

EMBRACING DIVERSITY



**How People of African Descent and Service Providers
experience diversity in Dublin 15**

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**Maynooth
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DUNGLAVE ASSOCIATES

EMBRACING DIVERSITY

How People of African Descent and Service Providers
experience diversity in Dublin 15

2019

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**Coimisiún na hÉireann um Chearta
an Duine agus Comhionannas**
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ACRONYMS

BAP	Blanchardstown Area Partnership (Empower)
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECRI	European Commission Against Racism
Empower	Local development company for Fingal responsible for a range of Government funded programmes (Formerly BAP)
ENAR	European Network Against Racism
GNDIU	Garda National Diversity and Integration Unit
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HEA	Higher Education Authority
ICI	Immigrant Council of Ireland
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
Intreo	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
ITB	Institute of Technology Blanchardstown
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PAD	People of African Descent
POBAL	Supports Communities and local agencies to achieve social inclusion outcomes
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
SICAP	Social Inclusion & Community Activation Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project entitled 'Embracing Diversity' was based in Dublin 15¹ and funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission 2017-18. The project was implemented by three partners with experience of undertaking research initiatives in marginal communities. The partnership comprised Maynooth University² with experience in collaborative research; Wezesha, an African Diaspora-led organisation which has been working to support migrant integration and social inclusion in Ireland since 2014; and Dungleave Associates with experience in participative engaged-research methodologies. The primary aim of the partnership was to combine our expertise in order to enhance our capacity to explore intercultural and interracial engagements and to promote social sustainability in this diverse community.

The project used interviews, questionnaires, focus group discussions and a plenary session to explore the experiences of diversity among People of African Descent (PAD) living in Dublin 15 and the experiences of different service providers operating in the area including Empower; Intreo; Citizens Information Service; Institute of Technology Blanchardstown; Fingal County Council; Gardaí; local NGOs and community groups.

All who participated in the project did so with enthusiasm. They were generous in giving their time and openly shared their knowledge and experiences. The willingness of community members and service providers to engage in all aspects of the research process including a plenary meeting involving all participants bodes well for on-going future cross cultural and cross sectoral engagements. While much attention was afforded the challenges and difficulties experienced by both PAD and service providers it must also be noted that many positives relating to living in Dublin 15 were also highlighted particularly by young PAD participants. Their experiences in negotiating their African culture at home and their Irish identity in other settings afforded them a particularly insightful positioning.

The research findings raised issues relating to miscommunication, racism, crimes and anti-social behaviour, employment and education. In the plenary session that took place after the data collection phase these themes were accepted as reflective of the experiences of both the PAD community and service providers.

The priorities for the future as defined by People of African Descent and service providers alike related to the need for government to renew its focus on diversity and in particular to support policy development and resource initiatives in the following areas:

- Training for Service Providers
- Creating a safer community
- Promoting social inclusion

With regard to Training for Service Providers this research recommends that:

- A support and training process be designed for front line service providers and that the training include creating spaces where people can be encouraged to tell their stories to aid their understanding and appreciation of difference.
- Local community and voluntary organisations and local service providers be involved in the design and delivery of this training. This grouping could ideally be led by the Citizens Information Service which is already engaged in training and has an ethnically diverse volunteer stakeholder group, many of whom are involved in interpretative services.
- The training aims to achieve the following learning outcomes:
 - Enhance staff familiarity with the diverse cultural and everyday realities of the communities they serve in Dublin 15.
 - Explore the constraints and opportunities afforded by the dominant cultures in the different service agencies with a view to improving how staff experience interactions with the communities.

With regard to creating a safer community this research recommends that:

- The fear that people are living in needs to be addressed through a multiagency response in Dublin 15 with a particular focus on creating a safer community.

¹ Dublin 15 comprises the south west corner of Fingal, from Blanchardstown to Corduff, Clonsilla to Kilmartin and from Mulhuddart to St Catherine's.

² Centre for Research in Adult Learning and Education. Edward M. Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention.

- Such a response should build on existing and create new opportunities for agencies to come together with local community representatives that reflect the diversity of Dublin 15 and include local and national media.
- The multiagency response could begin with two specific Dialogue Workshops as follows:
 - Dialogue Workshop One will focus on the concerns of young people. It could be held in Tyrrelstown Community Centre be led by Foróige and involve local youth representative organisations, An Garda Síochána, led by the Garda National Diversity & Integration Unit (GNDIU) and including Community Gardaí, Probationary Gardaí & Ethnic Liaison trained Gardaí. It is important that media representatives engage in this process.
 - Dialogue Workshop Two will focus on the concerns of the wider community. It could be led by Tyrrelstown Community Centre and involve local community and voluntary representatives, An Garda Síochána, Community Gardaí and GNDIU, and media representatives.
- The aims of these dialogue workshops are to:
 - Create opportunities to explore the extent and impact of racism and hate crimes.
 - Identify key initiatives that would contribute to creating a safer community.
 - Enhance inter-cultural understanding and sensitivity on the part of service providers including An Garda Síochána.
 - Enable the PAD community to develop confidence in An Garda Síochána and other service providers.

With regard to promoting social inclusion this research recommends that:

- A review of the provision of interpretative services, and the information that is available regarding access to interpretative services be undertaken with a view to enhancing provision where there are deficits.
- Community centres continue to play a role in promoting a sense of belonging by supporting and resourcing inter-cultural community get-togethers.
- A renewed commitment from government to invest in services and facilities for youth, particularly those whose parents are living in socially disadvantaged circumstances.
- The Higher Education Authority (HEA) prioritise migrant students as a target group.
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) disseminate information on existing processes that can be undertaken to attain formal recognition of non-EU qualifications and competencies, including QQI's NARIC database and application process.
- The Department of Education and Skills undertake research on embracing diversity in the primary, second level and third level sector in Dublin 15 involving parents, student representatives, teachers, parents' associations and boards of management.
- Empower and Intreo design supports for PAD in entrepreneurship.
- Positive discrimination measures be introduced in favour of employing PAD/migrant in each of the government agencies in Dublin 15.
- The Department of Justice disseminate information on legislation that protects PAD from systemic xenophobia.
- The Department of Rural and Community Development/POBAL modify the SICAP registration form to mirror the census form to enhance the data gathering of people with dual nationalities.

Shaping the Future

There was a discernable realisation among all the research participants that an increasingly diverse population poses complex challenges. On the part of the service providers there was a willingness to appraise how services are provided and a keen awareness of the need for improvements. On the part of the PAD community, despite the difficulties they face they were open, accepting and responsive to the possibility of change for the better. Both displayed a willingness to work together to create that change. Almost all of the recommendations made here are concerned with shaping the future by building on that willingness to engage.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Embracing Diversity Project

The project entitled 'Embracing Diversity' was based in Dublin 15 and funded by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission 2017-18. The project was implemented by the Centre for Research in Adult Learning and Education, the Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention, Maynooth University with experience undertaking educational and research initiatives in marginal communities; Wezesha, an African Diaspora-led organisation which has been working to support migrant integration and social inclusion in Ireland since 2014; and Dungleave Associates with expertise in participative engaged-research methodologies. The primary aim of the partnership was to combine our expertise in order to enhance our capacity to explore intercultural and interracial engagements and to promote social sustainability in this diverse community.

1.2 The International Context for the Embracing Diversity Project

The two key international contexts informing this research are (i) the United Nations Decade of People of African Descent (2014-2024) and (ii) the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With regard to the former the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) is a key stakeholder with responsibility in Ireland for supporting and advocating for the key themes of recognition, justice and development. These themes inform the management, design and delivery of this project. This research also responds to the National Implementation Plan (2018–2020) which provides a whole-of-government approach to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that are core to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A particular focus of the SDGs is on 'leaving no-one behind'. Both contexts call for fairness, inclusion and opportunity for all and have provided a lens through which the viability of policy options, normative practices, beliefs, and everyday experiences have been viewed. Three fundamental beliefs permeated this research's approach to fairness, inclusion and opportunity. The first is a belief that awareness and understanding are vital to counter the forces that alienate or disconnect people from each other. The second is that those whose 'voices' are silenced cannot participate fully in building a fair and inclusive society and are in effect 'left behind'. The third is that their exclusion impoverishes the community as a whole.

1.3 The Local Context for the Embracing Diversity Project

According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) statistics of population (2016) there were 57,850 Black or Black Irish living in the state with 10,684 resident in Fingal where the overall population was 296,214. This represents a slight decrease since 2011 when the figure was 11,324. The population decrease of African nationals is reflected within the electoral divisions included in this report.

Electoral Division	No of African Nationals 2011	No of African Nationals 2016
Blanchardstown-Tyrrelstown	143	90
Blanchardstown-Corduff	81	21
Blanchardstown-Abbotstown	176	81
Blanchardstown-Blakestown	1,743	490
Blanchardstown-Coolmine	276	185

**Population usually resident and present in Fingal 2011 to 2016
by Nationality, Census year 2016**

Nationality	Number	Nationality	Number
Algerian	61	Kenyan	29
Botswanan	36	Malawian	59
Cameroonian	64	Moroccan	27
Congolese	168	Nigerian	990
Irish Congolese	38	Other African	219
Irish Libyan	113	Somalian	176
Irish Nigerian	1520	South African	256
Irish Other African	308	Sudanese	73
Irish South African	204	Zimbabwean	93
Irish Sudanese	146	Multinational	535
Irish Zimbabwean	43	Nationality not stated	5806

1.4 Project Aims

This project targeted PAD and service providers. It set out to garner experiences of diversity from different groupings (based on age and gender) within the PAD community and with different service providers in the area including: Empower; Intreo; Citizens Information Service; Institute of Technology Blanchardstown; Fingal County Council; Gardaí; local NGOs and community groups.

The specific aims of the project were to:

- Give voice to the PAD community and those who provide services to them.
- Create an opportunity for PAD community members to hear each other's opinions and to recognise the diversity of opinions within groups, based on gender and age.
- Create an opportunity for different service providers to hear each other's opinions and to hear those of community members.
- Facilitate engagements that highlight the potential benefits of collaboration.

It was hoped that the project would result in an improved understanding of migrant issues, concerns and perspectives on the part of a range of service providers within the community; and an appreciation on their part of the sometimes subtle and nuanced differences between different groupings within the PAD community. In addition it was anticipated that the PAD community would be better equipped to access services as a result of getting to know individuals involved in the provision of different services and getting a better understanding of the dominant perspectives regarding diversity among service providers. It was also intended that there would be an increase in mutual understanding and acceptance between different sectors and groupings within the PAD community and an enhanced capacity to talk to each other and to reframe their approach to differences.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Project implementation

Funding for the project was approved by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) in December 2017. A steering group was established comprising representatives of the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention, the Centre for Research in Adult Learning and Education, Maynooth University, Wezesha and Dunlave Associates. The research project achieved ethical approval on 21st February 2018 from Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee (Reference Number SRESC-2018-012).

Research was conducted by direct engagement through focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires within the PAD community and among service providers in Dublin 15. These took place throughout April, May and June 2018. The African community were engaged through Wezesha which mobilised people through its established networks. The service providers were identified in Dublin 15 through desk research and particular services were prioritised following the focus group discussions with PAD. The schedule of questions for interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions were developed by the steering group.

2.2 People of African Descent (PAD) process of engagement

2.2.1 People of African Descent (PAD) Focus Group Discussions

Invitations to participate in the research were issued by Wezesha to women, young people aged 18 years plus and a mixed group of men and women. A total of twenty four respondents participated in three separate focus group discussions. The first group involved five women; the second involved seven young people and the third group involved four men and eight women.

The focus group discussions in the PAD community provided an opportunity for participants to get in touch with and narrate their lived experience. From these individual stories, meta stories emerged that highlighted issues and elements that otherwise may have been occluded by dominant discourses. In the case of the PAD community the facilitators of the focus group discussions were particularly alert to the need to create opportunities for the most marginalised experiences to be voiced.

2.2.2 People of African Descent (PAD) Questionnaires

Twenty four questionnaires in total were completed by people of African descent. The questionnaire explored country of origin, age group, gender, marital status, religion, length of time living in Ireland, level of education, and employment status. Respondents were asked to rate their overall experience of living in the community and according to their rating, to describe what is good or poor about living in the community. Respondents were asked to tick all of the services that they have accessed in Dublin 15 and to rate them according to their experiences. They were asked to elaborate upon their rating and to suggest what changes need to be made within services. They were also asked to suggest ways that would improve their overall engagement with services. Respondents were asked to outline the three most important initiatives that would enhance the lives of the African community living in Dublin 15. They were asked to describe their relationship with their neighbours, the Principal of the school their children attend, and where relevant their landlord. In conclusion they were asked for final recommendations that would improve living in the area. (See appendix A)

Number	Country of Origin	Religion	Employment Status	Education
24	12 Nigeria, 3 Zimbabwe, 2 Kenya, 2 Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) 2 Irish/Nigerian 1 Ireland 2 unknown	22 Christian, 2 Islamic	5 full time 5 self employed 5 unemployed 4 students 3 part time employed 1 homemaker 1 CE Scheme	6 Second Level 13 Third Level 1 Master's Degree 4 unknown

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4 Professor Anne Ryan

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6 Dr. Margaret Nugent

All participants completed a 'consent form' relating to the use of data generated from the questionnaires and focus group discussions.

2.3 Service Providers process of engagement

Invitations to participate in the research were offered to the service providers via emails throughout April and May. The invitation email contained an information sheet and a schedule of questions (See Appendix A). Service providers were followed up with telephone calls and interviews were organised throughout May and June 2018. At the start of each interview the context and aims of the research process was outlined and in most cases the interview was recorded. As the interviewees already had a copy of the interview questions, for the most part they had prepared responses. The purpose was to identify what each group or representative saw as the strengths and weaknesses of their diverse community and the factors or forces that help or hinder them in the delivery of their specific service. The interviews were conducted in a semi-formal way that allowed for relevant information to emerge without adhering strictly to the question format. Consent was achieved at the end of the interview when the interviewees had established what they were consenting to. Where interviews were recorded, a transcript of the interview was prepared and returned to the interviewee for further comments and clarification. Thirty service providers representing sixteen services in Dublin 15 participated.

List of participating Service Providers⁷

Date	Service
1/5/18	Empower (formerly Blanchardstown Area Partnership)
10/5/18	Citizens Information Service
10/5/18	Tyrrelstown Community Centre & Foróige Tyrrelstown
10/5/18	Mulhuddart Community Centre
14/5/18	Dept of Social Protection/Intreo
14/5/18	Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB)
30/5/18 & 14/6/18	An Garda Síochána, Blanchardstown Garda Station and Finglas Garda Station
5/6/18	Blanchardstown Youthreach
6/6/18	Garda National Diversity and Integration Unit (GNDIU)
6/6/18	Fingal County Council: Community Culture & Sports
14/6/18	Blakestown Community Centre
14/6/18	Aoibhneas Women & Children's Refuge
14/6/18	Sonass Services Domestic Abuse & Violence
14/6/18	Fingal Housing Department
14/6/18	Members of Fingal County Council

2.4 Plenary session

Following direct engagement with the PAD community and service providers, a plenary workshop was conducted in Blanchardstown Library on 14th June. It brought together both the service providers and the people of African descent who had participated in the research.

The aim of the plenary session was to share the preliminary findings of the research to date and to encourage, facilitate and deepen discussion around the key issues that had emerged. The session also provided an opportunity for those present to focus on next steps for the community as a whole with a view to building on the strengths and addressing the challenges that were identified. Thirty-eight people attended the plenary session. The findings generated by the research were presented and discussions on the findings were facilitated in small groups involving representatives from different service providers and residents. Each small group which was facilitated by staff from Maynooth University⁸ was asked to comment on the following:

⁷ Names of participants and positions held in each service is available.

⁸ The facilitators: Dr Kieran Doyle, Ms Maggie Noone and Dr Tedla Desta, Edward M Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention; Dr Bernie Grummell and Dr Michael Murray, Centre for Research in Adult Learning and Education

- *What surprised or didn't surprise you about the findings, or what do you find most interesting?*
- *What would you have liked to have heard more about?*
- *What topics generated the most discussion or enthusiasm?*
- *What topics generated agreement or disagreement among the participants?*
- *Any strengths, weaknesses, possibilities for the future emerging from the data?*

The participants concurred in general with the preliminary findings, stating that there was very little by way of surprises. PAD and service providers highlighted the need to identify the many positives for residents in Dublin 15. They were keen to adopt affirmative action within services and were enthusiastic about the opportunity for dialogue with PAD.

2.5 The final consultation

A draft report was compiled drawing on data from the questionnaires, interviews and plenary session and was returned to all who indicated they would like to receive a copy. The purpose of the dissemination of the draft report was to establish further clarification of the issues and to encourage deepening of mutual understanding between people of African descent and service providers about the key issues that emerged in the research project. Following feedback from this process this report was produced.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The key themes that emerged for both people of African descent and service providers in the Dublin 15 area through the various research methodologies outlined above were:

- Miscommunication
- Racism
- Crimes and anti-social behaviour
- Employment
- Education

Each of these themes are explored in detail below.

3.1 Miscommunication

Miscommunication emerged as the single most significant problem for both the PAD community and the service providers. The PAD community identified their main problems as not being listened to, not being understood, being referred on or being sent elsewhere without the service provider really understanding the issue. They spoke of *'feeling rushed'* saying *'services can be dismissive, not giving us enough time to express ourselves'* (PAD respondent). *'Feeling rushed'* was an experience shared by service providers who commented that they felt they did not have enough time *'we have time constraints, a list of people we have to go through'* Intreo.

In the experience of most PAD respondents mutual respect can be poor between client and service provider. They called for *'honest assessment'* instead of what they perceived as prejudiced judgments.

Service providers pointed to language difficulties as a significant part of the problem. Whilst they noted that English language skills amongst the PAD community can be good, they reported that regional accents, diction and sentence structure can create difficulties for mutual understanding.

'In general People of African Descent have good understanding and fluency, even people from French speaking parts of Africa, they tend to have good English'
Citizens Information Service.

'You need to be tolerant, there has to be an open-ness, put some effort in, listen to sentence structure. Some people have poor English, saying it louder doesn't work' Mulhuddart Community Centre.

'It's diction, as an Irish person encountering that for the first time it's difficult to hear particularly if you are being a lazy listener, if you sit quietly and listen it's ok, but if you don't it's difficult' Empower.

'I see a variety of students of African descent, their English varies, some struggle compared to some who have very good English'
Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

'People say they are mistreated based upon their country of origin and that sometimes they feel there is a communication barrier, not because of English, but cultural attitudes towards how they speak' Citizens Information Service.

Service providers said they found it difficult to engage with the African community in general, they struggle to find ways to get the information about services out to those who need it within the community and sought recommendations on ways to do this. The issue of trauma also emerged. Service providers were concerned with the trauma experienced by people coming from war torn countries, they felt they needed training to respond to the counselling needs of such clients. They also said that in communication with the PAD community they sometimes felt vulnerable. They were keen to find acceptable terminology. They often struggled with the correct pronunciation of African names. They reported that their fear of giving offence to clients can lead to miscommunication. They felt that nuances of expression can also create barriers to understanding.

All research participants highlighted the need for translation and interpretation services. The availability and utilisation of interpretation services varied.

'Clients (of housing department and social protection) say that they are not informed of interpreter services. It could be because of the demand on these services and people do not have the time to really talk with people' Citizens Information Service.

'It (interpreter/translation services) seems to work well in the HSE and in Social Welfare appeals' Citizens Information Service.

'Language is not an issue. If a parent doesn't speak English, the teenager usually does. We can have a translator available. They usually live in the local area so they (translators) can be here immediately. It's more accents that are difficult, you really have to listen to understand' An Garda Síochána.

PAD respondents said they needed information with regard to the availability of and access to translation and interpretation services.

The role played by children and young people in translating between their parents and service providers was also noted. For some service providers child interpreters are inappropriate.

'We have to arrange for translators due to data protection laws, in some cases children are translating for their parents, but that's not necessarily appropriate for the child' Intreo.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) means that clients can no longer bring their own translator to service provider meetings. This is seen as having a negative impact on effective service provision.

For the service providers language training for residents was seen as an important aspect of service provision.

'Assessment of need is complicated because of language difficulties. We support access to English language support groups for non- English speaking people' Intreo.

For the PAD community poor communication was not only about misunderstanding the words spoken but also about the nature of the engagement with service providers as evidenced in these quotes.

'We need information on rights to services, good information on how the service is being delivered'

'Information is not getting to grassroots'

'When you attend for social protection you have to look miserable, that has to change'

'African minorities might feel that they don't have power'

'People need to be empowered, are resources going to be put in place?'

'Integration as opposed to assimilation, at times the institutions promote assimilation'

'Irish need to respect us. They need to accept us'

Service providers also noted that they needed feedback from the different ethnic communities on how best to engage with and inform communities on all of the resources that are available and to ensure the services are appropriate to the needs to the community sector. For example Mulhuddart Community Centre noted that *'It's an effort to pull the women's group together, initial engagement is good but continuous engagement is a challenge'*. The PAD community felt that engagement between the PAD community and service providers could be enhanced. *'At least 10% of frontline service providers should reflect the community, be people of colour'*.

There was an awareness that training is needed to emphasise that the PAD population is not homogenous and that it encompasses a multitude of differences including languages, religious and cultural norms.

'There are huge cultural differences, we get a lot of Nigerian students, but even within that there is such ethnic and cultural diversity there' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

There was also an awareness that a tendency to see difference in terms of deficiency blinds us to its positive values.

'What we don't see are positive aspects of African culture and achievement, it doesn't matter where immigrants come from it's the same problems' Empower

'Diversity is an asset, I'm not sure that we tap into the potential of that in terms of its value' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

'Take the focus off diversity, place the focus on unity, team work, respecting cultures, embracing needs' Youth Reach Blanchardstown.

The PAD community called for training to *'enhance the skills (of service providers) by providing front line staff with cultural awareness and sensitivity training and culturally appropriate de-escalation techniques'*.

'The recommendation from clients' experiences is that cultural sensitivity training is needed. The National Committee on Racism and Inter-culturalism (NCRI) was doing a lot of training, and the Equality Authority. That seems to have completely disappeared' Citizens Information Service.

'How we use our language is important, acknowledging that we need skills and training' Fingal County Council.

Cultural awareness training was mentioned frequently by service providers and PAD with a view to not only improving communication but also making it possible to provide a comprehensive and effective service to clients. Pad respondents also suggested that such training could be provided to service providers by PAD. The aim of the training would be to develop awareness amongst service providers of the differences and commonalities amongst the client base, in terms of ethnicity and culture. *'There must be education about diversity and integration and how to respect individuals culture, norms and beliefs, we are from different religious backgrounds'*. Pad respondents also believed that such training would minimise the sense of *'Us and Them'*.

3.2 Racism

People of African Descent spoke of feelings of vulnerability, fear and resentment due to racism. They suggested that An Garda Síochána is limited in its potential to protect the African community. Women narrated how they were targeted in their homes by local Irish youth over the years with break-ins, intimidation and shouting of racist slurs. The mixed group of PAD talked of their experiences of systemic xenophobia and young people highlighted the insidious role of social media hate sites in perpetrating racism and intolerance.

PAD community members said they are easily identified as *'outsiders'* by the colour of their skin. They have developed responses to racism that include internalising and normalising their experiences. In such contexts racist incidences are not being reported, there is a *'keep your head down'* approach. They experience racism in many forms and in particular African males feel that their race negatively impacts their chances for employment. They highlight discriminatory policing of second generation Irish-born young males, some of who are experiencing racism when they reach maturity.

The opinions of service provider respondents differed with regard to the prevalence of racism. One respondent noted that *'if there is racism out there we don't hear about it'* Intreo. A Garda said *'In all the time I have been a community Garda I have only dealt with one racist crime. If it's happening it's not being reported'*. Observations on the lack of reporting by victims of racist crimes are multifaceted, *'some people won't go to the police, they wouldn't be bothered, some guys are macho, they may be too proud, others are fearful of retaliation, or because they are inhibited'* GNDIU. Responding to the lack of reporting of racist crimes, one respondent claimed *'if police are doing their job properly they should know if there is racism in an estate or not, we should reassure those people to come forward, not to be suffering in silence'* GNDIU. Other service providers acknowledged that the lack of reporting does not mean that racism is not happening. *'Just because the stats aren't there doesn't mean the problem isn't there. Sometimes if you don't ask you don't hear. I don't know how easy it is to report racism'* Citizens Information Service. Underreporting of racist crimes is a recurring theme *'200 racist crimes are reported a year, there's a lot more that's happening, if police were out in the community meeting people we would know that the figures are a lot higher'* GNDIU.

Others were equally definite about the existence of racism.

'There is racism out there and there are people who won't give them jobs because of the colour of their skin, or because of their accent' Empower.

'There is racism out there, they may not be called for an interview. It may be a lack of skills, or it is perceived racism that is a barrier to employment' Intreo.

'We have highlighted the 'No Racism Campaign', there's a number to call if people have problems. As individuals there's not a lot we can do about it apart from referring people on to a youth service or the Gardaí' Empower.

A respondent from the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown noted that

'They (PAD) don't all have negative experiences but they do talk about racism in terms of the broader society. That is a challenge that is not going away, not just at an institutional level but at a cultural level too'.

Respondents also remarked on racism between ethnic groups.

'We know that Africa is a big place with many countries, tribes and castes, there can be a lot of internal racism' Empower.

Service providers identified housing policy as a key concern fuelling racism in the community and as having a negative impact on integration.

'Housing policy in Fingal is problematic, it has caused a level of ghettoization, it causes resentment and racist incidences, it goes both ways' Empower.

'About 8 years ago 75% on the Fingal housing list were non-Irish. That meant that for every 10 houses that came available 7.5 went to non-Irish, new housing stock in Mulhuddart and Tyrrelstown area certainly are all African and eastern European. It is causing problems in terms of integration, same in Balbriggan as well' Empower.

'There is a huge outcry about housing, some Irish people are being bitter, they say "people are coming in from Syria, from Nigeria", they say "what right have they to get a free house?"' GNDIU.

It was felt that if the anger in relation to housing is not handled and managed appropriately then it could destroy good relationships that have been built up over the years. *'the tone of voice changes, they say 'hold on a second, I'm f..... sick of this, I can't get a house why should they get one"' GNDIU.*

3.2.1 Discriminatory policing and racial profiling

The PAD community talked of discriminatory policing and racial profiling on the part of Gardaí and described security personnel following them around in the shopping centre and in shops such as Lidl's. *'We are always stopped, irritated, agitated, shouted at, made to feel uncomfortable, picked on because of the clothes I wear'.* Young PAD were unanimous that this kind of response was not what they experienced as children *'what has changed is maturity, becoming an adult creates the difference. Without you speaking they look at you as a stranger'.*

A Garda representative said *'all teenagers think Gardaí are harassing them, it is across the board Irish white teenagers will say the same thing. We are getting to know them; the only way is to talk to them, if they are fidgety or nervous they may have drugs or drugs paraphernalia. We are obliged to find out who people are. We have to ask ourselves why they are so defensive, we might find something on them' An Garda Síochána.*

The response by the Garda National Diversity and Integration Unit (GNDIU) to opinions vocalised by young people of African descent of their experience of being targeted by Gardaí was very clear *'it's wrong because teenagers are always going to be out and about in open spaces. You can't stop and search them. When young people are gathered in public spaces work positively with them, don't treat them as second class citizens'.*

The potential problems that can arise in response to perceived discriminatory policing were highlighted in relation to a breakdown of trust between young Irish Africans and An Garda Síochána.

'Black kids in Blanchardstown if they feel that they are being policed differently to white kids that is a problem, kids get angry and start protesting, it can cause problems, black against white' GNDIU.

'It's a huge thing for Ireland now, Templemore needs to address that issue, there needs to be training, they don't cover it (diversity) in much depth' GNDIU.

Service providers were mindful of the need for restraint in characterizing all African youth as violent.

'Because there is a gang of teenagers hanging out it doesn't mean they are violent, we had 25 African teenagers in to do a programme, they opened up by saying a prayer. They weren't a faith based group but faith is part of their community. There was no intimidation, its perception or misconception' Empower.

In relation to anti-social behaviour perpetrated by a small group of young Africans it was noted that *'The majority of them who have been causing trouble in Tyrrelstown have moved out, so even though the trouble isn't there anymore, it's reported in the media'*

An Garda Síochána concurred *'there were 10 lads, youngsters from 4 or 5 families that made peoples' lives hell. They were dealt with through the courts. Media and social media had a role in drawing attention to it, it grew legs.'*

'We have a great relationship with People of African Descent, I find them a pleasure to police, I find them very easy to work with, they are law abiding people whether they are Nigerians, Congolese, South Africans, Zimbabweans' GNDIU.

'It's the same problems for the Irish, there is no difference, problems with parking, neighbours not getting along, anti-social behaviour, drugs, alcohol, scrambler bikes, muggings and robbings, different issues depending on whether it's an affluent or non-affluent area. We have a good African population, we never think it's going to be an African person (involved in crime)' An Garda Síochána.

A number of service providers referred to the negative role played by social media in hyping up anti-social occurrences and creating unnecessary fear in communities. Some speculated whether anti-social behaviour is less race related and more commonplace rivalry amongst housing estates.

'There has been violence and gang fights but is it race related? It's one estate against another, its local housing estate rivalry, it's definitely not as bad as it is portrayed in the media' Empower.

Both PAD and service providers referred to images portrayed by print and social media as being unhelpful and deliberately instilling fear in communities. *'Papers want to do stories about racism, there was a problem with black kids fighting with each other, on Facebook slagging each other off'*

'We had problems around St. Patricks Day, young black kids causing problems, I approached community leaders, pastors, asked them to tell kids to calm down, relax, don't be causing trouble. You have a good name here don't let these kids mess things up'. The initiative had a positive impact. 'we've had no arrests in the past two years, simple initiatives, but you can't keep doing this, it has to happen naturally' GNDIU.

Young people of African descent believed that having limited facilities causes problems.

'Basic infrastructure that keeps the community together was removed (Tyrrelstown Astro Pitch) therefore a spike in crime rate'.

They called for *'Garda that aren't biased towards the black community and more interactions with the community from the Garda to win their trust'.*

They praised the work of Foróige and also called for initiatives that have and would enhance the lives of members of the African community such as:

'Mixed race community forums/discussion'

'Events to bring everyone together'

'More multicultural activities that promote our culture.'

3.3 Crimes and anti-social behaviour

Service providers, people of African descent and various agencies⁹ highlighted the problem of hate crime in Irish society, crime that is motivated by racism. This type of crime was described as crucial for an Garda Síochána to address.

'Understand that hate crime is a unique type of crime, it's the most horrible crime to be subjected to and it needs a specialised approach. Police officers need to understand what's the motivation, how it impacts on the victim, why is the suspect motivated to commit that crime. Try to understand why that person hates' GNDIU.

Personal experiences of crimes narrated by PAD in the focus group discussions included attacks on children, attacks on personal properties and on their homes by local Irish youth.

One woman described her experience.

'Both of us were single, we had young children, we were targeted. We used to dread night-time, to the extent that for one year we used to combine families, one used to put children to bed, another at the windows, literally watch man, looking out through the window because they used to come every minute, literally breaking windows, more than 10 times we fixed our windows.' When asked 'Who are these people?' she responded 'Young gangsters, shouting get out, we don't want blacks in this area. You foreigners, you black people, you Africans, get out'

A number of PAD who had been victims of crime or anti-social behaviour were keen to acknowledge the actions and responses of some individual Garda who were described as *'helpful and responsive'*.

The majority, however, told of their unwillingness to bring justice to bear on those living within the neighbourhood who have targeted them. They feared further reprisals.

'A lot of things happened, it was terrible. I let it go because we don't want anything to happen, everyone knows these people.'

PAD acknowledged that their minority status and obvious differences within the Irish community impacts on their ability to stand up to criminals. One woman described why she declined an invitation from community members to attend a public meeting to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood because she was fearful of being easily identified.

'People came to my door and said we must have a public meeting, we know who these boys are, we must identify them, we are meeting at the community center. I refused to go, because I am a black woman, they are all going to be there, he will be there, his friends will be there, there are not many black people here, I would be identified.'

Repeatedly PAD indicated that their usual response to crime was to stay silent and hope it will stop.

'About 6 times my husband's car was broken into. The guards wanted us to follow up on a panel. We don't want trouble, we don't want to be targeted, we just let it go.'

PAD also pointed out that they are currently less targeted by criminals and there is overall less crime and anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood.

'Thank you to God and to the system, because even though it was after much trouble something happened out of worries, tears and a lot of struggle, something happened, now it is home. Now I don't remember I am a foreigner anymore, nobody targets us anymore.'

Some PAD believed that relationships between their Irish neighbours and themselves have improved as a result of their approach to 'letting it go' *'It is relatively peaceful now because we just mind our business'*. Others note that looking the other way is not entirely satisfactory *'We have adjusted to the way, even though it is not very good we have accepted and we let it go'*.

⁹ IHREC (2017) Responding to Racist Incidences and Racist crimes in Ireland.

3.3.1 Positive aspects of community

The positive aspects of living in Dublin 15 were identified by PAD as follows:

'Positive interactions between women and between children'

'A sense of inter-culturalism'

'Interactions within community'

'The opportunities that exist to participate in a variety of groups'

'The availability of support for learning and education'

Overall PAD women questionnaire respondents noted improved relationships within their community. *'We have started a neighborhood group and during summer we share food from different countries'* and *'personally I make it a point of duty to have a good relationship'*. Another said *'All we want is to be to be accepted, to be given a chance to prove ourselves that we are not the people they think we are, that we are not only here to take money'*. Young people of African descent expressed positivity about their community *'the people around the community are welcoming'* and *'it feels like a family and a decent place'*. *In relation to the relationship with their neighbours responses ranged from 'we greet each other whenever we see them' to 'due to our unity I regard them as family'*

'Within every area there are positive aspects and resources, facilities are good'

'I feel like the services for young people are scarce. But what is good is that there is a strong community link'

'There's the opportunity to engage and participate within the community'

'There is strong rapport between Africans'

'In Tyrrelstown, there is a sense of home, a sense of family and positive experiences. We know all of the black Irish'

'I recommend mixed race community forums for discussion, events to bring everyone together'

3.4 Employment

Issues relating to employment were key themes to emerge in the focus group discussions with people of African descent and in the interviews with service providers. This is very much in keeping with the findings of the ENAR Shadow Report (2014-2015)¹⁰ which showed that discrimination in the workplace and when looking for work is particularly problematic for Black people. African workers in Ireland are mainly engaged in caring, personal service occupations and elementary administration. The report also noted that:

Black female migrants are excluded from the workforce on many levels. Firstly, in terms of accessing jobs in their chosen careers as there is a lack of recognition of foreign qualifications. Black migrant mothers are also at a disadvantage because of the lack of extended family childcare support or affordable childcare. Under-representation of women of African descent in the workforce is mainly hampered by their reproductive role as the primary carer of their families, often parenting alone, with a limited support network. In many circumstances, the representative bodies of PAD tend to comprise mostly men and the representations they make to government, local authorities, health boards and other public bodies are provided from their (male) perspective and do not always reflect the true experiences and needs of women.

In this research a number of excluding factors also emerged. Service providers such as Intreo identified unrecognised qualifications as a problem leading to qualified people having to retrain.

'There is no recognition of their qualifications, they have to take on training here to be recognised, none of their previous jobs or qualifications are recognised through QQI. For African women education is hugely important, some have masters levels qualifications and still don't get jobs' Intreo.

¹⁰ ENAR (2015) Afrophobia in Europe: ENAR Shadow Report 2014-2015

Other factors included fear of the unknown on the part of employers.

'It's the fear of the unknown, people have no idea what that means. Trócaire is what we relate to in terms of our understanding of Africa, the images and the reality are different' Intreo.

Intreo also identified language as a problem.

'The main challenges are English language, literacy is a big challenge, access to literacy, they have to learn to speak the language first. They are a long way away from accessing the labour market' Intreo.

'They are failing at interviews because of language difficulties, they don't accept they are failing because of that, they are saying it's race' Empower.

Another factor was lack of focus on the part of PAD.

'Mostly they just want a job so it is difficult to encourage them to do other things along the way. A lot are motivated, they come in with a plan. Others will say 'I will do anything' and they need to focus' Intreo.

Another was the need for PAD to match skills to the job they want.

'They are so focused on work but the labour market is complex. It is a smart economy, employers want qualified workers' Intreo.

The entrepreneurship skills of Africans was identified as a particular strength creating opportunities for self-employment.

'There is a much greater entrepreneurial culture amongst the African community, much more so than in the Irish or Eastern European community. I would like to invest more money in specific enterprise and entrepreneurial training specifically for African communities' Empower.

Empower also acknowledged that culture and business planning can pose problems for entrepreneurship.

'Setting up a business in Ireland compared to Nigeria - it's a longer process here, in order to get your business approved you need a business plan. They also get mediation support, help to develop their business. Bureaucracy is a challenge for particularly the Nigerian communities, they can't understand why they need to jump through so many hoops before they can start a business' Empower.

Intreo also identified the challenges of entrepreneurship in a small economy.

'Africans are business oriented, it can be difficult for Africans to find their niche, they are good at buying and selling. Self-employment is a good option but this is a small economy and they don't have the connections in business that is needed' Intreo.

Intreo identified the jobs bridge programme as a useful way for the African community to build connections in the labour market that would lead to employment.

'The Job Bridge programme was a very useful way for people to access the labour market, for participants it provided the workplace connections and experience they lacked. The African community was positively affected by it, 60% of participants got jobs upon completion of the programme' Intreo.

However PAD suggest that programmes such as Job Bridge keep people in a poverty trap.

Empower highlighted policy changes that they believe will have a negative impact on people of African descent *'Taxi driving is now disqualified from the Back to Enterprise Allowance in the Department of Social Protection, we will have a glut of African men aged 45 plus who will not get into employment. If I could do one policy change it would be to reverse that'* Empower.

Other service providers mentioned the need for positive discrimination measures and the need for service providers to reflect the diversity of their client base.

'We make a conscious effort to employ people of African descent, 30% of our client base are PAD' Mulhuddart Community Centre.

PAD primarily saw racism and xenophobia as key issues that hinders their ability to gain employment. They cite specific instances where they feel their right to employment are being undermined.

'Pre judged opinions downgrade your chances of getting employed'

They called for protection of their rights to employment through legislation and for positive measures to support integration in the community and in the workforce.

'Opportunities for inclusion into the workforce where I can impact my knowledge and expertise'

They suggested that they should be represented in public services.

'We need opportunity to be able to secure position in public services, because people want others that can identify with them, not discriminate against them'

'Employ Africans in existing services, some refuse to employ migrants'

PAD also called for additional support.

'We need institutionalised financial support for migrants to enhance self-employment that add value to society and provide needs for the community'

'Give migrants the opportunity to start sewing training, carpentry, jewellery making - training that can engage them positively and make them useful in the community'

PAD suggested that racism impacted particularly upon young peoples' chances to gain employment during the recession.

'Youth unemployment was bad during the recession, but even worse for migrant kids'

3.5 Education

There was an overwhelming sense of positivity and hope for the future in the young peoples' focus group discussion regarding their experiences in education and their sense of community. Young peoples' experiences in education were described in terms of fairness and equality. It was felt that with the right attitude, hard work and study that a sense of enthusiasm for the future is justified. Young people of African descent, many who were born in Ireland felt that they have been granted the same opportunities as their peers. They noted that diversity is promoted in general and encouraged in schools. Foróige was also highlighted as doing very good work in promoting unity and inter-cultural communication.

'Education provides opportunities, with hard work you will achieve your goals'

'Because I was born here went to school here I didn't feel I was treated differently'

'There is unity, communication between all races, everyone seems to communicate and integrate quite well'

'With a 3rd level degree and experience it is very much career dependent if you get a job'

'We have a positive experience in Foróige, it keeps young people off the streets'

'My accent, Irish people regard that as cool, there is a sense of similarity to them'

'The principal is one of the fairest people I know because I understand the role he has to provide, I understand because I have been there'

'In Luttrellstown all of the teachers are helpful toward their students'

'I have rated the services good, because I felt like I had pleasant experiences whilst using these services, (St Philips NS, Luttrellstown CC, St Luke's Parish, Tyrrellstown Community Centre, Foróige)'

For parents on the other hand there was a heightened sense of vigilance in relation to ensuring that their child or children are treated fairly within the education system.

'Not everything is rosy in the schools, groups are formed, children of African descent are tolerated in the schools'

Integration of children of African descent was considered by parents as poor. *'There is poor integration in schools.'* Others went so far as to indicate that there is racism in the school system. *'There is racism in the school, double standards. The principal sees the child in a different way.'* Some expressed concerns about the treatment of people of African descent by individual teachers in specific educational institutions. *'School intake of children I rate as poor: my child was denied a place for two years but others were taken.'* It was felt that integration was hampered by the fact that many children of African descent are attending one or two schools in the area.

In particular it was felt by many parents that their children were being discouraged from taking science subjects at leaving certificate level. Also suggestions were made for Africans to assist with grinds for those children who wished to pursue science subjects.

Within the mixed focus groups and women's focus group there was an emphasis on the need for recognition of PAD's educational qualifications. *'Other qualifications are poorly represented in educational services, QQI need to begin work on recognition of other/ non-EU qualifications, build equivalency'*

They also spoke of their frustration at having to retrain and re-educate in sectors where they had completed training in their home country.

'I am feeling depressed, humiliated because my qualifications are not recognised, I feel retarded, pulled back. I am from a very enlightened background with a level of intelligence, they are training me for what I know before'

'Give equal opportunity and right to work in graduate field'

Service providers highlighted the need for a renewed focus on intercultural diversity in the education system.

'Intercultural diversity is not on the top of anyone's agenda at the moment, to a certain extent it might have been backtracked' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

They point to the need for inclusion of ethnic minorities in the Higher Education Authority target groups. They also highlight the need for statistical data on ethnicity in order to appreciate the full range of diversity.

'Ethnic minorities, outside of travellers are not part of the targeted groups of the Higher Education Authority (HEA). It is not on the HEA agenda in terms of the underrepresented groups in Higher Education' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

'We have figures by nationality but not by ethnicity, people of African descent are not necessarily non-Irish nationals. It is a gap in terms of our data collection. Full time students, non-Irish nationalities 15.7% are people of African descent. We have more from Nigeria than any other country. We also have students from DRC, Cameroon and Somalia. Stats for this year show that we have 59 students across 15 countries, non-Irish nationals' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

Lack of inclusion was seen to limit positive learning experiences that could be garnered through education. The need to actively enable inclusion in a learning environment was emphasised.

'I think there is very little attention paid to diversity and integration and I think we are poorer for it. Diversity is an asset, we have all of these students from diverse backgrounds, they come from the locality nearby. I'm not sure that we tap into the potential of that in terms of the value, in terms of what they can bring' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

'We delivered modules on cultural diversity, intercultural competence, combating racism. We would do basic things like mixing up the students, they need to be mixed up, integration doesn't necessarily happen itself, we have a role as educators in dealing with that' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

The need for systems to support inclusion was also noted.

'In relation to managing diversity the following systems have been put in place. We have a diversity, equality and inclusion committee, it is a cross section of the college that are represented, it is a voluntary group. It is very much grassroots rather than at a strategic level. It is not particularly well resourced in terms of support'

'We ran staff training on diversity, an all staff forum and we have a diversity charter' Institute of Technology Blanchardstown.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A key message that emerged in the research was that in responding to the complex needs of a diverse community 'One size does not fit all'. Service providers noted that in the earlier days of migration when a wave of new communities came to reside in Ireland a number of NGOs, initiatives, training, supports and plans were put in place. However in the past ten years much of that has gone by the wayside, leaving service providers with ever increasing caseloads, with limited resources, skills, training or time to manage diversity effectively. In some cases it was felt that institutional cultures and/or policies marginalise people of African descent. Service providers felt that integration has fallen off the agenda of statutory bodies' programmes of work and that the loss of funding for services and organisations that focused on the integration of migrants is a factor that is hindering communication and mutual understanding.

The priorities for the future as defined by People of African Descent and service providers alike related to the need for government to renew its focus on diversity and in particular to support policy development and to resource initiatives in the following areas:

- Training for service providers
- Creating a safer community
- Promoting social inclusion.

4.1 Training for Service Providers

The need for cultural sensitivity training was emphasised throughout the research by service providers and people of African descent alike as a requirement to support the process of integration. Overwhelmingly both service providers and people of African descent acknowledged that the training needs to be interactive and participatory on the part of the community representatives and service providers. Throughout the research process the stories that emerged in group meetings in relation to lived experience of both PAD and service providers were most enlightening. Stories of living in fear and experiences of racism were highlighted by PAD. But also stories of unity in adversity emerged. The strength of the bonds that have been built between the African diaspora community living in Dublin 15 is particularly voiced by women and young people. Bonds have also been developed in community between women and between young people from diverse backgrounds including Irish.

Stories from service providers were also mixed. They spoke of the vulnerability they feel in relation to being labelled as racist because of the decisions they need to make in relation to funding and/or provision of services. They also told of experiences that revealed the positives inherent in diversity.

Recommendation: that a support and training process be designed for front line service providers and that the training include creating spaces where people can be encouraged to tell their stories to aid their understanding and appreciation of difference.

It is recommended that local community and voluntary organisations and local service providers be involved in the design and delivery of this training. This grouping could ideally be led by the Citizens Information Service which is already engaged in training and has an ethnically diverse volunteer stakeholder group, many of whom are involved in interpretative services.

It is recommended that the training aim to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- Enhance staff familiarity with the diverse cultural and everyday realities of the communities they serve in Dublin 15.
- Explore the constraints and opportunities afforded by the dominant cultures in the different service agencies with a view to improving how staff experience interactions with the communities.
- Enhance staff capacity to engage in culturally appropriate de-escalation techniques during times when tensions are arising in communication.
- Enhance staff capacity to respond to the trauma and counselling needs of clients, some of who are experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of their experiences of migrancy.

4.2 Creating a safer community

A key priority that emerged in the research was the need to create a safer community where People of African Descent can live without fear of intimidation. It became clear from the focus group discussions that people have lived in fear of attacks, and that racist intimidation is a factor in perpetrating that experience of living in fear. Fear is negatively impacting upon peoples quality of life, has hindered opportunities to integrate and has the potential to be passed on through the generations. In the main people have adapted to intimidation through 'keeping their heads down'.

PAD perceive that An Garda Síochána are limited in their capacity to protect the African community from racist crimes and anti-social behaviour. Social media and mainstream tabloids are perpetrating the unfair and unjust notion of anti-social behaviour by young Africans in Dublin 15. This is further instilling fear of Africans amongst their Irish neighbours. It has led to segregation of migrant communities with limited interaction with their Irish neighbours.

Experiences by young Africans of racial profiling by some Garda, and local security personnel is exacerbating the problem. Young people of African descent called for An Gardaí to get to know them as individuals, to build trust in the community rather than profiling them as perpetrators.

Service providers acknowledged that it is necessary to address problems associated with racism, in particular the fear that is felt by Africans. Service providers acknowledged that they have been slow to react, that they have difficulty interacting, gaining access to the African community, difficulty understanding and knowing how to help.

Recommendation: That the fear that people are living in needs to be addressed through a multiagency response in Dublin 15 with a particular focus on creating a safer community.

Such a response should build on existing and create new opportunities for agencies to come together with local community representatives that reflect the diversity of Dublin 15 and to include local and national media.

It is recommended that the process begin with two specific Dialogue Workshops as follows:

Dialogue Workshop One to be held in Tyrrelstown Community Centre to be led by Foróige and to involve local youth representative organisations, An Garda Síochána, Community Gardaí and GNDIU, and media representatives.

Dialogue Workshop Two to be led by Tyrrelstown Community Centre and to involve local community and voluntary representatives, An Garda Síochána, Community Gardaí and GNDIU, and media representatives.

The aims of these dialogue workshops are to:

- Create opportunities to explore the extent and impact of racism and hate crimes
- Identify key initiatives that would contribute to creating a safer community
- Enhance intercultural understanding and sensitivity on the part of service providers including An Garda Síochána
- Enable the PAD community to develop confidence in An Garda Síochána and other service providers.

4.3 Promoting social inclusion

For the PAD community concerns relating to inclusion and exclusion mainly focused on communication, education and employment.

4.3.1 Communication

The need for interpretative services to enhance communication and understanding was highlighted by the research. It was perceived as inconsistent across service provision, with the health sector being acknowledged for having adequate provision.

Recommendation: that a review of the provision of interpretative services, and the information that is available regarding access to interpretative services be undertaken with a view to enhancing provision where there are deficits.

Fingal County Council's Integration and Social Cohesion Strategy is currently being developed and will be a welcome roadmap for integration throughout service provision in the Fingal area.

Recommendation: that community centres continue to play a role in promoting a sense of belonging by supporting and resourcing inter-cultural community get-togethers.

4.3.2 Education

This research identified the need for further research into the experiences of the education sector at Primary and Secondary level in embracing diversity in Dublin 15.

With regard to Higher Education People of African Descent and service providers noted the need for supports for some students

in the form of academic literacy and in some cases language competency in order to enable and empower all students to reach their potential in higher education. Difficulties in achieving recognition for qualifications achieved outside of the European Union as well as recognition of prior core competencies achieved before coming to Ireland were identified by service providers and PAD as a source of frustration. In general it was felt that the value of diversity has yet to be realised across the education sector and that more investment needs to be made to enable People of African Descent to contribute their skills, knowledge and intellect for the good of Irish society.

The research also identified the need for educators at primary, secondary and higher level to develop methods and means to encourage the mixing of students in the classroom in ways that value diversity and that recognise the goal of integration as relevant to all and not a 'migrant only' issue.

Recommendation: that the HEA prioritise migrant students as a target group.

Recommendation: that QQI disseminate information on existing processes that can be undertaken to attain formal recognition of non-EU qualifications and competencies, including QQI's NARIC database and application process.

Recommendation: that the Department of Education and Skills undertake research on embracing diversity in the primary, second level and third level sector in Dublin 15 involving parents, student representatives, teachers, parents' associations and boards of management.

4.3.3 Employment

Racism was raised by both People of African Descent and Service Providers as a factor in creating barriers to employment for PAD.

Recommendation: that Empower and Intreo design supports for PAD in entrepreneurship.

Recommendation: that the Department of Rural and Community Development/POBAL modify the SICAP registration form to mirror the census form in order to reflect dual nationalities.

Recommendation: that positive discrimination measures be introduced in favour of employing PAD/migrant in each of the government agencies in Dublin 15.

Recommendation: that Department of Justice disseminate information on legislation that protects PAD from systemic xenophobia.

4.4 Shaping the Future

There was a discernible realisation among the research participants that an increasingly diverse population poses complex challenges. On the part of the service providers there was a willingness to appraise how services are provided and a keen awareness of the need for improvements. While much attention was afforded the challenges and difficulties experienced by both the PAD community and service providers it must also be noted that many positives relating to living in Dublin 15 were also highlighted. On the part of the PAD community, despite the difficulties they face they were open, accepting and responsive to the possibility of change for the better. Both the PAD community and service providers displayed a willingness to work together to create that change. Almost all of the recommendations made here are concerned with shaping the future by building on that willingness to engage.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Data Gathering Documents

Appendix B: Bibliography

APPENDIX A: DATA GATHERING DOCUMENTS

Project Information Sheet

The aim of the Embracing Diversity Research project is to facilitate discussions between People of African Descent (PAD) and service providers in the Dublin 15 area. The research partners are Maynooth University, Wezesha Ltd and Dunglave Associates. The research will take place in the Blanchardstown area of Dublin 15.

The project will provide opportunities for people to highlight their concerns, identify any opportunities that exist and to build on the strengths of diversity in the community. The research will use one to one interview's, focus group discussions and questionnaires to explore experiences of diversity in the community and to promote tolerance through discussion. People can take part in one, two or all of three of the methods. A public meeting will take place for all who participated to further explore and discuss the key issues. Following that a report will be produced and circulated.

Contact information: If you have any questions, or would like to provide additional information please contact the following people: Anne Ryan, Project lead, anne.ryan@mu.ie (01) 708 3683. Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University: Kieran Doyle, Kieran.doyle@mu.ie (01) 7084458 Edward M. Kennedy Institute for Conflict Intervention, Maynooth University
Researchers: Margaret Nugent, margaret.nugent@mu.ie Project partners: Wezesha Ltd. Egide Dhala and Salome Mbugua
Should you decide to take part in the research, you have the right to access any data generated by you during the research and you are free to withdraw at any stage of the process.

Limits of confidentiality: It must be recognised that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances the University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent.

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at research.ethics@mu.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.

Schedule of Interview Questions -Service Providers

1. Name of Service: Name of Person representing Service:
2. Role and duration in service provision: list of services provided:
3. How many people access services (monthly, annually)
4. Has the number of people accessing services changed in 5/10/15 years
5. Has the client profile changed, if so, in what way?
6. How has the organization responded to that change?
7. Do People of African Descent (PAD) living in the community access services? Can you describe how they use your service and provide any details of your experiences with the PAD community?
8. How do the People of African Descent access the service/s? by drop in; by referral; within community; other ways. Please list the services most often accessed?
9. Does your service have a policy on diversity? If so can you describe it and how it was developed? Was there any specific reason the policy developed?
10. If yes; how is it implemented? What impact does the policy have on the delivery of services? What impact does it have at a governance level; management level; staff level and client level? Can you provide any examples of this?
11. In your opinion is there a need for service providers to consider diversity? And can you talk to this a little?
12. What are the challenges around this?
13. What are the needs of providers in understanding people of diverse cultures?
14. Are People of African Descent (PAD) represented or consulted within the service? What has happened as a result of representation and or consultation?
15. In your opinion, what are the general needs of the PAD community when engaging with your service; Please provide examples;
16. What is your experience of providing service with PAD community?
17. What recommendations do you have for services provision for the PAD community.

Questionnaire: People of African Descent

1. Country of origin? _____

2. Age Group: (18-25) (25-40) (40-60) (60+)

3. Gender: Male Female

4. Marital status: Single Married Widowed Partnership Separated Divorced Other

If other please specify _____

5. Religion: Christianity Islam Other None

If other please specify _____

6. Length of time living in Dublin 15:

Less than 1 year

1-5 years

More than 5 years

7. Which of the following best describes the level of education you have attained. Please tick

Primary

Secondary

Third Level

Other

If other please specify _____

8. Which of the following best describes your employment status. Please tick

Full time employment

Part time employment

Self Employed

Unemployed

Community Employment Scheme

Full time homemaker

Student

Other

If other please specify _____

9. Please rate your overall experience of living in this community:

Poor experience

Fair experience

Good experience

Please say what is **poor** or what is **good** about living in this community _____

10. Please tick all of the services listed below that you have accessed in Dublin 15, and where appropriate name the service, its location or office.

Please tick the box below that best describes how you would rate the experience

Service	Place a tick	Name	Poor	Fair	Good
Crèche					
Pre School Service					
Primary School					
Secondary School					
Training Centre					
College					
Church					
Garda Síochána					
Dept. of Social Protection					
Community Welfare Service					
Citizens Information Service					
Primary Care Centre					
Hospital					
Department of Housing					
Community Centre					
Women's group					
Youth Group					
Parent & Toddler Group					
Parent Teacher Association					
School Board of Management					
Residents Association					
Other					

11. For each of the services that you rated **good** please say why you found that experience positive.

12. For each of the services that you rated **poor** please say why you found that experience challenging:

13. If you have experienced challenges when accessing services what **changes** do you think would improve your experience?

14. What would **improve** your overall engagement with services?

15. What do you think are the **three** most important initiatives that would enhance the lives of members of the African community?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

16. Please tick the box that best describes your relationship with your neighbours

Poor

Fair

Good

Please explain your choice _____

17. How would you describe your relationship with the Principal of your child/children's school/s?

Poor

Fair

Good

Please explain your choice _____

18. If your home is rented how would you describe your relationship with your landlord

Poor

Fair

Good

Please explain your choice

Do you have any final recommendations that would improve living in this area?

Thank you for participating in this survey.

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

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learning-education](http://maynoothuniversity.ie/adultandcommunityeducation/centre-research-adult-learning-education)