

Information for advice providing organisations on engagement and communication with UK Nepali community members and community organisation representatives and leads*



* This information is provided to the advice-providing organisations that participated or where asked to participate in the questionnaire, and is also provided to Nepali community organisation leads

Explaining about your organisation structure & functions:

Can you explain (including via diagrams) about your organisation structure & functions to Nepali community service users with limited English language skills? If so, how is this done & how do you monitor the engagement process and respond to any revealed communication & engagement needs with the community? A diagram, downloadable and ready for electronic or hard-copy printing, available via your website or intranet, showing your organisation/agency/entity structure, with special emphasis on key posts titles and what they cover/remits, what your processes are, and how all of these relate to the service-user will be invaluable, and especially so the Nepali service-user can comprehend all of these clearly to avoid feeling disempowered or flummoxed.

Explaining about your organisation customer care commitments and how these are implemented:

Do you explain these commitments & implementation record to Nepali community members? No / Yes.

If Yes, your reflection on how currently this is done and any ways and areas that you feel would be beneficial, including direct & substantial Nepali community involvement, and its feedback on the effectiveness of explaining the commitments & implementation record, would be invaluable. Intranet resources in this area that can be used as a central information point for use by frontline staff interacting with Nepali community members would be invaluable.

Explaining about your organisation -- communications & engagement (who to go to on what subject):

Most, but not all national/regional, and some advice-providing organisations & agencies have 'easy read' [basic clear non-technical terms and phraseology] versions of information about themselves & the services they provide, accessed on their website, and in some cases PDF documents, webpages, and hard copy leaflets.

These are helpful for those with limited English skills. Some also have both Google translate facilities (these may have defects though in terms of automated translation, especially on all important technical terms & concepts), and some key information and documents available online or on request, that have been professionally translated into Nepali.

Any effort and work to consider advice provided from a Nepali [or other ethnic minority community] member who is a first generation/new UK community member, would pay dividends in terms of projecting your organisation/agency as inclusive: Nepali community organisations such as the UKNFS,

NRNA [Non-Residential Nepali Association] and others would greatly welcome approaches on this, to assist.

Consider what Panels, Boards, consultation groups & mechanisms [online review of policy and services implementation, processes, etc.] your organisation/agency have for meaningful [non-tick box] DIRECT engagement on effective, clearly understood, transparently delivered services by your organisation/agency/entity, with the Nepali community in ways in which accountability is clear and equitable delivery likewise.

Other:

If you have staff or volunteers from the Nepali community, consider how they can be deployed for information in-reach to the Nepali community, BUT only do so in conjunction with connecting with Nepali community organisation leads: the combination of these two factors will demonstrate enthusiasm for engagement & effective communication on a respectful effective basis, and maximise community in-reach for the information to advice provision about your services. To just make some contact with a Nepali staff member or volunteer without connecting with the community lead figures will only give nominal 'tick box' type benefits, whereas involving the community organisation lead figures will be regarded as sincere and greatly welcome engagement, and also help the staff member or volunteer to deliver the maximum meaningful impacts.

The UK Nepali community & community organisations advice-provision project, facilitated by the UK Nepal Friendship Society, was developed through a questionnaire. The responses from advice-providing organisations that ranged from national director-general, national statistician, chief constable & related levels, to regional and local organisations leads, to local authority equality officers [and equivalents], are provided in the project report.

Derived from those responses, here we provide some guidelines for all UK Nepali community organisations, ranging from best practice to poor, to unacceptable to pioneering practice based on those responses, to guide Nepali community organisations in their approaches to current engagement and/or new engagement on behalf of their community members (that involve reputation and their leads and senior officers valuable time usage) to the advice-providing organisations/agencies/entities.

Some guidelines:

1. Regarding organisations/agencies/entities that were approached (and provided with reminder follow-ups) but did not participate in the project questionnaire, and those that after much time expended [from the Nepali community side] in requesting participation, promised participation, and then informed to their regret they were too busy to do so, the guidance below may be of assistance. This when local or national level UK Nepali community organisations contact -- in regard to operational or policies, processes matters -- them to assist their community and community members on using these and other comparable organisations/agencies/entities [at local to national level] in accessing or attempting to use their services.

Always show towards the Nepali, ethnic, or other minority community and especially the organisations that they have the faith to directly represent and support their community and its voice, act professionally and with care. Acting professionally involves courtesy with timeliness (or at least acknowledgment of) regarding email responses & acknowledgments, not projecting that you (therefore the organisation you represent!) doesn't really care about

the Nepali or given minority community, whose members ultimately pay taxes which in most cases support your jobs and the existence of your organisation. Never give the impression that you are too busy and have more important matters to deal with.

2. Regarding advice project participating organisations that were timely in response to the advice project questionnaire. These clearly had good volition in the responses provided, but in some cases may have missed the significance of aspects of the given question that include particular Nepali community contexts, and instead provided generic non-Nepali responses on their work in this area. These and the many more comparable organisations/agencies/entities, not included in the advice project, taking a similar approach, are to be encouraged to look at the operational applied level, to how they could put the positions and approaches they have into a specific Nepali community context, developing a strategy for implementation that involves Nepali community organisations leads.
3. All advice providing organisations, agencies, entities have Equality & Anti-Discrimination statements and policies. These are essential and welcomed. However unless these are backed by both high quality anti-discrimination training [in which minority community members have been involved], and a detailed frontline orientated operations implementation strategy, and that this strategy's creation and certainly its monitoring, involves reputed Nepali community organisations and community leads, there will be minimal protection against the given organisation/agency frontline staff or even middle to upper management individuals that harbour subconsciously or openly, racist and anti-minorities [ethnic and other] values and perspectives acting in prejudiced & discriminatory ways.

Final reflection: the importance of substantial as opposed to nominal community engagement and communication matters:

Substantial community engagement & communication involves: direct relations with a given minority community's leads (respected community organisation with substantial membership) at the highest level of your own organisation/agency, and with regular consultation on operational and programmes & processes matters, and readiness to respond to concerns or suggestions made by the community.

Nominal community engagement & communication involves: non-existent or indirect contact with a given minority community, commonly overlooking it on key consultations, and with preference for 'reaching' it through third party organisations that lack substantial involvement by respected leads of the given community and evidencing lack of professionalism and care regarding response to communications made to your organisation/agency by the given community.

The rewards for effective community engagement are extensive in terms of organisation prestige and pecuniary benefits, whereas poor community engagement's costs involve a constant reputation retrieval phenomenon and financial costs. Well managed, well directed organisations, agencies, entities always know which of the two alternatives is the correct to follow and support: in regard to the opposites, changes can always be made, including in particular retraining on engagement, communication and minorities subjects, and with swift improvements being made through embracing the opportunity for direct community engagement at community organisations leads and respected figures level, and resulting co-production approaches to policies, programmes to revolutionise frontline operational level performance.