

Refugee Progression and Employment Project (REPP)



North West Case Study

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April 2008**

Refugee Progression and Employment Project (REPP) North West Case Study

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Acknowledgements

Firstly, we would like to thank members of the community and voluntary sector who introduced us to our new settlers and who provided additional insights into the educational and employment experiences of new settlers with whom they come into regular contact. Secondly, to all practitioners and policy makers who participated in the research either through interview or by contributing to the consultation event. Thirdly, we would like to thank our colleagues in the REPP project, in particular Anne Bellis from Sussex University for her contribution to the case study and to colleagues at Leeds for providing us with an additional opportunity to disseminate our findings. This work would not have been possible without financial support from the Higher Education – European Social Fund.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we would like to acknowledge and offer our thanks to the new settlers who shared their stories and encouraged us to think about our own practice and provided us with ideas which we have been able to share with community and voluntary groups, learning providers, employers and other service providers. The challenge now is for those who can to reflect on the findings and consider how they might develop their provision to ensure, as one of participants said, that future new settlers do not remain an ‘untapped resource’.

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
European Social Fund

1 Introduction

1.1 The Refugee Progression and Employment Project (REPP)

The Higher Education European Social Fund (HE ESF) funded the REPP project, which was a three-year collaborative project that was concerned with exploring the educational and employment experiences of refugees and 'minority ethnic' adults who have recently settled in the UK and who have acquired higher qualifications in another country. Despite previous educational qualifications and employment experience, these two groups do not automatically gain access to appropriate education and employment. Underemployment not only undermines them as individuals but inevitably restricts their opportunity to make a full contribution to society, which appears to contradict the Home Office (2005) commitments outlined in, *'Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society: The Government's strategy to increase race equality and community cohesion'*.

The project involved Sussex University as the Lead Institution, Lancaster and Leeds University, and Wedgwood Memorial College, in Staffordshire. Each institution undertook a discrete case study that explored the local context within an agreed framework of project aims designed to:

- Explore and evaluate strategies to combat discrimination in education and employment as experienced by members of the target group, through regionally based case studies;
- Explore the education, training and employment experiences of members of refugee and BME communities, their perceptions of opportunities and barriers and of the effectiveness of locally based strategies to combat discrimination;
- Engage with a range of stakeholders about the issues raised by the research, including refugee organisations, employers, education, and training providers, funding bodies and policy makers;
- Inform future debates about policy and practice in this area through dissemination of research findings.

Lancaster University's Community Access Programme (CAP) conducted the North West Case study. It focused on the stories and experiences of people who were born and educated in a range of different countries and moved to Lancashire for a variety of personal, family and work related reasons. The NW case study focused on the experiences of 'new settlers' belonging to a number of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities and provided a valuable point of comparison with other REPP case studies that examined issues facing refugees. The CAP's interest in working with new settlers reflected our previous work with the Lancashire BME communities and commitment to identifying obstacles to education and communicating these and possible solutions to local providers.

1.2 The Community Access Programme (CAP)

CAP is a research and development group within Lancaster University's Department of Educational Research. The Department received a Grade 5 in the 1992, 1996 and 2001 Research Assessment Exercises. This denotes a reputation for nationally and internationally acknowledged excellence in research. The field of post-compulsory education is a particular strength of the Department over the last decade.

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CAP specialises in research and evaluation in the fields of educational equality, social justice, widening participation and issues of inclusion. With respect to accessing and working collaboratively with members of the BME community including new settlers, the CAP has gained considerable experience through a number of research and development projects, most notably the 'African Caribbean and Asian Curriculum project' (ACA), funded by Lancashire County Council between 1995 and 2004 (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fss/projects/edres/cap/projects/completed/aca.htm>). In addition to the ACA Project, the CAP engaged in two action research projects, namely the Families and Higher Education Decision Making Project and the Lancashire Intergenerational Multicultural Education Project (LIME). All projects involved working with BME families and other communities traditionally under-represented within Higher Education, such as people with disabilities and those from social class IV and V within a school, community and higher education environment (Houghton and Ali, 2000; Houghton and Sharples, 2001, Houghton and Sethi, 2004, and Houghton, 2005). The CAP's positive and established relationship of working alongside Black and Minority Ethnic voluntary groups has enabled us to play an active and supportive role in the development of the Lancashire BME Pact. The BME Pact is a network and consultative group of BME community and voluntary organisations whose aim is to build the capacity its member organisations and act as an informed voice on BME issues.

By drawing on the experience of the CAP team and using role model researchers, we seek to respond to the specific cultural, social and physical or sensory needs of the participants. Our research expertise is supported by experienced support staff who undertake data transcription, input, and other administrative tasks in accord to the scope, scale and demands of a research project. CAP uses a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including questionnaires, structured and semi-structured interviews and focus groups, and data collected via project activities, all of which are responsive to the needs and context in which the research takes place.

An additional feature of the CAP's research and development is our collaborative approach. This includes: working in partnership with other researchers to aid dissemination for awareness, change, and sharing good practice, a goal we expect to achieve via our collaboration with REPP partners. Where possible CAP facilitates or undertakes pre and post research activities that empower or address support or information needs of the research participants, especially those in the community (For an example of this, see methods 2.4.3). Our approach reflects those of critical theorists and feminist inquiries who are often change-centred, and believe that researchers have a moral duty to improve situations where it is possible to do so (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997; Knight, 2002: 143). We also have an ongoing commitment to extending the social capital networks of the individuals and communities with whom we work as outlined in (Preece and Houghton, 2000).

2 Research Process

2.1 Overview

The North West case study includes three types of data collected between June and December 2004:

- documentary evidence, covering national, regional and local statistics and policy documents which provides the wider context;
- questionnaires encompassing standardised closed questions about new settlers and practitioners / professionals;
- semi-structured audio-taped interviews with 13 new settlers and 10 practitioners / professionals, where the emphasis was on gathering qualitative in-depth accounts.

Within this report the term new settlers refers to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people from other countries outside Europe who have recently resided within the UK. References to 'practitioners / professionals' includes paid workers within the community, voluntary, statutory and private sector, who as part of their employment have a remit to work with, or represent the needs of the BME community, concerning education, employment or social and welfare matters.

Previous CAP activity in the case study area, as well as factors discussed with research partners at Sussex, Leeds, and Staffordshire influenced the sample size and data collection process. An Asian researcher collected the majority of the data. She is a respected and well-known member of the community who is on the Management Committee of an African Caribbean community group, (Nguzo Saba Centre) and a community co-ordinator for Lancaster University's Community Access Programme. A second researcher known by practitioners and professionals collected additional data.

2.2 Questionnaire

2.2.1 Overview

The 'new settler' questionnaire included 3 main sections that captured personal profile information as well as details regarding arrival and initial experiences in the UK, pre and post arrival experiences of education and employment, support mechanisms, barriers and issues of racism (see appendix 1). The process of developing the questionnaire was collaborative and iterative, including further adaptations in response feedback on the initial pilot and from other members of the REPP team. In addition to providing common information, the questionnaire captured data for comparison with other case studies in the wider Refugee Progression and Employment Project. The interviewer completed the 'new settler' questionnaire during the interview, using it as a guide for the overall structure of the open-ended discussion. Due to the questionnaire layout, issues of language level were therefore not a major point of concern. Although space for interviewer notes was available, in most cases the only information recorded were answers to closed questions on the questionnaire and the spelling of names.

The practitioner and professional participants also completed a questionnaire that included: personal details, types of involvement with the Black and Minority Ethnic community, and an overview of their perceptions about the barriers and support mechanisms experienced by new settlers. The purpose of the practitioner /

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professional questionnaire was to introduce topics of interest and provide a focus for the semi-structured interview rather than generate comparative data. The diversity and range of backgrounds and working context from which the practitioners and professionals worked meant it was not appropriate to directly compare their perceptions. Instead, their views provided an additional insight into the experiences and context in which new settlers sought to enrol on courses or find suitable employment.

2.2.2 Analysis

Answers from the new settlers were recorded on an excel spreadsheet, which was developed and agreed with research partners. It provided a common dataset for subsequent comparison as well as a breadth of data concerning the profile, educational and employment details of the new settlers. This profile information complemented the in-depth qualitative data gathered during semi-structured interviews. The broad range of questions meant that not all were relevant to participants in the NW case study, which accounts for the variation in number of participants answering specific questions. Due to the small sample size, the report does not include a percentage breakdown.

2.3 Interviews

2.3.1 Overview

As already indicated, the format of the questionnaires shaped the overall structure of the interviews. The use of a semi-structured interview provided the freedom and flexibility for the participants to talk about their experiences. At the same time, it facilitated us in undertaking a guided exploration of issues relevant to the research. Within the context of the REPP project, we used semi-structured interviews described by (Webb, 1932 in [Silverman, 1993) as 'conversations with a purpose'. This approach provided us with an opportunity to listen to the stories of new settlers. A series of prompts enabled us to focus on pre arrival expectations of the UK, arrival experiences, interactions with educational providers, employers as well as community and statutory bodies relating to housing, health, social services and in many cases their children's education.

new settlers were actively encouraged to tell their story and recall events, actions, thoughts, and feelings. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003) the semi-structured interview facilitates discussion about motivations, feelings and thoughts that results in a more naturalistic, interpretative approach that is concerned with understanding the meanings which people attach to their actions, decisions, beliefs, values. In addition, the interviews allowed them to make comments and offer additional explanations about their actions as well as the actions of other people with whom they interacted. Not surprisingly, the interviews included a number of comments that during the interview itself seemed not directly relevant to the focus of the research. However, as Bryman points out, it is inevitable that:

the interviewee will 'ramble' and move away from the designated areas in the researcher's mind. 'Rambling' is nevertheless important and needs some investigation. The interviewee in rambling is moving into areas, which most interest him or her. (Bryman, 1988 p46)

The relevance of some comments was not always immediately obvious. Closer analysis, however, highlighted underlying areas of concern that new settlers seemed

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reluctant to vocalise more explicitly. Reasons for this are inevitably speculative, however, it was noticeable that detours in their stories were often more critical of the support systems or lack of them, or else signalled a dissonance between expectation and experience, which they felt uncomfortable criticising, in part assuming that the fault was their own. This was particularly evident in accounts of racism, where some new settlers almost took it for granted that name-calling would occur.

There was less structure in the interviews with practitioners and professionals working in the public sector. A prompt sheet operated as an aide mémoire and ensured coverage of key topics (see appendix 2). The purpose of these interviews was to identify strategies of support developed and delivered by their organisation. Typical examples included: organisations providing educational guidance, advocating on behalf of the learner, or offering voluntary work opportunities that provided new settlers with UK work experience for inclusion in their CV. The practitioners' position within an organisation inevitably influenced the official comments and more factual aspects of the interview. In a number of practitioner / professional interviews, personal background provided additional insights and a valuable commentary on the overall system that highlighted the context in which they and their colleagues worked, as well as the tensions they experienced. This distinction between official accounts and the more personal perspectives raises some interesting challenges with respect to the analysis and final report.

2.3.2 Analysis

The scale and scope of the REPP project and the context of the NW case study, has influenced the final analysis of qualitative data collected during interviews in a number of ways. For instance, within the time available it was not practical to produce full transcriptions, instead we used detailed summaries based on two members of the team listening to the interviews and making 'real time notes' and then transcribing direct quotations. In addition, previous CAP experience influenced a number of decisions including the use of an audiotape recorder and limiting the notes taken during the interview in order to focus on building a rapport between the researcher and interviewee. Aware of the technical problems of failed recordings as discussed by (Arksey, 1999); the interviewer checked the tapes immediately after the interview, fortunately the tape only failed during one 'new settler' interview. Although not ideal, the interviewer wrote copious post interview notes.

As other researchers have attested, the process of analysis is a continuous one that inevitably takes longer than expected (Knight, 2002). In the NW case study, analysis began immediately the interview was over and consisted of three stages:

- reflecting on the data during post interview note taking process;
- reformulating data as a summary of key issues for each 'new settler';
- coding and classifying data according to anticipated and emergent key themes relevant to the overall focus of the REPP project.

Each stage resulted in a different output, interview notes, interview summaries, and illustrative quotes confirming or challenging key themes. Producing the data outcomes involved both researchers who alternated their role either preparing or commenting upon each output, this process was interspersed with joint discussions about the data collection, analysis, and results.

Finally, notions of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1997; Office for National Statistics, 2001; Baron, 2000) citizenship (Coare, 2003) and identity (Brah, 2000;

Reeve, 2002) influenced the final analysis providing theoretical lens with which to view the literature.

2.4 Research Considerations

2.4.1 Practicalities

As with all research, a number of factors influenced the NW case study, these included a range of practical and ethical considerations. Practicalities affected researchers and participants alike, and are common to most research (Knight, 2002). One of the biggest challenges was finding a suitable time for the interview. Even though we arranged times with the participant there were several late cancellations. Finding a convenient place to meet, where the interviewee would feel comfortable and relaxed was another practical challenge. Interviews normally took place in community centres or offices. However, in one case, the 'new settler' suggested we conduct the interview in their car because she felt that there would be more privacy and less interruption, although an unconventional location, it was a very successful interview. In two other cases, interviews took place in the home of the 'new settler', where they tended to be very relaxed as they were in their own territory.

2.4.2 Gaining Access

The CAP contacts allowed us to gain access to new settlers. This was not without its problems. Although we discussed and provided written criteria for our community contacts, they did not always know if an individual fulfilled the criteria. This only became evident during the interview. Consequently, in some instances we interviewed individuals who only partially fulfilled our initial criteria of high level qualifications gained overseas, and a 'new settler'. We considered ignoring these interviews from the data set, but decided on balance to include the information gathered and specify in the final report the context of the comment.

2.4.3 A collaborative Approach

From previous experience, and knowledge of the community, we recognised the practical and ethical dangers of parachuting in, gathering information, and leaving. In accord with our overall collaborative approach when working with the community, and after discussion with some of our community contacts it was decided to address the possible imbalance of power between researcher and 'new settler' by offering several forms of practical support. For instance, we offered to review curriculum vitae and find out names and information about courses or areas of work in which the 'new settler' had expressed an interest. This approach enabled participants in the research to enrich their 'linking social capital' (Woolcock, 1998) by acquiring links to access additional sources of support. Seven new settlers we interviewed used this opportunity for additional assistance. The pre interview discussion and permission form addressed issues of confidentiality and anonymity.

2.4.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Assuring confidentiality and anonymity for all participants was an important feature of the data collection process. To respond to concerns expressed by participants when disseminating the views of practitioners and policy makers within the NW case study we ensured quotations did not include details that might reveal an individual's identity and grouped types of organisation together. For reporting purposes, we referred to practitioners and policy makers' gender, and their affiliation to one of the following collective agencies:

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- Community Voluntary Service – CVS;
- Umbrella Organisations – UO;
- Learning Providers – LP;
- Standard abbreviations are used for large organisations, such as Primary Care Trust – PCT.

2.4.5 Dissemination

Dissemination of case study findings consisted of:

- interim feedback to delegates at the Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research for the Education of Adults (SCUTREA) 2005 conference as part of a joint REPP roundtable discussion;
- a consultative workshop summarising the main findings and providing participants with an opportunity to offer additional comments for inclusion in the final report;
- a report based on the case study distributed to participating organisations and other relevant organisations;
- a workshop and contribution to the Building Bridges: the role of education and employment in refugee integration, Leeds Conference July 2006
- an executive summary of main findings and recommendations posted on the CAP and REPP project websites

Our dissemination strategy aimed to raise awareness of underlying issues, provide a stimulus for organisational discussion and a change in practice. A particular consideration when disseminating findings was to ensure anonymity of practitioner and policy makers. We addressed this by careful selection of quotations and examples, as well as relating issues to organisational categories, rather than specific organisations as outlined in 2.4.4.

3 Context

3.1. The North-West Case Study

3.1.1 Geographical Location

The case study relates to the experiences of minority ethnic adults living in Preston. Granted city status in 2002, Preston is located at the centre of the county of Lancashire's transport and business network with easy access of the M6 (North and South) M61 (Northwest – Manchester), M55 (Blackpool and Fylde), and M65 (East Lancashire). Overall Preston consists of nineteen wards, six fall in the bottom 10% nationally for multiple deprivation indices based on the ONS indices of deprivation (2000), 6 for income, 6 employment, 9 health, 5 education, 7 housing, and 9 child poverty (See Appendix 4).

3.1.2 Neighbourhood Profile

Preston is the administrative centre for Lancashire County Council, which until 1997 included the two unitary authorities of Blackburn and Darwen, and Blackpool. Preston City Council plays an active role and is in receipt of regeneration initiatives including ESF Objective II, Single Regeneration Budget and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) identifies Preston as one of the 88 most deprived local authority areas in the country (Preston City Council, 2002). The city has a mixed economy based on traditional manufacturing industries including textiles and engineering. Major employers include: Alstom (train manufacturers) and Bae Systems (military / commercial aircraft manufacturing).

In recent years numerous partnerships have formed to tackle aspects of deprivation, some have a specific focus for example education or employment, while others bring together agencies whose primary concerns enable the partnership to adopt a more holistic or joined up approach. For example, the AvenCentral Partnership is a locally based regeneration partnership within the City of Preston that was established in August 2000 to oversee the management and implementation of a £57 million regeneration programme for the AvenCentral area to improve the social, economic and environmental well being of the AvenCentral area (<http://www.avencentral.org.uk/>).

In contrast, the Preston Together Learning Partnership (PTLP) provides a focus for key educational providers including the University of Central Lancashire, Preston College, Cardinal Newman College, Lancashire County Council's Adult Learning Service and Workers' Education Association. Together PLTP seek to plan and deliver educational opportunities in accord with shared strategic goals whereby they aim to promote the value of learning and co-operation between learning providers and encouraging the voice of learners and potential learners.

The Preston Community Impact Group (CIG) represents an example of good practice by the Business in the Community. This is an employment-focused partnership that was established by Business in the Community (BITC) in 1998. The CIG partnership aims to increase the scale, impact and sustainability of business involvement in tackling key social and local issues in areas of deprivation in Preston (BITC website, 2005).

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3.1.3 Population profile

This section provides an overview of the Preston population based on data collected for the 2001 Census.

Age, Gender, Ethnicity and faith profile

Preston has a population of 129,633 people, 51% female and 49% male, with 72% of the population aged between 16 and 74. 85.5% of the population are white, compared with the English average 91.3%. Indians account for the largest minority ethnic group at 8.8% and Pakistanis represent 2.1% of the Preston population. Both Hindu and Muslim populations in Preston are above the national English and Welsh average, with 2.1% in Preston compared to 1.1% Hindus, and 8.2% compared to 3.0% Muslims. The greatest proportion of Hindus and Sikhs within the North West region, live in Preston. Preston has 7.2% of the population born outside the EU compared with 6.6% for the average English and Welsh population.

	% born in UK	% born outside UK
Mixed Race	91.35	8.65
Indian	56.75	43.25
Pakistani	56.70	43.30
Bangladeshi	48.53	51.47
Other Asian	49.40	50.60
Black Caribbean	48.57	51.43
Black African	30.04	69.96
Other Black	77.38	22.62
Chinese	24.09	75.91
Other Ethnic Group	13.73	86.27
All Ethnic Minorities	57.40	42.60

Table 1: Percentage of Preston population, ethnic groups born inside or outside UK

Out of this 7.2% born outside the EU, there is a notable difference between particular groups. Preston's Chinese (75.91%) and Black African (69.96%) population have significantly more members born outside of the UK. Similarly high figures of between 43-52 % of the Asian communities have origins outside of the UK. In contrast, Preston's mixed race population has only 8.65% who are born outside of the UK (Preston City Council, 2001).

Education and Employment

Of the minority ethnic groups, the educational profile summarized in table 2, highlights the considerable variation in the educational qualifications held by members of different minority ethnic groups. The community with the lowest level of educational attainment is within the Bangladeshi community, where only 17.46% has a higher education qualification and 50.26% of the Bangladeshi community has no qualifications. Although higher than the national profile, these figures do reflect the

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national findings for the Bangladeshi community where nearly half (48%) of Bangladeshi women and 40% of Bangladeshi men have no qualifications (National Statistics Online, 2004; Ofsted, 2004). A higher percentage of adults with no qualifications also exist within Preston's Indian (45.80%), Pakistani (45.77%) and Black Caribbean (45.35%) communities, compared to the national UK average of Indian (18%), Pakistani (34%) and Caribbean (17%) (National Statistics Online, 2004). Those with the highest percentage of their community population with a higher education qualification came from the Black African (48.50%) and Chinese (42.31%) communities of Preston.

Qualified Workforce (People aged 16-74)

	No qualifications	Lower Level Qualifications	Higher Level Qualifications	%		
				No	Lower	Higher
Mixed	189	422	137	25.27	56.42	18.32
Indian	3669	3142	1200	45.80	39.22	14.98
Pakistani	833	693	294	45.77	38.08	16.15
Bangladeshi	95	61	33	50.26	32.28	17.46
Black Caribbean	341	292	119	45.35	38.83	15.82
Black African	17	69	81	10.18	41.32	48.50
Black Other	19	34	12	29.23	52.31	18.46
Chinese	120	150	198	25.64	32.05	42.31
Other Asian	159	147	87	40.46	37.40	22.14
Other	54	63	87	26.47	30.88	42.65
TOTAL	5496	5073	2248	42.88	39.58	17.54

Note:

Lower Level Qualifications = Levels 1-3 of National Key Learning Targets e.g. GCSEs, O Levels, NVQ Levels 1-3

Higher Level Qualifications = Levels 4+ of National Key Learning Targets e.g. 1st Degrees, Higher Degrees, NVQ levels 4 and 5, HND, HNC

Table 2: Breakdown of educational qualifications within minority ethnic groups

Employment within Preston is 4.4% below the English and Welsh average. 6.8% of the population compared with 5.5% of the English and Welsh average are permanently sick or disabled. Table 3 below highlights the figures for the number of people economically active (aged 16-74, working or looking for work in the week before the Census), Employed (any person who did paid work the week before the Census whether as an employer or self employed, this includes people on sick leave, annual or maternity leave from work), unemployed (not in employment but available to start work in the next 2 weeks, looked for work in past 4 weeks or is waiting to start a new job) and economically inactive (retired, student unless working or economically active, looking after family/home, permanently sick/disabled and is unable to work within 2 weeks).

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	% Black	% Mixed	% Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi	% Chinese/Other	% All Ethnic Minorities
Economically Active	37.73	38.55	35.54	33.96	35.82
Employed	34.36	34.70	32.19	33.07	32.56
Unemployed	3.38	3.85	3.35	0.89	3.26
Economically Inactive	24.53	22.91	28.91	32.08	28.36

Table 3: Kearsley, 2001 Preston Workforce Profile based on Office for National Statistics, Census 2001

Transport and Housing

The percentage of households without a car in Preston is 31.4% compared to the English and Welsh average of 26.8%, consequently it is ranked 12th in the North West region. Although there is a comprehensive transport system within the North West, the challenges of using public transport and additional time required were discussed as a potential barrier to accessing education and employment. A particular example related to teaching. Whilst the Teacher Training Agency is keen to recruit members of minority ethnic community and both Colleges of Higher Education have participated in initiatives to increase participation, they are located in the north and the south of the county, which is some distance from the major minority ethnic populations.

Migration to Preston

Preston's 2001 census figures show that out of its 18,786 minority ethnic population, 8,002 of these were born outside of the UK (Preston City Council, 2001). Currently, Preston is not a designated refugee settlement. Despite this, since 1890 when Jewish refugees arrived escaping anti-semitism, Preston has provided a base for a range of different minority ethnic groups arriving for economic, political or environmental reasons, many of whom were attracted by the textile and engineering industries (Hunt, 1992; The Harris Museum & Art Gallery, 1998).

The majority of Preston's current BME population come from the African Caribbean and Asian communities. The first group arrived in Preston in 1955 and came from the Caribbean, with the intention of gaining better economic opportunities. This labour migration slowed down considerably with the introduction of the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962 (Eriksson, 1987; Hunt 2003). Similarly, between 1960 and 1965, the South Asian communities predominantly from the Punjab and the Gujarat arrived with the expectation of economic prosperity. Initially the men arrived as 'labour migrants' followed by their families in the following decade. The East African Asians, who were mainly from the Gujarat, did not arrive until the years 1968 to 1972, as a result of political pressure in Kenya or as refugees from Uganda. The original members of the Bangladeshi community come mainly from the Sylhet district, they also arrived within the UK in the mid 70's, however, only small numbers settled in Lancashire. Since then the Bangladeshi community has continued to grow in small numbers mainly in the form of family re-unions (Eriksson, 1987).

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Since the early 1980s small numbers of refugees have settled in Preston and then left, such as Vietnamese refugees (Eriksson,1987). The most recent group of arrivals has been from Montserratian families, who left their island because of the volcano disaster in 1995.

3.2 Participant Profile

There were 13 new settlers interviewed, seven were female, six male. Using the census categories, nine were Asian and four Black. new settlers came from seven countries, one from Bengal, Jamaica, Monserrat and Singapore, two from Nigeria and Pakistan and five from India.

Country	Number of New Settlers	Country	Number of New Settlers
Bengal	1	Nigeria	2
Jamaica	1	Pakistan	2
Monserrat	1	Indian	5
Singapore	1		

Table 4: Participant profile according to country of origin

There were six Hindus, four Muslim and three Christian in the group. Seven indicated that their religious beliefs definitely influenced how they approached life and helped them to explain their response to what seemed the more challenging aspects of their life experiences in the UK. For instance, Aba explained how her faith played a very important role in giving her a sense of belonging and inner strength, as well as tolerance and understanding of people from diverse backgrounds.

3.2.1 Language

During interviews, new settlers were asked to assess themselves and gave examples of the contexts in which they communicated with others, the type of reading material, and writing tasks in which they were involved. Since arrival in England, two people attended ESOL classes, and one person attended extra English language lessons as part of their UK Higher Education experience. Many people explained how they studied English in their country of origin, but still found people made assumptions that underestimated their language competency. Aba explained:

there was a perception that if you are African, your academic and English language would not be to the extent that you could complete assessments

In some cases, new settlers seemed to be overly critical of their own abilities, indicating that they spoke, read, and wrote English well, rather than very well. This is significant, as this may result in them assuming others, for whom English is a first language, will automatically be more proficient.

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	Not at all	A little	Well	Very well
English Speaking			7	6
English Reading			3	10
English Writing			4	9

Table 5: Self-assessment by new settlers of their level of English

Overall, new settlers ranked their spoken English less highly than their reading and writing abilities. With such small numbers and no objective measurement, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from this. However, other North West research by (McMichael, 2000; Patel, 2002) indicated that personal confidence when communicating in the spoken word was an important factor with respect to individuals' sense of belonging and ability to pursue educational and employment goals. Milbourne (2002) also identifies confidence in communicating in English, as a potential obstacle to participation in education and employment. Several practitioners believed that there was a close link between levels of confidence and a person's ability to communicate and engage with public organisations including educational establishments, local authority, health and social services. One public sector professional said:

confidence comes with communication. There are issues for the BME community whether they are a 'new settler' or been here 40 years, one is the difficulty in understanding public sector language. This raises problems with consultation documents, which are written in organisation speak, ... members of the community organisations are expected to understand language. They wonder why people don't respond to consultations.

Participants provided examples of how confidence and competence in their use of English played an important role in accessing services. For example, when Bandhu first came into the country he realised that he understood English more than he could speak or write. He felt that this acted as an obstacle when he tried to complete vocational qualifications relating to his employment. Interestingly, Catherine highlighted a practical issue regarding how she used English:

I am too direct in language. English for example, I do not go round and round, they think is polite. If English is my fourth language I won't be going round and round, 'oh please'... making things longer...I would go to the point...maybe people think I am too direct.

Within an educational context, several new settlers explained how extra English support and tutor support was useful in terms of understanding how to complete and structure assessments. A specific issue reported by new settlers who felt confident communicating in everyday situations related to technical language associated with particular subjects. For instance, Catherine referred to examples of jargon for instance 'lottery' and 'jackpot' that she initially struggled with, and explained how people would laugh at her, which made her feel embarrassed. To avoid this embarrassment, she would tape lectures and use members of her social networks to assist her in working out their meaning outside the session. She was also persuaded to enrol on an intermediate English course, although she was not convinced that this

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was the answer as her needs were more specific. Catherine's resourcefulness, problem solving capacity and use of her own support network resonates with the features of empowerment as identified by the European Union's Thematic Focus Group (1999) who stress the:

Need for the excluded individuals to take responsibilities (prise de responsabilite) or to decide for themselves (selbsbestimmung). From this viewpoint, self-help and self-employment can be starting points. The chance to take initiatives to improve one's situation is sometimes considered as a chance to become an active citizen (approche citoyenne, burgerzin). This approach capitalises on a desire to play a full part in improving the quality of life in the local community (Thematic Focus Group, 1999, p5, cited by Walters et al (2001, p19)

There were numerous examples of new settlers establishing links with community groups that not only allowed them the opportunity to develop their spoken and written English, but also enabled them to engage in activities associated with active citizenship, which helped develop confidence.

Within this group of new settlers there was no one for whom English was a significant problem, however, practitioners did refer to competency in English as a key factor in accessing both education and employment. A common example according to representatives from CC and CVG2, occurs when a husband does not speak the language. Due to the language barrier it is difficult to gain mainstream work, so they get work in retail shops stacking shelves, until confidence grows. This is far from ideal and often a waste, but access to appropriate ESOL is not always available or does not always address the specific needs of the individual.

3.2.2 Religion

Religious beliefs varied in their importance for, and impact on, how individuals lived their lives and responded to the situations in which they found themselves. Nobody interviewed felt that their faith was not important to them - 7 people said that their faith was 'very important' to them and 6 people stated that their faith was 'important'. Marita described the importance of her religion, and how her upbringing as a Catholic influenced her morally in terms of wanting to do work which helps other people. For others, their religious beliefs influenced decisions about work and how they approached other people, this was, however, something that was personal and did not necessarily affect how others interacted with them. Halima did mention that wearing a headscarf made her stand out, and although it was difficult to prove, she felt that it was something that influenced how others treated her.

One public sector professional highlighted the importance of people in the workplace gaining an understanding of the cultural needs of their customers and colleagues. They explained how Christian morals have traditionally driven organisational strategies, and stressed the importance of diversity within the public sector. An example of the type of shift that is happening within the hospital and larger learning provider context is the move from a Christian Chapel to a multi-faith centre.

3.2.3 Disability

Seven of the new settlers declared a disability, which is probably because one of the community gatekeepers belonged to a minority ethnic disability community group (CVG1). Two of the three new settlers connected with the CVG1 reported discrimination based on their disability, which they felt was a more significant factor than their ethnicity. For example, Deepak explained that after a back injury he had to leave work. Later on he then found it difficult to gain employment due to his disability despite numerous applications.

Having a disability or health condition also influenced decisions about work. Samina for instance, explained how she had declined suggestions to seek promotion, believing that she would find the increased responsibility and additional hours too much. Although, Samina did not discuss this during the interview, it is probable that she was unaware of support available for disabled people in the workplace under the Disability Discrimination Act. (Shropshire, 1999) noted that minority ethnic adults are often less aware of their legal position and entitlements, and (Fieldhouse, 2002) have reported that minority ethnic young people are less likely to be aware of the support available. The increased use of friends and family as sources of support and information is also likely to reduce the likelihood of their awareness of support available for disabled employees. According to research commissioned by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC, 2004) employers fall into three categories with respect to employing disabled people, 'nearly there – good neighbours', 'potential partners – thoughtless neighbours' or 'naïve discriminators – nuisance neighbours'. Thirty two percent (n = 1000) of SMEs fall within the naïve discriminator category. As such, they lack awareness of their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and are more likely to discriminate against people with a disability who come from minority ethnic community. Forty-two percent of the naïve discriminators think it would be difficult to employ someone from a minority ethnic background and regard disabled employees as a demand on their finances (37%) and their colleagues (33%). This negative attitude is one that new settlers had experienced, with one suggesting that this was the reason for their difficulties in gaining employment.

4 Education

4.1 Overview

The age at which people finished their full time education varied. Two people finished compulsory education at 16 years, nine at 18 years and two at twenty. Four people had no Higher Education (HE) experience, five had overseas HE experience and four had UK HE experience.

Regardless of their previous educational experience, many new settlers arrived expressing an interest in continuing their education. Some wanted to pursue a different area of work and believed a course would assist them in realising this goal. Some anticipated that they would need to build on previous qualifications, whilst others realised that they would need to undertake additional or in some cases repeat very similar courses to those previously taken, in order to gain recognition in the UK. Often they only discovered that their qualifications were not recognised as equivalent once they arrived in the UK.

Barriers and strategies that supported access to, and participation in, learning varied according to each new settler's circumstances. Feedback from practitioners and policy makers indicated that they were often aware of the problems faced by new settlers. Their comments helped to confirm and explain the background factors and external restrictions that shape the policies and practice of their own and other community groups, umbrella organisations and learning providers, when working with new settlers. We have used key barriers and supportive mechanisms identified by new settlers when deciding which educational factors to report in this case study.

4.2 Barriers to education

When asked to discuss the barriers to participation in education, eight of the new settlers identified finance as a main barrier. Three explained that they felt uncomfortable about using family finances to support their own learning goals and two felt that studying would take up time that they ought to spend working and contributing to the family finances. Two new settlers referred to educational provider's unwillingness to recognise existing qualifications and two people mentioned misinformation or poor advice as their main barriers to learning.

As might be expected the extent to which a particular barrier restricted an individual's opportunity to participate varied. Often it was a combination of factors that ultimately prevented or made it difficult for people to pursue their learning interests, whereas it was personal qualities, family support networks or chance encounters with the right person that enabled them to overcome a particular barrier. Other barriers to learning included:

- Access to information
- Attitudes – family and learning providers
- Childcare
- English Language ability and confidence
- Finance
- Time
- Transport

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- Cultural environment where courses are delivered outside of CVG's

In addition to the barriers mentioned, the attempts of new settlers to participate in learning indicate that the problems they faced when trying to access appropriate learning opportunities were often associated with issues of progression and experiences of racism within the learning environment (see 7.3).

4.2.1 Finance

The concerns about how to finance study included direct and indirect costs associated with the course. In addition, many worried about the loss of income if they secured a place on a full time course. Limited finances tended to restrict new settlers access to appropriate courses in particular higher level courses that would have enabled them to progress. Generally higher-level courses had higher fees, because new settlers were not eligible for grants or fee exemptions this meant the cost was prohibitive. Although Ajit spoke about courses being too expensive, he assumed from things people said that he was not eligible for a grant because he had not been in the country long enough, he referred to a 'three year rule' but was uncertain about the reliability of this knowledge. See 4.2.3 for further examples of accessing information.

A lack of finances was regarded as a significant barrier because it would entrap new settlers in a vicious circle, which delayed the process of settling. This is perhaps particularly noticeable for women, whose differential opportunities to pursue certain jobs outside the home may delay their settling in process. For example, CVG3 explained a common situation for some women:

they can't work because they need to speak English, the colleges charge 6 pounds an hour for fees, their husband won't pay for education. Therefore there is a delay in education [and] employment for a further two years, because then their education becomes free.
Female, CVG3

In other cases, there was a tendency for new settlers to access free community based courses, whilst these were useful in tackling isolation and building confidence, especially in use of English, they were rarely the ideal course in terms of academic ability. Several CVG and LP practitioners referred to regulations concerning eligibility and described how some individuals who understood the system were able to gain a free place. As LP1 explained:

If they tick 'no' to being a UK citizen, they have to go to the international department and they get charged. What I find is that most people just tick the box (yes they are a citizen). I have not got an obligation to check this when enrolling on ESOL classes. ... [I know] community liaison teams give advice and guidance – there is not much you can say. Male, LP1

LP1 pointed out the irony of the alternative scenario whereby new settlers did not understand the system or the forms: '*sometimes it is better if people don't understand the question or answer it incorrectly, because then I am unable to check out eligibility*'. The problem of gaining citizenship status, is further exacerbated as a female from LP2 described the situation whereby Level 3 in basic skills is required to gain citizenship within the UK, which places additional pressures to enrol onto

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courses. In response to this situation, LP2 recommended that if finance is a problem for new settlers, completing small modules rather than long programmes such as 3-year programmes may help minimise the cost, particularly if you are approaching the 'three year period'. Often course fees are calculated on the learners status at the point at which the enrol onto the programme, which means that even if a student is classified as a UK citizen part way through the programme they will still have to pay international student rates.

Several new settlers mentioned the tension of finding enough money within the family income, or using the family finances to fund further study. Bandhu explained that although he wanted to complete further qualifications there was a conflict between funding education, covering the costs of living within the UK, and earning enough money to send back to his retired father in India. This point was confirmed by female CC1 who noted that for new settlers *the priority [is] to get a roof over their heads and food on the table*'. Some new settlers were understandably frustrated at having to pay to repeat a course or qualification, which they had already acquired.

4.2.2 Qualifications

A lack of recognition of overseas qualifications is a common problem, facing refugees and asylum seekers (ECRE, 1999, para 72-74) as well as the minority ethnic adults within this case study. Although Article VI of the Lisbon Convention reads:

Each party shall take all feasible and reasonable steps within the framework of its education systems and in conformity with its constitutional, legal, and regulatory provisions to develop procedures designed to assess fairly and expeditiously whether refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation fulfil the relevant requirements for accessing higher education, further higher education programmes or employment activities, even in cases where the qualifications obtained in one of the Parties cannot be proven through documentary evidence. Unfortunately, no EU country has ratified the Lisbon Convention. Quoted by (Salinas, 2003 p49)

Both employers and learning providers lacked knowledge and understanding about the transferability of existing qualifications. Clarifying the level of qualifications and their credit value was time consuming and some new settlers gave up and resigned themselves to having to repeat qualifications. For some, this was very frustrating, for others, it allowed them to consolidate previous learning. Female, CVG 3 explained how having to repeat a qualification:

can cause some frustration for the women who come across as they regard themselves with higher expectations than what they are actually qualified to do. This causes them stress and tension as they are having to go back to college to spend a similar length of time to gain qualifications they feel like they have wasted their time. CVG3

The challenge facing learning providers is to enable new settlers to appreciate the difference between existing qualifications and similar ones in the UK and accept the exchange value of their qualification.

If students are not up to scratch and have to do other qualifications – most people are OK when it is explained why they have to do extra

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courses. ... Odd students who feel their qualifications are higher than what we say – as long they understand that we are not saying we are judging them as being academically poor but that the level and education system is different then they are OK. LP3

Not all new settlers were frustrated as female LP3 noted:

A lot of students have a love of education, they don't mind so long as they reach the goal they want to.

The attitude of each 'new settler' seemed to be significant in determining their approach to gaining new qualifications. For Aba, educational goals were linked to her career aspiration to support people who come from abroad. Aba's highest qualification was an NVQ 3 in Information Advice and Guidance which she completed with VOISE (a voluntary organisation training consultancy). She has also gained a Level 2 'Learn to Teach' qualification completed with the Learning Skills Council. Both qualifications she gained through staff development opportunities within the community organisations where she worked.

Demonstrating competency in written and spoken English was an issue identified by new settlers and 'practitioners'. The ESOL provision offered and the response of individual new settlers varied. Inevitably perhaps, practitioners in whatever context who provide initial IAG acted, as gatekeepers, whose assumptions had significant implications on the range of services new settlers, were informed about or able to access. As Aba explained:

When I first arrived in the UK, I went to the job centre who gave me advice about where I could complete courses. There was an initial presumption that I would need to attend ESOL classes although I felt that my English was adequate.

Once she contacted the college, she found that she was able to bypass the ESOL provision and enrol on a computer course, which she described positively, explaining that the teachers were:

particularly helpful [giving you] the structured times to complete extra work such as reading. The teachers [really] pushed you to achieve the highest standard you could possible gain.

4.2.3 Access to Information, Advice and Guidance

Within Preston, a few key CVS organisations have secured funding to enable them to employ qualified staff to give information, advice and guidance (IAG). There appears, however, to be a mismatch in understanding about the features needed if the IAG service it is to be accessible and meet the needs of the different communities. There is also an assumption that once information has been provided that new settlers will be able to act upon the information in a rational manner. There appears to be little recognition of the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1997) required in order to use the information to achieve specific goals, or the importance of trust derived from social capital, which is necessary to make use of the information or advice provided. One CVG practitioner shared their frustration:

The problem appears to be that although funders appear to have the understanding of the importance of providing an advice and guidance service, they don't however share that community understanding of

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how communities operate. People tend to prefer to use services that they feel comfortable in. For example, women only environments, faith, cultural and the vicinity of the organisation all have an impact on where a person goes for advice. This means that providing just one service in one community organisation is not sufficient, it is also possible that it could be alienating a large sector of a community from accessing that service.

This reflects findings from Houghton and Sethi's (2004) work relating to community provision. One example of a service, which appeared to work well, was a CVG who would take an individual through the different stages of gaining education through to employment. Many community groups developed partnerships with local FE, HE and other adult education providers to enable the provision of accredited courses within a community environment (See 4.3).

Overall, there was a general lack of Information Advice and Guidance (IAG), which was partly due to the long term funding difficulties faced by CVGs. Their dependence on external funding, which was often short term, meant that there was a high staff turn over, communities often lacked the resources to employ full time trained workers, which reduced their ability to provide accurate information. Several spoke about the tension and need to achieve a balance between providing a service which people felt comfortable accessing and a quality service. Although more formal services might have more upto date information they appear to be less easy for new settlers to find out about and thus access. new settlers tended to make initial contact via friends and family and local community organisations, which were easier to locate, and appeared less mysterious or official.

As the IAG workers involved within a CVG were often from a similar cultural background, gender, faith, or bilingual, this appeared to make the process of developing trust easier. This ensured delivery of IAG within a holistic context, which according to (Preece and Houghton, 2000) is an important feature and recommendation for community based adult learners.

Information, advice and guidance within the CVGs often extended beyond what might be typically expected. The levels of advocacy needed and provided maybe greater. For instance, there were examples of women getting a job and continuing to contact the CVG to ask for advice about how to do certain tasks. As CVG3 explained, often the women feel unsure about the expectations of their English employers and want to ensure that they do things the 'right way'. This uncertainty, based on not knowing the 'English ways' threatened their confidence and belief that they have the right to participate, which in turn potentially jeopardised their engagement with education or employment. As Lister (1997) states:

To act as a citizen requires first a sense of agency, the belief that one can act; acting as a citizen, especially collectively in turn fosters that sense of agency (p38)

Community based guidance experiences tended to tackle the wider issues, which need addressing as well as the more factual information available via learning providers' or the job centre guidance services.

4.2.4 Accessing higher education

Six of the new settlers had accessed higher education since living in the UK. Four expressed a desire to pursue higher study, but explained that the cost, time and family commitments were prohibitive. LP3 outlined examples that highlighted the impact that a lack of awareness and understanding of the UK system made on the process of accessing higher education. Other LPs and CVGs who provided IAG confirmed that many new settlers did not realise that they could not access funding (see 4.2.1), or that their qualifications would not automatically be recognised (see 4.2.2).

For new settlers who do access higher education there are numerous practical, academic and social hurdles to overcome as Catherine's account of her experiences of studying for an MA illustrate.

It was like when you first send a child to nursery. It was very frightening ... finding my own way...I had never had experience of using big libraries...not big or small...I never used library. I did not know how to find the books, which section and where... it was quite difficult in the first six months particularly. ...

Her attempt to seek help from the Students' Union resulted in invitations to a host of social events which she mistakenly thought were a compulsory feature of the course. Therefore, despite being tired and coping with the academic requirements she forced herself to attend, until she realised these were optional. Understanding the academic and social conventions especially when these differed from previous higher education experience was often a culture shock.

Although living in the UK, the experience of new settlers within a higher education context resonates with that of international students. Even when new settlers gain classification as UK students, their previous experience in different higher education system means that they often have more in common with overseas students. This influences not only on how they access higher education but also their experience of studying in a UK HEI.

4.2.5 Studying in higher education

Experiences of studying in higher education varied according to an individual's prior experiences of education. Catherine described her experiences of the Pakistan higher education system; she believed that even though they spoke in English when compared to the UK, she felt Pakistan was an under-resourced learning environment, with limited access to library resources and learning technology. This meant she felt unprepared for studying in the UK.

Technology was a big issue ... I did not have at all experience of technology, the area I was working in [had] no telephone, or computers there... electricity it is there, if it goes off...6 months we can be without electricity...so TV and these things we did not have at all. So when coming here the technology, the use of machinery, and the use of how to handle things, and cultural difference was a barrier.

Catherine's initial experience of studying in an English HEI was thus a bewildering and frightening experience.

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Previous experience was not the only factor to influence higher education study; language support (see 3.2.1) and financial constraints often impacted on course related decisions. For some, their financial circumstances meant they had to work part time whilst studying, for others they felt unable to pursue additional opportunities, such as work experience. Ali's account described how he had to work part-time throughout the course, because his qualifications were not from the UK he was told he had to go onto the Year 0 programme, which is an access course for mature students who have no formal qualifications and want to progress onto to a combined honours degree. Following the Year 0, he progressed onto a BA in Marketing and Public Relations, achieving a grade 2:2. One of the attractive features of this course was that it contained an option to have a year placement within a company. Although he felt the UK work experience would be helpful in securing a job, he did not take up this opportunity because this would have involved an extra year to pay course fees. On reflection, Ali commented how he felt this decision had disadvantaged him when he began to compete for graduate jobs.

Learning providers offered additional insights into the range of learner support systems available. Since their interviews followed those of the new settlers it was not possible to check out levels of awareness or specific use of services. There was some overlap between the services new settlers identified as important to help them succeed in their studies and the services already offered, which suggests that in some situations support is already available, but not well or perhaps appropriately advertised. This is, however, a perennial problem and not exclusive to new settlers.

Childcare was described as a common barrier. Unfortunately, learning providers often found it difficult to identify enough funding for the type of support new settlers required. As one learning provider explained:

the Learning Skills Council do not fund non-accredited courses, ... we therefore have to subsidise the courses, there are problems providing crèches if they are not cost effective, sometimes we have to pay for a crèche worker [who] may only look after one child. They can only look after a child for two hours according to legal guidelines. The person also has to drop off the child in one place and then go to another place for the course. It wasn't ideal or cost effective. What we do now is that those who are on accredited courses will be given a voucher to pay for childcare with a registered childcare provider. [we] can also claim most of the money back from LSC using this voucher scheme ... mothers feel better being able to choose their own childcare provider.

The changes within the system and the range of arrangements for childcare offered by different learning providers makes it difficult for new settlers to get a sense of the system. It can thus be very confusing, especially when they gain mixed messages from the providers themselves and well-meaning practitioners from the community whose knowledge is not always up to date.

Several learning providers referred to the impact of mental health issues faced by new settlers which they felt were exacerbated by isolation, a sense of difference, information overload, and the stress of having to study in an environment where systems of support and academic expectations differed from previous learning.

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Although seven new settlers reported a disability, like many international students, there was a reluctance to disclose this disability in case it was used to prevent them studying or gaining employment (see 3.2.3, disability). Learning Providers felt students did not disclose a disability because they feared rejection, however, by not disclosing this limited the range of help and support they were able to provide. In essence, a lack of awareness or possibly trust of the system placed some new settlers in a more difficult and less supported position.

4.3 Aids to Educational Participation

In many respects, strategies to support or encourage educational participation are dependent on tackling the barriers discussed in section 4.2. Possible solutions tended to depend on individual qualities (including resilience, motivation, and access to personal support networks) or learning providers and community voluntary groups developing and delivering relevant support mechanisms, which frequently benefited from working together in partnership. Whilst there was a tendency to see solutions as either the responsibility of the individual or the institution, there is a sense in which this divide is artificial. Invariably solutions resulted from tackling the obstacles from both an individual and institutional perspective

Learning Providers and Community Voluntary Groups alike referred to the importance of working in partnership. Within the Preston area, the EU funded Preston Together Learning Partnership (PTLP) was mentioned as an approach designed to facilitate the co-ordination of courses. Whilst there was some agreement about the aims, <http://www.pltp.co.uk/> there appeared to be some confusion about who and how LPs would work with a specific CVG. There was also some tension between LP and CVG as a result of differential access to funding opportunities, in particular the problems of short term funding, which reduce the possibility of longer term strategic planning and provision. These issues are not exclusive to provision within Preston, or for new settlers but extend to adult and community education more generally. Rather than looking at the needs of this group of learners separately, it would seem important to ensure that learning providers and collaborative partnerships take into account their needs when planning future provision.

One of the benefits of community based provision was that it often connected and over time extended an individual's social capital network by providing a:

safe and comfortable environment where there will be people of a similar background. It is important to be in a secure environment, as people need to be happy to learn. Once in a community course they will make friends who may have used some of the mainstream services such as job centre, and then encourage them to use those services i.e. peer support and mentoring. Female, CVG

In this context it is about giving people the chance to build a bond of trust, which is a common component of a social capital network. Individual factors that appear to aid educational participation and access to employment relate to the personal attributes of learners, their determination, motivation and drive to persevere and overcome the barriers presented to them. For instance, Samina's success when she adopted a proactive personal approach whilst trying to gain employment, despite not knowing

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who to contact. A representative of one umbrella organisation outlined some of the qualities, needed for success in education and work, he explained how people:

needed to be a super person in order to survive, they need to be resilient, very strong willed to be successful. Some people have succeeded and gone from strength to strength but very many fall out of the net because they could not face the pressures ... they are an untapped resource and untapped talent in this group. UO2

There is a danger when attributing success and failure to the individual in thinking that the responsibility of overcoming the barriers is down to the individuals. The challenge for learning providers and employers is to develop strategies that encourage individuals and minimise the number of people falling out of the net.

5 Employment

5.1 Overview

The group of new settlers included eight who had previous full-time work experience, four with part-time work experience and one who was not employed. On arrival to the UK three acquired full-time work, six gained part-time work, two were unemployed and two had become self-employed. Within the group, seven were also involved in voluntary work.

Many new arrivals came into the UK with high expectations of gaining comparable employment to what they did in their country of origin. However, it was not often achievable in the short term, and many had to accept lower status, and less well paid jobs. This led to personal frustrations. For instance, Mary still feels she will never gain the status in employment she would have expected if she had stayed in Jamaica. There she was a high level administrator, here she has only been able to acquire part time office posts. She is frustrated at the lack of opportunities especially when she reflects on how her friends who remained in Jamaica have excelled.

5.2 Barriers

There were a number of similarities between the barriers associated with education and employment, these included access to information, the importance of previous experience, and impact of time and funding. Accessing information in order to understand the system and the 'rules' of applying for jobs' relied on new settlers recognising a need for help, finding the right person or service, and then being able to respond to the advice. It was also important to have or acquire the right work experience as well as present that experience in a suitable format to future employers. Once they obtained a new job, issues of progression emerged. The time and necessity to get an income as soon as possible after their arrival often forced new settlers to get a job prematurely, which was often not commensurate with their job before arriving in the UK. As already indicated, the importance of securing an income often prevented them pursuing further or appropriate qualifications, which in the longer term may have been more useful.

5.2.1 Applying for Jobs

The job application process required new settlers to overcome a series of potential hurdles. These included developing a suitable curriculum vitae (CV), preparing for, and getting through the interview. Community and Voluntary Groups played a key role in offering the informal advice that enabled new settlers to become aware of the cultural and contextual differences that they needed to take into account during the job application process. Dadzie (1990) from a national perspective, and Houghton (1998) within a Lancashire context, have both highlighted the importance of adapting guidance for particular groups who have specific requirements and obstacles to negotiate. As this example from CVG 4 illustrates:

when I have worked with qualified overseas people, I have found their CV to be 6-7 pages long and to be very technical and subject focused. I have had to reduce these to 2-3 pages and to be more person focused on their human qualities. CVG 4

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Ajit described how he benefited from feedback on his CV; this was also a service offered as part of the REPP interviews and was something Ajit, amongst others welcomed. A related problem with preparing a CV concerned the equivalence of overseas qualifications; a useful strategy employed by one CVG was to include the equivalence in brackets. Offering advice in order to enable a 'new settler' to understand the UK or a specific employer's expectations regarding a CV or job application was common. However, as one learning provider explained it is important to '*avoid a culture of dependency, and try to encourage people to have a go and to be independent*'.

Samina adopted a very independent and proactive approach, using strategies she had found successful in her home country, however, without the same social capital network, she reported that this was a more challenging task. Successful strategies for gaining employment included using her initiative to visit workplaces and to ask personally about job vacancies. Until she found her job, the typical response she received was that she was overqualified or did not have the right qualifications or experience. Although she took a proactive and personal approach to gaining employment, the fact she did not know which personnel to contact in a large institution was a major obstacle to pursuing certain avenues of employment.

CVGs also helped prepare new settlers for interview; this included practical advice relating to cleanliness, smartness, posture, and eye contact. For example, some women are culturally and religiously discouraged from looking someone in the eye. Current advice from CVG and UO focused on enabling the 'new settler' to change, however, with many employers now stating that they are committed to celebrating diversity within their workforce, it remains to be seen how long this pattern of adaptation will have to continue. Change, especially attitudinal change is a slow process. According to Sanglin-Grant (2003) in a Runnymede Trust briefing paper about equality of opportunity and diversity:

a yawning divide exists between our stated intentions, both verbal and written, ... organisations express high values and aspirations so long as individuals do not have to change what they do (p1).

This concern mirrors comments pertaining to initiatives in the public sector regarding Race Equality Schemes, discussed in 7.4.

5.2.2 Relevant work experience

Many new settlers recognised the need to have relevant work experience, whether that be in a voluntary or paid capacity. Employers were often unwilling to recognise experiences that had been gained in other countries; consequently, in order to demonstrate and gain experience they would undertake voluntary work or accept a job in which they were underemployed.

For instance, Catherine's first job was as a Care Assistant for 'housebound people'. Not only was the pay low, but the level of responsibility was limited and not what she had been used to, however, she explained how it got her out of the house and gave her an opportunity to get to know the area and "*opened the path for me into the community*". This allowed her to develop contacts and demonstrate her skills in community work, which is the area of work she has since followed.

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Another example is Ajit, who whilst he was successful in securing a job using his ICT skills felt that the opportunities available to him were limited because of his current levels of experience, which he attributed to the differences between Indian and UK systems. The differences in ICT systems and the potential wastage of human capital was highlighted by CVG4 who explained:

The British Embassy encourage people with teaching, nursing and IT qualifications and experience to come to the UK. People therefore come with high expectations but when they come to the UK they realise that it is a completely different scenario ... there is no support and their qualifications are not recognised. For the IT people their experience is worse they are very highly qualified and experienced, but they still have problem gaining employment. Some of the IT packages they have used e.g. Oracle and Pascol (?) are not used within the Western world, but still they are technically highly skilled in IT.

The vicious circle in which many new settlers found themselves was understandably frustrating, and policy makers, CVG and public sector practitioners confirmed the extent to which people became trapped in a vicious circle. Marita shared her frustration when she described how UK employers expect people to have the qualifications and practical training or experience before obtaining the job. She found this a difficult idea to comprehend, and was uncertain how she was going to develop this knowledge or experience without the chance to do the job.

Coping with the challenge of having to start 'on a lower rung of the ladder' was according to a practitioner from CVG4, dependent on people having a:

can do attitude, ... they will do what they have to do they have always been like that, whereas other people stumble at the first hurdle, they have the attitude of it's fate that they are not meant to have a job. You need to work step-by-step with these people.

For some individuals, securing a job was also a matter of how they presented their experiences, which highlights the importance of preparing a suitable CV and application, see 5.2.1.

5.2.3 Experience of employment

One CC representative noted that people often:

don't get appointed to the level of their qualifications, they have to work their way up. The perception [is] that they have to work twice as hard, [although] I don't know if that is the reality.

CVG practitioners gave a number of examples of new settlers underemployment or exploitation within the workplace. They believed that these problems tend to be under-reported because individuals did not want to jeopardise their position, see further discussion 7.4. One CVG described how a person with poor language skills would typically end up in the textile industry, which she felt, was "really bad". Despite the introduction of the minimum wage, this was not always adhered to. According to two CVG practitioners, there are cases of employers coercing employees, including new settlers to sign documents saying that they are paid within the legal requirements and have received staff training, even when they have not. Feedback from

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practitioners working within CVG, UO and the public sector indicated that underemployment was common, a finding endorsed by others including Modood, 2004.

One public sector practitioner felt very strongly that positive experiences were often too dependent on an individual champion who informally checked if policies were working. They felt that improvements depended on the allocation of resources for formal monitoring of policy implementation. *“If policies are put into practice this will remove lots of barriers for refugees and new settlers ... it needs the infra structure in place”*. Other practitioners including learning providers and public sector employees warned of the dangers of too many policies leading to a tick box culture, in which policies existed, but the time, training and funding to support these activities was not available, which meant that policies failed at the point of implementation. Several CVG practitioners mentioned the benefits of recognising new settlers as a source of expertise. The idea of employing new settlers, in recognition of *“their specialist cultural understanding of working with the community, of their ethnic origin was one way in which people gained employment”* (CVG3). They believed this was a useful strategy because it enabled people to make a wider contribution to implementing policies.

There were, however, some positive experiences of employment; Aba for instance welcomed the opportunity to use previous skills. She felt valued and useful in her job because it enabled her to give meaningful support to other people that allowed them to lead a sustainable life. Not only did Aba operate as an active citizen, but through her work she encouraged and supported others to help develop the resources of the local community. Similarly, Bandhu who works in a voluntary capacity as a community tutor, was motivated by the learning opportunities he has undertaking and wanted to pass on this experience to other disabled people. These two examples illustrate how work experience not only benefited the individual but provided the impetus and opportunity for new settlers to operate as active citizens (Lister, 1997).

5.3 Aids to Employment

Information, advice and guidance before and during the application process as well as during the induction period of employment is clearly valued by new settlers. Feedback from CVGs suggests that without it, the transition into employment in the UK might not be as smooth. In addition, factors that appear to contribute positively to gaining employment include: specific employment initiatives, voluntary work to develop UK work experience, informal networks to access information about jobs, and insights into the cultural context and conventions of the UK workplace.

5.3.1 Employment Initiatives

Locally, Avencentral included a number of employment projects, which provided practical support and eased the transition into employment. Current initiatives include:

- employment and training opportunities in the construction industry working in partnership with contractors and referral agencies;
- development of an employment charter to establish the employment needs of local people;
- a Women’s Refuge project to increase the services provided by the charity for women;

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- a project with the aim to raise the skill levels of women with a particular emphasis on minority ethnic women to enable them to return to the labour market;
- a project providing support and assistance to people with a disability living in the AvenCentral area by working in partnership with Social Services and Integrate, to cater for disabled people wishing to work for less than 8 hours per week.

One of the ongoing challenges to organisations involved in delivering these initiatives was the dissemination of information to people who needed and might benefit from these initiatives. A specific initiative to support students in employment was offered by the University of Central Lancashire, like many other HEIs it acts as an intermediary and safeguards students by “*providing a support service for them [students] that looks out for students to make sure they don't work too many hours, and [work] with legitimate employers*”. They operate like a “bridge” and source of information about possible jobs. This mirrors the advocacy and support generally available via CVS.

5.3.2 Voluntary Work

Eight of the participants interviewed gained work experience through doing voluntary work within a community and voluntary setting¹. New settlers involvement in voluntary work was generally as a result of initially accessing that service as a client, building trusting relationships within the organization, with the consequence of gaining the confidence to carry out voluntary work. As Marita confirmed, the main way she gained relevant UK work experience was through carrying out voluntary work. She acted as a regular volunteer for the charity ‘Help the Homeless’ who had helped her when she first arrived in the UK. Marita felt it was important “to give back” as they had given her so much support. A CVG4 practitioner highlighted how many Muslim new settlers who were qualified schoolteachers overseas took advantage of opportunities to teach Arabic classes within mosques, and saw this as a means of gaining experience and getting a ‘foot in the door’.

There were numerous examples of new settlers making an active contribution to their community whilst developing relevant work related skills. This approach illustrates how voluntary organisations can provide an alternative to employment and a mechanism for operating as active citizens and thus gaining a voice.

5.3.3 Informal Networks

Many new settlers referred to their family and friends as an important source of information about applying for a job, and how to respond to situations once they were in employment. CVGs confirmed that family and friends played an important role, which made it very difficult for individuals without family connections, who were in danger of isolation. Marita’s story highlights the importance of making contact and finding the right source of support, she described how on arrival to the UK she applied for many posts that she saw advertised in the job centre. She felt employers did not recognise her qualifications and felt her “*ethnicity went against her. ... the application forms were a book ... asking the same questions about 3 times*”. When

¹ Whilst voluntary work may provide an ideal opportunity to gain relevant experience, we anticipate that the high proportion in our sample is due to our sampling strategy, whereby we gained access to new settlers from the voluntary sector.

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she went for an interview, she found the process focused on asking her questions about what she had done, her history rather than whether she could do the job. Although Marita tried to gain support to complete applications forms and develop her interview techniques, it was not until she met her friend Jackie who gave her practical advice and support. Her first job she gained was through someone she knew as a catering assistant in a nursing home. Although this job was not ideal it was enjoyable because there were other black people employed there who she could befriend, trust and with whom she could relax.

The importance of individuals' social capital networks should not be underestimated, however as Putnam 1995 and others including the Office for National Statistics (2001) have identified there are differences between forms of social capital. New settlers informal networks generally tended to be quite closed, this might give a strong 'bonded' form of social capital, but this runs the risk of inherently restricting the source of contacts to those members of a particular group. It was only when new settlers extended their social capital networks to community groups with staff who were themselves well connected with a wider, more diverse network, that bridging became possible, and with it, access to information, resources and contacts who were in a more advantageous position to assist. Whilst new settlers spoke positively about how their friends and family supported and assisted them in pursuing further study or gaining employment, they were also the reason why individuals felt unable to enrol on a course, or accepted a job regardless of whether it was suitable. The interviews with new settlers, practitioners and professionals seemed to confirm the importance of social capital networks, further research is required to reveal their complexity, diversity and value for lifelong learning and employment.

5.4 *Careers in teaching*

Four of the people interviewed had previous careers in teaching before coming to the UK. Halima felt that being a community tutor would be a good way to utilise her skills in an environment in which she felt comfortable. Previously new arrivals could be employed as community tutors and work their way up through the systems such as Bandhu and Banni. However, the new regulations have come into force stating minimum qualification requirements expected of teachers (FENTO, 2002) the:

problem with recruiting tutors with overseas qualifications which act as a further barrier are that they have to have a Skills For Life Qualification to teach ESOL. These have only started to be offered - so they are unlikely to have this qualification. It is now statutory duty that staff once recruited that they have to be teacher qualified within 2 years. Also they have to train existing staff - the amount of numbers of students that can be trained at one time is dictated by how much the university franchise to us- so they have to think when they take on staff will they have the capacity to train this individual LP1

The current criteria to gain access to funding for the Certificate in Education or the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (post compulsory) requires learners to have or acquire paid employment with teaching responsibilities. This often places the 'new settler' in a vicious circle involving funding and experience. They find that they are unable to access teaching unless they can pay the course fees and find a paid placement, when often their only opportunity to do teaching is in a voluntary capacity.

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Whilst Samina was very interested in pursuing a teaching career and was willing to complete a BEd. part-time, was, at the same time, reluctant to redo qualifications she had already acquired in India. An Education Institute advised her that she would have to complete a Mathematics and English examination equivalent to a GCSE and then complete another degree, which she felt was pointless and would have rather sat an examination to have her standards assessed.

A Lancashire County Council pilot project designed to provide training for members of the BME community to deliver community courses is an imaginative attempt to respond to this need for experience as well as training (Houghton and Sethi, 2005).

6 *Community and Voluntary Sector*

Ten of the people interviewed had accessed the community and voluntary sector as a means of support, advice, and guidance for education and seven in terms of employment. Whilst community self help can be enormously beneficial, it is not a panacea (Active Community Unit, 2000). The community and voluntary sector (CVS) have a reputation for helping to fill the gaps in statutory provision, and can often provide a holistic service that is responsive to the needs of a particular group. Positive examples referred to by the new settlers, practitioners and policy makers within this case study include community voluntary groups that cater for social, health, welfare and education needs. However, a common concern related to the quality and range of services offered, with fluctuations within and between one CVG and another. Variations occurred within and between organisations dependent on access to funding, which was often short term which prevented CVGs from being able to develop a longer term approach. The Active Community Unit (2000) identified ethnic minority organisations as playing a particularly valuable role. They also stressed that:

ethnic minority communities and voluntary sector are not homogenous groups; they need to be understood in their cultural, political and social context. (Active Community Unit, 2000 para 4.22)

With respect to the work of supporting new settlers the CVGs fulfilled an important role. However, as a male practitioner from UO1 pointed out there is:

No methodological systematic service – we are not equipped as a collective to lend support to refugees, asylum seekers, and new arrivals (male, UO1)

The absence of strategic thinking or work carried out amongst the CVS to support new arrivals in this town does, however, need to be placed into context that the absence of a large refugee population means that it is not high on anyone's agenda. According to the female CVG3 practitioner, the main reasons why people accessed CVS was because of the, "*safe and comfortable environment*" where people with similar experiences and backgrounds were present. For new settlers with no family links, a faith group was often the first point of contact to make new friends and develop social networks.

The voluntary and community sector offered new settlers an opportunity to '*get a foot in the door*'. The reason given was that often their overseas qualifications and experience was more likely to be accepted from an organisation of a similar cultural or faith background.

7 Racism

7.1 Overview

Six new settlers experienced racism within education. Seven people experienced racism within work. Although five reported no experience of racism within work, one person was not sure, but felt that they might be indirectly discriminated; a further two reported discrimination because of their disability. The new settlers not reporting racism tended to have narrower definitions of racism that did not include the insidious, everyday, or indirect manifestations typical of institutional racism.

7.2 New Arrivals – Definition of Racism

People's understanding of racism varied. Aba described racism as when:

People discriminate against you because you look different, dress different and they use that against you to make you feel bad.

Halima explained that racism was related to unfair treatment based on skin colour or religion, in essence it was "*when they are not ready to accept you for who you are*". Ajit expanded on this lack of acceptance in his definition, describing racism as a form of discrimination that resulted from:

a lack of information and lack of interest in learning about people from other cultures ... and a general tendency for people to be grouped into a block. Ajit

Mary's definition highlighted the insidious nature explaining that: "*racism is underlying it digs at you... it is when one culture despises another out of hate or jealousy*". Although Mary said that her experiences of racism within an educational context did not matter, her body language suggested that she felt downtrodden.

There were examples of direct racism including verbal abuse and indirect racism that Bandhu suggested people might not even be aware of doing, but was evident in people's body language. The instances of institutional or indirect racism arising from the inherent systems and structures within an organization that appeared to be more problematic. As Mary's definition earlier illustrates it is the underlying and ongoing nature of racism that influences levels of confidence overtime. This is or should be a cause for concern, because according to (Walters et al, 2001) confidence is a prime indicator for engendering a sense of empowerment that is required to tackle everyday challenges including racism. The process and outward manifestation as well as the previous experience of racism all had a clear consequence on an individual's ability to identify racism within their own lives.

Prior experiences of racism also influenced how individuals handled the discrimination that they experienced and the impact this had on their confidence, mental and emotional well-being. For example, as a member of a minority ethnic group in Singapore, where she lived before coming to the UK, Banni had already encountered racism frequently within her working life, and was not shocked to face discrimination within the UK. However, Marita from Montserrat, who had no previous experience of racism, cited numerous examples of racism as she described her experiences of life in the UK. Racism was obviously an issue that deeply concerned and affected her:

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...the only thing that has shocked me ...I was not brought up with racism, because we were always taught to treat people with respect ...I expected it because it is a bigger place ...but with equal opportunities ...its not like that Marita.

Racism was not always an obvious black–white issue. It tended to be more complex and within three cases, new settlers felt that the discrimination was from people from another minority group and was due instead to their social class, religious beliefs or cultural background. For example, Halima shared how she faced discrimination from other Nigerians once they realised that she came from a wealthy Nigerian family. Anisha preferred to describe herself as Indian rather than Bengali as she felt that people had negative stereotypes of Bengali people and felt that this disadvantaged her when applying for posts. She described her experience of a job interview, saying:

when I went for a job, the person [interviewing me] couldn't speak English and I thought, you are interviewing me and I thought how the hell on earth did you get the job. ... I phoned back afterwards and said 'could you tell me why I didn't get it and who did get the job'. I found out it was a Muslim and the person [interviewing] was a Muslim, I just knew. The gentleman I spoke to was English and he said, 'you just didn't have the experience'. I felt that was an excuse.

Although it is difficult to prove Anisha's claim, what is clear is that she, like others, felt forced to 'fit in' with normative expectations, which resulted in them adapting their behaviour, and changing their identity, as far as they were able, in order to avoid what they felt was discrimination.

7.3 Racism with Education

Within a college environment, racism took the form of verbal abuse from fellow students for two people. In both situations, the abuse came from younger students. Aba described her experiences of racism within the learning environment saying:

I wouldn't say it was direct, it wasn't from the teacher, but the students think that because you come from Africa you can't do anything. They say, 'how can you do this exam when you come from Africa?' or, 'you won't pass it, why do you come?' But on the exam I got a higher mark than them. I didn't talk too much because I realised I was ahead of them, because in Nigeria I learned English not an African language, so basically I felt I could defend myself. ... I don't think the teacher knew they did it, it was in the break when the teacher wasn't there. ... The first week they started this, there was an impact on me, I discouraged myself, ... I thought maybe I should give up because the exam is so hard. Aba

Another concern raised by two people related to tutor perceptions of their ability and possible tutor bias. Halima felt the tutor doubted she was able to reach UK academic standards and questioned whether her assignments were her own work. Halima felt this was because the tutor did not believe she could submit work of such a high standard. She also reported that when peers copied her work, they gained a higher grade. Atif shared a similar experience saying that he felt that he was marked lower compared to other students in his group for the standard of work he produced.

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However, he explained that he could not prove this, as it was more a feeling, or attitude that he felt the teachers had towards him.

None of the new settlers reported discussing their concerns with tutors or support staff working at any of the learning providers. They seemed to either be unaware of the support systems available to them, or felt unable to talk to someone, for fear of making things worse. This mirrors Hoyt's (2003) findings based on the views of international postgraduate students within higher education. Instead, the new settlers sought support and solutions to their concerns from their friends and family, often this resulted in pursuing educational opportunities available within their local community rather than the larger learning providers. Both Aba and Halima reported more positive experiences when they pursued community based learning opportunities. Aba was full of praise for the support given to mature students in terms of flexibility (time and working at own pace), access to courses within local venues and the support given by community tutors. However, as these new settlers and learners' views reported in research by Patel (2002) demonstrate, there are inevitable problems when trying to find local courses at a suitable level that offer appropriate progression routes.

Marita from Monserrat, who lived in a predominantly white community, believed that she was less motivated because of her negative experiences of being the only black person attending courses on and off campus. *'I felt uncomfortable being the only black person there ... You just put up a barrier up and that's it'* Marita.

Given the hidden and sometimes indirect nature of racism within education, it is not surprising that learning providers remained largely unaware. Whilst community provision was a partial solution for some, it was not a solution that suited everyone. A lack of awareness and confidence in formal mechanisms of support meant that people either did not report their concerns or only discussed solutions with members of their social capital network, whom they trusted. Although some outlet is better than none, it was evident that compared to some, the social networks of this group of new settlers were often quite restricted and this limited the possibility of people being able to make an informed decision about what action to take when they experienced either direct or indirect racism.

Accessing the reality of learners' experiences remains a challenge for all learning providers and needs to be a key feature of their race equality strategies.

7.4 Racism within employment

Racism within employment was not always easy to identify or prove. Some of the practitioners and policy makers, who are arguably in a stronger position than many of the new settlers we talked to, reported examples of racism. For example, a female member of LCC described racism at her previous workplace:

sometimes you can't pin point that it is racism – institutional racism – you can't say that that person said that – unsaid and unseen things happen.

The invisibility of incidents not only makes it more difficult to report, but also results in individuals questioning whether they are experiencing racism. This self-doubt can also extend to questioning ones own abilities. For instance, a male community practitioner reported that:

You are treated as if you are inferior, as if you can't do the job.

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Although seven of the participants felt that they had encountered racism at work, only two of them reported the incident or used the systems in place to tackle the issue. There were a multiplicity of reasons for not reporting racism to those in authority for instance, a lack of information about their rights, fear of victimization or not being believed, uncertainty that they would gain the support needed from management, feelings of apathy, and not feeling it was a big enough problem. Often it was the understandable fear of not wanting to do anything to jeopardize their job. As a male practitioner from UO1 explained:

Once people are in employment, they want to get on with it. The UO1 has no proof of mistreatment or [individuals] not being paid what should have been paid to them. However, from personal experience, people would be fearful, frightened to report any mistreatment.

There were also two incidents relating to the application process, for example, Samina explained how she felt discriminated by other Asian people who were of a different caste, part of India or gender than herself.

Several practitioners associated with larger employers referred to Race Equality policies and related implementation plans including training, as a possible mechanism for bringing about changes in awareness, attitude and action. However, they were concerned that despite training being compulsory, people tended to tick the box, '*they go into their own mode, they aren't interested and think this is not our problem, so [the training] doesn't affect them*' CC.

8 Conclusion

8.1 Limitations

As with any case study the numbers of participants involved make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions. However, we believe that the insights shared by new settlers and practitioners confirm some of the obstacles identified in other research (Aldridge *et al*, 2005; DWP, 2005) including the other REPP case studies. The main mechanism used to gain access to new settlers was via the CVGs and their informal networks, which will have biased the sample of people interviewed. There was also a reliance on the capabilities of the community worker to correctly explain the aims and objectives of the research and the benefits to new settlers to be interviewed. Potential people who fitted the interview criteria for new settlers refused to take part in the interview for various personal concerns.

8.2 Context of recommendations

Although not having to face the challenges of seeking asylum or gaining refugee status, new settlers share many of the real and perceived barriers to education and employment. Findings from the NW case study suggest that there are practical steps that learning providers and employers might take in order to improve access to education and employment.

Individual stories showed how new settlers often perceived obstacles as personal and practical and that there was a sense in which it was their responsibility to overcome the obstacles. Although failure to overcome obstacles or difficulties in realising their aspirations was attributed to themselves, they often explained success in terms of luck in meeting the right person or finding the right service.

There was considerable overlap between ideas generated for learning providers and employers, as well as other stakeholders, for that reason we present recommendations under some general headings of communication, recruitment, progression, empowerment, community engagement, and partnership.

8.3 Recommendations

8.3.1 Communication – Information, Advice and Guidance

- a To ensure gatekeepers working within LPs, CVGs and staff with personnel responsibilities are aware of opportunities offered by partner institutions in order to:
 - Inform new settlers about the range of support and services available and redirect them appropriately;
 - Reduce the number of people new settlers have to contact before they stumble across the 'right' person or service. **LP, CVG, Employer**
- b To use plain English in publicity and to keep format simple, for further advice see <http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/> and for advice about written material for people with dyslexia <http://www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk/main/information/extras/x09frend.asp>
LP, Employer, CVG
- c To improve access to Information, Advice and Guidance, it is important to secure funding that guarantees a quality assured continuous service that is located within the community. To achieve this, one suggestion is for CVGs to

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submit a joint bid to employ staff who can deliver an IAG service in a variety of community outlets. **CVG with financial support from LSC or working in partnership with LCC Adult Guidance Service**

- d To improve quality assurance mechanisms relating to advice and guidance services regarding education and employment opportunities within the UK provided for potential new settlers whilst in their country of origin. In particular detailing pre-requisites of qualifications required or would have to be gained within the UK to be eligible for the HE or employment opportunities they wish to pursue. **LP**

8.3.2 Progression

- a To facilitate progression it is vital that LPs and employers recognise previous educational and work experience. **LP, Employer**
- b To use existing systems such as learning agreements and staff development or appraisal processes to provide new settlers with opportunities to develop and demonstrate relevant skills. **LP, Employer**
- c To support study at higher level by providing a bursary or discretionary grant that could be made available for those new settlers who are particularly disadvantaged and can not meet the cost of course fees. **LP, LEA, LSC**

8.3.3 Recruitment

- a To improve training and monitoring of small businesses' recruitment and equal opportunities policies. **LSC, County, City and Borough Council's**
- b To raise awareness of the systems for recognising alternative qualifications, which may benefit from LPs working more closely with employers **LP, Employers, Job Centre**
- c To establish a network of staff within organisations with an interest in developing more straightforward systems for recognising alternative qualifications. **LP, Employer and IAG staff within CVG, Job Centre**
- d To recognise the importance of offering advice and guidance regarding the preparation of CVs, letters of application and interview techniques, this might involve:
 - Learning providers, Community Voluntary Groups, Job Centre etc. offering to review CVs and letters of application **LP, CVG and Job Centre**
 - Employers making it explicit the level of detail and type of information they expect or require - a strategy likely to benefit all applicants not just new settlers. **Employer**
- e To consider the adoption of the Skills Audits for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (Aldridge *et al*, 2005) or an agreed adaptation of this model to provide a consistent approach and common output which the 'new settler' could use as a basis for discussion with staff in other services they come into contact. **LP, CVG and Job Centre plus other guidance providers**
- f To appreciate the valuable role that CVGs play in providing a first point of contact for new settlers and explore how to keep them informed about new courses, work experience, job opportunities and changes in law affecting new settlers. **LP and Employer**

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- g To publicise 'upskilling' training programmes which might enable new settlers who already have skills in the areas of labour shortage to build on or develop new areas of expertise. **LP, LSC**

8.3.4 Empowerment

- a To develop advocacy or 'buddying' schemes within education establishments in particular Higher Education to meet the emotional and practical support needs of new students recently arrived within the UK. **LP, Employer**
- b To respond to a need expressed by some new settlers and suggested by some CVGs to encourage learning providers to offer 'citizenship training' which includes opportunities to identify rights and legal obligations, cultural awareness training of the British culture and details of support networks for their own cultural/ faith background. **LP, CVG**

8.3.5 Community Engagement

- a To provide opportunities to involve families within adult education guidance interviews as this will encourage greater understanding and respect for the benefits of life long learning which is necessary to secure appropriate employment. This more inclusive approach will allow families to make informed decisions, for example, evaluating the financial pros and cons of investing family funds to cover course fees. **LP, CVG**

8.3.6 Partnership

- a To encourage funding bodies to support partnerships between CVS, statutory, business and enterprise sector to raise awareness of legislative changes and project initiatives that ensure services are meeting the needs of new settlers. Ideally, this should be integrated into the city's strategy of valuing diversity and community cohesion, and should be an ongoing agenda item alongside whilst tackling other issues of inequality such as disability, race, age, sexual orientation and religion. **LP, CVG, Employers and LCC, LSC, and Preston City Council**

8.3.7 Racism

- a To use formal Race Equality policies to promote a more inclusive organisational culture. **LP, Employer**
- b To raise awareness amongst all staff about organisational policy relating to racism and perhaps more importantly enable staff and students to understand what constitutes racism and how this impacts on individuals. Ideally, this should be undertaken within a context of dealing with other equality issues to avoid marginalisation. **LP, Employer**
- c To explore developing and delivering staff development session for LPs and Employers based on insights and feedback from new settlers. **CVG**

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Appendix 1

New Arrival Questionnaire

**Minority Ethnic and Refugee Employment and Progression
(REP) Questionnaire**

Personal Profile

Full Name (print)	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
REP	Lancaster University
DOB	dd/mm/yyyy
Nationality: <i>Dual Nationality, record as it arises</i>	
Ethnicity:	
First Language:	
Other Languages:	
English Speaking <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well Please explain: ● In what situations do you feel confident speaking in?	
English Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well Please explain: ● What kind of materials do you read?	
English Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Very well Please explain: ● How do you use your writing skills (personal/ work)	
Religion: <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/> Christian <input type="checkbox"/> Hindu <input type="checkbox"/> Jew <input type="checkbox"/> Muslim <input type="checkbox"/> Sikh <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>Please state</i> <input type="checkbox"/> none <input type="checkbox"/> prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/> Very Important <input type="checkbox"/> Important <input type="checkbox"/> Not important If it is V/ Important, how do you think your religion impacts on involvement in education / work	
Disability: Might include physical, sensory, or learning disability, mental health condition, or chronic illness <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, what is the nature of the impairment / disability	

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How do you think this affects your learning experience / job – work?

In education - Have you ever asked or had help – support when learning? For example, support worker, specialist equipment, Disabled Student Allowance

Yes No

If yes, please say a bit more?

If no, have they heard about these types of help?

Would they have found them useful?

In work – Have you ever had any help or support at work? For example, automatic right to interview, specialist equipment, support worker?

If yes, please say a bit more

Time in UK Date of arrival

Months and Years

What brought you to the UK?

What did you hope / expect when you arrived?

How did you feel about these hopes/ expectations after you had lived here a month or two?

What kind of impact has moving to the UK had on your family?

Status Asylum Seeker Refugee Status
 Humanitarian protection Discretionary Leave
 exceptional leave to remain exceptional leave to enter
 not known other

Tell me a bit about your status and how it affects what you do

Education

Age end Education

When did you leave full time school education? (date / compared to age)

Thinking about school education – describe the type of school, educational level and possible equivalent to UK

How would you describe your experiences at school (positive and negative)

HE Y/N Home Country UK

Where did you study?

When did you study?

What subject studied?

Describe your experience of higher education?

What did you hope to do at this time?

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Education continued

Educational Aid 1

What sort of factors / services do you find helping / important when learning?

If you had to choose the main / biggest supporting factor, what would it be?

Networks – Education: What are your main networks for information about learning, key people, organisations. Can be informal or formal – how have these contacts been used?

Have your family used these networks? Have you used any contacts made by your family?

Racism in Education

We are interested in exploring obstacles to education, of which racism is one, can you give me your definition of racism?

Have you personally, experienced racism in the education? Yes No

Have you heard or seen racism in an educational setting? Yes No

If yes, please explain.

🗨 Can you think of any examples of how racism could impact education?

Other comments about learning

Work

Job Before UK Yes No

If yes, what did you do?

How did you feel about your job, your employer, your colleagues / the people who worked with you?

Is this the same type of work as what you do now?

If no, how is it different (better, worse, more / less skilled)?

Voluntary Work Yes No

If yes, talk about the type of work, the reasons for doing this work, what did / do you get out of doing this work?

Self Employed: Yes No

If yes, talk about the type of work, the reasons for self employment and the benefits and disadvantages

1st Job UK

🗨 First type of work / job you got when you moved to UK?

🗨 How you found out about the job?

🗨 Feelings about application process?

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🗨 Comparison to any previous work?

🗨 How did you feel about this job, your employer, your colleagues / people who worked with you?

Current Job UK

🗨 Type of work / job you have?

🗨 How you found out about the job?

🗨 Feelings about application process?

🗨 Comparison to any previous work?

🗨 How do you feel about this job, your employer, your colleagues / people who work with you?

Career Ambition: What are your career ambitions?

Describe your ideal job -

Job Barrier 1

What sort of barriers / obstacles have you had to face in finding out, getting and keeping a job?

If you had to choose the main / biggest barrier to work, what would it be?

Job Aid 1

What sort of factors / things have helped you find out, get and keep a job?

If you had to choose the main / most important / helpful factor, what would it be?

Networks – Job: What are your main networks for information about work, key people, organisations (link back to education)

Have your family used these networks? Have you used any contacts made by your family?

Racism Job

Have you personally, experienced racism in the workplace? Yes No

Have you heard or seen racism within the workplace? Yes No

If yes, please explain.

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<i>Other work</i>	
<i>Follow Up Information For Community Access Programme</i>	
Feedback on curriculum vitae: Y / N	Person to post / email
Course Information: Y / N	Subject Interest: Level: Full Time / Part Time
Other Information:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email:	

Thank you for your time and help.

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Appendix 2

Practitioner and Professional Interview Prompt and Record Sheet

All information will be confidential to the research team.

Name: _____

Employer: _____

Job Role: _____

Contact Address: _____

_____ postcode: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Web Address: _____

What is your experience of working with members of the following communities?

	Work	Voluntary	Main
Bangladeshi			
Black African			
Black Caribbean			
Black other			
Chinese			
Indian			
Pakistani			
Other Asian			
White			

What is your experience of working with members of these faith communities?

	Work	Voluntary	Own
Buddhist			
Christian			
Hindu			
Jew			
Muslim			
Sikh			
Other			
None			
Prefer not to say			

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Networks and support systems

Where do you think people find most of their information? Please add other groups to the list

	Work	Education	
Immediate Family			
Extended Family			
Friends			
Community organisations			
Faith Community			
College			
Job Centre			

Barriers and support systems

Barriers	Work	Education	Support Systems	Work	Education
Gaining information			Personnel		
Language			Services		
Confidence			Organisations		
Knowledge of the system			Procedure for ...		
racism			Policies that make a difference ...		
Disability					

Examples of good practice within your own and other organisations

Critical incidents that illustrate practice that either helps or hinders 'new settlers'

Observations on the distinctive characteristics of 'new settlers' in contrast to refugees and asylum seekers

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Appendix 3

Profile of Preston Ranking of Wards

There are 8414 wards in England, the ward with a rank of 1 is the most deprived, and 8414 the least deprived. A ranking of 2104 or less would mean the ward appearing in the bottom quartile (25%) of deprivation, and 842 or less would mean the ward is among the 10% most deprived wards in England.

The following table below is a summary of the indices of deprivation for wards across Preston. Many of the wards in Preston are amongst the most deprived in England.

Wards falling in the bottom quartile of deprivation (25%)

Wards falling in the bottom 10% of deprivation

Indices of multiple Deprivation – 2000 #

	Index of multiple deprivation, Rank	Income domain, Rank	Employment domain, Rank	Health domain Rank	Education domain, Rank	Housing domain, Rank	Access domain, Rank	Child poverty index, Rank
Ashton	4317	3980	3551	2559	4862	4687	7847	4691
Avenham	494	476	351	379	3166	361	8028	420
Brookfield	428	408	632	353	708	660	7469	402
Cadley	5837	5416	4428	2518	6574	8217	6698	6848
Central	911	997	1070	806	1094	614	8023	202
Deepdale	299	213	638	516	562	194	8022	204
Fishwick	192	148	403	433	304	248	7803	166
Greyfriars	6783	5853	5643	4834	6721	7172	4217	6249
Ingol	1487	1056	1432	639	4308	2883	6055	706
Larches	1469	1215	1695	668	2612	2596	6003	1350
Moor Park	1848	1578	1879	1271	3010	1554	7980	1634
Preston Rural East	6213	7280	5842	3750	7553	5882	1651	7846
Preston Rural West	4833	4958	3855	3088	7372	5605	2764	5144
Ribbleton	226	229	468	325	145	683	7129	280
Riversway	2052	1829	1839	1787	4439	868	8058	739
St. Matthew`s	387	461	722	607	299	292	8121	438
Sharoe Green	4976	5040	4138	2204	7037	5745	4837	6649
Sherwood	5092	5041	4552	3134	4852	7877	3366	5534
Tulketh	3380	2785	3186	2374	3860	3145	7810	2319

Source: ONS indices of deprivation

NB Office for National Statistics have since produced more detailed data, which operates at a super output area, the two sets of data are not immediately compatible, hence we have retained that which was originally available at the start of the project. For further information about ONS neighbourhood statistics please see <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/>

Appendix 4

Key for Acronyms used within draft report

Community Voluntary Groups

Pukar Disability Group – CVG 1

Gujarat Hindu Society – CVG 2

Sahara Women's Group – CVG3

Preston Muslim Forum – CVG4

Umbrella Organisations

Race Equality Council – UO1

BME Pact – UO2

Learning Providers

Preston College – LP1

Cardinal Newman – LP2

University of Central Lancashire – LP3

Lancashire County Council's Adult and Continuing Education – LP4

Public Sector

Lancashire County Council – CC

Preston Primary Care Trust – PCT

Learning Skills Council – LSC

Lifelong Learning Partnership – LLP