Funding and Sustainability

to the

Violence Against Women Sector

Session Overview

Context

- 2008 CEDAW examination of UK government: useful framework
- Funding to women’s organisations
- Application of the Gender Equality Duty
- The impact of commissioning frameworks

Sustainability: Beyond 2009

- Partnership working
- Building relationships and influencing
- Demonstrating value

Context: CEDAW Examination 2008

In July 2008, the UK government reported to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Context: CEDAW Examination 2008

The Committee commended many of the government's initiatives in advancing women's equality, but made a number of concluding observations and recommendations about the women's voluntary and community sector.

"The Committee notes that changes in the **allocation of Government funding from needs-based to 'commissioning' frameworks**, and the gender neutral **interpretation of the Gender Equality Duty** have negatively impacted on funding to women's organizations and the provision of 'women-only' services, in particular domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centres.

Despite the establishment by the Government of an interim short-term emergency fund, the Committee notes with concern the **impending closure of a number of rape crisis centres, as well as of domestic violence shelters, women's health organizations and black, minority and ethnic women's organizations"**.

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 2008

Context: Bread and Roses 2009

Of the 1,348 women's organisations analysed, over a quarter (26%) delivered activities to support survivors of gender-based violence.

Three quarters of these organisations focused on domestic violence.

Violence against women included so-called 'honour'-based violence, forced marriage, domestic abuse, trafficking and sexual violence.

Context: Bread and Roses 2009

The East Midlands had the highest **proportion** of organisations working to address VAW (37%).

London had the highest **number** of organisations working in VAW, yet these organisations represented only 13% of organisations in the region.

Context: Bread and Roses 2009

Women's organisations with an annual income of £10k or less represented 16% of all organisations.

Organisations with income of £1 million or more made up 6% of all organisations but accounted for half of all income.

Context: Bread and Roses 2009

Organisations with an income of £10k-100k were most likely to experience high income volatility.

Definition of high:

Organisations that have had a change of income of over 20% in one direction in one year and then a change of income of over 20% in the opposite direction the next.

NCVO in the Civil Society, Almanac 2008

Context: Bread and Roses 2009

Small, specialist services are most at risk.

Imkaan reported in 2008 that 50% of specialist Black, Asian and minority ethnic violence against women organisations had closed from 2003 - 2008.

Map of Gaps research in 2009 found that **one in four local authorities** have no specialised support services for women.

60% of all new services are statutory services and criminal justice based, while women's sector specialised services have remained static or diminished.

The CEDAW Committee in 2008 requested that the UK Government provide increased and sustained funding to women's organisations and to include information on funding to women's organizations in its next report.

Context: the impact of commissioning

As highlighted by *The Civil Society Almanac 2008*, there is a trend away from grant aid towards contracts.

Despite guidance on ‘intelligent’ commissioning, competitive tendering favours big, rather than small, organisations and national, rather than local women’s organisations.

This has enabled the growth of ‘super’ providers – larger organisations, including private sector companies, that are well equipped to win multiple contracts, sometimes in geographical and service areas where they have no track record or experience.

Context: the impact of commissioning

Research conducted into London women's refuges in 2007 found that at least seven independent refuges run by women's organisations had been taken over by housing associations since the introduction of competitive tendering under Supporting People (WRC, 2007).

On average, 66% of women's organisations annual income comes from local authorities (Supporting People contracts and other local authority funding).

Reliance on local funding and small changes in policy e.g. changes to funding frameworks, or being decommissioned, are likely to have significant impact.

"We don't know what will happen after 2011. If Liverpool Council decided to stop funding us, that would be the end, I think."

WRC case study of a Somali women's project 2009

Context: the impact of commissioning

To date, no research has been done to determine the *full impact* of competitive tendering on the women's sector, although we know this is further marginalising women's organisations.

The CEDAW Committee recommended in July 2008 that the UK Government conduct an impact assessment of its 'commissioning' frameworks on the funding of women's organizations.

Context: the misapplication of the gender duty

Despite the introduction of the Gender Equality Duty, women's organisations report being challenged by funders about their women-only services.

In a study of Rape Crisis centres in 2008, 43% were challenged by statutory funders about their women–only status (WRC et al, 2008).

Under the Gender Equality Duty, local authorities need to consider the different impact of funding decisions on women and men but many local public sector bodies are interpreting the GED in a gender-neutral way.

Many women's organisations have been excluded from tendering because commissioners want to contract with a single provider to deliver a generic service (i.e. for both men and women) and lack a gendered analysis.

Commissioning that does not meeting the needs of women survivors of VAW fails women and domestic and international legal obligations.

The CEDAW Committee recommended in July 2008 that the UK Government ensure that the interpretation and application of the Gender Equality Duty does not negatively impact on the provision of 'women-only' services or restrict the activities of women's organizations.

Current funding: 2009

Ministry of Justice funding for Women's Centres

Maria Eagle announces funding for 'one stop shops' for women for two years, based on recommendations from the Corston report in February 2009.

Hardship Fund, Office for the Third Sector (OTS)

Federal budget contains special funding for third sector organisations supporting the most vulnerable groups through the recession in April 2009.

Government Equalities Office (GEO) Emergency Fund

Emergency funding for Rape Crisis Centres announced by Harriet Harman in August 2009 (which includes funding to Survivors Trust groups).

Greater London Authority

Boris Johnson announces funding for a new rape crisis centre in London and increased funding for RASAC in Crydon in August.

No Recourse Pilot, Home Office Funding

Home Office announces last week a 3 month pilot beginning in December to support Women with No Recourse to Public Funds.

City Parochial Foundation (CPF), Esmee Fairbairn Foundation (EF) and Rosa (UK Women's Fund)

Funding for 1 – 3 years for women's organisations working to educate on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). To be announced in December 2009.

= needs to be part of a joined-up strategy with ring-fenced funding attached.

Beyond 2009

- Partnership working (Brighton Women's Partnership)
- Diversify funding base (social enterprise)
- Demonstrate value and worth (Social Return On Investment project)
- Lobbying and building relationships with commissioners and policy makers (No Recourse campaign)

Beyond 2009: Current partnership working

Brighton Women's Partnership

5 organisations in Brighton, including Rise, Brighton Women's Centre, Threshold, Oasis Project.

Working together to provide holistic services to support local women offenders, ex-offenders and those 'at risk' of offending.

Successful with partnership bid to the Ministry of Justice, announced this month.

Beyond 2009: Demonstrating Value

Social Return on Investment Project

5 women's organisations in London: Ashiana Network, Somali Women's Association, Heba Women's Project, Women and Girls Network

Two year research to demonstrate social outcomes delivered by services and accrued to individual women, families and communities.

Partnership with New Economics Foundation (nef)

Beyond 2009: Lobbying and building relationships

On Wednesday last week, **the government announced a three month pilot scheme** for **women with no recourse** and the **services that support them** in response a range of different lobbying activities by the No Recourse campaign group.

Campaign groups met with senior Home Office officials in May. After this meeting, the HO withdrew the proposal for further consideration based on concerns raised by campaign groups.

The pilot scheme shows signs of improvement, for example:

- An increase in payments for refuge providers from 25 to 40 days
- An increase in the actual amounts payable
- An agreement that payments be made up front to refuge providers, rather than backdated payments.

Beyond 2009: Lobbying and building relationships

The No Recourse campaign group still have significant concerns that have not been addressed, namely that:

The pilot will only apply to those on spousal visas, and does not include students, over-stayers, asylum seeking women and those on other visas.

This is a critical human rights issue, and the UK government is in breach of its international obligations to protect all women in the UK (regardless of whether they are citizens) from destitution and violence.

This is a pilot (running from Dec – Feb) and there is no commitment to a longer-term, permanent solution.

This funding is still woefully inadequate.

We actually need an exemption or removal of the No Recourse rule in order to really resolve this, or to make any real difference in women's lives.

Thank you!

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