



NICEM Strategic Plan 2016-2020

November 2015

Background

NICEM was officially launched on 8 June 1994 at the Conference on “Racism and Poverty”, which was organised by the Northern Ireland Anti-Poverty Network and NICEM. The initial idea for NICEM developed from the linkage and working relationship between the Chinese, Indian and the Travelling communities, which together with the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), had been the forefront in campaigning for the race relations legislation in Northern Ireland since 1991.

Following a meeting with the then Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, Sir Herman Ouseley, in December 1993, this initial idea was further consolidated, with the founding members extending the consultation to other communities. The new NICEM then spent the next twelve months to draft the Constitution, as well as build up the good working relationship among different minority ethnic groups¹. NICEM appointed its first staff in February 1996 and is now have 3 full-time and 2 part-time staff team and working in 3 regional offices.

Vision & Mission

Our vision is of 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. 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.

Aim

Promote good race relations and to endeavour the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of racial equality.

Objectives

1. Identify and respond to the needs of black and minority ethnic communities;
2. Defence and promote the rights of black and minority ethnic communities;

¹ *In this document “black and minority ethnic” (BME) which is a political term that has an inclusive meaning to unite all minority community to fight against racism whether they are settled ethnic minority (including Travellers, Gypsy and Roma) or settled religious minority (non-Christian faith), migrants (EU, non- EU), asylum seekers and refugees or other immigration status. It also addresses intersectionality between race and gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, etc. multiple forms of discrimination and social disadvantage. We use BME interchange with ethnic minorities or vice versa.*

3. Represent and promote the black and minority ethnic sector;
4. Provide support and leadership to black and minority ethnic communities;
5. Raise public awareness and understanding of racism, particularly institutional racism²; and
6. Provide training for potential leaders from within black and minority ethnic communities.

Core Functions

NICEM identifies the following core functions, which will undertake to achieve its strategic aims and objectives. These are:

- **Identifying and presenting views of the BME sector**
NICEM endeavours to exert influence on government departments and agencies by gathering and presenting the views of black and minority ethnic communities to departments and agencies and, where possible, participating in the formulation and review of policies and strategies.
- **Policy, research and information**
NICEM informs the sector of relevant policy, strategic issues, the structures and decision-making processes of departments and agencies. It will also undertake research into specific issues of strategic importance, disseminate information and facilitate discussion within the sector.
- **Community infrastructure through local regional office**
NICEM facilitates the sharing of information; provide support, advice and direction for newly emerging minority ethnic groups and support for the ongoing process of community participation.
- **Capacity building for BME communities**
NICEM enables black and minority ethnic sector to improve their disadvantage position and to build their capacity to be more effective in providing successful community development services. We will also enable member groups to exert greater influence over policy and strategic issues through participation.
- **Racial Equality support services**

² The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Team defined 'institutional racism' as "The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people." (Macpherson 1999, para 6.34)

NICEM provides advice and supportive services to encourage public, voluntary and community sector to set up model of good practice on racial equality, in particular ethnic monitoring in both employment and service provision. These include consultancy work, policy planning, anti-racism and cultural awareness; and equality and diversity training.

- **Advocacy and advice**

Due to current limited resources NICEM could not provide general advice to BME people, but continues provide advocacy and advice to victims of racial harassment and racist attacks. We continue to identify suitable public interest law case on institutional racism and discrimination that based on international human rights law that applied to Northern Ireland.

- **Campaigning and networking**

NICEM continues work with partner organisations in Northern Ireland, UK, Republic of Ireland, EU and the Council of Europe to campaign common issues of concerns.

Background for the Strategic Plan 2016-2020

NICEM was established as an umbrella organisation working at a policy and operational level to provide a voice and vehicle for the BME communities in Northern Ireland. Over a period of 20 years, NICEM has evolved from a small organisation with two staff in 1996 to a medium sized organisation with 23 full-time and 8 part-time staff in 2014 as well as a group of volunteers. Now we have 3 full-time and 2 part-time in NICEM as result of the Migrant Centre (with 4 part-time staff) became a separate legal entity with their own management board. The Migrant Centre NI shared office with us in which it is under our management support. The CONNECT-NICEM, our community enterprise, had ceased activity since it did not get the contract that we had run over a decade. This also reflects the end of our two main grants, the Atlantic Philanthropies (2009-2014) and the Big Lottery (2009-2014). Parallel with the organisational the number of Member Groups has now risen to 29.

This growth and development is a reflection of the rapidly changing environment within which NICEM operates. Politically, culturally and structurally the landscape within Northern Ireland has changed dramatically, particularly the current political crisis in Stormont, the austerity cuts in which it has just started and the changing ethnic composition since 2004, the EU accession of the former A8 and A2 countries has become the largest ethnic population. NICEM has developed its policies and services to respond to the environment and at times to influence it. In doing so NICEM has adopted a

variety of roles, which, while consistent with its core mission and values creates pressures on resources, priorities, focus and the necessity of keeping all members engaged.

Building upon the consideration of the environment over the period of 2010-2015 we had been successful to re-connect the discussion of policy issues through evidence based research with the sector and also through All Party Assembly Group on Ethnic Minority Communities. It is an important vehicle for the BME groups to meet with each other and politicians on monthly basis. It is a process of capacity building and participation to present issues and views to the politicians directly and work collectively to solve the problems in order to ensure that the voice of the BME communities is being heard.

Another major policy break through is the publication of the consultation document "A Sense of Belonging: Racial Equality Strategy 2015-2025" in 2014 in which a lot of submissions from BME, statutory and voluntary and community sector were based on our briefing paper. This collective approach ensures that key actions are on the top priority in the final policy document. By the time written this document we will not expect the government published the policy document by the late 2015; whether we still have our Devolved government or under Direct Rule. But the challenge remains the same – institutional racism, discrimination and poverty, in particular in-work poverty are the common experiences of the migrant community which represents majority of the BME population now in Northern Ireland. All these are contributed under the Executive Government in which all policies address to two main communities only, nothing more and nothing less.

Although CONNECT-NICEM has ceased activities since September 2015, it reflects the success of NICEM's multiple roles to pursue racial equality. CONNECT-NICEM not only did it set the standard that regulated the interpretation industry, it had created over 100 full time and 200 part-time jobs for BME people who perform the interpreter's role in the criminal justice system to ensure Article 6 right, the right to a fair trial, is fully observed. We also work in partnership with the School of English Studies to set up the MA in Translation and MA in Interpretation in order to benchmark standard in the criminal justice processes.

At the same time we set up regional offices, our exit strategy with the last round of funding from Atlantic Philanthropies, to support local BME groups through our capacity building programme; advocacy, advice and support; and local action research, particularly to most of our member groups through training on governance by using the Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisation programme (PQASSO), etc., as well as facilitate the new emerging community organisations in the local area.

The fundamental challenge facing NICEM over the next five years is to manage change internally and externally against the increasingly hostile working environment of less resource with ill-competition among sectors as

well as the voluntary and community sector, high expectation, opportunisms, institutional racism, poverty, and most of all - the austerity cuts. These scenarios have severe negative impacts on BME groups that serve the community as well as BME people who suffer economic and social disadvantage and systematic discrimination in our society.

The following issues are being identified as the key challenges in the next five years:

- **Young people / Youth outreach:** Supporting young people is seen as a major challenge and opportunity for NICEM, particularly leadership for the future of the BME communities;
- **The impact of poverty:** There is a need for research to identify the causes and impacts with thorough practical recommendations to alleviate poverty within the low-income group of BME people;
- **Challenging Institutional Racism and Discrimination:** This will continue to be the fundamental issue providing the focus and impetus for NICEM's work;
- **Integration:** NICEM will follow-up the INTEGRO EU project which was expired in May 2015 by set up local Integration Forum that will review the progress of the recommendations of the "Voices for Change – Mapping the views of BME people on Integration and a Sense of Belonging";
- **New Group and Vulnerable Groups:** NICEM will continue support the new emerging group and the victims of racial harassment, racist attacks and racial discrimination;
- **Financial Sustainability:** it was recognised that the challenge to secure the long-term viability of NICEM is on going and this will require new opportunities to be explored rather than resting on current successes. We continue explore new opportunity in funding and community business.

In response to the above issues, challenges and uncertainty of the working environment over the next five years, NICEM will work in partnership with our members and stakeholders to implement this Strategic Plan 2016-2020. We firmly believe that alliance building and partnership working are the only solution to fight against institutional racism, discrimination and poverty, in particular in-work poverty, in the framework of human rights and equality.

Start from the basic we will re-configure our capacity building programme on policy participation which will create more communication between groups and NICEM on common issues and concerns. At the same time we will develop more new leaders from within the community to empower their

participation on policy through the existing mechanism in the Northern Ireland Assembly, such as the All Party Group and the Assembly Committees, in order to scrutinise policy within each Northern Ireland department.

Working in the rapid changing environment and the growth and changes within NICEM, it has placed increasing emphasis upon the need to review, reflect and plan its future development. During 2014 and continued throughout 2015 NICEM has been engaged in a comprehensive review, which has included:

- Annual internal review of the Strategic Plan 2010-2015 in 2014
- A Planning Day with external inputs on political environment among staffs, Executive Committee and Advisory Board members in January 2015
- A discussion on the draft Aim for 2016-2020 in May 2015

The impetus of this work has been to encourage NICEM look at its fundamental purpose and priorities in the short to medium term. The draft Strategic Aim had been adopted in August 2015 by the Committee and the Draft Strategic Plan 2016-2020 will then send out to members of NICEM for consultation in September. It will formally be adopted at NICEM Annual General Meeting on 20th November 2015. The staff will work in conjunction with the Committee developing the business plan for 2016-2017 by the end of 2015. An annual review and business plan will be delivered for the rest of the period with interim review in 2018.

Aims and Objectives of the Strategic Plan

The overall aims of the Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020:

- 1. Monitor and response to the implementation of the new Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland;**
- 2. Mainstream human rights and racial equality into government policy and practice;**
- 3. Raise public awareness on racism and multiple discrimination and bring about a positive change;**
- 4. Advocate issues of socio-economic disadvantage and systematic discrimination through strategic advocacy that based on human rights and equality; and**
- 5. Influencing in local Community Planning and working in partnership with the new super Councils;**
- 6. Organisation sustainability**

The Strategic Aims of the Strategic Plan 2016-2020 are as follows:

Aim 1:

Monitor and response to the implementation of the new Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland

Objectives:

- 1. Build governance and accountability structure into the Action Plan and implementation plan of each department and their next steps agencies;**
- 2. Monitor the progress of implementation of departmental Action Plan, including next step agencies;**
- 3. Lobbying statutory committees with the BME sector on the implementation of departmental Action Plan; and**
- 4. Working in partnership with each department to support their implementation of departmental Action Plan.**

Output:

- 1. Provide training and support to key departments to develop their Action Plan and governance structure with the BME sector;**
- 2. Empower BME sector to monitor the Action Plan of the Racial Equality Strategy through capacity building training programme; and**
- 3. Present the view of the BME sector on issues and gaps of the departmental Action Plan implementation to the Statutory Committees of the Northern Ireland Assembly with the BME sector.**

Timeframe: 2016-2020

Aim 2:

Mainstream human rights and racial equality into government policy and practice

Objectives:

1. Campaign for the legislative timetable to reform the current out dated Race Relations (NI) Order 1997;
2. Mainstream race and gender into government policy and practice;
3. Working in partnership in NI and in UK campaign against the scrap of the Human Rights Act; and
4. Tackle institutional racism on access to public services.

Outputs:

1. Develop a platform to campaign the reform of the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997;
2. Promote and campaign ethnic monitoring in all departments and their next step agencies on public services;
3. Develop the BME Women's Network through advocacy, advice, support and capacity building;
4. Awareness raising on domestic violence and human trafficking;
5. Partnership work with the Human Rights Consortium, British Institute of Human Rights and UKREN on the campaign against the scrap of the Human Rights Act;
6. Develop and campaign NICEM 2016 Assembly Election Manifesto with our sector;
7. Partnership working with key service departments to improve BME accessibility to public services; and
8. Benchmark the progress on racial equality through NICEM Annual Report on the state of human rights and racial equality in Northern Ireland; and NICEM Mainstreaming magazine

Timeframe: 2016-2020

Aim 3:

To raise public awareness on racism and multiple discrimination and bring about a positive change

Objectives:

1. Develop the capacity of department and next step agencies on racial equality and ethnic monitoring;

2. Develop the capacity of the local community to tackle racism and prejudice; and
3. Develop the capacity of the school system to tackle racial bullying and prejudice;
4. Develop strategy to work with media through training and support

Output:

1. Deliver Belonging project to the community and the school system;
2. Develop a campaign strategy with the BME Women Network on school bullying
3. Develop and deliver new training programme that integrated with Action Plan delivers to departments and next step agencies;
4. Develop anti-racism training programme for the media through the partnership with Media Trust.

Timeframe: 2016-2020

Aim 4:

Advocate socio-economic disadvantage and systematic discrimination in education, training and employment for BME people

Objectives:

1. Combat child poverty and in-work poverty;
2. Combat discrimination in job market and in work place;
3. Reinstate ESOL as essential skills for BME communities in line with UK policy; and
4. Develop 2nd generation leadership

Output:

1. Monitor base-line comparable data and research on school performance (new transfer system, GCSE and A-level) of BME children and young people in Northern Ireland;
2. Develop and deliver research projects, including local Action Research and policy papers on Aim 4 in partnership with the sector and statutory agencies;

3. Develop strategy to work with BME young people in Northern Ireland on equality access to job market and addressing disadvantage;
4. Develop new areas of work with BME young people such as mentoring programme, employment guidance, job seeking skills, further education guidance and working experience;
5. Second-generation leadership training, mentoring and peers programmes to improve access and addressing disadvantage in education, training and employment.

Timeframe: 2016-2020

Aim 5: Influencing in local Community Planning and working In partnership with the new super Councils

Objectives:

1. Develop a working relationship with and support to our member through regional office;
2. Lead local BME groups participating community planning and presenting views to the local super council;
3. Partnership building with local stakeholders and BME groups; and
4. Address economic disadvantage and systematic discrimination at local level

Output:

1. Set up local BME Working Group within the structure of the new super council;
2. Identify local issues and conduct Action Research in partnership with local BME groups and stakeholders;
3. Provide governance training and support to local BME groups;
4. Support local new emerging BME group;
5. Provide advocacy, advice and support to those BME people who are in need;
6. Set up IDEA Family Resource Centre in Craigavon and Armagh Council.

Timeframe: 2016-2020

Aim 6: Deliver Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and build sustainability of NICEM

Objectives:

1. Develop a coherent, pro-active social media strategy and plan;
2. Diversify funding incomes from local, national and EU level;
3. Share space and facilities with BME sector;
5. Develop training and consultancy incomes and
6. Improve the governance and quality standards of NICEM through PQASSO process.

Output:

1. Proactive using social media to campaign NICEM's work;
2. Identify new funders and make appropriate applications;
3. Develop an office sharing and facilities scheme;
4. Annual review NICEM policy and practice

Timeframe: 2016-2020

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM)

Company Registration No: NI 36868

Northern Ireland Charity No: NIC100169

Registered Office: 3rd Floor, Ascot House, 24-31 Shaftesbury Square, Belfast, BT2 7DB, Northern Ireland

Tel: +44 (0)28 9023 8645 / +44 (0)28 90319666 Fax: +44 (0)28 9031 9485

Website: www.nicem.org.uk

working together against racism