

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

Ethnically Diverse Communities Project



**Dorset
Community
Foundation**



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**PROJECT OVERVIEW
AND
FIRST YEAR
SUMMARY**

The Ethnically Diverse Communities (EDC) Project is a three-year initiative (April 2024–April 2027) funded by the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF). It is a collaborative effort between Community Action Network (CAN), Dorset Community Foundation (DCF), Dorset Race Equality Council (Dorset REC), and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council.

The project aims to support groups from ethnically diverse backgrounds by strengthening organisational capacity, amplifying voices, and fostering collaboration. Planning began in 2022 with community involvement at its core. Early engagement sessions during the initial research phase shaped the project's design, ensuring it reflected the priorities and lived experiences of local EDC communities.

In April 2024, CAN, the appointed lead partner, employed a dedicated EDC Team consisting of a Project Manager (Mayu) and two Capacity Building Officers (Catia and Tama), all with established community ties. During the first months of the project, the team received training and started engaging with EDC groups locally. A launch event at Bournemouth University in June 2024 introduced the project, attracting over 60 attendees and setting the tone for future networking and engagement.

The summer was focused on training, community outreach, and attending events hosted by local groups. In September 2024, the EDC Team transitioned from CAN's Engagement Team to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Development Team, under the leadership of Amy Collins (Head of VCS Development) and working closely with Sarah Pickering (VCS Development Lead). This structural change enhanced alignment with the team's capacity-building work and improved internal support.

By autumn, the team had established working relationships with 18 core groups (from a wider contact base of 62 contacts at the time) that they were in regular contact with. The team also co-hosted a well-attended Black History Month event co-organised with colleagues from BCP Council and Dorset NHS Foundation Trust.

By the end of 2024 and early 2025, the EDC team also introduced Organisational Health Checks (OHCs) to assess group needs and identify development priorities. These OHCs informed the delivery of tailored training sessions on five key areas: business planning, policies and procedures, safeguarding, legal structures, and governance. Feedback from groups confirmed the value of these focused, supportive sessions.

A major milestone of the first year of the EDC Project was the launch of the DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability in January 2025. The grants process was co-designed with EDC communities' input to reduce barriers to access. Applications were supported by Capacity Building Officers (CBOs) and a "Meet the Funder" session with the DCF representative. As part of this process, four EDC representatives joined the grant assessment panel alongside DCF and NLCF representatives.

By April 2025, all applying groups had successfully secured funding for the very first round of grants.

This funding success significantly increased engagement from other EDC groups, positioning the project as a trusted route to support and development. The EDC Team continues to provide guidance, including on common challenges such as opening bank accounts.

Throughout the first year of the project, the partnership has met quarterly with representatives from the four institutions coming together to discuss the development of the project.

In early 2025, five EDC representatives were formally appointed to the project's partnership board, enhancing governance and embedding community voice into project oversight. The first board meeting that included EDC representatives took place in February 2025, marking a pivotal shift toward inclusive leadership.

The project's first year has delivered clear progress in trust-building, capacity development, and collaboration. The team is grateful for the support of its partners - BCP Council, DCF, Dorset REC, and their funder NLCF - and remains committed to learning from and alongside the communities it serves.

Further sections of this report provide detail on outcomes, stories of change, lessons learned, next steps and feedback from participants.



Ethnically Diverse Communities Project

Take a look at our project's timeline with the key highlights since the start in April 2024 until today

April 2024
The Ethnically Diverse Communities team join CAN

May 2024
The team receive training and start engaging with groups. They use their networks to contact different representatives and create a data base of over 50 EDC groups and individuals in the local area

June 2024

The team celebrates the launch of the project with over 60 attendees

July 2024
The EDC Partnership Board continues to discuss the progress of the project. The EDC Team attend regularly community events and festivals to support and promote the work of groups

August 2024
The team attends summer community events and starts planning for the Autumn!

September 2024
The team organise an online networking event attended by over 20 community representatives. The Project Manager also delivers an online session for stakeholders to promote the project

October 2024
The team co-delivers a Black History Month celebratory event

November 2024
The team co-delivers a session with Dorset Community Foundation to co-design with groups the DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability with 12 representatives from different communities

December 2024
The team deliver sessions with CAN's VCS Development Adviser to support groups with their Organisational Health Checks. So far a total of 17 groups have completed their OHC

January 2025
The DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability officially launch. The team also share the opportunity to be part of the EDC Partnership Board and receive a significant number of expressions of interest from EDC community leads

February 2025
The EDC Project Partnership Board meets and welcomes to the team a total of 4 EDC community leads appointed as Partnership Board Members

March 2025
Capacity Building Officers support groups to apply to DCF Grants and a total of 14 EDC groups apply to receive funding for strength and sustainability. A total of 4 EDC representatives are appointed as panelists to assess the applications

April 2025
The project officially celebrates its first year anniversary! The team works on the annual report and also prepares an EDC Celebratory Event for their first successful year!



PARTNERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The contributions of all partners in the Ethnically Diverse Communities (EDC) Project have been vital from the very beginning, dating back to the project's initial research phase. Their support and insights have been invaluable to both the EDC Team and the broader development of the project. This section highlights their contributions and shares their feedback.

Community Action Network (CAN)



CAN are the lead partner and are delighted to be involved in the EDC Project due to its deeply rooted community-centric approach. From the early engagement sessions that shaped its design to the inclusion of EDC representatives on the grant assessment panel and partnership board, it was clear that the lived experiences and priorities of local communities were at the heart of this initiative. This commitment to genuine partnership made our involvement especially meaningful.

To help as many VCSE groups as possible across BCP and Dorset with developing their organisational infrastructure, CAN are moving from a 'transactional' approach to a more 'transformational' approach in our support.

The purpose of this approach in providing advice, guidance and support, is to ensure that the VCSE groups develop the skills, confidence, resources and tools to build capacity and run their organisations sustainably and effectively, reducing the need to come back for support with steps they feel empowered to now undertake themselves. We have been trailing this 'do with' rather than 'do for' approach for over six months, with fantastic results in capacity building for the VCSE groups.

As a result, we are moving towards an more Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) framework, which focuses on the strengths of communities and how they can be mobilised to achieve change. It recognises that there are many talented, energetic people in communities, as well as existing assets that could be repurposed or looked at in a different way to help overcome particular challenges.

With the right support and guidance, communities can identify their own needs and develop their initiatives, leading to long-term, sustainable, effective solutions that are community-driven.

In applying this approach to all community organisations we support, this includes the capacity building support to the Ethnically Diverse Communities project, funded by the Reaching Communities Fund from the National Lottery.

The Reaching Community Fund aligns with the principles of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) by emphasising the strengths and assets within communities rather than focusing solely on their needs or deficits. ABCD is a framework that encourages communities to identify and mobilise their existing skills, resources, and networks to drive sustainable development.

The fund supports projects that are community-driven, aiming to empower individuals and groups to take ownership of initiatives. This approach resonates with ABCD's emphasis on building relationships, celebrating local talents, and fostering collaboration among residents, associations, and institutions. After a successful first year of engagement with the EDC groups, we are now merging the training for the groups under CAN's core service delivery, as this will allow the EDC groups to connect, collaborate and integrate with the wider community we support.



Dorset Race Equality Council (Dorset REC)

Dorset Race Equality Council has been privileged to be a partner throughout the planning and preparation of this project as ideas emerged across our diverse ethnic communities locally. Many of those ideas informed the bidding process, and it is exciting to see it all come together through the delivery of the first year of the EDC project.

It is impressive that the Capacity Building Officers have been able to engage so positively with a wide range of organisations and individuals:

It has been important to listen to people to hear of the barriers that they have faced and to work together to solve some of the problems and strengthen these grass roots groups in ways that are appropriate to achieve their outcomes and build their confidence and skills. There is much to celebrate.

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP Council)



BCP Council is the local authority responsible for providing a wide range of services across the area. Equality, diversity, and inclusion is one of our core commitments as well as widening our engagement with all our communities so more residents can have a say in how their services are delivered.

As part of the work of the community engagement and development team we recognised that we were not serving all our communities equitably and that there were barriers to diverse communities accessing opportunities for support. We were part of the discussions on this bespoke support project from the start. Alongside our partners, we identified gaps in our provision and gathered anecdotal evidence from the communities themselves, highlighting the need and desire for such a project.

Our priority as a partner, especially in the first year has been to provide advice and guidance, share skills, create networking opportunities, and increase the promotion of the project, whilst providing clear and constructive feedback. Our goal is to deliver innovative, responsive, and agile support to these communities, raising their aspirations and enhancing the sustainability, visibility, and resilience of individuals as well as the groups and organisations.



Dorset Community Foundation (DCF)

Given their specific role in this project, Dorset Community Foundation (DCF) has provided a detailed report of their involvement and activities, submitted alongside this document.

Ellie Maguire, Grants Manager at DCF also shared the following about her experience as a partner in this project:

We are so pleased to be working with CAN and the Capacity Building Officers on the EDC Project. In nearly 10 years at Dorset Community Foundation I have never experienced a round of funding when all the applications were eligible and suitable for funding, which was the case with our first round. This is testament to the excellent support provided for the groups.

EDC Panel Board Representative (Umoja Arts Network)



The EDC project has been a godsend to our communities and to Umoja Arts Network in general. The project came at a time when sector infrastructure support to ethnically diverse groups was near to a standstill.

Our organisation has welcomed the health checks and offer of training as it has definitely enabled us to refocus our efforts. I also have the privilege of being part of the partnership group and more recently the chair and this has provided me with the opportunity to influence the strategic direction of the project as well as provide assurances to the wider communities about the benefits.



EDC TEAM'S REFLECTIONS



Dorset
Community
Foundation



COMMUNITY
FUND

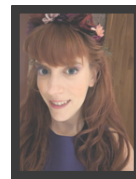
EDC PROJECT



The Ethnically Diverse Communities (EDC) Team is formed by the Project Manager, Mayu, and two Capacity Building Officers, Catia and Tama. They are part of the wider VCS Development Team led by Amy Collins, Head of VCS Development. The EDC Team has worked closely with the VCS Development Lead, Sarah Pickering, who has upskilled and supported the team in implementing the Organisational Health Checks (OHC) and has provided her expertise and knowledge throughout the training plan.

As part of this report, they have shared their reflections on how it's been for them to be part of the project.

Mayu Rouco Santos – Project Manager



I've had the incredible privilege of being part of this project almost from the beginning, when institutional partners first came together with representatives from Ethnically Diverse Communities (EDC) to lay its foundations. At the time, I had just joined BCP Council as a Community Engagement Officer in Kathy Boston-Mammah's team.

I still remember attending one of the first meetings at Beauford Community Centre, where I met many of the EDC representatives for the first time. One moment that has stayed with me was being introduced to Sister Tama. "But just call me Tama, please," she said with a smile. Little did we know that, just a couple of years later, we'd be working side by side, delivering the EDC Project together.

I also first met Catia during my council days, on a video call where she shared her wealth of experience supporting Brazilian and Portuguese-speaking communities.

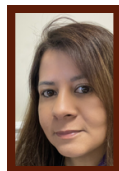
It feels like things have come full circle when the three of us were appointed as the Ethnically Diverse Communities Team within CAN.

I reflected on the significance of leading such a long-anticipated initiative. I knew this project was something truly special and that would become a milestone for our communities. I felt a deep sense of responsibility and purpose in stepping into that role.

Now, more than a year in, I continue to reflect on how I can grow in this role and offer the best of myself to the project, to our Ethnically Diverse Communities, to my team, and the local community. My heart is fully in this work, and I want my skills and efforts to truly reflect that commitment.

Thankfully, I don't walk this path alone. The team I work with at CAN, especially our dedicated EDC Team and Amy, could not be a better fit for this journey. We're also fortunate to be part of the broader CAN network and to have the support of a committed partnership. The guidance, feedback, and encouragement we receive from our institutional partners and EDC representatives on the partnership board continue to support our professional growth.

Speaking from personal experience, I am deeply grateful to the National Lottery Community Fund for its trust and support. To our team, partners, and community members who have brought passion, effort, knowledge, and heart to this work, thank you. The EDC Project has helped me grow not only professionally but also personally.



Catia Leite – Capacity Building Officer

Being part of the Ethnically Diverse Community Project, sponsored by the National Lottery Community Fund in the Dorset area, has been an incredibly transformative experience for me. As a Capacity Building Officer, in this first year, I have had the privilege of working closely with a few ethnically diverse communities and meeting many others.

The project has provided me with invaluable opportunities for personal and professional growth. Through various training sessions, workshops, and community engagements, I have developed a deeper understanding of the unique challenges faced by ethnically diverse communities. This knowledge has equipped me with the skills to effectively support and advocate for these communities.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role has been witnessing the positive impact of our efforts on the community. By providing capacity-building support, we have helped community members develop essential skills, access resources, and build stronger networks. This empowerment has fostered a sense of confidence and self-reliance among individuals, enabling them to take active roles in their community.

The Ethnically Diverse Community Project has been instrumental in promoting inclusivity and celebrating diversity within the BCP area. Our initiatives have created safe spaces for dialogue, collaboration, and cultural exchange, enriching the community as a whole. It has been heartening to see people from different backgrounds come together, share their experiences, and work towards common goals.

The support from the National Lottery Community Fund has been crucial in sustaining our activities and ensuring their long-term impact. The resources and funding provided have enabled us to implement meaningful programs and initiatives that address the specific needs of ethnically diverse communities.

As we continue to build on the successes of the Ethnically Diverse Community Project, I am excited about the future. The ongoing support and collaboration with the National Lottery Community Fund, BCP Council, Dorset Community Foundation, Dorset Race Equality Council and Community Action Network will allow us to expand our reach and deepen our impact. I am committed to continuing my work as a capacity-building officer, empowering ethnically diverse communities and fostering a more inclusive and vibrant society.

Tama Merdaci – Capacity Building Officer



Going back to the very start, I was part of the Ethnically Diverse Communities Project in the initial stage, attending workshops with the National Lottery and other partners. In these sessions, we aimed to demonstrate the need for this project to keep strengthening and sustaining our EDC communities to continue with their amazing abilities to support all, but also, listening too and understand that many were not being identified and heard.

Joining the EDC team as a leader of an Ethnically Diverse organisation, I was asking if I was the right person to support and guide others like me. 'What was a Capacity Building Officer?'

This sounded very scary to me as it required a lot of the responsibility, but now going into the second year of this project it is incredibly meaningful to me to guide all these great humans and care for what they are achieving.

Reading the EDC groups feedback after applying for their DCF grant and waiting for the panel to make their decisions, I felt so proud of everyone. I acknowledge the time and effort that each one of the groups gave to attend all the incredible training sessions, led by Sarah Pickering.

It was very fulfilling to witness how the groups were using the training to work with me to gain governance knowledge and building their business plans.

Watching all gain confidence and abilities, unified voices and collaborations blooming has been priceless. All this could not have been done without our incredible team and partners!

Looking forward to year 2, moving forward now as a Capacity Building Officer, feeling proud and celebrating!



**YEAR 1
OUTCOMES
AND
IMPACT**

The aim of this project, as agreed with the NLCF, is to support an already active ethnically diverse sector to become stronger, more sustainable, and better connected.

This section presents the outcomes from Year 1 (April 2024 – April 2025), highlighting the impact of our support on both directly engaged groups and the wider community. The following table compares our delivery against the original targets

Area of Work	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Achieved	Status
Groups receiving 1-to-1 support	15 groups	28 groups	Exceeded
Organisational Health Checks (OHCs)	10 groups	21 groups	Exceeded
Management/Governance support	15 groups	Covered through organisational health checks + training.	Exceeded
Funding advice	15 groups	13 groups received funding. Additional advice covered through organisational health checks + training.	On track
Volunteering management support	10 groups	Incorporated in capacity building	On track
Total communications with groups	40 communications	40+ communications	Met
Training sessions delivered	5 sessions, 40 attendees	5 sessions delivered	Met
EDC groups supported through grant funding	£40,000 to 10 groups	£40,000 to 13 groups	Exceeded
EDC-led networking/peer support events	3 events	3+ events	Met
EDC representatives on Partnership Board	3 reps	6 reps	Exceeded

We will also explore the progress through key data and provide a detailed look at each outcome.

Communication with EDC Groups and Individuals

From the outset, the EDC Team benefited from strong existing connections within the community sector. Partners such as BCP Council, Dorset REC, and DCF played a crucial role in expanding the project's reach. By May 2025, the EDC Team had established a contact database of 68 individuals and groups from EDC communities.

Of these, 28 groups are actively engaging, receiving 121 support sessions with the CBOs, including in-person meetings, calls, and video conferences.

Examples of the aspects that the team have shared communications about are:

- Information and promotion about dedicated events and activities facilitated by the Ethnically Diverse Communities (EDC) Project: launch event, online networking events, invite to DCF co-design workshop and Meet the Funder sessions
- Invites to CAN's training courses and online networking opportunities (not only related to the EDC Project but also open to wider audiences)
- Promotion of activities and events organised by Ethnically Diverse Communities in the local area
- Regular updates about the development of the EDC Project
- Promotion of opportunities related to the project: role description to become an EDC Partnership Board member, information about applying to become a panelist for the DCF Grants

Regular communication, whether through emails or preferred contact methods, ensures ongoing engagement. The EDC Team remains open to new contacts and actively fosters relationships with both existing and emerging groups. Since the first round of DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability were released, the interest and engagement from EDC groups has increased significantly and both CBOs confirmed that they are consistently contacted by EDC groups who would like to engage with the project.

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Capacity Building Framework for Support

During the first half of year 1, the focus of the CBOs was on engaging the EDC groups in the project. This involved addressing barriers to support and offering capacity-building support to develop their organisations. To effectively support as many groups as possible with the available capacity, we developed a framework of support.

This approach aimed to empower the groups to develop their skills, confidence, knowledge, and resources to make changes to their organisational infrastructure independently, rather than relying on the CBOs. For example, instead of the CBOs writing a constitution for the groups, the groups were supported to understand its importance and take ownership of writing it themselves, thereby increasing their skills, confidence, and ability to run their organisations.

To ensure the groups could become 'fit' for funding, we developed five key areas of support: business planning, good governance, and good practice in volunteer management, funding and Marketing, Networking and Communication. This was to ensure that the groups would have a sustainable infrastructure in place to increase their chances of successful funding.

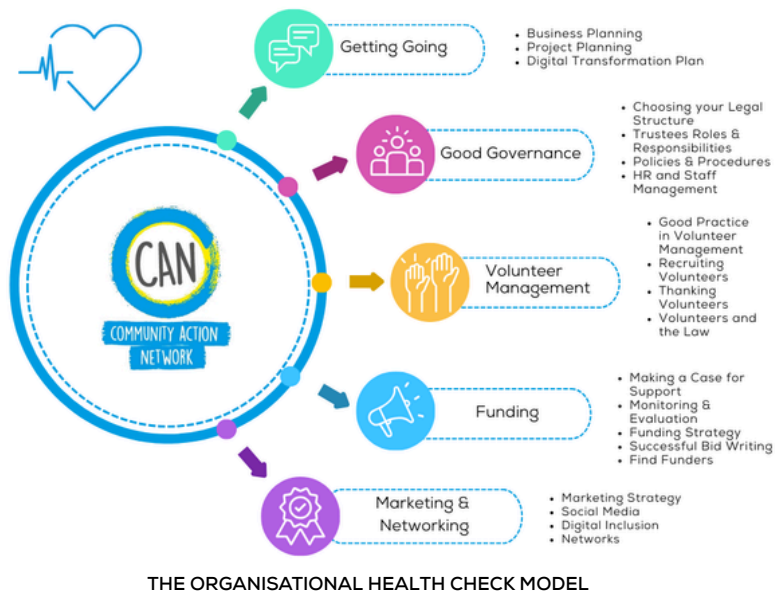


The key factor was to support the groups in developing a business or project plan to give them a clear understanding of their mission, aims, objectives, values, the activities they want to run to meet these objectives, and the resources they will need and how to fund them.

From January 2025, the CBOs and the VCS Development Lead started running bite-sized two-hour training courses on key areas of development identified. These courses provided practical support for organisational development and effective funding practices. Each training session was based on a comprehensive workbook containing activities, information, and hyperlinks to ensure that after the training, the groups could undertake the development areas themselves, with the support of the CBOs on identified areas.



To engage the groups in the training, the team developed an 'organisational health check' (OHC) to undertake with each group. This would clearly identify the areas of support needed. The purpose of this was twofold: firstly, the OHC, based on an outcome star, could be used as a baseline assessment to see the journey of change or distance travelled by the groups for monitoring and evaluation. More importantly, it served as a tool for discussion, encouraging organisations to reflect on their practices and identify any 'blind spot' areas for support.



The tool enabled gentle discussion and challenged preconceived ideas. For example, Kushti Bok (a charity supporting Romany Gypsies and Travelers) initially rated themselves a 10 on the outcomes scale under 'how well do you embed EEDI into your organisation'.

After the discussion, they revised this rating upon realising they could be more inclusive. For instance, they had fewer trustees from outside their Romany Gypsy Traveler community and lacked board diversity, such as young people on their board of trustees.

Taking ownership of areas that needed development led to deeper engagement from the groups and high participation in the training offered to meet their individual needs. The team undertook 21 OHCs from November 2024 to January 2025, some individually and some in group sessions.

The OHCs provided a baseline assessment of where the groups were before engaging in the project. Now, with the first phase of 21 groups having completed all the training, during year 2, the CBOs will undertake a 'midpoint Organisational Health Check review' of progress. This review will use the Outcome Star again to show areas of development and compare the progress of the initial OHC to show progress and 'distance' the groups have developed.

CAN's CRM shows specific outcomes achieved for each group, such as completing a business plan, writing a constitution, opening a bank account, and developing specific policies and procedures, to further demonstrate the impact of the support.

The midpoint review aims to assess how the EDC project support in capacity building has had a ripple effect in the community, particularly regarding the impact on the service users of the EDC groups. The review will also identify any further specific needs for support so that bespoke training and resources can be provided.

The final health check review will occur 12-15 months after engaging in the project to measure further progress, including the quality of funding applications and funding secured for longer-term sustainability. This review will also assess the EDC groups' own monitoring and evaluation data to see the ripple effect of impact in the community.

Year 2 will see a new phase of engaged groups undertaking the OHCs and receiving training with CBO capacity-building support, as phase 1 groups will be less reliant and have developed their organisation, skills, and confidence effectively.

One community group supported said: *"Thanks to the extensive learnings and resources shared, we have successfully formalised our group and launched our activities. This has empowered us to provide vital support to numerous families with neurodiverse children from various backgrounds. The impact of this support has been profound, creating a strong sense of community and offering much-needed assistance."*



Training for EDC Groups

From January 2025, we ran the following bite-sized two-hour training courses on key areas of development identified.

Training	Date	Number of attendees
Developing a robust business plan	03.02.2025	18
Choosing your legal structure	24.02.2025	7
Trustee Roles and Responsibilities	10.03.2025	9
Developing your Policies and procedures	24.03.2025	10
Introduction to Safeguarding (Equivalent to Level 1)	29.03.2025	19
Total attendees		63

These sessions were well-attended, with active engagement from both established and newly involved community leaders. The feedback from participants has been highly positive, with several participants highlighting how the sessions have deepened their understanding and improved their organisational practices.

Feedback from the Choosing Your Legal Structure session noted:

“Even though Kushti Bok is an established Charitable Company, we’ve realised we still have a lot to learn to keep updated.”

Another attendee from the Trustees’ Roles and Responsibilities session shared: *“This training is great, I’ve been updated on new issues, and been reminded of my responsibilities.”*

DEED also stated: *"I attended the business planning training with Sarah from CAN and found that very useful in identifying where we were doing well and where we needed to improve and it was particularly helpful working with other EDC groups during the training, getting to know each other better and sharing what we are all doing and working towards. It has helped DEED reflect on where we are as an established organisation but still with much work to do improving our focus for future growth and development."*

The team aims to continue delivering tailored training while also empowering EDC groups to lead future sessions, building EDC capacity for sustainability. This is one of the priorities for the partnership moving forward.

Training Feedback Summary

We are pleased to report overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants in our recent training session, indicating both high satisfaction and strong practical value. Key highlights include:

Quantitative Feedback

- Overall Satisfaction: Average score of 4.8 out of 5 for meeting expectations.
- Training Quality: 100% of participants rated the training as Excellent or Good.
- Practical Application: 96% rated the practical usefulness of the training as Excellent or Good.
- Depth of Content: 96% rated the depth and thoroughness of the material covered as Excellent or Good.
- Increased Understanding and Confidence: 96% reported improved understanding and confidence in the topic.
- Likelihood to Recommend: 100% of participants stated they would recommend this training to others.

Participants highlighted several aspects of the training as especially valuable:

- Use of templates and structured headings to develop documentation.
- Exercises to apply learning directly.
- Workbook provided during the session and follow-up by email.

Regarding the Relevant and Actionable Content participants enjoyed:

- Real-life examples and practical insights.
- Clear explanation of topics such as data protection, risk assessments, and insurance updates.
- Up-to-date guidance on policies and procedures.
- Useful links to external resources (e.g., ACAS, NCVO).

Regarding Business Planning Support, participants particularly appreciated:

- Detailed guidance on writing a business plan.
- Emphasis on clarity and structure.
- Insights on aligning business plans with practical goals and presentation needs.

About the Presentation and Delivery of material, the highlighted:

- Clear and accessible facilitation.
- Logical presentation structure.
- High engagement and ease of understanding.

Progress on Business Plan Development

As a result of the 'Developing a Business Plan' training, 11 organisations - including World of Love, Wise Advice for Life, BREACC, Overcomers Outreach, African Caribbean Luncheon Club, Afro*Disiac Radio, and Umoja - have successfully completed comprehensive business plans. An additional five groups are currently in the process of developing theirs.

Tama and Catia have played a key role in supporting groups from the start - building trust, providing regular check-ins, reviewing policies, and offering practical guidance. Their one-to-one support has helped groups grow in confidence, make decisions, and take ownership of their development as independent charities. This has been strengthened by Sarah's expert training on the five priority areas from the organisational health checks. Below are two examples of groups that, with CAN's support, have completed their business plans and grown as organisations.

Overcomers Outreach CIC



- Gained a new community centre in Pokesdown (the CBO supported with visiting and guiding them with fire safety policy, introducing an electrician and sharing their facilities with other EDC groups to hire, the next Partnership meeting will be taking place there)
- Ade Bamgboye – Director and Reuben Ocansey – Trustee have attended all 5 training sessions with CAN and gained through CAN training level 1: Safeguarding certificate
- Ade completed the Organisational Health check
- Applied to become a CIC
- Worked on a robust Constitution, Safeguarding and EDI policy
- Attended two meetings with NLCF Funding Officer and worked on improving their application for 'Awards for All' Funding
- Attended an interview with DCF to receive their EDC Grant application (funding awarded)
- Applied to be part of the Partnership Board (elected as a member)
- Working on strengthening links with two other EDC groups to collaborate together

Afro*Disiac Live Radio



- Met regularly with their CBO since May 2024 until today
- Discussed the governance structure of Afro*Disiac Radio, then operating as a CIC limited by shares
- Considered transitioning into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to better align with its community-focused mission
- Attended meetings with CBO and Funding Adviser to explore Afro*Disiac's funding strategy and future opportunities
- Reviewed previously rejected Awards for All application to identify areas for improvement
- Participated in various training sessions and workshops focused on governance, funding, and organisational development
- Completed an Organisational Health Check where it was identified an urgent need to develop a Business Plan
- Completed a Business Plan with support from CBO
- Attended a meeting with CBO and NLCF Funding Officer to review the organisation's volunteer management practices, legal structure, and trustee roles. The meeting also included a detailed review of a revised Awards for All application, which significantly boosted their confidence
- Applied and successfully secured *Awards for All* funding, a direct result of the strategic support and guidance provided

- Appointed as a Partnership Board Member
- Contributed to the DCF co-design workshop for the Grants' Application Process
- Applied and received the DCF *Strength and Sustainability Project Fund*, further strengthening its organisational capacity and long-term viability
- Currently organising to host two major community events: Reggae on the Bay (June 2025) and Reggae Weekend (July 2025), showcasing the organisation's growth, visibility, and impact

Networking Events for EDC Groups

Regular networking events have been a cornerstone of the project, facilitating community connections and sharing key project developments.:

- June 2024 – EDC Launch Event
- September 2024 – online networking session (20+ attendees)
- October 2024 – Black History Month celebration (60+ attendees)
- March 2025 – online networking session with Ellie from DCF as the key speaker (20+ attendees)



One of the participants (part of the Women Community Impact Awards) shared: *“Thank you so much for creating this forum! It's been incredibly valuable and exactly what I've been looking for. I've been involved in communities for over 8 years now, and while I've always found navigating my own path and receiving support from amazing people to be rewarding, this session has been particularly energising.”*



A milestone anniversary event is planned for 29th May 2025, with the goal of fostering further community engagement.

Partnership Board

A key achievement in Year 1 has been the expansion of the Partnership Board to include representatives from ethnically diverse communities (EDC). Since its launch in April 2024, the Board has become an essential platform for shaping the project's direction and addressing emerging challenges.

A role description was developed to support and encourage EDC community members to take a more active role, and six EDC organisations are now represented, with plans for further involvement - including opportunities to chair meetings.

Their participation ensures the project remains inclusive, community-led, and responsive to the lived experiences and needs of the communities it serves. This diverse representation strengthens decision-making, builds trust, and supports long-term impact.

The organisations that are represented on the Partnership Board are:

- It's All About Culture (IAAC)
- Overcomers Outreach
- Afro*Disiac
- African-Caribbean Lunch Club
- Celeste
- Umoja Arts Network

The next page shows the key figures of the EDC outcomes presented as an infographic. Following this, we cover the impact of the first year of the project.

Ethnically Diverse Communities Project

These infographics present key figures of the cases and activities that the Ethnically Diverse Communities Team are working on. The data presented here covers from the period from the start of the project (April 2024) until today (May 2025)

Total number of contacts

From April 2024 to April 2025

The number of individuals or representatives from ethnically diverse backgrounds that the project has contact with is currently 67 (5 more individuals than the last quarter). The contacts may include people the team are directly supporting but not necessarily.

We expect this number to increase gradually thanks to the team's engagement practices and the more active presence of the project in the wider local community.



28



Number of 'cases' that the EDC Team are supporting

From October 2024 to April 2025

By 'case' we mean a specific group or representative that engages actively and on an ongoing basis with our Capacity Building Officers. Since the last quarter (February 2025), 7 more cases have been created. Both Capacity Building officers will be supporting 6 new groups each besides their existing ones.



Organisational Health Checks (OHC)

Delivered from Dec 2024 until today (May 2025)

OHC is the model the team are following to identify the needs and the strengths of the groups they support.

The first rounds of OHC started in December 2024. New cases are undertaken the OHC and the ones who have done it in the first round will have a review in the coming months.

Bid Writing

Accountancy and bookkeeping

Monitoring and evaluation

Priorities identified by groups

As the first cohort of groups have attended a number of training sessions with CAN, more priorities are being identified and these reflect some of the top needs



First round DFC Grants: January to March 2025

Groups who received funding from the DCF Grants

Following the launch of the first round of applications for DCF Strength and Sustainability Grants 13 groups applied for funding and all the groups have been successful and received funding.

Upcoming Sessions

The VCS Dev Lead and the team have offered sessions to EDC groups on 5 different topics.

The team will be organising sessions, for new topics, delivered by EDC members.

Our Ethnically Diverse Communities Project Celebrates Its First Anniversary and our groups' feedback help our project grow

"Reflecting on the first year, we've had an incredible experience with the support provided. Our adviser has been instrumental in helping us build a strong organizational structure, and the training from CAN has been invaluable. With this guidance, we've successfully applied for a grant and feel confident moving forward"

"We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Community Action Network (CAN) for their unwavering support through the Ethnically Diverse Community project. The guidance and assistance provided by the capacity building officer have been truly invaluable to us.

Thanks to the extensive learnings and resources shared, we have successfully formalized our group and launched our activities."

We have explored the outcomes achieved in the first year of the project. In this section, we would like to illustrate the significant and positive impact on ethnically diverse communities locally.

Through targeted support, capacity building, and strategic engagement, the project has helped strengthen community organisations, fostered collaboration, and empowered groups to take on greater leadership roles within their own communities. Below, we highlight the areas where the impact has been most noticeable and significant for both the groups and the project.

Building Trust and Engagement

Since the start of the project in April 2024, the EDC Team and the wider partnership prioritised building strong, trusting relationships with ethnically diverse community groups. The team's deep-rooted connections in the community sector, combined with the support of the partners and the funder, ensured that the project was accessible to a broad range of local communities.

The outstanding work of the CBOs in building trust and connection with the communities they support is reflected in the excellent feedback received.

The feedback section includes testimonials from community representatives, highlighting how much they value the project's support and the team's efforts.



Empowering Through Capacity Building

The project's capacity-building efforts have focused on enhancing the skills, governance, and sustainability of ethnically diverse groups. The Organisational Health Checks (OHC) model has been pivotal in identifying key areas for development and offering tailored support.

These not only help groups understand their strengths and challenges but also ensure they are better equipped to tackle future challenges and opportunities.

Through funding received from the DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability, the groups have been able to access additional resources and tools tailored to their communities' needs. Additionally, by completing the co-designed funding applications, they are becoming better equipped to pursue other funding opportunities and better understand the key requirements of the application process.

Their participation on the grant assessment panel also enables them to develop new skills and take an active, committed role in both the project's development and the wider growth of their communities and peer groups.

Skills Development and Knowledge Sharing

Through a series of targeted training sessions, the project has equipped local community leaders and volunteers with the practical skills they need to set the basis to improve and grow their organisations.

These training opportunities have increased the capacity of ethnically diverse groups to secure funding, navigate legal structures, and implement policies that strengthen their operations.

Moreover, the project has emphasised the importance of knowledge sharing within the community. By identifying local experts and encouraging peer-led training, the project aims to foster a more sustainable model of community development, where EDC groups can eventually take the lead in supporting one another.



Supporting Access to Funding Opportunities

The support provided by the EDC Team and the wider partnership has enabled several groups - many of which had never applied for or received funding before - to access new funding opportunities. This marks a significant milestone in their development.

In addition to guiding groups through applications to the bespoke Dorset Community Foundation (DCF) Grants for Strength and Sustainability, the team also supported access to external funding sources.

For example, as stated in the Outcomes section, one of our Capacity Building Officers facilitated meetings between Afro*Disiac Live Radio and the Funding Officer from the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) to explore the 'Awards for All' grant. As a result, the group successfully secured funding—one of the standout achievements of Year 1. This success not only reflects the group's dedication but also highlights the value of tailored support. The insights provided by the NLCF Funding Officer helped the group better understand what funders look for in applications.

Advocacy & Amplifying The Voices of Our Communities

One of the common challenges faced by our EDC groups is difficulty in opening a bank account. Without one, groups cannot receive funding or manage finances effectively - posing a major barrier to growth and sustainability.

This issue is not limited to our area. NCVO has acknowledged it as a national problem and has been working to resolve it with banking providers. In response, we reached out to organisations across the country to gather insights and recommendations on banks that have successfully supported community groups. Locally, we also engaged with partners to identify commonly used banks.

Following this, we arranged a face-to-face meeting with a Lloyds Bank manager, who confirmed that community groups could apply for a specific community account and outlined the process. Despite this, some groups have since been declined.

We are now working to organise a session between Lloyd's representatives and our community groups to discuss the issues, seek clarity, and find practical solutions.

We remain committed to removing barriers and advocating for fair access to resources for all our communities.

Strengthening Community Networks

Networking has been a core element of the project's success in connecting ethnically diverse communities. Regular events, both online and in person, have provided platforms for groups to share experiences, exchange ideas, and build collaborative relationships. These events have also kept groups informed about the project's progress, as well as funding and development opportunities.

The ongoing relationships formed through these networking opportunities are helping to create a more unified and empowered community. Groups have also shared that they greatly value the opportunity to connect with other communities in a relaxed environment. The team aims to continue offering both online and in-person networking opportunities to maintain and strengthen this collaborative spirit.

Representation and Leadership

A key long-term impact of the project has been the increased representation of ethnically diverse communities in decision-making processes. The expansion of the Partnership Board to include community representatives is a major milestone in ensuring that the voices of local EDC groups are heard and acted upon.

By having a direct role in shaping the future of the project, community representatives will contribute to create a more inclusive approach to development, one that is led by the communities the project serves.

As the project progresses, the team plans to further empower EDC groups by offering leadership opportunities within the Partnership Board and encouraging greater community involvement. This will not only strengthen the project's responsiveness to local needs but will also contribute to the long-term sustainability of EDC groups.

Communities We Support

The EDC team engaged with 68 groups this year, 28 of which received ongoing tailored support. A full list of engaged groups is available in the Annex.





**STORIES
OF
CHANGE**

Reflecting on the outcomes and impact achieved during the first year of the project, we are pleased to share a selection of stories of change from EDC groups who have taken part. These examples highlight the growth and development these groups have experienced as a result of their involvement in the project.

The stories have been gathered by our dedicated Capacity Building Officers, who have supported the groups from the very beginning and continue to work closely with them today.

Wise Advice For Life

Wise Advice has been a light of hope and support for local families for over a couple of years. However, like many community organisations, they faced challenges in sustaining their activities and expanding their impact. This is the story of how capacity-building support transformed their operations and empowered them to make a lasting difference.

The group are a collective of SEND professional parents, founded with the mission to provide a wide range of services to the unique needs of SEND families. Their commitment stems from their personal journeys, embracing the challenges and strengths of the SEND community offering meaningful, compassionate support to other parents and families navigating similar paths.

Their priority is to support Portuguese-speaking families, ensuring they have access to the resources and guidance they need. Understanding the unique cultural and linguistic challenges faced by these families they are dedicated to provide tailored support that respects and celebrates their heritage.

Despite their dedication, they struggled with limited resources, insufficient funding, and a lack of strategic planning.

In 2024/2025, Wise Advice received capacity-building support from Catia. This support included:

Training and Workshops: The group participated in workshops on fundraising, developing a Robust Business Plan, trustee roles and responsibilities, developing policies and procedures and introduction to Safeguarding. These sessions equipped them with essential skills and knowledge to enhance their operations.



Mentorship: Catia has provided one-on-one guidance on how to set up the group's legal structure, as well as on planning activities for the families they support.

Networking Opportunities: The group was introduced to a network of other community organisations, fostering collaborations and sharing best practices.

The capacity-building support led to significant changes within the Wise Advice Community Group:

The development of a Constitution for the Wise Advice community group was a significant step in their journey as a community organisation. This foundational document has provided them with a clear framework and set of guidelines that are essential for our growth, governance, and sustainability. Outlining the roles and responsibilities of their members, leaders, and volunteers, enabled them to operate more efficiently and effectively, ensuring that everyone understands their duties and the processes involved in decision-making.

The positive experiences have shown them that it is possible to have enjoyable and inclusive social activities. Families are now looking forward to more opportunities to come together, have fun, and create lasting memories.

The Introduction to Safeguarding training provided by CAN has been instrumental in helping the Wise Advice community group understand their responsibilities in protecting vulnerable individuals. This training has equipped their volunteers with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns effectively.

The group delivered two activities to the families their support in a local community café signposted by their CBO, Catia:

Bingo Night and Burger Night. The Bingo Night and Burger Night events have brought immense joy and positive feelings to the SEND families who participated. For many of these families, socialising has been a challenge for years due to the lack of appropriate care and the fear of their children being discriminated against. These inclusive activities have provided a safe and welcoming environment where families can relax and enjoy themselves without worry.



One parent shared, "We haven't been out as a family for years because we were always worried about how our child would be treated. The Bingo Night and Burger Night were amazing. We felt welcomed and included, and our child had so much fun. We're excited for more events like these!"

In conclusion, the capacity-building support so far provided to the Wise Advice Community Group has not only transformed their operations but also empowered them to make a lasting impact on the community. Their story is a testament to the power of strategic support and collaboration in driving meaningful change.

"We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Community Action Network (CAN) for their unwavering support through the Ethnically Diverse Community project. The guidance and assistance provided by the capacity building officer, Catia Leite, have been truly invaluable to us.

Thanks to the extensive learnings and resources shared, we have successfully formalized our group and launched our activities. This has empowered us to provide vital support to numerous families with neurodiverse children from various backgrounds. The impact of this support has been profound, creating a strong sense of community and offering much-needed assistance to those who need it most.

Thank you for believing in us, for your continued support, and for empowering us to make a meaningful difference. We are deeply appreciative of the partnership and look forward to further collaboration in the future"

(Feedback from Wise Advice)



The Flower Girls Project (Kushti Bok)

Kushti-Bok is a registered Charity a voice for Romany Gypsies and Travellers in the Southwest.

They are charity well-known and respected within Dorset and amongst their many activities, they work to raise awareness about the issues faced by the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities but they also work passionately to share their values and culture.



Kushti Bok are involved in many different projects but some of the members of the organisation through conversations with their Capacity Building Officer, Tama, identified that there were many women within the community that were not receiving tailored support or doing any activities for themselves outside the home.

This is how the idea of 'The Flower Girls' Project came to being, as a unique initiative for young single mothers with young children who are isolated and financially on the poverty line suffering from ill mental health and well-being and lack of education due to leaving school at young ages never been in employment.

The project has this name because the main activity is to do flower making arrangements. This comes from a traditional Traveller tradition of over a hundred years ago, where great grandmothers stood the streets of Bournemouth Square selling flower posies to make ends meet and support their families.

The Flower Girls Project has received dedicated and ongoing support from their Capacity Building Officer in the following aspects:

Listening and learning about what they needed and wanted to achieve as a project that would grow and strengthen their way of life as a community.

Completing the Organisational Health Check within a group setting of 7 other community groups lead by the VCS Development Lead, Sarah Pickering, to identify what their needs were as a new project

Training and Workshops: The Flower Girls participated in group training sessions fundraising, strategic planning, volunteer management, developing a Robust Business Plan, trustee roles and responsibilities, developing policies and procedures and introduction to Safeguarding. These sessions equipped them with essential skills and knowledge to enhance their operations.



Mentorship: Tama has provided one-on-one guidance on how to set up the group legal structure developing a constitution, EDI Policy and Safeguarding Policy, as well as on attending the first Taster sessions – Flower arranging with a group of young mothers

Networking Opportunities: The group was introduced to a network of other community organisations, fostering collaborations and sharing best practices.

This has enabled the Flower Girls Project to facilitate two flower making sessions so far. Their Capacity Building Officer attended their first session and was amazed to see how many young mothers with their children came together to create the most amazing flower wreaths and spent the afternoon socialising.

Following this session, the Flower Girls Project aims to train more mothers and then as a community to use the social media platform to be able to sell flower arrangements for weddings, funerals and other events. This will lead to young mothers in the community to gain an income and feel valued members of the community.

The growth in confidence and self-awareness of these amazing women will grow in strength and sustain for a future of their community and build a bridge to collaborate with other Ethnically Diverse Communities.

The capacity-building support so far provided to the Flower Girl Project has given them the ability to achieve participants' ambitions, to strengthen their community and shape the way for the future. This project is also helping them to feel empowered to make a lasting impact on the community. Their story is a testament that demonstrates that they can do it; they will be heard and go on to do greater things.



Some of the participants said:

"Coming to the first session and being in a group learning flower arranging achieving something, coming out again, I want more, I feel empowered"

"I have never been able to be part of a group, I need to grow for my children to show them we are Gypsies, but we have hidden talents and abilities"



R.E.A.V (Re-Empowerment Amplified Voices)

R.E.A.V is a grassroots community group formed by young men from local asylum and refugee hotels in the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole (BCP) area. Co-chaired by Yonas and Tamtam, the group aims to give back through volunteering and community engagement, while fostering a sense of belonging for over 300 residents unable to work due to their immigration status.

With dedicated support from Capacity Building Officer Tama, the group established a formal committee, developed a constitution, and began volunteering with local initiatives, including litter picking and social canteens. Weekly meetings were held at Bournemouth University, offering a professional and inclusive space to plan activities and build team cohesion.

R.E.A.V successfully fundraised for high-visibility vests, improved their communications with a new social media presence, and were invited to share their story on Hope FM—an opportunity that significantly boosted confidence and visibility.

Despite challenges, including Yonas and Tamtam's temporary relocation to a detention centre, the group remains active and engaged, attending meetings online and planning future projects.

Looking ahead, R.E.A.V aims to expand its 48-member team, develop youth-focused initiatives, and partner with local organisations for activities such as gardening, swimming, and sports. Their mission is to support integration, personal development, and cross-cultural understanding through volunteering and community-led action.



LESSONS LEARNED

The first year of the EDC Project has been both exciting and challenging. The team has grown significantly, learning from one another, from partners and colleagues at CAN, and—most importantly—from the community groups themselves. Below are some of the key lessons and reflections from this first year.

Understanding Ethnically Diverse Communities (EDCs)

Following the project's launch in April 2024 and the subsequent event in June, the team received an overwhelming response from various communities seeking support. Many groups were already familiar with the project through earlier research phases or existing relationships with EDC team members, while others were engaging for the first time.

A recurring question was about what it means to be part of an "Ethnically Diverse Community" and which groups are eligible for support. Some groups working with diverse populations, but not led by individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds, sought clarity on whether they qualified. These interactions highlighted the need for clearer criteria.

In response, the team initiated open conversations internally and with community members and undertook further research. The agreed understanding is that, for a group to be considered part of the EDC community, it should be led and run by individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds, not just serving such communities.

However, this remains an evolving discussion. When groups don't fully align with the project's scope, the team kindly refers them to CAN's VCS Development Lead to explore other avenues of support.

Clarifying Capacity Building

The concept of "capacity building" has also prompted questions and required clarification. While the project was widely known, many communities initially expected funding alone, not fully understanding the broader aims of organisational development.

The term itself is broad and can vary in meaning across organisations. When the DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability were launched, both the team and community groups found it challenging to define which resources or activities qualified as capacity building.

Over time, through direct experience and ongoing discussions with partners and communities, the team has developed a more nuanced understanding. While there is still no single definition, the team continues to explore what capacity building means in practice and how it can best support grassroots growth.

Working in Partnership

The EDC Project is built on collaboration among four core institutional partners, now joined by newly appointed EDC representatives on the project board. This diversity of organisations and perspectives has led to valuable dialogue and learning.

The first year has helped partners better understand each other's roles and strengths, reinforcing the importance of shared decision-making. No single organisation has all the answers, and the project thrives when voices are heard, and mutual respect is fostered.

Partnership meetings have played a crucial role in building trust. Additionally, one-on-one conversations with colleagues have helped explore new ways to support the project.

A notable example is the close collaboration with Ellie from DCF, working with the team to co-design the grant application process—a true testament to effective partnership working.



Engaging with External Stakeholders

Since the start of the project, the EDC team has received considerable interest from external colleagues and organisations wanting to engage with EDC groups. Mayu, the EDC Project Manager, has often served as the main point of contact, sharing information and offering support.

To manage expectations and promote clarity, the team hosted an online stakeholder session to answer questions and outline the project's scope. As interest continues, the team remains focused on setting clear boundaries, managing requests appropriately, and ensuring external engagement aligns with the project's aims and values.



NEXT STEPS

As the first year of the EDC Project concludes, the team reflects on its achievements, successes, and lessons learned. Moving forward, the team and broader partnership will focus on several key priorities:

Insights and Feedback

The partnership seeks to understand the experiences of the groups that have received support. The feedback shared in the last section highlights the value of the support provided by the CBOs, but it is equally important to gather constructive input on various processes used throughout the year, including one-to-one meetings, networking events, Organisational Health Checks, training courses, and the DCF Grants process.

This feedback will help the EDC Team and the broader partnership identify areas for improvement and determine which processes may need to be adjusted to better align with the needs and aspirations of the groups.

Moving forward, the EDC Team, with support from the wider partnership, will reflect on the most effective and flexible ways to gather feedback, ensuring the process remains adaptable to the groups' evolving needs.

Matching Priorities with Expertise

A core focus of the project is the upskilling and professional development of EDC group members. This has been a priority since the research phase, and now that the team has settled into their roles and communities are receiving targeted support, it's time to take action.

Previously referred to as 'EDC Consultants,' this initiative aims to tap into the expertise of EDC individuals, allowing them to share their knowledge within their communities. While the term "Consultant" remains up for debate, the goal is clear: to leverage EDC expertise for the benefit of both the groups and the wider community.

The team is now identifying priority areas for further training, matching them with experts from within the EDC community or wider network. These professionals will have the opportunity to deliver training or workshops, with compensation for their work. This will not only enhance capacity but also contribute to long-term sustainability.

Additionally, a list of external consultants with relevant expertise will be made available to groups, particularly for those applying for DCF funding.

Expanding Funding Opportunities

As the project progresses and groups continue to grow, identifying additional funding opportunities will be a key focus. The DCF Grants for Strength and Sustainability have provided crucial support for many groups, but as they evolve, new challenges and areas for development will emerge. The team will work on identifying further funding sources to help groups meet these growing needs.

Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will remain a critical aspect of the EDC Project, both for the team and the supported groups. As groups begin receiving funding from various sources and expand their activities, it's essential that they are able to demonstrate the impact of their work on their communities.

The EDC Team and the partnership will engage in open discussions about how to measure impact and outcomes effectively, ensuring that actions are sustainable and continue to benefit the wider community.

Enhancing Partnership Board Meetings

Building on the Monitoring and Evaluation process, partnership board meetings will evolve in the second year of the project. A key goal is for these meetings to become dynamic spaces for exchange, decision-making, and collaborative action, with EDC representatives taking a more active role in shaping the project's direction.

Additionally, the option for EDC representatives to chair meetings will encourage greater involvement and provide opportunities for skill development.

Continuing Events and Networking

Networking and engagement remain central to the project. Groups have expressed their appreciation for opportunities to connect with others in the EDC community, and this will continue to be a priority.

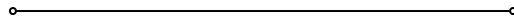
At the end of May 2025, the EDC Team will host a celebration event to recognise the success of the groups in the first year. In response to feedback, the event will be informal, providing a space for groups to share their experiences and reflect on the impact of the project.

The team will continue to organise EDC Networking sessions, while also encouraging EDC groups to take more initiative in organising these events themselves.



TESTIMONIALS

Feedback from the EDC groups and individuals we support is crucial to the success of the project. In this section, we present the valuable insights and testimonials gathered during the first year of the EDC Project.



“Reflecting on the first year, we’ve had an incredible experience with the support provided. Our adviser, Tama, has been instrumental in helping us build a strong organisational structure, and the training from CAN has been invaluable. With this guidance, we’ve successfully applied for a grant and feel confident moving forward.

Specifically, we’d like to highlight:

- The opportunity for RLEC to grow and develop.*
- The exceptional governance support we received.*
- The hands-on assistance with applying for the EDC grant.*
- The practical training that has strengthened our capacity.*

Your support has made a significant difference, and we’re excited to continue this journey into the second year.”

Russian Language, Education and Cultural Organisation



*“I’m excited to share that our application was successful, and the National Lottery Fund has decided to support our project! 🎉 We’re incredibly grateful for your support of Afro*Disiac Live Radio - this wouldn’t have been possible without you.*

We’ll be making our official announcement soon and getting to work right away!”

Afro*Disiac Live Radio

"We came to the launch at Bournemouth University 2024 and met our capacity building officer Tama Merdaci which we knew for many years from collaborating together especially in lockdown.

We are currently using a space in Boscombe and with the help of Tama in the EDC project we aim to grow and eventually again have our own premises and collaborate with all of the ethnic communities in Dorset.

Tama has been our strength and given us the confidence to think of our aims for IAAC and to feel confident we can have a brighter future for IAAC

We have attended all the training ran by CAN and this has been so important to gain knowledge of what we need to safeguard our IAAC community Tama has met us weekly in the Winton cafe on Mondays supporting us with our constitution, policies and applying for the first round of the EDC grant We are also part of the partnership quarterly meetings and aim to be a voice for all our ethnic diverse communities

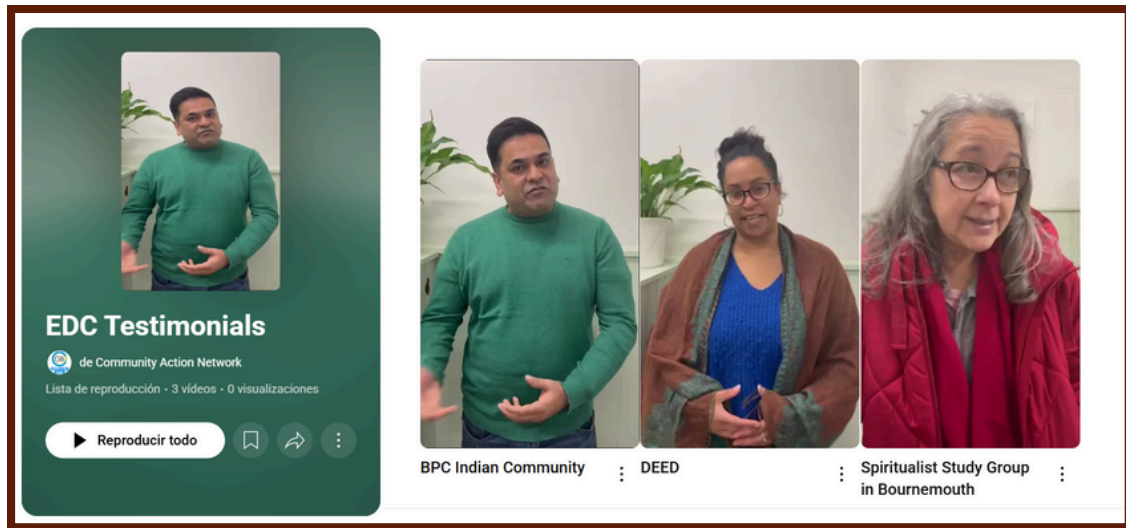
We are very grateful Tama for your constant support and guidance and look forward to continue with you in this project"

It's All About Culture – IAAC



Video testimonial:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/bw43KXaebI8>



ANNEX

EDC Groups Supported in Year 1

Below is a summary of the ethnically diverse community groups actively engaged and supported by the EDC Project team during Year 1 (April 2024 – April 2025). The list includes the group name, geographic focus, and a brief description of their work.

Group Name	Area Served	Description
ABA Art, Brazilian Artists and Artisans Association	BCP	Brazilian Artists Association that strengthen the category of artisans and artists living in BCP area. The Association is open to all lovers of art, regardless of nationality.
African-Caribbean Lunch Club	BCP	Promote Caribbean
Afro*Disiac Live Radio CIC	BCP	CIC promoting cultural enrichment through radio, events, and DJ workshops.
Arts for Survival CIC	Pan-Dorset	Promotes peace and positive social change through arts, media, and culture.
BPC Indian Community	BCP	Organises cultural events and community activities for the Indian diaspora.
Brazilian Educational and Cultural Centre (BREACC)	BCP	Supports Brazilian families through education and cultural programs.
Celeste (Vita Nova)	Pan-Dorset	Theatre group of refugees and asylum seekers using performance to connect.
Development Education in Dorset (DEED)	Pan-Dorset	Provides global education in schools and communities.
Dorset Ethnic Heroes Association	Pan-Dorset	A yearly awards evening for award to ethnic diverse individuals for their community work
EDC Guides Group	BCP	A Ethnic Diverse Brownies and guides club running ethnic community hub and camping trips for girls 5-16years
E-Vision Music group	Pan-Dorset	Ethnic diverse, cultural, language community group for African children and families
It's All About Culture (IAAC)	BCP	Offers low-cost community meals and wellbeing programmes for EDC residents.
Interfaith Network Dorset	Bcp	A group of faiths supporting with interfaith events and understanding
Kushti Bok	Pan-Dorset	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller-led charity promoting voice and visibility.
Life Changing Choices LTD	BCP	NON-contact boxing clubs for the Gypsy and traveller community supporting wellness and mental health
Many Faiths Together	Dorset	A multi-faith group (Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, and Humanist) offering school workshops to promote interfaith dialogue and respect among young people.
Mela Festival	Dorset	Dorset Mela is a vibrant and colourful festival celebrating the diverse cultures and communities in Dorset.
Overcomers Outreach CIC	BCP	Supports migrant families and promotes integration through outreach projects.
R.E.A.V (Refugee Youth Group)	BCP	Volunteer group by young refugees engaging in community clean-up and service.
Russian Language Education & Cultural Centre	Pan-Dorset	Offers cultural and social events for Russian-speaking communities.
1st Russian Language School	BCP	A Russian Saturday school teaching language, culture and arts
Spiritualist Study Group in Bournemouth	BCP	Group of Portuguese-speaking and English-speaking studying the Spiritist books and through prayer, they to illuminate their consciences, perfect their sentiments and individual qualities. They do charity work by volunteering in many organisations, supporting people in need (food, cloths, company, etc).
The Flower Girls Project	Pan-Dorset	Gypsy, Roma and Travellers ladies- flower arranging project for building confidence and skills.
The One Community	BCP	Community hub aiming to support all ethnic diverse communities with sign posting and information stations, prejudice reporting and support
Umoja Arts Network	BCP	Promotes African and Caribbean arts and culture across the region.
Wasmuffing	BCP	Kickboxing programme for people with mental health issues. Aims to offer low cost / free programmes to members of EDC communities.
Wise Advice for Life	Pan-Dorset	SEND family support group focused on Portuguese-speaking communities.
Rainbow Makers (World of Love Festival)	BCP	Annual multicultural festival celebrating diversity and heritage.

ETHNICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES



Project Launch

THURSDAY, 27TH JUNE 2024

**SHARE LECTURE THEATRE
BU FUSION BUILDING
TALBOT CAMPUS
6PM-8.30PM**

FREE EVENT

Get to know more about the
EDC Project

Share your community's
voice and values

Network with local groups
Explore new opportunities

CONTACT: HELLO@CAN100.ORG

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



ETHNICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Networking Event



THURS 26TH SEPT 2024

**FREE ONLINE EVENT
6PM-8PM**

**RSVP TO:
EDCPROJECT@CAN100.ORG**

Get to know more about the
development of
the EDC Project

Network with local groups

Explore new opportunities

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Black History Month 2024

Reclaiming our Narrative

FREE EVENT

Arts, music, and inspiring stories!



17-10-24

6.00 PM - 8.00 PM

Bournemouth University
Fusion Building, Talbot Campus

Free parking available

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE OUR
HERITAGE AND CULTURE AT THIS
FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT!

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO COME
ALONG IN YOUR
TRADITIONAL/CULTURAL WEAR!



ETHNICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES



LET'S CELEBRATE!

1ST YEAR OF OUR PROJECT



FREE NETWORKING EVENT

Snacks, refreshments, and
free parking !

29TH MAY 2025

**BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY
FUSION BUILDING (GROUND FLOOR)
TALBOT CAMPUS
6PM-8PM**

CONTACT: EDCPROJECT@CAN100.ORG

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH





**Dorset
Community
Foundation**



**We want to appreciate everyone's contribution to
this report
as it's been a collaborative piece between the EDC
Partnership, the VCS Development Team at CAN
and the EDC Team**

**Special appreciation to the National Lottery
Community Fund for believing in this project and
supporting it throughout the entire process**

**And our greatest thank you to all the Ethnically
Diverse Communities that have engaged with the
team as part of the project!**

THANK YOU!