



BEMIS is the Ethnic Minorities led national umbrella organisation for the Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector & the communities that this sector represents.

Our Mission is to empower diverse ethnic minority organisations and to promote their active participation in democratic civic life and policy development both at a community, national and international levels.

In addition, we endorse a vision of a Scotland that is equal, inclusive and responsive, in which people from diverse communities are actively participating without barriers, are valued, and treated with dignity and respect, where their opportunities, quality of life and citizenship are equal.



❖ **STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:**

All of BEMIS strategic, planning and operational contexts are based on a partnership approach to all equality strands & Relevant Stakeholders promoting interaction and cooperation at all levels.

BEMIS has three overarching strategic aims:



❖ **FIRST:**

To empower and build the capacity of minority formal and informal community organisations.

❖ **SECOND:**

To influence policy development, government and other public agencies in relation to equality and have a pro active role in supporting EM and the race equality agenda in Scotland

❖ **THIRD:**

Be Pro active in supporting and promoting Democracy & Human Rights in Scotland ensuring active citizenship at national and international (European) levels.



REVIEW OF BEMIS

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education



Overall key strengths

- BEMIS uniting diverse range of stakeholders – real strength

- BEMIS is making a difference to target audience – inclusive, active & responsible /Commitment to inclusion and diversity/ influencing policy at various levels.

- Programmes making an impact on individuals, organisations and communities

- BEMIS gives grass roots a voice rather than acting as mouthpiece for EM communities.

- BEMIS has increased local organisation efficiency and effectiveness



COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING (indicative grade: Excellent):

- Training courses targeted at representatives from organisations – have increased capacity
- Community groups accessing funding as a result of training – multiplier training
- Significant increase in EM responses to consultation processes e.g. youth work strategy/ race equality review/ community planning/
- BEMIS network and database has also increased involvement



Challenges Facing Active Democratic Participation (1):

■ **Policy Development and Delivery: Theory into Practice !**

ARE legislations and laws placed to impact a real change or as mere set of theoretical frameworks where the priority or the impact turns, as Lustgarten and Edwards (1991) explain, into: **a show of doing something rather than actually doing or transforming it into effective practice.**

*L. Lustgarten, and J. Edwards, **Racial Inequality and the Limits of Law** .(1991)*

If the political universe is not set up to evoke, receive, negotiate, and act sensibly and fairly on policy proposals, then potentially good ideas will never have much of a chance to be developed, debated, and acted upon.

*C. Lindblom, E. Charles E. & J. Edward **The Policy-Making Process** (1993).*



Theory into Practice:

How these policies were formed

Deployment of policies / Moving from National to Local levels

Monitoring and evaluations

examples:

✓ *Community Planning Policies !!!*

✓ *Race equality policies: E.G. recent survey regarding Further Education colleges in Scotland noted that all colleges have race equality policies in place but only 3 of them has followed up on action plan and monitoring and evaluation.*

✓ *Equal Opportunity Policies.*

✓ *Positive action !!*



Challenges Facing Active Democratic Participation (2):

- Equality & Human Rights Bodies out of Touch with Communities.

- Institutional Racism & Exclusion

The *McPherson Report* on the [*Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*](#)

The report defined institutional racism as "...the collective failure of an organisation (institution) to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people. It persists because of the failure of the (institution) openly..to recognise and address its existence and causes by policy, example and leadership“

Chapter 6, Para.6:34



Challenges Facing Active Democratic Participation (3):

- Lack of effective implementation of national policies: (subverted at local levels)/ lack of understanding at local levels and lack of accountability/
- Creating change NOT paper work load.
- Positive Action Vs Positive Discrimination
- Engagement & Consultation
- The Role of the Media
- Resources



Challenges Facing Active Democratic Participation (4):

- Context of Democracy Itself: A & B
- Challenges Vs Easy Option / Leaders Vs Communities
- Selected Representation Vs Diversity
- Sponsorship Culture Vs Commitment
- Divisions Vs Partnership



Strategies for Effecting Democratic Active Citizenship: Role of NGOs:

▪ **Empowering Diverse Voluntary Sector (NGOs)**
How & why ?

▪ **Stimulate a Proactive vs. Reactive Role. How & why ?**

▪ **Developing Engagement Strategies. How & why ?**

▪ **Promote the setting up of Dialogue & Lobbying
Forums: Academic,
NGOs, Policy Makers. How & why ?**

▪ **Seek Sharing Experiences and Develop a Cultural
Shift in Work
Practice. How & why ?**



Strategies for Effecting Democratic Active Citizenship:

Working in Partnership:

- ✓ Share Aims and Be Open to Change;
- ✓ Work beyond the traditional context;
- ✓ Work Together
- ✓ Give Up power
- ✓ Dedicate Resources to Deliver Shared Goals; and
- ✓ Involve Communities in New Ways



Strategies for Effecting Democratic Active Citizenship: Role of NGOs:

❖ *HOW CAN WE DEVELOP and RELAY TO EM (and Others) A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING ON WHAT is ACTIVE DEMOCRATIC CITIZINSHIP:*

❖ *HOW CAN WE EMPOWER AN ACTIVE DEMOCRATIC VOICE THROUGH NGO'S & in EUROPE:*

Engagement strategies:

- ✓ Capacity Building
- ✓ Policy Development Active & Pro-active)
- ✓ Information strategy.
- ✓ **The ROLE OF DARE: Beyond Borders.**

VOICE TOOLKIT TRAINING ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT