

# Shaping the future: Getting the best for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Children and Young People

Seminar series report

**rota**  
Race on the Agenda

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## Introduction and background

Over the last decades, we have seen massive changes in the law and there is no doubt that progress has been made in addressing racism in our country. Greater proportions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) young people are going on to higher education, for example. However, these increased qualification levels are not translating into labour market and wealth outcomes with disproportionate numbers of BAME young people being unemployed and underemployed. Nearly one in two young Black people are unemployed, compared to one in eight of young people in general. We are not making the most of British talent and are seriously risking a better future for all of us. Despite these unequal outcomes, many politicians, civil servants, social commentators and others are claiming that we now live in a post-racial society – race and racism no longer has a significant impact on people's life chances.

Between November 2011 and February 2013, ROTA delivered the *Shaping the Future* seminar series across London, which considered this contradiction and the overarching questions: Is there an elephant in the room? If we live in a post-racial society, why do certain ethnic groups continue to experience disadvantage? Planned to follow the retrial into the murder of Stephen Lawrence, the series looked at progress made against race inequality since 1993 and identified new forms of racism and inequality emerging from a challenging economic climate and wide ranging policy reforms and public spending cuts.

The seminar series focused on children, young people and their families. This report provides an overview of the

seminars and summarises the broad ranging discussions that took place along with the solutions posed by participants to some of the key challenges identified.

## Who took part and what happened

The seminar series included two regional events (an opening event at the House of Lords in November 2011 and a closing event which took part alongside ROTA's Annual General Meeting in October 2013), five local events (in Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Southwark), five workshops with young people, two workshops with parents, and a two day training programme for representatives of children and young people's community organisations. The 500 participants included representatives of London's BAME communities and their organisations and of a range of statutory organisations responsible for children and young people's services. Appendix 1 lists some of the invited speakers and commentators who attended one or more of the seminars.

Discussions at the launch seminar in the House of Lords, which brought together key leaders and thinkers in the field of race equality, shaped the format of local seminars. At the launch seminar, Lord Victor Adebawale chaired a discussion with Dr Richard Stone, Professor Gus John, Dr Nicola Rollock, Superintendent Leroy Logan and Rita Chadha, Director of RAMFEL, who responded to the questions: how do we achieve a post-racialised society; why doesn't the wider public understand the reality of racial inequalities; what is the language we need to adopt, because the language we have isn't working; can racism be eradicated with the current lack of senior BAME representation in governance; can racism be eradicated when there is a lack of real youth engagement in discussions about race equality; decision-makers tell us it's not a question of race, its socio-economic status, how should we respond to this;

what can society do to eradicate racism; How do we engage young people in debates about eradicating racism; how do we mobilise people and communities around racism and race inequalities; what would a society without racism look like?

The local seminars started with a range of local representatives presenting their views on what needs to be done to progress race equality in key areas relevant to BAME children, young people and their families. Participants then took part in roundtable discussions to further discuss key issues raised by speakers and to identify solutions. Challenges from these roundtable discussions were put to panellists, which included representatives from the local statutory sector.

Earlier local seminars focused on different issues under the broad theme of children, young people and families. Due to the heavy emphasis on educational inequality that emerged during earlier seminars, later ones explicitly focused on solutions to educational inequality. Within these general themes, more specific local issues were identified by local partners for discussion as follows:

#### **Tottenham, February 2011**

Ensuring the Youth Contract benefits disadvantaged young BAME people

Putting in place the critical factors needed to help young people find work – a holistic approach

Improving education, apprenticeships and volunteering opportunities locally.

#### **Tower Hamlets, February 2011**

Sharing space: Tackling community tensions in multi-cultural Tower Hamlets

Influencing beyond Tower Hamlets: Filling the absence at the regional and national policy-making table

Addressing the multiple-inequalities faced by BAME children and young people who are disabled, female, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, religious or not....

Improving opportunities for BAME young people in Tower Hamlets: further and higher education, training and employment.

#### **Hackney, February 2011**

Influencing the school system to improve educational outcomes for BAME children and young people

Addressing underrepresentation of BAME children's voices in public health service planning

Improving mental health outcomes for BAME children and young people

Getting it right – Supporting parents: Defining appropriate intervention from social care to support BAME families in need

Tackling overrepresentation of Black communities in the criminal justice system

Improving outcomes in education for BAME children and young people

Ensuring qualification improvements translate into training, enterprise and employment outcomes

Promoting family wellbeing in BAME Communities.

#### **Islington, March 2011**

Supplementary education

Why do some cultural groups do better than others?

The role and importance of BAME history in schools

Teachers and teaching methods

Parents and parental engagement.

## **Islington November 2011**

Using the Equality Duty to engage with and influence schools

Understanding schools to improve outcomes for BAME learners

Successful community partnerships in education

Making school/college work for young people.

## **Southwark & Lambeth, February 2013**

Managing potential: teachers' expectations of young Black males

The pressures of teaching: resources available to teachers for schools

Schools and their equality objectives: holding schools to account

Teacher training: dealing with exclusions and attainment.

Activities with children, young people, parents and representatives of community organisations focused on personal experiences of inequality, particularly in relation to criminal justice and education.

A list of speakers and panellists who took part in the local seminars is available in appendix 1.

At ROTA's Annual General Meeting discussion in October 2013, key findings and recommendations from the seminar series were discussed under the following broad themes:

Addressing educational inequalities

Voice and under-representation of BAME people

Addressing lack of opportunity for young BAME people to realise their aspirations

Youth engagement in building a movement for race equality and justice.

## **Executive Summary: Main findings and recommendations**

### **The persistence of racism and race inequality in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain**

The seminars found that racism and race discrimination still exist in British society, and are frequently evident in the school system and in higher education.

Racism and race inequality persist in new and emerging forms and in a denial of racism that sees it as 'no longer an issue'.

The language of equality is being lost to public discourse.

### **Recommendations for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)**

Implement public awareness raising campaigns about the persistence of racism and its impact on individuals as well as mainstream society. This should address racism within the public and create safe places for mainstream society to talk openly about racism without fear.

### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Reframe the discussion on race equality to explore and learn from racial advantage; to speak in terms of assets and aspirations most often and to nurture youth leaders and a sense of consciousness about race equality among young people.

### **Policy influence and Voice**

The voice of BAME communities is key in addressing inequality, yet BAME people remain under-represented in senior statutory roles and democratic processes, for example as Learning Trust board members, head teachers, QCs and senior judiciary members, Police Chief Superintendents and Chief Inspectors. This

under-representation impacts on some young people's employment aspirations.

BAME people are underrepresented in the media. Addressing this is critical to achieving race equality, particularly given the disproportionate amount of bad press aligned to BAME communities.

Some legislation and policy tools previously available to BAME communities to challenge decisions affecting their children and families have been removed. Reduced emphasis on race equality monitoring by statutory services is highly problematic.

Most schools are not complying properly with the Equality Act 2010, in particular their Public Sector Equality Duties (PSED). This makes it difficult for communities to hold schools to account.

BAME communities seek support in becoming better represented in positions of authority and in using the Equality Act to influence or challenge educational policy and practice.

Sustained and meaningful youth forums and leadership programmes that provide a platform for young people to make recommendations or shape approaches to policing for example, can publicly affirm young people's contribution to the society in which they live.

Voluntary sector youth initiatives are highly regarded in encouraging leadership skills and enhancing the influence marginalised communities have on the development of public policy.

Programmes which present role models to young people are seen as important, but need to be expanded.

### **Recommendations for the public sector**

Take positive action steps to ensure the most disadvantaged young people are engaged in the development of policy and practice.

Undertake monitoring using comprehensive ethnic categories and take proactive steps to address under-representation in senior statutory roles and democratic processes.

### **Recommendations for Greater London Authority (GLA)**

Support voluntary organisations to enable disadvantaged BAME communities to positively influence the education system. Support parents to become effective governors and raise awareness among BAME communities about how to influence decision-making in education.

### **Recommendations for the BAME sector**

Support BAME parents to develop forums and work together to positively influence and hold education services to account

Work in greater partnership with youth organisations and take specific steps to open up the race equality movement to young people. This would include: specific communication strategies targeted at young people; opening up programmes to young people, such as those aimed at enabling BAME communities to hold authorities to account; opening employment opportunities within race equality organisations to younger people; adequately resourced youth-advisory groups; supporting young people to lead social action and policy influencing projects on issues of importance to them.

Collaborate with the youth sector on projects that support youth-led spaces where consciousness can be raised about race equality, experiences can be articulated and explored and responses developed. Outcomes from this to shape the policy influencing work of BAME voluntary organisations.

Extend initiatives that promote positive role models to BAME children and young people.

Campaign for the sustainability of youth organisations in inner London.

Advance a race equality movement that is linked with other, more powerful, social justice movements, such as teachers' movements and children's sector campaigns. With unpopular issues, the BAME voluntary sector should first seek to influence more powerful social justice movements to take on issues, and, once this has been achieved, to influence statutory policy and practice itself.

### **Criminal Justice**

Stop and Search, the most visible manifestation of discriminatory practices within the criminal justice system, continues to disproportionately affect BAME people.

The August 2011 riots had a disproportionate effect on BAME communities and a key factor in involvement was thought to be the failure of society to inspire marginalised young people.

Those in positions of power within the criminal justice system can learn from the experience of young people.

### **Recommendations for the police**

For police practices to take account of the lived experiences of local people, many of them from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. Models of community policing and policing by consent to be implemented far more consistently and with substantive involvement of young people.

Bring young people to magistrates' training sessions, to share unfair experiences of the criminal justice system and help inform and improve knowledge and practice.

## **Racism and discrimination in education**

Although some progress has been made in recent years, educational inequalities remain a considerable concern among London's BAME communities, still in 2013.

### ***Exclusions***

School exclusions represent a most direct and persistent form of discriminatory practice in schools and continue to have a disproportionate impact on BAME young people and their families.

There are many types of informal exclusions of young Black males within the classroom, which contributes to a sense of isolation from their peers.

### ***Stereotyping***

Stereotyping in too many schools is limiting educational opportunities and the achievement of BAME pupils (through setting, behaviour management and access to extra-curricular activities).

Early, negative labelling of BAME pupils has a damaging effect upon educational progress, but social stereotyping and cultural assumptions about Black pupils can be embedded in schools.

Because of stereotypical associations with 'gangs' or 'danger', Black male pupils often feel criminalised and treated with suspicion, leading to 'overvisibility' and unwarranted accusations that may lead to exclusion.

### ***Behaviour management***

African-Caribbean boys are at risk of more acute racism, often linked to unfairness and a lack of transparency in behaviour management systems in schools and in the criminal justice system.

### ***Vocational education***

Vocational training on offer to young people in and after compulsory education

is poor. Young BAME people from disadvantaged urban areas should have more influence over the development of vocational education programmes that exist.

### ***Mental health and social and emotional well-being***

Many BAME pupils with mental health issues are misunderstood and misdiagnosed with learning or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, leading to inappropriate treatment.

### ***Attainment and outcomes***

Access to quality education services, particularly in deprived inner London wards, limits the educational opportunities available to BAME children and young people, and, if not adequately addressed, could go on to have generational impact.

Many teachers and schools want more support to enable them to address attainment gaps between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. However, there is a perception that schools' emphasis on the 'attainment gap' ignores inequality and racism.

Black and world history is given insufficient emphasis in schools.

### ***Non-formal education***

Many parents lack confidence in the state education system and compensate by sending their children to supplementary schools. Parents are concerned that this provision is over-stretched, under-resourced and badly affected by public sector spending cuts.

It appears that growing numbers of BAME parents are home schooling their children due to concerns about the state education system, while local authority support for home schooling is being reduced.

Voluntary sector youth initiatives play an important role in providing non-formal educational opportunities to young BAME Londoners who are most at risk of exclusion from mainstream education. Such initiatives, however, are particularly under-resourced and have been disproportionately impacted by public spending cuts.

### ***Teacher training***

Teacher training is key to raising awareness about diversity, culture and equalities, but these issues are inadequately covered in many teacher training programmes.

### ***Representation***

BAME communities have limited influence on education services: BAME people are under-represented in the capital's classrooms (particularly men), as senior managers in schools and on bodies that oversee education; BAME families have limited influence on school systems – they often do not know what their rights are. Where there are BAME governors, they and their children are at risk of harassment if they raise issues of inequality at a school governance level.

BAME parents want opportunities to discuss racism in education and to play a role in developing and implementing solutions.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) has made insufficient effort to engage BAME communities, in particular those who have faced the greatest educational disadvantages historically, in work they are progressing to improve education services in the capital.

### ***Concerns about national policy reforms in education***

BAME communities are concerned that many of the educational reforms will impact adversely on BAME communities

and reverse progress over recent years in addressing educational inequalities. In particular there is concern about changes to the Ofsted framework, which now has less of a focus on equalities; loss of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and the loss of many support services in nearly all London boroughs; the failure of the pupil premium to adequately target educational support at BAME pupils at risk of educational disadvantage; the inadequacy of equality impact assessments of policy changes; and the under engagement of BAME communities in the development of free schools and academies.

### ***Support for families***

Existing support programmes, such as social care interventions for families and young people, are thought inadequate or inappropriate.

There is insufficient information available to BAME parents who want support in looking after their families.

### ***Recommendations for national government***

Assess the impact of the absorption of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG).

Develop a central support package that enables schools to ensure the pupil premium addresses educational disadvantage linked to racial inequality as well as socio-economic disadvantage and share good practice.

### ***Recommendations for Ofsted***

Amend Ofsted's school inspection guidance and grade descriptors so that schools are inspected more thoroughly for compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty in particular.

### **Recommendations for initial teacher training institutions**

Expand training activities aimed at improving trainees' awareness of equality, inclusion and culture.

### **Recommendations for Greater London Authority**

Establish an advisory group including representatives of communities that have experienced the greatest marginalisation in education to advise on the delivery of GLA's education programmes.

Resource and facilitate a support programme to nurture potential school leaders from BAME communities that are under-represented at senior levels in schools.

Support alternative routes to teaching for gifted and talented Londoners from disadvantaged communities. Consider paid, practice-based, teacher training programmes. Engage voluntary organisations to identify potential trainees and enable them to address skills gaps in getting ready for teacher training. Provide on-going mentoring during Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) and early career phases to ensure high retention rates.

Develop school improvement packages targeted at senior school staff to support them in addressing attainment gaps faced by learners at risk of educational disadvantage but not targeted through the pupil premium.

### **Recommendations for local authorities, school alliances and academy chains**

Coordinate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities for teachers on key local equality and inclusion issues. Specific issues to consider include: Fairness in behaviour management; tapping into cultural and religious capital to support learning; academic language proficiency for pupils with English as an

Additional Language (EAL); addressing sensitive out-of-school issues that impact on educational attainment (e.g. impact of gang association on girls); meeting the needs of Roma pupils in schools; responding to the psychological, social and cultural needs of asylum seekers and refugees; teaching to support newly arrived pupils at early stages of English language acquisition; responding to the Special Educational Needs (SENs) of pupils who belong to additional equalities groups (e.g. BAME pupils with learning difficulties face greater barriers to academic support than others); teaching to support the progress of pupils with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and other social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; compliance with the Equality Act 2010, in particular ensuring and evidencing tangible outcomes.

Monitor the performance of BAME groups that are most at risk of educational disadvantage and undertake specific action in response to under-performance at whole school policy and classroom practice levels.

Undertake specific steps to recruit, retain and support the career progression of teachers from BAME communities that are under-represented.

### **Recommendations for the public sector**

Resource voluntary sector youth initiatives including inter-youth support and mentoring, homework clubs and support for life skills outside the classroom to improve employability.

### **Recommendations for BAME voluntary sector**

Support BAME parents to develop forums and work together to positively influence and hold education services to account.

Highlight good practice in the state education sector in addressing inequalities

and draw attention to the educational situation for groups such as Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, for whom provision may not be adequate or sufficiently resourced.

### **Youth aspiration and opportunity**

BAME pupils are under-represented in the 'elite' universities. Widening Participation programmes in many universities are not fulfilling their quotas and parents are often not aware of them.

Young BAME people's aspirations and confidence are thwarted by a lack of opportunity in disadvantaged parts of London where BAME communities are over-represented.

Programmes to enable meaningful and sustained employment are not impacting on young BAME people sufficiently. Statutory employment programmes are failing to use the expertise of BAME organisations who know most about the aspirations and needs of disadvantaged BAME communities.

#### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Influence large private sector companies to deliver proactive outreach programmes – to support young BAME people from disadvantaged communities, who may not have succeeded in compulsory education, to gain meaningful employment.

Support young people to deliver campaigns to ensure work experience programmes are maintained in areas where young people may have less access to the necessary social capital.

Monitor the access which young BAME people from disadvantaged areas have to quality work experience, vocational and apprenticeship schemes.

### **Pressures on young Londoners**

Social and economic inequalities exacerbate disengagement and a sense of futility for many young Londoners.

The negative influences of gang culture and the lure of the street disproportionately impact upon young BAME people in London.

Youth projects can re-engage young people in a positive way and help develop individual resilience, skills and critical knowledge for understanding the society in which they live.

#### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Take on campaigns aimed at supporting the sustainability of youth organisations in inner London boroughs.

The BAME and youth sectors to collaborate on projects that support youth-led spaces where consciousness can be raised about race equality, experiences can be articulated and explored and responses developed. Outcomes from this to shape the policy influencing work of race equality organisations.

#### **Recommendations for local authorities**

Ensure that voluntary sector youth initiatives, which have a central role in ameliorating community pressures through developing leadership skills, providing training opportunities and employment programmes, are fully supported.

### **Community cohesion**

In some boroughs such as Tower Hamlets, there are tensions in relationships between different ethnic communities and between different equality groups, which threatens community cohesion.

Many young people aspire to move out of the area they grew up in, which they see

as disadvantaging their educational, employment and economic prospects.

Early engagement of young people in local politics pays dividends in addressing issues affecting their communities.

### **Recommendations for BAME voluntary sector**

BAME voluntary sector to undertake positive action measures to address the under-representation of young BAME people from disadvantaged urban communities in paid leadership roles.

### **The BAME voluntary sector**

Public spending cuts are felt most keenly in London's BAME voluntary and community sector and affect its ability to meet growing frontline needs and also in undertaking effective policy influencing work.

In many boroughs there is no adequately resourced mechanism through which BAME communities can have strategic dialogue about their communities' future

### **Recommendations for BAME voluntary sector**

Work more collaboratively to develop and implement strategies to engage the public in race equality work, including in raising independent funds for 'A movement built on self-determination, resilience and agency'. This would ensure the strength of the race equality movement is not dependent on the ideologies of whichever political party is in power at the time.

## Overarching themes

The following overarching themes emerged from all seminars.

### The persistence of racism and race inequality

*The persistence of racism and race inequality is a particular concern, with a denial of racism and emerging forms of racism running in tandem. There is a sense that 'race' is disappearing from the policy agenda, along with a disinclination to confront, or even talk about racism. Race and class were examined critically within a social context. The meaning and impact of race and racism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Britain were explored, through everyday experiences and personal accounts, which revealed the complexity and difficulty of addressing inequality. Different strategies to support BAME people to challenge racism and discrimination were put forward, with a focus on practical solutions. There were indications that voice is key in addressing race inequality.*

### The denial of racism

Racism and race inequality persist in new and emerging forms and in a denial of racism that sees it as 'no longer an issue'.

While progress has been made since the murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993, there was overwhelming consensus among the 500 participants in *Shaping the Future* that we do not live in a 'post-racial society', race inequality and racism persist. BAME communities still face unequal outcomes in many key areas of life.

Many stark facts were presented at each seminar about specific local issues to highlight this, for example: in Hackney, there are no Black people on the board of

the Learning Trust even though 48% of the pupil population are Black: in Islington even though young people of Black or dual heritage made up 33% of the local population, they made up 65% of all school exclusions.

*"[There is] the 'myth' that racism is no longer an issue."* Young panellist, Islington seminar, November 2012

*"The denial of racist experiences and outcomes of BAME people in Britain frequently comes in the guise of 'post-racialism'...It is accompanied by a process of stigmatisation, which is to a very large extent led by the media, which enters into social analysis, political debate, and, which sadly heralds self-fulfilling prophecies."* Professor Gus John, House of Lords seminar, November 2011

Alongside concerns about the persistence of racism, were other questions about current trends in dominant social and political discourse and policy-making, where there is denial that racism and race inequality remains a problem in our society.

Many examples of the shift away from concern about race equality in policy development were given throughout *Shaping the Future*. Most obvious were Boris Johnson's removal of 'Black' from the title of the bi-annual 'London Schools and the Black Child Conference' in November 2011, rebranded with the new, 'colourblind' name: 'London Schools and All Our Children'. Race had indeed 'fallen off the agenda', according to journalist Simon Israel at the Islington seminar. The inadequate consideration of race equality in the government's draft Integration Strategy, published for consultation shortly before the local seminars, was also frequently raised. Nicola Rollock, at the House of Lords seminar referred to colleagues who argue, from a critical race

theory point of view, that racism is a very *“normal and embedded part of society, albeit often misunderstood, often unseen”*.

The denial of racism alongside the fear of mainstream society to talk openly about racism and take ownership for it was a major point of discussion. The need to move beyond this was considered critical to achieving race equality and there was much discussion about how this could be achieved. At the House of Lords, Nicola Rollock argued that *“We can’t merely rely on empathy or compassion...”*, that we need to attach race equality onto *“other forms of equality that are more palatable”*, and spoke of the notion of *“interest convergence”*, where there is a need to be clearer about how race equality serves the interests of mainstream society. Lord Victor Adebawale noted that while the retrial into Stephen Lawrence’s murder was being widely reported across the media, racism was rarely mentioned. Similarly, at the Islington November seminar, Rob Berkeley from Runnymede Trust noted an argument developing that society has reached a ‘post-racial stage’ whereby the success of some BAME people is being used to claim that ‘racism no longer exists’ – hence, no need for government or civil society to take action.

There were many concerns that the capacity to effectively counteract racism and inequality was affected adversely by factors such as inadequate equality impact assessments of policy changes and spending cuts and the risks of new forms of race inequality emerging over the coming months and years. A number of discussions focused on this, alongside reduced monitoring and enforcement in relation to public sector equalities duties.

## Emerging forms of racism

*“Somalis are not accepted as ‘Asian’ or ‘Black’ and are not seen to fit into Tower Hamlets by many.”* Ilham Gassar, Council of Somali Organisations, Tower Hamlets seminar, February 2012

The seminars explored new dimensions of racism. For example, does the way in which inner London boroughs are experiencing the most negative impacts of national policy reforms and spending cuts amount to institutional racism given the representation of BAME communities in these boroughs compared to other local areas? With two thirds of London’s school populations made up of BAME pupils, it is of some concern that national government is failing to address the 10,000 shortfall of school places through proportionate capital funding.

The Tower Hamlets seminar provided an interesting case study linked to this.

*“A ‘super-diverse’ inner London borough where, locally, BAME communities have achieved equal outcomes particularly in relation to political representation, voice and education. In contrast, however, within the broader regional and national context, the political leadership and influence of this borough is minimal and it is a borough which has been disproportionately negatively impacted by national policy reforms and public spending cuts.”* Michael Keating, Service Head, One Tower Hamlets, Tower Hamlets Council. Tower Hamlets seminar, February 2012

There was also worry as to whether we were beginning to see a re-emergence of more overt forms of racism, with the racist comments of footballers John Terry and Luis Suarez in late 2011 emerging in many discussions. Participants reported a sense that copycat incidents were on the increase in their local communities.

## Race versus class

*“The very rich had a 50 per cent income increase last year...there aren’t many in the 50 per cent income increase group that come from BAME groups.” Richard Stone, House of Lords seminar, November 2011*

It was acknowledged that there are overlaps between disadvantages caused by racism and those caused by inequalities of class. Growing wealth inequalities were considered alongside the over-representation of BAME communities in disadvantaged socio-economic groups. The distribution of British wealth largely along ethnic lines is partially a consequence of a racist society. At the House of Lords Superintendent Leroy Logan noted how, in some of the multicultural inner London boroughs he has worked in, you could *“almost type case deprived areas by the colour of residents’ skin”* and how the visibility of this must impact on youth disengagement.

There was a strong sense, particularly at the House of Lords seminar where a specific question was tabled, that debates about whether ‘race or class’ impacts on life chances more are crude, divisive and allow us to avoid a discussion about the issue of race in a meaningful way.

At the House of Lords seminar, Superintendent Leroy Logan and Professor Gus John considered the role of the Black middle class in working against some of the inequalities disadvantaged members of BAME communities face. Leroy Logan argued that class divides allow *“a lot of our own Black diaspora not to take ownership”* while Professor Gus John noted *“a class issue amongst us”*.

The seminars also considered how being from an affluent background is no

protection against racism with many examples from research and personal experience given to support this. Some participants equated success in wealth-retaining communities with skills around collaboration, participation in governance, ability to influence and confidence in using social media rather than privilege. However, racial privilege was often alluded to both implicitly, as the backdrop for inequality figures in attainment, education, employment and other measures and specifically, for example, class barriers affecting progress into further and higher education. See *Specific Themes: Youth opportunity and aspiration*.

## The meaning and impact of racism

*“We have got to find a way of bridging the whole definition of ethnic minority in a much more cohesive way. The notions of Black, the notions of Asian, and the notions of Eastern European are changing, because of the migration patterns that are changing in local communities.” Rita Chadha, House of Lords seminar, November 2011*

The everyday experience of racism was widely explored, through personal accounts of racist and discriminatory practices. Racism is far more complex than the Black and white issue it once was. London’s population, in particular children and young people, are ‘super-diverse’. The seminars voiced a strong sense that, as a result, racism is very different today than it was in the past and that we need to be far more sophisticated in how we discuss racism, seek to address it, and engage with those that have not traditionally engaged.

The nature of the racism experienced by different BAME communities often varies, and so responses require sophistication. For example, the racism experienced by African Caribbean boys who are at

greatest risk of educational exclusion is very different from the less obvious, but highly impactful, experience of Chinese youth whose generally greater educational success does not translate into labour market outcomes.

African Caribbean boys were identified over and over again as a group that were particularly at risk of more acute racism, often linked to unfairness and lack of transparency in behaviour management systems in schools and in the criminal justice system.

The impact of racism and discrimination within the education system emerged as a specific theme for discussion and is considered in more detail later.

### **Recommendations for the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)**

Implement public awareness raising campaigns about the persistence of racism and its impact on individuals as well as mainstream society. This should address racism within the public and create safe places for mainstream society to talk openly about racism without fear.

### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Reframe the discussion on race equality to explore and learn from racial advantage; to speak in terms of assets and aspirations most often and to nurture youth leaders and a sense of consciousness about race equality among young people.

## Specific themes

The following specific themes emerged at the round table discussions linked with the seminars:

### Policy influence and Voice

*Although the voice of BAME communities is key in addressing inequality, BAME people remain under-represented in senior statutory roles and democratic processes, which affects their capacity to influence or challenge policy. Legislative and policy tools were examined for their fitness of purpose for BAME communities seeking to challenge decisions affecting their children and families. Ways to use the tools practically and effectively were put forward. Support for young people's involvement in policy-shaping processes, e.g. through youth sector initiatives, was discussed. The use of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to hold schools and education services to account was explored and the role of school governors and inspection bodies in assuring schools' compliance with PSED was considered. There was a concern that the 'language' of equality was being lost to public discourse.*

*"The fact is that Independent Appeals Panels are no longer authorised to insist that schools reinstate excluded children." Gus John, Islington seminar, November 2012*

*"Dealing with schools is not easy for parents. I was able to challenge my son's school because I know the law." Participant, Islington seminar, November 2012*

### Legislative and policy tools

BAME people are very concerned that many recent changes in legislation, public policy and spending would impact adversely on their communities. In

education, particular concern was expressed about the loss of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant and services in nearly all London boroughs, the failure of the Pupil Premium to adequately target educational support at BAME pupils at risk of educational disadvantage and the inadequacy of equality impact assessments of policy changes. The legislative and policy tools available to help ensure equality are changing and the BAME voluntary sector needs to understand the changes and develop skill in using them effectively. Disquiet was expressed that some tools previously available to BAME communities to challenge decisions affecting their children and families had been removed.

Many felt that BAME communities do not know enough about rights and about how to demand accountability from the public sector regarding equality.

In her response to the question, 'What do we now need to do to progress race equality?' at the House of Lords, Rita Chadha spoke of "*Understanding the policy agenda, understanding the legislative agenda, seizing it and using it to our advantage. Making those policy arguments effectively*". Rita was realistic about the challenges involved in this for a sector facing sustainability obstacles: "*But trying to explain that to a lot of BAME organisations is going to be an uphill struggle because they are going to be worrying about how they are going to continue to run their service*". Participants explored solutions and strategies to enable BAME organisations to influence policy relating to their service areas and to understand, for example: the role and remit of new health and wellbeing boards, how to use equalities legislation to influence local services; and how to seek judicial reviews.

The involvement of young people in the democratic process was discussed. Youth forums and leadership programmes can provide opportunities for young people to contribute to policy debates, e.g. by making recommendations about local policing. A need was identified for more partnership working with youth organisations and youth advisory groups and for steps to be taken to open up the race equality movement to young people. Given the success of some youth sector projects in supporting young people to lead social action and policy-influencing projects, there is an evident need for adequate and sustained resourcing.

At the Lambeth & Southwark seminar, Anthony Robinson referred to tools that can be used by BAME parents and young people in addressing educational inequalities, including the Equality Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the Human Rights Act, but pointed out that the challenge was in ‘moving from an understanding of the tools to action.’ The issue of ‘how to translate learning into action’ was taken up by Rob Berkeley at the Islington November seminar, who asked people to consider how to:

*“Sharpen the elbows’ of people from minority ethnic communities, people seeking to address racial inequality, so that they can be effective ‘activist’ citizens; support the creation of forms of extra-governmental accountability that would encourage public authorities to address persistent racial inequalities; support the creation of infrastructure at local and national levels that can act to ensure that the issues of racial inequality are addressed at appropriate levels.”* Rob Berkeley, Islington seminar, November 2012

*“We have lost the language of equality. Setting aside what has happened with the Equality Act, we have confused and we’ve muddied the waters with discussions of cohesion, diversity and, I still don’t think they’ve published the strategy for it, integration.”* Rita Chadha, House of Lords seminar, November 2012

### **Using the Public Sector Equality Duty**

*“All schools ought to know what the PSED (Public Sector Equality Duty) duties are; many do not, both primary and secondary schools. There is a need for better accountability and transparency so parents and communities can see what equality issues are being prioritised through the equality objectives being published. A recent report from EHRC found that most schools weren’t complying with the requirement to publish their equality objectives; less than a quarter had done so and the picture in free schools is even worse. Governors are responsible for ensuring schools meet statutory duties so there are issues of effective governance also.”* Bill Bolloten, ROTA Annual General Meeting discussion, October 2013

*“Governors need more equality training and governing bodies need to be told how they can ensure the school is carrying out its Public Sector Equality Duty.”* Ifhat Shaheen-Smith, ROTA Annual General Meeting discussion, October 2013

At the Islington November seminar, using the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to engage with and influence schools was discussed. It was pointed out that even where parents were knowledgeable about legislation, engaging with schools could be difficult for a number of reasons, including the need to use

knowledge confidently. It was thought there was a need to continue to increase the level of confidence amongst all parents so that they can use the PSED to hold schools to account.

There was scepticism about what the law can achieve in promoting race equality. Some participants felt that the law had been weakened in its potential for promoting race equality as schools no longer had to produce 'race equality schemes' and many schools had not yet published equality objectives. Young people at the Southwark seminar wanted to know how pupils and parents can challenge schools on the Equality Act 2010. That schools are compliant with their duties cannot be taken as read – evidence of compliance should be asked for. Ofsted has a role in identifying schools which have an outstanding record of not discriminating, and those which are not meeting their obligations. This information from Ofsted, although available to parents, does not guarantee schools' compliance. It is the role of the school's governing body to ensure compliance and put in place processes for doing so. This ought to apply to all schools, including academies and free schools. Where this was not happening, there was a requirement for better training, support and clarification of what governors should do.

School governors have a role in ensuring schools deliver their PSED responsibility and fulfil their accountability to the community. There can, however, be difficulties for governors regarding their position in upholding educational standards in relation to other influences or allegiances within the school. Gus John pointed out at the Islington November that *"Governors are legally responsible for the quality of education. However, governors are friends to the*

*teachers."* A panel member from the Islington November seminar, who was a school governor, described some of the tensions of working with head teachers, senior staff, classroom teachers and parents, steering a path through situations *"where there is stereotyping and labelling on both sides"* in order to achieve better outcomes for BAME parents and children.

### **The language of race equality**

When attempting to influence societal attitudes, the language of race equality was considered to be of paramount importance and yet there were concerns that the 'language' of equality itself had become lost to public discourse. Rita Chadha, at the House of Lords seminar, pointed out that although it was necessary to address issues of 'cohesion' 'diversity' and 'integration' there was a danger that many local authorities and public sector workers, if asked, would be hard put to distinguish between an 'equality' strategy and a 'diversity' strategy.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Lambeth & Southwark, February 2013**

*How can young people be supported in a practical way to challenge unfairness, understand the Public Sector Equality Duty that schools have to fulfil and take practical steps to improve things?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Schools must publish their equality information and equality objectives.*

*Parents should find out what the equality objectives are.*

*This information should be easily accessible to parents and if it is not, schools should create better channels of communication.*

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington seminar, November 2012**

*How can BAME people get involved in demanding accountability from the public sector regarding equality?*

*How can schools be held accountable for their equalities duties?*

*Should work to progress equality be abolished?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Make sure there is a mechanism in place to follow it up.*

*Do training on the Equality Act 2010 and find out how to use it.*

*Directly ask schools what their priorities under equalities legislation are? They have a duty to reply. If they have not decided their priorities, that is the opportunity to influence them.*

*School governors have a role in ensuring schools deliver their responsibility and fulfill accountability to the community.*

*One way of holding schools to account for equality is to compare them with other schools exemplifying good practice.*

*Community groups can help parents hold schools to account.*

*Work to progress equality must not be abolished but must change.*

*As the power of local authorities diminishes and becomes centralised, there is a need for a middle authority that would hold a 'family' of schools to account.*

#### **Recommendations for the public sector**

Take positive action steps to ensure that disadvantaged young people are engaged in the development of policy and practice.

Undertake monitoring using comprehensive ethnic categories and take

steps to address underrepresentation in senior statutory and democratic roles.

#### **Recommendations for Greater London Authority (GLA)**

Support voluntary organisations to enable disadvantaged BAME communities to influence the education system.

Support parents to become governors and raise awareness among BAME communities about influencing decision-making in education.

#### **Recommendations for BAME sector**

Support BAME parents to develop forums and work together to hold education services to account.

Work in partnership with youth organisations and open up the race equality movement to young people. This would include: specific communication strategies targeted at young people; opening up programmes to young people, such as those aimed at enabling communities to hold authorities to account; opening up employment opportunities within race equality organisations to younger people; adequately resourced youth-advisory groups; supporting young people to lead social action and policy influencing projects on issues of importance to them.

Collaborate with the youth sector on projects that support youth-led spaces where consciousness can be raised about race equality, experiences can be articulated and explored and responses developed. Outcomes from this to shape the policy influencing work of BAME voluntary organisations.

Extend initiatives that promote positive role models to BAME children and young people.

Campaign for the sustainability of youth organisations in inner London.

## Criminal Justice

*“It is this absurd obsession with punishment that lies at the heart of this country’s record for jailing the most people in Western Europe, excluding the most young people from school, having the most illiterate prison population and all the rest of it. Is it any wonder that rather than examining the system issues that lie beneath the eruption of violence in August 2011, all David Cameron and his government could do was show the nation and the world how tough they could be on ‘sick’, ‘feral’, ‘thugs’ and ‘criminals’.” Gus John, Islington seminar, November 2012*

*“How is it more or less accepted that there is a marginalised group within society which is contrary to the body politic?”  
Panellist, House of Lords seminar, November 2012*

*Criminal justice remains a major concern among London’s BAME communities, along with its most visible manifestation of stop and search, which persistently and disproportionately affects BAME people. Solutions and success stories were shared around rebuilding relationships with police and helping to inform better practice and police training. The involvement of young people in developing new models of policing was to be welcomed. The August 2011 riots in London were thought to be a wider manifestation of economic and social disengagement among some segments of London’s young population. They were linked with anger towards the criminal justice system and stop and search, particularly in the areas where the riots took place, where there was a disproportionate effect on BAME communities. Families and communities can help young people feel more valued and respected along with social action encouraging young people to channel anger into more positive forms of protest and legitimate campaigning.*

## Policing and Stop and Search

The seminars demonstrated that criminal justice is still a huge concern among London’s BAME communities. Disproportionate stop and search rates among BAME communities and the resulting relationships between communities and the police were discussed. In Hackney, Cllr Patrick Vernon spoke of men in their 50s who still remember the impact that being unfairly stopped and searched had on their sense of self. Newer concerns about communities experiencing the brunt of tensions within the police force itself due to reductions in police resources including levels of staffing were also voiced.

Suggestions were put forward on how to open up a dialogue about stop and search, with a view to bringing down the rate of stops. These focused on raising awareness among parents and young people of their rights and systems which monitor its inappropriate use by the police. David Lammy MP, reflected at the Tottenham seminar that, although community policing and policing by consent were the correct approaches, he, like many others, said that the models needed to be implemented far more consistently and with substantial involvement of young people.

At a number of the seminars reporting on stop and searches, or rather, what was done or not done with reports, was considered as an issue that needs to be addressed.

It was thought that the election of Police and Crime Commissioners may also be effective in addressing the issue; the BAME voluntary sector needs to consider this opportunity.

At the House of Lords seminar and in Tower Hamlets and Hackney, Dr Richard Stone argued the following:

- Police officers to be properly trained in race awareness.
- Outside experts who are unpaid, are by definition not valued. All outside experts brought in to help police to become more professional should be offered pay at the same rate, be they I.T. experts or race awareness experts.
- Some community experts in race awareness may choose not to accept payment lest they feel they may be seen back home as 'too close to the police'. Senior officers must recognise this not as a signal to stop offering payment, but as a sign of abysmal lack of trust and confidence which must be improved.

A new way of addressing race awareness training is to stop throwing money at it. Instead, second all officers, from Chief Constable/Commissioner to constable on the street, for one week in the year to be a volunteer in a community different from her/his own. Then spend the race awareness training budget on more officers on the streets.

### **The August 2011 London riots**

The August 2011 riots and potential for future riots, although not discussed in detail, were not far from people's minds. The riots were considered as a manifestation of the disengagement of segments of the young population. In inner London the disproportionate impact of the riots on BAME communities was spoken about frequently at all seminars. While the behaviour of those involved was not deemed as acceptable, the 'criminal behaviour' view was rarely present, with society's failure to inspire marginalised young people being acknowledged as the key factor.

Other factors thought to have played a part in young people becoming involved in the riots were also considered. In Hackney, Jake Ferguson spoke about how Hackney CVS had commissioned Mori to work with local community groups to survey 2,000 residents following the riots, which identified race and racism in relation to criminal justice and stop and search as a key part of the riots in Hackney. A survey of 2,000 people recognised that stop and search is a major problem in terms of police relations with local communities.

Where young people felt alienated and unsupported within their communities, it was thought there was always a risk that they would be drawn into a range of potentially harmful or criminal behaviours. Several mentions were made of interventions that could alleviate young people's sense of alienation from society, such as sustained and meaningful youth forums and leadership programmes. Such initiatives provide a platform for young people to make recommendations or shape approaches to policing, for example, and can publicly affirm young people's contribution to the society in which they live.

*"Show [our young people] that they can make positive contributions to society that have financial gains for themselves and for others, remind them of the long history of Black and ethnic minority civil rights campaigners and most importantly let them know that we love them and want them to succeed because I don't think they think we do."*

Participant, Hackney seminar, February 2012

Examples of success were shared. In Hackney, as a response to the August 2011 riots, a young people's stop and search monitoring group has been established to support young people in taking more

control and rebuilding some fractured relationships with the police. Hackney CVS are currently developing a phone 'app' for young people to use as a monitoring tool.

Professor Gus John considered the August 2011 riots by reflecting back on the aftermath of the Mossbourne Uprising in 1981.

*“Those who took to the streets to protest years of police brutality etc were the ones who went to jail, lost out on lives opportunities, whereas a burgeoning Black middle class arose out of those struggles.”* Professor Gus John, Islington seminar, November 2012

He noted that the very same thing is happening following the August 2011 riots, with large numbers of young people being criminalised in a way that would have a long-term effect on their lives. Many participants predicted we would see more riots in the future.

### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Advance a race equality movement that is linked with other, more powerful, social justice movements, such as teachers' movements and children's sector campaigns. With unpopular issues, the BAME voluntary sector should first seek to influence more powerful social justice movements to take on issues, and, once this has been achieved, to influence statutory policy and practice itself.

### **Recommendations for the police**

For police practices to take account of the lived experiences of local people, many of them from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. Models of community policing and policing by consent to be implemented far more consistently and with substantive involvement of young people.

Bring young people to magistrates' training sessions, to share unfair experiences of the criminal justice system and help inform and improve knowledge and practice.

### **Challenges for the panellists, Hackney seminar, February 2012**

How are we tackling over-representation of Black communities in the criminal justice system?

*Is stop and search necessary? What should be the alternative?*

### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Training parents and young people on their stop and search rights.*

*Lobbying to ensure the national curriculum teaches young people about their rights in relation to stop and search.*

*Distributing stop and search rights cards to young people.*

*Stop and Search, which is supposed to be based on intelligence, leads to few prosecutions and is not a proven tool in effectively finding criminals. Its use comes at a big cost to community/police relations. The basis on which it is carried out should therefore be looked at with a view to changing procedure.*

*Hackney CVS are in dialogue with the police after the riots. The police have agreed to allow young people to monitor stop and search via an independent advisory group. Hackney CVS are also creating an app that young people can use to help them understand what their rights are and report instances where stop and search is being used inappropriately or illicitly.*

## Racism and discrimination in the education system

*“You’re unteachable. Just go and sit at the back of the class.”* Young participant, Southwark & Lambeth seminar, February 2013

*Discrimination in the education system was addressed. It was apparent that school exclusions represent a most direct and persistent form of discriminatory practice in schools and continue to have a disproportionate impact on BAME young people and their families. Ofsted, as the main regulatory body for schools, was called upon to consider the question of exclusions more carefully in relation to a school’s overall rating. The detrimental effects of stereotyping and negative labelling of young people can have a lasting impact. Behaviour management and informal exclusions were referred to extensively. It was thought that revisions were needed in behaviour management practices. The diagnosis, or mis-diagnosis, of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder was of concern to parents and young people, especially with regard to the ‘pathologising’ of BAME children. Alternatives to formal education were considered for young people needing additional provision or continuity of support. Access to quality education services and better support and training for teachers in raising pupil attainment was required, along with measures to increase BAME representation in schools at all levels. More appropriate support for families concerned about their children’s education and wellbeing was called for.*

### Exclusions

*“If I was excluded, I was on the streets, seeing things I shouldn’t have been seeing.”* Young participant, Southwark & Lambeth seminar, February 2013

*“How can we trust Ofsted to audit schools in a proper way when schools are given good or outstanding [ratings] even though they are excluding Black boys like me above and beyond other groups?”* Young participant, Islington seminar, November 2013

Exclusions were identified as the most direct and persistent form of discriminatory practice in education. Rob Berkeley, at the Islington November seminar, said that Black Caribbean pupils were “almost four times more likely to be permanently excluded from school in 2009-10 than the school population as a whole.” Exclusion, and understanding its context, was seen as vital to challenging its continued disproportionate use. Many participants said that exclusions impacted on young people and their families’ trust and confidence in the education system. ‘Race’ was often talked about within the context of stereotypes that inform decisions about exclusions, the disproportionate use of exclusions in schools and the impact exclusions at an early age have on outcomes. In Islington, for example, even though young people of Black or dual heritage made up 33% of the local population, they made up 65% of all school exclusions. Though many young people thought exclusions should be the last resort in the behaviour management process, they believed exclusions were too often the first response to disruption. One young person in Islington felt schools exclude for “every tiny little reason, without trying to find any resolution.” It was noted that schools were beginning to respond to changes to educational policy that would require them to pay approximately £8,000 for alternative provision for excluded pupils by establishing internal exclusion units, or using those of neighbouring schools. This was concerning as it may make the process of exclusion even less transparent.

Some were also concerned that schools were manipulating exclusions to improve school ratings, with some young people reporting they had been excluded when Ofsted was expected and that fixed-term exclusions left pupils on the streets, with little access to alternative provision. This was one of the many specific areas where education intersected with criminal justice, given the disproportionate use of stop and search in local communities. The counter-productive effect of exclusion was further explored at the Southwark seminar. Exclusion, sometimes used as a quick fix by teachers, 'who did not have the time to manage difficult behaviour led to worse problems in the long term'.

Of the many explanations given for exclusions, Gus John highlighted factors such as "school concern about pupils' conduct undermining school discipline," school "failure to have regard to the context of pupils' poor discipline" and "pupils refusing to comply with what they consider to be teachers' unreasonable or unjust instructions." Some participants explained that pupils were often punished for their reactions to other provocations, which then prompted feelings of injustice or unfairness. Linked to this, one young person rooted behaviour in responses to bullying, abuse and harassment, saying some pupils would rather be excluded than experience bullying.

Many young people said they never understood, nor were they given an opportunity to understand, why they were punished so often. Because they experienced punishment as arbitrary, some participants in the series said they began to lose trust in the school, falling into the cycle of recurring fixed-term exclusions. During the sessions, when taking up the language of equality and racism, some young people felt more prepared to identify and challenge unjust

treatment, as well as take individual responsibility to stop the cycle of fixed-term exclusions.

Given the weakening of regulation and enforcement mechanisms to hold institutions to account, Gus John called for exclusions to be viewed as a human rights issue in schools. The role of Ofsted, as the main regulatory body of schools, was questioned. Participants wanted Ofsted to consider exclusions within the context of a school's overall rating. It was observed that some schools, which had high levels of pupil exclusions, managed to achieve a high Ofsted rating. It was thought that there is a case for amending the school inspection guidance and grade descriptors.

#### **Challenge for the panellists, Hackney seminar, February 2012**

*What are the alternatives to detention and exclusion in schools?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*More Black male teachers in schools in core subject roles with authority as head teachers/department heads.*

*More teachers who love their subject area and want to inspire pupils.*

*More teachers who understand culture and who encourage BAME parental involvement.*

#### **Stereotyping and negative labelling**

*"When I was in trouble at school, I was told, when you're older you're going to be selling the Big Issue. I didn't know what this was, but I got the message, the teacher's expectations had signed me off." Timi Raji, young leader, Southwark & Lambeth seminar, February 2013*

The damaging effect of early negative labelling and stereotyping of pupils from some BAME communities was referred to

throughout the seminar series. Numerous examples were given of embedded assumptions about Black pupils in some schools, within and outside the classroom; more punitive and more frequent sanctions issued against Black male pupils compared with other pupils; the risk of a 'criminalised' view of young Black males. It was thought that some negative notions about children from certain ethnic minority communities could be countered through better teacher education at an early career stage and through raising the everyday level of awareness of cultural sensitivity with school staff.

Young people at the Southwark & Lambeth seminar and Islington November seminar identified labelling and negative stereotyping of BAME pupils in school contexts from classroom to canteen. A young male participant described how he felt unfairly treated when he was always seated at the front of the class so that the teacher 'could keep an eye on him, with all the other Black boys'. Other participants agreed that white pupils who were worse behaved tended not to receive this sort of attention or level of punishment. Assumptions about Black pupils appeared to be embedded. A participant at the Islington November seminar gave an illustration of this problem at lunch times, with *"the dinner lady always giving my Black friend chicken, without even asking him if that's what he wanted"*.

How to reduce stereotyping or labelling of pupils was widely discussed by young people at the Islington November seminar. Teachers' expectations of and rapport with Black pupils, in particular African Caribbean boys is of concern. This was often related to expectations in terms of academic ability but also in negative stereotyping, unfairness in behaviour management processes and a disproportionate number of exclusions. It was thought that teacher

training could address the prevention of labelling through initiatives such as on-the-job learning through mentors for teachers, a commitment by teachers to ensuring equal content and quality of teaching for all pupils and a higher presence of Black teachers. This was similarly discussed amongst young people at Southwark, who suggested that stereotypes could be challenged through encouraging teachers to have the same expectations of every child regarding academic achievement and aspirations.

Having identified a need to work on the negative stereotyping of BAME pupils in schools, some campaigning action was formulated by the Islington November young participants. They put together an action plan which involved asking panel members questions. They considered a research project that would involve collecting information about experiences of negative stereotyping by looking at school seating plans, lunch choices and behaviour e.g. teacher/pupil and pupil/pupil interactions. Some of these young people have since gone on to deliver the keynote speech at the Institute of Education's annual diversity day for trainee teachers.

For participants in Southwark, Islington, Hackney and Tottenham, Black males were more often stereotypically associated with 'danger' or 'gang culture'. Thus, within schools, Black male pupils often felt criminalised and treated with suspicion. This type of overvisibility extended to unwarranted accusations. One pupil spoke of his experience at an academy where he was accused of theft and was about to be excluded when CCTV footage found him innocent.

Solutions to many of the above issues centred around empowerment programmes that enable parents to better support their children, for example,

through playing a greater role in their education.

### **Challenges for the panellists, Lambeth & Southwark seminar, February 2013**

*What can be done to improve teachers' cultural understandings of different codes and norms?*

*How can teachers relate better to young Black male pupils without categorising them in terms of culture or class?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Develop 'cultural competence' through regular inservice training for teachers so that they have the same expectations for every child regardless of background.*

*Engage with external organisations which provide support around cultural identity.*

*Ensure the curriculum acknowledges contributions from different cultures.*

*Encourage more diversity in school governance boards and better access for parents to influence schooling.*

*If the school environment is not welcoming or youth-friendly, make changes.*

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington seminar, November 2013**

*How can stereotypes be reduced?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*The impact of teacher attitudes on educational outcomes should be examined and addressed.*

*Governors can be held legally responsible for the quality of education.*

*Parents and pupils should organise themselves, care about what is happening in their schools and be proactive in holding them accountable.*

*Schools must re-examine their recruitment policies and career progression.*

## **Behaviour management**

*"What I noticed is, I used to get punished a lot more than other kids. As soon as I said a word, they would send me out the class. But other kids would get warnings. I remember I was with my Dad one time and my Dad heard it from the other table, like my teacher discussing me with another parent. I was like 'oh my days'."* Young participant, Southwark & Lambeth seminar, February 2013

Behaviour management was discussed throughout the seminar series. Young participants pointed to many types of informal exclusion within the classroom such as being seated alone or removal to the corridor for periods of time. Overall, the experience of undue and excessive negative attention from teachers, without similar levels of positive reinforcement, contributed to a sense of isolation from their peers.

Young people felt punishment such as being pulled aside or "yelled at in front of others" was humiliating. Pupils recalled being frustrated, especially in adolescence when feelings of 'standing out' or 'being different' are magnified, that issues were not handled more sensitively, or with more discretion, by teachers.

Mental health was often identified by participants as misunderstood or misdiagnosed in schools, with pupils often being treated inappropriately through behaviour management systems. In short, disruptions were often viewed within the complex dynamic of subjective teacher assessments of Black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils.

Expectations of behaviour and the implementation of punitive behaviour management techniques in the classroom were seen to influence assessments of intelligence, and therefore, access to

equal outcomes. Young people at training on the Equality Act 2010 in Southwark felt they had been entered into sets much lower than they were capable of, not because of their academic ability, but because of teachers' inability to communicate with them. Dr Keith Davidson, speaking at the Southwark seminar, questioned the basis on which 'intelligence tests' are carried out. The type of tests which are used do not necessarily measure children's 'innate' intelligence but indicate whether children have a 'ring of support' to help them achieve higher marks.

Participants demonstrated how both fixed-term and permanent exclusions affect access to opportunities of improvement and development while excluded from the school environment. Participants called for schools to work more closely with the community when they are unable to manage behaviour effectively. Equity, involvement, engagement and communication were all seen as more sustainable than the continued 'punish-first, solve-later' approach to discipline.

Participants called for more to be done to remove barriers to engagement with parents, voluntary groups and other organisations, but recognised that exclusion was in itself a barrier. Elizabeth Henry challenged Islington panelists: "*How are we going to engage parents whose children are excluded?*"

Many identified the role of the youth sector in encouraging success and leadership as a significant factor in tackling the detrimental impact of exclusions. At the Southwark seminar, Timi Raji said his involvement as a youth worker and leader at SE1 United enabled him to overcome the impact of being excluded multiple times. Participants called for recognition of the positive impact of this youth-first

approach to success, engaging young people as decision-makers instead of decision-receivers.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Southwark & Lambeth seminar, February 2013**

*How can schools improve behaviour management policies and practices so that issues are handled more sensitively?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Encourage schools to work more closely with the community to develop strategies for managing behaviour more effectively.*

### **ADHD – a perceived or real method of social control**

A very concerning discussion point raised at a number of the seminars related to the growing numbers of children and young people diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Furthermore, many of those diagnosed are being pressurised to take medication by health care professionals and schools, with limited access to alternatives.

During a seminar in Tottenham, two parents from separate families told of the extreme pressure placed on them by schools to medicate their children following diagnosis. One mother refused to medicate her child and began schooling from home. The other agreed she would medicate her son, if a second opinion confirmed the diagnosis, to avoid exclusion from school.

There were concerns that this type of adversarial treatment, and lack of access to alternative treatments other than medication, was an issue that disproportionately impacted on BAME communities.

Young people from Southwark discussed how the 'label' of ADHD is often used to excuse inappropriate behaviour, poor

effort and academic performance, leading to low expectations for pupils, low self-esteem and schools relieving themselves of their responsibilities to provide quality services. Pupils diagnosed with ADHD are frequently excused from lessons to participate in non-academic activities, with teachers condoning pupils using the ADHD label in opportunistic ways, actions which often result in educational failure. Older young people gave examples of friends who had used their ADHD 'label' in opportunistic ways and then later regretted this on realising the life-long impact that academic failure would have. They wished schools had responded more appropriately to their educational needs.

There was concern that accounts of parents disagreeing with diagnoses may indicate that health practitioners are paying limited attention to the recommendations from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence that symptomatic behaviour be observed for at least six months in two settings, typically the home and school.

Young participants at a workshop in Tottenham expressed concern about the possible misdiagnosis of classmates who had been through traumatic life experiences and whose behaviour reflected the lack of support following this rather than the atypical brain chemistry often linked to ADHD. They considered this particularly problematic given the impact of medication, (which is usually offered by healthcare practitioners) on personality and its potentially life-long impact on the brain.

In Hackney it was noted that while there are many programmes for pupils with mental, emotional and social issues, these are often not properly quality assured. It was observed by many that teachers and schools lack experience in working with pupils with mental health issues, among

which BAME pupils are over-represented. Pupils with mental health issues are frequently misunderstood and misdiagnosed as having Attention Deficit Disorders or learning difficulties and treated inappropriately through behaviour management systems.

In discussing ADHD, there were concerns about the ongoing 'pathologising' of BAME young people within education.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Hackney seminar 2013**

*How can support be improved for children with ADHD or other social, emotional or behavioural issues?*

### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Schools need to respond sensitively and more appropriately to educational needs and discuss alternatives to medication so that parents do not feel pressured into action that may lead to longer term problems for their children.*

### **Attainment and outcomes**

*"While more Nigerian pupils continued to reach the measures [5 A-C GCSEs], the fewest numbers of FSM [Free School Meals] and non-FSM Black Caribbean pupils, not White British, reached this baseline. Moreover, nationally, only 10% of Gypsy, Roma or Traveller pupils were reaching these marks." Participant, Haringey seminar, February 2012*

*"When it comes to Black kids, I don't think they [teachers] recognise that they're smart. So I think they put them in the bottom set. When you're placed in the bottom set, you're not going to do as well as if you were placed in a higher set. It's hard for people to get recognition [of their capabilities] especially Black people sometimes." Young participant, Southwark & Lambeth seminar, February 2013*

The underachievement of certain BAME groups in education was identified as an outcome of many inter-related issues. At the October ROTA AGM discussion group, it was thought that although poverty and disadvantage needed to be taken into consideration when looking at outcomes, these factors ought not to be used as justification for underachievement.

*“Some teachers use ‘poverty’ or ‘disadvantage’ as an excuse not to raise standards, but all children can be brought up to a good educational level with good teaching.” Ifhat Shaheen-Smith, ROTA Annual General Meeting discussion, October 2013*

In raising the attainment levels and educational outcomes of young BAME people, there was concern about access to quality education services, particularly in deprived inner London wards where BAME young people make up greatest proportions. Risks that quality will deteriorate in the face of public spending cuts, and how we could address this, were considered. This was expressed alongside concerns with difficulty recruiting good teachers to schools working in the most challenging circumstances. Motivating pupils who saw little relevance in what was taught in relation to their life situations was thought to be key to improving their educational experience and keeping them engaged. Teachers and schools want more support to enable them to address attainment gaps between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. The need for teachers and schools more generally to be empowered through their training to teach all pupils was considered in relation to these points.

The challenges and solutions which arose from the discussion groups in relation to attainment and outcomes.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Lambeth & Southwark, February 2013**

*How can teachers keep pupils motivated?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Teach so that subject matter is relevant to real life situations.*

*Ask whether there is flexibility for teachers to teach from personal experience of what is important instead of directly from the national curriculum.*

*Invest in part-time or voluntary teachers to share the burden of marking and have more experienced teachers facilitating and mentoring young teachers.*

*Accept that the community should take some responsibility for academic and holistic education.*

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington, November 2012**

*How do we empower parents and pupils to improve outcomes for BAME pupils?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Have an openness and access to what is happening in school.*

*Show schools how to get better at listening to parents without feeling threatened.*

*Get Black panellists and experts from the seminars together to go from area to area running workshops on how to improve outcomes in education.*

*Find a way of using the information from the seminars to influence policy and help guide work on improving outcomes.*

## Non-formal education

*“We need to look at the charges for the facilities community groups are using...because the more they get pressure to income-generate, the more we are at risk of excluding the best community activities”.*

Participant, Islington seminar, March 2012

Many participants referred to voluntary and community sector youth initiatives playing a valuable role in providing non-formal educational opportunities to young BAME Londoners who are most at risk of exclusion from mainstream education. Such initiatives, however, are particularly under-resourced and have been disproportionately impacted by public spending cuts, despite the fact that youth initiatives are highly regarded by many for providing training, mentoring, peer support and encouraging leadership skills. Other organisations such as supplementary schools had evidenced improvements in attainment and pupil performance for many young people from BAME communities.

Non-formal education, including local schemes which linked with employment opportunities such as apprenticeships and volunteering, was identified as having considerable potential for young people who are less academic or who may have disengaged from formal education. To tap into this, there is a need for sustainable investment in the organisations that provide them and the value of non-formal educational opportunities needs wider recognition. It was acknowledged that such opportunities, which particularly marginalised BAME young people benefit from, such as those provided by the BAME voluntary sector have been disproportionately impacted by public spending cuts.

## Challenge for the panellists, Haringey seminar, February 2012

*What are the alternatives to formal education?*

### Discussion points and solutions

*A need to expose young people to the rest of the world and offer support through mentoring and role models.*

*A £4 million employment scheme such as that launched in Tottenham to create jobs in partnership with local employers.*

## Teacher education

*“In one example, a survey done amongst teachers trained in universities or colleges since the 1970s, a repeated survey suggests that over 65 per cent do not feel able to construct and deliver a curriculum that meets this agenda of confronting racism”. Gus John, House of Lords seminar, November 2011*

*“Teacher training is key...the diversity training programme is very poor. And there is a lack of understanding about the social differences that exist in working class communities. Aspiration is not the issue, BAME children do not under-perform.” Kunle Olulode, ROTA Annual General Meeting discussion, October 2013*

It was thought that many of the capital’s state schools lack expertise in, or are even fearful of dealing with racial inequalities and racist bullying or harassment.

Black history has been ‘de-prioritised.’ Education as a space that allows the development of self knowledge and history is denied to BAME pupils in many of London’s state schools. Community responses, such as through supplementary schools, are being disproportionately hit through public spending cuts. Where Black and world history is taught, it can enrich

teachers' experience and understanding of the cultures and heritage of the pupils they teach.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington seminar, November 2012**

*What can be done in teacher training to encourage positive attitudes and overcome preconceived notions about pupils?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Learning on the job, through peer to peer mentoring for teachers.*

*Early-career support for teachers so that they do not arrive in schools with negative preconceptions about certain pupils.*

*Conducting pupil-led research into areas where there is concern about 'embedded' perceptions of certain pupils in school situations, e.g. seating plans, lunch choices, behaviour and attitudes.*

*Ensuring that all pupils get same input and quality of teaching.*

*More Black teachers should be coming through from teacher training programmes.*

### **Representation**

*"In London, the majority of pupils are minority ethnic and yet the majority of teachers are white." Patricia Lamour, Islington seminar, November 2012*

BAME people, and in particular men, are under-represented in the capital's classrooms, as senior managers in schools and on bodies that oversee education. BAME families have limited influence on school systems – they often do not know what their rights are or about the avenues for engaging with schools.

Parents are concerned that they have no forum for discussing racism and race

discrimination in education and schools are not good at providing space.

At Hackney, there was considerable discussion on how the lack of representation and influence could be overcome, for example through support for BAME people to work as effective school governors. There was also some discussion about the opportunity provided by the Government's free schools programme to communities to take a lead in developing education services where parents are dissatisfied with what currently exists. However, for the most part, there was limited awareness among participants about such opportunities.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington March 2012**

*How can better representation of BAME people in schools be achieved?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Raise awareness of school governor support initiatives for BAME people e.g. with local authorities, where such initiatives exist.*

*Encourage parents to link with others to strengthen the case for developing forums for discussing education issues.*

### **Support for families**

The need for different types of support for parents and families was discussed throughout the seminars. There is insufficient information on resources available to BAME parents who are concerned about their families or who want to become more involved in the process of influencing education policy and practice, e.g. as school governors. There was a need for empowerment programmes to enable parents to better support their children, for example, through playing a greater role in their education. Specific resources that enable

parents to support their children's education were identified as literacy and numeracy skills; ESOL; policy support around school governance and other areas of democracy and accountability.

Existing social care interventions for families concerned about their children's wellbeing, or with young people at risk of becoming involved with criminal activity can be inappropriate or potentially racist. Strategies were to be looked at to provide more appropriate support.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington seminar, March 2013**

*What are the best ways of supporting parental engagement?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Cross-generational mentoring with age-specific lessons for life stages: 60 year olds mentor 50 year olds, 50 year olds mentor 40 year olds and so on, developing a culture of lifelong support.*

*Encourage familiarity with technologies young people use and use them for educational purposes. There is a computer app which gets pupils to design games based on real issues and concerns in their communities, which also gives them skills which computer industries are looking for, enhancing employability.*

Better support was also sought for families with young people at risk of engaging in criminal activity being drawn into in gang culture. Many of the existing support programmes for families and parents are thought to be inadequate, especially in the area of social care interventions. In Hackney a roundtable was dedicated to defining appropriate interventions from social care. This was because inappropriate and potentially racist interventions are a concern among some BAME families.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Hackney seminar, February 2012**

*How can we empower BAME parents and families to know about policy and resources available to them?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*There must be mandatory, clear information given out to parents that will help them to understand how the education system works (e.g. setting and levels) so that they are better able to support their children's education and advocate on their behalf if schools have low expectations for them.*

*Constructive relationships between parents and teachers need to be brokered to improve educational outcomes for children.*

*Teachers need greater cultural understanding of different families' and cultures' modes of discipline.*

*Schools need to keep working on higher expectations for all children.*

*There is a need to assess the impact of being a parent governor. Parent governors need training. Representation is one thing but people need to be informed, trained and feel confident to speak and have impact.*

A better understanding of the needs of vulnerable BAME children, and better support for their parents in a climate of public spending cuts in mental health and other services, was specifically identified as an issue.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Hackney seminar, February 2012**

*How can we safeguard/protect vulnerable BAME children from the negative impacts of reduced public spending and cutbacks e.g. in mental health services?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Schools need to have a better understanding of BAME cultures/what is going on in children's lives.*

*Issues associated with mis-diagnosis of disability and mental health problems in schools need to be addressed.*

*Evidence and research about what works and what doesn't work should be listened to by government and policy makers.*

#### **Recommendations for national government**

Assess the impact of the absorption of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG).

Develop a central support package that enables schools to ensure the pupil premium addresses educational disadvantage linked to racial inequality as well as socio-economic disadvantage and share good practice.

#### **Recommendations for Ofsted**

Amend Ofsted's school inspection guidance and grade descriptors so that schools are inspected more thoroughly for compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty in particular.

#### **Recommendations for initial teacher training institutions**

Expand training activities aimed at improving trainees' awareness of equality, inclusion and culture.

#### **Recommendations for Greater London Authority**

Establish an advisory group including representatives of communities that have experienced the greatest marginalisation in education to advise on the delivery of GLA's education programmes.

Resource and facilitate a support programme to nurture potential school leaders from BAME communities that are under-represented at senior levels in schools.

Support alternative routes to teaching for gifted and talented Londoners from disadvantaged communities. Consider paid, practice-based, teacher training programmes. Engage voluntary organisations to identify potential trainees and enable them to address skills gaps in getting ready for teacher training. Provide on-going mentoring during Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) and early career phases to ensure high retention rates.

Develop school improvement packages targeted at senior school staff to support them in addressing attainment gaps faced by learners at risk of educational disadvantage but not targeted through the pupil premium.

#### **Recommendations for local authorities, school alliances and academy chains**

Coordinate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities for teachers on key local equality and inclusion issues. Specific issues to consider include: Fairness in behaviour management; tapping into cultural and religious capital to support learning; academic language proficiency for pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL); addressing sensitive out-of-school issues that impact on educational attainment (e.g. impact of gang association on girls); meeting the needs of Roma pupils in schools; responding to the psychological, social and

cultural needs of asylum seekers and refugees; teaching to support newly arrived pupils at early stages of English language acquisition; responding to the Special Educational Needs (SENs) of pupils who belong to additional equalities groups (e.g. BAME pupils with learning difficulties face greater barriers to academic support than others); teaching to support the progress of pupils with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and other social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; compliance with the Equality Act 2010, in particular ensuring and evidencing tangible outcomes.

Monitor the performance of BAME groups that are most at risk of educational disadvantage and undertake specific action in response to under-performance at whole school policy and classroom practice levels.

Undertake specific steps to recruit, retain and support the career progression of teachers from BAME communities that are under-represented.

#### **Recommendations for the public sector**

Resource voluntary sector youth initiatives including inter-youth support and mentoring, homework clubs and support for life skills outside the classroom to improve employability.

#### **Recommendations for BAME voluntary sector**

Support BAME parents to develop forums and work together to positively influence and hold education services to account.

Highlight good practice in the state education sector in addressing inequalities and draw attention to the educational situation for groups such as Gypsies, Travellers and Roma, for whom provision may not be adequate or sufficiently resourced.

## **Youth aspiration and opportunity**

*There is a lack of opportunity for aspirational young BAME people to access skills and knowledge for progressing into further and higher education and employment. Loss of Education Maintenance Allowance, increased tuition fees and high youth unemployment present barriers. Socio-economic factors alone do not explain why young BAME people from wealthier families for example, still face disadvantages in education, which is evidenced by the failure of universities to fulfil their quotas, despite initiatives such as Widening Participation. Nurturing aspirations through focused and targeted schemes e.g. sharing know-how for getting into the best universities, is shown to be effective and should be more widely communicated. Comparatively high levels of unemployment among BAME young people persist but programmes to enable meaningful and sustained employment are not impacting. Work experience programmes were seen to be diminishing, and in some areas disappearing all together or becoming less about 'experience' and more about 'exploitation'. There is a case for more involvement of BAME organisations who know most about the needs and aspirations of their communities. BAME-led businesses have a role to play in raising the aspirations of young BAME people. There is a need to make sure that the Youth Contract benefits disadvantaged young people from BAME communities.*

*“I remember speaking to a few girls in my old school about what they wanted to do after we had completed our GCSEs. They explained that because they are Asian and living in London, the opportunities available to them, compared with those available to someone from, for example, a white background with similar educational qualifications, differ greatly.”* Tasmina Khanum, Deputy Young Mayor, Tower Hamlets.

### **Barriers to success**

It was reported by many seminar participants that young BAME people’s aspirations and confidence are thwarted by lack of opportunity in accessing the skills and knowledge for progressing through education into further study or employment.

The impact of poor educational experiences combined with lack of youth opportunity was linked to the disengagement of some young Londoners from education. The challenge in inspiring young people when the context in which they are being educated is one of reduced access to higher and further education, with the loss of Education Maintenance Allowance and increased tuition fees, high youth unemployment, particularly for Black people, against a back-drop of an urban culture of immediate gratification and gang fidelity, was voiced. For young people looking for work or work-related training, the opportunities being offered to young BAME Londoners through government’s youth employment initiatives are at best uninspiring and at worst, exploitative.

At the seminars participants identified the assumption we increasingly see in public policy-making, that anti-poverty programmes will address the disadvantages faced by London’s BAME

communities, as problematic. Participants cited evidence that shows when socio-economic factors are considered, such as employment status and family structure, there are still unexplained differences in life outcomes across different ethnic groups. Participants gave examples of how young people from wealthier BAME families still face disadvantages in education due to racism. Policy measures to address educational disadvantage, such as the pupil premium, will not ensure education equality for BAME pupils as it does not address this.

*“This country is creating a swathe of bitter and angry young and older citizens whose lives are blighted by the very wealthy. A subset of this group are those who face discrimination on the grounds of the colour of their skin.”* Dr Richard Stone, House of Lords seminar, November 2011

Young people who did not feel valued within the education system might well question what they could gain through it. Andrew Muhammed, of Westside Young Leaders Academy summed this up: *“If education is no guarantee of a job, what makes it worthwhile?”* He called for more vocational education linked to tangible outcomes and prospects.

In building resilience, Tottenham participants commented that it should not be assumed that some young people lack aspirations more than others. If local opportunity is limited – where a young person’s world may tend to be very localised – it will impact on their strategies for success.

## **Challenge for the panellists, Tottenham seminar, February 2012**

*What steps can be taken to address lack of opportunity for BAME young people?*

### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Develop links with BAME organisations who know most about needs and aspirations of their communities.*

### **Higher education**

In Tower Hamlets, Tasmina Khan, the then Deputy Young Mayor, spoke about many young residents with ambitions of higher education who often did not follow their ambitions up, due to their sense of limited opportunity as BAME residents in inner London. Tasmina spoke about how young people's sense of lack of opportunity was exacerbated by cuts to educational maintenance allowances, rising tuition fees; issues which disproportionately impact on young BAME people due to the economic struggles their families are more likely to face.

At the Islington November seminar, Tony Sewell raised the issue of getting more BAME young people into higher education. Given that London has such a high population of BAME children, there is a need to bring them up to the level of excellence demanded by Russell Group universities, which require at least 3 A levels.

*"We need to be thinking, teaching and learning about excellence, we need to look at the availability of school places and linking schools and pupils to the wider global economy. We need to have a strategy that encompasses the whole school at all levels." Dr Tony Sewell, Chair of the Mayor of London's Education Inquiry, Islington seminar, November 2012*

Knowledge-sharing and know-how on accessing higher education is not being widely communicated to BAME pupils and their parents.

Young participants at the Southwark workshop pointed out that despite numerous intervention programmes, there was still an under-representation of BAME pupils in the 'elite' universities. Strategies to encourage pupils who had not considered applying to these universities had not been filtering through to the communities. The Widening Participation teams in many universities were not fulfilling their quota. It was thought that information was very selective, that parents were not aware of the programmes and ended up being marginalised by not asking for information.

*"There should be more communication and this should be passed on to young people – where are our successes – young people getting into Oxford and Cambridge within the borough being shared and used as an example of what can be achieved." Participant, Islington seminar, November 2013*

Tony Sewell mentioned that one of the strategies of the Mayor of London's recent Education Inquiry focused on "*setting up a charity to work with young Black men with the aim of getting them into top universities studying sciences*". £20 million had also been assigned by the Education Secretary Michael Gove, together with the GLA's Excellence Fund, to work with Black pupils to improve outcomes.

Young people at the Southwark workshop suggested that within schools, structured peer-mentoring had the potential to make some difference. The TeamUp programme (whereby university pupils sign up to the Rising Leaders programme and tutor small groups of school pupils) was given as an

example that was “not ideal, but it was a start”.

A reduction in the overall level of investment in education and training was evident in the options open to people who are now looking for work. Financial barriers were still preventing many able young people from BAME communities from continuing their studies.

*“We need to make sure that we do not educate people according to their means.” Sir William Atkinson, Hackney seminar, February 2012*

Overall however, the prevailing view, particularly among the many educators present at the seminars, was that most young people are not lacking in aspirations but in skills, knowledge, confidence and opportunity – we should be investing in our young people to meet these needs.

#### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington seminar, November 2013**

*What can be done to improve levels of BAME representation in universities which are not fulfilling their quotas?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Structured peer mentoring programmes should be expanded and improved.*

*There should be more communication of success stories. Where young people from the borough get into Oxford or Cambridge they should be given as an example of what can be achieved.*

#### **Work experience**

*“If you go outside London to green leafy places, often people’s parents who work in nice posh places will organise work experience. And so I think it is a real challenge for us all about how we get good quality work experience.” Participant, Islington seminar, March 2012*

*“They’ve cancelled our work experience. How are we meant to get a job when we leave school?” Young participant (from Tottenham), Islington, November 2013*

*“The demise of work experience is one of those things quietly building up... I think you’ll find other young people who feel just as strongly as you do, and if you join together, you might make it into a big issue that more people take notice of.” Panellist, Islington seminar, November 2012*

Participants at the seminars pointed out that in their experience, programmes to enable meaningful and sustained employment are not impacting on young BAME people. Statutory employment programmes are failing to use the expertise of BAME organisations who know most about the aspirations and needs of disadvantaged BAME communities.

The changing nature of work experience placements was discussed. At the Tottenham seminar, there was a perception that access to work experience schemes was a potential area for discrimination, whether direct or indirect, and should be monitored. Where young people in Haringey had been on work placement schemes, some reported that these were ‘compulsory and exploitative’. Constructive support for young people was urged by a panellist at the Islington seminar, who encouraged young people to campaign for quality work experience.

### **Challenges for the panellists, Islington seminar, November 2012**

*What can be done where schools have cut their work experience programmes e.g. due to spending decisions?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Pupils can get involved in making decisions in school councils and seek to influence councillors.*

*Pupils can prepare a case to say what a difference work experience makes to their career prospects.*

*Pupils to set up petitions through social media when work experience was stopped.*

### **Youth employment programmes**

The latest youth unemployment figures of almost one in two young Black people being unemployed compared with one in eight young people overall was discussed at all seminars. This was tied in to discussions about how improvements in qualifications for BAME communities have not translated into labour market and wealth outcomes. Examples were given of highly qualified BAME young people migrating because of limited opportunities. The UK is failing to capitalise on the assets its BAME population brings such as languages and links to other countries which could support trade.

The growing number of households, where parents and now their young adult children, were facing long periods of unemployment, and the impact this would have in the future, were considered. In Haringey, this was identified as particularly problematic for the Somali community, where young people's situation caused anxieties that they might:

- Go to Somalia for work in dangerous circumstances

- Remain unemployed and get into drugs and alcohol
- Become mentally ill
- Get into crime, anti-social behaviour and offending

It was noted in Haringey, that very few from this community go into higher education. David Lammy MP compared this issue in some of the inner London boroughs with issues seen in the north of England where successive generations in some families are not working. In Haringey David Lammy MP also noted how the areas that saw rioting have among the highest unemployment in the country.

In Haringey and Hackney concerns were raised about the ability of statutory employment programmes to enable the most disadvantaged BAME communities into meaningful and sustained employment. It was widely felt that many of the opportunities it is intended that they provide are getting stuck in bureaucracies and amongst wealthier, connected communities, and are not filtering through to areas where they are needed most. The limited involvement of BAME organisations who know most about the aspirations and needs of such communities was considered to be part of this problem. The need for statutory employment programmes to use the expertise of such organisations to ensure that the most disadvantaged BAME families benefit was also identified. The potential of BAME businesses and enterprise in giving young people something to aspire to was considered.

However, there are other barriers to employment, which are seen to be linked to employer prejudice and discrimination. At the House of Lords seminar, Nicola Rollock referenced government research which compared the success of job applicants with non-English sounding

names with English sounding ones: *“those with non-English sounding names have to make 74 per cent more applications than those with English sounding names even though they have the same qualifications, experience and CVs.”*

#### **Challenge for the panellists, Tottenham seminar, February 2012**

*When can we start putting in place the critical factors for finding work?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*The Future Jobs Fund will not duplicate other initiatives and there will be no sanctions. It will be a voluntary scheme. Employers are starting to work with young people, e.g. a seventeen year old, to increase attendance and attitude towards work.*

#### **Challenge for panellist, Tottenham seminar, February 2013**

*How can we ensure that the youth contract benefits disadvantaged young BAME people?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*We should be investing more in our young people to enable them to fulfil their potential.*

*As the youth contract is about to be rolled out, there needs to be follow-up on whether BAME groups are able to access this and the apprenticeships scheme.*

*Representatives of BAME communities who attended this event are in a good position to do this but need to be upskilled in terms of collaboration and make sure that meetings are structured towards reporting progress without getting lost in other issues outside Black youth unemployment.*

#### **Challenge for the panellists, Tower Hamlets seminar, February 2012**

Should there be a campaign around positive discrimination in the labour market?

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

There should be campaigns for positive action. The Commission for Racial Equality used to have many campaigns which it may be timely to remember.

#### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Influence large private sector companies to deliver outreach programmes to support young BAME people from disadvantaged communities, who may not have succeeded in compulsory education, to gain meaningful employment.

Support young people to deliver campaigns to ensure work experience is maintained in areas where there is less access to the necessary social capital.

Monitor the access which young BAME people from disadvantaged areas have to quality work experience, vocational and apprenticeship schemes.

#### **The pressures on young Londoners**

*“Young people are adopting strategies to regain and empower themselves. The so called gangs are a way in which young people are coming together to get power and respect. And I think the key question to be asked of all of us in relation to what can be done relates to looking at ourselves as leaders. We have to look at leadership within the community, economically, culturally, spiritually and educationally. We need to look about how we come together in terms of leadership.”* Patricia Lamour, Aspire Education Group, Islington seminar, November 2012

*Wider societal pressures on BAME communities in the capital were acknowledged and discussed. Social and economic inequalities exacerbate the disaffection and sense of futility felt by some young Londoners. Youth projects can re-engage young people in a positive way and give them the critical knowledge and skills to understand the society they live in, but such projects need better resourcing.*

Social and economic inequalities exacerbate the sense of disaffection and futility felt by some young Londoners. The influence of cultures of immediate gratification and gangs in many of the inner London boroughs where BAME communities are over-represented was highlighted as a concern by many.

Gang culture was considered as a symptom of a society where wealth is very unequally distributed and largely along ethnic lines in inner London, and where not enough is being done to respond. Young BAME Londoners are disproportionately impacted by gang culture as victims and participants, and failure to respond is an issue of race inequality.

Gang culture in areas like Hackney was thought to offer a sense of family and a source of income to some young men who had become, or were at risk of becoming, disengaged with education. It also conferred a sense of status, but not in a positive way, and was linked to the exploitation of girls and young women. Building resilience in these instances was necessarily connected to nurturing a sense of power and equality within communities and demonstrating that engaging in crime, while a part of the social context, was not inevitable.

However, it was recognised by many participants that teachers have an important role to play in building resilience.

*“Developing knowledge of self and heritage, through teacher education as well as parental support, encouraging an aspirational attitude and building resilience”. Panellist, Islington seminar, March 2012*

*“Teachers need to be more reflective, proactive, ask critical questions and have higher expectations from pupils.” Young participant, Islington seminar, November 2013*

The impressive work done by many youth projects is just scratching the surface. The requirement for an adequately resourced and more coordinated community response is urgent. The need for community-led social education to give young people the critical knowledge and skills needed to understand the society they live in was identified as a response to many of the social ills that disproportionately impact them. Projects were needed which would provide young people with means to take positive steps towards attaining their goals and support them in overcoming any racist barriers they face in achieving success. The importance of ‘cohesive’ communities that got together to address the issues and problems in their neighbourhoods was discussed. Participants spoke about the need to support young people in building resilience at an ‘individual level’, but also acknowledged the importance of building wider resilience in the race equality movement.

In response to a question about the lure of the street and gang culture, Sir William Atkinson spoke again about resilience in Hackney:

*“Home values make a difference, but the lure of the street is strong, so pupils need to learn resilience along with consistent expectation raising and setting of boundaries.” Sir William Atkinson, Hackney seminar, February 2012*

## **Challenge for the panellists, Lambeth & Southwark seminar, February 2013**

*How can young people build resistance against negative influences and pressures?*

### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Youth projects, such as SE1 United, should be supported and resourced so that they can continue to provide mentoring and opportunities for young people to develop and share educational, social and leadership skills.*

### **Recommendations for the voluntary sector**

The BAME and youth sectors to collaborate on projects that support youth-led spaces where consciousness can be raised about race equality, experiences can be articulated and explored and responses developed. Outcomes from this to shape the policy influencing work of race equality organisations.

For the BAME voluntary sector to take on campaigns aimed at supporting the sustainability of youth organisations in inner London boroughs.

For local authorities to ensure that youth initiatives, which have a central role in ameliorating community pressures through developing leadership skills, providing training opportunities and employment programmes are fully supported.

### **Community cohesion**

*“It [the Bangladeshi] community is successful politically... educationally... cohesively. At the same time, the statistics for the Bangladeshi community of child poverty, unemployment and overcrowding fit the national picture.” Michael Keating, London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Tower hamlets seminar, February 2012*

*“It is important to work against stigmatising areas like Tottenham, so that applying for jobs from an N17 postcode is not a disadvantage.” David Lammy MP, Tottenham seminar, February 2012*

*There are tensions in relationships between different ethnic communities and also between equality groups. These give rise to highly complex community cohesion challenges such as those which exist in Tower Hamlets. In Haringey, many young people aspire to move out of an area which they see as disadvantaging their employment and economic prospects. A programme of events to bring back a sense of local pride and get young people from different backgrounds working together should be prioritised.*

Community cohesion was raised by some, particularly at Tower Hamlets, as warranting attention; not only relationships between different ethnic communities but also those between different equality groups. In Tower Hamlets, it was reported that understandings of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) BAME people can be based on rigid scriptural interpretations, for example, and can sometimes originate from within BAME communities. Furthermore, it was thought that the issue of homophobia can be appropriated by those who are seeking to promote conflict and community tension.

It was noted that some BAME groups, such as Bangladeshi residents in Tower Hamlets, have achieved relative influence and power in their local area. However, when compared nationally, areas with high concentrations of BAME communities, no matter how diverse or locally well-respected, appear to do less well in social mobility indicators or under the impact of financial austerity. Some of the community cohesion challenges raised

were so complex, it was felt impossible to give them meaningful consideration within a half-a-day seminar.

In Tower Hamlets there is a new problem that has arisen based on racial tension with increased formal and informal activity by the English Defence League (EDL) in the borough. Local young Bengali men are organising in response. There are growing concerns that this issue of tension will increase significantly in the future.

Linked to the issue of community cohesion, community pride in the local area emerged as a discussion point in all areas but particularly in Tower Hamlets and Haringey. The ambition of many young people in both areas was to move out of the neighbourhood they grew up in, which they see as disadvantaging their educational, employment and economic prospects. In Haringey, this was exemplified by perceptions of some young people that having a 'Tottenham based postcode' impacted on job applications outside the borough. More could be done to encourage high achieving young people to remain in the borough and act as role models for others. It was thought that residents could get involved in an initiative aimed at developing pride about living in Tottenham. Seminar participants spoke of a need to do more to identify the good in the area and in its residents, who may be 'unsung heroes'.

In Tower Hamlet's Deputy Young Mayor Tasmina explained that one of her priorities is anti-discrimination at interpersonal levels and shared her team's good practice in addressing this - successful events that bring young people from different backgrounds to work together.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Tower Hamlets seminar, February 2012**

*How can we ensure that the voices of smaller communities are heard?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*Tower Hamlets has a mandate evolved from community discussions which seeks to ensure cohesion and address inequalities. It should be used by community organisations to ensure services meet the needs of residents.*

*Youth services need to expand to minority groups such as the Somali community, white males and girls.*

### **Challenge for the panellists, Tower Hamlets seminar, February 2012**

*What are the police doing to improve the treatment of young people around Tower Hamlets?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*The police are seeking to increase public confidence daily. Monthly surveys are carried out and there is a focus on assessing public satisfaction after interaction with the police. The force is ensuring officers improve on this.*

*The police are working in partnership with safe neighbourhood teams as they obtain most of the local intelligence. By looking at this intelligence and obtaining feedback from the public it will enable the police to work better.*

*Police are being trained and put on the frontline very early on and gain experience in different areas and departments.*

*A lot of work has been done between youth services and police to enable young people to gain a better understanding of how the police work and this should continue.*

## Recommendations for BAME voluntary sector

BAME voluntary sector to undertake positive measures to address the under-representation of young BAME people from disadvantaged urban communities in paid leadership roles.

## The role of the BAME voluntary sector

*With further public spending cuts disproportionately affecting London's BAME voluntary and community sector, there is an urgent need for organisations to come together and for leaders to work in greater collaboration to tackle race inequality. This includes the sector addressing the need for BAME communities to take a more active part in political and democratic processes. This may include a constructive but critical look at the number of organisations in the sector and their capacity to work effectively. It was thought that supplementary schools had a proven track record in meeting the needs of many young people and in engaging with parents and schools on equality and inclusion issues, but some schools faced funding difficulties. The challenges faced by the sector can be turned into new opportunities to regain focus and keep the race equality issue at the centre of the agenda.*

*"The BAME community has always had cuts, but they will hit us harder because we are not fighting together. The government don't need to treat us as a group, because we don't connect in a political way... Voting is a form of representation and a form of voice. Less than 10 per cent of BAME people vote, which says to politicians that they don't need to speak to us, because we have no influence in getting them re-elected." Participant, Islington seminar, November 2012*

*"There is no real power house that represents the interests of BME communities at the most senior levels – we don't have a race equality council in Hackney nor do we have a Black caucus of individuals who regularly work together for the benefit of the Black Diaspora – we need to address this."*  
Jake Ferguson, Hackney seminar, February 2012

Concern was expressed at all seminars about the disproportionate impact of public spending cuts on London's BAME voluntary sectors' ability to meet growing frontline needs, and also to organise a coordinated approach to tackling race inequality. In many boroughs there is no adequately resourced mechanism through which BAME communities can have strategic dialogue about their community's futures.

A number of participants felt there is a need to look at significant numbers of organisations in the sector, which may impact on its effectiveness. There was a perception that some individual organisations needed better support in finding ways to enhance their capacity and contribution to the sector. Some examples of good practice were given. Participants referred to supplementary schools, many of which had been shown to be effective in enhancing pupil achievement and parental engagement. Such schools had also contributed to raising awareness of equality and inclusion issues e.g. with parents and with teachers in mainstream schools, but faced funding difficulties. At the House of Lords, Rita Chadha called for a discussion that focuses more on internal conflicts which, she felt, is essential in order to arrive at a BAME voluntary sector and race equality movement that is fit for purpose. Many mentioned the need for leaders to work in greater collaboration.

Many saw the current challenges as an opportunity. At the House of Lords, Superintendent Leroy Logan said: *“We became very very complacent. We lost focus and in many ways allowed race to come off the agenda”*. Participants saw challenges to the sector as an opportunity to move past this.

### **Challenge for the panellists, Islington seminar, March 2011**

*How can funding be improved for supplementary schools?*

#### **Discussion points and solutions**

*As funding is on the decline, efforts must be made to demonstrate the need for supplementary education as a fundamental part of the school system.*

*Solutions to the problem centre on networking, the creation of forums, better monitoring of pupils and of those in need of supplementary education, lobbying and combined or collaborative bids for funds.*

### **Counteracting racism and inequality: a revived race equality movement**

*There is a call for a revived race equality movement which should give more space to young people, with an emphasis on self-determination, resilience and agency. An inclusive movement, linked to other social justice movements, is sought and ways of achieving this are discussed. There are indications that Voice is key in addressing race inequality.*

‘What can we now do to progress race equality?’ was a question explicitly asked of all 500 people who took part in the seminars. Answers included many different ideas about responses to quite specific local issues of inequality. Overall however, the need for the race equality movement to be revived was a focal point of conversation. Many ideas were put

forward. Those which achieved the greatest consensus included:

### **A movement with more space for young people**

*“I have been working in this field for about three years and I think there is a very big gap between the elders in the community and what’s going on with the young people. And this is down to communication. What are we as leaders saying to young people and how do we get them involved. There is a lot of academic terminology that is being used that is not actually being reflected back to our young people and our community members and the people we are representing. Last year over the summer with the standing up against the fees and the riots, we should have been talking to the young people more. Young people need to be supported more to engage”*. Whitney Iles, Vice-Chair of Equanomics, Founder of NoSexWithOutLove and Project 507 Ltd, House of Lords seminar, November 2011

*“As Deputy Young Mayor one of our main priorities is anti-discrimination. We recently held the Young Mayor’s One Borough event where we brought together young people from different areas and different backgrounds...it’s the little things like this – getting the community together and having that sense of cohesion – which reduces racism.”* Tasmina Khanum, Deputy Young Mayor, Tower Hamlets Seminar, February 2012

There was a call for a movement with more space for young people and awareness of their lived experiences, which are distinct from that of the generation which dominates the BAME voluntary sector. Younger participants spoke of youth-led spaces where

consciousness can be raised about race equality, experiences can be explored and responses developed.

Sustained and meaningful youth forums and leadership programmes that provide a platform in which young people can make their recommendations, or shape policing, for example, and which gives them public affirmation were considered.

Young people need an education about racism and discrimination, support to understand the impact that it has on their lives and to be enabled to work against it at institutional as well as individual levels. Such an education should provide young people with an understanding about what their rights are, where they can get help if they are experiencing racism, and include anti-discrimination law. Along with this, young people also need a social education that enables them to build resilience to some of the pressures they face living in inner city London.

### **A movement built on self-determination, resilience and agency**

*“A movement beyond seeking to influence public institutions, refocused on self-determination and building resilience to racism at community as well as individual levels; one which seeks to address the ‘glass-ceiling’ while building resilience that enables individuals to overcome it.”* Participant, House of Lords seminar, November 2012

*“While the glass ceiling exists, children and young people need to be aware that it can be broken, whatever their social circumstances, gender, ethnicity etc.”* Participant, Hackney seminar, February 2012

*“[There is] a need to look at different levels of resilience within communities: cultural and social capital.”* David Lammy MP, Tottenham seminar, February 2012

*“It’s about young people taking bad experiences and turning them into something good. Building resilience [across all cultural groups] has to continue.”* Young person, Islington seminar, February 2012

*“Building resilience among job seekers at risk of facing racism: Active racism and institutionalised racism has to be tackled as a societal issue, and through levers for change, such as the Equality Act, but at an individual level, the unfair world has to be dealt with.”* Participant, Hackney seminar, February 2012

Central to discussions about a revived and inclusive race equality movement was the idea of ‘self-determination’ with communities shaping solutions and leading on their implementation without reliance on the state. ‘Survival’ was one of the most common themes throughout the *Shaping the Future* seminar series, with participants focusing on the need to instil resilience. The seminars were widely welcomed as a space for this – for mutual support and reflection on solutions to racism. The need to couple this with informed and purposeful policy influencing work was highlighted.

Within this, many felt a positive stance needed to be taken by race equality organisations focusing on concepts of resilience, agency, assets and aspiration, rather than overly focusing on disadvantages. At the House of Lords, Dr Nicola Rollock spoke of *“the need to consider how those in positions of power – white middle classes – are advantaged by their race and how they work to retain their privilege”*.

It was also felt that greater emphasis is needed on supporting people to report, take action against, and build resilience to racism at an individual level. There is a need to recognise that while racism limits the life opportunities of many, individuals can find ways around it, and buck the trend. Many felt that as a community, alongside the fight against institutional racism, there is a need to support positive responses at individual levels. This aspect was explored in the specific theme 'Pressures on young Londoners.'

### **A movement in which Voice is key**

*"I struggle to see how Black communities are going to make strategic changes if there remains a lack of Black people in positions of power....where are the opportunities for Black and ethnic communities to have strategic dialogue about their futures in an increasingly competitive and financially restricting world?" Jake Ferguson, Hackney CVS, Hackney seminar, February 2012*

*"We have produced a whole wave of BAME police officers just below the commander level. These have been waiting to take over from other senior officers on retirement. What has been the outcome of that? Well, it's not surprising there are now no, or maybe one, BAME member of the Association of Chief Police Officers. For the next ten years, we are not likely to see any Senior Police Officers from BAME backgrounds. The whole top layer of the police is not going to be informed by personal experience of racism in this country." Dr Richard Stone, House of Lords seminar, November 2011*

*"Those who argue that parents need to scrutinise schools fail to understand that very often parents are unaware what they need to be scrutinising. This is why Black parents don't demand or connect together. Even if they did, we are not sure how much of an effect this would have on the situation. However, children's education is the most important job as a parent, and we must never give up on that." Participant, Islington seminar, March 2012*

Voice was identified as central to addressing inequality and under-representation of BAME people in senior statutory roles and democratic process; in education, in the police force, the judiciary and in local services. Participants identified many examples where under-representation was evident, for example: only 30 of England's 21,000 head teachers are Black men; the lack of BAME QCs; no BAME people in the senior judiciary; 860 of the 32,000 London Metropolitan police officers are Black.

*"We need more than three Black Chief Superintendents out of 73; Eight Black superintendents out of 176; 22 chief inspectors out of 391 in London." Dr Richard Stone, Hackney seminar, February 2012*

Many felt that BAME communities do not know enough about rights and about how to demand accountability from the public sector regarding equality. This was specifically addressed in the earlier subsection, 'Legislative and Policy Tools.'

In Tower Hamlets, part of the success in terms of political representation was attributed to youth services as many current local politicians were members of youth clubs from a young age. In Hackney, Cllr Vernon noted that the local democratic system was a route into influencing policy, but that "Councillors need to be worked harder - communities

*that do not typically speak out need to be mobilised. There are 57 councillors in Hackney that could be influenced”.*

Other examples of achieving political representation were shared. Cllr Webbe told how 3,200 people now vote for Islington’s Youth Council and that seven out of eight of the youth councillors are BAME.

In the Islington November seminar, panel members responded to the question, *“What can be done to support BAME community groups to have a voice?”* Access to and sharing of space was needed, as well as sharing of resources and experience. Cllr Caroline Needham said that the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham was helping groups to find meeting places and would engage parents in having their voices heard. Gus John thought that inviting supplementary schools into mainstream schools would help, by increasing representation of BAME parents and teachers within schools. It was also noted that schools which work together can open up dialogue with BAME community groups about their children’s educational needs. At the Islington March seminar, Elizabeth Henry focused on partnership working, good practice sharing and improved training and support for BAME parents to assist and progress education.

Linked to discussions about strengthening the voices of BAME communities was the idea of the need for more opportunities where race can be considered. Nicola Rollock, at the House of Lords, spoke about how there is no ‘space’ for a meaningful conversation about race and race equality – *“unless we want to leave it to the likes of Goodhart and New Black Politics”.*

*“We need to clarify the internal discussion about race equality... We need more opportunities where race can be deconstructed and constructed positively again. We need a much more enlightened discussion that encompasses everybody.”*  
Rita Chadha, House of Lords seminar, November 2011

### **Recommendations for the BAME voluntary sector**

Work more collaboratively to develop and implement strategies to engage the public in race equality work, including in raising independent funds for ‘A movement built on self-determination, resilience and agency’. This would ensure the strength of the race equality movement is not dependent on the ideologies of whichever political party is in power at the time.

## Conclusion

Participants in the *Shaping the Future* seminar series agreed some progress had been made in addressing racism in our country since Stephen Lawrence was tragically murdered in 1993. However, there was overwhelming consensus throughout the seminars that this progress was not enough; BAME children and young people still face unequal outcomes in many key areas of life. Of particular concern were inequalities faced in relation to education, training, employment, criminal justice and mental health and well being. There was concern about the disaffection of some young BAME children and young people as a consequence of inequality thwarting the opportunities available to them. Participants were also highly concerned about the underrepresentation of BAME people in senior statutory roles and democratic processes, and felt it would be impossible to achieve race equality until this was addressed. Given the reduction in the size and capacity of the BAME voluntary sector following wide-spread public spending cuts, addressing this underrepresentation was seen to be even more important. Participants agreed that our society is far from 'post-racial', as is claimed by many social commentators and policymakers.

While the impacts of wide-spread policy reforms and public spending cuts had yet to be felt in full during the seminar series, participants felt they were likely to have detrimental impacts on London's BAME communities and, particularly in education, that much of the progress that had been made towards improving outcomes for BAME children and young people in recent years would be reversed. Furthermore, new manifestations of the impact of institutional racism were identified, such as the marginalisation (in

terms of central government funding, shortages of school places and so on) of inner London areas where BAME children and young people reside in greatest proportions.

The need for new approaches to progressing race equality were identified, including a revived race equality movement, which engages the general population and young BAME people more effectively, and which is built on self-determination, resilience and an independent grant fund. Participants put forward many solutions to the challenges discussed and a range of recommendations for various stakeholders including parents, the BAME voluntary sector, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the public sector, the Greater London Authority (GLA), Ofsted, initial teacher training institutions, local authorities, schools, school alliances and academy chains and parents. ROTA has already begun work to progress a number of these. We hope this report will support others who took part in the seminar series to do the same and that it acts as a source of evidence of need and ideas for projects they seek to develop.

## Appendix 1

Abu Mumin, Senior Manager, Osmani Trust

Ilham Gassar, Council of Somali Organisations

Ambrose Quashie, Economic Regeneration, Haringey Council

Andrew Muhammad, Westside Young Leaders Academy

Andy Gregg, Chief Executive, Race on the Agenda

Anthony Robinson, Lawyer in Human Rights and Equalities

Brian Dickens, North Lambeth and North Southwark Sports Action Zone

Clasford Stirling MBE, Broadway Farm Football Club

Cllr Alan Strickland, London Borough of Haringey

Cllr Andrew Harper, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, London Borough of Barnet and board member of London Councils 14 – 19 Young People's Education and Skills Board

Cllr Caroline Needham, Shadow Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services, London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Cllr Claudia Webbe, London Borough of Islington

Cllr Rakhia Ismail, London Borough of Islington

Colin Adams, Chair of Hanley Crouch Community Association

Cllr Jilani Chowdry, London Borough of Islington

Cllr Rachel Heywood, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, London Borough of Lambeth

Darren Coghlan, Head of Specialist Education Services, London Borough of Southwark

David Lammy MP, Tottenham

Deputy Young Mayor Tasmina Khanum, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Dr Elizabeth Henry, Chief Executive (former), Race on the Agenda

Dr Jeanelle de Gruchy, London Borough of Haringey / NHS North Central London

Dr Keith Davidson, Author and former headteacher

Dr Richard Stone, ROTA Patron

Dr Rob Berkeley, Director, Runnymede Trust

Dr Somen Banerjee, Interim Director of Public Health, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Dr Tony Sewell, Chair of the Mayor of London's Education Inquiry

Frankie Sulke, London Borough of Lewisham, Association of London Directors of Children's Services, Board Member of London Councils 14 – 19 Young People's Education and Skills Board and Panel Member of the Mayor of London's Education Inquiry

Graham Smith, Head of Planning and Equalities, Cambridge Education @ Islington

Ilham Gassar, Female Policy Development Officer, Council of Somali Organisations Muhammad Rabbani, Aasha Gang Mediation Project

Rebecca Shaw and Jack Gilbert, Co-Chair, Rainbow Hamlets

Mary Durkin, Service Head for Youth and Community Learning, London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Jacob Whittingham, SE1 United

Jacqueline Stewart, Hackney Parent Governor

Jake Ferguson, Hackney CVS

Jennette Arnold AM, London Assembly Member for North East London and Chair of the London Assembly

Jenny Hinds, Manager, Blackfriars Project

Jessica Hodgson, Work Services Directorate, North London District, Department for Work and Pensions

Jude Kelly, Artistic Director, Southbank Centre

June Jarrett, Haringey Sixth Form College

Karen Buck MP, Shadow Minister for Education (Former)

Lauren Pemberton-Nelson, Deputy UK Youth Parliament Representative for Southwark

Leander Neckles, Necko Consultancy

Lela Kogbara, Director of Regeneration, Strategy and Partnerships, Islington Council

Lizzie McPhee, Lambeth Parent Activist

Michael Keating, Service Head, One Tower Hamlets, Tower Hamlets Council

Munira Mirza, Deputy Mayor for Children and Culture

Munira Muhammad, SE1 United

Narendra Makanji

Nigel Nottidge, Chief Inspector, Safer Neighbourhood Team

Omar Jobson-Lewis, Ludusmagnus

Patricia Lamour, Aspire Education

Patrick Vernon, Chief Executive, Afiya Trust

Phillip Kissi, External Relations Manager, Job Centre Plus

Professor Gus John, Education Consultant and Associate Professor, Institute of Education

Robin Walker, Black History Walks

Rueben Tapper, Young Fathers Worker, Immediate Theatre

Shaynul Khan, Assistant Director of the East London Mosque and London Muslim Centre and Chair of Tower Hamlets CVS

Shounde Adejugbe, SE1 United

Simon Israel

Sir William Atkinson, Phoenix High School

Sona Mahtani, The Selby Trust

Steve Belk, Acting Chief Executive, the Learning Trust

Sukhpal Grewal, Partnership Manager, Finsbury Park Jobcentre Plus

Superintendent John Carroll, Haringey Police

Superintendent Robert Jones, Hackney Police

Superintendent Simon Corkhill, Acting Borough Commander, Islington Police

Timi Raji, young research and education consultant





### What is ROTA?

ROTA is an action research and social policy organisation focused on issues impacting on Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities.

As a BAME-led organisation, all ROTA's work is based on the principle that those with direct experience of inequality should be central to solutions to address it. Our work is actively informed by the lived experiences of BAME communities and their organisations.

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