if not catered for, could place their most vulnerable members at risk of social exclusion. Examples of such groups.....Travellers and members of other ethnic minorities" (p.17).

AN AGENDA FOR TARGETING SOCIAL NEED AND PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Black and ethnic minorities do not benefit from either the existing TSN or the new TSN due to the fact that mainstreaming black and ethnic minorities has never been taken place in order to alleviate inequality, social disadvantage and social exclusion within the agenda of the government.
2. Both PAFT and TSN are key government policies which aim to alleviate social disadvantage and social exclusion of marginalised groups. We can put it in this way : **PAFT is the policy framework for equality proofing; and TSN is the programmes to implement the spirit of PAFT on major key policies that affect marginalised groups. Thus TSN programmes must not, and should not, work out without referring to the framework of PAFT.**
3. **New TSN will not have impact and be effective unless it follows the impact assessment framework under the new statutory PAFT.** Thus it will avoid "discriminate in favour of one community against the other" (second paragraph, p.5) on the one hand, it will identify the disadvantage groups in our society on the others.

4. Since there has been little research done by the government (see second paragraph, p.5) in relation to the **comprehensive needs assessment for black and ethnic minorities** in Northern Ireland, government has obligation, under CERD and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minority, to conduct it as soon as possible in order to set the benchmark policy for black and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland.
5. Since New TSN will rely heavily on research and the collection of statistics. The Central Secretariat Circular 2/98 states :
 “Appropriate monitoring arrangements are fundamental to New TSN....
 Departments audits will need to comment on the scope for....gathering
 information on the community background of recipients, clients and
 beneficiaries.”
 **Therefore mandatory ethnic monitoring on both employment and service
 delivery are essential in order to provide a comprehensive baseline which can
 identify the gaps of black and ethnic minorities.**
6. **The Social Steering Group should ensure an uniformity approach across all
Departments and Non-Departmental Public Body in relation to statistical
collection and monitoring.**
7. **NICEM must challenge the government’s definition of “community background”
(paragraph 3, p.5) which is exclusively referred to the two traditions in Northern
Ireland.** It violates the two international conventions mentioned above and basic
concept of PAFT. If social inclusion is the main objective of the New TSN, both
community background and community relations must refer to all traditions which
highlights the richness of diversity in Northern Ireland.
8. **We have strong reservation on government’s commitment on Good Friday
Agreement in respect of equality (paragraph 1, p.7) simply because the Northern
Ireland Bill does not deliver fully on the Agreement, in particular on the
proposed new Equality Commission, impact assessment, new public body will not
automatically require a statutory scheme.** Thus it put the New TSN into limbo, if
one of the objectives of the new TSN is to achieve equality of opportunity.
9. NICEM welcomes the new management structure - the Social Steering Group
(paragraph 1, p.8) which is an interdepartmental task force, and a central advice unit to
deliver the new TSN. We also welcomes the publication of Official guidelines on New
TSN. It is regrettable that there has no proposal to set up a monitoring unit to review
the mechanism of the New TSN.

REVIEWS AND ACTION PLANS

1. NICEM welcomes the use of Action Plan to identify practices, policies and legislation which hinder the achievement of New TSN objectives **on the condition that “preferential treatment” to one group is to achieve a long term objective of equality.** Thus Action Plan cannot and must not violate the principle of impact assessment on PAFT.
2. **There must be a mandatory requirement for consultation with those groups being affected by means of the Action Plan.**

INFORMATION ON DEPRIVATION

1. NICEM welcomes the use of multiple approaches to tackle information on social deprivation.
2. NICEM concerns the previous census did not have any information about black and ethnic minorities in which the Robson indices are weakened in terms of identifying issues for black and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland. As a result, **a mandatory ethnic monitoring on employment and services delivery has a strong case.**
3. **NICEM also concerns the attitude of the civil servants against any mandatory ethnic monitoring on the ground that the relative small population of black and ethnic minorities does not deserve the attention nor difficult to deploy a suitable methodology.** We must use a more positive attitude to tackle the inequalities, social disadvantage and social exclusion of the black and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland.

MONITORING

1. NICEM concerns that there is no structure being set up to monitor the impact of the New TSN, nor a uniformity approach for the purpose of monitoring such a big social programmes. **Both cost-benefit and cost-effective analysis are essential in the monitoring system for the New TSN.**
2. Other aspect on data monitoring and uniformity approach has been discussed above.

FOCUS ON UNEMPLOYMENT

1. **Education and training is essential process for all marginalised groups leading to open employment in any society. Any inequality arising from the education and training system must be remedy. Thus NICEM concerns lack of special programmes to tailor specific education and training needs of black and ethnic**

minorities means that they are socially and economically segregated in our society. In the UK, there has a section 11 funding under the Home Office in which a supportive English programmes to enhance the English proficiency of the second generation of black and ethnic minorities. We do not have the same programmes in Northern Ireland. As a result, Chinese and Pakistani communities will suffer most in which less than half of the population can speak fluent English.

2. **The government has no specific programmes for the education and training needs of the Travelling community in Northern Ireland.** Moreover, the segregated education of the Travelling community in West Belfast is totally unacceptable. As a result we have witnessed the first time in history that 13 young people moved into Secondary education in September 1998 in Belfast.
3. It is important to provide black and ethnic minority students with opportunities for gaining formal qualifications from such vocational oriented courses, and for directly linking these courses to opportunity for employment of further training.
4. **NICEM also concerns lack of black and ethnic minorities statistical data on unemployment, training opportunity and educational achievement and commitments from the government to remedy this problem.**
5. **The social and economic segregation arising from employment / unemployment is clearly violate the international law governing in this area.** We request the government to remedy this as soon as possible so that black and ethnic minorities will have the same rights as others to get access to education, training and open employment. We would like to request the government to conduct an impact assessment on black and ethnic minorities' education needs and performance in order to set a benchmark for future policy planning.

SOCIAL NEED, INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL

1. **“Speaking Out” Conference Report** : the health and social needs of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland, **the “Out of Shadow” Research Report** on Family, Racism and Exclusion and **“Accommodating Nomadism” Report conclude the same that black and ethnic minorities suffer enormous institutional racism in receiving basic services such as health, education and training, housing and accommodation, benefits, policing, etc.**
2. **When we address the issue of social need, inequality and social exclusion, unemployment is one of the many multiple factors that create social exclusion in our society.** We need a more integrated approach to tackle the issue of social exclusion. For example, over 80% of the travellers are unemployed. They cannot normally benefit from the New Deal programmes if education and training,

accommodation, health and social services, etc. have not been improved at the same time.

3. NICEM would like to draw the attention that the European Union has developed a good framework and practice to address the issues of social exclusion : **mainstreaming policy in all levels to tackle social exclusion, including funding.**
4. NICEM would like to see the commitment from the government on the new TSN by employing mainstreaming policy into practice. Thus, **we request the government to mainstreaming black and ethnic minorities into all levels of government policy and decision making in order to address the social needs of black and ethnic minorities on the one hand, remove inequality and social exclusion against black and ethnic minorities on the others.**

PROMOTING SOCIAL INCLUSION

1. NICEM welcomes the initiatives of promoting social inclusion in the new TSN which address the wider issues of social exclusion in our society.
2. NICEM welcomes the partnership approach in tackling social exclusion by setting up PSI working groups. At the same time, we concern about lack of black and ethnic minorities representation in these working groups. NICEM is registered our interests to sit in such body in order to represent the sector.

PSI CONSULTATION

The PSI Model

1. **how to maximise the impact of PSI as an initiative within New TSN ?**
 2. **how many priority projects should be addressed at any one time ?**
 3. **how far ahead should the rolling agenda look ?**
 4. **are the structural arrangements right, particularly the involvement of non-governmental partners ?**
- 1.1 **The new TSN Unit should conduct an Impact Assessment on Social Exclusion of black and ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland, as well as other marginalised groups under PAFT.** This is an essential exercise to address the inequality, social disadvantage and social exclusion of black and ethnic minorities. The Impact Assessment is also essential to set benchmark for future policy planning for all Departments in Northern Ireland.
 - 1.2 **Mainstreaming black and ethnic minorities in all levels of government policy and decision making.**
 - 1.3 If social inclusion is the key objective of the PSI, all marginalised groups under PAFT should be included in the PSI programmes. **Without doing a comprehensive**

impact assessment of all marginalised groups under PAFT, it is extremely difficult to set up priority areas for the PSI projects.

1.4 NICEM suggests a type of rolling programme for all marginalised groups under PAFT. The rolling programme must review every six months in order to determine the priority area within each group.

1.5 There must be a mandatory requirement for consultation with those groups being affected by means of priority of the PSI programmes.

1.6 NICEM welcomes the partnership approach in tackling social exclusion by setting up PSI working groups. **Black and ethnic minorities should be represented at the PSI working groups.** NICEM is registered our interests to sit in such body in order to represent the sector.

Groups at risk of social exclusion

1. what groups are particularly at risk ?

1.1 Travellers are the most disadvantaged and socially excluded group within **Northern Ireland. NICEM shall support to nominate the Travellers under the PSI group.** At the same time, NICEM also concerns the politics playing around the Travellers, in particular the new Assembly will determine the PSI groups. Therefore we need a political commitment from the government to deliver the new TSN with reference to their statutory duty under the new PAFT.

Causes of social exclusion

1. other than unemployment what are the factors which cause social exclusion ?

2. what types of approach are required to tackle these factors ?

3. to what extent are these factors unique to Northern Ireland ?

1.1 The “Speaking Out” Conference Report : the health and social needs of ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland, the “Out of Shadow” Research Report on Family, Racism and Exclusion; and “Accommodating Nomadism” Report conclude the same that **health, education and training, housing and accommodation, benefits and policing are the factors which cause social exclusion.**

1.2 These factors are inter-linked. **NICEM suggests to the new TSN Unit to employ an integrative approach to tackle social exclusion. Therefore, a cross-departmental body must set up to deliver the PSI programmes.**

1.3 These inter-linked factors are not new, but we never tackle in the same way as other European partners are doing, in particular the European Union. Moreover, the Race Relations (N.I.) Order has been in place for just more than a year, the issues of black and ethnic minorities should play more attention in order to address the inequality, social disadvantage and social exclusion.

Experience of joint working

1. what did you organisation gain from the experience ?
2. what were the costs, problems or drawbacks you or your organisation experienced ?
3. what factors helped your joint venture to succeed ? what factors had to be overcome in order to progress ?
4. was there anything which would have helped to make your joint working more successful ?

1.1 Participation from the marginalised groups under PAFT is crucial to the new TSN. **Participation must address the issues of empowerment. Resource allocation to the groups to train people to attend the policy area debate is essential.** The recent experience of the local district partnership create a good model of practice.

1.2 NICEM has extensive working experience in networks in the UK, the Republic of Ireland and the European Union. Our experience is positive and you can see the people put the efforts together with the views to change. People from various background will bring their expertees and experience to the networks which enrich the quality of the result.

1.3 **Equality is the basic principle for any co-operation. Equality must recognise differences, respect the others and diversity.**

3 November 1998

Promoting Social Inclusion Team
20-24 Donegall Street
Belfast BT1 2GP

Dear Sir

RE : Consultation on New TSN - an agenda for TSN and PSI in Northern Ireland

I enclose our submission paper on new TSN - an agenda for TSN and PSI in Northern Ireland. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me for details.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Yu
Executive Director