

Tackling Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination in London's Labour Market

'3DsLondon'

Final Report



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Although many individuals have contributed to the success of the project, its findings and conclusions are the responsibility of the researchers alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or position of the LSC or ESF.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. London contains some of the highest areas of poverty, deprivation and worklessness in England. In response, a whole range of project initiatives have been developed to improve access to work, particularly among those experiencing the greatest risks of long-term disengagement and social exclusion.

2. Often, however, some of these initiatives were carried out with little awareness of the initiatives that have already been tried and tested elsewhere in London. To help fill this gap, the 'Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination' project, supported by Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Pan London European Social Fund (ESF) Funding has mapped and analysed learning and skills development projects that support access to employment by members of disadvantaged groups across London.

3. Information has been gathered on initiatives targeting workless people from the following disadvantaged groups: black and minority ethnic groups (BME); refugees and asylum seekers; disabled people; 16–19 year olds not in employment, education or training ("NEET"); older people (aged 50 and over); lone parents; homeless people; travellers; ex-offenders; drug and alcohol misusers; people living in areas with high levels of deprivation; returners to the labour market; people made redundant; long-term unemployed 12 months+; economic migrants.

4. This report summarises findings from returns from 362 provider organisations in the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, relating to more than 500 projects designed to help disadvantaged groups gain access to the labour market. A high proportion of survey responses came from voluntary and community sector organisations. The analysis of findings combines the survey returns with case studies of good practice and with information from 42 semi-structured interviews and nine focus groups involving providers, stakeholders and participant groups. The qualitative research focused on a subset of the disadvantaged groups that were included in the survey, namely: 16–19 NEET group, long-term unemployed, people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation with a secondary focus on refugees and asylum seekers, ex-offenders, people with disabilities, lone parents.

5. The findings build on existing research about barriers to learning and employment and provide additional evidence-based support for measures that give help to members of disadvantaged groups in their efforts to get employment and stay in work. The 3DsLondon research gives voice to the perspectives of people from disadvantaged groups that can otherwise easily go unheard in analytical and policy discussions.

6. All interviewees felt that there are important conceptual differences between disadvantage and discrimination, although the level of detail in which the distinction was explained varied between providers, participants and wider

stakeholders. Many indicated that it was about the difference between social positioning and social action, and nearly all thought that the distinctions were blurred in practice, because social position influences the way providers, employers and public institutions act and can reinforce the social position of disadvantage.

7. By their involvement with employment initiatives, the participants interviewed had in effect overcome barriers to engagement, but there was a difference between those who had joined a project voluntarily and those who were part of mandatory schemes such as some of the New Deal programmes. The latter had more reservations about their project. For both types of participants the two most important aspects of involvement for them personally were:

- The general support offered by the providers; and
- The 'soft skills' that had been developed, such as raised motivation, enhanced self-esteem, communication and group working skills.

8. The barriers that project participants discussed during the interviews and focus groups were the high cost of travel and the difficulty of moving from social security benefits into low waged employment. Interviewees also saw a major obstacle in the attitudes and expectations of employers, whom they felt were unwilling to give them a chance. Lack of work experience or track record in employment was seen by them as the most important barrier to inclusion in the labour market.

9. Providers stressed the need for an inclusive and holistic approach to tackling disadvantage and emphasized physical and economic obstacles, as well as the social and cultural barriers that make it difficult for participants to move into employment even once they have become 'engaged' through learning and skills development. Providers have a good understanding of the needs of their target groups and often work in partnership with specialist organisations or community groups to reach disadvantaged target groups.

10. Many providers were uncomfortable with project funding arrangements, which were seen as rigid and target driven, making it difficult to take a holistic view of the client needs or to tailor provision. Funding was also seen as very fragmented, making it difficult for providers to consolidate their expertise for the benefit of their client group(s); it also resulted in a reliance on temporary staff, with the attendant problems of lack of continuity and difficulties of organisational learning and capacity building. Successive rounds of short-term funding result in projects ending and others being initiated – in other words “re-inventing the wheel” - using a disproportionate amount of resources on start-up rather than building on experience.

11. The stakeholders saw work with, or in relation to, disadvantaged groups as central to their organisations' objectives. Whilst some pointed to the resources available to disadvantaged groups and how much money was spent on particular issues such as Skills for Life, others felt that however much had been achieved it was but “a drop in the ocean” or “only scratching

the surface of the deeper social issues". There was broad agreement on what constitutes success in project delivery for disadvantaged groups including outreach work and capacity building with voluntary and community sector groups.

12. The limitations of current funding regimes are acknowledged by the stakeholder organisations, including fragmentation, revisiting old ground and some mismatch between funders' objectives and the focus of provider organisations or the expressed needs of the target groups. Whilst the different stakeholders recognised the operational need for a co-ordinated approach, the particular focal interests of their own organisation could drive them in different directions.

13. The report also highlights the importance of collaboration between different agencies in order to tackle the multiple disadvantages that many individuals experience and that put them at risk of social exclusion. Different agencies necessarily have distinct governance styles, remits, objectives and protocols. Nevertheless agencies may wish to consider fostering the more coordinated approach that seems to be emerging. Such a co-ordinated approach across a range of agencies, embracing inter alia social security benefits, health, housing, and child care, is required to ensure that clients are properly equipped to enter the labour market.

14. The research results are available as three main outputs:

- An on-going web-based database for provider and stakeholder organisations in London who want to find out what initiatives for disadvantaged groups are already offered. It can be searched by single or combined criteria including target group, project objective, London borough or Learning and Skills Council (LSC) sub-region, funder, type of provider organisation, project outcomes and other aspects.
- A CD toolkit format, which will be particularly useful to practitioners. This includes summary charts from an analysis of the projects in the database; a model of 'critical success factors', five good practice case studies and the executive summary and recommendations from this research report.
- A model of critical success factors has been developed from analysis of the database findings and the views expressed in the qualitative interviews and focus groups by project participants, by providers of training and guidance, and by stakeholders and employers. This proposes that a combination of internal and external factors can make a qualitative difference to disadvantaged individuals' progress in learning and skills development and their move into employment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations arise directly from the research results. They are directed principally at funders and commissioning bodies, since it is they who determine the direction of present and future initiatives. In some cases there are also recommendations, either direct or implied, for providers in considering the services they deliver and the good practice guidelines that are available. It is through their activities that interventions for members of disadvantaged groups become effective:

1. Major funding organisations should consider working together more closely to
 - co-ordinate their tender requirements to enable providers to prepare more effectively for applications to different funders and funding rounds
 - avoid fragmentation of projects in relation to target groups and in particular geographical areas
 - share good practice as identified for example in independent evaluation reports that some funders have commissioned.
2. Funders (possibly working jointly) should consider the scope for giving projects with a good track record reassurance of continuing funding and show awareness of the timescales required by provider organisations for building and maintaining capacity. This would avoid a loss of experienced staff and awareness of the project amongst members of the target group(s) at the end of each project.
3. Funders should consider taking a more prominent responsibility for advocating the value of this work, and should recognise the time needed for the lengthy process of tackling disadvantage through the learning and skills development required to ensure that participants are ready for jobs in London's labour market.
4. Arrangements should also extend to ensuring that provider organisations are able to develop and maintain the on-going capacity to respond to emerging policy requirements and initiatives, and to interpret and understand client needs in a changing environment.
5. Providers are urged to make fuller use of existing channels for sharing good practice, including the database that has been developed with this research, and of Adult Learning Inspectorate findings that work to a common benchmark of good practice.
6. Both providers and project funders need to work more closely with sector skills councils and with individual employers to ensure that work experience is built into many more of the projects that they actually fund.
7. The lack of employer involvement in many projects is a point of weakness that needs to be tackled by many different agencies through:

- better information from government agencies to employers (eg about 'Access to Work' information for disabled people)
 - better links between providers and employers with the support of funding agencies to ensure co-ordinated rather than fragmented approaches to employers
 - sector skills councils, LSCs and initiatives such as LDA's 'Diversity Works' working to help raise awareness amongst employers of the business benefits of recruiting and training a more diverse workforce.
8. More innovative ways may need to be found by funding organisations and policy makers to consult with project participants as well as with providers, with a view to broadening the outcome target definitions attached to projects.
9. To monitor progress on such developments the major funding agencies should consider ways of keeping the 3DsLondon database up to date, expanding it and including a regular assessment of evaluation reports.

1.0 PROJECT RATIONALE and OBJECTIVES

1.1 Introduction

This report sets out the findings of the “Tackling Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination in the London Labour Market” (3DsLondon) research project, which has been funded by the LSC Pan London ESF co-financing programme for 2005/06. The research project aimed to identify effective ways that projects and initiatives in London have developed for supporting members of disadvantaged groups in their efforts to enter employment.

The 3DsLondon research was developed in partnership between:

- Five London Learning Partnerships¹:
 - Central London Learning Partnership
 - London West Learning Partnership
 - North London Learning Partnership
 - Partners in Learning (East London Learning Partnership)
 - South London Learning Partnership
- Southern and Eastern Region TUC
- Refugee Council
- London Voluntary Service Council
- CITB-ConstructionSkills
- Working Lives Research Institute at London Metropolitan University (as lead partner).

These partners were joined by other agencies with experience of working with and on behalf of disadvantaged groups and communities. They included representatives from

- London Learning and Skills Councils
- Jobcentre Plus
- London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium
- DABD (Disability Association Barking and Dagenham)
- Open College Network London Region

The project steering committee (PSC) was aware that many training, advice and job brokerage programmes in the past and present have tried to assist disadvantaged groups to enter the labour market; equally they recognised that there is a massive and continuing level of unmet need in London. The research has aimed to provide information that will assist providers and funders in their attempts to build on and consolidate existing experience in tackling disadvantage and social exclusion.

¹ During the course of the research two of the five London Learning Partnerships ceased to exist as independent network organisations.

The research was designed to meet a number of objectives, as set out in the research proposal and subsequently refined in meetings of the Steering Committee. The stated objectives include:

- To examine the particular needs of the following groups which all experience disadvantage and/or discrimination in the labour market: black and minority ethnic groups, refugees and asylum seekers, disabled people, 16–19 year olds not in employment, education or training, older people aged 50 and over, lone parents, homeless people, travellers, ex-offenders, drug and alcohol misusers, people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, returners to the labour market, people made redundant, long term unemployed (12 months and over), economic migrants;
- To collate and develop a database about the range of approaches and measures that have been used by different providers to support people who are disadvantaged in the labour market and to combat discrimination;
- To analyse available information about the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of different initiatives and projects in order to identify ‘critical success factors’ for engaging people who are currently disengaged from education, training and job opportunities;
- To identify examples of good practice that help combat discrimination by enabling the inclusion and empowerment of members of the targeted groups;
- To make recommendations to decision makers and providers on good practice for supporting disadvantaged groups, and to produce a database, a toolkit and organise a dissemination conference in London.

The research undertook a strategic overview of what had already been achieved under different funding initiatives, the barriers and critical success factors involved when working with disadvantaged groups, and how good practice is developed and disseminated to ensure that future initiatives can build on achievements to date.

The methodology used for the research included a postal questionnaire with provider organisations; individual semi-structured interviews with project participants, providers and stakeholders; focus groups with project participants, employers and providers; as well as detailed case studies, to develop the analysis. The research methods are described fully in Appendix C. This report sets out the findings that have emerged and the recommendations arising from them. Appendices to this document include a glossary of terms and background information about the policy context.

1.2 Tackling worklessness and promoting equality and diversity in London's labour market

The “Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination” research maps and analyses information about projects or initiatives that support members of disadvantaged groups that experience higher than average levels of worklessness in London to gain access to employment. It is based on responses to a postal questionnaire survey.

Support measures reported by respondents include learning and skills development (often leading to a qualification); providing information, advice and guidance (IAG); facilitating individuals' personal development; offering work experience or intermediate labour market programmes; brokering opportunities for volunteering, and other means. Projects often combine several such measures. The term project is used loosely in the research report to embrace any initiative that focuses on helping workless members of the specified disadvantaged groups to develop their employability skills to enter the labour market.

Currently, knowledge of what has already been tried and what projects have been successful is patchy. By mapping and profiling recent projects offered by providers in the statutory, voluntary and community, and private sectors, the research has produced a bank of information that will be valuable to funders and practitioners for revealing patterns and trends in provision. It will also be a useful reference tool for members of the target groups.

Many projects have aimed to improve the confidence and employability of disadvantaged Londoners. It is important that the experience gained and lessons learnt from these projects are preserved and developed. To help providers and funders consolidate the process of learning from experience and moving forward, the 3DsLondon web database has been set up. This can be accessed at www.3DsLondon.info

The 3Ds London research focuses on projects that have run between 2001 and 2006 – a period during which there have been many important policy developments in the areas of learning and skills and employment at national, regional and local levels. To help set the context a brief summary of national policies and major stakeholders and funders is provided in Appendix B.

The database is not at present an exhaustive catalogue of the initiatives in London supported by all of the possible provider organisations, but the 500 projects currently listed provide a useful picture of the many initiatives designed to support those who are at risk of social exclusion. It is possible to analyse the information on the database by target group, number of beneficiaries, gender and ethnic distribution of beneficiaries, project objective, hard and soft outcomes, borough and sub-regional distribution of projects, source of funding, type of provider organisation, and other variables. The 3DsLondon database adds value to the information provided elsewhere and is innovative and distinctive in that it captures information across different

funding streams for a range of different target groups and includes information on project outcomes.

The questionnaire survey has been particularly successful in obtaining information from smaller providers in the voluntary and community sectors, which often work most closely with the target disadvantaged groups. In interviews some of the provider organisations felt that their contribution to tackling disadvantage was not fully acknowledged, and thought that current funding regimes made it difficult for them to capitalize on their experience in a way that would benefit disadvantaged groups.

In addition to carrying out the survey and setting up the database, the researchers conducted interviews and focus groups with providers, participants, funders, policy makers, and advocacy organisations. The qualitative research has increased understanding of how members of different disadvantaged groups, including the so-called 'hard to reach groups', can be engaged, what training and other support is helpful, how employers' awareness of the benefits of recruiting a diverse workforce can be raised, and how to engage them in projects for disadvantaged groups. Economic, cultural and linguistic factors as well as psychological barriers can make it difficult for members of disadvantaged groups to access employment. In turn this militates against their prospects of establishing the economic and skills base for improving their situation and overcoming the factors that give rise to disadvantage and deprivation.

The 3DsLondon research has shown that a twin approach is required to make a real impact on disadvantaged groups: discrimination in the labour market needs to be challenged wherever it occurs and disengagement felt by members of disadvantaged groups needs to be overcome. Learning and skills initiatives, backed up by additional support, are necessary to help individuals overcome their disengagement and increase the number of people able to break out of the cycle of disadvantage and deprivation, with the result that London's labour market can become more diverse, more inclusive and more effective.

The findings from the 3DsLondon project contribute to both the worklessness and the diversity and equality debates. The findings from the research can point the way towards developing effective means through which the socially excluded can be supported to access learning and employment. The research is thus highly relevant to the work of the Skills and Employment Board chaired by the Mayor, which has supplanted the former London Skills Commission, to give impetus to bringing together the skills, employment and worklessness agendas and determining the strategy for adult (post 19) skills training in London.

3DsLondon supports the work of the agencies represented on the board and explores ways of furthering social inclusion through developing the skills and productivity to strengthen London's position as a sustainable world city. During 2002-05 the London Skills Commission's Framework for Regional Economic and Skills Action (FRESA) identified the priorities for research,

collaboration and delivery for key organisations within London. The 3DsLondon project relates closely to the FRESA strategic objectives, priority themes and flagships and to the London Skills Commission Action Plan for 2005/6 that followed on from the FRESA. The policy background to the research is set out more fully in Appendix B.

The “Tackling Disadvantage, Disengagement, Discrimination in the London Labour Market - 3DsLondon” research provides additional evidence about the wider issues of skills, employment and social inclusion in London and can help to inform these debates.

1.3 The impact of ‘disadvantage’, ‘disengagement’ and ‘discrimination’ on individuals, communities and the London economy

The concepts ‘disadvantage, disengagement, discrimination’ form the title of the project and are often mentioned in policy and project discussions about the issues, however they are complex concepts that warrant a brief consideration of their meanings.

The concept of ‘*disadvantage*’ or ‘*disadvantaged group*’ is used throughout the report to indicate a range of problems that prevent people from participating fully in the labour market and in society generally. The characteristics by which each of the target groups is defined can be the source of disadvantage in the labour market. This is of course not to say that all members of these groups are in a disadvantaged position in the labour market, but rather that the populations defined by these group characteristics face proportionately higher levels of disadvantage than the general population. Of course, individuals will have different experiences and should not be stereotyped due to their ‘group category’. It is also important to note that sub-groups of the broadly defined target groups for this research may have proportionally lower levels of disadvantage – for example some ethnic minority groups have higher rates of economic activity and employment than the general population.

A range of factors can combine with the characteristics of these groups and contribute to an individual members’ disadvantage - factors such as low skills and low educational achievement, unemployment, low income, poor health, bad housing, family difficulties, and lack of social capital – to mention some of those that the research has found to be particularly important. These factors are more often than not interlinked (low income due to poor skills and qualifications or poor health due to bad housing conditions etc) but it would go beyond the scope of this research to discuss possible causal relationships between the different factors associated with disadvantage. However qualitative evidence of the cumulative nature of the different facets of disadvantage was obtained and is highlighted in the concepts of ‘multiple disadvantage’ or ‘multiple deprivation’.

A low level of skills is perhaps one of the most significant disadvantages in the London labour market. A section of London's labour market has high skills requirements but there is also a large amount of low skill work, much of it at minimum wage levels. At the core of this research is the investigation of how the level and type of skills of individuals from the target groups link to their disadvantage in relation to the London labour market.

The relationship between disadvantage and discrimination is complex. Disadvantage can be a source of discrimination; and similarly discriminatory actions can create or reinforce disadvantage. Three examples from the research interviews and focus groups exemplify the difficulties of trying to establish a causal link between them. A respondent who lives on a certain estate felt that employers discriminated against him because of his residence, another felt that employers did not give her the opportunity to prove herself because of her Afro-Caribbean background. The decision by an employer not to consider a well-qualified applicant with a criminal record for a job was seen as discrimination by the applicant but may be interpreted as disadvantage arising from the criminal record by others. It has not been part of this research to explore these perceptions in relation to the reported incidents, nor to formulate a statistical model of causal relationships between disadvantage and discrimination.

'Discrimination' as defined in the equal opportunities legislation refers to treating someone less favourably on grounds of gender, race (including colour, ethnicity or national origin), disability, age, faith or sexual orientation. A distinction is made between direct and indirect discrimination. Processes of discrimination in the labour market can occur either 'directly' whereby particular groups of workers are deliberately or consciously treated unfavourably by employers, or 'indirectly' where the effect of certain requirements, conditions or practices imposed by an employer has an adverse impact disproportionately on one group or other since only a small proportion of them can meet the criteria. The concept of 'institutional discrimination' has become widely used following the Stephen Lawrence inquiry (Home Office: 1999); it refers to the discrimination that is implicit in the policies and culture of institutions and is often expressed through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and stereotyping; institutional discrimination reinforces individual prejudice and disadvantages particular groups.

'Disengagement' is used in educational circles to refer specifically to disaffection with learning; this type of disengagement particularly affects some young people, although it is not exclusive to them. The term NEET (not in education, employment or training) refers to a social position of disengagement from those major formal institutions within which young people are usually socialised. In this report the concept of 'disengagement' is more broadly used to refer to individuals of any age who do not participate in employment or learning and who lack the motivation or incentive to try to get access to the labour market or to improve their skills. They may however be part of important social networks through family, faith, language or local

community. The extent to which different informal social networks support or possibly undermine inclusion is an increasingly important part of the debate about social exclusion. Evidence from our interviews indicates that 'disengagement' may be a reaction to the processes of 'social exclusion' rather than its source, but that it serves to reinforce such exclusion.

The 3DsLondon concepts are also related to the concepts worklessness, social exclusion and poverty are relevant to the discussion on disadvantage in the labour market and its policy implications. These concepts are themselves multidimensional and not always interrelated (Atkinson, 1998) (Barry, 1998), for example, points out that social exclusion can occur between groups that are not significantly distinguished from one another economically. A more detailed discussion of the concepts can be found in (Hills et al, 2005) and Hills and Stewart (2005).

Worklessness is a relatively recent term which is different from 'unemployment' and different from 'economic inactivity' in that it is used to describe those who are without work but who would like to find a job (Campbell, 2001). In (Ritchie et al., 2005) worklessness is defined broadly as detachment from the formal labour market by certain groups. Workless individuals include people who are unemployed and claiming benefits, people who are economically inactive and people who are working in the informal economy. There may be many reasons for worklessness including reasons associated with general conditions in the labour market. In the context of this research worklessness is included in relation to the situation of individuals from disadvantaged groups and their ability to compete successfully for available employment, as well as in relation to the perceptions and actions of employers when recruiting for jobs. Work, in the sense of employment or self-employment, is for most people their main means of income; lack of work can therefore lead to poverty, particularly when all members of a household are workless. The government's 'Welfare to Work' programme and the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal are underpinned by a policy approach that sees work as the main means of getting people out of disadvantage and poverty (Campbell, 2001, Hills and Stewart, 2005).

The term 'social exclusion' is widely used by the current Labour government in the UK and within the European Union to denote the processes involved when people or places suffer from a series of problems that combine to create a 'vicious cycle'. Yet the meaning of social exclusion tends to fluctuate and the term is often used interchangeably with 'poverty'. Consequently, there continues to be a lack of clarity in its meaning. The report "Tackling Disadvantage: A 20-year enterprise" (Darton et al., 2003) defines 'social exclusion to signify the processes which create disadvantage'. However the authors of the current report see 'social exclusion' as the relative lack of opportunity to develop one's potential and the inability to participate as a full member of society because of marginalisation from employment, social networks due to processes such as discrimination and to personal factors such as low motivation and disengagement. This state of powerlessness over one's own life arises because of processes of direct or indirect discrimination and a failure of mainstream institutions to facilitate participation of all social

groups. In other words, rather than seeing social exclusion as the source of disadvantage, the authors regard social exclusion as the outcome of multiple disadvantage often compounded by discrimination.

1.4 Disadvantaged groups

When talking about disadvantaged groups it is important not to confuse the characteristics of a population with the characteristics of sub-groups or even individuals or within it. This is particularly the case when talking about a diverse category such as BME groups. Whereas BME groups overall have higher than average levels of worklessness some sub-groups within the BME category (for example Indian and Chinese) have higher than average levels of education achievement or employment. Some oversimplification is therefore involved in the terminology used in this research when references are made to 'disadvantaged groups'.

The disadvantaged groups that are the focus of this research² are defined on the basis of various characteristics relating to their ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, their ages and levels of qualifications, their domestic responsibilities, their residence and their health statuses, and/or their criminal record. These groups have a higher level of disadvantage in terms of worklessness than the general population other groups and often a lower level of basic qualifications and skills including ESOL (English for speakers of other languages). The disadvantaged target groups that were included in the research all experience significant barriers to employment. More often than not the disadvantaged groups are not discrete groups, the disadvantages overlap and the individual beneficiaries who took part in the research experienced multiple disadvantages and may fall under more than one group category.

The disadvantages experienced by members of the target groups for this research that make it difficult for them to get jobs are often represented in terms of 'barriers to work'. In addition to the need for learning and skills development, the main barriers that have been identified in this and other research (Campbell et al., 1998) include: responsibility for caring for children and other dependents, the difficulty of getting to places where jobs might be available due to distance and/or cost of transport and the costs associated with attending interviews and starting work (for example, necessary clothing and equipment). These barriers are common, but vary in extent and effect and it is important to tailor provision to the needs of particular groups and individuals.

² Black and minority ethnic groups; refugees and/or asylum seekers; people with disabilities; 16 – 19 year old –NEET; Older people (over 50); lone parents; homeless people; travellers; ex-offenders; drug and alcohol misusers; people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation; returners to the labour market; people made redundant; long term unemployed (more than 12 months); economic migrants.

Recent GLA Economics research has shown that London has a higher proportion of people with characteristics associated with labour market disadvantage than the rest of the country, and that many of them face multiple barriers to work. Nevertheless government spending per capita that is devoted to tackling worklessness in London falls behind spending figures in other parts of the UK (Meadows, 2006a).

The London economy is growing while about a third of working age Londoners remain workless. Disadvantaged groups and individuals are not able to participate fully in the prosperity associated with the growth of London's economy, in part because of a mismatch between their relatively low level of skills and the high skills requirements of the industries that are expanding and recruiting from an increasingly globalised labour market.

The London economy includes advanced technology, creative and professional sectors that are associated with high levels of skills and qualifications in the so-called 'knowledge economy'. The largest sector of employment in London is financial and business services. Other important sectors that are expected to grow are other (mainly public) services, transport and communications, retail and distribution and hotels and catering (GLA Economics, 2006). Construction activity and employment is also anticipated to increase due to major infrastructure and housing projects such as the 2012 Olympic Games and the Thames Gateway. While a higher proportion of people in London are employed in professional and managerial occupations than in other parts of the UK the labour market, there are also a large number of lower skilled jobs in occupations such as administration, cleaning, security and hospitality. Another factor is that London continues to attract a large number of migrant workers – over 40 % of the 1.5 million migrants to the UK are estimated to be based in London (Salt, 2006). They are present across the labour market, but in particular in many routine jobs that are low paid, demanding and/or involve anti-social hours.

In summary, the developing sectors in London all have occupations at different skills levels and labour demands present opportunities for involving employers in skills development projects for disadvantaged groups. However, established industry structures and methods of recruitment can restrict opportunities for disadvantaged groups. For example, the construction industry often recruits informally and on a short-term basis, making it difficult for disadvantaged groups to access opportunities. This highlights that training people in new skills alone is not necessarily sufficient; there need to be systems for supporting them to gain work experience, which requires a pro-active partnership between private and public sectors.

By ensuring that all groups of Londoners will be able to benefit from growth in employment opportunities, there is potential to reduce income inequalities and social exclusion. Participation in learning, to develop and raise skill levels, and participation in employment, are important routes out of "disadvantage, disengagement and discrimination" and can make a real contribution to upskilling the future London workforce. This research provides tools that funders and providers and other stakeholders can use to make these

outcomes more effective. Keeping one-third of Londoners 'workless' squanders much of the potential contribution of these diverse communities to London's social and cultural life and to the London economy.

2.0 MAPPING DISADVANTAGE IN LONDON

London is a lively and dynamic capital city, a region of economic growth, artistic, cultural and architectural achievement and home to an ethnically and culturally diverse population. Despite its strong economy and high level of wealth, extreme inequality sits alongside affluence, and London is also home to a large number of groups who face multiple disadvantages and whose rates of worklessness are significantly higher than the national and London averages (Darton et al, 2003; GLA, 2002).

A variety of factors shape the patterns and trends in growth and inequality. London is an economic engine that generates new employment and affords increasing earnings for many people, which acts to attract inflows of migrants from both across the UK and overseas. But this is contrasted with high costs of living for social needs such as housing, transport and childcare, and a large number of low wage jobs with limited opportunities for progression.

In this chapter key statistics for London are brought together to illustrate the diversity of London's population and highlight the disparities in the economic situations of different social groups. This data needs to be understood against the backdrop of a region with a growing economy and increasing demand for labour. Many job opportunities are often unavailable to London residents who are members of disadvantaged groups. The projects included in the 3DsLondon database aim to enable members of disadvantaged groups to develop the skills necessary to open up greater employment opportunities for themselves. The benefit of tapping their productivity will in turn strengthen the diversity and the dynamism of the London economy and its workforce.

Statistical data about London are included to establish the context and provide a reference point for the analysis of the 3DsLondon research findings. The data provide a useful profile for users of the 3DsLondon research results. They also provide information for provider organisations, some of whom commented that data about disadvantage by borough and target group will be useful to them. Sources of relevant data are therefore included at Appendix D.

2.1 London: Regional Profile

A series of key indicators on London's population and economy are compared with the UK as a whole in Table 1. With regard to population, it shows that London has a proportionally smaller population of pensionable age, which reflects the trend for movement out of the city as people get older. Employment and economic rates in London are lower than in the rest of the UK, but measures of average household incomes and median earnings are higher and average dwelling prices are considerably higher. In comparing these indicators, it is important to note that averages somewhat mask the levels of disparity within the population.

Table 2.1: Key Statistics for London

	London	UK
Population, 2004 ¹ (thousands)	7,429	59,835
Percentage aged under 16 ¹	19.4	19.5
Percentage pension age and over ¹	13.9	18.6
Economic activity rate ² , spring 2005 (percentages)	74.8	78.5
Employment rate ² , spring 2005 (percentages)	69.3	74.4
Unemployment rate ² , spring 2005 (percentages)	6.9	4.7
Median gross weekly earnings: males in full-time employment, April 2005 (£)	574.8	471.5
Median gross weekly earnings: females in full-time employment, April 2005 (£)	482.9	371.8
Gross value added, 2004 (£ billion)	165.0	1,005.4
Gross value added per head index, 2004 (UK=100)	132.2	100
Total business sites, March 2004 (thousands)	383.1	2,573.1
Average dwelling price, 2004 (£ thousands) (Not note/source '1')	274.9	183.4
Average gross weekly household income, 2001/02 to 2003/04 (£)	740	554
Average weekly household expenditure, 2001/02 to 2003/04 (£)	485.50	406.20
Households in receipt of Income Support/Working Families Tax Credit ¹ , 2003/04 (percentages)	9	15

Source: London regional Profile, National statistics

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=1132&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=310>

Notes: 1 Population figures for 2004 are mid-year population estimates.

Pension age is men aged 65 or over and women aged 60 or over.

2 Seasonally adjusted data for people of working age, men aged 16 to 64 and women aged 16 to 59.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), 2004 has been developed to aggregate the many different economic, social and environmental indicators for a geographical area in order to produce an overall framework for ranking them by their relative level of deprivation. As such, it provides a useful instrument for comparing them. Table 2.2 shows how London boroughs rank within the IMD 2004 in relation to all 354 local authority areas within England.

For a summary see

http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1128444#P18_329

Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Islington rank amongst the ten most deprived boroughs in England and a further four boroughs, Newham, Haringey, Southwark and Camden rank within the 20 most deprived in the country. Other boroughs - including Lambeth, Westminster, Greenwich, Barking & Dagenham, Waltham Forest, Lewisham, Hammersmith & Fulham, Brent, Ealing, Hounslow, Enfield and Kensington and Chelsea – are within the one-third of most deprived local authority areas nationally. Within each borough there are also disparities and even in some of the least deprived boroughs there are pockets of deprivation.

Table 2.2: Index of Multiple Deprivation for London Boroughs

out of 354 of which 1 is the most deprived

Tower Hamlets	4
Hackney	5
Islington	6
Newham	11
Haringey	13
Southwark	17
Camden	19
Lambeth	23
Westminster	39
Greenwich	41
Barking and Dagenham	42
Waltham Forest	47
Lewisham	57
Hammersmith & Fulham	65
Brent	81
Ealing	99
Hounslow	102
Enfield	104
Kensington and Chelsea	116
Wandsworth	128
Croydon	140
Redbridge	163
Hillingdon	166
Bexley	212
Havering	214
Merton	220
City of London	226
Harrow	232
Bromley	238
Sutton	236
Kingston upon Thames	266
Richmond upon Thames	301

Sources: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004, Office for the Deputy Prime Minister (Data compiled from key information for London boroughs provided by the Government Office for London website: <http://www.go-london.gov.uk/boroughinfo/>)

Economic activity rates of London’s population are shown in the following tables. Members of disadvantaged groups often find it difficult to take advantage of work opportunities or to enter the labour market - either due to their lack of the increasingly high levels of skill required by employers or unwillingness to take on low paid jobs on offer, prolonged disengagement from the labour market, or the particular nature of their disadvantage (e.g. being an ex-offender). They may also experience discrimination related to age (considered to be too young or too old), race and ethnicity or immigration status such as being a refugee.

Projects and initiatives aim to tackle the above factors by enabling disadvantaged people overcome barriers to employment. For example, projects have been developed to provide skills, advice and guidance and/or to provide childcare to mothers and fathers to enable them to follow a course or find a job. There is also a range of initiatives to overcome age-related disadvantage by targeting specific age groups. The types of projects that are included in the 3DsLondon survey need to be seen alongside many regeneration schemes that aim to improve the living conditions of residents in deprived wards and that try to involve local people in the local economy.

Economic Activity of London’s population

- By Gender

Table 2.3: Percentage of Economic Activity of Working Age Population by Gender for 2005-2006

	London	United Kingdom
Male	81.0	83.0
Female	67.0	73.0
All people	74.5	78.1

Source: Annual Population Survey, March 2005 – May 2006

- By Ethnic group

Table 2.4 Employment Rate of Working Age Population by Ethnicity for 2005-2006

	London	United Kingdom
white	74.7	75.8
non-white	57.0	58.7
all mixed ethnic group	62.9	63.6
Indians	70.2	70.2
Pakistanis/Bangladeshis	40.5	42.9
Black or black British	57.5	61.1
All other ethnic group	54.1	58.0

Source: Annual Population Survey, March 2005 – May 2006

- By Age

Table 2.5: Economic Activity of Working Age Population by Age group for 2005-2006

	London	United Kingdom
working age	74.5	78.1
16-19	35.9	55.9
20-24	67.4	76.0
25-34	80.8	83.4
35-49	80.2	84.8
50-retirement age	73.5	72.5

Source: Annual Population Survey, March 2005 – May 2006

- By London Borough

Table 2. 6: Unemployment rate – working age Apr 2005 – March 2006

Area	percent	confidence
England	5.1	0.1
London	7.8	0.5
Barking and Dagenham	9.5	3.0
Barnet	6.6	2.6
Bexley	4.4	2.0
Brent	8.4	2.8
Bromley	3.6	1.7
Camden	8.2	2.9
City of London	!	!
Croydon	7.4	2.3
Ealing	10.4	2.8
Enfield	9.8	3.0
Greenwich	8.7	2.6
Hackney	10.9	3.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	8.6	2.4
Haringey	8.8	2.5
Harrow	7.1	2.7
Havering	6.5	2.5
Hillingdon	10.0	2.8
Hounslow	8.0	2.4
Islington	7.6	2.7
Kensington and Chelsea	7.1	2.4
Kingston-upon-Thames	6.7	2.4
Lambeth	9.1	2.9
Lewisham	7.6	2.5
Merton	9.1	3.0
Newham	8.8	2.8
Redbridge	5.2	2.3
Richmond-upon-Thames	3.3	1.6
Southwark	8.4	2.8
Sutton	3.5	1.8
Tower Hamlets	12.9	3.2
Waltham Forest	8.1	2.5
Wandsworth	7.2	2.7
Westminster, City of	10.8	3.0

Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

- By socio-economic classification of working age population

Table 2.7: Socio-economic classification of working age population, spring 2004

Socio-economic classification	London	United Kingdom
Higher managerial jobs	14.7	10.7
Lower managerial and professional	24.1	22.2
Intermediate occupations	9.1	10.0
Small employers and own account workers	7.3	7.5
Lower supervisory and technical	5.9	9.1
Semi-routine occupations	9.5	12.9
Routine occupations	6.4	9.4
Never worked, unemployed and NEC	23.0	18.1
All working age (thousands)	4,767	36,279

Source: Source: Office for National Statistics, Region in Figures, Winter 2004/05, (Table 4.5)

Note: Not Elsewhere Classified (NEC) which includes: students, occupations not stated or inadequately described and not classifiable for other reasons)

The data presented in Tables 2.3 to 2.7 reveals information about levels of disadvantage in relation to London's labour market across the boroughs:

- The female economic activity rate for London is about 5 % below the national rate and 12 % below that of males in London (Table 2.3)
- Members of non-white ethnic minority groups have a lower economic activity rate than white groups both in London and nationally (Table 2.4)
- Economic activity rates amongst both the youngest (16–24) and oldest (50+) age groups are lower in London than in the UK generally (Table 2.5)
- The London borough distribution of unemployment (Table 2.6) reflects the overall borough ratings according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (Table 2.2). High levels of multiple deprivation such as in Tower Hamlets or Hackney result from higher unemployment. This pattern also reflects that larger ethnic minority populations – more likely to experience unemployment - are resident in these boroughs.
- In the classification by socio-economic group the proportion of people in the 'never worked, unemployed and NEC' category is significantly higher in London. The large number of students in the capital would contribute to this proportion. However it also reflects levels of unemployment and disengagement of some groups from the labour market. (GLA, 2006, Meadows, 2006b) (Table 2.7).

2.2 Disadvantaged Groups

Availability of reliable data on the characteristics of specific disadvantaged groups within the London area is limited whether in respect of their general characteristics or their position in the labour market. However, a number of overall pointers can be derived from existing sources.

Indicative data about some of the disadvantaged groups in the study is listed below. Appendix D includes links to existing sources which users can consult for detailed information.

3.0 Questionnaire survey and database analysis

The database is based on a postal questionnaire survey. The questionnaire was sent in different waves to a wide range of providers in London during the period May 2005 to August 2006. Some questionnaires were sent out directly by the project team and others were distributed through partners. At least 7,000 questionnaires were sent out in all, most as hard copies but also some electronically. Some providers downloaded the questionnaire from the project website. The questionnaire is attached as Appendix F

All information gathered by means of the questionnaire is stored in a Microsoft Access Database consisting of various relational tables including simple and complex queries. The database includes information on:

- *Organisations*: contact details, person responsible, type of organisation, London borough and London LSC sub regional location.
- *Projects*: project title, the date of project delivery - if the project is ongoing, and how often has the project been delivered - project objectives, project funding, project partnerships, target groups (both main and secondary targets) and any special focus the project might have had in terms of age, gender or ethnicity.
- *Project participants*: age group, the gender and ethnic group of the project participants, area of project recruitment (both in terms of London boroughs and London LSC sub region), and size of the projects.
- *Project outputs and outcomes*: qualification awarded at the end of the project, participants' progression, any 'soft' outcomes, any feedback received by the organisation, any particular sector targeted by the project, results of any evaluation of the project and other recommendations.

The information from the MS Access Database is also accessible as an on-line searchable tool on the web at www.3DsLondon.info. The development of a web-based database became possible halfway through the project in early 2006. The web database has the capacity to serve the interests of a variety of different users and assist with their queries. The web database will be particularly useful for:

- *Provider organisations*
The 3Ds database will help providers benchmark their provision, provide ideas for future developments and collaborations or partnerships and assist in the design of future proposals.
- *Funders and decision-makers*
The database is also expected to be useful to funding bodies and decision-makers as it provides information on existing provision, participants and project outcomes both locally and on a pan-London basis over the last five years across different funding streams. The

information could help shape future funding while improving provision for disadvantage groups in London.

- *Information Advice and Guidance providers*
IAG providers will be able to use the website as a way of informing themselves and advising clients about the range of provision for particular target groups and particular geographical areas. The database does not however try to provide a detailed course listing.
- *Members of target groups and support organisations*
Potential project participants and organisations that provide support to particular disadvantaged groups will find the information useful for gaining a picture of what is available and what could be suitable for their own circumstances (certain project participants that took part in our qualitative research thought that the database would be useful for them in this way).
- *Researchers*
Researchers from academic and public policy establishments will also find useful information about the range of initiatives providing access to employment for particular disadvantaged groups.

Users of the 3DsLondon web based database will be able to run their own queries. For ease of reference an analysis of the data with selected summary tables and charts is also included in this report. This analysis of summary data from the survey is based on 500 responses and is structured in three main subheadings: Projects, Participants and Providers. Within each of these subheadings the order of the information follows that of the questionnaire.

Information from the 3DsLondon database (December 2006) about progression routes, project frequencies and number of participants is currently available for descriptive purposes only. Further development of the database in terms of number of project entries and the addition of new variables, will enhance the capacity of the 3Ds London database to produce statistically meaningful models combining several variables. For example, in these models one could study the relationships of project outcomes using the following variables: project objectives, project frequency or number and participants combined. The 3DsLondon database can be improved statistically for stakeholders and project providers.

3.1 About the projects

The following analysis is based on 500 responses to the 3Ds questionnaire survey, which included questions about provider organisation, project objectives and disadvantaged target groups, participants and projects outputs and outcomes. The survey results help to illustrate trends and give an insight to London's provision for the disadvantaged, but it is added that further development would be necessary to make it a tool for statistical analysis. The

3Ds database stores information about a range of projects that target disadvantaged groups and have been delivered between 2001 and 2006. The majority of entries are recent projects (from 2004 – 2006). Attempts to gain information about earlier projects were largely frustrated; in most cases project staff had left after funding had come to an end and questionnaires were returned either unopened because former staff could not be contacted or, alternatively, current staff informed us that they did not have access to information or records about completed projects.

Dates and frequency of project delivery

The majority of projects in the database are offered as rolling programmes (as shown in Table 3.1) either through mainstream funding or following repeated funding applications, often to a variety of different funders. 48 projects were delivered just once; 21 projects twice, 6 projects three times and 33 projects were delivered more than three times. 32 projects did not respond to this question.

Table 3.1: Project Frequency

Project frequency	Number of times delivered
Rolling programme	359
Once	48
More than three times	33
No response	32
Twice	21
Three times	6

Project Objectives

Each project on the database pursues one or several objectives to help project participants develop their employability skills and access employment.

Although some projects have more than one objective, Table 3.2 shows that basic or general employability skills and IAG are amongst the most frequently cited objectives of the projects in the 3DsLondon database, followed by access to jobs, vocational training, skills for life volunteering and raising employer awareness (which also includes work experience placements). The majority of projects focused on increasing participant’s employability through multiple support measures, of which access to jobs was one of a number of project objectives. There were fewer projects that had access to jobs as their specific and sole project objective. This reflects the fact that providers addressed the multiple support needs of participants within their projects; it may also reflect providers’ apparent difficulties in engaging employers in a sustained manner.

Table 3.2: Number of projects by Type of Objective

Type of Objective	Number of projects
Basic or General Employability Skills	256
Information Advice Guidance	253
Access to Jobs / Job brokerage	204
Vocational Training	185
Other	175
Literacy	167
ICT	167
Numeracy	149
Volunteering	119
ESOL	119
Raising employer awareness	102

Project Objectives and Target Groups:

Information on project objectives has been cross-referenced with each of the main target groups. Projects that target BME groups tend to have basic/general employability skills, IAG, access to jobs and vocational training as their main objectives – whereas projects for disabled people tend to have raising employer awareness and/or volunteering or ICT as their objectives. Projects for the long-term unemployed and 16-19 NEET groups predominantly aim to provide mainly access to jobs, basic or general employability skills, information advice guidance and vocational training. There are no other clear trends when cross tabulating target groups with project objectives.

Project objectives and participants age:

As shown in Table 3.3, people in the age ranges 20-24, 25-49 and 50+ have been recruited mainly to projects that provide IAG and basic and general employability skills, while 16-19 year olds largely participated in basic or general employability skills and vocational training projects. Projects aiming at raising employer awareness as well as volunteering have the fewest participants - in all age groups. The fact that raising employer awareness does not rank high amongst the project objectives can be interpreted in a number of ways. It suggests that most projects have difficulty in making direct contact with employers. Funding may also not have been directed to support work with employers to help change their processes and attitudes in relation to recruiting people from diverse groups. Various initiatives may be delivering capable people looking for employment, but employer demands may continue to limit their opportunities; this was obvious within the construction industry, where a large number of projects prepare members of disadvantaged groups for entry to the industry but many still fail to get jobs despite the continuing demand for labour. There is a need to place more emphasis on working directly with employers.

Table 3.3: Project objectives by participants' age

Objective	16-19	20-24	25-49	50+
Access to Jobs / Job brokerage	23	38	43	32
Basic or General Employability Skills	38	48	52	39
ESOL	13	22	20	17
ICT	24	30	30	24
Information Advice Guidance	30	49	52	40
Literacy	22	25	26	15
Numeracy	17	25	24	18
Other	19	26	24	15
Raising employer awareness	9	16	18	15
Vocational Training	28	32	39	28
Volunteering	8	15	15	11

Target Groups³

Respondents to the 3Ds survey were asked to identify the main disadvantaged group targeted by their project and, where appropriate, to also list up to three other target groups. However, in many cases the distinction between main target group and secondary target group was artificial as many individuals experience multiple disadvantages (e.g. individuals may be refugees from an ethnic minority and lone parents). About 10% of respondents listed more than one disadvantaged group as their main target group. There may be several explanations for this:

- The project has been specifically designed to target individuals with two or more disadvantages, for example 16-19 NEET or BME groups.
- The project did not aim to recruit one specific target group so the respondent listed several disadvantaged groups that participated in the project.
- The project may nominally target one main group, but in practice many of the participants faced multiple disadvantages.
- The organisation as a whole targets several disadvantaged groups and the information provided was for the organisation rather than for a specific project.

³ Throughout this chapter, the analysis is based on target groups selected as 'main target group' for each project by the provider organisation, unless otherwise stated.

Overall distribution of target groups

Table 3.4 presents information on the overall distribution of projects by type of disadvantaged groups as a main target.

Table 3.4: Number of projects by Main Target Group

Main target group	No of Projects
Black and minority ethnic groups	152
People with disabilities	71
16-19 year olds not in employment, education or training	66
Refugees and/or asylum seekers	59
Long term unemployed (more than 12 months)	52
People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation	48
Returners to the labour market	35
Homeless people	20
Lone parents	16
Ex-offenders	13
Older people (50+)	9
Drug and alcohol misusers	6
People made redundant	3
Economic Migrants	1

The most frequently targeted groups in descending order are BME groups, followed by disabled people, 16-19 years old NEET, refugees and asylum seekers, long term unemployed, and people living in areas of multiple deprivation. The priority given to these groups is a reflection of the current policy and funding directions in London that aim to address both the difficulties that these groups experience in accessing employment in the London labour market and the lack of diversity in the workforce in many employment sectors. The frequencies are similar when tabulating information on secondary target groups.

Table 3.5: Number of Projects by Secondary Target Group

Secondary target group	No of Projects
Black and minority ethnic groups	152
Long term unemployed (more than 12 months)	138
People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation	128
Refugees and/or asylum seekers	86
Returners to the labour market	81
Lone parents	80
People with disabilities	60
16-19 year olds not in employment, education or training	59
Older people (50+)	56
Economic Migrants	54
Ex-offenders	44
Drug and alcohol misusers	42
Homeless people	32
People made redundant	22
Travellers	6

Both tables indicate that there is relatively little provision for certain disadvantaged groups.

Geographical distribution by main target group

The majority of projects captured by the 3DsLondon database⁴ have been developed and delivered within the LSC sub-regions of London East and London Central regardless of whether one looks at a projects recruitment area or at the organisations' location (see Tables 3.6 and 3.15).

Table 3.6: Number of projects by London LSC sub region (in terms of where participant are recruited)

London LSC sub region	Number of projects
London East	244
London Central	205
London North	150
London West	150
London South	116

In Table 3.6, London South contains fewer projects, possibly reflecting fewer deprived areas than for the average of the London region as a whole. London East is the largest of the London LSC sub-regions and includes two of the

⁴ Some projects recruit from more than one London LSC sub region. Data in Table 3.6 also included pan-London projects

three London boroughs that rank amongst the 10 most deprived in the country⁵; a larger number of projects that target disadvantaged groups is therefore to be expected. There is also a concentration of provider organisations based within the London East and London Central sub regions.

Table 3.7 shows the boroughs from which projects recruited participants. Most projects recruited from London boroughs in East and Centre, followed by boroughs in the North and the West of London.

Table 3.7: Number of projects by London borough (in terms of participant recruitment)

Borough Recruitment area	No of projects	Borough Recruitment area	No of projects
Pan London Projects ⁶	81		
Hackney	76	Newham	42
Haringey	75	Westminster	41
Lambeth	65	Barnet	37
Southwark	63	Bromley	35
Barking & Dagenham	62	Greenwich	35
Islington	62	Waltham Forest	35
Brent	60	Wandsworth	34
Enfield	59	Redbridge	31
Hammersmith & Fulham	56	Havering	29
Camden	53	Kensington & Chelsea	26
Ealing	53	City of London	22
Lewisham	53	Merton	21
Hounslow	52	Bexley	20
Croydon	45	Sutton	20
Tower Hamlets	44	Richmond on Thames	16
Hillingdon	43	Kingston on Thames	15
Harrow	42		

⁵ see IMD in chapter 2

⁶ 16% of projects featuring in the 3DsLondon database (of 500 entries) recruit their participants on a pan-London basis

Project Funding

Table 3.8: Number of Projects by Funding Source

Funding Sources	Number of projects
European Social Fund (ESF)	174
Learning & Skills Council (LSC)	170
“Other”	98
Local Authority	93
Jobcentre Plus	88
Trust or Charity	64
London Development Agency (LDA)	48
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF)	39
Single Regeneration Budget	32
Association of Local Government (ALG)	30
Connexions	29
Lottery Funding	27
Home Office	17
Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities	15
Fast Forward	12
Government Office for London (GOL)	11

In the overall distribution of project funding sources, the largest number of organisations received funds from ESF and LSC, most probably as part of the co-financing initiative. This result was to be expected, given the twin focus of the 3Ds research on disadvantaged target groups and on employability. The LSC is the main funder for education and skills development for adults (16+) and the recent policy emphasis has been on raising qualification levels in order to reduce educational and employment disadvantages. A major focus of ESF Objective 3 is on helping disadvantaged groups gain access to employment.

The third most important funding source selected by respondents was “other”. The importance of the “other” category is due to the existence of a large number of funding bodies for projects for disadvantaged groups (some of them very small). It also reflects the way in which some organisations have to bring together small amounts of funding from a wide range of diverse sources. These other sources of funding include:

- Self-funding
- Participants fees
- Other government funding not listed in the questionnaire e.g. the Department of Health or Sure start
- Voluntary donations

- Other organisations including NIACE Widening Adult Participation and Achievement Fund (WAPAF)

Local Authority, Jobcentre Plus, LDA and trust or charity funded projects also feature highly and there are a smaller number of projects funded by other bodies.

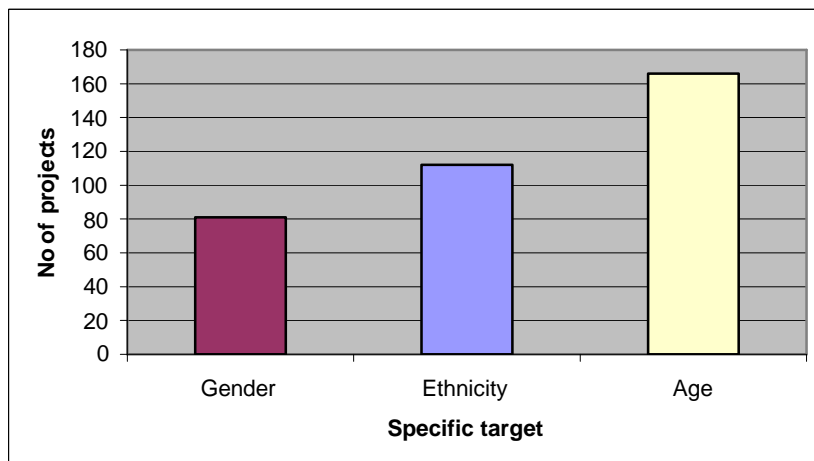
In terms of project objectives, the majority of funders have focused on projects with a main objective of developing basic or general employability skills or IAG. The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and Jobcentre Plus funded access to jobs or job brokerage projects and the Neighbourhood Learning for Deprived Communities mainly funded skills for life projects.

3.2 About the projects' participants

Specifically targeted projects

The 3DsLondon data contains information about the age, gender and ethnicity of project participants. Some of the projects have been developed to specifically target people from particular gender, ethnicity or age groups. Most respondents selected just one primary focus for their project (where applicable) and only a very small proportion of respondents selected a combined theme focus, such as Somali women.

Chart 3.1: Distribution of specifically targeted projects



As we can see in Chart 3.1 over a half of such projects⁷ have an age focus (aimed mainly for either young or older people). Of those that focused on gender, the majority of projects aimed at female participants and only a few on just men. The difficulties of working with men are illustrated by one project

⁷ Half of the projects in the 3DsLondon database responded to this question (261 out of 500 projects)

that had initially intended to focus on men but instead attracted a large number of female participants and eventually changed its focus.

The objectives of specifically targeted projects mirrored the overall distribution with IAG, vocational training and access to employment featuring as the most common in all three categories.

Participants’ ethnic group – age – gender

By ethnic group

The ethnic group categories in the Census were used in the questionnaire, in line with the recommendations of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE).

Table 3.9: Main Ethnic Groups of projects’ participants

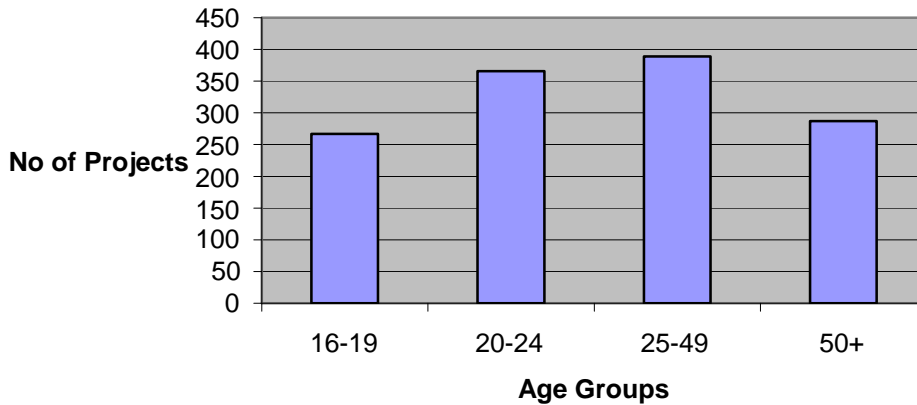
Main ethnic group	Total no projects
White British	177
African	118
Caribbean	94
Other Black	72
Bangladeshi	44
Other White	45
Indian	40
White & Black Caribbean	39
Pakistani	38
Other Asian	29
White & Black African	28
Chinese	27
Irish	20
Other Mixed	19
White & Asian	19
Other background	15

The majority of projects in the 3DsLondon database indicated that the main group of their participants are from White British origin followed by Black African and Caribbean, Other Black, Bangladeshi and Other White. Fewer projects indicated that people of mixed or Chinese origin were their main group of participants.

By age

The majority of projects worked primarily with participants between the ages of 24 and 49. There are fewer projects working largely with participants in the younger group of 16 – 19, or in the older age groups, as Chart 3.2 shows.

Chart 3.2: Age groups of Participants in Projects



By gender

Information about gender was collected as percentages. There are more projects with a greater number of female participants than projects where males predominate. A small number of projects recruit equal numbers of male and female participants (Table 3.10)

Table 3.10: Distribution of projects by Gender

% Of Gender Distribution	No of Projects
Female – greater than 50%	224
Male – greater than 50%	159
50% male – 50% female	47

There is a considerable difference between male and female participation in some types of projects. For example, in the case of lone parents and returners to the labour market the majority of participants were women as childcare is still predominately a women’s issue in society⁸. However, it could also mean that male participants do not feel very comfortable in participating in projects that they perceive to be designed for women. Men on the other hand are over-represented in projects that target the long-term unemployed, older people 50+ and homeless people⁹.

⁸ The average participation for lone parent projects is 77% for females and 15 % for males. For returners to the labour market the average participation for females is 66 % compared to 33% for men (for projects included in the 3DsLondon database).

⁹ The average participation for older people is 60% males and 39 % females, for long term unemployed it is 53 % male and 43 % female and for homeless people 57 % male and 30 % female

Project participation

Within all 500 projects in 3DsLondon survey, a total of 383,822 disadvantaged people from all groups and areas of London participated in projects designed to support their entry to the labour market or access to further courses. These projects vary in size according to the number of participants they can accommodate. The following size categories were selected by looking at combinations that produced meaningful groupings to describe the results.

Table 3.11: Number of projects by size

Size of project by number of participants	Number of projects
Very small (up to 25)	55
Small (26 -100)	123
Medium (101 - 500)	166
Large (501 – 1000)	49
Very large (1001 - 60000)	41

Progression routes

The questionnaire also asked for information about progression routes of project participants after they left the project, i.e. whether they gained any qualifications, moved into employment or undertook further courses. Out of 500 responses, 434 questionnaires provided information on progression. Some projects were unable to provide any information, for example where the activity was still on-going. Responses to this survey question tend to give estimates of progression routes as observed by providers. Routes vary according to project objectives, for example some vocational courses tend to lead to a qualification outcome whereas others may provide IAG or general employability skills without leading to a qualification. Thus, although the results should be approached with some caution, they do provide a useful indication of the overall picture.

Table 3.12 shows progression rates of participants.

Table 3.12: Average proportion of participants by progression route and by project size

	Very small (Up to 25 participants)	Small (26-100 participants)	Medium (101-500 participants)	Large (501-1000 participants)	Very large (1001-6000 participants)
Got a qualification	21.9	33.7	32.3	26.7	24.5
Got a part or full time job (16 hours+ per week)	9.0	13.8	12.1	17.7	17.9
Got a part time job (less than 16 hours per week)	6.9	9.9	5.5	7.7	4.4
Progressed to other courses or projects	16.9	17.9	15.4	20.2	18.6
Other / None of the above	11.3	5.2	5.0	5.2	3.5
Number of observations	55	123	166	49	41

Description of statistics by group size: a higher average proportion gain qualifications in small and medium sized projects. A higher average proportion of participants in large and very large projects gain part or full time jobs than any of the smaller projects. For part time jobs (>16 hours) there is not much difference between the group sizes. Participants in large projects show the highest average progression routes to other courses or qualifications, followed by participants in very large projects.

Across all groups, about a third of participants obtained a qualification. About 15% went on to full time (or nearly full time) employment and 7% into part-time employment (of <16 hours per week). The average proportion of participants across the range of projects of different sizes that gained a qualification or moved to other courses or projects was higher than for participants that got a part-time or a full-time job. By comparing these results with the overall distribution of awards (see table 3.16), it appears that there is considerable encouragement from providers for participants to gain a recognised qualification. This may also reflect the emphasis placed by some of the major funders on qualification outcomes. The average proportion of participants that move on to other projects or courses may reflect the need of disadvantaged participants for further preparation before they are ready to apply for jobs. It is also clear from what the providers said that it is considered a success when participants stay on and gain at least a certificate of attendance.

Table 3.13: Average proportion of participants by progression route and main target group of projects

	Got a qualification?	Got a part or full time job? (16 hours+ per week)	Got a part time job (less than 16 hours per week)	Progressed to other courses or projects	Other / None of the above
Black and minority ethnic groups	34	14.3	5.2	14.9	5.4
Refugees and/or asylum seekers	43	14.5	8.7	20.8	4.5
People with disabilities	30.7	16.8	9.5	18.4	4.6
16-19 year olds NEET	29.4	8.5	6.5	15.3	6.6
Lone parents	20	4	0.5	31.2	0.3
Homeless people	30.8	9.4	8.8	21.4	7.1
Ex-offenders	22.1	17.2	10.9	13.4	11.8
People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation	21.3	15.2	5.2	25.2	4.7
Returners to the labour market	32.8	13.8	4.3	11.3	12.6
Long term unemployed (more than 12 months)	16.5	12.8	12.5	14.3	0.1
Other	44.5	17.9	5.8	26.0	3.0

Note: The category 'other' includes: older people 50+; drug and alcohol misusers; people made redundant; economic migrants and travellers

Table 3.13 (as well as table 3.12) suggests that on average more projects led to an educational progression route than an employment-related progression route. The average proportions of participants that gained qualifications varied by target group. For example, lone parents and people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation had a lower average proportion of qualifications but higher progression routes into other courses or projects.

For the long-term unemployed the data show that average learning and skills and employment outcomes are balanced. The average progression routes for ex-offenders to full time or part time employment are amongst the highest shown, whereas the 3Ds London qualitative research revealed that ex-offenders faced real difficulty in accessing the labour market due to the disadvantages and discrimination experienced by the group.

Soft Outcomes

Apart from hard outcomes, all of the projects that feature in the 3Ds database also included some additional benefits – also known as ‘soft outcomes’, - which are not so easy to measure but are considered very important in helping particularly disengaged people to approach the labour market. According to providers, the following are important outcomes, from the participants’ point of view:

- Increased confidence and motivation
- Job search skills
- CV writing skills
- Access to guidance (vocational, personal etc)
- Social development through teamwork and meeting new people

The term ‘soft outcomes’ is used to distinguish personal developmental outcomes from more directly measurable outcomes (such as the number of qualifications achieved by participants at the end of a project). Describing them as “soft skills” undervalues them, since these outcomes are clearly central to the achievement of many project participants and are important to their longer term engagement, even if they do not result in immediate outcomes. Sometimes the most successful outcomes with some of the most disadvantaged groups are not about climbing up a ladder of qualifications and achievements but are about a change of values and an identity shift towards engagement with learning and skills development and with community and citizenship.

Several initiatives to measure soft outcomes exist, notably RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement in Non-accredited Learning) which is being implemented and embedded across LSC-funded provision¹⁰. In the 3Ds project, it has not been possible to gauge the impact of RARPA and no specific references to RARPA were made by respondents.

¹⁰ Guidance is also available from DfES, see <http://www.londono3.ecotec.co.uk/resources>

3.3 About the provider organisations

Type of organisation and project partnerships

The majority of projects featured in the 3Ds database (61%) were delivered as part of a partnership; this was explored further through further comments in the questionnaire as well as in the qualitative research. Some organisations praised the supportive role of their partnerships and were looking into continuing the collaboration in future projects. Other providers felt that communication, unwillingness to share information and increased costs were obstacles to partnership.

Organisation location

The sub-regional distribution of organisations according to the organisation location in the current entries is as follows:

Table 3.15: Distribution of projects by LSC sub region (location)

London LSC sub region	Number of projects
London Central	109
London East	96
London West	57
London North	52
London South	44
Outside London ¹¹	4

Types of award

The following table shows the type and frequency of qualifications awarded in projects

Table 3.16: Awarded qualifications by number of projects

Type of Qualification	Number of projects
Certificate of attendance	168
Locally accredited qualification	58
Nationally accredited qualification	244
None	96
Other	70

The majority of projects selected more than one field, for example certificate of attendance and locally accredited qualification

¹¹ A small number of provider organisations had their addresses outside London but recruited participants from the London region.

Nationally accredited awards include various levels and types including:
 NVQs in levels 1,2 and 3
 OCR at various levels / OCR Clait, OCR Clait Plus
 City and Guilds
 NCGE Teaching assistance
 OCN (both as nationally and locally accredited qualification)
 FA football coaching licence

Project Feedback

The following list shows the number of projects that have received formal and informal feedback and is arranged by descending order of frequency of formal feedback.

Table 3.17: Type of Feedback by number of projects

Feedback type	Formal feedback total	Informal feedback total
Feedback from participants on completion of the project	322	153
Feedback from participants who did not complete the project	110	129
Follow up feedback from participants after 6 months	91	107
Feedback from employers about individual participants	81	77
Feedback from employers about the project	80	80
Other Feedback	27	16

Overall 80% responded that they had received some form of feedback - the majority of them received both formal and informal feedback. On-going or recently started projects did not have any feedback figures, which accounted for the 20% that did not respond to the question.

Project Evaluation

The database also provides information on the number of projects that have been independently evaluated, which amounted to 35% (179 projects) of the entries. A proportion of this percentage consists of ongoing projects that will be evaluated in the future. Unfortunately it has not been possible to gain access to more than a very small number of these project evaluations. The project evaluations have therefore not been systematically analysed as part of this project.

4.0 LEARNING AND SKILLS INTERVENTIONS IN LONDON – INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

This chapter provides an analysis of the problems and opportunities faced by project providers and participants. Forty-two semi-structured interviews were carried out with a sample of providers, beneficiaries and other stakeholders across London¹². The individual interviews were carried out between November 2005 and June 2006. Eight focus groups were carried out between March and September 2006.

The interviews and focus groups have enabled the researchers to:

- Develop a fuller understanding of the particular needs of different disadvantaged groups and of the barriers that they face;
- Get an insight into the barriers that make it difficult for members of the disadvantaged target groups to enter or stay in employment;
- Hear from those working in the field as providers, support organisations or policy agencies about what they regard as the most general (i.e. most widely experienced) barriers to progression into employment by disadvantaged groups;
- Obtain the views of stakeholder agencies' policy priorities with respect to disadvantaged groups and of the impact of existing initiatives in the short and medium term.

The chapter outlines the experiences, perceptions and views of the different stakeholders who were interviewed. This qualitative research was useful for highlighting the range and salience of views across the disadvantaged target groups in London, but it is important to note that they only represent a small selection of people and generalisations about the views of the overall sector cannot be drawn.

The interviews with providers and participants concentrate on three out of the 15 main categories of disadvantaged groups in the 3DsLondon project: long term unemployed; people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation; 16-19 year NEETs. Due to the frequent nature of multiple disadvantage within these three categories, interview respondents who were also disabled; lone parents; refugees/asylum seekers, or ex-offenders were included. The selection of qualitative research subjects was narrowed to these categories to indicate the range of projects being undertaken in London and to enable some analysis to be undertaken within the limited scope of the research, as funded.

¹² For Interview and Focus Group breakdown see Appendix C

Different sections of this chapter deal with the findings from the participant interviews and focus groups, provider interviews and focus groups, stakeholder interviews and employer focus groups. An overview of findings by disadvantaged target group, which also incorporates the views expressed by advocacy organisations for particular groups, and a breakdown of interview and focus groups concludes the chapter.

4.1 Interviews with providers

Disadvantage

All of the providers were well informed about the range of disadvantages experienced by beneficiaries and stressed the importance of overcoming multiple disadvantages in order for them to progress to employment or training. Moreover, one disadvantage may lead to another as one provider mentioned to us: 'Just take a typical person who is 24 years old, been kicked out of home, and knocks around with his friends. He's from a black and minority ethnic group, he's not a lone parent but he may well have fathered a child. He's homeless, he's an ex offender, he's a drugs and alcohol misuser. He lives in an area of multi deprivation, he's unemployed for a long period of time - so that's just one person'.

The disadvantages most frequently mentioned in the twenty provider interviews include low qualifications, difficult family background, poverty trap, unwillingness to travel, and lack of basic and language skills. Overall, the examples of disadvantage mentioned by providers can be grouped into the following broad categories:

Economic: the poverty trap, gaps in employment history, benefit system trap;

Educational: low qualifications, lack of understanding about how the system works, not suitable for Jobcentre Plus programmes;

Psychological: reluctance to travel, low motivation;

Social: family background housing, health issues, not knowing how to access services (e.g. GP), family situation, presentation, homelessness, immigration status, age, lack of support network;

Perceptions: discrimination by members of the public, employer discrimination, colour of their skin, disability, age, religion;

Cultural: 'benefit culture', cultural issues preventing women from working, ethnic/religious tensions provoked by international developments.

Disengagement

Providers again stressed the multiple barriers¹³ experienced by beneficiaries. The five barriers that prevent learners from engaging with skills opportunities include lack of basic skills, family commitments and childcare, health and housing/environment. Five barrier-categories can be distinguished:

Physical: Transport, economic, working part time and studying, health, timing/location of the project, debt, housing/environment, not having a bank account;

Social: Family commitments, childcare, lack of social network, family background, peer influence, lack of basic social skills;

Psychological: Lack of confidence, expectations (too high or too low);

Cultural: Ethnic or religious differences possibly leading to tensions between groups (eg about knowledge of discrimination, perceptions of the role of women etc)

Educational: Language, skills, transferring qualifications.

Discrimination

The interview schedule included a question on the difference between disadvantage and discrimination. Most providers thought that there was a difference between the two concepts albeit a blurred one and that one could reinforce the other. The responses are best summarised by one of our interviewees: 'Discrimination is an act, disadvantage is a sort of a place you're at!'

Working with disadvantaged people

As part of the research we set out to discover the types of challenges providers experience in their work with members of disadvantaged groups. Different positive and negative types of challenges were described:

Making an impact: A positive aspect of the work was described as contributing to 'changing people's lives'. Frustrating outcomes were experienced 'when people get back into their old ways due to issues that surround their private life'.

¹³ The term 'barrier' is widely used by professionals in the field to refer to things that would-be project participants need to be able to engage with projects. Often the discussion focuses on resources, eg for books, travel, childcare, appropriate clothing etc. Barriers to participation are also created by individuals' health or housing needs. Some of the barriers derive from insufficiently joined up systems (eg those relating to the benefit system), others are may be cultural and some may be cognitive, eg how do you work out what you are aiming for if you have no sense of what skills development is or might achieve for you?

Clients' life-styles: Clients' life-styles may be chaotic and one challenge is 'getting people back into routines'. Dealing with participants involved in drug dealing; or participants that work in the informal economy poses professional and ethical challenges.

Clients' aspirations: Clients' may find it difficult to acknowledge that they have a 'basic skills' problem. Some regard it as an opportunity to change their lives around, for example by leaving the influence of negative networks.

Workload: Dealing with challenging behaviour is physically and emotionally tiring. Additional training may be desirable for all staff working with disadvantaged beneficiaries (health professionals as well as trainers and others). Projects need to have realistic and attainable objectives instead of pressing staff to take on caseloads that they cannot manage.

Tackling Disadvantage

There are two broad categories of projects concerned with changing the situation of disadvantage felt by workless people:

- *Mandatory* where individuals are placed through Jobcentres or other referral agencies such as the probation service;
- *Voluntary* through referrals from organisations such as Connexions, recruitment through outreach work, by word of mouth or through advertising.

In the first case providers had little trouble in recruiting participants whereas in the second recruitment is more difficult and some project participants drop out in the middle of the course. Some providers find outreach a successful method to attract participants and to help retain beneficiaries in projects.

Most of the participant provider organisations run a variety of projects and some were able to offer incentives to beneficiaries such as a bonus payment when they find a job or assistance with clothes for interviews. In the case of some vulnerable beneficiaries (e.g. learning disability), the provider also attended job interviews with the project participants.

What makes for a successful project?

Providers were asked about their own projects or initiatives: what worked well and why, and also any weaknesses that they felt needed to be addressed in the future. Most providers felt that their projects were successful and helped beneficiaries to progress and achieve. The reasons that they gave for their success can be grouped together under two headings:

1. The provider organisation is 'fit for purpose'
 - Clear principles and specifically designed curriculum

- Long experience as an organisation (mentioned by established providers)
- Good quality assurance processes
- Informality of the environment
- Very focused and steady staff team
- Access to employers and a track record in putting people into jobs

2. The provider understands the needs of members of their disadvantaged target groups:

- Reaching the hard to reach people
- Building up relations with community groups
- Taking a holistic approach to disadvantage

There were also weaknesses in projects. The main problems that providers referred to were inadequate levels of funding. These led to:

- good projects ending due to a lack of finance
- organisations needing to use temporary staff
- constraints on course improvement
- difficulties in resourcing thorough follow ups with participants ('what happens next')

Narrow specifications for projects and short timescales to deliver outcomes were seen as a further area of weakness. Longer project times were deemed necessary in order to:

- tailor the approach to the individual needs of each project participant
- be able to help participants address multiple disadvantages (e.g. debt, poor health, caring responsibilities, housing)
- help participants overcome low confidence and low motivation

Working in Partnership

Most providers had mixed experiences and mixed feelings about partnership working.

There were some positive feelings about partnership strengths:

- Partnership was seen as useful in areas where organisations do not have their own infrastructure
- Organisations can complement each other by sharing responsibilities
- Partnership facilitates exchange of information (including sharing of course input and 'figures').

However, there were also some weaknesses raised about partnership working:

- Tendency for the lead partner to become too detached from project delivery and to be concerned mainly with monitoring and financial accountability

- Reluctance to pass information between partners
- Communication problems can occur
- Partnership is an added cost.

It appears that when partnerships work well they build on the strengths of each organisation and thus add value to a project and to each of the partnership organisations. However, some partnerships were put together merely in order to satisfy requirements of funding agencies and in these cases their main impact is to incur additional transaction costs.

Effectiveness of support measures for disadvantaged groups in London

Providers were also asked about their general view of the effectiveness of the many initiatives in London that target disadvantaged groups. All the providers interviewed believed that there has generally been some improvement in London recently. Many also mentioned that the true effects of the present measures could only be evaluated in ten years' time as some projects aim for the long term. One provider gave the example of the New Deal that aims for change in the longer term through breaking up the perceived 'benefit culture'.

Suggestions made by providers for the future concentrated on:

- *Funding*: considered too fragmented but on occasion there is also duplication of projects, which leads to unnecessary competition among providers. Funding for individual projects is additionally considered to not be flexible enough or sufficiently long term to address multiple disadvantages. Some providers stressed the need for continuation of training projects and for projects that link more closely with employers.
- *Monitoring*: The monitoring requirements of some of the funding organisations were seen by many providers as necessary but onerous and some expressed the fear that they detracted from the objective of supporting disadvantaged individuals.¹⁴
- *Targets*: targets for getting people back into work are unrealistic and may be counter productive by focusing effort on people who are relatively easy to support rather than on those facing complex problems. As a provider said: 'the aim to put 50% into jobs means that providers take people with the best chances'.

¹⁴ One provider put this particularly forcefully: "there is a tendency for the lead partner to lose sight of what's being delivered and the quality of what's being delivered and the impact of what's being delivered, and to get completely embroiled in the monitoring and the financial accountability. Which I know is an absolute essential, I know it is, but it's not the whole story and ... what gets me very annoyed, is that the project manager will very often just communicate with you in terms of your monitoring report and the boxes that you ticked and the monitoring information that you file. A lot of which is beyond my ken about how it would help anybody."

- *Combating negative perceptions*: in society in general but more specifically amongst employers.
- *Need for preparatory work at an earlier age*: This was mentioned by almost all providers targeting 16-19 NEETs.
- *Invest more in advice and guidance*: This could improve motivation and self-confidence and help someone to choose career options suitable to their skills.
- *Practical suggestions*: less paperwork and a request for earlier payment to providers.

In summary, providers generally acknowledged that there are many initiatives in London that target disadvantaged groups but that most cannot offer on-going support for the people who need it. Although many of the suggestions inevitably focused on funding, providers also made suggestions for a longer term plan to tackle disadvantage. These included suggestions about the future design of projects, which could be less rigid in terms of targets, have closer links with employers and be less fragmented.

4.2 Interviews with project participants

Some of the issues that were raised in the individual interviews with beneficiaries were then put to focus group participants as areas for discussion.

Disadvantage

The questions on disadvantage and barriers to employment were handled sensitively and avoided sociological and technical terms, but beneficiaries themselves nonetheless used terminology such as ‘barriers to employment’, ‘peer pressure’ and ‘breaking up the benefit culture’ (this may have reflected the fact that when already engaged in projects, people tend to pick up the jargon and realise how they are being categorised).

Participants’ responses regarding disadvantage were similar to those of providers, but participants added low confidence and lack of motivation alongside low qualifications as major disadvantages. Three additional points featured in interviews with project participants:

- Project participants appeared to judge their peers more harshly than the providers, and were less sympathetic to their circumstances, expressing the view that individuals do not find jobs due to laziness,

lack of discipline, benefit culture, negative attitudes to society, peer pressure, or because they did not work hard enough when they were in school.

- Project participants – especially the younger age groups – considered the lack of work experience or of a track record of working as a major drawback in their search for employment and some felt that gaining work experience is more important than qualifications.
- Age was considered a disadvantage by both young and older beneficiaries – a perceived lack of experience and mistrust by the employers in the former case and old age discrimination in the latter.

Disengagement

Participants mentioned similar barriers to employment as those given by providers – including transport, health and language - and added presentation and criminal record as further major barriers.

All beneficiaries from the five London sub-regions mentioned transport as a major obstacle in their search for jobs due to its high costs. Additionally, beneficiaries mentioned that some jobs require a driving licence, which they may not possess. In contrast to providers responses, none of the beneficiaries mentioned lack of willingness to travel as an issue.

Discrimination

Beneficiaries thought that there was a difference between disadvantage and discrimination although, unlike the providers, none could identify why and chose to simply express their views on the issue of discrimination:

Briefly, a selection of comments include:

- Discrimination exists in terms of: race, colour, class, ethnicity
- “Discrimination is often used as an excuse for not getting a job”
- Discrimination was more prevalent in the past
- Everyone should have a fair chance but this is not easily achieved

An example of inter-ethnic stereotyping and discrimination was given by a beneficiary who thought that being Black she had less chances for a job than a person of Indian or Pakistani origin who employers would consider to be more hard working and honest. The beneficiary also suggested that immigrants stood a better chance of employment for the same reason. These factors made her feel discriminated against. Two beneficiaries mentioned that people sometimes use discrimination as an excuse for not getting a job. Beneficiaries during a focus group also raised the point of the difficulty faced by Muslim women wearing a hijab when they are looking for a job, especially jobs that involve contact with the public. The focus group participants told us

that they knew of cases where employers discriminated on this basis, which is a form of religious discrimination.

Tackling Disadvantage

In general the project beneficiaries, especially the ones recruited on a voluntary basis, appeared very happy with the projects or courses they were attending and felt lucky to be able to participate. A 17-year old girl, living in an area of high levels of multiple deprivation in London West who had been arrested and cautioned in the past told us about the impact of the project she joined: "Since I have been here I have changed in myself totally. I haven't been in trouble with the police since... I am going to college".

A slight difference in attitude was evident however, between mandatory and voluntary participants; the former were keener to complain about the quality of their experience: "We were pushed all the time to attend a compulsory course. So they weren't really helpful." Some felt there was too much pressure on people to find a job.

The most positive attributes of the courses for the beneficiaries in both the interview and focus group samples were related to psychological/emotional and social factors: raised motivation and confidence, getting out of the house, developing a routine and meeting other people. Participants often also found induction and individual assessment sessions useful; they also mentioned that they had benefited from general support offered by the provider organisation, such as personal help with job searches and provision of facilities for job searching (e.g. internet access, newspapers etc.)

Despite these benefits, some beneficiaries felt that their participation was compromised by having to travel long distances to get to the course, or by being put together with people with negative attitudes, as well as the fact that some providers were too 'pushy to get you back into employment'. They made the following suggestions for further improvement to projects:

The opportunity to undertake work experience;

- More activities to bond participant groups together;
- Tackling the negative and carefree attitude that exists among some participants.

Thus the major benefits that individuals value in relation to what they have gained from the projects and initiatives that they attended can be described as 'soft outcomes', which are difficult to measure and which hence tend not to figure amongst the successful outcomes sought by funding agencies. Providers also highlighted the benefits of 'soft outcomes', as noted in Section 4.1. However, this emphasis on soft outcomes must be seen in the context of the status of the interviewees, in that they had not at that stage attained the 'hard' outcome or been able to 'gaining a qualification'.

The effectiveness of current support measures for London and suggestions for the future

Project participants expressed mixed opinions about the learning and skills support measures in London of which they were aware. Some felt that a lot more is needed; others were satisfied with the level of provision.

All beneficiaries were vocal in making suggestions for the future of support measures in London. Suggestions relating to project improvements and new project developments included:

- More initiatives with work placements: a project participant told us that in the work placement initiative in which she is participating there were over 300 applications for 14 positions;
- Free travel for job search for all unemployed participants;
- More projects for younger people before they become NEETs and may be at risk of offending;
- More chances to study before being asked to look for jobs (e.g. a lone parent beneficiary told us how she met with resistance at her Jobcentre when she enrolled on a part time course at university).

Other suggestions and comments were made in relation to job searching and moving off benefits:

- Jobcentres do not offer much for skilled workers – most jobs are minimum wage;
- Currently there are insufficient incentives for individuals to move on from benefit to minimum wage employment;
- Some projects just try to push people into ‘a job’ instead of qualifying them for jobs with a chance of progression;
- The system is unnecessarily complicated – all placements or benefits should be simplified;
- The system should become tougher on benefit cheats;
- Application and interview processes for very low paid jobs are unnecessarily difficult.

Clearly projects are valued for the opportunities and access to employment that they potentially provide, but what also came across in the interviews was the level of frustration with the benefit and wage systems as well as with employment procedures that have not served these groups well.

4.2.1 The needs of particular target groups

This section brings together the comments from providers, project participants and advocacy organisations about the wider needs of the particular target groups. Furthering employability skills and supporting entry to the labour market are just two aspects of these wider needs.

Long Term Unemployed (more than twelve months)

Although all of the interviews focused on unemployed people, the long-term unemployed faced the particular disadvantage of either a long gap in their employment history or no work experience at all. Interviewees identified the main reasons for long-term unemployment as relating mainly to poor qualifications or skills, family commitments, lack of childcare, long-term health problems, or language. Providers that work with the long-term unemployed emphasized that there was a need to

- build closer relations with employers
- put more effort into combating the attitudes of people who are unwilling to work
- address the issues of low motivation and low confidence that are often an outcome of long-term unemployment
- continue the funding of training programmes
- allow beneficiaries to enter college or further education on a full time basis without affecting their jobseeker allowance.

People Living in Areas with High Levels of Multiple Deprivation

This target group by definition encompasses individuals and sub-groups with many different types of disadvantage. Most people in these areas have low income, and a high rate of worklessness and do not have bank accounts. This economic disadvantage interacts with *cultural* disadvantage and may include a gender component. For example, certain ethnic minority communities discourage women from working or training and as a result women are economically dependent on their families or reduced to poverty. Many of the hardest to reach are found in such areas of multiple deprivation. A provider mentioned that there are people who are seven or eight steps away from being job ready and there is no funding for them, although once 'reached', they could benefit from intensive or long-term support through a range of suitable projects. The funding is for people who are only about one or two steps away from being job ready.

In order to support these disadvantaged communities there is a need for providers to build closer relations with local communities. Interviewees also suggested that a balance needed to be struck in these communities (e.g. the recent emphasis on BME projects has left some young White boys relatively under supported and has given rise to resentment).

16–19 year olds Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs)

Providers view 16-19 olds as particularly vulnerable with multiple disadvantages. 16-19 NEETs are often youth offenders, may suffer from undetected mental health problems, live in deprived areas and themselves can be lone parents. Interviewees recognised these problems originating in the general environment of their upbringing, often including difficult family backgrounds, exposure to negative attitudes and negative peer pressure combined with very low motivation.

Some suggestions made for this group during the interviews included:

- Targeting younger children at risk of becoming NEETs
- Employers should develop a more sympathetic attitude towards young people and give them an interview and then provide feedback
- Longer project time is needed for what was called 'character building'
- Enabling young people to gain experience in a workplace.

Despite the strong image that some young people may project in public, they can lack confidence when searching for employment. To help a young person who left school early to find their way back into the system they need respect and support as well as honest feedback following an unsuccessful interview.

Disabled People

According to one of the advocacy organisations there has been a general improvement for disabled people in relation to their ability to attain skills and training and to access the labour market. Whereas in the past disability tended to be seen in terms of a medical model, the social model of disability is gaining widespread acceptance which one interviewee from a support organisation outlined as '...disabled people are (not) necessarily limited by their impairment...rather there are barriers in society which limit the participation of disabled people'. Areas that require further improvements are:

- More adjustments to work places, transport and public spaces such as polling stations and parks;
- Flexible working hours to accommodate disabled people (such as people with mobility or visual impairments) – although it was reported that not all employers are very keen;
- Equal rates of pay - a support organisation reported that people with learning disabilities are likely to be paid less than non-disabled employees, if they are lucky enough to find employment in the first place;
- Enabling people with disabilities – and disadvantaged groups generally - to advance and gain positions of leadership within an organisation.
- There is a need for specialist childcare for disabled children with disabled or non-disabled parents. This point was also put forward by a lone parent with a disabled child;
- It was mentioned that there may be a relationship between undetected mental illness or learning disabilities and youth offending.

Lone Parents

It is worth noting that the issue of childcare is seen predominately with reference to mothers and as a female women's responsibility. Lone parents experience three main obstacles to their participation in initiatives or in their search for a job.

- Finding childcare that they can afford;
- Finding childcare that they can 'trust';
- Childcare provision for older children is limited;

- On returning to the labour market following several years' absence lone parents have been reported to experience age discrimination and may need retraining;
- *Discrimination*: some lone mothers, especially from ethnic minority backgrounds suffer stigmatisation and experience exclusion from their own communities which has an adverse effect on their well-being. Some mothers also see accepting childcare as an abrogation of their responsibility.

Refugees and Asylum seekers

The situation of refugees is rather different from that of asylum seekers in relation to support for skills development and entry to employment. Refugees have the right to seek training and work in the UK and many of them are well qualified from their countries of origin, but they often have difficulties in having their qualifications recognised and in gaining work experience within a different work culture. Asylum seekers on the other hand are only able to participate in a limited range of training initiatives and are not allowed to accept employment¹⁵. Their opportunities to gain experience through volunteering are also controlled. Both groups battle against negative stereotyping and there is widespread misunderstanding about the differences in their respective status. Other findings from provider interviews reveal that the main disadvantages that this group of people face are that some have serious health problems, lack a support network, and although they may be well qualified their qualifications are not necessarily accepted in the UK and they may have poor employability skills in a new cultural context (e.g. not understanding how to write to CV or knowing what is expected in an interview situation). Language is a major barrier for this group when trying to access employment. There is a great demand for ESOL classes but there are not enough qualified teachers. Asylum seekers have been able to benefit from ESOL classes free of charge but this is about to change.

Refugees/asylum seekers who participated in focus groups reported low confidence and low motivation due to the fact that there is usually a long wait for the outcome of an application for refugee status. The fact that many have housing problems or that sometimes their families are left in their country of origin can exacerbate their sense of social isolation.

Ex-Offenders

The stigma of a criminal record affects the chances of ex-offenders in employment: according to a beneficiary support organisation, there is considerable confusion among employers as to what is a caution and what is a specific conviction. Ex-offender beneficiaries considered their lack of experience or gap in employment history as a major disadvantage in their job searches - as in the case with long term unemployed – but additionally they have a criminal record. Self-employment was considered as an option by some of the beneficiaries but ex-offenders can have difficulty in obtaining

¹⁵ This statement was correct at the time of the interview. Regulations have since changed and asylum seekers can now apply to work if no decision on their application for refugee status has been reached within 12 months.

business insurance. Within the education system, criminal record checks are widely used and there may be a tendency to screen out ex-offenders even in situations where their prior convictions may be irrelevant to the course or job applied for.

Employment opportunities and employers' views

Project participants made various suggestions on how projects could improve access to and interaction with employers (as reported in previous section). Although this was not questioned directly in the interview schedule, a few commented on how they saw their employment chances. They were generally keen to get jobs but usually regarded their employment opportunities as poor as is evidenced in the interviews with ex-offenders, disabled people and lone parents.

One provider commented on the importance of what was happening in the local economy – the closure of major local employers affects the employment prospects of beneficiaries, which in turn affects the project's job outcomes, but these wider difficulties tended not to be acknowledged or appreciated by funders. This example raises the issue again of the need for strategic co-ordination between the major agencies in London.

4.3 Stakeholders' views

Stakeholder interviews were carried out with representatives of key players within the field of learning and skills, including funders, central government and London government agencies, accreditation agencies, umbrella organisations for voluntary sector training providers, advocacy organisations. Eight interviews were with policy stakeholders and three interviews with advocacy organisations. Very few of the stakeholder organisations were involved in direct delivery; the individuals interviewed for each organisation had responsibilities for policy and strategy.

The interviewees were able to provide useful overviews of policy and funding developments in relation to disadvantaged target groups. All the stakeholders in the interview sample were well informed about a whole range of policy initiatives in London and nationally and made trenchant observations on policy and funding trends and their implications for provision.

Some of the points raised in the interviews with providers and beneficiaries were also mentioned by stakeholders, such as the multiple aspects of disadvantage, the nature of the barriers facing disadvantaged groups and the difficulties of moving from participation in projects to gaining and sustaining employment. Some of the stakeholders had detailed information about one or two particular target groups.

Tackling disadvantage

All of the stakeholders interviewed felt that addressing the issues faced by disadvantaged groups in relation to the education and skills agenda or in relation to the labour market was very important to their organisations and gave examples to show how they had been prioritised. When asked about how well the support needs of disadvantaged groups had been covered in London to date, most suggested that much had been achieved but more needed to be done. Some thought that the field has been well covered in general but they also indicated that "probably there's too much confusion" and also "overlap and competition". Most seemed to agree with the view put by a stakeholder from within government that many projects and initiatives "probably don't make much more than a marginal impact... you move from one to another (problem) as focus changes. At the moment worklessness is a kind of catch all phrase used to address a lot of these problems." It was also pointed out that helping the disadvantaged or the 'education poor' represents an on-going or even increasing set of tasks that need to be tackled across different parts of the education system and other parts of government as well, and may require a shift not only in priorities but also in existing values.

Successful measures

There was broad agreement between stakeholders on three main elements behind success in project delivery

1. Identifying the needs of the most deprived London areas and particular target groups is best done through 'work with local authorities and Jobcentre Plus on the basis of various statistics' as well as "talking to the local groups on the ground".
2. Building the capacity of the voluntary and community sector. This has two dimensions: enabling the sector "to be able to engage with our [the funding agencies'] agenda" and "to help them to better engage with those hardest to reach so that the capacity building is very much focused on street level community development"; both are essential for effective delivery.
3. "Developing more flexible employer-led training provision which meets specific sector needs or the needs of particular employers".

Shifts in policy and funding priorities

In all the stakeholder interviews, reference was made to changes in national and London government (and European Social Fund) priorities over the last five or more years, referred to by one stakeholder as 'policy-itis' (also commonly referred to as reform-itis). Several of the stakeholders who had worked in learning and skills for a long time referred to the cyclical way that policy initiatives tend to develop and come around again. The current emphasis is on:

Worklessness agenda and entry to employment

All stakeholders talked about the current emphasis on 'worklessness' and 'workfulness' within the wider regeneration agenda for reducing social exclusion. Helping disadvantaged groups get into employment, for example through job brokerage, was seen to be a current priority. One stakeholder suggested that there was now less emphasis on the traditional route via qualifications into labour market entry and more on support for direct entry and then workforce development.

The labour market, social inclusion and poverty

Some of the stakeholders argued that working with disadvantaged groups means engaging with the 'future labour force' more than with the current labour force and hence issues of social inclusion and poverty cannot be separated from labour market solutions. Whereas the current UK government 'says that the labour market is the most effective route out of poverty' the European Commission in a recent is looking at active inclusion measures through social protection as well as the labour market – "a job is arguably the most effective route out of poverty but it's not the only route out of poverty". (The new Social Agenda, 2005).

Regional, sub-regional or local policy emphasis?

All stakeholders referred to the consultation regarding the Mayor's powers in relation to the skills agenda and were awaiting a decision on this issue at the time of the interviews. In so far as stakeholders were willing to be drawn on how they saw the outcome¹⁶ they cautiously welcomed the anticipated emphasis on regional developments with funding channelled from the London region through to local authorities – as they are “best in judging the needs of the disadvantaged”. However there was also criticism of lack of integration and of “the territorial approach to claiming funding by local authorities”. The Mayor's regional powers are expected to provide impetus to marrying up initiatives on a pan-London basis.

Funding regimes

All stakeholder interviewees commented on trends in funding.

High volumes and targets

Many comments were made about the (negative) impact that unrealistically high volumes and demanding targets have on provision, although stakeholders also commented that they were likely to stay and become even tougher. Virtually all the stakeholders pointed out that these individual targets may detract from the focus on the greatest needs. ‘Unit prices are not enough...so we give a short sharp service which can be effective to people who have got more modest barriers to overcome, but it's more difficult to help people really who have got major barriers to progress because they really need an on-going service and an on-going relationship and that's something that can't easily be funded with the regime that we have'. Others commented on some of the funding rounds being too large and the trend towards commissioning being too ‘top down’. One commented that ‘they have got to move it back to smaller schemes’.

Outcome based payments

The difficulties with outcome driven payments – particularly their impact on voluntary organisations that lack a ‘float’ – was pointed out. One stakeholder thought that a payment structure in three parts (at the start, in the middle and an outcome payment) enables providers to choose whether a qualification is their goal and their learners' goal or whether they can survive on the level of income provided by start and middle payment.

Emphasis on Level 2 qualifications¹⁷

Emphasis on Level 2 qualifications is not always helpful to disadvantaged groups or to the organisations that try to help them overcome their barriers. For example, refugees and asylum seekers may have qualifications above Level 2 but they may be pushed onto funded courses with a Level 2 outcome (because that is where the funding lies) but which does not address the individuals' particular ‘employability’ or entry to employment difficulties. While

¹⁶ At the time of the interviews the Secretary of State had not yet announced the Mayor's additional remit in relation to Skills. The Mayor now chairs the Skills and Employment Board.

¹⁷ At the time of the interviews the emphasis was mainly on level 2; at the time of writing the emphasis is shifting more towards level 3, particularly for the LSC.

stakeholders stressed that ‘qualifications based projects are essential for London’ it was also acknowledged that the emphasis on qualifications ‘could be a barrier to some groups’ and as a result not enough time ‘is spent on soft indicators and [there is] insufficient recognition of distance travelled’. It was also stated that qualifications driven funding has benefits for providers by ensuring that they have quality assurance processes and accreditation in place. Another felt that quality assurance was no longer a major problem even within smaller provider organisations and that most had developed a way of dealing with assessing and recording progress and achievements. One stakeholder thought that outcome driven funding challenged providers to push their participants a bit more in the direction of qualifications and job outcomes, which this respondent saw as the real goal of learners. Another put it like this: “if you do stretch individuals you’ll be surprised how they blossom...if you provide the safeguards for those people for whom a challenge is too great”.

Non-accredited adult learning

Several of the stakeholders also regretted that non-accredited adult learning has been squeezed, with the exception of basic skills, that, as one interviewee noted ‘not every adult learner needs’. It was argued that the shift in funding is likely to be damaging to disadvantaged groups because they are not confident enough or ambitious enough to take on level 2 qualifications, and that first they “need to have an experience of success by doing something small, whereby they build up their confidence”.

Infrastructure

A few of the stakeholders expressed concern about the implications of outcome driven funding on infrastructure. “Developmental aspects and resourcing of capacity and the infrastructural development is expensive and it’s not matched and measured in outcomes.” It was suggested that ‘small grants funding’ would help the voluntary sector develop their infrastructure.

Engaging employers

All the stakeholders who referred to employer engagement also acknowledged how difficult it is to achieve in practice: “Most businesses are busy running their business”, networking events are more usually attended by people providing services to employers and by a negligible number of employers. Some of the stakeholders made reference to sector skills councils in the context of developing employer engagement. The difficulties were seen to lie within the labour market itself “There isn’t necessarily a demand by the labour market and without experience it’s very difficult for anyone, whether they come from a disadvantaged background or any other kind of background to break into the labour market”.

Working in partnership

All stakeholders agreed that partnership working was not only ‘required’ but useful in order to reach and help target groups. Good examples of what makes a partnership successful were given, including good communication; knowing the patch and the area; complementary expertise; not competing for the same pot of money; and establishing relationships that are open and honest. Several of the stakeholders were involved in partnerships with a

strategic function, others co-ordinated partnerships to improve delivery and tended to use the terms 'partners' and 'sub-contractors' almost interchangeably. Most mentioned that the purpose of partnership is often to attract funding but some thought "the amount of energy and effort that's necessary is possibly not worth it"; also, when there are "operational pressures it's harder to move into the strategic questions because you never get the chance to step back". The general verdict seemed to be that there was a need for an underlying rationale for partnership beyond the immediate funding and delivery issues and that there was a need for sufficient time and flexibility and good management to make a partnership work. This was considered to be an additional infrastructural cost, which was not often recognized or taken into account.

4.4 Focus Groups

Two beneficiary and two employer focus groups were carried out. They were arranged towards the end of the cycle of individual interviews, in order to enable the researchers to include points that had been raised in the individual interviews in addition to the general themes. Additionally four group discussions took place with providers; these were in the form of short focus groups and are also analysed in this section.

4.4.1 Beneficiary focus groups

Participants of beneficiary focus groups were contacted through provider and beneficiary support organisations – the categorisation of participants is available in Appendix C. All participants received £30 in gift vouchers to thank them for their participation. It had, unfortunately, not been possible to include members of the 16-19 year old NEET category in any of the focus groups, as providers regarded them as vulnerable and were reluctant to allow young people to travel in central London on their own or to join members from other target groups.

The themes raised during the sessions outlined the general themes in the individual interviews for beneficiaries, namely about participants' experiences of the project, perceptions of disadvantage and barriers and suggestions for the future. The issues mentioned during the focus group discussions highlight vividly some of the general experiences and concerns of each target group.

Range of initiatives

Participants in both groups had varying experiences of the range of courses they had been following. Some participants felt very lucky to be part of a project and this feeling was particularly strong amongst beneficiaries following work placement programmes as they reported that such placements are scarce and hard to get. Beneficiaries also found initiatives very helpful and stressed the soft outcomes of boosting their confidence and motivation and meeting other people in their situation. A point raised by an asylum seeker

related to the similarity of available courses, so that people who attend more than one course experience repetition; she asked for a greater variety.

Experiences of Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination

An overview of disadvantages and barriers is presented in Table 4.1. This table shows that different disadvantaged groups experience the same or similar barriers. For example it can be observed that all participating groups regard 'low confidence' as a disadvantage/barrier. Some points however are distinctive to the needs of particular groups. For example, asylum seekers questioned their legal barriers to work; to quote one of the respondents: "...[why] push people who do not want to work into jobs" while "they make it hard" for asylum seekers who do want to work. She continued that this is particularly stressful but "stressed people are easier to control". Long-term unemployed and ex-offenders also made the point that their confidence was low and particularly the latter felt that they had little hope of getting a job - they felt that their criminal record was a strong barrier. Finally, the expense of travelling in London was considered a barrier to looking for and getting a job by all participants. People with disabilities found it both difficult and expensive to travel across London. Most participants felt that going for an interview could prove costly if the ticket is not reimbursed.

A point that was not made by all groups but was strongly discussed in our first focus group was that of 'lack of experience' or 'lack of track record'. Beneficiaries were highly concerned that their chances to enter employment were minimal without prior work experience and would have welcomed a scheme where they would be able to gain some. Beneficiaries from both focus groups thought that discrimination by employers constitutes a barrier and mentioned the examples of women wearing the hijab (religious discrimination) and older women (age discrimination). Lack of affordable childcare by people they could trust was also a barrier experienced by some participants from various target groups. Beneficiaries – mainly lone parents – mentioned that the lack of suitable childcare was actually more acute with older children and especially during holidays.

Project participants' suggestions for the future

Participants in both groups thought that some people in society – for example some people with certain severe disabilities – probably cannot work and need to be looked after, rather than being asked to work. On the other hand there should be more effort in tackling the 'benefit cheats', and more help should go to people that need the benefit.

Following on from the discussion on barriers and disadvantages beneficiaries made some general suggestions on support with childcare, accommodation, continuation of projects that award qualifications and more emphasis on individual needs. A need for projects designed to raise beneficiary work experience emerged as a strong suggestion as did the request for a greater variety of courses.

Many of the same points had also been raised in individual interviews with providers and beneficiaries; the focus groups provided more detail and

accounts of individual experiences. Three 'new' suggestions for the future were made during the focus groups:

Firstly, more information needs to be circulated about organisations that can help members of different disadvantaged groups. Some participants told us that they had found their course by chance.

Secondly, more support from Jobcentres in terms of the range of jobs that are on offer. There were not many skilled jobs that pay above the average wage available through the Jobcentres.

Thirdly, it would help disadvantaged groups to help themselves get into sustainable employment if they could enrol on full-time courses in college or university without losing benefits.

Table 1: Perceptions of Disadvantages and Barriers cited by the listed target groups

Perceptions of Disadvantages and Barriers cited by the listed target groups							
Beneficiary Focus Group Participants	Personal Development	Family Responsibilities	Language/ Culture	Beneficiary Status	Education, Skills/ Experience	Job related	Access
Long Term Unemployed	--Low confidence	--Childcare		--Criminal Record	--Lack of experience/tr ack record		--Travel costs
People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation	--Low confidence		--Language --Wearing a hijab		--No/low qualifications --Poor employability skills	--Lack of employability skills	--Travel costs
Lone Parents	--Low confidence --Low motivation	--Childcare				--Searching for a job is costly and time consuming --Too many applicants for few jobs --Benefit Trap	--Travel costs
Ex-Offenders	--Low				--No/low	--Benefit Trap	--Travel

Perceptions of Disadvantages and Barriers cited by the listed target groups							
Beneficiary Focus Group Participants	Personal Development	Family Responsibilities	Language/Culture	Beneficiary Status	Education, Skills/ Experience	Job related	Access
	confidence			--Criminal Record	qualifications		costs
Refugees/Asylum seekers	--Low confidence --Low motivation	--Childcare	--Wearing a hijab	-- Immigration status for asylum seekers		--Searching for a job is costly and time consuming	--Travel costs
People with disabilities	--Low confidence						--Travel costs

4.4.2 Provider workshops and focus groups

Workshops were facilitated in each of the five sub-regions to raise awareness of the research and to invite providers – particularly from the voluntary and community sector – to contribute to it. In four of these five workshops there was an opportunity to exchange information about good practice and successful project delivery and, where time was available, the discussions took the form either of a moderated focus group or of a brainstorming session followed by discussion.

Each group discussion focused on the issue: ‘What makes for a successful project?’ As expected there was considerable overlap in the ideas raised in each of these workshop discussions/focus groups, but there were important differences in approach.

One of the groups looked at the issues very much from the point of view of actual or potential project participants, two others focused much more on the role of the provider organisation, its staff, systems and resources, whilst the fourth group talked much more about the relationship between the funder and provider organisations. The discussions took all these dimensions on board but with different emphases. Funding was a key issue in all the workshop discussion groups and a short summary of the concerns about funding expressed across all the different discussion groups follows the group specific summaries.

Workshop One:

Discussion about successful projects concentrated on consideration of the target group. ‘Who is the target group?’ and ‘What is the project trying to achieve?’ were the key questions for those present. The ‘client remains the key focus within our service’ and ‘we use a holistic approach which acknowledges and addresses all barriers’ said one provider. The ‘self-esteem’ of project participants and staff was seen as key to successful deliver. Awareness of cultural diversity and of community cohesion were also mentioned in this group. In relation to planning and delivery, mention was made of the need for effective consultation with the target group, and ‘sufficient time and flexibility’ to maintain a client focus. ‘To be needs led you need to have flexibility’, said one of the participants. The importance of recognising and valuing soft outcomes and distance travelled were mentioned, as well as the need for partnerships and for networking.

Workshop Two:

The need for good research on ‘whether there is a need for the project’ was raised as the starting point, and planning by involving the target group was seen as the next step. ‘You need to have skilled, well-informed staff leading the project’ was underpinned by the call to ‘work to organisational strengths’. This

was countered by 'ability and capacity to cater for a diversity of needs'. Stability of funding was a further factor crucial to achieving success.

Workshop Three:

Participants in this workshop agreed amongst themselves on a list of factors that 'make for a successful project' by thinking through the steps involved in planning and managing a project. The items included were good planning, relevant advertising, meeting an identified need, an interactive format with participant involvement and input, adequate funding, good management, monitoring and evaluation, skilful delivery, respect for participants and acting on feedback.

Workshop Four:

'What makes for a successful project' is 'knowledge of the funding regime and the environment', according to one of the participants. 'Adequate funding to deliver learner centred provision' was another brainstorming suggestion which was followed by 'clear progression routes' and 'clear measure of success'. This led to a discussion about quantity versus quality in measuring success and the thought that 'outputs are too stringent'. The need for a long-term vision was mentioned, the 'continuation of the work after the life of the project'.

Funding:

This was seen as an issue in all four of the discussion groups. Sufficient resources to deliver quality services to disadvantaged client groups were mentioned, with the implication that funding and resources were not currently adequate. Criticism was made of the existence of different funding pots; it was felt that if they were streamlined there would be less costly administration and more money for beneficiaries. Several of the providers used the phrase 'not a level playing field' and asked for planned provision, rather than short term tendering with much form filling. It was suggested that funders could simplify procedures and agree a common form for scoring and monitoring purposes. One provider wrote as an additional suggestion after the end of the session: "In future senior personnel from funding bodies should be participating in research activities to get a better understanding of the issues and barriers faced by voluntary and other organisations".

4.4.3 Employer Focus Groups

The focus group method was also used with a sample of employers. Two employer focus groups were carried out; Focus Group One was held with private, voluntary and public sector employers who have employed staff with disabilities or are considering doing so; more than 20 people attended, including some disability advisors. Focus Group Two was for employers from the voluntary sector who recruit members of disadvantaged groups as volunteers and who

support volunteers who aim to move from volunteering into paid employment; eight people attended.

Employer Focus Group One (Topic: Disability)

The following topics were discussed and different contributions to the debate were made by the employer and disability advisers present. Each different topic is underlined and different contributions to each topic are indicated by a new paragraph.

The need for disability champions and disability awareness training

Organisations that use the 'two ticks'¹⁸ mark may still fall down in their practices: Examples given include a local authority whose policy states that people with disabilities who fulfil the criteria will be offered an interview. But interviewers have not necessarily received disability awareness or equality training.

Local authorities often have all the policies and strategies and support from the top of the organisation but things may not be implemented on the ground unless a champion is appointed.

It was suggested that smaller companies may be 'better' employers of disadvantaged (particularly disabled) job applicants than larger employers because they may find it easier to be more flexible but they are also most likely to say 'I've got a living to make' and to ask 'what's in it for me?'

One small employer's approach was to look only at ability to do the job not a person's disability when recruiting. For example the best candidate for a secretarial post had a disability, and 'it's at that point you say, what do we need to do, and what do you need to do to make that disability an ability?'

There was a need for dialogue with disabled people about what support they need to be able to work.

The 'business case' for diversity needs to be stressed in order to overcome employers' hesitations.

Using diversity and equality as a measure of performance

The example of a high street bank with branches near Tower Hamlets was given. These branches are expected to recruit from the local Bengali community even though this did not necessarily reflect their customer base.

Another example was an investment bank that worked with organisations support employers to take on disabled people. This bank took on one person with a severe visual impairment and another with Aspergers, having considered what these people would be able to do and tailored the job accordingly. This was seen

¹⁸ The Two Ticks symbol is awarded by Jobcentre Plus to employers who make five specific commitment to promote employment of disabled staff .

as an example of doing something practical to meet a target – ‘when the focus is on achievement not policy, things happen’.

What are the risks for the disabled person and for the potential employer?

The risks for a disabled person associated with entering employment were discussed. It was suggested that disabled people are scared to try and get into work because they are afraid they'll lose their benefits.

This view was countered by another employer who reported on the safety net provided by DWP through the 52-week linking rule, which may enable the disabled person to reclaim their previous rate of benefit if, after starting work, their disability means they could not continue working.

Other cases were reported in which the benefits of a young disabled person had become a source of family income and that this acts ‘as a disincentive to empowering the young person to become independent’.

A participant with autism reported that spending money on a support person enables her to go to work and means that instead of being in expensive psychiatric care she can pay her own bills. She also reports that there is evidence that disabled people take less sick leave and there is less staff turnover amongst this group.

Discrimination and ‘positive discrimination’

It was stated by one employer that employers may be concerned because they have to tread particularly carefully in order not to be accused of discrimination against a disabled person and that this perception can act as a disincentive.

Those employers who had experience of employing disabled staff gave very positive accounts of their experience. Overall, the discussion tended to point out more of the difficulties than the benefits, however.

A disability advisor suggested that a good way forward was for employers to link in with projects or schemes that promote the employment of disabled people and can give advice to employers as well as on-going support to the disabled person.

The evidence from this focus group suggests that there was much good will towards employing disabled people amongst the group of employers in East London who had come to a disability awareness event and attended the focus group discussion that took place as part of that event. There are however apprehensions about the rights and safeguards of both parties and a need for clearer information. A small number of employers had recruited a disabled employee through a support scheme or project and there was a more general willingness to get more information about such projects and to try them out.

Employer Focus Group Two (Voluntary Sector organisations)

This focus group was composed of voluntary sector service providers who are also employers of staff and who use volunteers from disadvantaged groups for a range of tasks. Most saw their recruitment of volunteers as a way of providing training to members of disadvantaged groups in order to prepare them for employment. The range of organisations present included some who work with disabled people, BME groups, refugees and asylum seekers, and women.

The discussion included the following topics:

Employing staff from disadvantaged groups

All the organisations presented employed staff from disadvantaged groups (ranging from about 25% of the staff complement to about 90%). Many, but by no means all were from the groups for whom the organisations provide services. This was considered to be part of the 'ethos' of their organisations; all had equality and some had diversity policies.

Engaging volunteers

All the organisations worked with volunteers and volunteers filled a range of roles and carried out a range of tasks depending on the volunteers' abilities and their development needs.

The point was made that the difference between voluntary and paid employment is often really only a legal or technical difference ('volunteers are basically just workers who are not paid').

A discussion about the differences between internship and volunteering took place. Some made a strong distinction between 'interns' and 'volunteers' and between work placements and volunteers. Interns are usually highly qualified and use the time-limited internship to gain experience and develop their skills in a workplace. Work placements are also time-limited and may or may not have a particular objective. Volunteers often work on a more ad hoc (but sometimes very long-term) basis, often out of a sense of commitment.

It was stressed that the purpose of volunteering needs to be clear – and that depends on the focus of the organisation and on the funders.

Volunteering to develop employability skills

Three of the organisations had well-developed volunteer schemes for disabled people, people with mental health issues and people with learning difficulties.

In one of the organisations the volunteer schemes had several functions and provided individuals with the possibility of moving to paid employment:

- Diagnostic function (what tasks a person can do)
- Developing general employability skills (e.g. turning up on time, personal presentation)
- Training in job-specific skills (e.g. cleaning, gardening, reception duties etc.)
- Support volunteers' job search and entry to employment (and provide on-going support).

It was suggested that volunteering was not part of everyone's cultural background (whereas supporting family or neighbours in need might be) and that some BME groups tend not to participate in volunteering.

Progression from volunteering to employment

The experience of several organisations was that it was easiest to place service users into jobs in other voluntary organisations and hardest in local authorities.

The benefits trap is an issue for volunteers who hope to move into employment, (and the organisation provides help with benefit calculations).

A risk assessment of service users is very important before they are referred to employers.

Voluntary sector organisations provide awareness raising and training about volunteering for disadvantaged groups as a pathway into employment not only for their own staff but often also for other employer and the general public.

The flexibility of the voluntary sector, together with its increasing professionalisation, was seen as key to the success of the sector in helping disadvantaged groups into employment.

The evidence from the voluntary sector focus group suggests that most of the voluntary sector organisations who participated provide a service to disadvantaged groups and try to recruit some of their staff from amongst their user groups. The degree of professionalisation within the organisations concerned varied a great deal. Some had a separate human resource function, others did not. Nearly all had well-developed schemes for assessing, training, and supporting their volunteers and helping them enter employment. Work placement and job opportunities for participants were generally sought within the voluntary and community sector rather than the public or the private sectors.

5.0 EXPLAINING SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION – A MODEL OF CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

This section explores what are the critical success factors that distinguish successful from less successful initiatives or projects? The results propose that a combination of internal and external factors can make a qualitative difference to disadvantaged individuals' progress in learning and skills development, and to their access to employment. Critical success factors are described below and are also represented in diagrammatic form.

Projects: Projects that include the following components appear to be more able to make a significant impact on participants' ability to progress into employment:

- IAG (to ensure that the project is appropriate and that the participant has a purpose and objective)
- Learning and Skills Development (e.g. skills for life or IT classes, apprenticeships, employability skills such as CV writing)
- Work experience or work placements (providers need to work closely with employers to be able to give participants at least short-term work experience as well as interview practice with feedback from the employer)
- Financial support with travel, childcare and interview expenses (e.g. appropriate clothing)
- Continuing support (eg through mentoring) after a project ends to assist participants in their job search and to maintain their motivation.

Experienced **providers** and stakeholders already recognise the importance of combining these types of support. However, interviews with providers and project participants also highlighted that due to the exigencies of limited funding and high output targets not all elements are always included. Also, many projects offer only limited or no employer contacts. This particular issue applies across many projects that aim to support disadvantaged groups. Notably, it was in participants' opinions the single most important factor that would make a difference to their eventual progression into the labour market but seemed to be under-developed across the range of projects.

At the core of a 'model of critical success factors' are the **projects** that aim to support disadvantaged groups into employment. There is also a strong need for **employers** to take on board the diversity agenda and to look towards local people who are currently not in employment to fill vacancies. For many participants from disadvantaged groups there is also a need for **other support** from agencies outside the learning and skills system. In the attached diagram these are shown as additional pillars of support alongside the funding for the project itself.

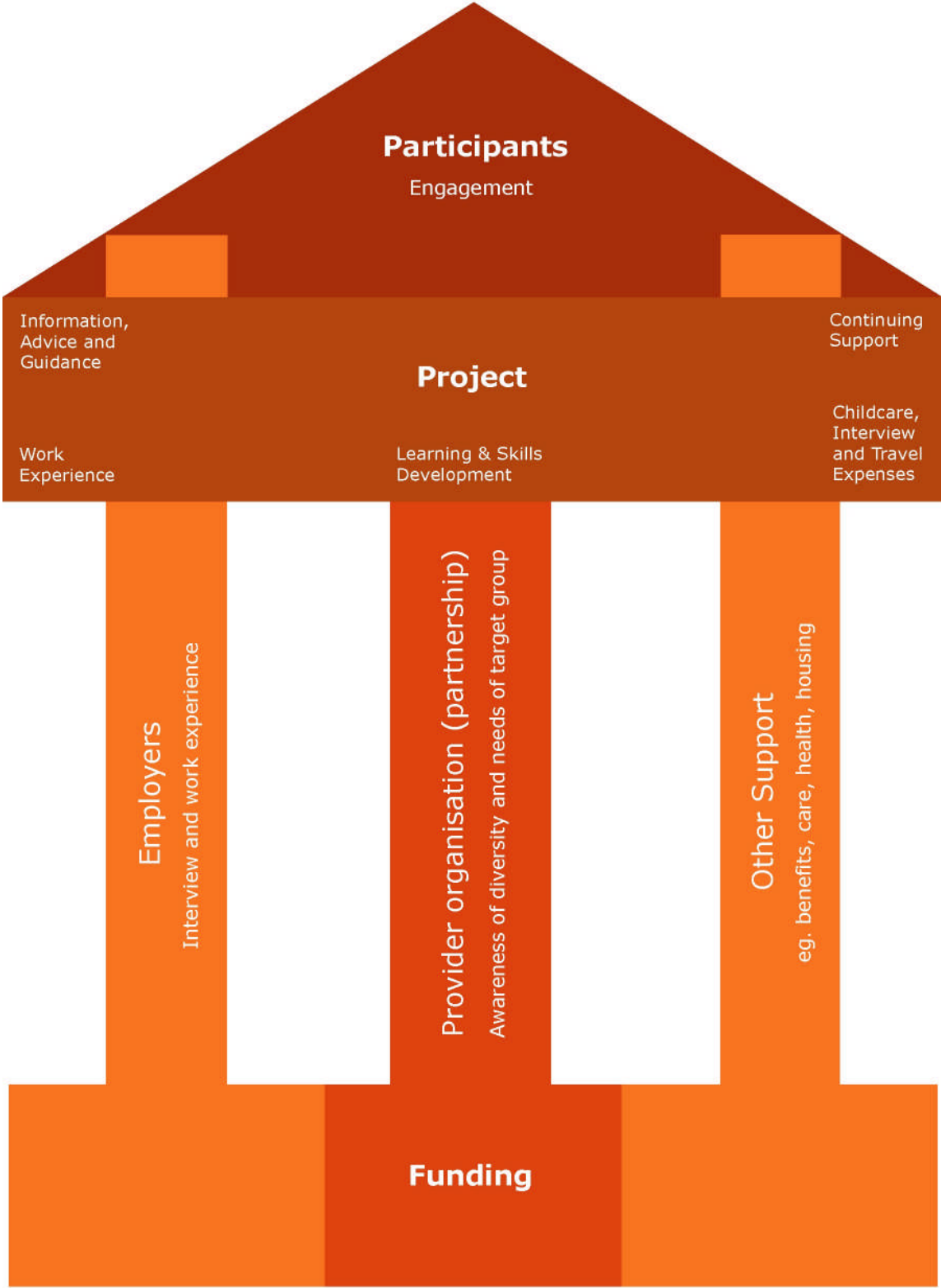
Funding: Projects that target disadvantaged groups are funded in a number of different ways and funding is generally channelled through provider organisations.

Provider organisations: They deliver projects by agreement with the funders.

Participants: Project participants from disadvantaged groups demonstrate engagement through their participation. Wider levels of support suggested in this model help increase motivation and can lead to their full participation as citizens and in the labour market.

A Model of Critical Success Factors

Tackling Disadvantage, Disengagement, Discrimination



6.0 CASE STUDIES

Five case studies complement the other research findings. The case studies draw attention to aspects of good practice that have been uncovered in the course of the 3DsLondon research through survey, interview and focus group analyses and have been summarised in a model of critical success factors. An important research finding is the need for more sustained employer engagement with projects in order to help members of disadvantaged groups present themselves and their skills and abilities to employers and thus gain the opportunity to compete on more equal terms with other applicants for jobs. Projects that have developed innovative ways of working with employers have therefore been included in this selection of case studies.

The case studies describe projects that work successfully with a particular disadvantaged target group or groups and with potential employers. The case study projects between them draw participants from each of the different London LSC sub-regions. All are innovative examples of good practice that other providers will find useful to reflect upon and to adapt to their own circumstances. The aspect of good practice highlighted by the research is mentioned in the brief summary below. The good practice aspect underlined in all five case studies is establishing good relationships with potential employers.

BEARS Youth Challenge is offered by Brent Educational Art Recreational Services offers a variety of projects (including the Multi-Skills Partnership, ESF Learnnet and E2E) to young people from an area of multiple deprivation, a large housing estate in Stonebridge West London. The young participants are able to progress according to their age group and according to their educational needs and achievements. The project is featured for its good practice in outreach combined with giving guidance and advice.

Building London Creating Futures (BLCF) is a project that recruits Londoners from a range of disadvantaged target groups and matches them with employment and training opportunities in the construction industry. This project is a good practice example of an innovative and successful partnership between employers in the construction sector working with local government and with colleges. Building London Creating Futures has been operating for several years; it started as an EU Equal Project and has since attracted both other funding and additional employer partners. Employers are moving gradually towards mainstreaming the initiative as part of their normal business practices.

The *Mencap Pathway Project* in Sutton and Merton, South London, assists people with learning disabilities access employment. The Pathways initiative is in fact a range of connected projects to suit the varying needs of participants. 'Job carving' has been developed as an innovative approach that enables the project

to match the needs of employers with the particular capabilities of each project participant. The provider has successfully engaged employers from the public and private sectors. It is a good practice example for innovative 'job carving' and for the developmental relationship between clients, provider and employers.

Praxis is based in East London. Its "Preparation Course for Supervised Practice Programme" prepares its participants from refugee and BAME groups for work in the health and social care sectors, in close collaboration with employers. It is a sector specific project, which is innovative by bringing together a skills audit of the target group with an audit of the skills needs in the sector. It is thus a good practice example of the way in which general and job specific employability skills are integrated and combined with opportunities for further vocational training.

The *Tamil Refugee Training and Employment Centre (TR TEC)* is offering a project called "Skills for the Disadvantaged" that recruits specifically from the Tamil BAME community and aims particularly to include women from that community. The project focuses on helping members of the target group with their language and employability skills, especially IT skills, which are necessary in the London and UK labour market. The provider organisation has set up successful partnerships with employers, most of whom are also from within the Tamil community. The case study is a good practice example of how the gender dimension is recognised and addressed separately within the needs of a particular target group.

Each case study tells a story based on interviews with key players: project participants, providers, employers and other stakeholders.

6.1 Case Study: BEARS YOUTH CHALLENGE

BEARS YOUTH CHALLENGE - Brent Educational Art Recreational Services - is based in Stonebridge, Brent, within the London West LSC sub region. Established in 1991, BEARS's purpose is to help young people aged 8-25 years overcome the multiple barriers and social exclusion that they experience as a consequence of the physical environment, social networks, family breakdown, crime, the informal economy, underachievement in education or long-term unemployment.

Through a range of projects aimed at "character development, lasting qualities of good citizenship and appreciation and understanding of the positive values of young people's own community", BEARS has been able to provide an increasingly important service in the wards of Church End, Stonebridge, St Raphael's and Harlesden and recently in the wider area of the London Boroughs of Brent and Ealing.

The organisation has attracted mainstream funding from the LSC since April 2006 and offers an Entry to Employment (E2E) programme for young people needing help with skills in order to progress to other courses, training or employment. The ability to attract mainstream funding is considered by BEARS to be a successful development, the E2E programme being the "first LSC contract held by BEARS without the support of partnership working".

Range of Projects for 2005/06/07

For 8-14 year-olds

A Half Term Greenhouse Holiday Sports Programme funded by Not Another Drop and Greenhouse is offered (in Partnership with Greenhouse Sports Programme).. This programme offers sports activities such as swimming, football and cricket. An evening programme is planned (funding applications in process) to offer a homework club, trips, games, sports and issue-based learning, for example on drug and sexual health awareness.

For 13-16 year-olds

The Multi -Skills Partnership (MSPP) funded by ESF London West LSC is a pre – E2E educational programme, aimed especially at Black boys failing in mainstream education. The programme involves work placements, training and qualifications and, once they have completed it, young people are able to progress to an E2E (Entry to Employment) Programme.

For 15-25 year-olds

The Divert Youth Programme funded by Harlesden and Stonebridge Neighbourhood Renewal Fund provides a range of specially adapted activities that respond to the needs of young people in the wards of Harlesden and

Stonebridge. Activities developed in close consultation with the outreach workers include leadership programmes and one-to-one counselling sessions. Advice and guidance offered to young people helps with their progression to employment or work placements, training and qualifications and going to college.

16-19 NEETs.

The E2E programme funded by LSC, offers skills for life and vocational courses leading to a qualification in:

- FA Coaching Certificate: Level 1+2
- Community Sports Leadership Awards
- Literacy and Communications: Skills for Life, Entry 3 and Key Skills, Level 1&2
- Numeracy: Skills for Life, Entry 3 and Key Skills, Level 1&2
- IT/ECDL: Key Skills, Level 1&2 and ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence)

Courses for 16-18 year old NEETs last for 22 weeks or longer; 19-24 year olds can also be considered for E2E enrolment.

Location

Currently, BEARS is centrally based in Stonebridge, an area that consists of old estate tower blocks that are being slowly demolished and replaced by more modern housing. The substantial regeneration programme is aimed at providing a safer community based environment for the residents. However, as mentioned in one of the case studies interviews, “to achieve a successful regeneration, more effort is needed to also regenerate the people’ and provide additional facilities for young people to ‘get them off the street’. This includes youngsters who mix with and imitate the behaviour of older groups.

The location does present challenges, as it sometimes acts as a deterrent in terms of recruitment. The provision of the E2E programme requires enrolment from the wider area of Brent and Ealing but due to the reputation of the area, young participants are reluctant to travel to Stonebridge. BEARS is aware of the problem and believes that moving to new premises by the end of 2006 will tackle the issue.

Another challenge is linked with the reputation of the area in relation to young peoples’ chances of getting a job. Interviewees spoke of ‘post-code’ discrimination: “if you want to do something then get out of Stonebridge” or “at the moment Stonebridge is not a very good area, if you go out there you will see a lot police...there is lot of stop and search, there are notices for dispersal orders”. It was added however that “the area does have a lot of potential especially if people can get jobs”.

Project Participants

Young people aged 8-25 are the core participants of BEARS projects. Multiple disadvantages are prevalent as the young people are residents of an 'area with high levels of multiple deprivation' and very deprived wards. Some are '16-19 NEET' or younger at risk of becoming NEET, some are 'ex-offenders', some come from 'Black, Asian and Minority ethnic' backgrounds, some are also 'lone – and often teenage - parents' and some are 'long term unemployed'.

The combinations of the above disadvantages increase the barriers and disengagement for the young people who are often characterized as 'hard to reach'. A more positive explanation was given during the interview with the provider – namely that the young people's circumstances made it 'hard for them to access services'. Some of the common challenges encountered include:

- Widespread selling and use of drugs
- Easy money from selling drugs act attracts young people
- Increase of gang and gun culture
- Peer pressure
- Violence amongst the young people and against other residents
- General attitude problems which hinder employment prospects
- Unrealistic aspirations and a lack of understanding of progression

What makes BEARS successful?

1. The provision of formal education

As of April 2006, BEARS has been able to move from the provision of informal education as a personal development provider, to being a registered training provider offering formal and accredited qualifications (through MSPP and E2E projects). The government's current focus on education coupled with the project's long experience of working with deprived young people put BEARS in a good position to attract mainstream funding for this major step forward. Additionally, through partnership with other organisations such as Head to Head Training or Bigger Fish, BEARS was able to demonstrate a proven track record of successful delivery of programmes and was able to gain experience, for example in the complicated paperwork involved. BEARS gained the Investors in People Award in 2004, which recognises that the support, training and development provided to their staff is integral to success.

2. Innovative Outreach Work

BEARS' focus on working with young people within the challenges presented by their local area has enabled the development of coherent and innovative outreach work aimed at recruiting highly disadvantaged and disengaged young people from the local area.

BEARS has developed an experienced and dedicated team of outreach workers who are considerate of young people's needs. There is a

commitment to constantly discussing and reviewing strategies for approaching young people by being present

- in 'hotspots', areas with minimal outreach work, including places where drugs are sold and other crimes are committed,
- in areas where young people gather i.e. high streets, sports grounds, parks,
- as residents. The workers are themselves residents of the local area; they are in touch with current local issues and with the situations young people encounter.

To be successful the approach also requires quick assessment of the best way to approach individuals, and sensitivity to gender issues.

BEARS puts emphasis on a 'Never Give Up' approach and views work with young people as continuous. Staff regularly telephone, e-mail or text new recruits, young people who have approached BEARS and even participants who have completed their project; all are encouraged to keep in touch. This persistence is what breaks social exclusion according to BEARS staff but it also contributes to the fact that there are no drop-outs from the projects: "we don't ever give up on young people, because we are the last resort around here, if we give up on them, there is nowhere else for them to go". Outreach workers re-approach young people if not successful the first time.

Specially designed leaflets have been produced to attract young people. This is especially helpful during outreach work when leaflets play a part in a young person's decision to engage or not in conversation with the outreach worker

3. Creative approach to projects and diverse activities

This means encouraging young people to be innovative and creative by empowering them to contribute their thoughts to running the project. Young people at the start of a project set their own ground rules and times.

Organising a range of creative activities that aim to educate, encourage teamwork, involvement with the community, leadership skills and other creative skills is also important. Examples include the 'Treasure Hunt', 'Fact Finding Mission studying Gun Culture', participation in 'Young People's Conference' held in Brussels and the 'Xpress Ur-Self' music project. Another initiative involved organising visits that have an entrepreneurial purpose e.g. the visit to an exhibition of T-shirt design where the designer discussed his work and gave tips on 'how to start and run your own business.'

4. Presence on the estate

Being located in Stonebridge for more than 15 years has allowed BEARS to develop a highly focused approach of specialised provision. This long-term presence on the estate provides an alternative route to employment and education for the local youth and those up to the age of 24 who are

disengaged from mainstream education. Participants often recommend BEARS to other family members or to their friends. It also keeps young people off the street by providing facilities for them to do their homework, use the computers and internet facilities or ask for advice. The lack of youth clubs in the area highlights BEARS's role.

5. Guidance

This has proved important by carrying out an initial assessment with the emphasis on a one-to-one approach and if appropriate, involving parents and teachers. Readiness to offer advice, even outside working hours, about education options and on all aspects of young peoples' lives has helped the profile of the guidance staff. At a practical level the project has also assisted with contacting employers and writing CVs and giving advice on interview procedures, dress codes etc.

6. Links with Employment

Targets for BEARS projects include the progression of young participants to other qualifications, work placements and to full or part time employment. BEARS has been able to meet all the targets.

Emphasis is placed on helping people get jobs in the local area. Young people have been able to gain work placements with the local school as school assistants or in local shops, such as hairdressers or at the Post Office. A partnership with Hillside Housing Trust aims to help young people into local construction jobs especially through the current regeneration of the area: "We work with companies that are involved with the construction work here because we believe that the residents should have an input in building their own homes so to take some pride...to say I built this...if I built something then I do not want to destroy it".

One BEARS participant was helped by Hillside Housing Trust to gain an apprenticeship with a construction company that does regeneration work: "It was difficult to get the job but once I had my foot into the door and my boss saw how dedicated I was and how much I took it seriously, I could start climbing". However, the participant explained how difficult it is to gain either an apprenticeship or a job in construction - or indeed in any other business for young people from the area because "people heard about Stonebridge and assume that everyone from Stonebridge is involved ... there is some discrimination...when I apply for jobs I never put Stonebridge down, I get more responses in this way."

BEARS is always seeking to establish links with companies, especially those that employ local people, for example, WHSmith and John Lewis in the Brent Cross

Shopping Centre, Stonebridge Regeneration, McDonalds (Harlesden and Wembley), and IKEA. Other employers with links to BEARS include the BBC, Transport for London and the London Fire Brigade.

Next steps

BEARS will open a new centre in the Pavilion, which is being built as part of the local regeneration programme and will be within close reach of sports facilities. BEARS aims to put more emphasis on young people and sports, an area of growing demand amongst the young people. The new venue will offer services to even more young people.

BEARS will continue with its outreach work and its commitment of never giving up on approaching young people and helping them out of disadvantage.

You can contact the BEARS project at:

BEARS Youth challenge
Unit 5
The Stonebridge Precinct
Stonebridge
London NW10 8LT
Tel. 020 8965 3068/6319
bears@dircon.co.uk
www.bearsyouth.org

6.2 Case Study: Building London Creating Futures (BLCF)

Building London Creating Futures (BLCF) aims to find long-term employment in the construction industry for local people in London, and to help the industry with its recruitment needs. BCLF developed a collaborative approach between the public and private sectors. Partnership working between construction employers, training providers and community organisations, local authority regeneration agencies and employment agencies, is intrinsic to the BLCF project, which is coordinated overall by a manager based in the London Borough of Southwark. A network of Workplace Co-ordinators (WPCs) works with major contractors on projects situated mainly in inner London.

How was the project started and how is it funded?

The project started around 2001 as an ESF Equal¹⁹ funded project and continued as an Equal project until 2005. During the period 2002-2005, BLCF built on that funding, bringing in Single Regeneration Budget money through the Cross River Partnership. When those funding schemes came to an end, BLCF moved straight into further funding, which is from two primary sources – both through the London Development Agency. European Social Fund co-financing funds three posts; the remainder is from the London South Central Single Programme.

When the model of a scheme with Work Place Co-ordinators was first developed it was 100% funded by the public sector, which covered the salaries of the WPCs, the cost of training the beneficiaries and other costs such as buying tools and hard hats. The costs are now split around fifty-fifty between the public and the private sectors. ESF funds half and employers meet the other half of the project costs. The public sector funding is used predominantly for the training element. This effectively resulted in the WPCs being embedded into the employers' companies and thus within the supply chains. This is evidence of a real effort on the part of the industry itself to match some of these costs and hence to make the project more sustainable.

Another source of funding comes through what the BLCF Project Manager, Mr. M, refers to as 'section 106 planning gain.' He explains: "In major developments now - we have started in Southwark and we also operate section 106 in Lambeth - major developers are required to contribute to the cost of all their Work Place Coordinators on their sites and there are attendant targets around what they have to do there.'

¹⁹ Equal is a European Social Fund (ESF) Community Initiative, providing funds to projects which test and promote new means of combating discrimination and inequalities in the labour market.

Thus the project started as a pilot around pathways to employment. It was set up specifically to look at how to support disadvantaged groups to obtain employment within the construction industry. The target groups include: BME groups, women, under 25s, long-term unemployed, recent returnees to the labour market, refugees, and people over fifty. BLCF has aimed to offer construction skills and lifelong learning skills to beneficiaries from these groups. “The sector itself has shortages of skilled labour, so it is looking at other groups that might be a resource for construction, a resource that could be developed. We (at BLCF) provide them with access to labour” (a BLCF WPC).

Most participants come onto the project at entry level with low or no skills. They must undertake health and safety training which then enables them to obtain a CSCS Card (the CSCS card is the passport to working on site in the construction industry). They can learn and develop basic skills and soft skills – like CV writing and interview techniques – as well as specialist skills. Beneficiaries are encouraged to undertake training that will lead to a qualification, normally at NVQ1 or NVQ2 level.

Seven construction companies in the BLCF partnership have WPCs who recruit the beneficiaries and match them to relevant opportunities. The WPCs also support the beneficiaries during the 13+ weeks when they are trained on site. The WPCs give the participants whatever equipment they may need to work on a particular site – usually they get their own hard hat, boots, tool belt, visibility vest – and they arrange the training.

The Work of a BLCF Workplace Co-ordinator

Mace is a large Construction and Project Management Company, which operates in the building, civil engineering and property sectors and is a partner to BLCF. The company is the principal constructor at Heathrow Terminal 5 and employs a WPC there, Mr TH, who is also Mace’s social inclusion manager. Combining the two roles gives the company the opportunity to implement their local employment strategy. “We discuss what the programmes are about and we ask people [the employers and firms in the supply chain] to go along with us. We guarantee that the people we recruit are as good as employers will find through the usual and traditional methods. Our beneficiaries come through a programme that gives long-term benefits to themselves and the companies, because they have more than the minimum requirements as a result of the preparation they have to go through. So the retention level is high. They will stay, employers want people to stay”, explains Mr H. As a manager at Mace he is embedded in the supply chain and has access to a large range of opportunities within a small geographical area. “For instance, if a plastering company is on site, then WPCs will work with them and say ‘Okay, you are looking for three plasterers at the moment; why don’t you take these?’. In that way beneficiaries are brought into the workforce. The WPC for Mace has supported 200 BLCF beneficiaries at Terminal 5.

Mr H. explains that Mace do not target a specific group. “Everybody without a job is a suitable beneficiary, but we concentrate on certain groups: over 50s, women, BME, the long-term unemployed, and other disadvantaged groups who you wouldn’t normally see in the construction sector.”

The recruitment of beneficiaries happens in two stages and then there is the third stage of helping them develop while they are in the job.

1. Mr. TH. works with local stakeholder organisations like Jobcentre Plus and other training organisations – most of whom are preparing people for employment for all sectors – to find suitable candidates. He works with these training organisations to prepare suitable beneficiaries who want to work in the construction industry by making sure that they are briefed on the sector, on the companies that they are interested in and on jobs they are going for. He also informs them of the qualifications that they are going to need, the right way to approach their interviews and the behaviour they need to adopt whilst at work, and putting together a plan of the sort of training they need in order to get a CSCS card.
2. Once the WPC has found employment for the beneficiaries – by asking members of his supply chain to take people on – he will use the grants given by BLCF to develop the beneficiaries’ skills so that if they start as labourers they can then perhaps take an NVQ1 or 2 to move up the ladder. “If you take somebody on at entry level as a support labourer for an electrical company, you don't want to him to be a support labourer for the rest of his life. You want to make sure that he is going to on developing, into NVQ1, then NVQ2, that he is going to sign into a college, he is going to develop with this company and that he is not going to stay static.”
3. The third stage is about making sure that people are well supported and mentored in their new jobs. The need for support of beneficiaries varies. For example those who have been long term unemployed may need further support to avoid the 'revolving door syndrome', where if they come into a job and are not supported (either by the WPC or the employer), they might develop a level of dissatisfaction because they cannot see how they can fit in with the job. Mentoring involves being there for the beneficiaries, if they need it, to give advice on the general world of work; this could be as simple as reminding people to be punctual, helping them with travel planning, or dealing with their domestic arrangements, such as child care. The relationship between Mace and its beneficiaries is on-going. The beneficiaries always have the option to come back for more advice, guidance and further development. Mace has a system that ensures it does not lose track of people, and the relationship is designed to continue.

Mace, together with its clients, has set up bursary schemes to allow further support to beneficiaries through programmes which allow students from poor and underrepresented groups to go to a University and study construction related degrees. At the moment the bursary scheme caters for six people. Mace is working with more clients to increase that number.

The BLCF project at Mace has been successful overall, with positive sustainable employment outcomes. Beneficiaries may go on to all sorts of apprenticeships. They can start at entry level and get their NVQ1/2 and then become skilled operators within the industry. Some participants were reported to be considering BTECs and degrees. Out of 300 beneficiaries, 200 progressed into employment and 70% of the beneficiaries get higher levels than NVQ1; seven people are on degree level schemes.

The BLCF funding is important to Mace, the WPC explains: “the idea was to have WPCs embedded in the companies....it produces the grants to enable WPCs to do their job when finding people work or training opportunities”.

How successful has Building London Creating Futures been?

The BLCF Co-ordinator explains that, in most cases, BLCF overachieved its targets as shown in the following table:

Groups	Targets set by BLCF	Actual output
Below NVQ1 Qualifications	107	765
NVQ1 Qualifications	194	109
NVQ2 Qualifications	175	60
NVQ3 Qualifications	0	1
Number of People into sustainable jobs	250	388
Young people under 25 assisted	509	534
Women assisted	134	71
Older people assisted	0	54
Disadvantaged people into work	0	163
BME	622	815
People with disabilities	0	8

The high success rate can be attributed to:

1. Working to change the image of the construction sector

The industry is seen as white male dominated profession, not very conducive to people from BME groups, or women. The Co-ordinator explains: 'It's all about selling the industry, and that's something the industry is starting to do for itself. Obviously there are organisations like the Construction Industry Training Board who are very active in this field, and also provide training for agencies. But I think employers themselves are starting to engage much more and do a lot more outreach to BME, women, and others.'

An example of the actions that the industry and BLCF have taken to address image problems associated with the construction sector is with regard to the recruitment of women.

- The industry and BLCF try to convey the message to women that 'not every role is a hard manual labour role. That there is a lot of mechanisation and that there are other opportunities on sites that can be taken into account.'
- Most of Work Place Coordinators (WPCs) are women – this was not done deliberately, but nevertheless proved successful in encouraging more women to join. Because these female WPCs are based within the management structure they have the ability to physically make differences on site. The other effect is that these women who have the influence to make changes on site, are in turn telling their friends about it and this is cascading to others.
- On most of the sites in which BLCF works, the sexist workplace culture such as pornography has been banned from sites, which used to be a very common feature.

2. BLCF's ability to outreach

BLCF has largely focused on areas of disadvantage in Central London to date. The co-ordinator clarifies, "Our core area is central London, predominantly south of the river, so Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth, Westminster and the City of London. The project is pan-London, so we can help people across the city. But within the core area, there are significant areas of deprivation. Because the links are very good with, for instance, the Jobcentres, with local community based organisations, with the Local Authorities, and with others, it has really enabled the project to engage with clients with the most needs".

3. Tracking of beneficiaries

This is another innovation and one of the key things BLCF embraces to make sure the relationships with beneficiaries continue for a long time. BLCF track beneficiaries for monitoring purposes and keep in touch with them for the lifetime of the project. There are difficulties in that, because the construction industry is of transient nature: people are on one site for two or three months or less before moving on to another site. WPCs develop their own networks to deal with this and remain in touch with beneficiaries even after they leave their current site; this enables WPCs to find beneficiaries' new work if and when their contracts come to an end.

4. Employer Links

The primary way for BLCF to keep in touch with employers is through a series of regular meetings. The meetings are chaired by Cross-River Partnership and are attended by a wide range of other BLCF partners. BLCF also updates its employer partners regularly, through emails and newsletters. The Co-ordinator also has a lot of face-to-face meetings, not only with current employers but also with companies that have expressed an interest in the project. This enables BLCF to achieve its aim of forging strong links with potential employers and gradually to widen the geographical area of its operations.

5. Work Place Coordinators:

Because the WPCs are partially financed by BLCF but are also employer representatives, they are embedded in the supply chain and based with one employer. Therefore they are well-placed to recruit beneficiaries using outreach approaches and these beneficiaries in turn have a good chance of being recruited by employers in the company's supply chain.

The Future of the Building London Creating Futures Project

The number of WPCs has depended on funding. BLCF plans for another six to join by the end of 2006. There are four at present based at:

- Bankside 123, three new office buildings just south of Tate Modern
- St. George Wharf Vauxhall, a large housing development.
- Heathrow Terminal 5
- Kings Cross, where work is being carried out on a rail link and refurbishment of the station

The BLCF Co-ordinator is optimistic of the future and states that there is a lot going to be happening in their area of work over the next few years. There are some very big schemes going on that BLCF is trying to get involved in. The Mace WPC, too, thinks that if the BLCF funding runs out there are other opportunities in the pipeline, for example through the Olympics. A lot of organisations are interested in putting money towards developing greater social inclusion in the construction sector. "Like any sector, it is changing, it is slow, sometimes

conservative, but it will take new ideas quite readily, more so than other sectors. The sector is willing to embrace the ideas of social inclusion like we advocate”.

Project Beneficiaries:

Mr. MA.

A 58 year-old from Somalia, Mr MA works as an assistant surveyor for the Site Engineering Surveyors at Heathrow Terminal 5. Having successfully passed the three months probation period, he is now working on a permanent, full time basis.

He found out about the BLCF programme in Acton’s Jobcentre. At that time, he had been unemployed for over two years and was getting Jobseeker's Allowance. He says, “I was doing training at the Jobcentre. They were helping me with my CV, and I was also using their computers to improve my IT skills. Then, [the WPC from Heathrow] came to the Jobcentre to select qualified people for jobs at Terminal 5”. MA had an interview with Mr. TH and it was this, he says, that changed his life. “At the time ..., I was very depressed. You see, I am a qualified Engineer; I have a Masters in Engineering from Italy and have worked as an engineer in Somalia. But that was a long time ago. And when I came to this country, it was hard to find a job in my profession. I was so demoralised for not working in my field. I didn’t know which door to knock. I didn’t know where to look. Until I met [WPC]. He gave me a new life, a new hope. I can only say thanks to him. He is the angel who saved my life.” During the interview with Mr. H, MA stated that he wanted to do anything in the construction industry. But the WPC, having seen his CV and professional qualifications, informed him that he will look for a job where he could use his skills. The WPC helped MA to tailor his CV to the construction industry by highlighting the specific experiences and skills relevant to that sector; he coached him in interview techniques; informed him about the working environment in construction in the UK and taught him about health and safety, and how to behave with colleagues and managers.

About three weeks after his first interview with the BLCF WPC Mr. MA. was found a job as an assistant surveyor at Heathrow Terminal 5. He started his job at Terminal 5 in July, 2006. Although he wasn’t offered financial assistance, such as travel expenses, the employer provided him with safety helmet, boots, gloves, and high-visibility clothing. The Work Place Coordinator also continued to offer Mr. MA further training and guidance. “After I got the job, [the WPC] continued to help me to adapt. This was my first job in this sector in the UK. Although I worked in the construction industry in my country, it was different. Things were done in a different way there. We are in a different world. I am now in Europe and they do things differently in Africa. The equipment we use in Africa is different from here, so I needed the training to be a good surveyor and [the WPC] made sure I got all the training I needed.”

The WPC's assistance also included making sure that Mr. MA progressed up the ladder. "When I got the job of assistant surveyor, [the WPC] kept pushing me to aim higher. He pushed the manager [at Terminal five] to give me more practice and more chances to implement my knowledge, and use more and more instruments. Practice makes perfect. The more you familiarise yourself with the equipments, the more you can progress on the job. [The WPC] and I are planning that after six months, I will be a junior engineer and after that I will be a full qualified engineer. I am going up, up."

Ms E G.

Ms EG. is working as a painter/decorator for GSE Decorating Specialists. She says that before she knew about BLCF, she found it difficult, as a woman, to get into the construction industry. "Even though I heard in the media that more women were coming into the industry, I found it really hard to get into it and I was struggling, so it was a big weight off my shoulders when I found [WPC] and found this job. I was so frustrated and getting depressed because I was having no luck whatsoever."

"When I first started this job, it was the first proper construction site I have been in, so it was a great experience for me, having to wear the helmet, gloves, and boots.... it was good and I have gained a lot of knowledge."

She says that BLCF and the WPC will support her professional development, but "although I am thinking about progressing and going up the ladder, at the moment, I am enjoying getting my hands dirty and working with the lads."

She says she loves her job and that she wishes that the industry would take more women.

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There is a 15-minute DVD about Building London Creating Futures. Contact this address to request a copy of the DVD

6.3 Case Study: MENCAP Pathway to Employment Service

Sutton Pathways Employment Service has been working in the London Borough of Sutton for 19 years and more recently in the London Borough of Merton. Pathways is the education and employment arm of MENCAP, the UK's leading learning disability charity. The aim of the Pathways project is to assist and support people with learning disabilities into the world of work. There are an estimated 1.5 million people in the UK with a learning disability but currently only 1% of are in employment compared to 10% with other disabilities.

Pathways runs a range of programmes that provide support, training and work experience for individuals with learning disabilities to improve their work skills and to move them towards paid employment. These different programmes have been developed to meet the differing levels of need among the Pathway clients as well providing progression from early stage support and introduction to work into employment.

Step by Step is a 26 week course of support, funded by the European Social Fund and Jobcentre Plus, tailored to suit individual needs. An Individual Learning Plan is developed for each participant that may include confidence building, CV completion, job searching skills, interview preparation and practice and work experience. From this programme many clients go into paid work some for just a few hours a week, some for over 16 hours a week; others go into voluntary work or go on to college or further study.

The **Work Preparation Programme** is a two-part programme. Part One, the Personal Development Programme, is a classroom based pre-vocational training course designed to increase the individuals' skills in finding and keeping a job. Small groups of individuals attend in-house training for up to 12 weeks. Part Two is the Work Placement Module, offering work experience for up to eight weeks to introduce or re-introduce individuals to the work place enabling them to gain valuable skills for long-term employment.

Connexions to the World of Work is a partnership project between Connexions and Sutton Pathways that works with young people with learning disabilities and difficulties to improve the transition from education to work. This again includes in-house Personal Development Modules and Work Experience Placements.

As the MENCAP Pathways Service Manager, JS, explains "We work with individuals by providing initial assessments and identifying each person's skills and capabilities. We then produce an individual action plan where each person works toward achieving personal objectives. Through various modules, and the delivery of in house training we aim to increase and enhance people's work related skills, provide an opportunity for them to discover what their own

strengths and capabilities are, building confidence and helping prepare for work”.

A scheme that Mencap Pathways has introduced in recent years is to work with employers on ‘job carving’. As JS explains: “Job carving is an innovative way of finding employment for people who can only work for a few hours a day or for a few days a week. For example a full-time admin role may involve envelope stuffing, shredding and photocopying, some of the more repetitive parts of the job. Ring fencing these jobs for our clients offers achievable employment, then advertising the rest of the job as part time for maybe 30 hours. Likewise, with a catering job, it can be carved up with a few hours dedicated to washing, dishwasher stacking and clearing tables etc”.

This has certainly worked well in the London Borough of Sutton Civic Offices where JG from the Customer Services Department has been working with MENCAP Pathways for over three years. This department now employs Pathways clients in a range of roles. There is the small team of three people who come in on different days to send out cheques, with a fourth person ‘Tommy’, providing the start of the chain role - preparing all the envelopes ready for the other people to put the cheques in. Sutton have another 36-hour job broken down into roles for ten people.

JG faced a number of challenges in being able to take a more flexible approach to employing people with learning and physical disabilities at the start. Her experience with Pathways clients had led her to start working with REMPLOY to employ people with other disabilities. The main obstacles were created by some of the Council’s employment policies. A number of people had been on work experience placements or part-time short-term contracts and she had wanted to take them on as permanent staff as they could clearly do the jobs. JG felt that her excellent employees might be disadvantaged through the normal interview process. So after much negotiation with department heads, it was agreed that they should be offered permanent employment.

As a result of this experience, the Head of HR worked with the Unions on the development of a new flexible recruitment policy for the Council. If there is now a suitable vacancy at the Council, JG contacts MENCAP Pathways or REMPLOY to ask if they have any candidates interested. She explains “they’ll send however many people they’ve got, and we have a chat, show them around, ask if it is something they’d like to do. And we then take them on a six months fixed term contract, which if you think about it, runs in parallel with when any person starts with the Council because you have a six months probation period. So it’s running in tandem and then what we do is at the end of the six months, providing both parties are happy, they just become permanent staff”.

The Pathways Employment Service is working closely with a whole range of other local employers including Sainsbury’s, Asda, Morrisons and UCI Cinemas, promoting the benefits of employing people with learning disabilities and outlining

the range of support they can offer. This includes disability awareness training, support workers for people on work experience and in employment and access to grants for adaptations to premises and special equipment.

Pathways also talks to the employers about the possibility of 'job carving' and different approaches to recruitment. They are working with some employers on 'work trials', where a person with a learning disability who is interested in applying for a job is given a week or two's work trial rather than going through a formal application and interview process. The employer gets a chance to see if the candidate can do the job and the candidate can see whether the job is something they are able to do. JS (Service Manager) explains "with many employers, recruiting people through an application form and an interview, they may employ the person and find out within a few weeks that they're actually no good for the job at all. And this is what we tell employers when we market to them that offering this work trial is really good, and benefits both parties as some clients can do the work for a week and decide that it's actually quite different to what they thought and they'd rather try something completely different. So nothing lost, they've learnt from it and again it's something to put on the CV. However for the majority it replaces the usual recruitment process and offers an alternative way to become employed where an individual can prove to the employer that they are capable of achieving all that is asked of them rather than being successful due to a CV full of qualifications".

Pathways does not only work with large employers – it also works with smaller independent employers such as Green Recycle in Mitcham. For 10 years Green Recycle has been providing work experience and employment opportunities for Pathways clients. They currently have three employees with learning disabilities who were introduced to them by Pathways, but many more have worked there in the past and moved on the other employment. "The best thing is seeing people achieve and seeing what they get out of the work. Their ability and confidence grows, they earn their own wage and some have moved into their own flats" says JT from Green Recycle.

JT feels that being a small company means they are more like a family and can take time to get to know people and find out what their needs are. This was particularly the case of one employee, as JT explains "When he moved into his own flat I noticed he started having a few problems at work. So I contacted MENCAP Pathways and we worked it through together and now he works part-time rather than full-time to give him time to organise his home life".

Pathways pride themselves on offering a full support system not only for the client but also the employer. JS says, "We feel that it's so important, not only early on in making sure that the individual achieves employment, but to continue with the support to help sustain their employment until they're at a stage whereby they're able to continue working independently. If the employer at any stage has any issues or concerns we are only a phone call away. We can be there to help

with a problem before it turns into a crisis”.

For JG the benefits to the employer of employing people with learning disabilities and difficulties are enormous. It creates a good public image – the Council customer survey showed that the public now see the Sutton Council as being inclusive and supportive of a diverse community. It has positive impact on other staff – there is now less absenteeism. It puts the equality and diversity policy into action – having people with disabilities at the diversity training is “an eye opener”. It helps staff to overcome any prejudices they might have - some staff were initially apprehensive about working alongside a person with a disability, now they all work together as team.

‘Nicky’, a Pathways client has gone from work experience copy-typing at Sutton’s Civic Offices to being a star employee working in the Call Centre, taking 80% of the IT calls and training new staff. Yet when Nicky started with the Council she didn’t even like to answer the telephone at home. Alongside her work Nicky is also studying for an Institute of Customer Service award. Asked what she liked best about working at the Civic Offices “I really enjoy training people, showing them what to do, how to take the calls. I’m really happy working here”.

Critical success factors

1. The Provider understands the needs of the target group

MENCAP Pathways Employment Service offers a range of different programmes of support tailored to the needs of their individual clients, which have been developed through years of experience working with people with learning difficulties and disabilities. The pre work training and advice coupled with the work placement provide the clients with vital skills and experience.

2. On-going support

MENCAP continue to provide support for their clients once they are in work – becoming part of an important network of support that involves families, carers and the employers.

3. Working closely with employers

MENCAP works closely with employers helping them to look at flexible approaches to recruitment. This can involve a work experience trial period which gives the potential employee a chance to see if the job is right for them and the employer time to see if the candidate can fulfil the role. Traditional job interviews can be a real barrier for people with learning disabilities.

4. Employers take a flexible approach

MENCAP has also worked closely with employees on job carving – two or three people filling one post – and on alternative recruitment procedures.

5. Employers have a commitment to a diverse workforce

The employers are willing to adapt their premises and their ways of working to accommodate a truly diverse workforce, which can bring real benefits in terms of customer profile and staff morale.

6. Participants

Project participants are motivated and committed employees.

You can contact the MENCAP Pathway Project, Sutton and Merton at the following address:

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6.4 Case Study: Praxis (Refugee and overseas nurses)

The organisation **Praxis** has been operating for over 20 years with the main aim of supporting new residents to integrate in the UK, both to their benefit and that of their new community. These new residents often come to the UK as economic migrants or as refugees. Praxis helps people cope with the requirements of daily life in the UK and find a job. One of the many projects it carries out is for Overseas Qualified Nurses, which is called 'Preparation Course for Supervised Practice (PCSP)

The Project: Preparation Course for Supervised Practice (PCSP)

The programme offers a twelve-week course to prepare Overseas Qualified Nurses (OQN) for Supervised Practice Programme at hospitals and nursing homes, which is a necessary for them to get their PIN number. The Workforce Development Co-ordinator at Praxis explains: “the PIN number is an registration number given by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) for nurses to be able to practise in this country.”

The Preparation for Supervised Practice Programme at Praxis provides:

- Language and communication skills for nurses
- Orientation to Nursing in the UK
- Employment preparation and Equalities.

The programme started in 2000 and so far Praxis has run twelve courses with 141 participants altogether. Over this period the course had several sources of funding. For the first course, Praxis had to secure money from different sources. Funding for the next four courses came from the Health Action Team, a local regeneration project made up of local employers, including the Barts and London Hospital Trust and the Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) funded six courses with ESF co-financing. Praxis managed to fund the last course from London City Fringe funding and other regeneration funds.

The course was discontinued in 2006 because there is currently no serious shortage of nurses in the NHS Trusts and hence funding for this particular project has now ceased. Praxis has transferred the model of the PCSP and has run courses for midwives and allied health care professionals.

Target Group(s) for the PCSP Project are refugees and overseas nurses. At the start of the project, the students were almost exclusively refugees. In the very first group, there were eight refugees and two migrants who were not refugees, but since then, as asylum seeking has decreased and immigration increased, the situation has reversed. HW, the Lead on Workforce Development at Praxis, explains, “the majority of the students we find are not refugees, they are varying descriptions of migrants. But I think that ... government policy, patterns of

refugees and asylum seekers coming into the country, with a dispersal policy of asylum seekers, they're not coming to London. And it also mirrors the growth in migration and the overall reduction in refugee and asylum seekers." Although the number of refugees has decreased, the number of other migrants is going up. Praxis' networks for recruiting participants have broadened as a result of working with a wider group of migrant nurses. The qualification level of nurses at recruitment varies, and nurses from abroad come with different lengths of experience and qualifications.

What makes the Preparation Course for Supervised Practice at Praxis successful?

According to Praxis, in the twelve courses, 141 nurses participated. Of them, 70-80% of nurses who went through the preparation courses were offered employment and are now working in nursing in the UK. Praxis was successful in placing most of its nurses in paid-placements and getting them out of the benefit system. But sometimes, HW says, it takes a long time for somebody to get into employment, because of delays in resolving their immigration status. In their last course, for example, there were eleven participants. Three have already finished their Supervised Practice Programme (SPP) and got their PIN number; four are doing their (SPP) at Thames Valley University and another in Leeds, and the ninth is still trying to get into SPP. There were only two who dropped out and in each case this was attributed to personal reasons. Overall, HW says that this is a high level of success with outcomes at near eighty percent. In addition, "we continue to track people and make sure they get into employment."

What explains this successful outcome to Praxis's projects?

1. Full preparation of participants for the Supervised Practice Programme

Praxis found, through research, that overseas nurses need to develop language and general communication skills when they go for supervised practice in hospitals and nursing homes. So Praxis adapted the course to give participants the communication skills they need as well as intensive training about 'how nursing is done in the UK'.

The innovative aspect of the PCSP derives from the fact that Praxis designed the programme by looking at the needs of the participants and the final outcomes that were required by employers. This, HW says, "is innovative, because we designed a customised programme that directly responds to those needs and those outcomes. Personally I just see it as common sense, actually. But it's innovative, in that nobody else is doing it, or very few people are doing it." Praxis courses enhanced participants' skills by directly tackling barriers.

Barriers	What Praxis does to remedy
Communication skills.	The element of the course that deals with Language & Communication Skills helps to improve communications skills in English. It is deals with the culture of working in a ward in the UK.
Orientation to Nursing in the UK.	The element of the course, 'Orientation to Nursing in the UK', is an orientation to nursing in this country and is taught by a practising nurse. It includes the practical skills needed for the SPP in hospitals & nursing homes. "Nurses tell us that our courses show them how nursing is done in this country and this in turn improves their chances to get into supervised practice and eventually get their pin number" (Workforce Development Co-ordinator)

2. Guidance

Praxis provides comprehensive job search skills including help with completing job applications, writing CVs and covering letters. Guidance is also given on using websites that offer job vacancies. Participants are taught about interview preparation on the course and also go to external mock interview sessions with local employers. This way, HW says, they get very detailed support around what type of questions are likely to come up in real jobs interviews and what further practice is required. She says: "many nurses have come back to us and said 'Oh you know the questions they asked me in the interview, they were exactly the ones that we practised in the class. I was so confident in my answers.'"

3. Additional support after nurses leave the course

Praxis continues to offer ongoing support to course participants after they finish their programme. This includes giving tutorials, writing references for people, HW explains, "it's quite a large part of the work actually, writing references for our students. And particularly for refugees but also for migrants, getting a reference is a really difficult thing to do. And without a reference you can't get a job. It's very valuable... and occasionally a nurse needs some financial assistance because of some aspect of the employment process. And we have had and still do have some access to small pots of money to support people financially."

4. Evaluation as a way to improve project delivery

All the participants on the course complete an evaluation of their experience of the project. They have a session on the course where they have to fill in an evaluation form. They also have a meeting with tutors and staff on the course to evaluate the programme. Funders also play a part, as in addition to monitoring, they give feedback of a more evaluative nature. Praxis had various external evaluations, which enable the organisation to reflect on "what we're doing, and whether we have achieved or not achieved, and why, what is happening there..

how a certain outcome has been achieved.” As a result of evaluation Praxis has increased the IT component on the course, has introduced a qualification (English Speaking Board) and has developed its outreach activities.

5. Link to employers and work experience

Another innovative step that Praxis has taken is to involve employers in their projects, through participating in teaching of the courses and in mock interview sessions. A distinct benefit of this is that it provides the platform for employers to get to know Praxis and its students very well. And nurses get to meet employers and potential interviewers in advance. For example, in the courses, when the Health Action Team were the primary funders, Praxis was working in partnership with Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust. “So Praxis dovetailed their courses to feed into their vacancies. So there was a direct link from our students into employment in the health service. And the employers were involved, not only in delivering aspects of the course, but also in part of the assessment process, the recruitment process on to our course.” “But when Praxis moved on to a different form of funding, the organisation started to build up a relationship with more employers, like trusts in East London, and others in south east London.”

Example of an Employer’s experience with the Praxis’s project:

Mr. MU is a Nurse Manager at Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust (THPCT) at Mile End Hospital.

Reasons for working with Praxis: Mr. MU indicates that one of his main aspirations is that local communities are given the opportunity to join their local NHS services. He summed this up as local people providing services to their local population.’ Therefore his Trust’s engagement with Praxis focused on bringing a cultural mix to their wards and in doing so being able to represent the different mix of minorities in London. He also points out that different people from different backgrounds bring different skills.

His views on Praxis’s project:

‘From my perspective as an employer,’ says MU, “the course at Praxis helps a lot of people in the pre-supervised training programme, which prepares them for the supervised practice... I have helped Praxis by going there and doing sessions in which I talked to participants about careers in the NHS; the various opportunities available for them; and talked about equality and diversity in the NHS, so that they are aware of these... I also participated in teaching interview techniques.”

He points out that he particularly likes the Praxis’s course focus on providing participants with a sense of belonging. New people meet in class with other people in similar situations; he welcomes the content of training that teaches participants about the culture of nursing in this country, and teaching them about how to do interviews, which is good for students to compete in the labour market

He says, 'the course teaches them interview skills, which is not a necessary skill in the countries where these nurses come from. For example, in Africa and Asian countries jobs could be handed out not through interviews but nepotism. So Praxis prepares them in that aspect.'

His views on Praxis's trainees:

Mr. MU points out that 'I noticed that people who join us from Praxis are more assertive at the beginning of the supervised practice programme than others who didn't come from Praxis.'

People from Praxis might lack administrative skills, but we teach them about these during the programme. They are quick learners. They have good communication skills and customer relations. He likes their dedication and commitment. 'Overall Praxis people are one of the best. When they get the placement with us, it is like a dream for them, so they work hard and know that to get their registration pin number they have to do so. They don't give us any problems.'

Benefit to trainees on work placements at the Mile End Hospital: The main benefit he mentions is that participants are provided with a place to do their adaptation, which will, after successful completion, mean they will get their pin number and can practise nursing in this country. He states that many of Praxis's people are successful in that they finish their placements. He gives the example of J. who came from Praxis into their supervised practice and after her completion of the supervised practice, she worked at their hospital and was promoted.

Future collaborations with Praxis:

Mr. MU points out that 'at the moment, the NHS is undergoing serious overhaul and because of lack of funding we stopped doing our supervised practice programme. The last supervised practice we did was in September 2006. That's because the government is saying we have too many nurses. And they are withdrawing permits from nurses on band 5, which is the starting grade for overseas nurses.'

This issue with lack of permits for overseas nurses will lead to huge disadvantages for overseas nurses he thinks because 'if you want to continue to employ overseas nurses, you have to provide the Home Office with reasons why you couldn't find British nurses. And employers don't want to go through the hassle of doing this. Therefore we stopped the supervised practice for overseas nurses.' Although he would be happy for their relationship with Praxis to continue it has become impossible due to the NHS restructuring and Home Office regulations.

Helping other disadvantaged groups:

This employer suggests that, in his opinion, there is a large pool of disadvantaged local people to recruit from for nursing. He says, for example, he has seen very few Somalis working in hospitals. This, he says, is incomprehensible given that there is a large Somali population in Tower Hamlets. 'I know there are so many Somalis in Tower Hamlets,' he explains, 'In this borough, Somalis are classified as a different ethnic group from other Africans because of their size, and they are thought of as a special group in Tower Hamlets.'

He also points out that there are disadvantaged groups in Tower Hamlets who he'd seen poorly represented amongst staff in hospitals, for example Bangladeshis, who form 30% of the population in the borough, or disabled people. When asked why there are only a few of these disadvantaged groups working in the profession, MU mentions three reasons: they are not encouraged, they are not given the opportunity, and they are not told of the opportunities available.

The Project's Beneficiaries

Two nurses were interviewed for this case study:

Nurse1, 'Chichi', has just finished her supervised practice and got her PIN number as a UK-registered nurse. She is now applying for a job as a qualified nurse. She saw the course on the internet and joined the twelve-week PCSP at Praxis in January 2005. She has worked as professional nurse in Nigeria for three years prior to coming to the UK.

She said that overall the course was very well organised and that as well as building up her IT skills from scratch and "how English is practiced here, because back home, back home we do it differently", she learned about communication skills in the workplace and how to communicate in the nursing profession in this country. In Nigeria, she says, they have the British-based knowledge about nursing but different terminologies. So the course taught her about nursing terminologies in the UK. 'In Praxis, they put me through all the medical terms used in the UK. They prepared me very well so that when I went to do my supervised practice, I didn't find it difficult in the ward.'

She also says that she was given guidance towards getting jobs. She learnt how to write her CV and covering letter according to the format required in this country, about general interview skills and the appropriate dress code for interviews. She says, "A lady teacher came to help us how to do interviews like making eye contact. Where we come from we don't do eye contact. So I felt confident afterwards when I have to do real interviews"

Other skills/assistance she gained from Praxis: Using job search skills she learnt at Praxis, she found a vacancy at a hospital in Mile End. Praxis helped her with completing the application form, preparing for the interview and provided her with references. She managed to get a three-months paid placement, which set her on course to achieving her PIN and subsequently being able to practise nursing in the UK.

Overall, she says, the course was great, but she wished that the nursing aspect of the course was taught by professional teachers from Nursing Colleges as opposed to nurses from hospitals, because "teaching is a skill, not everyone can teach."

Nurse 2, 'Elsie', has just finished her supervised practice programme at Mile End hospital. It was a four-months paid placement. She has her PIN now and is currently applying for jobs. She hopes to be interviewed for at least one of those she is going for. But she fears that this may be difficult to achieve given that the Home Office removed nursing from the short list for automatic work permits. She practised nursing for 20 years, and upon her arrival she learnt that The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) requires that overseas nurses must have supervised practice. So she applied for the Preparation for Supervised Practice Programme at Praxis in April 2005. She says that the course has helped in more than one way, and that when she did her supervised practice, she was "ahead of every nurse in the programme because I already knew things." She particularly draws attention to the following skills she gained from the course in Praxis: With respect to IT Skills she says that, "I never knew how to type one word, but now I am a computer expert." With respect to the Orientation to Nursing in the UK course she indicates that she has learnt about machines, equipments, medication, and most importantly, terminologies used in this country. She explains that the different nurses brought in by Praxis to help with this aspect of the course, showed them how nursing is practised in the UK and highlighted for them the difference between nursing overseas and the UK. "They made us understand the NMC code properly. They taught us how to operate in a multicultural London." As an example for difference in language used in wards between here and Nigeria, she points out, "back home, a patient would say, 'I want to do number one', but in this country a patient would say, 'I want to urinate.' Knowing about this is important so that when we are on the ward we don't frustrate patients, already stressed through lack of language understanding."

Jobs guidance: besides learning how to write CV and her covering letter, she learned how to conduct interviews. "In this country, the way they talk is different. In Africa, we shout when we talk, but at Praxis we learnt how to talk in a low tone, and how to improve our body language... it is like they adapt you to the culture here and to be a better nurse. These skills helped me when I went for the interview. When I did my interview at Mile End, the head of the interviewer panel

called Praxis and said, ‘the people who did your course are so good, especially Elsie.’”

What she likes most about Praxis is “things in Praxis come like a package. You get your training, they guide you to get a job, and keep in touch with you to check whether you have found a job.” Although she says Praxis helps with child care costs, she suggests students should have been paid to do the course. This is because “some students were working night time to afford to pay their rents and still come to the classes.”

The Future

At the moment, because the Health Authority and the Department of Health stopped funding, Praxis is not running the Preparation course for Supervised Practice. HW identified a few reasons as to why the funding stopped: The employment situation in healthcare has changed dramatically. Where there were a lot of vacancies, there are now almost none. And in fact some N.H.S. Trusts are making people redundant. There has been an increase in nursing undergraduates from within the UK. And this has created almost like a hierarchy for recruitment that goes first to the UK newly graduated nurses, and then to overseas nurses.

The effects of lack of funding on nurses are, as illustrated by HW, as follows: Professional and highly qualified nurses are going to lower level posts. But by doing so, HW explains, they are keeping somebody out of that lower level post who would only be able to do lower level vacancies. Some nurses are doing, or thinking about doing some alternative or transferable career. HW indicates that this is “one thing that we are working on with people. Okay there is not a job in your original profession, what about looking at a transferable employment role. Stay within health, but something that is transferable. So that’s a possibility. That’s a positive impact.”

Although Praxis is hoping that “the market in nurse recruitment picks up in 2007”, the organisation is helping to recycle its programme by helping other organisations in North England make use of its programme. For example, it is partly involved in other similar projects created by other institutions outside London. Thus a course is now taught at the University of Central England, which isn’t the same as at Praxis’s, but it has drawn on some aspects of this course. HW says, “We didn’t set up the course at the University of Central England. The University of Central England has set it up. But we have advised them. And for example, I went on a University Approval Panel, a validation of the course.” Praxis is now offering a similar type programme to other disadvantaged groups. It has also been involved “in some research work around pre-employment programmes and entering health and social care. We’re actually running a course called ‘ESOL and Care’, which is about entry level

employment. So these are lessons, that can be remapped onto different sectors.”

You can contact Praxis at:

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6.5 Case Study: TAMIL Refugee and Training Centre

The Project: Skills for the Disadvantaged

The Tamil Refugee Training & Education Centre (TR TEC) is part of a network of three Tamil organisations in London that offer services to Tamil refugees:

- Tamil Refugee Action Group: provides immigration and welfare advice;
- Tamil Community Housing Association: provides housing and housing benefit advice; and
- TR TEC: looks after training and employment of Tamil refugees.

TR TEC has branches in three areas of London where the Tamil population is concentrated: East London (Ilford), South London (Tooting) and West London (Alperton).

TR TEC's project Skills for the Disadvantaged, provides ICT training, ESOL, information, advice and guidance on employment and progress into further education.

The project started on 1st January 2005 and runs until 31st December 2006 with funding from the LSC Pan London ESF co-financing programme. TR TEC will apply for more funding once present funding has ceased.

The project targets unemployed Tamil refugees in the London area; it accepts people with or without qualifications.

So far over 3000 beneficiaries have gone through TR TEC's courses with many of them ending up in further education or permanent employment. The Project Manager at TR TEC emphasises that they have had no problem with movement into employment from social security benefits.

Success Criteria of TR TEC's project

1. Increase participants' skills to compete in the labour market

TR TEC identified that Tamil refugees' access to the labour market can be hindered by language barriers, cultural barriers, and insufficient IT skills. Its courses address these issues as follows:

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>What TR TEC does to remedy</i>
Language	The course is popular because it is taught in both English and Tamil. This is particularly appealing to newcomers whose level of English is low or intermediate. Being taught in Tamil by Tamil staff offers them the opportunity to learn English gradually and in familiar environment.

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>What TR TEC does to remedy</i>
Cultural barriers & enhancing their communication skills:	TR TEC appreciates the fact that the UK's labour market is increasingly competitive – they cite the effect of Polish workers' arrival in the UK. TR TEC believes that Sri Lankan newcomers need more help to adapt than migrants from within the EU. Thus, the project offers the opportunity to train participants in the cultural aspects of the UK's labour market. The staff use their experience to teach them how to achieve success, get around shyness (thought by TR TEC to be a significant feature amongst newcomers) and to understand English society and hence integrate better and increase their overall confidence so that they can work with other communities.
Modern Technology (IT Skills)	TR TEC assumes that in today's labour market it is required that employees have at least a minimum level of ICT skills. Some participants are villagers who, because of the civil war and underdevelopment in their country of origin, didn't have access to modern technology.

2. Target the disadvantaged from the Tamil refugee community

TR TEC targets women and focuses a great deal of effort on increasing women's representation in their projects. Currently women make up 50-60% of course participants in contrast to 20-30% a few years ago. They have found an innovative solution on how to increase women's participation. TR TEC recognised that the problem with women's participation has cultural elements – women stay at home because they are married and/or are pregnant. The organisation uses a mobile project which has eighteen laptops with wireless connection, which they take around Tamil community centres and temples to encourage women to participate. They leave the laptops at a community centre or temple for three days to get women interested in computers and subsequently the organisation's project. TR TEC also pays for child care in order to support women's participation.

3. Guidance

TR TEC provides comprehensive job search skills, through access to computers and the internet, guidance on websites that advertise job vacancies, CV and covering letter writing and coaching in interview techniques, including involving potential employers in mock interviews.

4. Link to employers and work experience

TR TEC has, in the last 15 years, established links with local employers – mostly Tamil businesses. TR TEC uses what it calls Tamil Yellow Pages to contact Tamil businesses, to convince them to take participants on work experience. These businesses - because they are Tamil and are aware that TR TEC is a charity - are always willing to help Tamil and do their bit by giving Tamil an advantage in the labour market through providing work experience.

TR TEC actively suggests work placements to participants and trains them in how to best use their time during placements and how to win over potential employers. TR TEC points out that it is more difficult to place participants with non-Tamil employers. As the project manager says, "It is difficult to persuade other employers to accept refugees as trainees. It could be due to their accent, but we are still trying hard".

Example of Employer's experience with TR TEC's project

RT is Director of a small travel and estate agency that has been offering work placements for TR TEC's trainees on a regular basis for many years. He has generally been impressed with TR TEC's trainees because they come to him with good level of computer skills and with good communication skills, are always punctual and have good customer relations. His feedback has improved the quality of TR TEC's recent trainees. Previously trainees lacked experience in modern office equipment. He says: "I know that trainees were sent to me to gain experience in how to work in an office environment, to know how to answer the phone, how to file, how to use the fax, photocopier and so on. So before, my staff and I used to spend time in showing these trainees from TR TEC how to operate this equipment. But when I raised the issue with TR TEC, they have incorporated my concerns in their training courses. They start to train their course participants how to use office equipment. Now, trainees come to me as though they have already worked in office before. This helps a lot because we don't spend much time in showing them how to answer the phone, or use the fax. It saves us time. Now when we ask them to file this document or photocopy this and that they will do it perfectly. So our time with them focuses on how to use our specific computer database, how to work in an estate and travel agency. So when we are very busy, we trust that they will look after customers and do the bookings and so on"

Overall, he says, TR TEC teaches trainees theoretical skills and his business offers those on work placements practical skills. For example, in customer relations they train people on how to deal with customers and be friendly. They also build up their confidence by training them in the skills needed to work in a travel and estate agent, in accountancy and banking skills, and in how to operate computer database specific to the business.

He says that he has taken two TR TEC's trainees on permanently because he was very satisfied with their skills and discipline. He also recommends TR TEC to his business associates and some have been taken on by a Post Office, and a mortgage broker. He says that because he is happy with the trainees that TR TEC sends him, he spreads the word about them and their trainees whenever the opportunity arises in business meetings, and to his business friends.

He gives the insight that newcomers nowadays are luckier than his generation, who came to the UK in the 1970s/80s when discrimination was much worse. There were no training courses like TR TEC's, to help overcome barriers to labour market entry. TR TEC also pays for participants' transport. TR TEC's guidance – how to get jobs – and other vital services were not available to him and those of his generation. In addition there are now many Sri Lankan businesses which, like his, are ready to help their country men and women with practical placements.

Mr G, who is in charge of the IT courses at TR TEC, and who has previously worked in software development has developed a programme which enables the TR TEC to keep in touch with its trainees after they leave the course.

What's Next for TR TEC?

In order to improve and tailor courses according to current needs, TR TEC actively keeps in touch with changes in the labour market through reading reports/studies conducted by LSC, LDA, and the Government Office of London, and also participates in research such as the 3DsLondon Project. TR TEC aims to expand its services to participants from other communities. The course coordinator, says, "We need more funding to help our community even more. But with more funding, we could also expand the skills we gained over the years and use our high success rate in helping trainees into the labour market to offer similar services to other communities."

Project Beneficiaries

1. Mrs A

Mrs A found out about the course in the Tooting branch from a Tamil radio programme. She was so pleased to be on the course that she was happy to take two buses every day to get to the branch. Mrs. A participated in a six-months advanced IT diploma course, which also included English and accountancy. She liked the fact the course was taught in both languages (Tamil and English). After she successfully completed the course, TR TEC found her a placement with a Tamil-run accountancy firm. She was taken on on a permanent basis and is also pursuing further studies. She says, "Even though I finished my course at TR TEC, I keep in touch because I gained so much from this course and I want this course to continue for our people. So I want to come here and help any time I can. I spread word about the course, especially to women, because there is, you know, inequality between women and men everywhere. So I want to help address this, and I know the course will help in addressing this."

2. Mrs S

Mrs S found out about the course in the Tooting branch from a leaflet in the temple. She decided to do the IT and English course, because she knew that to get a job in this country, one had to have computing and language skills. She found the course a great help because "I was sad at home and I wasn't able to

even open and log into a computer... It also helped me a lot that the course was in Tamil and English, because if it were only in English, it would have been difficult". She is currently working for Tamil Media. "I was sent by TR TEC to do two weeks work experience at Tamil Media. And they took me on a permanent, part-time basis after I finished my training". She appreciated the fact that TR TEC staff were very helpful in finding jobs. "TR TEC called jobs agencies [during the training] to come to the Centre and help us fill application forms. We also gave these agencies our CVs, which they sent around to employers."

Both Mrs A and Mrs S say that TR TEC has let them use the facilities at Tooting even after they finished their courses. The Project Manager adds, "Tooting Centre is very small, it could be better. Internet is dial-up and we want broadband. We want bigger facilities to use to apply for other jobs."

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7.0 SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

The purpose of the research on “Tackling Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination in the London labour market” has been to consolidate and extend existing knowledge about the barriers that prevent members of disadvantaged groups from participating fully in learning and skills opportunities and in employment. The objective was to create a database and research report based on a survey of provision and on qualitative interviews and focus groups that would inform and influence the policy and funding decisions relating to training; information, advice and guidance and support activities provided to disadvantaged groups across London.

The resulting body of work provides information and insights for practitioners in the field and offers evidence based policy suggestions to decision-makers and funders, supporting those initiatives that help workless, disadvantaged individuals and groups to move closer to employment.

7.1 Research methods and results

To meet the objectives the project employed a range of complementary research methods, including:

- A questionnaire survey of provider organisations and of projects that they offer in the learning and skills sector in London. The results have been mapped and a database and website created to enable users to access summary information about projects and to pursue their own queries using the interactive database.

The data can be analysed using a range of variables about projects, participants and providers. Detailed information about particular projects can be accessed, and at another level, broader patterns of provision which can be analysed by such variables as disadvantaged group; borough; project objective; funding body and project outcomes.

Information from the database can be used to:

- identify areas where existing provision for particular target groups is limited
- identify suitable partners
- provide evidence for a funding bid.

The website can be expanded and updated on a continuing basis.

- Qualitative interviews and focus groups with providers, participants, stakeholders, employers and advocacy organisations. These enabled

detailed questions and probing, on the nature and experience of disadvantage, disengagement and discrimination, about existing barriers to participation in employment; about individual and group views on the impact and success of existing initiatives in relation to particular projects or policy and funding initiatives with which the respondent had experience.

The focus group discussions elicited a range of views about barriers that disadvantaged groups experience and about factors that make particular projects successful. Although some barriers are specific to one disadvantaged group, in general barriers to economic and social inclusion are broadly similar for different disadvantaged groups. In many cases individuals would fall into more than one of the 15 disadvantaged groups that were considered, and therefore could be seen as suffering multiple disadvantage.

- A small number of case studies were undertaken that highlighted innovation and “good practice” in relation to approaches to tackling ‘disadvantage, disengagement and discrimination’.

7.2 Key findings from the 3DsLondon research project

Many different projects that target disadvantaged groups and work to improve their access to employment have been developed in London. The often fragmented and discontinuous nature of project funding has in itself been a barrier, as providers sometimes knew little about what had already been tried and tested elsewhere and were not in a position to build on achievements and learn from the experience of others.

There is consensus among providers about the importance of an inclusive and holistic approach to tackling disadvantage. This needs to address both physical and economic obstacles, as well as the social and cultural barriers that make it difficult for participants to move into employment, even after they have become ‘engaged’ through their learning and skills development. Experiences of discrimination (although conceptually distinct) can serve to reinforce disadvantage.

Providers are well attuned to the needs of their target groups and often work in partnership with specialist organisations in order to reach out to disadvantaged groups and address their needs in a holistic manner.

Partnerships involving employers and learning and skills providers tend to be ad hoc and most are not yet established on a sustainable basis.

Providers showed a good awareness of the need for quality assurance of their projects, but made little reference to the setting of common standards

and sharing of information that is available through the Common Inspection Framework and published ALI reports. Little mention was made of the impact of Adult Learning Inspection (ALI) criteria on their provision. By contrast, many commented on the burden of monitoring associated with some funding regimes. This was seen as excessive and as deflecting from the main purpose of their work.

Many providers felt that project funding arrangements were too rigid and target driven, making it difficult to tailor provision to client needs. The strong emphasis on qualifications rather than on 'soft' employability skills was seen as counter-productive to efforts to create greater opportunities for people in the most vulnerable situations. Emphasis on qualifications effectively excludes many people who are not yet in a position to take on such courses, and creates an incentive for projects to focus predominantly on people who are relatively easy to engage and able to complete these 'hard outcomes and meet funding targets.

Successive rounds of short-term funding were seen as devoting too much time to re-inventing the wheel, rather than to innovative and/or mainstream work that builds on experience. Short-term funding was also seen as destabilizing, and the bidding processes as too rigorous for small providers.

Participants were generally very positive about the projects they were involved with. Generally the two most important aspects of involvement for them personally were the support offered by the providers; and the 'soft skills' that they had been able to develop, such as raised motivation, enhanced self-esteem as well as communication and group working skills.

Project participants were able to give many examples of their own personal journeys to overcome disengagement. Unfortunately many felt disappointed or even 'let down' by a lack of employer engagement with projects, which to them meant that their main barrier to employment could not be overcome²⁰.

The lack of work experience opportunities or of opportunities for realistic interviews with, and feedback from, employers was a major topic of discussion in participant focus groups. There were suggestions for more collaboration between funding agencies and providers to ensure that participants get the experience that they need to move into jobs. At a practical level, travel to work distance and costs were also reported as real barriers.

²⁰ It has not been possible within the context of this research to explore whether the main limitation is a lack of employers awareness of the existence of initiatives to bring more members of disadvantaged communities into the labour force or whether engagement with such schemes are not considered to be amongst their priorities.

Employers need to be brought more firmly into the debates and into partnerships with policy agencies, funders and providers. There is a slow but increasing recognition within the business community of the 'business case' for recruiting, developing and training a diverse workforce from the large pool of workless London residents whose potential is as yet largely untapped.

Social exclusion is multi-faceted. Ideally, measures to counter social exclusion should flow seamlessly, from learning and skills initiatives, to job placement, leading to income and social inclusion. Intermediate steps such as work experience and interview skills are vital to assisting many participants on their journey towards inclusion.

There are signs of a growing awareness among employers of the need for, and potential of, initiatives to bring disadvantaged groups into employment - to both improve the opportunities available to members of disadvantaged groups and to meet the capital's growing skills shortages. This would help promote social inclusion of individuals and groups who are disadvantaged, disengaged and/or discriminated, while at the same time developing the potential of a substantive proportion of the London population who are not yet able to develop fully into the future workforce.

Recommendations arising from the research findings and conclusions are included with the Executive Summary.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: List of Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

List of Acronyms

ALG:	Association of London Government
APS:	Annual Population Survey
BAME:	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
BME:	Black and Minority Ethnic
BL4L	Business Link for London
CFOs	Co financing organisations
DfES:	Department for Education and Skills
DWP:	Department for Work and Pensions
ESOL:	English for Speakers of Other Languages <i>also</i> English for Speakers of Overseas Language
ESF:	European Social Fund
EZ:	Employment Zone
FRESA:	Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action
GLA:	Greater London Authority
GOL:	Government Office for London
IAG:	Information, Advice and Guidance
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
IMD:	Index of Multiple Deprivation
JC+	Jobcentre Plus

JSA	Job Seeker's Allowance
LDA:	London Development Agency
LFS:	Labour Force Survey
LSC:	Learning and Skills Council
LVSC:	London Voluntary Services Council
LVSTC:	London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium
NEET:	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NRF:	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund
NLDC:	Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities
NVQ:	National Vocational Qualification
OCN	Open College Network
RAS:	Refugees and Asylum Seekers
RARPA:	Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement in Non-accredited Learning
SfL	Skills for Life
SRB:	Single Regeneration Budget
WAPAF:	Widening Adult Participation and Achievement Fund

Glossary

Access to Work: a scheme that supports employment of disabled people by giving advice as well as practical (financial) help to employers towards meeting any additional costs that arise from a person's disability. The scheme is administered through Jobcentre Plus.

Advocacy organisations: organisation that gives advice to particular (usually disadvantaged) groups and lobbies on their behalf, for example the Disability Rights Organisation.

Association of London Government (ALG): - now called London Councils runs a range of services (including training and skills development) but also sees itself as a think tank and a lobbying organisation www.alg.gov.uk

Basic Skills: Basic Skills can be defined as 'the ability to read, write and speak in English and use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general'
<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Jargonbuster/Basic+Skills.htm>

BAME group: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups refers to those in Mixed, Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Chinese and Other ethnic groups.

Beneficiary is the term commonly used by ESF funded or co-financed project providers for their participants (see also participant)

BME group: Black and Minority Ethnic Group. This categorization includes, for example, White Irish, White Other

Co-financing: a system of applying for and distributing ESF funding through a small number of large (governmental) organisations.

Common Inspection Framework: sets out the principles and evaluation requirements for the inspections of post-16 non-higher education and training. Inspections are carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI). (see <http://docs.ali.gov.uk/publications/CIFwebversion.pdf>)

Connexions: is an advice service for 13-19 year olds (13-25 year olds if they have learning difficulties or disabilities) in England. Following the publication of Every Child Matters and Youth Matters Connexions is in a transition phase while children's trusts are in being set up in local authority areas.

Disability Rights Commission (DRC): is an independent body set up by the Government to help promote equal opportunities and stop discrimination against disabled people in England, Scotland and Wales

Department for Education and Skills (DfES): www.dfes.gov.uk

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) – responsible for the Government's welfare reform agenda (see also Appendix 3). Aims to promote opportunity and independence for all.

Diversity – differences between individuals and social groups in cultural values, beliefs, ethnic background, sexuality, skills and knowledge

Economically inactive: people who are out of work and not seeking work or unavailable to start work; includes those who want a job and those who do not. (see office for National Statistics www.statistics.gov.uk for more information)

Employability: The ability of someone to get or keep a job. The skills required to improve an individual's chances of becoming employed (this may include a wide range of skills, including vocational specific skills as well as Skills for Life or general skills)

Employment Zone (EZ) – area where additional money is available to help the long term unemployed into work. www.dfee.gov.uk/employmentzones

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): - according to the London Skills Commission Strategic Action Plan there are estimated to be 600,000 people of working age who have varying levels of ESOL needs – but only about 125,000 in ESOL learning.

Entry to Employment (E2E): is a work-based learning programme for young people who are not yet ready or able to enter an Apprenticeship programme, further education or employment.

Equal: Equal is a European Social Fund (ESF) Community Initiative, providing funds to projects which test and promote new means of combating discrimination and inequalities in the labour market.)

ESF Objective 3 Funding: - Provides funding for education, training and employment (see <http://ec.europa.eu/>) (see also co-financing)

European Social Fund (ESF) – one of the four European Structural Funds to help reduce differences in living standards between regions of the EU by: reducing unemployment, improving and developing skills of employed people, investing in industrial or rural areas which are in decline.

Floor targets – minimum targets for service delivery set by government and agreed with local authorities and their local partners. Floor targets typically include targets for reducing worklessness, crime or health measures and increasing educational standards, safety, etc.

Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA) : - a programme of action agreed by key agencies to meet the needs of London's people and businesses. The work of the FRESA (2001 – 2005) has now been taken over by the London Skills and Employment Board

Information Advice Guidance (IAG): is a free service delivered by accredited providers. IAG services for adults are funded by LSC and IAG services to young people by Connexions. to adults over 20 and to young the specific need and

aspiration of clients and working with other agencies to ensure a full service (for more information see) <http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/iag/index.htm>

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD): has been developed to aggregate the many different economic, social and environmental indicators for a geographical area in order to produce an overall framework for ranking them by their relative level of deprivation. (see http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1128444#P18_329)

Job Seeker Allowance (JSA): People who claim JSA must be out of work and prove that they are capable of and available for and actively seeking for employment in the week the claim is made for

Learning and Skills Council (LSC): is responsible for planning and funding vocational education and training for young people and adults (with the exception of higher education). Within London there are five LSCs who increasingly co-operate at a regional level. www.lsc.gov.uk

London Development Agency (LDA): The LDA is responsible for producing the Mayor of London's Economic Development Plan. The LDA disburses funds to support regeneration and diversity initiatives. www.lda.gov.uk

London Skills Commission: a strategic association of key agencies involved in the planning, delivery and support of employment, training and labour market policy – now brought together as the London Employment and Skills Board .

LORECA: provides an on line database that provides information nationally for refugees/asylum seekers (RAS) and for organisations working with RAS.

New Deal for Communities (NDC): a Government programme aiming to regenerate 39 of the most deprived neighbourhoods in England over a ten year period.

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) – a non-governmental organisation to promote adult continuing education.

Not in employment, education or training (NEET): used to refer to young people who are not in education, employment or training; these young people are a key target group for LSC and for Connexions

National Vocational Qualification (NVQ): work-related, competence based qualifications that reflect the skills and knowledge needed to do a job effectively

NOMIS: official labour market statistics, <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Outcome or output: results or products of a project including qualifications, progression to employment or businesses supported. Many learning and skills projects have been set targets by their funders for achieving a certain number these measurable outcomes and outputs (cf. also soft outcomes)

Project: in the context of this research the term is used to refer to learning and skills initiatives.

Project Participants: in the context of this research project, 'project participant' has been used to refer to learners/beneficiaries/clients of funded initiatives.

Refugees / Asylum seekers (RAS): Asylum seekers and refugees have moved across borders 'due to a well-founded fear of persecution'. Asylum seekers have applied for protection as refugees and are awaiting a decision on their application. If accepted they become refugees. Since 2002 asylum seekers are not normally allowed to work or undertake training. Refugees on the other hand have permission to work.

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs): are independent, strategic UK wide organisations. The 25 SSCs have responsibility for skills and workforce development of all those employed in their business and employment sectors.

Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) – funds, supports and monitors the network of employer led independent Sector Skills Councils

Skills for Life (SfL): SfL include those skills that are considered necessary or basic for adults to function effectively in day-to-day life, including literacy, language, numeracy, ESOL and ICT.

Social Exclusion: when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown (see www.socialexclusion)

Soft outcomes: a way of describing the success of a project without concentrating solely on quantitative outcomes. Soft outcomes include motivation, self-esteem and confidence as well as communication skills, interpersonal and team skills etc.

Sure Start: Sure Start is the Government's programme to deliver the best start in life for every child by bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support (see www.surestart.gov.uk)

Unemployment: someone of working age who is without paid work (see also Jobseeker

Worklessness: people of working age who are not in work, full-time education or training and may or may not actively try to find work. High levels of worklessness amongst particular sections of the population, e.g. amongst those living in areas of multiple deprivation (and particularly when worklessness has an intergenerational dimension) have led to policy interventions. See also floor targets.

APPENDIX B: The Policy Context

What are the policies underpinning delivery to disadvantaged groups in London?

The **National Skills Strategy** was outlined in a series of three White Papers:

- **21st Century Skills – Realising Our Potential** (2003);
- **14 – 19 Education and Skills** (2005);
- **Skills: Getting on in business, getting on in work** (2005)

The 2003 White Paper sets out a vision which helps employers to access the skills needed to be competitive in a world economy and which enables individuals to develop the right skills to gain employment and experience personal fulfilment. It prioritises funding for individuals to gain a first NVQ Level 2 qualification. It also indicates a preference for partnership delivery and sets out an agenda for qualifications reforms.

Skills: Getting on in Business. Getting on in Work, the 2005 White Paper, addresses adult education and targets certain disadvantaged groups for assistance, in particular low skilled adults on welfare benefits, prisoners and other offenders, and older people; it also covers women, ethnic minorities and disabled learners – groups that are the focus of the 3DsLondon research.

The White Paper **14 – 19 Education and Skills** emphasizes the need to improve the participation rates of young people and the importance of work related learning. A major aim of the planned changes is to re-engage disaffected young people by providing more individual guidance and support, and allow greater flexibility in what and when to study. Specialised diplomas will strengthen vocational routes and work-based learning. The White Paper did not, however, mention a new framework for qualifications which might have been expected following the **Tomlinson Report** (2004); this had set out and advocated replacing the current qualifications system, that is bifurcated into academic and vocational routes, through one new overarching diploma.

The White Paper **Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances** (2006) announced reform of provision in further education colleges based on the Foster Review and the **Leitch Review of Skills** (Final Report: December 2006). This anticipated the need to improve the skills profile of the UK, not only by reducing the number of people without qualifications, but also by increasing the number of people with intermediate and higher level qualifications, so that the country could stay amongst the economic world leaders.

In the UK at present, one in six adults do not have the literacy skills expected of an 11 year old, and the proportion with comparable numeracy skills is still lower. The **Skills for Life Strategy** was announced in 2001 to address these problems;

it proposed the establishment of a programme with challenging targets for improving adult literacy, language (ESOL), numeracy and information and communication (ICT) skills. Available evidence indicates that it is struggling to meet its targets due to the serious shortage of basic skills teachers.

New Deal programmes were first introduced in 1998 and are a key part of the Government's approach to tackling long-term unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. New Deal is one aspect of the "welfare to work" approach that aims to help people become economically self-sufficient through getting jobs, coming off benefits and moving out of poverty. There are New Deal programmes for different groups including young unemployed people, those 25+, 50+, lone parents, disabled, as well as particular occupational groups such as musicians. Some of the New Deal programmes are mandatory and others voluntary but every New Deal offers a personal advisor whose task it is to discuss the most suitable options (e.g. taster courses, training, work experience as well as help with job search etc.).

Neighbourhood Renewal is an initiative to tackle issues within the most deprived local authorities and neighbourhoods, mainly by working to improve the floor targets²¹. Within London there are 20 boroughs that are eligible to receive funding under this initiative. Projects funded through Neighbourhood Renewal (NRF) and disbursed through the Local Strategic Partnerships in each borough are mainly used to improve the floor targets, which include such indicators as worklessness and education. NRF funding, as well as another government initiative, the **New Deal for Communities**, is not targeted at disadvantaged social groups as such but at the geographical areas within which they tend to live²².

Who are the key funders of support to disadvantaged groups in London?

The projects listed in the 3DsLondon research database are delivered by provider organisations in all sectors. They have been funded from a number of different sources - either mainstream funding or competitive tendering or charitable grants. Many of the projects in the 3DsLondon database have been co-funded between the European Social Fund (ESF) and one of the 10 co-financing organisations (CFO) in London²³, most commonly one of the London

²¹ Floor Targets are the minimum performance requirements set by government for service providers to achieve and are set out in Public Sector Agreements. Floor targets are designed to strengthen neighbourhood renewal by making sure that mainstream resources take account of the needs of the poorest areas.

²² for example over two-thirds of England's BME population live in the 88 most deprived local authority districts compared to 40% of the general population (see www.nru.gov.uk/ Accessed on 17/08/06).

²³ Co-financing organisations provide the match of 55% to the ESF's 45%. The co-financing organisations in London are the 5 LSCs, LDA, ALG, JC+, BL4L, SLConnexions. The co-financing system is particularly useful for smaller organisations as they can apply for the full cost of running a project to the co-financing organisation.

Learning and Skills Councils. Some of the projects have been established with mainstream formula based funding; this is particularly true of those established by further education colleges, local authority adult and community learning departments and work based learning providers who all receive mainstream funding from the LSC. Each of the five sub-regional LSCs in London has an annual tendering round, in addition to pan-London bidding rounds. A large proportion of organisation who support disadvantaged groups and are listed in the 3DsLondon survey of projects, received their funding through a competitive process of 'bidding' to a CFO, to a government programme or a charity. The fragmentation of these funding regimes have made it difficult for the smaller organisations to sustain their activities and experience.

Tendering rounds are seen by the funding organisation as a way of ensuring that their own strategic objectives are met, and specifications may be very detailed, with high levels of output expected. Expected outputs tend to be expressed in job placements and/or numbers and levels of qualifications achieved, or progression to other, higher level projects and programmes.

The organisations mentioned most frequently as funders for the projects in the 3DsLondon database are, alongside the **European Social Fund (ESF)** the **Learning and Skills Councils (LSC)**, the **London Development Agency (LDA)** and **Jobcentre Plus (JC+)**. These organisations have responsibilities for delivering national and regional policies and in this context are also major funders of initiatives to tackle disadvantage. Their respective roles are outlined briefly here as part of the background.

The **Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs)** were set up in 2001 with a brief to 'make England better skilled and more competitive'ⁱ. The LSC is responsible for funding and planning education and training for adults over 16 in England. In addition to their mainstream funding they also disburse ESF Funds and each LSC also has some discretionary funds for addressing specific local needs. The LSCs are central to implementation of the government's National Skills Strategy and increasingly also its Strategy for 14 – 19 year olds.

To plan training and skills development for young people and adults the LSC works with sector skills councils and with employers. Increasingly, the five LSCs in London are now collaborating closely within a regional framework for the whole of London. Since July 2006 they have also had a brief to collaborate closely with the **Mayor of London** whose remit has broadened to take in the learning and skills agenda alongside London's economic development strategy.

The Mayor's Economic Development Strategy for London is produced by the **London Development Agency (LDA)**, the Regional Development Agency for London. High amongst the LDAs' priorities are supporting growth sectors of the economy (such as the cultural and creative sector and the construction sector) and helping to create a workforce with skills to take up the jobs that are created.

A high proportion of the new jobs to be created will require skills at a level higher than those currently possessed by many of the Londoners who are workless. This major barrier to the employment of Londoners who are currently workless, needs to be tackled in order to fill a greater proportion of the jobs available with local recruits. This will, at the same time, enable disadvantaged groups gain income from employment, and thus enable them to help themselves better.

Jobcentre Plus is the government agency that helps individuals find work, helps employers fill vacancies and processes benefit claims. The agency oversees the government's welfare to work schemes, in particular the New Deal programmes. There is a separate New Deal programme for several of the equality target groups that are the focus of the 3DsLondon research.

All these key strategic and funding agencies are concerned to reduce the level of worklessness in London and to ensure that Londoners are able to take advantage of job vacancies and new employment opportunities. Worklessness - is higher in London than in most other parts of the country and combating worklessness is seen as central to reducing social deprivation and social exclusion. But the rates of unemployment vary greatly across London boroughs and between wards within boroughs (see chapter 2).

For organisations concerned with learning and skills, employment and social inclusion is a high priority – alongside the priority of combating worklessness - is the promotion of equality and diversity. The Mayor has championed equality and diversity developments and the LDA programme "Diversity Works" engages employers in valuing the diverse labour supply in London. The LDA's recently released London Economic Development Snapshot (2006) shows that while overall London's economy continues to grow strongly, over 30% of working age adults in London are not in work. The relatively low skills levels of many Londoners, combined with the material and social barriers that disadvantaged groups have to overcome in order to get work, are identified in the report as main causes for the disparity in employment opportunities.

APPENDIX C: The Research Methodology

The 3DsLondon project employed a range of quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to collect both general and in-depth information about existing projects or initiatives across London that have been specifically developed to help raise the employability skills of disadvantaged individuals or assist them directly into jobs.

Questionnaire Survey and Database

Thematic clusters

A questionnaire was designed to gather both general and detailed information about projects and was distributed to various provider organisations – statutory/public; voluntary and community; private and other - in London across all five LSC sub-regions.

The questionnaire was designed for completion on a project by project basis so that a single organisation operating several different projects would be asked to complete several questionnaires. The questions were divided into four thematic clusters (see Appendix F for a copy of questionnaire):

- Questions about the respondent and organisation
- Questions about the objectives and target groups of the project
- Questions about the project participants
- Questions about the project's outputs and outcomes

Target groups

The list of the 15 disadvantaged target groups was identified from funders' criteria and each respondent was asked to choose one 'main' disadvantaged group targeted by their project and three further secondary ones where they were applicable. This distinction between 'main' and 'secondary' groups was used to try and identify the major focus of the programmes by target group (see chapter 3).

Geographical distribution

The location of the project provider and the recruitment area of the project were recorded in such a way as to allow classification by local authority area and LSC sub-region.

Questionnaire distribution and returns

The questionnaire was finalised and distributed initially in April/May 2005. During the course of the project, mail and telephone follow-ups took place regularly as well as mail outs to new organisations in order to increase the number of returns. In some cases the questionnaire was filled in when one of the research team visited the organisation. In total, at least 7,000 questionnaires were distributed across London. The contact addresses were obtained through a variety of sources, including:

- Lists provided by the project's Steering Committee members of their providers or members
- Hard copy mailings by Learning Partnerships in London Central, South and West to their contact addresses
- Web-based searches
- Web-based directories (including databases and directories of ALG; GOL (ESF provision); Loreca; LVSTC)
- Contacts made through attendance in conferences (participant lists)
- Hard copy directories of local authorities and other organisations

In addition to the mail outs, the 3DsLondon research team organised workshops in all five London LSC sub-regions with GOL support. The purpose of these workshops was to raise awareness of the research and the opportunity was taken to distribute the project questionnaire. Moreover, the workshops also took the form of a focus group discussion and were able to assist the qualitative part of the 3DsLondon research (see chapter 4).

It is not known how many projects there are in London that would be eligible to participate in the survey. Factors limiting the response relate to the transient nature of many projects, including:

- Project teams were too busy to dedicate the time and effort to fill in the questionnaire
- Organisations could not always provide accurate responses for on-going projects
- In cases where organisations use part of their overall funding to ensure the continuation of courses, accurate information was again not possible
- Change of organisation address
- Person responsible for the project has moved on to another job
- After the completion of project the team also moved on
- Closure of projects
- Closure of the organisation
- Some organisations did not complete a separate form on every project

Despite the short-term nature of many of the projects dealing with the disadvantaged target groups data capture was significant.

Database

The number of questionnaires received (500) is very credible and has allowed the team to proceed with the project's database and survey analysis. The amount of data collected through each questionnaire is detailed and when aggregated provides a good profile of provision. An MS Access Database was developed, consisting of various relational tables and with the capacity to store all the information obtained by the survey. Moreover, the database has been successful in attracting additional funding during the course of the project, enabling its

further enlargement and the potential to become available on the web as a searchable resource. The launch of the online database has been planned to coincide with the research dissemination conference for the project on 8 December 2006.

Database Analysis

The analysis of the database is based on the use of SQL²⁴, the standard programming language for creating, updating and retrieving information that is stored in the database. The three main themes that run throughout the analysis are queries based on participants, providers and projects.

The main purpose of the database is to provide profiling information (e.g. on numbers of types of projects for particular target groups), map the geographical provision of projects (taking into consideration both the location of the organisation and its recruitment area), identify possible gaps in provision and recognise any potential trends for the future.

The database also provides details about the structure and content of projects as well as information about gender, age and ethnic distribution for each group of participants.

Qualitative Interviews

In order to obtain a detailed insight in the provision for the disadvantaged groups the 3DsLondon project carried out 43 semi-structured and face-to-face interviews – covering all London LSC sub-regions. The information came from:

- 12 Project Participants: introduced by provider organisations
- 19 Provider Organisations: selected from the database
- 3 Advocate organisations for disadvantaged groups: selected for their involvement with employers.
- 8 Stakeholder organisations: selected according to their salience to the policy and funding context of the research

It was decided that the qualitative interviews could not focus on all of the disadvantaged groups because they would not be able to adequately cover the wide variety of different issues that they would face. Instead, the interviews explored the situation of three main disadvantaged groups. In order to gain an element of comparative information, it was considered preferable to interview several members of a smaller number of disadvantaged groups. As discussed in the report however, people can often experience multiple disadvantages and the groups are therefore not mutually discrete. To reflect this fact, in the interviews a secondary focus was maintained on four other categories of disadvantage in order to explore how they overlap with the primary groups.

²⁴ SQL = Structured Query Language

Primary focus:

- 16-19 year olds not in education, employment or training
- Long term unemployed (more than 12 months)
- People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation

Secondary focus:

- Refugees / Asylum seekers
- Ex-Offenders
- People with disabilities
- Lone parents

There is a difference in the categorisation of the primary three groups and the secondary four groups – the primary ones are general and defined by position in relation to education and employment or geography, the secondary ones are characterised by social position.

The selection was based on advice from the Project Steering Committee, which took into consideration three main criteria:

- The amount of previous research on disadvantage
- Forthcoming legislation
- The number of questionnaire returns and hence database entries for each of the target groups.

Interview schedules

The wording and structure of the questions in the interview schedules were adapted for each of the main groups of interviewees, there are three themes that are common to all:

- Questions about the project
This section was designed to gain an insight into the range of projects that exist across London, their usefulness to disadvantaged participants, processes of recruitment, partnerships, strengths and weaknesses.
- Questions about perceptions of disadvantage
In general the interview schedule was developed in such a way to cover all three concepts of disadvantage, disengagement and discrimination and to discover if there is any difference between the concepts in the interviewees' view. The responses to these questions by all four groups assisted in formulating definitions on the above concepts and understanding the extent of discrimination faced by members of the disadvantaged groups entering the labour market.
- Questions about current and future policy
Responses on this theme helped to identify practical problems in the delivery of projects in relation to the extent of disadvantage experienced

by project participants. The section additionally helped the analysis with an overall assessment of the situation in London and expectations for future trends.

Care was taken to design the interview schedule for the project participants so that it would be sympathetic and tactful in exploring their situation. The stakeholder interviews contained additional questions specifically designed to gain information from the particular organisation about their involvement in decision-making and implementation in relation to the national and local education and skills policy agenda. Additional questions about the organisation's capacity for political lobbying, forthcoming legislation and current trends were added to the interview schedule of the advocate organisations. For samples of the interview schedules see Appendix G

Focus Groups

The qualitative research also included eight focus groups with the following:

- FG 1: Employers and employment brokerage organisations of disability groups – 30 participants
- FG 2: Project participants (Ex offenders, Long term unemployed, people with disabilities, people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, refugees/asylum seekers) – 7 participants
- FG 3: Project participants (refugees/asylum seekers, lone parents) – 7 participants
- FG 4: Employers – voluntary sector – 8 participants
- FG 5: Providers (London East – 3 participants)
- FG 6: Providers (London North – 17 participants)
- FG 7: Providers (London Central – 12 participants)
- FG 8: Providers (London South - 22 participants)

Participants in FG2 and FG3 were recommended by organisations from projects featuring in the 3DsLondon database and by advocate organisations. It was decided not to include 16-19 year olds in the focus groups because provider organisations advised against this on the grounds of their potential vulnerability. Instead, additional one-to-one interviews were arranged with people from this group.

The focus groups were supplementary to the overall findings of the interview analysis and were used to get additional information and evidence on points that were raised in the interviews.

Case studies

The research also included five case studies that were chosen to illustrate aspects of good practice and to highlight innovative approaches. The case studies featured different disadvantaged target groups and were based in

different parts of London. Five interviews were carried out for each case study (except for one case study with only four interviewees) to gain a rounded view of the project and the experiences of different stakeholders. Interviewees typically included representatives of the provider, participants, employers and other stakeholders (for example the project funder).

Literature review and analysis of datasets

As well as the above primary sources the 3DsLondon has drawn information from secondary sources including statistical information from Census, Annual Population Survey, and Labour Force Survey. Academic literature, policy reports, media reports and others were also reviewed as background information for the research.

APPENDIX D: Some Sources of Statistical Information

General London Statistics:

National census searchable online:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/census2001.asp>

For definitions in National Census terminology:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=12951> or

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/census2001/definitions_chapters_1_5.pdf

- Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics which offers Labour market and related population data for local areas from a variety of sources including the Labour Force Survey (LFS), claimant count, Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), New Earnings Survey (NES), and the 1991 and 1981 Censuses of Population is searchable on line at: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk> Also includes:
 - The Annual Population Survey (APS) was introduced in 2004, comprising the annual LFS supplemented by an extra boost (the APS(B)), designed to obtain a sample of 500 economically active adults in each local authority district. As a cost saving measure, the APS(B) was scaled back in mid-2005 and was withdrawn from January 2006. APS estimates for the April 2005 to March 2006 period onwards will therefore revert to the sample used for the previous annual local area Labour Force Survey. The last APS period which contains APS(B) cases is that covering January to December 2005, as this is the last period for which a complete year's boost is available.
 - Ethnicity Analysis of claimant count (available since 15 November 2006) includes claimant count stocks, in-flows and off-flows by age band, gender and duration of claim. Since the data are not sample-based, accurate figures down to the local authority level are available but not below this level (no ward or super output area figures). Historical data back to April 2005 can be requested.
- Focus on London 2003: statistical information from a wide range of demographic, social and economic statistics that can be downloaded from: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=10527&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=422> 2003 was the last year available for Focus on London
- A useful document published by the Office for National Statistics. The following link is on issue 9, Winter 2004/05 (ISSN 1740-6129) <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=10446> (choosing

London) This includes data on the population, economy, labour market, education and training, transport and the environment and living in London.

- Index of Multiple Deprivation and other London borough information: The Government Office for London website provides summary information on London boroughs including the IMD rank and can be found at: <http://www.gol.gov.uk/gol/OurRegion/BoroInfo/>
- Another comprehensive guide has been developed by Newham Council, which compiles statistical information about the borough on its population, economy, health, crime etc. Although the site is mainly about Newham, comparative information with the rest of London can be obtained: www.newham.info

Statistics on Disadvantaged Groups

Statistical information for the target groups featuring in the 3DsLondon London Research can be found from a variety of sources and can include data about London, which could be compared to the national average. Information for target groups that constitute categories in the national census, and through Nomis (labour force and annual population survey) is easily accessible. These include:

- Age group of 16-19 although the data is not exclusively for NEETs
- Age group 50+ to retirement age
- Lone parents with one or more dependent children
- Long Term Unemployed
- Disabled people
- Economic migrants (internal and international)
- People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation
- People made redundant
- Returners to the labour market

The searches for all these target groups can include unemployment rates, economic inactivity or inactivity rates which give a clearer picture as data contains further categories such as for people who want a job, those who do not, people who are discouraged workers, long term sick, looking after family or those who are students. Additional information includes gender distribution of the above groups and information on each London borough.

People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation

For people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, the Index of Multiple Deprivation together with the breakdown at sub-borough level provides a guide for comparing London boroughs and pockets of deprivation within the boroughs: <http://www.gol.gov.uk/gol/OurRegion/BoroInfo/> and for Super Output Areas (SOAs)²⁵ <http://www.go->

²⁵ Super Output Areas (SOA) are small area statistics that are calculated on the lower, middle and upper layers within a borough boundary. SOAS are gradually replacing ward-based statistics.

london.gov.uk/boroughinfo/profiles/ID/Index%20of%20Deprivation%202004%20Briefing%20Note%202.doc

Some information specific to wards or neighbourhoods can also be searched via:
<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

People made redundant

For people made redundant there is a comprehensive list compiled by national statistics which shows rates by gender between 1995-2006 for the UK

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/LFSHQs/Table07.xls.

Additionally, the following link (to the national statistics web site) shows information about redundancies including information about London.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/articles/labour_market_trends/redundancies_UK.pdf

Returners to the labour market

For returners to labour market, related information is highlighted in the annual population survey under the category of economic inactivity due to caring for family. Other relevant documents with some statistical information about this target group are LDA 'Helping women returners with children back into workforce'.....and The London Childcare Strategy (2003) by GLA:

http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/childcare/docs/childcare_strategy.pdf

and

http://www.lda.gov.uk/upload/doc/Women_returner_Specification_for_Pilot_projects_DTI_amends.doc

Homelessness

For 2006 and earlier years the quarterly Statutory Homelessness Statistical Release, published in March, June, September and December, provides statistics of households in England - including information about London and London boroughs - defined as homeless in the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts and can be found through the following links:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1156302>

or:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1156305>

Note: please give particular attention to "supplementary table" for information at local authority level.

The GLA report on estimating the numbers of homelessness and risk of homelessness in London examines the issue from many aspects:

http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/housing/docs/housing_need.rtf

Also:

The following <http://www.homelesslondon.org/details.asp?id=LP82> from Homeless London projects provides information both on London boroughs and general information about London

BME (Black and Ethnic Minority) and BAME (Black and Asian Minority Ethnic) groups

The national census is a good source for ethnicity related data but later information from annual population survey and local labour force survey usually comes with categorisation 'whites' and 'non whites' (ie. corresponding to BAME categorisation). Other information on ethnicity can be found on individual borough websites providing information on workforce analysis or specifically on ethnicity.

Since November 2006 ethnicity data for Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) has been published for the first time. The JSA data is available on Office for National Statistics on the Nomis website (<http://www.nomisweb.co.uk>) and on the Tabulation Tool on the Department for Work and Pensions (<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/>).

Travellers

Statistical information about travellers can be sketchy. Despite recognition as an ethnic group, travellers were not included in the latest census.

The Department of Communities and Local Government (formerly: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) has produced information about caravan count. (<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1155501>)

Some statistical information about travellers can be found through the Commission of Racial Equality (<http://www.cre.gov.uk>)

Refugees and Asylum seekers

As highlighted in relevant literature²⁶, statistical information on refugees and asylum seekers is not easy to obtain. The following links are some key sources:

- Home Office statistics on asylum decisions: www.homeoffice.gov.uk and <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs05/asylumq404.pdf>
- Census 2001 country of birth figures: <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk>
- Information provided by refugee community organisations (RCOs): <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

A report on labour market experiences of refugees and ethnic minorities²⁷ highlights the overall picture of refugees in London and shows that there are significant variations between London boroughs.

²⁶ **Schreiber, A (2006): LORECA Mapping Exercise: Examining the numbers, locations, and employment, training, and enterprise needs of London's refugee and asylum seeker communities**

²⁷ Dhudwar, A (2005) 'Comparing the labour market experiences of refugees and ethnic minorities: A review of the issues'. Working Lives Research Institute, London

Drug and Alcohol misusers

The London Alcohol Statistics Project in July 2005 report on alcohol treatment in London includes information on the demographics of service users, referral routes and waiting times and provides some statistical information:

<http://www.ldan.org.uk/documents/London%20Alcohol%20Statistics%20Project.pdf>

Other information can be obtained from the Arrestee Annual Survey Report, November 2006 by the Home Office:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/hosb0406.pdf>

Ex-Offenders

Information about convictions for individuals is held on the Home Office Offenders Index together with useful links for further statistics and court data:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/offenderindex1.html>

The CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) report on Employing ex-offenders – a practical guide published by the Criminal Records Bureau, 2004, is an additional source of information regarding employment:

http://www.crb.gov.uk/PDF/3083_Employing_aw.pdf

APPENDIX E: 3DsLondon and other web based databases

There are several other websites and databases that offer information on projects and initiatives for disadvantaged groups. They include: the ESF Programme Directory on the GOL website, LORECA (refugee projects), Homeless London, the LVSTC directory, the LSC and LDA databases, FRESA database, Guide Star database and Skillscope to name just a few. Both similarities and differences with the 3DsLondon web based database project have been found:

Type of user

- Some of the web based databases aim – like the 3DsLondon database - at provider organisations and funding bodies as their main users (example the GOL ESF Programme Directory, the LDA database) while others such as the FRESA website albeit limited in its scope is particularly useful for researchers.
- Some other databases are aimed at provider organisations and potential end users and IAG agencies, e.g. the LORECA database, the LVSTC, Homeless for London and the LSC database. The information for projects listed in some of these websites reflects this. For example, they include information useful to participants such as type of access, opening hours, available facilities in the building, trainee allowances etc.
- Some databases are designed for members of the general public and those who might advise them. For example the Guide Star database which lists information on UK charities including charity number, name of trustees, beneficiary group and how to make a donation.

The reviewed websites aim at different users and the type of information provided differs accordingly with each database collecting slightly different information and enabling analysis through different criteria.

The 3DsLondon database is unique by

- bringing together information about projects targeted at a range of 14 different disadvantaged groups
- bringing together information about projects funded by a range of different funding bodies
- providing information about the age, ethnic and gender profile of participants
- facilitating detailed geographical searches by key criteria
- including information about outcomes and evaluation of projects

APPENDIX F: Questionnaire



QUESTIONNAIRE

Tackling Disadvantage, Disengagement and Discrimination in London's Labour Market

Does your organisation:

- **target one or more of these disadvantaged groups:**
black and minority ethnic groups; refugees and/or asylum seekers; people with disabilities; 16-19 year olds -not in employment, education or training; older people (50+); lone parents; homeless people; travellers; ex-offenders; drug and alcohol misusers; people living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation; returners to the labour market; people made redundant; long term unemployed (more than 12 months); economic migrants
- **help Londoners who are not in employment:**
to develop employability skills and/or gain entry to employment

We are creating a database covering all London projects that aim to help members of particular disadvantaged groups develop employability skills and/or to assist them in gaining direct access to jobs. The database seeks to list all projects from April 2001 up to today. When completed, it will become a useful research and policy tool for all agencies by giving a fuller picture of existing efforts to combat labour market disadvantage and discrimination.

Please fill in this questionnaire (one per project). Please feel free to photocopy it or request extra copies (see p.8 for contact details). Alternatively, our questionnaire can be found at: www.workinglives.org/disadvantage.html

Every organisation completing a questionnaire will receive a complimentary CD of all database entries and descriptions of good practice.

The membership of the Steering Committee for this project includes:

- London Metropolitan University (lead partner)
- Central London Learning Partnership
- CITB-ConstructionSkills
- DABD
- FRESA Social Inclusion Group
- Jobcentre Plus
- London Learning and Skills Councils
- London North Learning Partnership
- London Strategic Health Authorities
- LVSTC
- London Voluntary Service Council
- London West Learning Partnership
- OCNLR
- Refugee Council
- SERTUC Learning Services

DISADVANTAGE, DISENGAGEMENT, DISCRIMINATION PROJECT

DATABASE OF LONDON PROJECTS

Please fill in one questionnaire for each project in your organisation that meets the criteria set out on page one. Please answer all questions that are relevant to your project.

Some questions about yourself and your organisation

(If you have already completed a copy of this questionnaire it is only necessary to provide name of organisation for additional replies)

Name _____

Position _____

Organisation							
Address							
Town/City			London Borough				Postcode
Tel:			Fax			Mobile	
Email			Website				
Type of organisation	Statutory/ Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Voluntary/ Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>

Some questions about the objectives and target groups of your project

1. Name of the project

.....
.....
.....

2. Date(s) when the project was delivered between 2001 and 2006
(please state)

.....

3. How often was the project delivered between 2001 and 2006?

- It was a rolling programme
- Once

- Twice
- Three times
- More than three times

4. Main project objective(s)
(please tick as appropriate)

Basic or General Employability Skills (e.g. CV writing)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Vocational Training		<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to Jobs / Job brokerage		<input type="checkbox"/>
Skills for Life <i>(please tick as appropriate)</i>		
Literacy <input type="checkbox"/>	ESOL <input type="checkbox"/>	
Numeracy <input type="checkbox"/>	ICT <input type="checkbox"/>	
Information Advice Guidance (IAG)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteering		<input type="checkbox"/>
Raising employer awareness		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other <i>(please state)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>
.....		

5. Was the project delivered in partnership?

If yes please list main project partners

.....

.....

.....

6a. Client/Target groups

(please tick the main target group on the left and up to three secondary target groups on the right)

<i>Tick main group</i>		<i>Tick max.3 others</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black and minority ethnic groups	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Refugees and/or asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	People with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	16-19 year olds - not in employment, education or training	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lone parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Homeless people	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ex-offenders	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drug and alcohol misusers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	People living in areas with high levels of multiple deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Returners to the labour market	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	People made redundant	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Long term unemployed (more than 12 months)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Economic Migrants	<input type="checkbox"/>

6b. Was the project additionally targeted at:

- a) Particular gender group No Yes *which.....*
- b) Particular ethnic group(s) No Yes *which.....*
- c) Particular age group(s) No Yes *which.....*

Some questions about the project participants

7. Participants' gender (all intakes from 2001 – 2006)

How many men?

 %

How many women?

 %

8. Participants' Ethnic Origin

(please tick the main ethnic group on the left and all others on the right)

Tick main group	Ethnic Group	Additional groups
	White	
<input type="checkbox"/>	British	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other White	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Black or Black British	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	African	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Black	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Asian or Asian British	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Chinese or other ethnic background	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other background	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mixed	
<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Mixed	

9. Participants' age (all intakes from 2001 – 2006)

Age Group	Please tick one or more
16 – 19	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 – 24	<input type="checkbox"/>
25 – 49	<input type="checkbox"/>
50 +	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Project Funding

(please tick the main source(s) of funding for the project)

Learning & Skills Council (LSC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)	<input type="checkbox"/>
London Development Agency (LDA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Association of Local Government (ALG)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mayor of London / Government for London (GLA)	<input type="checkbox"/>
European Social Fund (ESF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government Office for London (GOL)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fast Forward	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobcentre Plus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lottery Funding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Home Office	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trust or Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connexions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	

11. The area from which your project recruited participants

(please tick one or more)

London-wide	<input type="checkbox"/>
London Boroughs	
Barking and Dagenham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barnet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bexley	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bromley	<input type="checkbox"/>
Camden	<input type="checkbox"/>
City of London	<input type="checkbox"/>
Croydon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ealing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enfield	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greenwich	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hackney	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hammersmith and Fulham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Haringey	<input type="checkbox"/>
Harrow	<input type="checkbox"/>
Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hillingdon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hounslow	<input type="checkbox"/>
Islington	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kensington and Chelsea	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kingston upon Thames	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lambeth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lewisham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Merton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Redbridge	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richmond upon Thames	<input type="checkbox"/>
Southwark	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sutton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tower Hamlets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waltham Forest	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wandsworth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Westminster	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Total number of project participants
(all intakes between 2001 and 2006)

13a. How many project hours per participant?

13b. How intensive was the project for participants?

(please state length in days/weeks/months as appropriate)

Some questions about the project's outputs and outcomes

14. Awarded qualification or certificate

<i>Qualification</i>	<i>Please tick</i>	<i>Please specify type and level (e.g. NVQ2 in Business and Administration or OCNLR)</i>
Nationally accredited qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Locally accredited qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Certificate of attendance	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	

15. What percentage of the participants

	<i>Percentages</i>	<i>Does not apply/ Do not know</i>
Got a qualification?		<input type="checkbox"/>
Got a part or full time job? (16 hours+ per week)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Got a part time job (less than 16 hours per week)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Progressed to other courses or projects		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other / None of the above		<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Other benefits gained

(please state other benefits gained by participants, e.g. details of any work placement experience, 'soft' outcomes)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

17. Did you have any formal or informal feedback from participants and employers? <i>(Please tick as appropriate)</i>		
	Formal	Informal
Feedback from participants on completion of the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback from participants who did not complete the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Follow up feedback from participants after 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback from employers about the project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feedback from employers about individual participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Feedback <i>(please state)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. Does your project prepare for employment in a particular sector?

Yes No

If yes, please specify (e.g. creative industries, construction, retail etc.)

.....

19. Was there an independent project evaluation ?

Yes No

20. Any other comments

(e.g. about funding, future development, specific difficulties you encountered, particular success stories, etc.)

.....
.....
.....

Further information about the project is attached

Thank you for taking part in this research

Please return your questionnaire as soon as possible using the Freepost envelope provided to:

Dr. Anna Paraskevopoulou
Disadvantage, Disengagement, Discrimination Project
Working Lives Research Institute
London Metropolitan University
Freepost LON18355
31 Jewry Street
London EC3N 2EY

For more information about the project, or additional copies of the questionnaire please contact:

**Monika Beutel (Tel: 02073201371); e-mail: m.beutel@londonmet.ac.uk or
Dr. Anna Paraskevopoulou (02073201351);
e-mail: a.paraskevopoulou@londonmet.ac.uk**



APPENDIX G: Sample of Interview Guide

Interview Schedule 1

3DsLondon Project Semi structured Interview Schedule for Provider Organizations

Interviewer(s)

Date

Introduction

The 3DsLondon project lists and analyzes London initiatives designed to help members of particular disadvantaged groups develop employability skills and/ or to assist them in gaining direct access to jobs. We have created a database listing relevant projects. We are in the second stage of our research looking for an in depth insight to some of the initiatives that feature in our database and find out about your experiences as a provider of such projects, so thank you very much for your contribution. The interview consists of general questions on disadvantage and the labour market and more specific ones on your particular project(s). We will use this information to a. write our final report and b. develop a 'good practice' guide with case studies. These, together with our database, will be available as a toolkit to all participants in our research.

Section 1: Personal Details

Name:

Organization:

Position in Organization:

Address:

Contact Details:

Name of project:

Project's main target group:

Section 2: About your project

1. Could you give a short description of **your project**...? In what specific ways has **your project**.... been able to help (LTU/16-19/PMD group) overcome any barriers. Please use examples in the following areas:
 - personal development
 - acquiring skills
 - finding a job
 - future prospects
 - any others

2. How are the participants in your project financially supported?
 - Do they get an allowance –educational allowance – any other benefit)

3. Is your project delivered in partnership with other organizations?
 - How do you work together?
 - Does the partnership work well?

4. How did you recruit participants? (through a leaflet – word of mouth?)
 - Easy/difficult

5. How would you summarize the main strengths and weaknesses of your project?
 - How would you overcome any of these weaknesses?

6. Is there anything else you would like to say about the challenges of working with disadvantaged groups?

Section 3: Perceptions of Disadvantage

1. Our project is about disadvantaged groups in labour market. Your project works with(LTU/16-19/PMD) groups. What makes them disadvantaged?
2. Are there particular barriers for this group, which make it difficult to engage with learning and skills development opportunities that might help them gain jobs?
 - Family commitments
 - Transport
 - Language
 - Health
 -
3. In your view or experience which other group(s) of people are disadvantaged in the labour market?
 - What is it that makes them disadvantaged?
4. Do you think there is a difference between disadvantage and discrimination in the labour market?
 - And how would you characterize this difference?

Section 4: Your thoughts on effectiveness of support measures for the disadvantaged

1. Do you think enough is done in London for LTU/PMD/16-19 (+other target) to improve their skills and prepare for employment?
 - If not what more can be done?

2. How effective in your view are the major policy and funding agencies in addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups?

3. As a provider working with disadvantaged groups, would you have any suggestions for policy and funding agencies (in terms of your needs and concerns)?
 - Targeting particular groups
 - Funding
 - Staffing – cash flow
 - Expected outputs
 - Time scales (binding – delivering outputs)
 - Paper work

4. Do you have any other comments or suggestions for the future

Section 5: Is there any additional documentation for your project that might be useful to our research?

APPENDIX H: Membership of the Steering Committee

- Ania Oprawska
Central London Learning Partnership



- Nicholas Jones
CITB-ConstructionSkills Greater London



- Lesley Hawse/Elaine James
Disablement Association of Barking and Dagenham



- Chris Dunne/Jim Jessop
Jobcentre Plus London Regional Office



- John McDonald/Mike Fenton/Gareth Ashcroft
Learning and Skills Council (LSC)



- Julia McGerty/Sola Osinowa
London Voluntary Sector Training Consortium (LVSTC)



- Elizabeth Balgobin
London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC)



- Ashna Khan/Vicki Wusche
London West Learning Partnership



- Lee Thomas/Angela Gill
North London Learning Partnership



- Helen Bishop
North London Strategic Health Authority

- Maree Walker
Open College Network London Region



- Anna Reisenberger/James Lee
Refugee Council Head Office

- Stephen Davis/ Janice Pigott
South London Learning Partnership

- Jon Tennison
Southern and Eastern Region TUC

- Steve Jefferys/ Monika Beutel / Anna Paraskevopoulou
Working Lives Research Institute, London Metropolitan University

- Sue Gardener/Judith Gawn/Helen Plant
NIACE

- Kathryn Forrest /Stephen Halligan
ECOTEC Research & Consulting



