



Minority Ethnic Communities and Volunteering in Scotland

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The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights works to eliminate racial discrimination and promote racial justice across Scotland. Through capacity building, research and campaigning activities which respond to the needs of communities, our work takes a strategic approach to tackling deep rooted issues of racial inequality.

CRER has experience of anti-racist work covering areas such as community engagement and empowerment, research and resource development, practical training and equality mainstreaming support for Public and Voluntary Sector organisations.

CRER takes a rights based approach, promoting relevant international, regional and national human rights and equality conventions and legislation.

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Executive summary

Introduction

The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) commissioned Research Scotland to carry out this research as part of a wider programme of work that CRER is undertaking for the Scottish Government. The research aims to provide qualitative evidence on minority ethnic volunteering, to inform the implementation of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030.

This report explores experiences, perceptions and reflections on volunteering gathered from minority ethnic people, and staff responsible for recruiting and supporting minority ethnic volunteers.

Methodology

The research was conducted from March to May 2017. The views expressed in the report are based on focus groups, interviews and surveys conducted with 71 minority ethnic people and ten staff members.

Research participants were primarily recruited through direct contact with 12 organisations based in Scotland that work with and/or for minority ethnic people. The organisations were a combination of community/grassroots groups and national organisations.

The research engaged a relatively small number of participants. Due to the limitations of the research, it is not possible to draw strong conclusions about the experiences and perceptions of all minority ethnic people.

Key findings

Benefits of volunteering

Most people we spoke with had very positive experiences of volunteering. They enjoyed:

- doing something valuable with their time;
- being part of a community;
- learning skills and gaining work experience; and
- socialising.

Barriers to volunteering

Research participants discussed a range of challenges and barriers to getting involved in volunteering. These were mostly around:

- finding time;
- awareness of opportunities;
- understanding the value of volunteering;
- confidence; and
- perceptions about language and communication.

Inequalities in volunteering

Volunteers involved in this research had predominantly positive experiences of volunteering, with few examples of racial inequality or discrimination. Most participants felt welcomed and valued when they volunteered, both in minority ethnic and majority ethnic/mainstream organisations. Those that had experienced inequality when volunteering noted that it was not always direct or overt, but that there were words or actions which made them feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.

Where inequality had been experienced, participants reported that it was often around:

- discrimination due to negative assumptions;
- being overlooked for roles or progression opportunities;
- use of racist and prejudiced language; and
- tokenism.

Reflections on volunteering

We asked staff that recruit and support volunteers to reflect on their experiences of working with minority ethnic volunteers.

Overall, staff felt very positive about working with minority ethnic volunteers, and often commented that working with minority ethnic people was highly rewarding.

Almost all the staff we spoke with said that recruiting minority ethnic volunteers was an ongoing challenge. Many were beginning to adopt more targeted approaches, and collaborating closely with minority ethnic communities and organisations.

Staff identified similar benefits and barriers to volunteering as volunteers. They also noted that providing incentives and support were key to recruitment and continued engagement.

Informal volunteering was not well recognised by the majority of research participants, although many regularly provided informal or ad hoc support to people in their community.

Going forward

Overall, people we spoke with felt positive about their volunteering experiences. The key issues for consideration appear to be around effective volunteering engagement with minority ethnic people, and their continuing experiences of inequality and discrimination.

1. Introduction

About this report

- 1.1 This report explores formal and informal volunteering within minority ethnic communities in Scotland. This report discusses minority ethnic people's perceptions and experiences of volunteering. It also discusses reflections on volunteering from people responsible for recruiting and supporting minority ethnic volunteers.
- 1.2 The research was conducted from March to May 2017. It was commissioned by the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) as part of a wider programme of work being undertaken by CRER for the Scottish Government.

Context

- 1.3 This research aims to inform the implementation of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030. It provides qualitative evidence on minority ethnic participation in volunteering to inform the way in which commitments made within the Race Equality Framework are taken forward. These commitments are around minority ethnic led approaches to community action, and the contribution of minority ethnic voluntary organisations.
- 1.4 The research explores:
 - perceptions of volunteering;
 - experiences of volunteering; and
 - reflections on volunteering.
- 1.5 This research engaged a relatively small number of participants, and did not engage with people from every minority ethnic community in Scotland. It is qualitative research, reflecting the experiences of the individuals who participated. This report highlights the broad themes emerging and any key issues that should be considered, going forward.

2. Methodology

- 2.1 This chapter discusses our methodology for the research and the numbers of participants involved.
- 2.2 The research was conducted from March to May 2017, with most of the fieldwork taking place during May 2017. The research primarily involved:
- minority ethnic¹ people who have engaged in volunteering; and
 - staff responsible for recruiting and co-ordinating volunteers.
- 2.3 Where possible, we also included minority ethnic people who had not been involved in volunteering, to better understand the barriers and challenges to participation. In total, we engaged 71 minority ethnic people, through focus groups, interviews and a survey. We also involved ten staff members from organisations working with minority ethnic volunteers.
- 2.4 The research involved the following key stages:
- **Focus groups with volunteers from minority ethnic communities** – We conducted four focus groups with people from minority ethnic communities, predominantly with people that had taken part in some form of volunteering. The focus groups also included some volunteers that had not taken part in volunteering. We supported organisations to help us arrange focus groups by covering the cost of room hire, refreshments and participant travel expenses. We also offered each organisation that arranged a focus group a £50 donation. In total, we engaged 43 participants through focus groups.
 - **Individual interviews with volunteers** – We conducted face-to-face interviews with four individuals at a volunteer run event and with one volunteer at a community centre. We also conducted five telephone interviews with individuals that could not attend a focus group. In total we conducted ten individual interviews.
 - **Survey** – We offered participants the option to complete a short survey, either online or in paper format. The survey was promoted through the organisations we contacted for the research, through CRER and through Twitter. We received 13 responses to the online survey and an additional five responses from individuals completing the survey in paper format at an event. In total, 18 people completed a survey.
 - **Telephone interviews with staff** – We conducted telephone interviews with ten staff responsible for recruiting and co-ordinating volunteers. These interviews explored their experiences and perceptions of working with minority ethnic volunteers, and identified common barriers and challenges.
- 2.5 We developed a matrix of organisations to approach to help arrange discussions with volunteers and staff. This matrix was designed to ensure that the research involved people:

¹ For the purposes of this research, 'majority ethnic' is defined as white Scottish / British, and 'minority ethnic' as all ethnic groups outwith the majority ethnic group.

- volunteering formally;
- volunteering informally;
- from a range of different minority ethnicities; and
- from range of areas across Scotland.

Adaptations to the methodology

- 2.6 A number of organisations from our original matrix were unable to help us arrange a focus group. We contacted a wider range of organisations, including organisations from CRER's database. We also used social media (Twitter) to increase awareness of the research amongst our own and CRER's wider networks.
- 2.7 Despite adapting the matrix, the type and spread of research participants fulfilled the original criteria. We maintained a good geographic spread of participants by conducting focus groups in Glasgow, Inverness and Dumfries and Galloway. We worked directly with 12 different organisations to arrange focus groups, interviews and to disseminate the survey. The organisations were a combination of community/grassroots and national organisations. The mix included organisations working specifically with minority ethnic people and more mainstream organisations. The organisations also offered different types of volunteering activities including: administration, community work, conservation, delivering educational programmes, fundraising, gardening, giving guided tours, litter picking, running a helpline and running events. This allowed us to engage participants from a wide range of minority ethnicities, and to hear about a range of formal and informal volunteering experiences from participants.

Our approach to engaging participants

- 2.8 We took a flexible approach to engaging participants in the research. Due to the research timescales, organisations were not always able to arrange a focus group. We offered participants the option of a telephone interview, online survey or paper survey as alternatives. We also attended events or community groups that were already organised, rather than arranging separate focus groups. During these events we engaged people individually or in small groups to accommodate the wider activity that was already taking place.
- 2.9 During focus groups, staff and other volunteers provided valuable interpretation support when required.
- 2.10 The tables below show the types of organisations we worked with to engage minority ethnic participants and staff working with minority ethnic volunteers. This research project worked with relatively small numbers of participants. To protect confidentiality of research participants we have not named the organisations involved.

Volunteer engagement		
Organisation size	Organisation type	Ethnic group of participants
Grassroots/Community	Majority ethnic	South Asian
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic	South East Asian
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic	Mixed
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic	African
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic	Roma
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic	Roma
National	Majority ethnic, working in partnership with minority ethnic and faith based groups.	Mixed
National	Majority ethnic	South Asian
National	Minority ethnic Faith based	Mixed

Staff engagement	
Organisation size	Organisation type
Grassroots/Community	Majority ethnic
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic
Grassroots/Community	Minority ethnic
Local	Minority ethnic
Local	Minority ethnic/faith
National	Majority ethnic
National	Majority ethnic
National	Minority ethnic/faith

3. Experiences of volunteering

- 3.1 This chapter discusses research participants' experiences of volunteering. This chapter is based on focus groups, discussions and surveys with minority ethnic people that took part in the research.
- 3.2 Through our focus groups, interviews and survey, we engaged 71 people that identified as minority ethnic. We asked these research participants about their own experiences of volunteering, broadly covering:
- understanding of volunteering;
 - reasons for volunteering;
 - benefits of volunteering;
 - barriers to volunteering; and
 - inequalities when volunteering.

Understanding of volunteering

- 3.3 People we spoke with defined volunteering in many ways, most often concentrating on the fact that it involved doing something for free, without any expectation of remuneration or reward. A small number of people spoke of volunteering as a “two-way” activity involving giving and gaining of time, skills and expertise.

“For me, it’s a commitment. Whether it’s bringing something along, or giving my time, I put a value on it. I do take it seriously.”

Research participant, Pakistani

“Giving your time, skills to other people/organisations without being paid for it.”

Research participant, Prefer not to say

“Volunteering means giving something back to the community and giving yourself skills. Its two-way.”

Research participant, Roma

- 3.4 Most people, whether they had volunteered or not, were familiar with the concept of formal volunteering. When people identified as a volunteer or talked about volunteering, it was usually in the context of formal volunteering for a group, club or organisation.
- 3.5 Informal volunteering was not as well recognised. After exploring definitions of formal and informal volunteering, many people we spoke with said that they did informal volunteering regularly, but would never define it as ‘volunteering.’ For them, activities such as helping new migrants settle in, babysitting or checking in on elderly members of the community was part of their regular activity.

“I don’t consider it as volunteering, it’s just what you do, helping people out.”

Research participant, African

Reasons for volunteering

- 3.6 Research participants stated many reasons for getting involved in volunteering. Most commonly participants said that they got involved in volunteering to:
- give back and do something for others;
 - get work experience; and/or
 - meet people and socialise.

Giving back and doing something valuable in the community

- 3.7 Most of the people we spoke with felt strongly that volunteering was about doing something valuable with their time. They chose to volunteer because they wanted to do something useful and worthwhile.
- 3.8 Research participants told us that socialising through volunteering helped them feel that they were part of the community, regardless of whether they were volunteering with an organisation focused on their own minority ethnic group or in a majority ethnic organisation. Working together towards a common cause gave people a sense of purpose in the community. For new migrants, volunteering also helped them to learn about their area and the local culture.

“I wanted to do something that made my time worthwhile and made me feel good, especially when I was off work. I wanted to feel that my time was not wasted.”

Research participant, Filipino

- 3.9 Some people that had migrated to the UK told us that they had received a lot of help from voluntary organisations and community groups when they first moved Scotland. They initially got into volunteering as a way to give back and help other people in a similar situation.

“When I first arrived I was lost because I didn’t know the system and had no friends. Then I found this organisation. They helped me a lot and now I can reciprocate and help other people because I understand how they must be feeling.”

Research participant, Chinese

- 3.10 A few volunteers (from different ethnicities), that identified as Muslim, said that volunteering was part of their faith. They felt that helping others and giving back to the community was a duty of the faith.

Work experience

3.11 Many of the people we spoke with said that volunteering was a useful way to gain work experience, or experience in a new field. They felt that it was a safe way to learn and improve skills, which would ultimately help to improve their CV and support job applications. Research participants told us that it was very difficult to find a job without showing that they had experience, and volunteering helped provide experience and references. For a few people we spoke with, volunteering helped them to network and make contacts, and even led to paid opportunities.

“I like to think of it as work experience, and that doing it is going to take you somewhere. I used all my volunteering experiences as work tasters.” Research participant, Pakistani

3.12 A number of women we spoke with specifically mentioned that volunteering was their route into or back into work – particularly once their children had started nursery or school. These women told us that they had been away from the workplace and job market for up to ten years, mainly due to family and childcare commitments. A small number of women that migrated to Scotland after marriage said that they had never worked before, as it was not culturally expected of them in their country of origin. All of these women said that once their children started attending education they had more time during the day and a desire to do something productive with their extra time.

“I started volunteering as soon as my children started nursery. I wanted to do something and I didn’t want to sit around at home.”
Research participant, Pakistani

Socialising

3.13 Most people we spoke with mentioned how much they valued the social aspects of volunteering. They said that volunteering helped them to meet people and make friends. They enjoyed meeting people from different ethnicities and cultures, as well as working with people from the same ethnic group. For some, meeting people and making friends was a key reason for volunteering – particularly older people and women who said that they felt isolated before getting involved in voluntary work.

“It gets me out, I enjoy the socialising.”
Research participant, Pakistani

“I started volunteering to get more settled in to life in Scotland when I first moved here, and to be part of the community, especially because I was at home a lot with the kids.”
Research participant, Singaporean

Other reasons for volunteering

3.14 In addition, research participants also cited the following reasons for getting involved in volunteering:

- improving health (physical and mental);
- taking on a challenge;
- to have fun;
- to improve confidence; and
- to further a cause that they believed in.

“My volunteering choices are based on an issue I’m interested in – it has to fit with my philosophy and I have to feel safe.”

Research participant, Pakistani

Getting involved for the first time

3.15 We asked research participants how they first got involved in volunteering.

Many younger participants (under 40) that were long term residents or born in the UK said that they first became involved in volunteering through school or university. A number of young people said that they first started volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award or similar school based scheme, but that they had continued to volunteer because they enjoyed it so much.

3.16 Others said that they had been “roped in” by a friend or family member who was already volunteering. And some people who primarily volunteered with a minority ethnic organisation said that they first got involved to be part of cultural activities for themselves and their family.

3.17 A few women we spoke with said that they took their own initiative to start volunteering, as they wanted to gain skills or return to work but needed more experience

3.18 Overall, most of the people we spoke with had become involved through a minority ethnic organisation or community group that they were already engaging with.

Benefits of volunteering

3.19 Many of the benefits that volunteers discussed mirrored their reasons for getting involved in volunteering. The main reasons research participants spoke of were:

- enjoyment;
- feeling a sense of worth;
- gaining skills and qualifications; and
- being part of the community.

Enjoyment

- 3.20 Volunteers we spoke with as part of this research said that they loved volunteering. Many had been volunteering for years and said they would continue to volunteer because they enjoyed it so much. Participants often said that the most enjoyable aspects of volunteering were having new experiences and making friends.

“I met a lot of people and my social circle grew bigger.”
Research participant, Chinese

Self-worth and personal development

- 3.21 Feeling a sense of worth was mentioned by most of the people we spoke with. Doing something for others, altruistically, made them feel good about themselves. Some volunteers equated this feeling with financial reimbursement i.e. they did paid work in order to earn money, and they did volunteering to earn a sense of self-worth.

“I get a lot of personal satisfaction from doing things and doing them well.”
Research participant, Pakistani

- 3.22 Some volunteers also said that they enjoyed feeling that they could do something useful for others and that they were valued and recognised for their voluntary contributions.

“It made me realise that there are a lot of things I can volunteer in beyond my profession.”
Research participant, Filipino

“Volunteering is a job that comes with responsibilities. You’re paid by the appreciation that you get after working – seeing people happy.”
Research participant, Roma

- 3.23 One participant said that being a volunteer empowered her to try new things and make changes in the organisation, because she did not have the concerns or fears of consequences that an employed staff member might have.

Skills and qualifications

- 3.24 One of the key benefits for volunteers was the opportunity to learn new skills, improve existing skills and gain qualifications.
- 3.25 Volunteers told us that they greatly appreciated when their skills and contributions were formally recognised through qualifications. For young people, volunteering was often associated with gaining a Duke of Edinburgh

Award or Saltire Award. Other volunteers told us that they received valuable qualifications in first aid and food hygiene, which boosted their CV and helped them when applying for work or future volunteering opportunities.

“It would be good to always get some kind of qualification or job (paid work) out of it at the end.”

Research participant, African

3.26 Volunteers said that volunteering helped them develop personal skills. For recent migrants, volunteering was often a good opportunity to improve their English language and communication skills. Others used volunteering to gain skills in a specific sector of interest or an area related to their chosen career path.

“It has made such a difference to my life. I see myself maturing, meeting different people and seeing how different organisations work. I’ve also learned so many skills.”

Research participant, Roma

3.27 A few volunteers told us that they enjoyed being able to share their skills with others, watching them grow and develop. They also noted that even when they were teaching others, volunteering was always a learning opportunity.

“Whenever I help other people, I always learn something new myself.”

Research participant, African

Being part of the community

3.28 Volunteers said that they enjoyed the sense of community and belonging that they felt from volunteering. For many, volunteering gave them a chance to engage with people and activities beyond their area and social circle. A few people said that it helped them feel more integrated and learn more about the place in which they live.

“I think that the volunteering I do contributes to my role in the wider society in Scotland, and that’s quite important to me.”

Research participant, Pakistani

3.29 A few volunteers said that they felt there were benefits for the community as well, beyond the volunteering activity itself. They felt that it was good for the wider community to see people from minority ethnicities doing volunteering, in order to understand that they are the same as everyone else. They also felt that volunteering allowed people to better understand other cultures.

3.30 A few volunteers also mentioned that they appreciated more flexible forms of volunteering. They liked being able to volunteer when they had time, but not being obliged if they were unable to attend regularly.

Challenges and barriers to volunteering

3.31 The key issues that our research participants identified were challenges around:

- time and money;
- language and communication;
- confidence; and
- awareness and understanding of volunteering.

Time, money and other commitments

3.32 The most common reason that people gave for not volunteering was lack of time. Between employment, family commitments and caring responsibilities many said they had little time to pursue their interests and so volunteering was not always a high priority. Some of the people that we spoke with said that they volunteered on an ad hoc basis, giving their time when they could. They found that this worked well in smaller community or grassroots organisations.

“Volunteering has been fairly flexible. People in these organisations are open minded about hours.”
Research participant, Roma

3.33 However, some of those that had volunteered with larger national organisations, or organisations with a formal volunteering programme, said that the time commitment required was substantial. They noted that there was a significant commitment required to complete volunteer training, even before the activity had begun and they recognised that this was likely to be a barrier for many people considering voluntary work.

“It is sometimes demanding, having to adjust working time with volunteering.”
Research participant, Roma

3.34 Many people told us that they felt that minority ethnic people, particularly when they first migrate to a new country, need to work very hard to earn money and improve their standard of living. Not all minority ethnic migrants are able to access social security or benefits, so financial pressure can be a big strain. For these people, spending time doing unpaid work was often not an option, or at best a very low priority.

“It’s long hours for no pay!”
Research participant, African

3.35 In particular, some of the women we spoke with said that when they had young children it was simply not possible to volunteer, unless childcare or financial support for childcare was provided.

Valuing volunteer time

3.36 Volunteers also spoke about how their time was used. Some said that there were occasions when they had been called to volunteer but had been left with nothing to do and their time was wasted. This made them feel that their time was not valuable, and made them reconsider the value of volunteering for themselves.

“Sometimes you’re just sitting around doing nothing and you think, what’s the point?”

Research participant, Pakistani

3.37 A few volunteers also noted that there were times when they felt they were being “overused” and felt unable to say no to the voluntary organisation. Those who had been volunteering for many years said that it was important for volunteers to learn how to balance their time and priorities, and to learn to say no if they could not spare the time.

Language and communication

3.38 Some of the people we spoke with felt that their opportunity to volunteer was limited due to their English language skills. Within their own community and community groups they felt comfortable volunteering as they could communicate in their mother tongue. Indeed, for some people, attending community groups like this was a valuable way for the next generation to learn about their heritage, culture and language. However, they did not feel confident enough in their English language skills to volunteer outwith these groups. This was often linked to their own perceptions around the way that they spoke English, in terms of their pronunciation, accent and use of colloquialisms, as opposed to actual ability to speak English.

“The only thing stopping us is the language barrier...that’s the only thing preventing us from doing more outside the centre.”

Research participant, Chinese

3.39 Census data² shows that proficiency in English language skills is broadly very good amongst people born outside of the UK, and the majority of participants (97%) that took part in this research were able to take part without interpretation or translation support. However, many of them, including those who were long term residents and citizens of the UK, still perceived themselves to be struggling with English or felt that their language skills were not good enough to volunteer in wider society.

3.40 There was also a perception amongst research participants that language skills were likely to be an issue for other minority ethnic people, even if it was not an issue for themselves.

² *Scotland's Census 2011 - National Records of Scotland Table DC2213SC - Country of birth by English language skills (1)* shows that only 1.5% of people born outside the UK have no skills in English and 1.9% can understand but do not speak, read or write English.

Confidence

- 3.41 As described above, lack of confidence to volunteer was most often linked to a lack of confidence around language and communication skills. A small number of participants told us that they felt unable to volunteer in the wider community or with mainstream organisations because they felt that their grasp of English was not strong enough. These participants often perceived their abilities to be inadequate to volunteer with a mainstream organisation. This suggests that strong perceptions exist around how language skills will be perceived (linked to accent and pronunciation) by other staff and volunteers within organisations.
- 3.42 Some people we spoke with said that they were initially apprehensive about volunteering because they were unsure what skills or qualities they had that would be useful to others. They felt that this might be the reason a lot of minority ethnic people still do not volunteer - because they are not sure what they could offer. This was particularly so if they had never worked or been away from the job market. It was also a particular issue for women, if they are part of a culture where women's roles and responsibilities are primarily based in a home or family setting, rather than out in the community.

“In the Asian community, some women spend their whole life looking after the children and never doing anything for themselves, so when the children grow up they don't have any confidence to go out and do something.”

Research participant, Indian

Lack of understanding

- 3.43 Another key challenge raised was the lack of understanding and awareness around volunteering within some minority ethnic communities. Often, people we spoke with said that there were many in their community that simply did not understand the value of volunteering and why someone would do “work for no pay.” This attitude made it hard for volunteers to recruit more people to their cause, and to engage the next generation in volunteering.
- 3.44 One participant we spoke with said that even her close friends did not understand why she chose to volunteer, and would not consider doing volunteering themselves. A few people also said that people in minority ethnic communities might not know where to go or how to get involved in volunteering.

“They didn't understand why I was doing it. They just wanted to stay at home and watch TV.”

Research participant, Pakistani

Inequalities when volunteering

3.45 We asked research participants if they had ever experienced prejudice, inequality or discrimination when they had been volunteering. Most of our research participants volunteered with minority ethnic organisations, within communities of people from a similar ethnic origin or faith. It is possible that they were less likely to experience inequality or racial discrimination in these settings. However, some research participants had experience of volunteering with mainstream organisations or through school or university, as well as in minority ethnic organisations. The majority of people we spoke with said that they had never had any negative experiences when volunteering, or none that were associated with their ethnic origin.

“I don’t see any negative things. I’ve always had good support and they appreciate everything that I do.”

Research participant, African

“Staff have been very welcoming. I wore a jubba (full length abaya) when I was gardening and nobody ever said anything to me. They’re quite interested in my religion and often ask me questions about it, so I get a chance to teach them something too.”

Research participant, Indian

3.46 A few people we spoke with said that they had experienced discrimination during volunteering. In most cases this was during interactions with other volunteers or staff from the voluntary organisations/community group. Examples of discrimination included being overlooked for leadership roles, despite having the same qualifications and experience as the successful candidate, or being in an environment where racist or prejudiced language was being used.

“From experience, I feel it does not pay off afterwards for minorities. We are constantly required to prove ourselves; for instance, an individual (minority/ethnic) who has volunteered for six months or more might not/or almost never get a position afterwards, or it may not lead to more rewarding opportunities thereafter.”

Research participant, African

“In mainstream organisations, I sometimes feel out of place. And you feel like you have to work harder in a mainstream organisation to prove yourself.”

Research participant, Pakistani

3.47 Some people also said that they felt people made negative assumptions about them and their ability, often based on their accent and appearance. A small number of participants said that they, or others they had volunteered with, were discriminated against because majority ethnic people did not understand their accent. They felt that majority ethnic people did not listen to them and assumed that they could not speak English well because they spoke in a different accent.

This links back to the views given by participants whose perception of their own English language abilities was a barrier to taking part in volunteering.

“They make presumptions based on how we look and sound – and we get pigeonholed and labelled.”
Research participant, Chinese

“When they see our faces they think we don’t have any ability and our language is low and culture is low – that we are below them and from the third world.”
Research participant, Chinese

3.48 One research participant said that when she had volunteered with a mainstream majority ethnic organisation, majority ethnic volunteers made assumptions about her religious beliefs because of her name and physical appearance. Despite correcting them, they continued to make the same assumption, time and time again.

“They would just keep asking me the same questions because they weren’t listening.”
Research participant, Indian

3.49 Most often people said it was hard to pinpoint a specific incident but that there was a subtle feeling or an underlying atmosphere that made them feel uncomfortable, unwelcome or discriminated against. A few volunteers felt that in some organisations, despite their best efforts, there was still an element of hidden bias and that people who look or sound unfamiliar will always be at a disadvantage.

“You just don’t feel as welcome, you feel secluded and like you’re not really part of the organisation. Or worse, they treat you like a special case. Either way, you don’t feel accepted, so you don’t feel comfortable.”
Research participant, Indian

“It’s subtle, but it’s there.”
Research participant,
Chinese

“They don’t even realise that they’re doing it.”
Research participant, Chinese

3.50 Only two people said that they had made a formal complaint or raised inequality as an issue in the organisation they were volunteering with. For one person this did result in a change and the person that had made discriminatory comments was disciplined. The other volunteer said that it made no difference. She has seen no difference in the organisation and does not expect to. She said that she is unlikely to bring forward any more complaints relating to racial inequality because she does not believe that the situation will change.

“I feel like I do more and get less credit. There’s no point in saying something because nothing changes.”

Research participant, African

- 3.51 None of people that spoke with us about their experiences of racial inequality stopped volunteering. Despite the challenges, they said that they enjoyed volunteering and helping people, and that a bad incident would not prevent them from pursuing this. A few people told us that they chose to move away from the organisation and volunteer elsewhere, but that they continued to volunteer and are still active volunteers.

“No, it doesn’t discourage me. It motivates me to help more.”

Research participant, Roma

- 3.52 A number of people spoke about broader issues of inequality and discrimination, not directly linked to their ethnic origin. Some women, mostly from South Asian communities said that they had faced gender inequality when volunteering. All of these women said that this had occurred when they were volunteering in a minority ethnic organisation and was usually from male members of their own community. They said that this was not uncommon as some patriarchal, religious and cultural concepts of how women should behave in society are still ingrained – particularly among the older generation. These volunteers told us that they were often spoken over or that their ideas were not listened to in group meetings.

- 3.53 A small number of volunteers said that they had faced discrimination from other volunteers because of their educational background. They felt that they were overlooked for some tasks because they did not have higher or further education qualifications, and so others assumed that they would not be capable.

- 3.54 A few volunteers spoke with us about their experience of favouritism or tokenism. They said that mainstream or majority ethnic organisations really appreciated their input and sometimes offered more opportunities than their own community groups. The main issue related to them being used for photo opportunities or case studies. In some ways, they felt that minority ethnic people (along with disabled and LGBT people) were being targeted and used for the organisation’s benefit, rather than for the wider cause.

“You can be used as the face of things, because you’re female, and Muslim and minority ethnic. And sometimes I think it gives me opportunities that maybe other people don’t have.”

Research participant, Pakistani

4. Perceptions of volunteering

- 4.1 This chapter discusses research participants' perceptions of volunteering. We asked research participants about:
- their general perceptions on inequality and minority ethnic engagement in volunteering;
 - the differences in volunteering – based on ethnic origin and length of residency in Scotland; and
 - different experiences of volunteering, in different organisations.

General perceptions on minority engagement and inequality in volunteering

- 4.2 We asked research participants to think, beyond their own personal experiences, about the reasons that people do and do not get involved in volunteering. Broadly the reasons given were similar to what participants told us about their own motives for volunteering, and the barriers that they identified.
- 4.3 The main reasons participants gave for why people get involved in volunteering were:
- to gain work experience/improve CV;
 - to socialise; and
 - to do good.
- 4.4 The main reasons participants gave as barriers to volunteering were:
- lack of time to do unpaid activities;
 - not understanding the value of volunteering, or how it relates to them; and
 - lack of awareness of the available opportunities

“People don’t know about opportunities; they don’t know where to go.”

Research participant, African

“People from other backgrounds might not necessarily be brought up in a culture supporting volunteering. If they are interested in volunteering, it might be mainly to gain work experience.”

Research participant, Prefer not to say

- 4.5 Overall, the people we spoke with felt that there was little inequality in volunteering for minority ethnic people. Most people based this on their own positive experiences of volunteering and were unsure about commenting on other people’s experiences.

“No, I don’t think so. I think it’s the same for everyone.”
“Bringing people together is not different. We all have the same needs.”

Research participant, Pakistani

- 4.6 The few who had faced inequality or discrimination were more able to discuss these issues and consider the broader picture of volunteering for minority ethnic people. They felt that there was still racism and discrimination in the wider world and that these issues would also exist in the voluntary sector.

“Discrimination still exists, people still look at you and judge from what they see outside.”

Research participant, Roma

- 4.7 A few people mentioned that not knowing what to expect, or how welcome they would be or fear of discrimination might prevent some people from accessing volunteering.

The differences in volunteering – ethnicity and length of residency in Scotland

- 4.8 We asked research participants to think about and compare different people’s experiences of volunteering, such as:
- minority ethnic people and majority ethnic (White Scottish/British) people; and
 - long term migrants/UK born minority ethnic people and recent migrants.

- 4.9 Most of the people we spoke with did not think there were any inequalities in volunteering between minority ethnic and majority ethnic people. This was based primarily on their own positive experiences of volunteering. They felt that the experience of volunteering might be affected by the type of activity or the attitude of the other people involved – but that these things were not affected by one’s own ethnic origin.

“Wherever you volunteer people are very grateful that you’re volunteering. I’ve never had any experiences of inequality or heard about any from others.”

Research participant, Filipino

“Organisations are usually just grateful for help.”

Research participant, Roma

- 4.10 Those who had experienced inequality and discrimination had different perceptions and felt that inequality was likely to be widespread in volunteering, as they had experienced inequality in wider society.

- 4.11 They felt that majority ethnic people were likely to be given more responsibility, priority and leadership positions than minority ethnic people. They felt that in some cases this might be due to a language barrier, but that often it was simply due to perceived stereotypes of minority ethnic people, and assumptions that they were not as skilled or capable.

“It’s easier for white Scottish people. I feel that they’re more likely to get the position. If it’s [the volunteering role] between me and a white

Scottish person and we're the same age and have the same experience and qualifications, I feel that they're more likely to get it."
Research participant, African

"And while you're doing it, I feel that they're more likely to be given a leadership role. Because they, white people, are probably running it and they have more connections, they all know each other."
Research participant, African

4.12 The majority of people we spoke with felt that the main differences between recent migrants and UK born/long term migrants were around:

- language and communication;
- awareness and understanding; and
- cultural differences.

4.13 Many said that new migrants often work long hours and might not have time for volunteering. They thought that once new migrants had settled in and were financially stable, volunteering might become more of a priority.

"Lots of people cannot afford it as they need to work hard - either long hours or 2 employments."
Research participant, Polish

"Also new migrants may not have much spare time – working full time and trying to create a better life. Probably they would do more if they had more time."
Research participant, Chinese

4.14 However, some also felt that new migrants might find it useful to volunteer as a way to learn about their new home, integrate into the community and improve their English.

"Recent migrants won't know many people so it's a good way for them to learn about the country and integrate."
Research participant, Singaporean

4.15 Generally, participants felt that people who were born in the UK or were long term residents were in a much stronger position to volunteer. They felt they would be more likely to understand the value of volunteering and how to get involved, and would be less likely to have difficulties around language and communication.

"New migrants don't have the confidence or language skills. UK born or long term migrants have more local knowledge and are well adapted so will find it easier to do volunteering."
Research participant, Chinese

"Language barriers might cause misunderstanding. Also they might not know how society and community works."
Research participant, Mixed (South/South East Asian)

The differences in volunteering – organisation type

4.16 We also asked research participants to consider how volunteering might differ between different types of organisations, such as:

- small, local, grassroots organisations and large, national organisations; and
- organisations with a focus on or basis in minority ethnic communities and organisations with a focus on other issues.

4.17 Overall, people we spoke with felt that there should not be any inequalities in volunteering regardless of the organisation size or type. Some people felt unable to comment or make a comparison because they had never volunteered or had only ever volunteered with one organisation. However, most research participants felt that there would be some differences, depending on the size of organisation and whether or not it had a minority ethnic focus.

4.18 Many research participants who had volunteered with both minority and majority ethnic/mainstream organisations had a perception that minority ethnic organisations (usually smaller and working locally) were less organised than larger, majority ethnic organisations. Some volunteers felt that there would be more internal politics in minority ethnic organisations. A few people felt that there would be different cultural expectations, which could easily lead to discrimination against women or people without formal education qualifications.

“Mainstream organisations are more organised with their staff and how they run projects. In minority organisations it doesn’t feel as well organised.”

Research participant, Pakistani

“BME organisations are a bit more disorganised and have too much internal politics. Commitment isn’t always forthcoming, there’s a lot of complacency.”

Research participant, Pakistani

4.19 However, some people mentioned the positive aspects of volunteering with a minority ethnic organisation. The most important difference was the ability to speak in the same minority language. An inherent understanding of culture (and sometimes religion) was also felt to be more likely in a minority ethnic organisation. This was discussed in terms of understanding about religious and dietary requirements.

“Volunteering with our organisation is more comfortable because we can use our own language and so it removes the language barrier.”

Research participant, Chinese

4.20 Some people also said that there was a different feeling to working with and for your own community and “helping your own people.” Some noted that there was not a lot of support available for people of their own ethnic origin, so they wanted to be part of an organisation that was helping to improve this.

“I think there’s a lot out there for non-minority ethnic people. Our community has only just started asking for help. That’s why I’m committed to coming here and helping people that are in need.”

Research participant, Pakistani

For me, I don’t see any differences – all voluntary organisations have the same goal to help people. At the moment I feel connected to this minority group because I want to help my people.

Research participant, Roma

“At school it’s all different people, but here you know everyone. Sometimes it’s easier just to work with your own people.”

Research participant, African

- 4.21 Many people felt strongly that the differences they had experienced, or that others might experience, were the result of the people they worked with, rather than the size, type or focus of the organisation. They felt that if the people they worked with (staff and other volunteers) were welcoming, understanding and appreciative then the experience would be positive. However, if the people or the atmosphere was unwelcoming, then regardless of any shared language, culture, cause or faith, the experience would not be positive.

“It’s all about the people. If the people are nice, then you can volunteer anywhere.”

Research participant, Pakistani

- 4.22 A number of people we spoke with said that their most positive volunteering experience was not with a minority ethnic organisation, but with an organisation that worked with anyone in the community and where the activity was not necessarily focused on minority ethnic issues. And a few had felt let down by minority ethnic organisations, where they had expected a positive experience but had felt unwelcome, unimportant or uncomfortable. These experiences led to a strong perception from a small number of volunteers that it was better to volunteer in a mainstream organisation than with a minority ethnic organisation.

- 4.23 Some people also talked about majority ethnic/mainstream organisations having a lack of understanding about cultural and religious requirements. They felt that not all organisations were well equipped, or open-minded enough to accommodate their needs.

“Some organisations don’t have the strategies in place to support minority ethnic people.”

Research participant, Mixed (South/South East Asian)

Wider challenges

- 4.24 A few participants noted challenges that they had faced whilst volunteering, that were not related to their ethnicity.
- 4.25 One volunteer said that although she enjoyed volunteering, she sometimes felt that volunteers were not always taken seriously, particularly in larger national organisations that have a full team of staff. For example, the volunteer timetable might be changed without any consultation with volunteers themselves. Whereas, in smaller, community based organisations, volunteers have the opportunity to take on more responsibility and potentially effect change in the organisation because their role is more valued.

5. Staff reflections on volunteering

- 5.1 This chapter discusses staff experiences, perceptions and reflections on volunteering amongst minority ethnic communities. This chapter is based on ten staff interviews that we conducted over the telephone. All staff that we spoke with had a responsibility for recruiting, training or supporting volunteers in their organisation.
- 5.2 We asked staff about:
- recruiting and supporting minority ethnic volunteers;
 - benefits of working with minority ethnic volunteers; and
 - minority ethnic volunteering in different organisations; and
 - the challenges and inequalities faced by minority ethnic people in volunteering.

Recruiting and supporting minority ethnic volunteers

- 5.3 Most of the staff we spoke with said that they kept equalities and monitoring data to better understand the demographics of their volunteers. All wanted to get more minority ethnic people involved in volunteering, and were looking at how to increase participation.
- 5.4 Almost all of the staff we spoke with said that they found minority ethnic communities quite hard to reach, and recruitment was a key challenge.
- 5.5 A few staff members said that communication between minority ethnic people and their organisation is primarily in English, which may present a barrier for some people. One staff member suggested that people who were not confident in their English skills could potentially volunteer, with some support, but that they might not be able to access opportunities because advertising and recruitment posters for her organisation were written in English. Another staff member, at a different organisation, noted that the nature of the volunteering at her organisation required volunteers to communicate in English, so it was difficult for her to recruit people that were not confident in their English language skills.
- 5.6 One way that staff said they had been successful in engaging minority ethnic volunteers was by taking a very targeted approach. This involved working in close partnership with a local minority ethnic organisation or community group and creating a bespoke volunteering programme that accommodated any specific needs. This approach required more input from the organisation, but had better results at recruiting and retaining volunteers from minority ethnic communities.

“The biggest thing is that it isn’t about having an opportunity and expecting them to come to you. You have to go to them and market it and sell it to people.”

Staff

“You won’t find ethnic minority communities coming chapping on your door until you’ve chapped on their door first.”

Staff

- 5.7 A small number of staff members talked about the value of having role models in minority ethnic communities. They felt that role models in the community helped to show the value and accessibility of volunteering.

“For females, if you can get role models it is easier for people to get involved and copy what they see – you need to get people to lead by example – it’s quite powerful. This would be one way to improve longevity and improve recruitment.”

Staff

- 5.8 Some staff also noted the need to be welcoming and to ensure that the first experiences of volunteering were positive. They felt that if people had a bad experience or did not feel welcome, they would not return to the organisation, and might not pursue volunteering in the future.

“You need to be very adaptable, relaxing and flexible – and volunteers also need to be flexible. The first contact needs to be positive.”

Staff

Benefits of working with minority ethnic volunteers

- 5.9 All of the staff members we spoke with were very positive about working with minority ethnic communities and volunteers.

- 5.10 Staff told us that minority ethnic volunteers brought useful skills and ideas to the organisation and the activity. They enjoyed working in a diverse atmosphere, and the opportunity to learn about different cultures, cuisines and religions. A number of staff commented on the enthusiasm and drive that minority ethnic volunteers brought to their organisation.

“It brings a real freshness to an organisation.”

Staff

- 5.11 A few staff members, from different organisations, discussed how they involved minority ethnic people in outdoor volunteering activities. In their experience, some minority ethnic people did not always have a good understanding of what outdoor activities involved or what would be required of them - in terms of bringing suitable outdoorwear and preparing for physical activity. Some suggested that this may be because these types of activities involved (hill walking, gardening, conservation) have not always been popular amongst minority ethnic people. One staff member noted that a lack of awareness or understanding could be misinterpreted as incompetence. She felt that organisations should not make assumptions about people’s awareness, and that they had a responsibility to

provide detailed information and support to volunteers before beginning a programme of activity.

“Knowledge and skills [of outdoor activities] are underdeveloped in BME communities because the opportunities haven’t always been there, or been taken up. That doesn’t mean that the passion and commitment isn’t there.”

Staff

5.12 Many noted the valuable skills in translation and interpretation that minority ethnic volunteers provided. In organisations where volunteers support people from a minority ethnic community e.g. a helpline, some people felt that having volunteers that could understand and relate to specific issues was useful.

“I couldn’t do this work without volunteers. It would be impossible because I am the only staff member and I only speak English.”

Staff

“They might feel that the ethnic minority volunteer will understand them and their situation better than a white Scottish person. On the other hand, some people might prefer to speak with someone who is not part of their community.”

Staff

5.13 A few staff members noted that minority ethnic volunteers were increasingly being used for services that they felt ought to be provided by local or national government, such as translation and interpretation. They felt that although this was a good opportunity, it was unfair to use volunteers for work that should be conducted by paid interpreters.

“There is not enough equality. It’s more convenient for the government to not provide these services because they can say ‘we’ve got volunteers’ but they government shouldn’t rely on volunteers. We are doing the job so that they don’t have to provide services – it takes away all responsibility from them.”

Staff

5.14 A few people we spoke with said that working with minority ethnic communities was especially rewarding because they took so much from the opportunity. They said that the increase in confidence and skills was much greater than with any other groups they work with.

“When we get into those communities that are harder to reach, the reward is more gratifying.”

Staff

Minority ethnic volunteering in different organisations

- 5.15 Many of the staff we spoke with said that they were aware of minority ethnic people volunteering (formally and informally) within their own communities or faith groups. Sometimes staff felt that the extent of this volunteering meant that they were unable to volunteer anywhere else.
- 5.16 Most of the staff we spoke with felt that minority ethnic organisations provided a different experience for minority ethnic volunteers presenting fewer barriers. The key issues were that people:
- did not need to ask for special requirements;
 - did not need to explain cultural or religious beliefs;
 - could speak a language they were comfortable with; and
 - were amongst familiar faces.

Challenges and inequalities faced by minority ethnic people in volunteering

- 5.17 We asked staff about their perceptions of volunteering for minority ethnic people.
- 5.18 In terms of the challenges and barriers faced, their ideas were similar to the volunteers we spoke with and included:
- lack of time;
 - lack of confidence;
 - lack of awareness and understanding; and
 - lack of financial resources.
- 5.19 Staff said that, like most people, minority ethnic people did not have a lot of time to spare and this made it difficult to get involved in a formal volunteering opportunity. This was even more challenging when volunteering programmes had a fixed training period or where the timetable was less flexible.

“It’s hard for people to make a regular commitment.”
Staff

- 5.20 Staff told us that minority ethnic people often lacked confidence – preventing them from getting involved in volunteering or progressing to volunteer in the wider community. This was felt to be because they had never volunteered before, were more comfortable working within their own community, or were unsure what to expect if they came to a mainstream organisation.

“One of my volunteers said to me that the biggest step is going into
the place you want to volunteer.”
Staff

- 5.21 A few staff members discussed the current political climate. They felt that people from minority ethnic communities might be unsure how welcome they would be

in a mainstream organisation, and would not want to risk facing racism or discrimination.

“Because of things in the media nowadays it can be extremely difficult for people from minority ethnic communities. They could be feeling nervous to go somewhere they aren’t familiar with because of fear that they might meet someone that might not like them because of their ethnicity.”

Staff

5.22 All the staff members we spoke with said that language was a significant barrier, particularly for new migrants. They felt that lack of confidence in their English was likely to be a key factor in their decision to volunteer, and where they would choose to volunteer.

“There’s a lack of confidence in communication with people, especially if English isn’t their first language.”

Staff

5.23 One of the staff members we spoke with had a perception that it was often difficult for some minority ethnic groups to understand the concept of volunteering, and what the benefit would be to themselves.

5.24 In another organisation, a staff member noted that the specific community he works with is extremely deprived and has a long history of facing discrimination. For these people, the concept of volunteering was difficult to grasp, as they had only ever been the recipients of support.

Issues to consider when working with minority ethnic volunteers

5.25 Staff told us how they work to accommodate and support minority ethnic volunteers in their organisation.

Being flexible

5.26 They told us that organisations and the staff working with volunteers needed to be flexible and adaptable. Staff said that they tried to be aware of specific needs and cultural sensitivities and to address them early on, rather than volunteers having to ask for support or different arrangements. Staff said that often very small changes or considerations went a long way to making minority ethnic volunteers feel more comfortable, and more likely to continue volunteering.

5.27 Staff also mentioned that different people and communities like to work in different ways, and that organisations should take account of this. For example, some like to volunteer in women-only groups, others prefer to volunteer as a whole family or in peer groups.

Asking questions

5.28 One staff member said that there was also a need to ask questions. She felt that sometimes organisations were unsure of what to ask or how to approach issues, but that it was important to ask the right questions and not shy away from unfamiliar issues.

“We can pre-empt things for example we know to check before sending a young male to the home of an older female in the south Asian community. And we’re not afraid to ask those questions.”

Staff

Incentives

5.29 Many staff members said that volunteering worked best when both parties (organisation and volunteer) felt they were benefitting from the experience. Some staff members said that they always tried to offer an incentive, such as an accredited training programme or qualification, so volunteers left with something tangible.

“You need a carrot to draw them in - like giving a qualification, or something that will look good for them professionally or that will help them obtain funding in the future.”

Staff

“It’s a give and take relationship. They can’t feel that it’s all give, give, give, and they aren’t getting anything in return – then it’s not an equal relationship.”

Staff

Practical support

5.30 Most staff told us that providing transport and meals made a big difference for volunteers. They said that some volunteers would never be able to take part if these expenses were not met.

5.31 One staff member said that her organisation had started to provide childcare costs, after realising that they were losing many female volunteers due to childcare responsibilities. They said that this made an enormous difference to retaining these volunteers who were able to complete the full volunteer programme and some have continued to volunteer with the organisation.

5.32 Overall, staff said that they were aware of the need to be flexible and adaptable, making volunteering as accessible as possible to minority ethnic volunteers.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 This chapter summarises our findings and highlights the key issues raised by research participants.
- 6.2 This research engaged a relatively small number of participants. Due to the limitations of the research, it is not possible to draw strong conclusions about the experiences and perceptions of all minority ethnic people.

Key themes around volunteer experiences

- 6.3 Broadly, the people we spoke with said that they had enjoyed positive volunteering experiences. They enjoyed being part of a community, sharing and learning skills and doing something valuable with their time.
- 6.4 Very few people we spoke with had experienced inequality whilst they were volunteering, however most of our research participants primarily volunteered with minority ethnic organisations (or as part of a targeted programme in a mainstream organisation), which may impact the likelihood of experiencing discrimination. Around half had some experience of volunteering with mainstream organisations, or in the wider community with school or university. Based on their experiences, there was a general perception by these research participants that inequality was widespread, in the voluntary sector and in wider society.
- 6.5 In order to improve experiences of volunteering, people told us that organisations should be more welcoming and accepting of different needs. They wanted to feel part of the team, and not to be excluded for looking or sounding different.
- 6.6 People that had not experienced inequality in volunteering generally felt that voluntary organisations were very welcoming and appreciative of their help. They felt that volunteering was largely a positive experience and they did not expect to encounter racial inequality or discrimination.
- 6.7 Informal volunteering activities were not well recognised as volunteering. However most of the people we spoke with took part in both formal and informal volunteering, to some extent.

Staff views

- 6.8 In terms of recruiting and supporting minority ethnic volunteers, staff felt that the key things organisations could do were to:
- take a proactive, targeted approach; and
 - be flexible and adapt to different needs and circumstances.

Key issues to consider going forward

6.9 The key issues to consider going forward are around:

- recruiting and engaging minority ethnic people in volunteering; and
- addressing the “subtle” discrimination felt by minority ethnic people volunteering in mainstream organisations.

6.10 It may also be useful to consider how best to work with minority ethnic groups that are already undertaking significant amounts of volunteering within their own communities or with faith groups. Partnership working between the mainstream voluntary sector and these communities could help improve community integration, through a shared passion for volunteering.

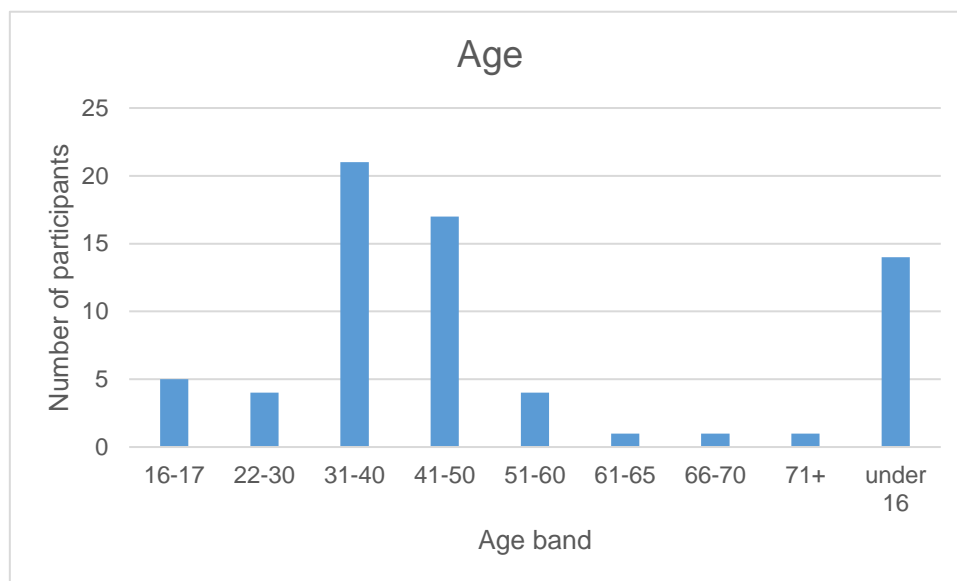
Appendix 1 – Participant demographics

This appendix shows how many minority ethnic people we engaged in the research, and their demographics. This information was collected through an equalities monitoring form that was completed anonymously at the end of focus groups or through the online survey. Telephone interview participants were asked if they were happy to complete the form over the telephone and were advised that it was voluntary. Sixty-nine participants agreed to complete the form. Two online respondents chose not to complete it.

We did not routinely ask staff involved in the research to complete an equality monitoring form to capture this data. The number of staff involved in the research was small and we did not feel that analysing monitoring data would be meaningful. We would note however, that six of the ten staff members we spoke with self-identified as minority ethnic.

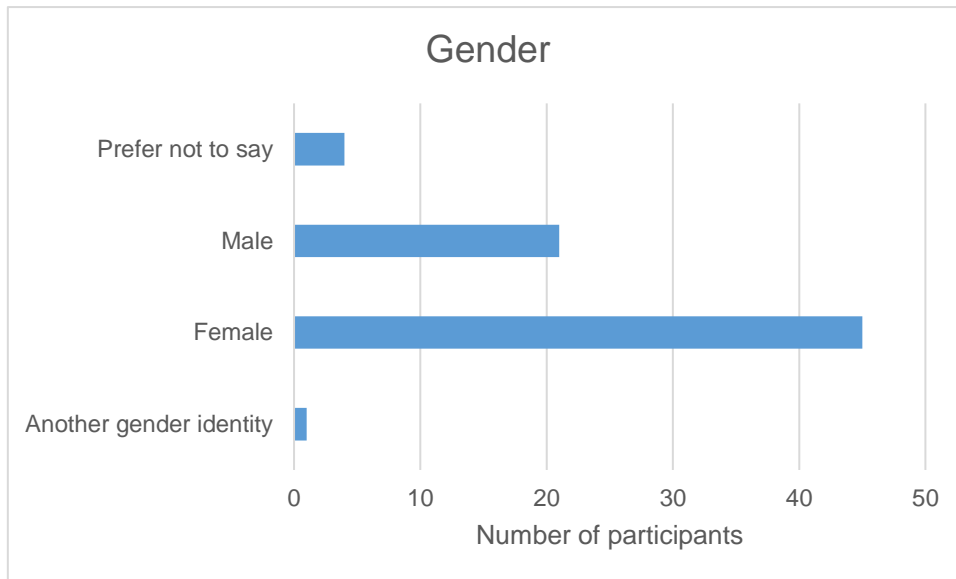
Age

Most participants were aged 31 to 40. We spoke with young people under 16 at focus groups or events, where parents were present and had consented to their participation.



Gender / gender identity

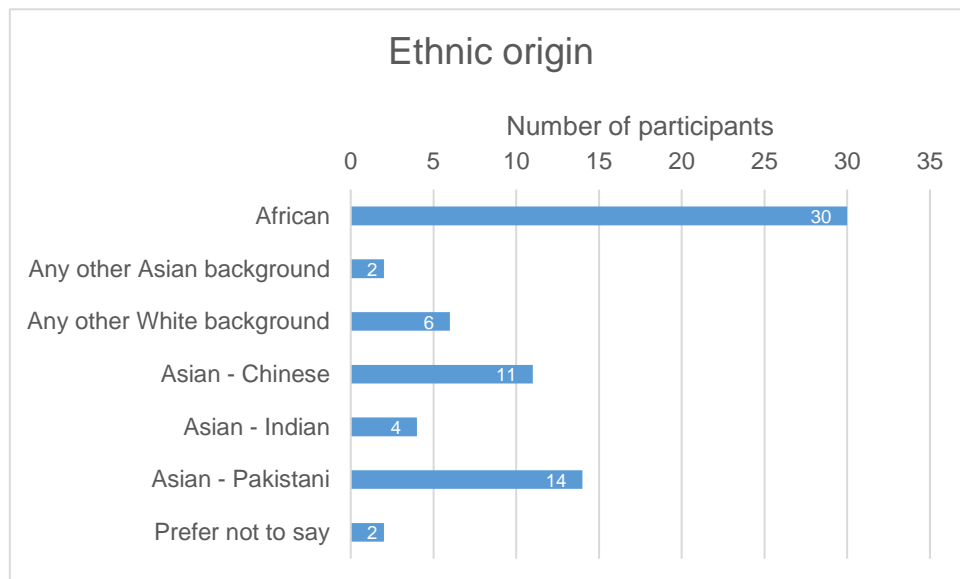
Most of the participants in our research were female. Only one of the organisations involved in the research was a women's organisation. However, many of the community groups that helped to arrange the focus groups were attended by more women than men. The gender / gender identity question also provided an option for non-binary gender identities.



Ethnic origin

While planning the methodology for this research, we aimed to engage people from as many different minority ethnicities as possible.

The chart below shows the broad categories of ethnic origin, as self-identified by 69 research participants.



One participant from 'Any other Asian background' identified as being of mixed/multiple ethnicity (Pakistani and Filipino). Two participants chose not to share their ethnic origin.

In total, research participants self-identified nine different ethnic origins, as well as mixed ethnic origin:

- African
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Polish
- Roma Bulgarian
- Roma Slovakian
- Singaporean

Disability

Three participants identified as disabled people.

Appendix 2 – Discussion guide for minority ethnic people

Discussion guide – volunteers

We are conducting research into volunteering within ethnic minority communities. This work has been commissioned by CRER (The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights). The research will inform the implementation of Scotland’s Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030.

We would like to find out about your experience of volunteering. We would also like to hear from people who have not been involved in volunteering, to understand why.

We will report anything you say to us confidentially and anonymously. Taking part in this focus group is voluntary. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Nadia Hyder on 0141 428 3972 or email nadia.hyder@researchscotland.org.

Introduction

- Background to the research
- Equality monitoring forms

What we mean by volunteering

Giving time or energy Bringing about measurable benefit Done by choice Not for financial gain Formal - through an organisation Informal – any unpaid help to a non-relative
--

How would you define ‘volunteering’? What kinds of activities fall under the term ‘volunteering’? (Give examples)

Experiences of volunteering

Have you been involved in any volunteering activity?

How did you first get involved?
What made you want to volunteer?
What kind of activities were you doing?
Who were you volunteering with?
How long were you involved?
Are you still volunteering?

Has volunteering made a difference to your life?

What were the benefits of volunteering, for you?
Were there any benefits for others (individuals, communities, environment)?
What did you most enjoy about volunteering? How did this make you feel?

Was there anything you did not enjoy about volunteering?

What were the challenges or difficulties? Did you experience inequality?

How did this make you feel?
Did this affect your future decisions around volunteering?

Have all of your volunteering experiences been the same? If not, what was different? Was it to do with the type of organisation, the type of volunteering, something else?

Do you have any other comments on your experiences of volunteering?

Perceptions of volunteering

More generally, why do you think people choose to volunteer?

Why do you think some people choose not to do voluntary work?

Do you feel that volunteering is the same for minority ethnic people as it is for majority ethnic (White Scottish/British) people? What are the differences? Why do you think they exist?

Do you think there are any inequalities in volunteering for minority ethnic people? What are they? Why do you think they exist?

Do you think there are differences between volunteering with a minority ethnic organisation compared to an organisation that is not focused on minority ethnic communities/issues? Which are you more comfortable volunteering with? Why?

Do you think there are any differences in the experience of volunteering if you are a long term resident, compared to a recent migrant?

Thank you for your time!

Appendix 3 – Discussion guide for staff

Discussion guide – staff

We are conducting research into volunteering within ethnic minority communities. This work has been commissioned by CRER (The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights). The research will inform the implementation of Scotland's Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030.

We would like to find out about your experience of coordinating, managing and recruiting volunteers specifically ethnic minority volunteers?

We will report anything you say to us confidentially and anonymously. Taking part in this interview is voluntary. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Nadia Hyder on 0141 424 5295 or email nadia.hyder@researchscotland.org.

Introduction

- Background to the research
- Equality monitoring form

Your role

Can you tell me about your role in relation to volunteering?

How would you describe the type of volunteering opportunities you and your organisation offer? (Probe: formal, informal, mainstream, minority ethnic focused)

Volunteers at your organisation

Do you do collect equalities monitoring information from volunteers?
During recruitment do you target minority ethnic communities?
Do you know what proportion of your volunteers are from minority ethnic backgrounds?

Perceptions and experiences of volunteering

Why do you think people choose to do voluntary work? What are the main benefits?

Why do you think some people choose not to do voluntary work? What are the main barriers or challenges to getting involved?

Is this the same for people from minority ethnic communities? If not, what are the differences?

What are the main benefits for you when working with volunteers from ethnic minority communities?

What are the main challenges for you when working with volunteers from ethnic minority communities?

Do you think that the experience of volunteering is the same for minority ethnic people as it is for majority ethnic (White Scottish/British) people? What are the differences? Why do you think they exist? E.g. duration of volunteering, type of volunteering?

Do you think there are any differences in the experience of volunteering between long term/UK born minority ethnic residents and recent migrants?

Are there differences between volunteering with a minority ethnic organisation compared to an organisation that is not focused on minority ethnic communities/issues?

Overall, what do you think are the main challenge/inequalities around volunteering for people from minority ethnic communities? What are they? Why do you think they exist?

Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for your time!

Appendix 4 – Survey for minority ethnic people

Volunteering within minority ethnic communities

This survey is for anyone from a minority ethnic background.

We would like to find out about your experience of volunteering. We would also like to hear from minority ethnic people who have not been involved in volunteering, to understand why.

This work has been commissioned by CRER (The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights). The research will inform the implementation of Scotland's Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030.

We will report anything you say to us confidentially and anonymously. Taking part in this survey is voluntary.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Nadia Hyder on 0141 428 3972 or email nadia.hyder@researchscotland.org.

What we mean by 'volunteering'

Volunteering can be formal and informal.

Formal volunteering might be something you do through an organisation, such as a charity or community group.

Informal volunteering can be any unpaid help that you provide to someone that is not a relative e.g. babysitting or checking in on an elderly neighbour.

What we mean by volunteering:

- Giving time or energy
- Bringing about measurable benefit
- Done by choice
- Not for financial gain

If you have volunteered more than once, or with different people/organisations, please tell us as much as you can about all of these experiences.

Question

Have you ever been involved in volunteering?

- Yes
- No*

**If 'No' is selected, survey will redirect to questions for people who have not taken part in volunteering.*

Question

What does volunteering mean to you?

Your experience of volunteering

Question

How did you get involved in volunteering? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Through a friend
- Through a family member
- Through school/college/university
- Through a minority ethnic organisation
- Through a majority ethnic (mainstream) organisation
- Through a community group
- Another way (please specify)

Question

Why did you choose to get involved? What were you hoping to get out of it? (Please choose all that apply)

- Learning new skills
- Improving existing skills
- Meeting new people/making friends
- Getting work experience
- Helping people in the community
- Gaining confidence

- Being part of a community
- Improving physical health
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Taking on a challenge
- Doing something fun
- Something else (please specify)

Question

What activities did your volunteering involve?

The difference it makes

Question

What were the main benefits of volunteering, for you? (Please choose all that apply)

- Learning new skills
- Improving existing skills
- Meeting new people/making friends
- Getting work experience
- Helping people in the community
- Gaining confidence
- Being part of a community
- Improving physical health
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Taking on a challenge
- Doing something fun
- Something else (please specify)

Question

Was there anything you did not enjoy about volunteering? What were the challenges or difficulties?

Question

Did you experience inequality?

- Yes
- No

Question

If you answered yes, can you tell us a bit more about this? What happened? How did it make you feel? Did this affect your future decisions around volunteering?

Perceptions of volunteering

Question

Do you feel that volunteering is the same for minority ethnic people as it is for majority ethnic (White Scottish/British) people?

- Yes
- No

What are the differences? Why do you think they exist?

Question

Do you think there are any inequalities in volunteering for minority ethnic people?

- Yes
- No

What are they? Why do you think they exist?

Question

Do you think there are any differences in the experience of volunteering if you are a UK born/long term resident, compared to a recent migrant?

- Yes
- No

What are the main differences?

Question

Do you have any other comments on your experiences or perceptions of volunteering?

About You

Please tell us your gender

- Male
- Female
- Another gender identity
- Prefer not to say

Please tell us your age

- under 16
- 16-17
- 18-21
- 22-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-65
- 65+

Please tell us your ethnic group:

- White - Scottish
- White - other British
- White - Irish
- White - Gypsy/Traveller
- White - Polish
- White - Other (please specify below)
- Asian - Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British
- Asian - Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- Asian - Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British
- Asian - Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British
- Asian - Other (please specify below)
- Caribbean - Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British
- Caribbean - Black, Black Scottish or Black British
- Caribbean - Other (please specify below)
- African - African, African Scottish or African British
- African - Other (please specify below)
- Any other ethnicity (please specify below)
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

What type of volunteering did you do?

- Formal (through an organisation e.g. charity or community group)
- Informal (any unpaid help that you provide to someone that is not a relative)
- Both formal and informal

How much time did you spend volunteering per week?

- Up to 1 hour
- 1 - 5 hours

- 5 - 10 hours
- 10 - 20 hours
- 20 - 30 hours
- 30 - 40 hours
- Over 40 hours
- One off volunteering experience (please specify how many hours)

How long was the duration of your volunteering experience?

- Up to 4 weeks
- Up to 3 months
- Up to 6 months
- Up to 1 year
- Over 1 year
- Other (please specify how long)

Are you still volunteering?

Yes/No

End of survey

People who have not taken part in volunteering

Question

What are your main reasons for not volunteering? (Please choose all that apply)

- Not sure how to get involved
- Not sure what I could do as a volunteer
- Don't have time
- Not interested in volunteering
- Previous bad experience with volunteering
- Something else (please specify)

Question

Why do you think people choose to volunteer? (Please choose all that apply)

- To learn new skills
- To improving existing skills
- To meet people/make friends
- To get work experience
- To help people in the community
- To build confidence
- Being part of a community
- Improving physical health
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Taking on a challenge
- Doing something fun
- Something else (please specify)

Question

Do you feel that volunteering is the same for minority ethnic people as it is for majority ethnic (White Scottish/British) people?

- Yes
- No

What are the differences? Why do you think they exist?

Question

Do you think there are any inequalities in volunteering for minority ethnic people?

- Yes
- No

What are they? Why do you think they exist?

Question

Do you have any other comments on volunteering within minority ethnic communities?

About You

Please tell us your gender

- Male
- Female
- Another gender identity
- Prefer not to say

Please tell us your age

- under 16
- 16-17
- 18-21
- 22-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-65
- 65+

Please tell us your ethnic group:

- White - Scottish
- White - other British
- White - Irish
- White - Gypsy/Traveller
- White - Polish
- White - Other (please specify below)
- Asian - Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British
- Asian - Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- Asian - Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British
- Asian - Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British
- Asian - Other (please specify below)
- Caribbean - Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British
- Caribbean - Black, Black Scottish or Black British
- Caribbean - Other (please specify below)
- African - African, African Scottish or African British
- African - Other (please specify below)
- Any other ethnicity (please specify below)
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

End of survey

Appendix 5 – Equalities monitoring form

Equalities Monitoring Form

VOLUNTEERING

1. Have you ever been involved in volunteering?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

GENDER

2. Are you:

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Another gender identity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

AGE

3. Which age band do you fall into?

Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/>	41-50	<input type="checkbox"/>
16-17	<input type="checkbox"/>	51-60	<input type="checkbox"/>
18-21	<input type="checkbox"/>	61-65	<input type="checkbox"/>
22-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	66-70	<input type="checkbox"/>
31-40	<input type="checkbox"/>	71+	<input type="checkbox"/>

DISABILITY

4. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

ETHNIC GROUP OR BACKGROUND

5. Please tick ONE box, which best describes your ethnic group or background:

African		Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	
African, African Scottish or African British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other, please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caribbean or Black		Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed or multiple ethnic group	
Other, please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any mixed or multiple ethnic background, please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>
White		Other ethnic group	
Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Gypsy/Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Polish	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other white ethnic group, please specify below:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	
		Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

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