



Development of Soft Indicators of Performance

Final Report

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Study undertaken on behalf of the ASPIRE Development Partnership

by the Aston Centre for Voluntary Action Research

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Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose and aim of this study	1
1.2 Structure of this report.....	1
2. Development of soft indicators of performance (SIPs).....	2
2.1 Review of ASPIRE funded projects.....	2
2.2 Review of the literature	2
2.3 Development of a theoretical framework.....	3
2.4 Construction of soft indicators of performance.....	5
2.5 Trans-national collaboration	8
3. Design of research instruments	8
3.1 Questionnaire design	8
3.2 Focus group design.....	9
3.3 Case study design.....	9
4. Methods of data collection and analysis	10
4.1 Structured Interviews	10
4.2 Focus Groups.....	11
4.3 Case Studies.....	12
4.4 Data analysis methods.....	12
5. Presentation of findings.....	13
5.1 Characteristics of the sample	13
5.2 SIPs for the development of social bridges and social bonds	13
5.3 Relating the data to project types.....	22
5.4 Improvements in self confidence.....	23
5.5 Development of social links.....	25
6. Findings from focus groups.....	26
7. Findings from case studies	28
7.1 Organisation A	28
7.2 Organisations B and B1	30
7.3 Organisation C	31
7.4 Discussion of findings from case studies	32
8. Summary of findings	33
9. Implication for the future use of soft indicators as performance measures.....	35
9.1 Structured interviews.....	35
9.2 Focus groups	36
9.3 Case studies	37
10. Conclusion	37
References.....	39
Appendix I	41
Appendix II	52
Appendix III	53

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and aim of this study

The ASPIRE programme was designed to test out innovative approaches towards helping asylum seekers and refugees (ASRs) to make connections with their host community in order to support the integration process. Measuring the effectiveness of such interventions can pose significant challenges because the integration of ASRs is complex and often fraught with difficulty, for both the person arriving in this country and the people trying to provide support (Department for Work and Pensions, 2005; Home Office, 2005; 2007). Indicators to assess how far ASPIRE funded projects have benefited ASRs in developing social bonds, bridges and links with their host community need to take account of a dual challenge faced by ASRs: making connections with people with whom they share geographic, ethnic, religious or other characteristics, and at the same time making connections with their host community, which may consist of settled white or black residents.

While conventional performance assessments of European Union funded programmes such as ASPIRE rely on primarily quantitative or 'hard' performance measures, there is a growing recognition that qualitative, or 'soft' measures of performance are a means of providing important evidence of programme impact. The application of such soft indicators of performance (SIPs) poses a number of challenges however, not least because of the perceived subjective nature of such indicators, and the requirement to use indicators that are specifically developed for a particular project or programme. It is in this context that the ASPIRE Development Partnership identified a need to develop SIPs to measure the effectiveness of the support provided for ASRs through ASPIRE funded projects and therefore commissioned this study.

This study had the purpose of developing measures of performance which would be capable of providing evidence of the progress made, or 'the distance travelled', by ASRs towards their integration through the ASPIRE funded projects. The aim of this study was to develop SIPs and test these on ASPIRE funded projects with the objective exploring their utility as performance measures, as a first step towards the establishment of a complementary performance measurement approach for other programmes aimed at supporting ASRs.

1.2 Structure of this report

In developing qualitative indicators to measure the degree to which ASPIRE funded interventions have contributed to the integration of ASRs we drew on published literature and on the expertise of practitioners who were part of the trans-national development partnership CONCENTUS which consisted of the following members: ASPIRE, England; Bridge, Germany; Inclusion Refugees Networks, Italy; and the Intercultural Centre for Vocational Adaptation, Poland. Amongst the common interests of the members was the comparison of the impact of interventions on ASRs across different countries and the development of measurement tools to capture such impact.

This study began with a review of the existing literature on SIPs and was followed by the design, piloting and testing of the SIPs. The key stages and outcomes of this process are presented in this report in five parts:

- Development of SIPs
- Design of research instruments
- Methods of data collection and analysis
- Presentation of findings, and
- Discussion and conclusions.

2. Development of soft indicators of performance (SIPs)

The development of SIPs was undertaken in five stages:

- Review of ASPIRE funded projects
- Review of the literature
- Development of a theoretical framework
- Construction of indicators
- Trans-national collaboration

2.1 Review of ASPIRE funded projects

A review of ASPIRE funded projects took place between May and September 2006. The discussions with project managers of 12 ASPIRE funded projects showed that each project was planning or was in the process of developing specific approaches towards diagnosing needs of ASRs and monitoring their progress. While none of these approaches was considered sufficiently robust to base the development of SIPs on, the review supported the identification of projects from which our sample of study participants and potential case studies could be drawn.

At the time of our review many projects were still in their start-up phase and a number of these projects did not come to fruition. The volume of projects funded by ASPIRE has increased substantially since then however and we included a number of new projects to create a diverse sample. This was considered important because the SIPs developed for this study were intended as a first step towards the development of qualitative performance measures which were suitable to be applied to other programmes aimed at supporting ASRs.

2.2 Review of the literature

The review of the published literature included academic and practitioner journals, and a search of governmental websites. The initial search found a wide range of literature on qualitative indicators in general (see for example Halachmi, 1999; Improvement and Development Agency, 2006; see for example The Urban Institute, 2007) and a substantial body of literature in which the complexity of issues encountered by ASRs and the providers of services in the public and third sectors are discussed (A good overview of current research and practice is found in Sandford and Lumley, 2006).

As our initial search found little by way of guidance on the development of SIPs for interventions aimed at ASRs, an in-depth search of the literature was undertaken. This search identified three studies which were used to inform the methodological approach towards the development of SIPs for this study. One of these studies reviewed the approaches chosen by practitioners to capture qualitative outcomes in 300 ESF funded projects. A great variety of measures were reported, most of which were developed specifically for a particular project. The study points to the importance of being explicit from the outset about a project's intangible outcomes so that the 'distance travelled' can be measured through qualitative behavioural or attitudinal measures once the project is completed (Dewson et al., 2002). Another study carried out for the Department of Work and Pensions (Lloyd and OSullivan, 2003) reviewed current literature and practices of qualitative performance measures and surveyed 1,533 projects to capture current practice in measuring soft outcomes. The study also emphasises the importance of establishing baselines at the beginning of interventions in relation to specific clients or projects in order to apply SIPs to measure the distance travelled. While both studies contained a wide range of qualitative indicators, they fell short of providing a framework or a model which could be used to develop SIPs which could assess 'the distance travelled' by ASRs.

The most useful study found was undertaken by Ager and Strang (2004). This study is specifically about asylum seekers and refugees and provides a suitable framework for the development of indicators to assess the level of integration of ASRs. Ager and Strang identify ten domains in which ASRs must have a tangible degree of involvement before integration can be said to occur. These domains include employment, housing, education and health, as well as cultural awareness, language skills and an understanding of rights and responsibilities (ibid. p.13). Crucially, Ager and Strang point to the need for ASRs to be able to establish links with public services and develop social bridges and bonds in their communities in order to gain meaningful engagement with higher level domains, such as employment, housing, education and health, as well as lower levels associated with cultural awareness and language skills.

2.3 Development of a theoretical framework

Ager and Strang's work is based on Putnam's theory of social capital argues that the social connections individuals possess are 'social capital' and that the extent of social capital determines success in gaining access to employment opportunities and leading a fulfilled life (Putnam, 2000). Social capital is defined as networks of social relationships based on trust and reciprocity. A common distinction that is frequently made, and one that is also found in Ager and Strang's approach, is between bonding, bridging and linking social capital:

- 'Bonding social capital' describes relationships between people who share basic identities and refers to having social ties with people who are similar in some important way. Bonding social capital is created where people meet as equals and share common backgrounds or attributes, for example ethnicity, nationality, age or gender. Bonding social capital is often referred to as 'social glue'.

- 'Bridging social capital' involves the creation of 'bridges' between individuals and groups who are different from each other. Bridging social capital describes relationships and networks that operate across social groups and networks and is produced among people who previously might not have known each other. Bridging social capital emerges less easily than bonding social capital and needs to be facilitated through processes and institutions that bring individuals from different backgrounds together.
- 'Linking social capital' is a term which describes connections between groups or individuals and institutions, and which allow people to reach resources outside their social circles in which they can draw on bonding or bridging social capital. Linking social capital is more tenuous than bridging social capital and is best understood as the capacity to gain access to services and institutional processes; for example using local governmental and non-governmental services, assuming civic duties, or taking part in political processes (for an overview of the literature on social capital see: Putnam and Leonardi, 1993; for an overview of the literature on social capital see: Portes, 1998; Kajanoja and Simpura, 2000; Putnam, 2000)

There is a significant body of literature which suggests that ASRs find it difficult to establish contacts with their host communities (Home Office, 2003, , 2004, , 2004; Local Government Association, 2004) and that relatives and people from their home communities are important first contacts on arriving in this country (Koser and Pinkerton, 2002). There is also a substantial body of evidence which shows that deprived communities are often places where there is a high degree of diversity and at the same time a high level of strong social bonds amongst members of groups defined by common features or values, such as ethnicity, religion, or nationality (Silburn et al., 1999; Gilchrist, 2004; Cattle, 2005; Department for Work and Pensions, 2005; Department of Communities and Local Government, 2006). While such groups tend to have strong in-group bonds, they also tend to have few social bridges to other groups and individuals which do not share these features (Community Cohesion Unit, 2002; Home Office, 2004, 2005; Zetter et al., 2006; Taylor et al., 2007). In other words, bonding social capital tends to result in the isolation of groups which have a strong internal cohesion. In contrast, bridging social capital tends to be inclusive; it provides linkages to other people, communities, services and information. Bonding social capital helps in mobilising solidarity and reciprocity 'to get by', while bridging social capital is 'good for getting ahead' (Putnam, 2000, p.18 – 24).

While bonding social capital can be very important and valuable to people who arrive in a new country, often having gone through severe trauma and loss, the potential exclusion of people who have not gone through this process requires particular attention. This is because ASRs need to make connections, or 'build bridges' with their wider host community and establish links with the institutional structures in order to begin the integration process. Another reason, which is of equal importance, is that developing bridges and links can work against the fragmentation of communities and can foster community cohesion. A number of studies have found that where strong bonds within minority groups or sections of a community are developed at the expense of connections between different communities, problems of cohesion and exclusion arise (Cattle, 2001; Faulkner, 2004; Home Office, 2004; Pennant, 2005).

The argument that diverse and often deprived communities face particular challenges in relation to social cohesion and inclusion is also supported by an empirical longitudinal study recently published by Robert Putnam (2007). Putnam suggests that the increase of immigration in developed countries will over the short term lead to a reduction in social solidarity and increased fragmentation amongst ethnic groups:

“Ethnic diversity will increase substantially in virtually all modern societies over the next several decades, in part because of immigration. Increased immigration and diversity are not only inevitable, but over the long run they are also desirable. Ethnic diversity is, on balance, an important social asset. ... In the short to medium run, however, immigration and ethnic diversity challenge solidarity and inhibit social capital.” (Putnam, 2007, p.138)

Indicators to assess how far ASPIRE funded projects have benefited ASRs in developing social bonds, bridges and links with their host community therefore need to take account of two main questions. First, the extent to which ASRs are supported in developing social bonds amongst themselves and, second, the extent to which ASRs are better equipped to build social bridges and establish links to the societal institutions within their new communities as a result of the ASPIRE funded interventions.

2.4 Construction of soft indicators of performance

In constructing the SIPs within the conceptual frame of social capital we drew on a wide range of published literature about key aspects of integration and the barriers or challenges encountered by ASRs (Robinson and Segrott, 2002; Griffiths, 2003; Kirk, 2004; Refugee Action, 2006; Zetter et al., 2006). Given the exploratory nature and small scale of this study it was decided to focus on a small number of SIPs for social bonds, bridges and links. In addition to these ‘core SIPs’ a number of subordinate indicators were developed which aim to ‘contextualise’ the ASR and capture data on self-esteem, self-confidence and the ability to relate to others (Dewson et al., 2002; Lloyd and OSullivan, 2003; Robb and Greenhalgh, 2006). The way in which the indicators for social bridges, social bonds and social links were constructed is presented below.

2.4.1 Social Bridges

We developed three SIPs to assess the extent to which interventions support ASRs in the development of social bridges. These were designed to capture contacts with the host community, and a distinction was drawn between individuals, voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) and faith organisations. VCOs were understood to include informal groups or formal organisations where local people come together to address an issue of shared concern. Faith organisations were understood to bring people together through a shared belief.

The three SIPs to assess the extent to which an ASPIRE project has contributed to the development of social bridges were:

- *The project supported the ASR in meeting people from the local community*
- *The project supported the ASR in making contact with VCOs*
- *The project supported the ASR in making contact with faith organisations*

Where the project did help make these connections the ASR would be asked to elaborate on the nature of their contacts, their views of the benefits derived and their experience of participating in the project. It was assumed that such bridges to other individuals or organisations would broadly contribute to problem solving, networking or simply allowing ASRs to share their experiences with others. In addition, the development of social bridges was also expected to require ASRs to be able to work with, support and/or challenge others. Therefore the following additional sub-ordinate measures were chosen to illustrate how social bonds may benefit ASRs. These included:

- Help other people
- Work in groups
- Motivate/encourage others
- Deal with cultural differences
- Negotiate conflict
- Deal with racist attitudes

2.4.2 Social bonds

Earlier research suggests that social bonds develop more easily than social bridges between people who have important characteristics in common (Putnam, 2000). For the purposes of this study it was assumed that the two characteristics which were most important in influencing the forming of social bonds were shared nationality and having ASR status. The two SIPs to assess the extent to which ASRs developed social bonds were:

- *The project supported the ASR in meeting other refugees and asylum seekers*
- *The project supported the ASR in meeting other people from their own country of origin*

Where the project did help make these connections the ASR would be asked to elaborate on the nature of their contacts, their views of the benefits derived and their experience of participating in the project. It was assumed that such bonds with other individuals or organisations would broadly contribute to problem solving, networking or simply allowing ASRs to share their experiences with others. In addition, the development of social bonds was also expected to require ASRs to be able to work with, support and/or challenge others. Therefore the following additional sub-ordinate measures were chosen to illustrate how social bonds may benefit ASRs. These included:

- Help other people
- Work in groups
- Motivate/encourage others
- Deal with cultural differences
- Negotiate conflict
- Deal with racist attitudes

2.4.3 Social Links

In line with the theoretical framework developed for this study (see 2.3. above), social links were seen as ASRs making connections with organisations and institutions

which provide services or opportunities to engage in civic or political processes. VCOs are of particular relevance in this respect as they deliver the majority of the projects funded by ASPIRE are delivered by VCOs. Hence it was expected that by engaging with ASPIRE funded services ASRs would make further connections with networks of other VCOs. We also wanted to measure the connections ASRs made with public services, although this was not a declared aim of any of the ASPIRE funded projects we studied. We therefore developed two separate sets of measures; one related to the work of other VCOs, and another capturing the use of public services. Given the potential for making multiple links outside the ASPIRE funded project it was necessary to select a larger number of indicators.

Links to public services were measured by:

- Knowing about rights and responsibilities
- Access to medical and social care
- Support with housing problems
- Support with schooling of children
- Obtaining support for special needs
- Access to training or education outside ASPIRE
- Access to public sport, leisure or cultural facilities

Links to VCOs were measured by:

- Awareness of the work done by VCOs
- Access to work shadowing or volunteering opportunities
- Participation in community led cultural events
- Access to refugee community organisations (RCOs)

2.4.4 Attitudinal measures

The ability of ASRs to develop social connections was expected to be, at least in part, dependent on the attitudinal values of the individual, such as self-esteem and self-confidence. The underlying assumption being that high levels of self esteem facilitate a better utilisation of the opportunities offered by ASPIRE funded projects to develop social bridges, bonds and links. Identifying the degree of self-esteem was therefore considered important in exploring and explaining the extent to which ASRs felt enabled to develop social bridges.

The attitudinal pre-disposition of ASRs for the development of social bridges, bonds and links were to be captured through the following indicators:

- Extent to which the project has contributed to confidence in the future.
- Extent to which the project has contributed to self confidence. This might express itself through
- Extent to which the project has contributed to a sense of achievement.

The collection of data on the attitudinal disposition of the ASR together with data on SIPs that establish the degree to which the ASPIRE project contributed to the development of social bridges and bonds, was expected to provide a robust assessment of the impact of ASPIRE funded interventions in terms of the progress made by an ASR towards integration.

2.5 Trans-national collaboration

The development of SIPs for this study benefited from the input of practitioners and researchers practising in three other countries in receipt of EQUAL funding. The agreement to collaborate on the development of SIPs was made in May 2006, following an introductory presentation by the study team on the initial theoretical framework and the elements from which SIPs could be constructed. During June and December 2006 there were a number of formal and informal discussions amongst practitioners and researchers on the development of the SIPs. This process resulted in a two day workshop in January 2007 where the key elements of the SIPs and the first draft of the questionnaire for data collection were agreed. At this stage a small number of additional measures were agreed for inclusion in the questionnaire on the grounds of creating a research instrument that could be applied consistently across the four participating countries:

- Political activity as a dimension of social links and bonds
- Setting up a bank account, obtaining home insurance, and gaining access to a car/obtaining a driving license as dimensions of social links.

3. Design of research instruments

The main research instrument to test the indicators designed in Part Two was a questionnaire through which quantitative and qualitative data could be collected. In addition three case studies and five focus groups were undertaken to compare and contrast the data collected through the questionnaires. The design of these research instruments is discussed below.

3.1 Questionnaire design

The nature of data sought required a mixed methodology of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection. This was intended to establish a relationships between the ASPIRE funded project and the progress towards integration reported by the ASRs. We also wanted to capture data that would illustrate the processes through which ASRs develop social bridges, bonds and links.

The questionnaire contained four main sections:

- Section A: Questions to collect factual data about the interviewee.
- Section B: The five core indicators for social bridges and bonds.
- Section C: Indicators measuring the development of social links.
- Section D: The opportunity to comment on the interview and raise any other issues that were not covered.

A total of 59 questions were contained in the questionnaire. The scales to measure the majority of the questions were Lickert scales, a widely used and systematic approach towards attitude measurement. In addition yes/no filters were applied to questions about SIPs on social bridges and bonds before applying Lickert scales to establish a direct relationship between the ASPIRE project, the development of social bridges or bonds and the activity illustrating the nature of these social bridges or bonds. Questions aimed at exploring the extent to which ASRs had established

social links were based on yes/no answers and a category which gave participants the opportunity to say whether a particular service was required.

3.2 Focus group design

An important part of the ASPIRE programme were projects which involved theatre, music and other artistic forms of self expression. These projects were in part intended to enable ASRs to engage with the host community by presenting the reasons for seeking asylum and the challenges that were encountered by ASRs. The task of measuring the impact of these interventions was therefore twofold: to establish the extent to which these activities had enabled ASRs to develop social bridges, bonds and links, and to ascertain how far the audiences were more inclined to develop bridges with ASRs as a result of either watching or participating in a performance. While the impact on ASRs was explored through the questionnaire based interview, the impact on the audiences was explored through focus groups.

The focus groups were structured around the following topics:

- What was learned about the ASRs
- Have opinions of ASRs changed as a result of seeing/participating in the performance
- Are there actions participants want to take as a result of seeing/participating in the performance

A copy of the focus group guide is attached at Appendix II

3.3 Case study design

The case studies served two purposes: First, to explore the extent to which providers of services had the concept of social bridges/links/bonds in mind when designing and delivering their services to ASRs. Second, to explore the extent to which social connections identified through the structured questionnaire interviews could be directly attributed to the ASPIRE funded project, and whether this could be separated from other services which ASRs were accessing from the ASPIRE project.

The case studies were based on a small number of in-depth interviews with key actors of the organisation hosting the ASPIRE funded project. A topic guide was used to conduct the interviews covering the following:

- History of the organisation and services provided
- Reason for developing the ASPIRE funded project
- Benefits derived from the ASPIRE funded project for the organisation and ASRs
- Challenges encountered in delivering the ASPIRE funded project.

A copy of the topic guide for case study interviews is attached at Appendix III.

4. Methods of data collection and analysis

The questionnaire was piloted in February 2007 with three ASRs in two different ASPIRE projects. This resulted in small amendments to a number of the questions to make them clearer and less ambiguous; the sequencing of the questions was also adjusted. Following this pilot stage, the collection of data was undertaken using three distinct methods:

- Structured interviews
- Focus groups, and
- Organisational case studies

4.1 Structured Interviews

The questionnaire was administered by trained researchers in the form of a structured interview. Each interview lasted for approximately 40 minutes. Answers were recorded on the questionnaire by the researcher, and the researcher took notes of the way in which study participants illustrated the social connections they had made as a result of the ASPIRE funded project. Most of these illustrations were recorded by the researcher during the interview, while observations were recorded afterwards upon reflecting on the interview. As language can be a significant barrier in conducting questionnaire based interviews, the introductory questions helped to establish the degree of language competence of the interviewee in order to sensitise the interviewer to the need to repeat or paraphrase questions that were not, or only partly, understood by the study participant.

Study participants were identified through the project managers or tutors of ASPIRE funded projects. Securing interviews with ASRs proved problematic despite the full co-operation of project staff, primarily due to ASRs facing substantial uncertainty and often having to respond to other demands or opportunities at very short notice.

The first wave of data collection was undertaken between March and April 2007. Following a review of the process and the emerging findings in May 2007 interviewing continued until July 2007. A convenience sample of 48 ASRs was identified from which a total of 35 interviews were undertaken. The ASRs who were interviewed participated in nine different ASPIRE funded projects; these were chosen purposefully so that the four thematic areas of ASPIRE - which include arts, language, capacity building and volunteering - could be covered. The interviewees were drawn from the following projects:

The arts:

- Asylum Stories Through Theatre
- Women in Arts
- Infusion

Banner Theatre was funded by ASPIRE to produce a play on the issues encountered by asylum seekers which challenged stereotypes and prejudice against ASRs. The Women in Arts project led by the Community Integration Partnership provided female ASRs with the opportunity to create new experiences and move their lives forward from their current preoccupations, through meeting with other ASRs in artistic

workshops under the supervision of trained art tutors. The finished work was exhibited at a number of community venues across Birmingham. The project led by Infusion brought together musicians from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to undertake a series of workshops engaging with children within primary schools across Birmingham, culminating in musical performances which were shown in the Birmingham area.

Language learning:

- ESOL through arts
- Visual arts through ESOL

City College and Mathew Boulton college delivered ESOL projects within their respective colleges of further education. Artistic expression of participants was stimulated and used to encourage language learning and social interaction. The City College project culminated in the work being exhibited at a Community event where the ASR's and their families were invited to meet informally and socialise alongside visitors from the local community.

Capacity building:

- Building sustainable RCOs
- Sanctuary

The Building Sustainable RCOs project was delivered by Fircroft College for further education in partnership with the Muath Trust Development Agency. The aim of the project was to address organisational development needs within RCO's and teach ASRs active in RCOs the fundamental skills of organisational development, whilst, at the same time, support course participants in dealing with the particular challenges arising from being ASRs. The Sanctuary project delivered by MyTime aimed to support ASRs in coming to terms with the trauma associated with fleeing one's home country and seeking asylum.

Volunteering:

- ARC
- Peer support

Both projects were delivered by black and minority ethnic (BME) led VCOs and aimed to help ASRs find volunteering or work shadowing opportunities, either in public agencies or VCOs.

4.2 Focus Groups

The study team attended five performances of the Banner Theatre Company and two performances of the shows developed by Artsites. The Banner Theatre Company performed the ASPIRE funded play 'Strangers in Paradise Circus' to students of adult education colleges, secondary schools, youth groups and residents in a number of locations in Birmingham. The play challenged stereotypes and prejudice about ASRs by explaining the reasons for people seeking asylum and, using real life stories, showing the actual living conditions of ASRs in the UK. Artsites facilitated the 'Soups and Stories' performances, which were developed collaboratively with local residents and ASRs under the guidance of artists over a number of weeks. This led

to a performance evening in the locality in which people from a range of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds came together to watch the show and share food from their home countries.

Following a performance, ACVAR researchers approached tutors of further education colleges or community development workers to ask for support in convening a focus group. We convened five focus groups which ranged in size from 10-45 participants from contrasting backgrounds:

- University of Central England with 45 social science students
- Brasshouse Language School with 16 ESOL students
- Hawkesley Community centre with 2 youth workers and 8 young people
- Kingstanding Community Centre with 12 young people
- Castle Vale Community Centre with 18 older people

Each focus group was facilitated by two ACVAR researchers who took field notes of key points that arose during the discussion.

4.3 Case Studies

Following a preliminary analysis of the interviews and focus group data collected up to June 2007, three case studies were prepared and undertaken between July and August 2007. Their purpose was twofold: First, to explore the extent to which providers of services were guided by the concepts of social bridges, bonds and links when developing services for ASRs; second, to investigate the extent to which the impacts reported by ASRs could be attributed to the ASPIRE funded service or project.

A total of eight in-depth interviews with project staff were undertaken in three case study organisations; these were complemented by earlier interviews of ASRs and a review of organisational documents, such as project and annual reports. Interviewees were promised anonymity and confidentiality in order to encourage full and open responses; therefore we do not disclose the names of the projects or organisations which were used as case studies. The case study organisations delivered their ASPIRE funded project in the following thematic areas:

- The arts
- Volunteering, and
- Capacity building.

4.4 Data analysis methods

We used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyse the data collected. For the analysis of quantitative data collected through structured interviews we used SPSS, a standard data analysis tool frequently used in the analysis of questionnaires. Qualitative data gathered through structured interviews and case studies was analysed using NVivo, a software for the analysis of a wide range of qualitative data. Focus group data was subject to an open coding approach and discussion amongst ACVAR researchers to identify key issues and themes.

5. Presentation of findings

In this section we present the findings from the data we collected¹. Due to the small sample used for this study the quantitative analysis of the data is based on frequencies only and has according to our Chi-Square test no statistical relevance. However, the data presented here provides a valid illustration of the impact of the ASPIRE programme. Our data further show that the application of the SIPs used in this study can elicit relevant and important indicative information about the extent to which ASRs have been able to make connections which support and facilitate the development of social bridges, bonds and links.

In the following section we first present our findings from the structured interviews. We begin by providing a description of the sample used for this study and then present our findings on the development of social bridges, social bonds and social links. Qualitative data is presented at certain points to illustrate and illuminate the findings. We conclude this section with a discussion in which we draw on the attitudinal data to explore the findings in more depth.

5.1 Characteristics of the sample

We drew our sample of 33 ASRs from nine ASPIRE projects over a period of five months, undertaking interviews at a stage when ASRs had completed or were about to complete their participation in the project. We selected an equal number of male and female participants, 70% of whom were between the age of 25 and 46 years old. The majority of study participants had family members in the UK (57%) but only 44% of those with family in the UK live with them. It was the original intention of 69% of study participants to come to the UK; 31% of the ASRs in the sample had stayed in another country prior to coming to the UK. The longest stay in the UK of the ASRs interviewed was since 2000 and the shortest 8 months at the time of interview. Over 70% of the sample could speak, read, write and understand English either very well or fairly well.

5.2 SIPs for the development of social bridges and social bonds

In this section we present findings in relation to three SIPs for the development of social bridges and two SIPs for the development of social bonds. These are:

- Contact with voluntary and community organisations
- Contact with faith organisations and churches
- Meeting other asylum seekers and refugees
- Meeting people from country of origin

¹ As the SIPs we used were not linked to contracted output measures at project or programme level this study is not an evaluation of the ASPIRE programme. Therefore comparisons of performance between ASPIRE projects, or between ASPIRE and other EQUAL funded programmes cannot be made on the basis of this study.

For each SIP we identify the percentage and number of ASRs who engaged in social activities associated with the development of social bridges and social bonds. The dimensions of activities supporting the development of social bridges and social bonds are:

- Talking about the experience of asylum
- Developing social networks
- Participating in political activity and
- Solving problems

We then correlate the responses from ASRs engaged in bridge building activities to questions about their ability to work with others, deal with conflict and cultural differences. At this stage we also present our qualitative data to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of ASPIRE projects on the ability of ASRs to develop social bridges and social bonds.

5.2.1 Meeting people from the local host community

The question about whether ASPIRE has supported ASRs in making connections with other individuals from the host community was one of the core SIPs intended to measure the extent of bridge building activity. Most ASRs responded to this questions by saying that ASPIRE did not help in making contact with local people, but all of those ASRs who had made contact with the host community reported the these contacts were new contacts for them.

Table 1: Has the project helped you meet people from the local community?

Yes	No	Total
42.4% (14)	57.6% (19)	100% = (33)

Table 2: Did you have contact with these people before joining ASPIRE?

Yes	No	Total
0% (0)	100% (33)	100% = (33)

Table 3 below shows that most of the respondents who reported that that they had made contact with people from the host community through their ASPIRE project reported that they were able to talk about their experience and develop social networks with them. Over 80% of ASRs who responded to this question did not consider political activity as being part of the development of bridges with local people. Solving problems in conjunction with local people was also an activity that few ASRs had taken part in.

Table 3: Types of activities ASRs engaged in with local people

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Talk about experience	18.2% (2)	27.3% (3)	0	54.5% (6)	100% = (11)*
Develop social networks	15.4% (2)	30.8% (4)	0	53.8% (7)	100% = (13)**
Participate in political action	84.6% (11)		0	15.4% (2)	100% = (13)**
Solve problems	41.7% (5)	16.7% (2)	25% (3)	16.7% (2)	100% = (12)***

*22 missing cases

** 20 missing cases

*** 21 missing cases

When we correlate questions about how ASPIRE has enabled ASRs to work with others, deal with cultural differences and conflict with data about the respondents who had made contact with local people as a result of ASPIRE, a more complex picture emerges. Table 4 shows that most ASRs reported that their engagement with local people was of little relevance with regard to being better equipped to deal with cultural differences, negotiating conflict or dealing with racism. However, a large proportion of ASRs reported that through their engagement with local people they felt better able to motivate others and work in groups.

Table 4: Have contacts with local people enabled you to

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Help others	18.2% (2)	45.4% (5)	18.2% (2)	18.2% (2)	100% = (11)*
Work in groups	21.4% (3)	28.6% (4)	35.7% (5)	14.3% (2)	100% = (14)**
Motivate others	7.1% (1)	35.7% (5)	28.6% (4)	28.6% (4)	100% = (14)**
Deal with cultural differences	42.8% (6)	21.4% (3)	21.4% (3)	14.3% (2)	100% = (14)**
Negotiate conflict	85.7% (12)	0	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	100% = (14)**
Deal with racist attitudes	71.4% (10)	7.1% (1)	7.1% (1)	14.3% (2)	100% = (14)**

*22 cases missing

** 19 cases missing

The following quotations illustrate the nature of the connections ASRs have made with local people through ASPIRE:

“Contact with community groups and doing workshops has helped me develop a sense of belonging and being connected.”

“The project teaches me how to be friendly with my neighbours.”

“I have met local people at the exhibition of our art work and also have done a video. That put me in contact with lots of local people.”

5.2.2 Contact with voluntary and community organisations

Making contact with VCOs was the second SIP which measured the extent to which ASPIRE has supported ASRs in developing social bridges. Table 5 shows that the majority of respondents reported that ASPIRE had not helped them in making contact with VCOs.

Table 5: Has ASPIRE helped you make contact with VCOs?

Yes	No	Total
39.4% (13)	60.6% (20)	100% = (33)

Table 6: Did you have contact with these VCOs before joining ASPIRE?

Yes	No	Total
0% (0)	100% (33)	100% = (33)

The majority of respondents who reported that ASPIRE had helped them make contact with local VCOs did not feel that this contact had been of much practical help (Table 7). Over 60% of ASRs who had made contact with VCOs did not feel that they were able to talk about their experience, develop social networks or solve problems; for nearly 90% of ASRs participating in political activity was not something they had engaged in with VCOs.

Table 7: Activities undertaken with local VCOs

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Talk about experience	31.6% (6)	36.8% (7)	5.3% (1)	26.3% (5)	100% = (19)*
Develop social networks	21.1% (4)	42.1% (8)	0	36.8% (7)	100% = (19)*
Participate in political action	89.5% (17)	0	0	10.5% (2)	100% = (19)*
Solve problems	52.6% (10)	15.8% (3)	26.3% (5)	5.3% (1)	100% = (19)*

*14 cases missing

When we correlate the questions about how ASPIRE has enabled ASRs to work with others, deal with cultural differences and conflict with data about respondents who had made contact with local VCOs as a result of participating in ASPIRE (Table 8), the data show that contact with VCO was of little or no help to most ASRs in negotiating conflict, and dealing with racist attitudes or cultural differences. This should not necessarily be interpreted as a shortcoming on the part of the projects they engaged with, or a shortcoming on the part of the ASRs, as the provision of such activities was not the explicit aim of the VCOs visited or the ASPIRE project. In

contrast, most ASRs felt better able to motivate others or work in groups as a result of establishing contacts with VCOs. A significant number also felt that by engaging with VCOs they were able to help others.

Table 8: Have contacts with local VCOs enabled you to:

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Help others	13.3% (2)	40% (6)	20% (3)	26.7% (4)	100% = (15)*
Work in groups	5% (1)	35% (7)	35% (7)	25% (5)	100% = (20)**
Motivate others	0	40% (8)	25% (5)	35% (7)	100% = (20)**
Deal with cultural differences	50% (10)	25% (5)	15% (3)	10% (2)	100% = (20)**
Negotiate conflict	90% (18)	5% (1)	0	5% (1)	100% = (20)**
Deal with racist attitudes	85% (17)	5% (1)	5% (1)	5% (1)	100% = (20)**

*18 cases missing

** 13 cases missing

The types of activities ASRs engaged in show a similar pattern to that of Table 4 which reports the level of engagement with local people. This suggests that respondents did not clearly distinguish between the individuals they met and the institutional context within which these connections were made. Where this distinction was drawn the responses we collected suggest that being able to take on volunteering roles in VCOs is the main way in which ASRs felt able to help others:

"I repair light fittings and repair furniture. That makes me feel better."

"I help translating, filling in forms and applications for the people who come here."

"I helped decorate the meeting room with other people from the centre."

"Recognising how much you can help other people gives you a real boost."

5.2.3 Making contact with churches and faith organisations

Making contact with churches or faith organisations was the third SIP for the development of social bridges. Like the other SIPs, the data for this indicator also suggest that ASPIRE has had little impact in helping ASRs make contact with these organisations (Table 9).

Table 9: Has ASPIRE helped you make contact with churches or faith organisations?

Yes	No	Total
12.2% (4)	87.8% (29)	100% = (33)

Table 10: Did you have contact with churches or faith organisations before joining ASPIRE?

Yes	No	Total
6.1% (2)	93.1% (31)	100% = (33)

Out of 33 respondents, only four had made contact with faith organisations or churches during the course of their participation in ASPIRE, of which two had been in contact with churches before. Due to the low frequency of responses to this question there is also little benefit to be gained by correlating the answers of just four ASRs to questions about working with others, dealing with cultural differences and conflict. This might suggest that collecting data on the contribution of faith organisations has little relevance in the regard to testing of SIPs based on the concept of social bridges and bonds. However, it needs to be borne in mind that the ASPIRE projects in our sample were not intended to make connections with faith organisations. There is also a substantial body of evidence on the importance of faith organisations in the development of social connections (see for example: London Churches Group for Social Action and Greater London Enterprise, 2002; North West Development Agency / North West Regional Assembly, 2003; Jackson and Kimberlee, 2004; see for example: Furbey and Macy, 2005), and consequently no conclusions should be drawn from this data. We are able to illustrate the nature of the connections respondents made with faith organisations with the following quotations:

“Sometimes I help the church with repairs and the church help with the telephone or copy machine.”

“Other students have supported me in going to the local church. I meet people there.”

5.2.4 Meeting other asylum seekers and refugees

Making connections with other ASRs is one of two core SIPs for the development of social bonds. All bar one ASR reported that ASPIRE helped them make contact with ASRs and, for most of our respondents, these were new contacts (Tables 11 and 12).

Table 11: Has ASPIRE helped you make contact with ASRs?

Yes	No	Total
93% (32)	3% (1)	100% = (33)

Table 12: Did you have contact with other ASRs before joining ASPIRE?

Yes	No	Total
6.1% (2)	93.9% (31)	100% = (33)

Table 13 below shows that being able to talk about one’s experience as an ASR and developing social networks with other ASRs are the main activities a large proportion of respondents engaged in. Most respondents did not use their contacts with other ASRs to solve problems or engage in political activity.

Table 13: Types of activities undertaken with other ASRs

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Talk about experience	19.2% (5)	30.8% (8)	11.5% (3)	38.5% (10)	100% = 26*
Develop social networks	22.2% (6)	22.2% (6)	18.5% (5)	37% (10)	100% = 27**
Participate in political action	88% (22)	4% (1)	0	8% (2)	100% = 25***
Solve problems	45.8% (11)	20.8% (5)	20.8% (5)	12.5% (3)	100% = 24****

*7 cases missing

** 6 cases missing

*** 8 cases missing

**** 9 cases missing

When we correlate questions about how contact with other ASRs has supported respondents to work with others, deal with cultural differences and conflict (Table 14), the data show that few ASRs felt enabled to help other ASRs, deal with cultural differences, negotiate conflict or deal with racist attitudes. In contrast, working in groups and motivating others are activities that a large number of respondents associate with being together with other ASRs.

Table 14: Have contacts with other ASRs helped you to:

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Help others	28% (7)	38% (10)	19% (5)	15% (4)	100% = (26)*
Work in groups	18.7% (6)	31.3 (10)	31.3 (10)	18.8% (6)	100% = (32)**
Motivate others	18.7% (6)	31.3 (10)	25% (8)	25% (8)	100% = (32)**
Deal with cultural differences	72.6% (20)	21.9% (7)	9.4% (3)	6.3% (2)	100% = (32)**
Negotiate conflict	90.6% (29)	0	6.3% (2)	3.1% (!)	100% = (32)**
Deal with racist attitudes	84.4% (27)	6.3% (2)	3.1% (1)	6.3% (2)	100% = (32)**

*7 cases missing

** 1 case missing

The data in Table 14 seem to suggest that ASRs may not support each other or deal with the cultural differences or tensions that might be rooted in the conflicts they escaped from in their home countries. Our qualitative data does show that some respondents do help other ASRs and that ASPIRE does provide important mechanisms for sharing traumatic experiences and dealing with cultural differences.

In addition some projects provide important opportunities for bonds to form amongst ASRs:

“To see that my own trauma is experienced by others helps me.”

“My experience of being a refugee can be of help to others.”

“Sharing experiences with refugees from different cultures has been very useful.”

“Working with musicians from around the world has helped in developing a better understanding of how different cultures can mix with good results.”

“I met new people and make friends at college. College is like a family.”

“I have made a lot of friends and we are now taking turns in visiting each others homes.”

5.2.5 Meeting people from your country of origin

Meeting other people from one’s home country is the second core SIP for the establishment of social bonds. The data in Tables 15 and 16 show that most respondents made contact with people from their home country as a result of engaging with ASPIRE and that all of these contacts were new.

Table 15: Has ASPIRE helped you make contact with people from your country of origin?

Yes	No	Total
51.1% (17)	48.5% (16)	100% = (33)

Table 16: Did you have contact with these people before joining ASPIRE?

Yes	No	Total
0% (0)	100% (33)	100% = (33)

A large proportion of respondents who reported that ASPIRE had helped them make contact with other people from their home country did not engage with them in the activities we were asking about. The data in Table 17 suggest that talking about their experience is the most important activity that ASRs from the same country engage in. More than a third of the sample also developed networks. A large proportion of respondents did not use their contacts with people from their home country to solve problems or develop social networks and almost all respondents did not engage in political activity with people from their home countries.

Table 17: Activities undertaken with people from your country of origin

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Talk about experience	17.6% (3)	35.3% (6)	5.9% (1)	41.2% (7)	100% = 17*
Develop social networks	23.5% (4)	35.3% (6)	5.9% (1)	35.3% (6)	100% = 17*
Participate in political action	82.4% (14)	0	5.9% (1)	11.8% (2)	100% = 17*
Solve problems	35.3% (6)	35.3% (6)	23.5% (4)	5.9% (1)	100% = 17*

*16 cases missing

When we correlate questions about how ASPIRE has enabled ASRs to work with others, dealt with cultural differences and conflict with data of respondents who had made contact with people from their home country a complex picture emerges (Table 18). The data suggest that contact with people from their home country has enabled some ASRs to work together in groups and motivate others, rather than deal with conflicts or cultural differences. There is also little evidence that respondents dealt with racism when meeting with people from the same country.

Table 18: Have contacts with other people from your home country helped you to:

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Help others	41.1% (7)	29.4% (5)	11.8% (2)	17.6% (3)	100% = (17)*
Work in groups	11.8% (2)	29.4 (5)	35.3 (6)	23.5% (4)	100% = (17)*
Motivate others	17.6% (3)	29.3% (5)	35.3% (6)	17.6% (3)	100% = (17)*
Deal with cultural differences	58.8% (10)	11.8% (2)	17.6 (3)	11.8% (2)	100% = (17)*
Negotiate conflict	82.4% (14)	0	11.8% (2)	5.9% (1)	100% = (17)*
Deal with racist attitudes	76.5% (13)	11.8% (2)	5.9% (1)	5.9% (1)	100% = (17)*

*16 cases missing

Meeting people from one's home country has also taken place in an institutional context, where ASRs participating in organisational capacity building training have established networks with other organisations which share a similar purpose or target group.

"I shared what I learned with other women in other RCOs. There is a lot of networking with other RCO organisations."

"I have new skills and new contacts. I am developing new partnerships with other RCO organisations." [*Refugee Community Organisations]*

"I did not know anybody before coming to this project. Meeting people from my home country is good."

5.2.6 Discussion of findings from quantitative analysis

A superficial reading of this data suggest that support from ASPIRE in developing social bridges and bonds is quite limited. However, it should be noted that the sample was very small and the frequency of responses to some of the sub-questions was less than 50% of the sample. A change in just two or three responses could significantly alter the perceived impact of the programme.

However findings show that there are four key areas where the ASPIRE programme has consistently supported a large proportion of ASRs in the development of social bridges and bonds. The social activities which were consistently reported by a most ASRs as being supported by ASPIRE were:

- Working in groups
- Motivating others
- Developing social networks and
- Talking about the experience of asylum.

These activities are an essential part of the process of developing social bridges and bonds and therefore the ASPIRE projects in our sample can be considered to be making a significant contribution towards the integration of ASRs.

In addition, the projects from which our sample did not have the development of social bridges and bonds as explicit target outcomes. If the values of all positive responses on the Lickert scales, from 'a little' to 'a lot' were drawn together and compared to the 'not at all' responses, the picture would change substantially. On almost all dimensions we would find that most ASRs were benefiting from the ASPIRE projects in our sample and had support in developing social bridges and social bonds.

5.3 Relating the data to project types

To explore which project types made the most important contribution to the five SIPs we grouped the data into the four themes of the ASPIRE programme. In doing so we discounted responses with regard to political activity, as most respondents did not engage in this type of activity across all projects. We then compared the positive and negative scores about the extent to which ASPIRE had supported our respondents. Where positive scores were higher or equal to negative scores (shown in brackets in Tables 19 -21) the project type is considered to be significant to a particular SIP and social activity.

The data suggest that Art projects are the most important project type to support ASRs in making contacts with people from the local host community and to some extent with other ASRs, followed by volunteering and capacity building projects. Capacity building projects were also the most important in facilitating contacts with

other ASRs and people from home countries; they also helped in making contacts with VCOs.

Table 19: Art Projects

	Meet local people	Meet other ASRs
Talk about experience	3 (2)	5 (6)
Social networks	4 (1)	6 (5)
Solve problems	3 (2)	4 (7)

Table 20: Volunteering Projects

	Meet local people	Meet other ASRs
Talk about experience	2 (0)	3 (1)
Social networks	1 (1)	2 (2)
Solve problems	1 (1)	1 (3)

Table 21: Capacity building projects

	Meet local people	Contact with VCOs	Meet other ASRs	Meet people from home country
Talk about experience	1 (1)	2 (3)	3 (1)	5 (0)
Social networks	7 (6)	3 (2)	5 (1)	5 (0)
Solve problems	1 (2)	2 (3)	2 (1)	3 (2)

Language learning projects, in contrast, did not score positive values on any of the five SIPs, suggesting that such types of projects may not be conducive to the bridge building and bonding activities focused on by our study.

5.4 Improvements in self confidence

In addition to the benefits reported in section 5.2, the projects in our sample also contributed significantly to the self-confidence of ASRs. Most ASRs reported that their ASPIRE project had contributed to improved confidence in their future, their own abilities, and their sense of achievement.

Table 22: Has this project improved your self confidence and sense of achievement?

	Not at all	Not very much	A little	A lot	Total
Confidence in yourself	3.1% (1)	12.5% (4)	18.8% (6)	65.6% (21)	32**
Confidence in future	6.5% (2)	12.9% (4)	19.4% (6)	61.3% (19)	31*
Sense of achievement	3.1% (1)	18.8% (6)	15.6% (5)	62.5% (20)	32**

* Two missing cases

** One missing case

We also collected a wide range of examples given by ASRs which illustrate the data in Table 22 above. We found that all projects in our sample had given ASRs a greater sense of confidence and achievement.

Confidence in self

"I feel more secure here and sleep better. I stopped eating tablets."

"Being able to perform and practice together builds confidence."

"I now have the courage to bring about change in my personal circumstances."

I value my own skills as a musician more now. I also value the skills of other people more."

"Performances to local groups and schools has given me a sense of self worth as a musician."

"This project has given me something meaningful to do each day, which has helped with my self confidence."

Confidence in future

"I am now making plans for my RCO with greater confidence."

"I now understand the choices and their consequences, the mechanisms of this society. We were blind, now we can see what our options are."

"I have the confidence that I will be able to apply my artistic skills and work here in future."

"I am a little more confident now that I am able to go on a course and become a qualified electrician here."

Sense of achievement

"I have been able to develop wider social networks because of being in contact with different organisations and people."

"I have a lot of new contacts and a completely new social network. I really have a sense of achievement in working with this project."

“The ASPIRE project has been the first step to meeting other people and knowing more about music opportunities.”

“The project has taken me to new places in Birmingham, meeting different communities. I am feeling more at home here.”

“Contact with schools and taking part in performances have helped me develop a sense of belonging and connection. I feel valued as an individual.”

5.5 Development of social links

In addition to the development of social bridges and bonds, ASRs also need to develop links to the institutions which structure their social environment, such as providers of public services. We collected data on the development of these social links with two sets of measures: one focused on access to public services, the other related to connections made with VCOs.

5.5.1 Links to public services

Few study participants reported that they were making links with public service providers and most respondents felt that these services were not required. The two areas where ASRs reported significant activity in making links were related to training and education opportunities outside the ASPIRE programme (37.5%) and gaining access to public sport, leisure and cultural facilities (22.7%). Our findings suggest that these links were facilitated by project staff, rather than other ASRs. For example, signposting to other educational or training opportunities by tutors and other staff was mentioned repeatedly by interviewees as something which was considered very helpful.

5.5.2 Links to voluntary and community organisations

We measured connections to VCOs separately by asking whether participation in ASPIRE had helped ASRs find out about the work of VCOs and connect with their activities, either through voluntary work or by taking part in events that were organised by the organisations. Table 23 below suggests that VCOs play an important linking role for ASRs in terms of work shadowing opportunities and participation in cultural events. Cultural events were identified as the most important way of making links with VCOs, while finding volunteering opportunities was seen as less important to ASRs than finding work shadowing opportunities. The data also suggest that few ASRs obtained support from RCOs.

Table 23: As a result of taking part in ASPIRE have you been able to:

	Yes	No	No need	Total
Find out about support available from VCOs	35.7% (5)	7.1% (1)	57.1% (8)	100% = (14)
Find work shadowing opportunities	42.9% (6)	21.4% (3)	35.7% (5)	100% = (14)
Find volunteering opportunities	21.4% (3)	42.9% (6)	35.7% (5)	100% = (14)
Take part in cultural events	53.8% (7)	38.5% (5)	7.7% (1)	100% = (13)*
Obtain support from RCOs	35.7% (5)	35.7% (5)	28.6% (4)	100% = (14)

*One case missing

In considering these particular findings it should be noted that the dimensions used to measure the degree to which ASRs make links with public services or VCOs did not form part of the output targets of the ASPIRE projects in our sample. This might explain, at least in part, the low scores against some of these questions. However, our qualitative data show that ASRs did make a wide range of links with their institutional and social environment. Links included visits to cultural institutions, local authority offices and learning about rights and responsibilities:

"The project gave me access to databases on voluntary sector projects."

"We went to a museum in London. This was very inspiring."

"I have been able to visit art galleries in Birmingham with my project."

"I learned about child protection legislation."

"We learned about our responsibilities when we give performances."

"The neighbourhood office is helpful."

"I got help from (name of) Housing Association."

"The ... Centre has lots of important information."

"I now know where to get help from."

6. Findings from focus groups

The purpose of holding focus groups was to explore the extent to which audiences and participants were more inclined to develop social bridges and bonds with ASRs as a result of watching the Banner Theatre performance or taking part in the Soups and Stories show. Our data provide contrasting findings which appear to be more

strongly related to the composition and circumstances of the focus groups convened, rather than the performances or the questions that were raised to structure the discussion. These contrasting findings are presented below according to the different audiences that took part:

- Predominantly BME participants
- Predominantly white participants
- Predominantly older participants

Predominantly BME participants

Two focus groups consisted primarily of BME participants, some of whom were ASRs but not connected to ASPIRE. These focus groups were held in an educational context and in the presences of tutors. The data from these two groups suggest that the performances had made the audience more reflective of their own role with regard to supporting ASRs, and also enabled them to put the challenges encountered by ASRs in a political context:

"I'm a bit more careful about how I see asylum seekers now."

"It is our fault that they have such problems in their countries. That's why they come here."

"We are a nation of immigrants. Our ancestors were immigrants coming to the UK to find work."

"The production makes me feel that I want to change people's opinions."

"Campaigning and making a fuss is really important."

Predominantly white participants

Two focus groups were held with participants under the age of 25 who were predominantly from white British backgrounds. One group was held in the presence of community development workers who actively took part in the discussion, the other was conducted with young people without official figures of authority being present. In the latter case, comments were more provocative, but in both focus groups there was little evidence to suggest that watching the performance had resulted in the audience being more inclined to develop social bridges or bonds with ASRs:

"A lot of the people who have negative views about asylum seekers are very big characters in the community. There is no way of shutting them up."

"The asylum seekers want to work, but the majority of people living in England don't want them here."

"Why do they have to still come here? Why can't their own governments provide housing?"

"The UK Government should be stricter with the immigration process."

“The play was one sided – didn’t tell the whole picture. Asylum seekers create mess in the areas where they live.”

Predominantly older participants

One focus group was held with predominantly older participants over the age of 60. Here we found a sense of reluctance to accept the realities of asylum as presented in the performance, alongside a recognition that learning about different cultures is a pre-requisite for the development of social bridges. There were also suggestions that younger people needed to be targeted more so that they were able to form their own views about ASRs, which might differ from that of their parents. Older people were seen as potentially important mentors of younger people, more tolerant and able to see the bigger picture:

“The sketch was a bit heavy. They were trying to make us feel guilty.”

“More children should be involved. They have to learn to live with these people.”

“In future let people learn the gentle way; the ‘in your face’ performance on immigrants was out of place.”

7. Findings from case studies

In this section we present our findings from three case studies which were conducted between July and September 2007. The case study organisations chosen formed part of the sample of ASPIRE projects from which our interviewees were drawn, thus providing the opportunity to compare data from interviews with staff and volunteers at the chosen organisations with those of its users. In selecting the cases we aimed to include organisations that were different in terms of their size, purpose and history.

7.1 Organisation A

Organisation A started as a project in 2002 aimed at providing support specifically for ASR women in Birmingham. The project grew with the support of public agencies and European funding and became incorporated as a charity in 2007. The organisation currently has a turnover of £300,000, employs five staff and benefits from the support of five regular volunteers. A range of services are provided for ASR women, including a citizenship course, parenting classes, outreach and drop-in sessions as well as ESOL and IT classes.

The ASPIRE project formed the continuation of an initiative which started in 2003 bringing together artists, women from ASR backgrounds and local communities to work collectively on medium term art projects. This approach was further refined and developed over time to ensure that the process and the outcomes of the projects would ‘stand up in a critical context.’ This involved balancing the aim of developing art work that could be displayed at an exhibition with the desire to explore the reality of the women’s own experiences. The project focuses on the social aspects of personal development, learning and making links with the local community, thus complementing formal and accredited training courses which ASR women might attend. The purpose of the project is to help ASR women to achieve personal development in their social and institutional environment:

"We work under the theme 'New Growth'. This is based on ideas of growing within the community, a sense of self, feeling safe and some form of peace and a feeling that you are part of a community, able to grow in a nurturing environment." (Manager)

The workshops are led by four trained art teachers who have skills in different areas of art work and are able to use a range of communication methods to engage ASR women of different language abilities. The approach taken to the development and delivery of individual courses is collaborative, with users shaping course content and process. Other staff from Organisation A frequently join the workshops, creating an open and friendly atmosphere in which ASR women can relax while making contact with local people. Some art teachers develop strong social bonds with their participants in the process of developing and delivering the courses:

"I have to tell you that this really impacted on my life, working with this project and also on the way I approach my work now." (Art Teacher)

Organisation A draws on a wide network of other organisations to connect project participants with other art projects, exhibitions and organisations. Other ASPIRE funded art projects are part of this network which considered to be a particular benefit of working with the ASPIRE Development Partnership. Staff also try to encourage and enable ASR women to make and sustain connections themselves with people in other organisations and projects:

"Some women have continued to sustain their relationship with the exhibitors and gallery owners and attended other exhibitions organised by their contacts." (Art Teacher)

ASR women participating in the project reported that they had made friends with course participants and felt more confident. Establishing contacts with people from the local community was also seen as a particular and important benefit of taking part in the ASPIRE project:

"I exhibited my work at a community arts faire where I met lots of people who were interested in my work. This gave me a real boost and made me proud."

"I now feel part of a community because I meet other women on different days each week."

"I have made lots of friends through the project."

The conditions associated with the ASPIRE funding were posing some considerable challenges however, and were considered to restrict the ability of the organisation to deliver a project aimed at the personal development of ASRs which consisted almost entirely of soft outcomes:

"Our project is one with a lot of soft outcomes. Twinned with the very stringent evidence requirements attached to the ASPIRE funding the project requires a considerable amount of administration. ... In some ways the ASPIRE funding made things difficult for the project." (Manager)

7.2 Organisations B and B1

The organisational capacity building project funded by ASPIRE was delivered in partnership by Organisations B and B1. Organisation B is a registered charity which was founded in 1990 to provide educational programmes aimed at empowering people from BME backgrounds to contribute to the regeneration of the area. The turnover of Organisation B is currently £1 million and there are 75 staff providing a wide range of services and projects at its premises. Organisation B1 is a college of further education and a registered charity which was founded in 1909, specialising in residential programmes which are primarily aimed at the voluntary and community sector. Organisation B1 currently employs 50 staff and has a turnover of £1.5 million.

The two organisations initially made separate applications for ASPIRE funding to deliver organisational capacity building training to RCOs. As the purposes of the two applications were very similar a joint project was designed in which Organisation B contributed their expertise of working with RCOs and Organisation B1 provided the structures for the delivery of accredited training. The purpose of the ASPIRE funded project was described as follows:

“Essentially organisations should be stronger and more able to compete and find their way in a competitive environment. RCOs should be better able clarify where their own organisation should be focusing on and then o develop these priorities.” (Manager, Organisation B)

Course participants were recruited primarily through networks of Organisation B. The ASPIRE project supported 15 RCOs and provided for the recruitment of a course tutor and an outreach worker who would together establish the residential and outreach elements of the course. Many students took advantage of other learning opportunities at the college:

“Many of the students have taken advantage of the additional places on other courses. I think that two of the participants now feel confident to move on and leave their RCO to form their own organisation.” (Course Tutor)

The ASRs participating in the capacity building course were described as enthusiastic and keen to take up the networking opportunities offered by the ASPIRE project. They gave enthusiastic reports about their experience of participating in the course, particularly with regard to the contacts they were able to establish with other organisations:

“I developed new skills and new contacts. New partnerships with other organisations developed through this course.”

“I now have a new social network and new contacts with voluntary organisations.”

“I developed new networks and contacts. There is a great opportunity to take things forward.”

Here too the funding conditions associated with ASPIRE posed considerable challenges, particularly for Organisation B1. There were ongoing uncertainties over what could be used to match fund the ASPIRE grant and there was a sense that the ASPIRE funding was insufficiently flexible to accommodate the approach necessary

to delivery a project that was aimed at supporting the organisational development of RCOs:

"It's been disappointing for us that despite very clear briefings on several occasions that EQUAL would be different, would be prepared to be riskier than other European programmes, this has not been the case. ... In terms of using this as a funding source in future our experience is a positive disincentive." (Programme Director, Organisation B1)

7.3 Organisation C

At the time of undertaking this case study Organisation C was still an emerging organisation. Having been created in May 2006 the organisation was not incorporated and was in the process of obtaining charitable status. Organisation C is governed by a management committee of seven refugees and was founded and managed by the current director who himself is a volunteer. The organisation has been successful in obtaining a number of smaller grants, and five staff were employed at the time of the study, mostly on a part time basis. The turnover of Organisation C was less than £50,000 and the ASPIRE funding provided for the employment of a full time co-ordinator and administrative costs.

Organisation C aims to provide a 'One Stop Shop' for ASRs seeking information and guidance on education, health and housing issues. The purpose of the ASPIRE project was to provide work shadowing and volunteering opportunities for ASRs. This was considered an important element of supporting the integration of ASRs once they had obtained their refugee status:

"The big thing no-one else was addressing was volunteering. There is a problem because a lot of refugees and asylum seekers do not have this experience here in the west. I mean, how can you expect a refugee to get a job when he is new to this country, has never had any training or any experience in working in an environment with a western work ethos?" (Director)

ASRs are recruited through word of mouth and extensive networks with RCOs which Organisation C cultivates. The organisation operates an open door policy and many ASRs drop in asking for support and guidance. Obtaining placement opportunities posed challenges, mainly because many VCOs and public agencies have been found unwilling to take on ASRs who tend to have limited language capabilities and are still finding their way in a society that is governed by different values and institutional processes to their own. At the time of the case study less than five volunteer placements had been made. However, the volunteer placement officer did help others to find ways of using and developing their skills so that they might find paid employment in future:

"There's this physics teacher I was just on the phone to. I have got him a volunteer placement and he was supposed to start two weeks ago and he hasn't. But I've got him into college this autumn, starting a Qualified Teacher in England certificate. ... There's also a woman from Albania, I've got her bursaries to do the course. So we've got two physics teachers enrolled but that doesn't count toward my output targets." (Volunteer Placement Officer)

The ASRs that were placed with other organisations appreciated the opportunity to be able to do something that was not training but was part of the 'real working life' of Britain. Some of these placements were more successful than others, and in one case the ASR terminated the placement because:

"People would not talk to me. I was sitting looking at the computer screen all day and nobody would say a word." (Project participant)

One of the key motivators for the ASRs interviewed was that they were seeking to establish a sense of self worth by applying their skills in a working environment. In some cases there was a sense of disillusionment with the mainstream training opportunities on offer to ASRs because they were not seen to lead to real work opportunities:

"I hate the job centre. They never help. I need a job. I just want a job." (Project participant)

Organisation C also encountered substantial challenges associated with the ASPIRE funding; these were primarily associated with the requirement that only people with asylum seeker status were permitted to participate in the project. When the contractual agreements were entered into - with a large intermediary VCO acting as the accountable body because Organisation C did not have the legal status and systems to administer the funding directly - the director and the governing body of Organisation C were not fully aware of the implications for the feasibility of their project. Following an initial implementation period of approximately six months, it became clear that the project would not achieve its contracted output targets because the majority of volunteers did not have asylum seeker status. As a result the ASPIRE funding was withdrawn:

"I took this broad view that the project was just more relevant to refugees and that the funder would support this. I was wrong. ... Nearly all my clients are actually refugees but I've blindly gone on and dealt with refugees. Only a very small number are actually asylum seekers. My latest client was an asylum seeker when I met with him three weeks ago. When I arranged to see him again last week he had leave to remain, he was a refugee!" (Volunteer Placement Officer)

7.4 Discussion of findings from case studies

Our case studies show that each organisation had designed their project which with the explicit purpose of supporting ASRs in the development of bridges and links to their social and institutional environment. In the case of Organisation A strong emphasis was placed on helping ASRs to establish social bridges amongst themselves and then to other people and organisations. This process was carefully facilitated and has, in some cases, led to the development of strong social bonds between ASRs, as well as between course tutors and ASRs. The latter is significant as an example of social bonds being developed between people who shared in a common activity, producing art, while the individuals did not share core attributes, such as having the status of an ASR or being from the same national or ethnic

backgrounds. In addition ASRs established important links with VCOs and individuals independently following an initial contact facilitated by the project.

In the case of Organisations B and B1 the ASPIRE project was not specifically aimed at enabling ASRs to develop social bridges or links, but rather at enabling the organisations they worked for to establish effective approaches to compete in an institutional environment. However, the case study data show that individual ASRs used the project to develop social bridges amongst themselves as well as a range of links to other organisations which could be of help to them. As a number of ASRs took advantage of other training opportunities and contacts available to them at the college it is unlikely that all of the benefits reported are entirely attributable to the ASPIRE project they participated in. However it is quite likely that the ASPIRE funded training played a major part in helping ASRs to establish social bridges and links.

Organisation C provides a contrasting case. Here, the staff and volunteers were trying to help a wide range of people from migrant backgrounds to establish social links with organisations by focusing on the needs and capabilities of ASRs and largely ignoring their official status. This approach created substantial problems for the organisation because the funding requirements did not permit this degree of flexibility. The networks and enthusiasm that staff and volunteers brought to their work could not be harnessed for the benefit of ASRs because of the European Union funding conditions. However, despite the withdrawal of funding Organisation C continued to support everyone seeking help in the best way it could; this included assistance with volunteer and work shadowing placements.

It should be noted that in all three cases the funding conditions associated with ASPIRE were considered restrictive and unsupportive of projects that were primarily delivering soft, i.e. difficult to evidence, outputs. In one extreme case the application of the funding conditions nearly led to the closure of the organisation and the loss of paid staff who continued to work voluntarily in pursuit of supporting ASRs. While Organisation C might have been able to deal with the funding challenge it faced had it been longer established with more capacity to handle European funding, these findings raise two questions. First, is ASPIRE funding in particular, or European Union funding in general, a suitable vehicle to resource the work of organisations at the grassroots of communities, organisations which may be best placed to reach those people who live on the margins of society, such as ASRs? Second, are European Union funding sources suitable to fund projects that are aiming to produce largely social or 'soft' outcomes?

8. Summary of findings

This study has shown that the use of SIPs based on the concept of social capital can be effective in assessing programme impacts on ASRs. While it is difficult to design indicators to fit all types of projects, the SIPs designed for this study were suitable for a range of very different projects funded by ASPIRE. Although the SIPs used in this study would benefit from further refinement (see Chapter 9) and our findings are not representative of programme performance, the data collected through SIPs provides clear indications of:

- The types of social connections made

- The project types which appear most effective in supporting the development of social bridges and bonds;
- The activities which ASRs tend to engage in when developing social bridges, bonds and links.

Despite the small sample used for this study, our findings clearly suggest that ASRs formed a wide range of social links, bridges and bonds. The data indicates that social bridges in particular were developed as a result of participating in ASPIRE which, given that social bridges are important yet difficult to establish, should be noted. With regard to social bonds, our study suggests that these were developed, but not to the extent as social bridges or links.

Art projects have been found to be most effective amongst the different types of projects studied at facilitating the development of social connections, in particular social bridges and links. We also found that cultural activities related to art projects are key facilitators for making links with local people and local institutions, and that these links can play an important role in helping ASRs find access to training and education opportunities. Volunteering projects also appeared to be effective at establishing links with local people and organisations, while capacity building projects seemed to be very strong in connecting ASRs with each other. Language based projects in contrast appear to have little impact on the development of social bridges and links, with ASRs tending to develop bonds within their learning group rather than with people and institutions outside it.

Despite the differences we observed between the projects studied, there is strong evidence to suggest that participation in ASPIRE funded projects improves the self confidence and self esteem of ASRs. Participation in structured activities which provide opportunities to meet and work with others were valued and considered by almost all ASRs to have improved their confidence in themselves and their future.

Our study indicates that most ASRs engage in networking and talking about their experience; joint problem solving or political activity appear to have a low profile amongst ASRs. Also, being able to work in groups and motivate others appear to be the benefits most widely perceived by ASRs in our sample. Helping others, or dealing with conflict, cultural differences or racism were activities which only a small proportion of ASRs in our sample engaged in. However, these findings need to be treated with caution because it is likely that complex concepts or processes, such as dealing with conflict or joint problem solving, cannot be explored in sufficient depth through a single structured interview.

It should be noted that ASRs appear to engage in networking, sharing experience, working in groups and motivating others without being bound by their ASR status or coming from the same home country, thus developing social bridges with people who are 'different' in important ways. Our study also suggests that ASRs appear to select other people with who they form social bonds on the basis of the people who participate in a particular project, rather than on grounds of nationality, ethnicity or religion. This finding runs counter to outcomes that could be expected on the basis of social capital theory and warrants further exploration.

Finally, the case study data show that in every ASPIRE project was developed with the specific intention to enable ASRs to develop social bridges and links. The

organisations were able to support ASRs to develop such social connections amongst each other within a particular project, but also with organisations and individuals outside the ASPIRE funded project; This finding is supported by data from structured interviews. However, our findings also show that VCOs can encounter substantial challenges because of the conditions associated with European Union funding. Small VCOs in particular seem to struggle to fulfil European funding requirements, which raises questions about the feasibility of using funding programmes such as ASPIRE to reach into the grassroots of deprived communities.

9. Implication for the future use of soft indicators as performance measures

In this final section of the report we discuss the suitability of the SIPs developed in this study as a means of assessing the extent to which ASRs benefited from interventions aimed at supporting their integration in their new host community.

Below we identify the benefits of the methods used in this study and suggest changes for future application of these of similar SIPs in evaluations or studies aimed at assessing the progress made by ASRs towards integration. The discussion is presented in three parts and in accordance with the different methods used in this study, which were:

- Structured interviewing,
- Focus group discussions, and
- Case studies.

9.1 Structured interviews

Our experience of developing and conducting this study suggests that future studies of this nature would benefit from using a mixed methods approach to contextualise and compare data. Using structured interviews combined with recorded statements and examples which explain and illustrate the responses given by ASRs to questions posed by the interviewer has proved to be an effective method of data collection about the impact of a wide range of different projects on ASRs.

The SIPs and their subordinate indicators have proved capable of capturing the complex, and at times contradictory process of establishing social connections, providing a rich, client based picture of how progress was made. We were able to collect evidence on the progress made towards integration in relation to individual ASRs, groups of ASRs using a particular service and particular service types. Furthermore, our experience of conducting this study suggests that the questionnaire we designed would be suitable for incorporation into the normal operation of a project. This would provide a means of focusing the measurement of performance on outcomes and process. However, we are also able to identify a number of limitations and opportunities for the improvement of the approach used in this study which are discussed below.

While our study generated meaningful findings, the data was collected during or shortly after the completion of a project. In future studies the SIPs developed here

would find their most effective application when the interviews with ASRs are conducted at the beginning and the end of a project. This could most usefully be integrated into the admission or discharge process, and for longer term intervention could be combined with a review process. It should be noted that the application of our questionnaire requires a one-to-one interview and is therefore resource intensive. Such resource implications would have to be made explicit at the design stage by both the funder and the provider of services. In addition, the specification of outcomes which could be evidenced through SIPs would have to form an explicit element of the project design and approval process.

We found that any limitations caused by the language capabilities of ASRs could be overcome by the interviewer explaining and paraphrasing questions and asking for examples from the respondent. However, our experience of conducting interviews suggests that for future studies which use similar indicators or questions, it may be advisable to find proxy indicators for complex concepts which are largely culture specific, such as 'social networks', 'negotiate conflict' or 'political activity'.

This study has shown that a small number of key indicators, the SIPs, can generate meaningful findings to evidence the impact of interventions on ASRs, but SIPs need to be supported with a wider range of subordinate measures which reflect the context of the programme. The composition of such indicators may therefore change according to the programme studied because they need to have relevance to the programme outcomes that are aimed for.

The data collected through this study suggest that there is little benefit in having separate SIPs for voluntary and faith organisations. The ASRs questioned did not seem to engage to a significant extent with either of these organisational types, neither did they appear to use the services of RCOs extensively. For future studies of this nature it would seem sensible to have one SIP to capture connections with third sector organisations, which would include faith and refugee organisations.

A similar rationale applies to potential changes to questions about 'links'. The poor responses to these questions can only be in part explained by the ASPIRE projects in our sample not having intended to make these links. Our respondents provided a range of useful examples about the kind of links they make in the course of the ASPIRE project they participated in; these should form the basis for a revision of the questions on social links.

Our study shows that collecting data on the self-perception of ASRs is an important way of contextualising their responses to the interview questions and thus provides a deeper understanding of the impact that projects, such as ASPIRE, can have on ASRs.

This confirms the importance of collecting qualitative data as a means of explaining and enhancing our understanding of the findings resulting from the quantitative analysis of data.

9.2 Focus groups

The focus groups which we conducted held limited explanatory value to assess the impact of ASPIRE on the audiences. Our experiences show that discussions can be strongly influenced by the composition of the focus group and the presence or

absence of authority figures. These variables were difficult to control in our study because focus group participants were self-selecting. This aspect would require particular attention if future impact assessments were to include this method of data collection. Using focus groups drawn from audiences of performances is likely to be an important aspect of future studies however, because assessing the 'distance travelled' by the host community may be just as important as assessing the progress made by ASRs towards their integration.

While the data we collected through focus groups is not suitable for exploring the impact of the performances on ASRs or audiences, our findings do suggest that participants are more likely to comment on the development of social bridges and links, rather than social bonds. This should also be taken into consideration in the design of future studies.

9.3 Case studies

The case study data proved useful in offering a different perspective on the findings from structured interviews. However, the contribution of a case study approach could be enhanced by a larger sample of cases and, within these, a larger number of interviews, both with ASRs and staff. Then, correlations could be made between individual projects, or projects clustered under themes such as art or language learning, and the benefits derived by ASRs in relation to the cases studied.

In small VCOs, which provide services primarily or exclusively for ASRs it was relatively simple to attribute impacts on the development of social bridges, bonds and links to the APIRE funded activities, because of the limited range of services provided. In larger organisations where ASRs are just one of many client groups, attributing impacts to just one programme, such as ASPIRE, is potentially problematic and is likely to require significant resources. Hence careful consideration would need to be given in future evaluations to the design of such case studies in order to weigh up the benefits that might be derived from case studies of complex service providing organisations.

Nevertheless, case study data can identify important challenges faced by VCOs in providing support for ASRs, such as in evidencing soft or social outcomes. Such challenges need to be brought to the attention of funders and providers of services for ASRs so that problems can be addressed at the project or programme design stage.

10. Conclusion

The SIPs and associated methodological approaches developed in this study have generated meaningful data on the extent to which ASRs progressed towards their integration with the host community as a result of participating in ASPIRE funded projects. As this study was exploratory in nature, the primary objective was not to undertake an evaluation of ASPIRE. Our findings are therefore not representative of the ASPIRE programme, nor should they be taken as an assessment of the performance of individual projects because the outcomes captured by SIPs were not specified as targets and outcomes of the projects studied. Nevertheless, our study shows that the ASPIRE funded projects we studied did support ASRs in the

process of their integration, and also how this process could be assessed and evidenced.

The SIPs developed here have the potential for wider application to other programmes and projects aimed at ASRs, both nationally and in other European Union member states. However, further refinement and testing of these indicators are necessary before they can be recommended as tools for the performance measurement of interventions aimed at the integration of ASRs in other programmes.

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Appendix I

Cover Sheet

***(to be removed and stored separately from questionnaire
prior to data entry)***

Soft Indicators Study

Interviewer.....

Date of interview

Name of Project.....

Project code.....

Name of Interviewee.....

Interview code.....

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE EQUAL Projects

Project Code:.....

Interview Code:.....

Introduction:

- Introduce yourself;
- Explain purpose of the study;
- Explain that some questions may not be relevant;
- Assure the interviewee that the everything that is being said and entered into the questionnaire will be treated confidentially and anonymously.

Section A: Factual data about the interviewee

1. Participant is

- Male
- Female

2. How long have you participated in this project?

Number of weeks _____

Number of months _____

Number of years _____

3. What main activities do you take part in?

4. Do you have members of your family in the UK?

- Yes
- No

If Yes,

- Partner/Husband/Wife
- Children How many? _____
- Parent How many? _____
- Other relatives How many? _____

5. Do you live with members of your family?

- Yes
- No

6. How often do you see your family members?

- Not at all Some times Often Very often

[Explore whether and what kind of support the interviewee receives from family] _____

7. How old are you?

- 18 – 24 years old
 25 – 35 years old
 36 – 46 years old
 46 years old and over

8. When did you arrive in the UK?

Month & year _____

9. Was it your original intention to come to the UK?

- Yes
 No

If No, identify original target destination:

10. Did you stay in another country prior to arriving in the UK?

- Yes
 No

If Yes,
What country? _____
How long did you stay there? _____

11. What is your country of origin? _____

12. What is your main language? _____

13. Do you speak other languages? _____

	Not at all	A little	Fairly well	Very well
14. How well can you understand <i>spoken</i> English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. How well can you <i>speak</i> English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. How well can you <i>read</i> English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. How well can you <i>write</i> English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**18. If response is 'Not at all', 'A little' or 'Fairly well' ask:
What would help you improve your English?**

- Language courses
- Language training for trades/technical terms
- Conversation courses
- Social gathering with people
- Access to library
- Other _____

19. Before coming to the UK what was your main activity?

- In employment
- Self employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Looking after home and family
- Retired
- Other _____

20. If you did work before coming to UK, do you hold any qualifications?

- Yes
- No

If Yes,

- Primary School
- High School
- Practical/vocational
- College/academic

If No,

What skills has the participant acquired informally which enabled him/her to work in the home country?

Section B) Indicators which explore the development of social bridges and social bonds

21. In your home country, how did you spend your free time - apart from working or taking care of the family?

(Supplementary question: Did you do enjoy any specific activity, for example sport, music, art?)

22. To what degree has this project helped you to start again the activities that were part of your 'normal life' in your home country?

Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If answer is 'some' or 'a lot' ask for examples:

To what degree do you feel this project has contributed to greater

23. Confidence in your future

Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[Examples might include: Making plans; seeing opportunities; courage to bring about change in their personal circumstances; understanding how and where they might want to settle down/join with family members]

_____ [Record the examples interviewee cites]

24. Confidence in yourself

Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[Examples might include: Ability to face their trauma; ability to communicate their experience to others; confidence/acceptance of their own history; recognition of the value of their own skills and experiences]

_____ [Record the examples interviewee cites]

25. Sense of what you have achieved

Not at all Not v. much A little A lot

[Examples might include: Familiarity with new social context; new contacts and social network; obtaining skills; opportunities to apply their skills]

_____ [Record the examples interviewee cites]

26. Has this project helped you to meet other refugees and asylum seekers?

Yes No

If Yes: Did you have any contact with them before joining the project?

Yes No

Have these contacts helped you to:

	Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
Talk about your experience?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop social networks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in political activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solve problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take note of other benefits mentioned or problems that were solved:

27. Has this project helped you to meet other people from your country of origin?

Yes No

If Yes: Did you have any contact with them before joining the project?

Yes No

Have these contacts helped you to:

	Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
Talk about your experience?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop social networks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in political activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solve problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take note of other benefits mentioned or problems that were solved:

28. Has this project helped you meet people from the local/indigenous community

Yes No

If Yes: Did you have any contact with people from the local/indigenous community before joining the project?

Yes No

Have these contacts helped you to:

	Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
Talk about your experience?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop social networks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in political activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solve problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take note of other benefits mentioned or problems that were solved:

29. Has this project helped you make contact with community groups?

Yes No

If Yes: Did you have any contact with community groups before joining the project?

Yes No

Have these contacts helped you to:

	Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
Talk about your experience?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop social networks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in political activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solve problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take note of other benefits mentioned or problems that were solved:

30. Has this project helped you make contact with faith organisations/churches

Yes No

If Yes: Did you have any contact with churches/faith organisations before joining the project?

Yes No

Have these contacts helped you to:

	Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
Talk about your experience?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop social networks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participate in political activity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solve problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take note of other benefits mentioned or problems that were solved:

To what degree has this project helped you to:

	Not at all	Not v. much	A little	A lot
31. Talk about your experience as an asylum seeker with other people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Talk about your experience about living in the UK with other people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Help other people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Work in groups with other people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Motivate/encourage other people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Deal with cultural differences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Negotiate conflict?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Deal with racist attitudes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. To what degree has this project motivated you to build a new life in the UK?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. To what degree has this project helped you to feel comfortable in your new community in this country?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[Q38 Take note of examples given:] _____

[Q40 Explore in what way this project contributed to these perspectives]

Section C) Indicators to explore the development of social links

Access to public services

41. To what degree has this project helped you to know about your rights and responsibilities?

Not at all Not v. much A little A lot

[If Yes, explore how project achieved this]

	Yes	No	Not applicable	No need
42. Has this project helped you get access to health/social care?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. Has this project helped you to deal with housing problems?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Has this project helped you find a school for your children?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Has this project helped you obtain support for special needs (children and self)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Has this project helped you set up a bank account?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. Has this project helped you obtain home insurance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. Has this project helped you obtain a driving license/access to a car?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. Has this project helped you participate in training or education outside the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. Has this project helped you to use public sport, leisure and cultural services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Take note of examples given. Record how the project has contributed to these outcomes.

Access to support from voluntary and community organisations

51. To what extent has this project helped you to know about the support that is available from community and voluntary organisations?

- Not at all Not v. much A little A lot

- | | Yes | No | Not applicable | No need |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 52. Has this project helped you to find work shadowing opportunities in VCOs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 53. Has this project helped you to find volunteering opportunities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 54. Has this project helped you take part in cultural events of community groups? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 55. Has this project helped you to get support from Refugee Community Organisations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

56. Are there other ways in which community groups and organisations (outside this project) have given you support? _____

Section D) Any other comments from interviewee

57. Do you want to tell me anything else about the way in which this project has helped you?

58. How could this project be improved?

Thank you

Appendix II

Topic Guide

Focus Group Banner Theatre/Soups and Stories

Hans: Introduction: What is going to happen; why we are doing it

Jayne: Recap of the purpose of performance:

Real life experiences of asylum seekers

Expose myths and prejudices

1. How did the performance made you feel?
2. What did you learn about asylum seekers/refugees that you didn't know before?
 - Difference between asylum seeker/refugee/economic migrant
 - Types of jobs they do/sub-economy
 - Poverty/standard of living
 - Personal freedoms
 - Fleeing persecution
 - Rights
 - Attitudes of public agencies
3. To what extent has your opinion of asylum seekers changed as a result of seeing the play?
4. Is there anything that you would want to change now with regard to asylum seekers and refugees?
 - Media/press
 - Government
 - What should be done locally – why?
 - Meeting of indigenous population and asylum seekers
 - Supporting development of self-help groups/social networks
 - Providing training/volunteering opportunities
 - Providing jobs/work opportunities
 - Advise on their rights
 - Help them finding their way round
 - What can you personally do?

Appendix III

CASE STUDY INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Third Sector Organisations

Question	Prompt/Probe
1. Organisational Information	
1.1 Please would you tell me about the history of this organisation. How did it come about and why was it created.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Who were the founders <input type="checkbox"/> Political and ethical aims <input type="checkbox"/> Legal status <input type="checkbox"/> Number of staff/volunteers <input type="checkbox"/> Turnover <input type="checkbox"/> Importance of residents/users <input type="checkbox"/> Profile of professional and political actors <input type="checkbox"/> Vision of organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Composition of management committee
1.2 Please would you tell me how you became involved in this organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Previous employment/work <input type="checkbox"/> Why this organisation
1.3 What are your roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Relation to other functions of the organisation
2. <i>Aspire Project Funding</i>	
2.1 Why do you believe the application for aspire funding was made	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How did the idea come about <input type="checkbox"/> Role of board in decision making and application process <input type="checkbox"/> What raised concern <input type="checkbox"/> What was attractive
2.2 What particular benefits does ASPIRE funding bring to your organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue existing work <input type="checkbox"/> Develop new work <input type="checkbox"/> Take risks <input type="checkbox"/> Innovate <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability
2.2 In what way does the ASPIRE project complement other services/projects you provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Added value through synergy <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing on existing structures/skills <input type="checkbox"/> Requiring new structures/skills <input type="checkbox"/> Links to other services interviewer is aware of

3. Impact of the project	
3.1 What impact has the ASPIRE project had on your users?	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased employability Motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Change in attitudes
3.2 Impact on organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Reviewing processes <input type="checkbox"/> Influence on other projects
3.3 Impact on staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased confidence <input type="checkbox"/> Training
3.4 In what way will the ASPIRE funding/project influence the future development of this organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Growth <input type="checkbox"/> Independence <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability
4. Barriers/Support to delivering Project	
4.1 Compared to funding from other public sources, are there particular challenges associated with using or administering ASPIRE funding	<input type="checkbox"/> Effect on organisational structure and process <input type="checkbox"/> Need for specialist personnel <input type="checkbox"/> Administration of funding <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting, evidencing, monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability of project after ASPIRE funding ceases
4.2 What support would you have wanted to get from the LSC/Steering Group in delivering the project	<input type="checkbox"/> Capacity building (skills and org dev.) <input type="checkbox"/> Technical support <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility in implementing funding requirements
4.3 What support would you have wanted to get from public agencies in delivering the project	<input type="checkbox"/> Political support <input type="checkbox"/> Financial support <input type="checkbox"/> Influence overall strategy
4.4 What collaboration from other Third Sector organisations in delivering the ASPIRE project did you benefit from	<input type="checkbox"/> Sharing of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Networking <input type="checkbox"/> Mutual support <input type="checkbox"/> Competition <input type="checkbox"/> Adversarial relationships
5. Key Learning Points	
5.1 Where there any enablers that were crucial to the success of the project	<input type="checkbox"/> Networking <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration of VCO's <input type="checkbox"/> Skills of delivery staff <input type="checkbox"/> Public agencies
5.2 What have you learnt from delivering this project	<input type="checkbox"/> Impact of project on staff, organisation and users
5.3 What advice would you give other organisations/tutors wanting to undertake a similar project	<input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration with VCO's <input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Building/Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility in funding requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Timescales
5.4 Where there any unexpected, hidden costs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Travel/sustenance