

# Factsheet 4

## Sharing Good Practice

This is the last of a set of 4 factsheets to help BME third sector organisations do what they do better.

For more details visit [www.voice4change-england.co.uk/performance](http://www.voice4change-england.co.uk/performance)

### Example Scenario

An Asian women's group offer advice, counselling and emotional support. They have three full time staff and a small team of trained volunteers who provide a vital one to one counselling service. They receive funding from the local council. Their support services are facing increased demand, creating new pressures for the volunteer team.

The main challenge for this group is to ensure that they support, and so retain their current volunteers.

**Benchmarking can help this group to learn by example. Through benchmarking, an organisation can identify what steps or initiatives other, similar organisations have taken when faced with a comparable issue; in this case keeping their volunteers.**



Photos by Adrian White at the Race & the Recession Conference (October 2009)

### Sharing good practice: example actions

#### ***The organisation already has:***

- A five day volunteer training programme.
- Regular one to one supervision meetings between volunteers and management staff.
- Systems to monitor counselling sessions.
- A written volunteer policy setting out expectations and support provided.

#### ***The organisation could:***

- Set up regular meetings with a similar organisation to exchange experiences or practices.
- Organise shadowing opportunities for key staff with an organisation that is good at retaining and supporting their volunteers.
- Host a seminar on volunteer management, inviting other organisations and/or speakers with expertise on the issue.
- Organise a one off meeting with local group working on different issues but of a similar size with a strong volunteer base to explore opportunities to share good practice.



## Sharing good practice: Benchmarking

Benchmarking can be useful when you want to compare performance, processes and practice with another organisation to improve your work by learning from others.

### ➤ What is it?

There are many different approaches to benchmarking. In its simplest form, it can involve two people meeting to discuss the way their organisations market their services or recruit staff. This knowledge is then used to improve processes in their organisations. This approach can be a quick and easy method of learning about good practice and sharing solutions to common problems. Developing this concept into a slightly more structured process can lead to greater benefits for the organisations involved.

### ➤ Why is it important?

Benchmarking can help you to improve your work in chosen areas, by comparing how well you are doing in these areas to other organisations. It can give you ideas for what else you could be doing and provide access to good practice by working with a partner with known expertise in your chosen areas. It can be a simple and cost effective way of improving your work.

### ➤ How can it help us?

Benchmarking can help an organisation to address challenges, focus its resources most effectively, and ultimately, to achieve more as an organisation. As well as improving your performance, it can help your organisation to develop new ideas by looking at the successful work others have done.

### ➤ Want to know more about benchmarking?

#### **Benchmarking made simple (CES 2008)**

[www.ces-vol.org.uk/downloads/benchmarkingmadesimple-231-238.pdf](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/downloads/benchmarkingmadesimple-231-238.pdf)

#### **CES publications**

[www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=69](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/index.cfm?pg=69)  
020 7713 5722

#### **V4CE website**

[www.voice4change-england.co.uk/performance](http://www.voice4change-england.co.uk/performance)

#### **Charities Evaluation Services**

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