

BEMWG AWAY DAY REPORT

REPORT ON 'AWAY DAY' HELD AT GEFFRYE MUSEUM, FACILITATED BY MARIKA MASON ON 11th SEPTEMBER 2008

PARTICIPANTS

Management Committee members:

Dr. Nazima Osman, BEMWG Chair
Ibrahim Avcil, RWCA & Hackney Refugee
Forum

Ferhat Cinar, Refugee Arts Project

Eve Greenblatt, Yad Voezer

Cynthia Dickson, Sickie Cell &
Thalassaemia Centre

Anthony Allert, City & Hackney PCT

Apologies:

Lesley Mountford, Joint Director of Public Health & Medical Director

Sam Amponsah, KUSH

Rani Ogundipe, BEMWG management committee member

Dr. Bekele Gessesse, Agrofop

Staff members:

Aliyah El Glib, Director

Haci Ozdemir, Development
Worker

Introduction and Expectations

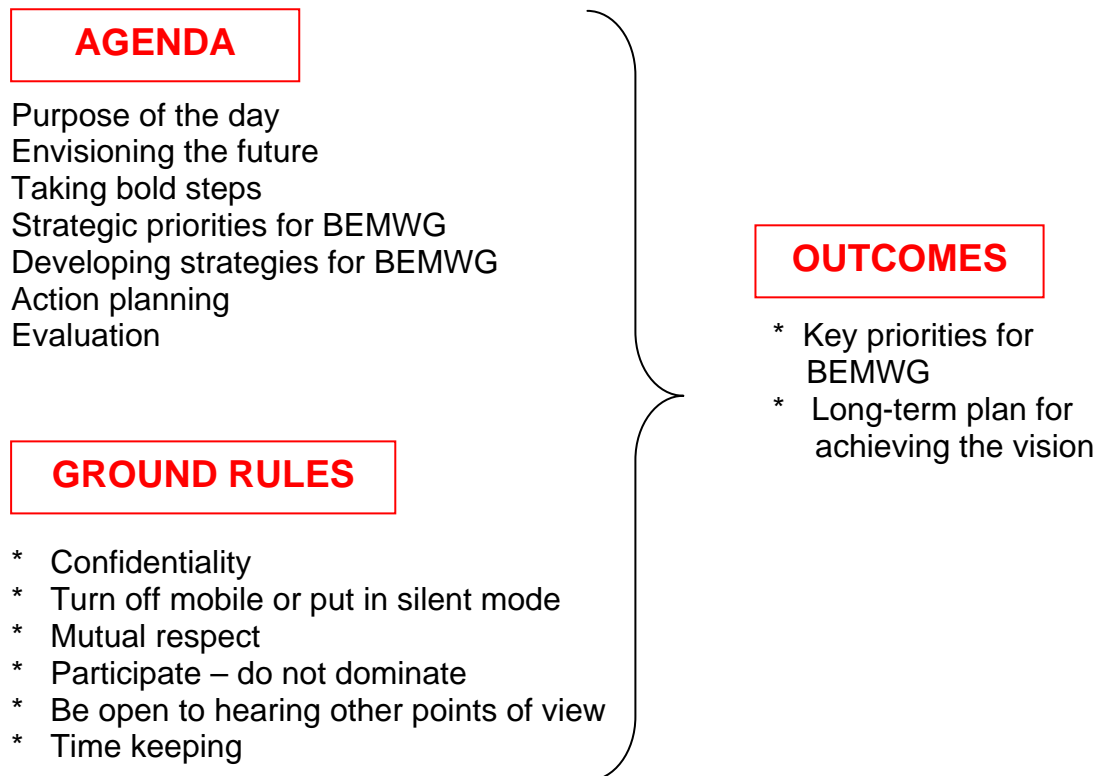
Marika Mason, facilitator for the day, opened the session and people in attendance introduced themselves.

Each person was asked to state one expectation they have for today's event that would be checked at the end of the day. The expectations given were as follows:

- To have better understanding of the short-, medium- and long-term plan for BEMWG and how to improve BEMWG's activities
- See an agreement between staff, management committee and stakeholders on way forward for BEMWG; how to engage with the grassroots effectively; more commitment from the management committee, e.g. they sit on forums; have a strategic plan for BEMWG.
- To have a clear vision and strategy for BEMWG and how we will do what we say.
- Better understanding of strategy; sharing of responsibilities amongst staff, management committee and stakeholders; clear achievable plan for BEMWG.
- Get a consensus and clear vision for BEMWG to come up with a business plan for 3 to 5 years.
- BEMWG to have a voice in the hierarchy (i.e. funding, strategy, policy). People on top understand the importance of culture and religion in the lives of communities. Action plan for 3 to 5 years.
- To gain more clarity and direction in terms of future role and function of BEMWG for next 3 to 5 years.

- Have clarity about where does BEMWG fit in the mix. Is there space for BEMWG? What are the differences between Health and Social Care Forum and BEMWG?
- Use of public money → issue for BME groups. Have systems in place. Branding of BEMWG – getting BEMWG into many places, e.g. members do activities under the BEMWG brand/logo, which will increase the recognition and reputation of BEMWG.

The facilitator presented the programme agenda, ground rules and outcomes planned for the day. See below:



Purpose of the day

She stated the purpose of the day was to:

“Take time out to plan for the future of BEMWG.”

Vision and Mission Statement

The facilitator abbreviated BEMWG’s current mission statement to read:

Improving the quality of health and social services for BME communities in City and Hackney

A sample vision was also presented:

City and Hackney is a better place for all people enjoy equal access To first rate health and social care services.

The group discussed and amended the above mission statement to the following version:

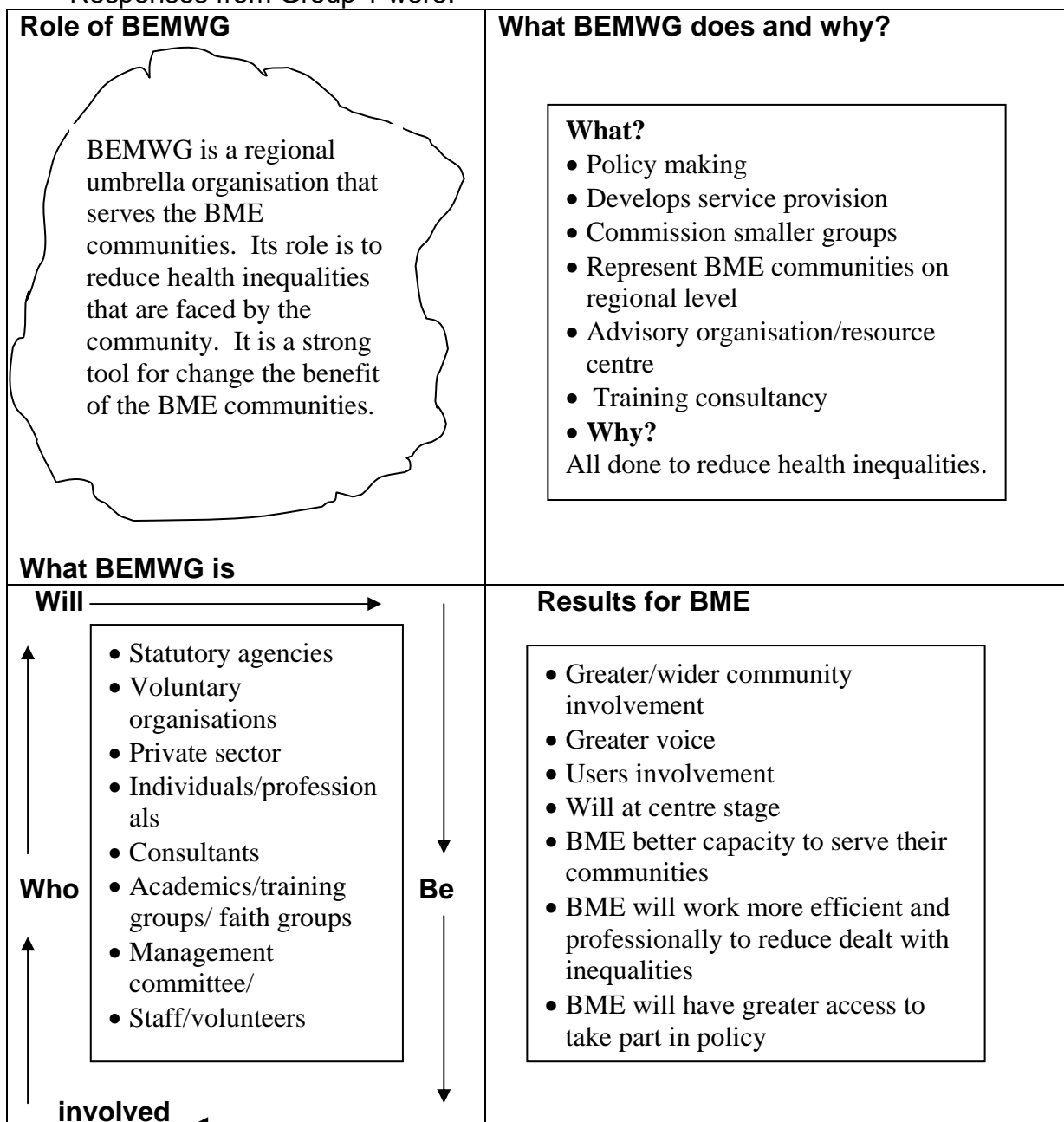
Advocating for and supporting the improvement of quality of life and well being for BME communities in City and Hackney; reducing health inequalities in health and social services for BME communities; ensuring services are accessible and culturally appropriate.

Envisioning the future – “In the Movies” poster

Delegates were split into two groups – one appointed nominee reported back.

The aim of this exercise was to envision where BEMWG will be in five years.

Responses from Group 1 were:

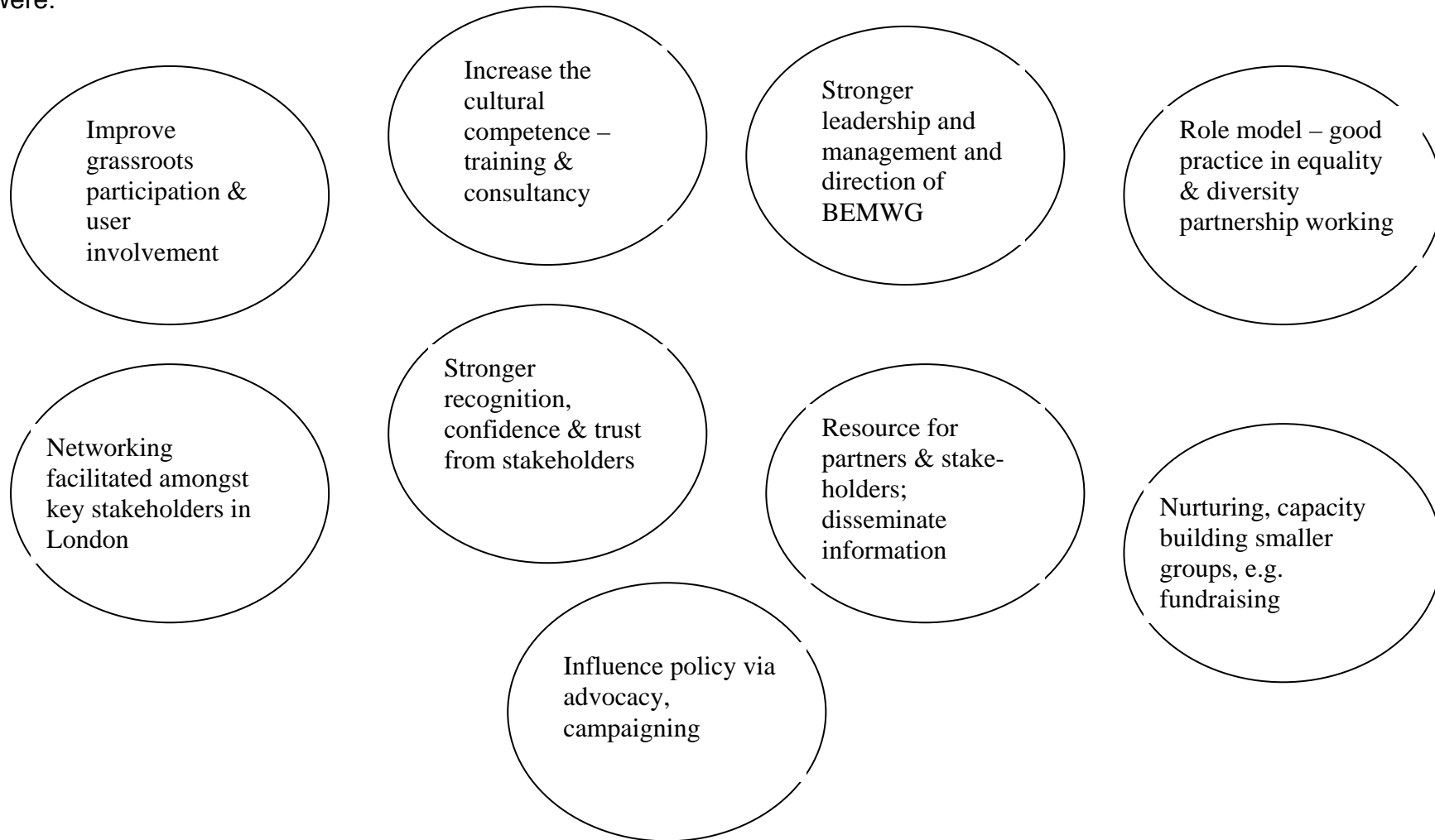


Responses from Group 2 were:

ROLE	FUNCTION
Challenge ignorance and discrimination London wide/national Umbrella organisation for BME communities Voice, advocacy, campaigning for health, social care to be more accountable to local people Better quality of life for BME communities Role model – partnership working – equality & diversity	Provider of services Umbrella/network Disseminate information Co-ordinate participation Develop community cohesion Manage public money Support smaller orgs/groups, e.g. funding grants scheme Participation in decision making – partnership working
KEY PLAYERS	OUTCOMES
Defining who BEMWG represents – New communities, e.g. Eastern Europeans Management committee Funders – PCT, local authority Partner agencies Grassroots – members Representation to full participation	Use Olympics include for community development Expansion, better and securing funding Improved environment and well being for BME communities ??? Membership – COL Greater awareness, Acceptance of value and support of different religions and cultures

Taking bold steps

Delegates worked as a group to identify the strategic themes from the previous exercise. Some of the strategic objectives identified were:



The group then highlighted what kinds of bold steps could be taken:

VISION – Everybody enjoys equal access to services in City and Hackney.

What will support the vision?

- The key players: i.e. staff and volunteers, management committee, public agencies
- More collaborations with health and social care agencies
- Use the policy and legislation to champion these issues/support BEMWG's goals. Should be explicit in BEMWG's literature.
- Skills and experience
- Good track record of BEMWG
- Committed management committee
- Supportive partners

7. Member organisations develop activities under BEMWG brand.
6. Widen the membership and diversity of the BEMWG.
5. Links with private sector/ELBA to support the resource development within BEMWG.
4. Recruit experts and professional advisors for management committee.
3. Fundraise to take the bold steps for the organisation.
2. Link with specific initiatives disproportionately affecting BME communities, e.g. Diabetes Society.
1. Have intense dialogue with the health and social care forums/agencies in Hackney and outside, e.g. HSCF, SAFH, e.g. how can our work be co-ordinated?

What will challenge the vision?

- Lack of funding
- Lack of committed management committee
- No staff
- Conflicting views and interests
- Change of government policy
- Lack of trust amongst different VCOs and public agencies
- Management of change is a challenge for smaller groups
- Recession
- Skills and knowledge deficit
- Competition

BOLD STEPS – What bold steps might be taken to achieve the vision?

Strategic priorities for BEMWG

From the list of strategic themes previously mentioned the delegates identified four key priorities for BEMWG:

1. Grassroots participation and involvement
2. Influencing policy
3. Networking amongst public bodies and voluntary and community organisations.
4. Culture and diversity ethos – where diversity drives the agenda

Fundraising was highlighted as a key internal priority for BEMWG. Some actions were agreed for internal discussions.

Delegates worked together as a group to put in place the development strategies under the 4 priorities:

1. Culture and Diversity

- Training and consultancy across the board (a source of income generation)
- Demonstrate good practice in equality and diversity in partnership working
- Expand the general membership and management committee; BEMWG to include new communities, e.g. Eastern Europeans.
- Make links and collaborate with health and social care agencies working on specific conditions prevalent in BME communities, e.g. Diabetes Society.
- More involvement in equality schemes, equality networks and forums.

2. Grassroots Participation/Involvement

- Organise Open Days
- BEMWG website
- Expand membership → more attractive to the communities. Have a role in decision making. Participation is credited and valued, part of decision making. Outcomes of debates canvassed to relevant agencies
- Generate ongoing dialogue with different organisations, e.g. visit parents in schools, outreach activities, talks to voluntary and community organisations
- Support initiatives organised by member organisations under the BME brand/logo addressing inequalities racism and discrimination → more partnership working
- Quality of life and well being – broader area of work for BEMWG, develop flexibility

- Set up thematic sub-committees within BEMWG
- Administer and manage small grants programme for community groups.

3. Influencing Policy

- Closer links with local authority and Primary Care Trust, Greater London Authority and Learning Trust.
- Effective lobbying and campaigning
- Facilitate dialogues between communities and public agencies.
- Recruit a lawyer as a professional advisor.
- Find out what equalities legislation and policies exist and produce information .
- Equality and Human Rights Commission – website, get a representative to talk to BEMWG
- BEMWG website → upload relevant information to disseminate equality and diversity resources
- Participate in different strategic fora/BME representation.
- Transparency and lack of jargon and focus on grassroots needs/people's daily lives/pressures
- Circulate and comment on draft policy documents
- Work with other voluntary and community organisations to co-ordinate responses.
- BEMWG meetings → Invite speakers/agencies with more challenging perspectives/create more dynamics in the community.

4. Networking

- Have intense dialogue with other health and social care groups in Hackney
- One of BEMWG management committee members should attend Health and Social Care Forum meetings. Include BEMWG in Health and Social Care Forum decision making process.
- Organise joint events/activities with other agencies, e.g. BEMWG and Hackney Refugee Forum
- Open Meetings discuss particular topics organised for networking (2 hours limit).
- Develop links and connections with other BME health and social care forums and BME equality forums/networks.
- BEMWG membership meetings.
- Ask BEMWG members to talk to their networks about BEMWG.
- Set u e-news.
- Produce a BEMWG newsletter.

Action planning

Delegates identified tasks in hand to support the four priorities of BEMWG.

Key Priority	0 – 12 months	12 – 24 months	24 – 36 months
Culture and diversity	Explore which training and consultancy agencies work on cultural awareness and diversity issues. Role model equality and diversity work Expand membership	Expand specific work on conditions, e.g. diabetes. Involve with local equality forums/networks	Involve with regional equality forums/networks
Grassroots participation & involvement	Organise Open Days BEMWG website Expand BEMWG membership → more attractive to the communities. Have a role in decision making. Participation is credited and valued, part of decision making. Outcomes of debates canvassed to relevant agencies Generate ongoing dialogue with different organisations, e.g. visit parents in schools, outreach activities, talks to voluntary and community organisations Support initiatives organised by member organisations under the BME brand/logo addressing inequalities racism and discrimination → more partnership working Quality of life and well being – broader area of work for BEMWG, develop flexibility	Set up thematic sub-committees within BEMWG.	Administer and manage small grants programme for community groups.

Key Priority	0 – 12 months	12 – 24 months	24 – 36 months
Influencing policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Links with LA/PCT/Learning Trust Facilitate dialogues BME representation Need more volunteers from management committee Recruit volunteer lawyer as soon as possible, e.g. equalities legislation, Transparency and people's daily lives e.g. grassroots people speak at meetings/AGM Advocacy Circulate and comment on draft policy documents Invite speakers/agencies with 	BEMWG website – need IT person/expert	
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intense dialogues with other health and social forums Exchange with Health and Social Care Forum management committee members Open Meetings Invite BEMWG members Spread the word via networks and fora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise joint events Set up e-news Co-ordinate responses 	Produce BEMWG newsletter

Session Evaluation

All delegates completed an evaluation form. The facilitator reviewed the expectations list to gain delegates' feedback on the extent to which the session had met their expectations.