Towards Global Democracy
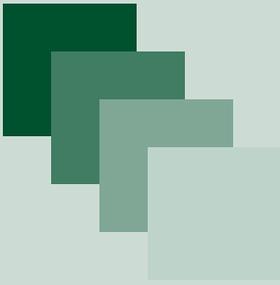
An Exploration of Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work

A report by

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Viva Cummins

Development
Education
Association

Development Education Association

The DEA is the umbrella association promoting global and international development issues within education in the UK. It has over 220 member organisations, including development agencies, Development Education Centres, local authorities, universities, professional bodies, community groups and youth organisations. It produces a range of publications including a monthly Bulletin, a discussion Journal published three times per year, and specialist newsletters. The Association also runs a range of training programmes and has programmes in all sectors of education. The DEA is funded by its members, the leading development agencies, church bodies, three government departments, the European Commission and the Community Fund.
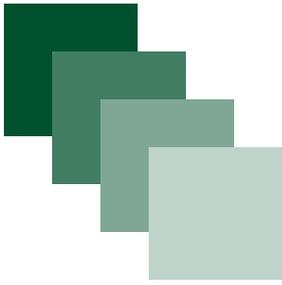
Preface

The Development Education Association (DEA) welcomes this very important publication on Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work and thanks its authors. The publication brings together the work the DEA has been doing for a number of years on supporting Black organisations in their work on development education and the development of thinking and practice as to what constitutes global youth work.

But the publication does more than just bring these areas together, it takes forward the thinking on what constitutes good development education practice and good youth work.

The DEA will ensure that this report is disseminated widely within its membership via direct mailings to key organisations and its availability on its website.
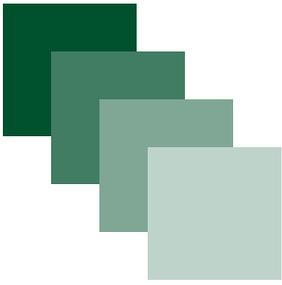
It will also work with key networks who work with young people in ensuring that the main themes and issues raised in the report are discussed and debated with a view to encouraging youth groups to begin to address some of the questions raised. Aspects of the report will be incorporated into a planned revised edition of the Global Youth Work Practice Training Resources Manual.

The DEA also intends over the next three years to include work on Black Perspectives as an integral feature of its strategy on global youth work. This will include supporting pilot projects, developing appropriate training courses and encouraging closer links between Black organisations and voluntary youth organisations in membership of the DEA.

We hope all interested in supporting good youth work practice will find this report useful and we would welcome your observations and comments on its contents.
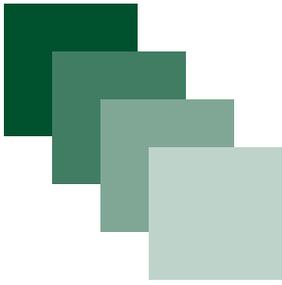
Douglas Bourn

Director-DEA

Acknowledgements

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Section 1

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of work carried out on behalf of the Development Education Association (DEA) by a working group on Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work (GYW). This report was commissioned by the DEA and examines both the theoretical and practical considerations involved in the development of Black perspectives in GYW. Though this report is written for the DEA, the analysis should also be of wider interest and relevance to:

- Development education and global youth work practitioners;
- Organisations responsible for policy development including Government departments;
- Youth and community services (statutory, voluntary and independent sectors);
- International youth organisations;
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- Training agencies;
- Black voluntary and community organisations;
- DEA members.

This report is based on the premise that both Black and white people have a role and responsibility to incorporate Black perspectives into GYW practices and policies. Although written largely from a Black British perspective, it may be that elements of the report could be useful also to readers in other countries.

This report has been written and compiled by a working group comprising:

- Joe Joseph, Critical Praxis;
- Kwame B. Akpokavi, Global Impact;
- Vipin Chauhan, Lotus Management Consultancy;
- Viva Cummins, Coventry Community Education Service.

The Role of the Working Group

The working group was charged with the responsibility of:

- Developing the concept and principles behind Black perspectives in GYW;
- Developing concepts and ideas that could be incorporated into the GYW Trainers' Manual;
- Exploring concerns about the lack of apparent visibility of Black perspectives in existing definitions and practices of GYW;

- Engaging in discussions with both Black and white workers about initiating, developing and incorporating Black perspectives into the practice of GYW;
- Producing a report that could help guide the work and future direction of key national and local bodies.

Background

In July 1997, the DEA formally launched its Global Youth Work Advisory Service (GYWAS) to ". . . promote the development of global youth work as a mainstream practice within the UK voluntary and statutory youth service and other organisations". (DEA: GYWAS brochure: 1997)

The DEA also established the GYW Strategy Group (GYWSG), now operating as its Youth Committee, to develop and guide the work of the advisory service. The GYWAS was to be delivered by the DEA through consultants specifically trained for the task and who would provide a range of support and development services on GYW to organisations and individuals across the country.

At a training residential for GYW consultants in Birmingham in 1997, concern was expressed about the need to make more explicit, Black experiences of globalisation and the impact of this for the development of GYW practice. At its meeting in October 1997, the GYW Strategy Group agreed to set up a working group to develop Black perspectives in GYW.

The Black perspectives in GYW were always seen as the first in a series of initiatives to explore different perspectives in GYW. By concentrating on Black perspectives, the objective was not to dissipate anti-oppressive analyses but to engage in a creative exploration of what was meant by Black perspectives and its relationship to other forms of oppression.

Methodology

The working group staged three national seminars to initiate an exploration of Black perspectives in GYW:

- Seminar I – a focused event for Black participants who had already undergone the GYW trainers' programme together with some interested individuals.
- Seminar II – a larger event for Black practitioners and policymakers to develop understandings and definitions of Black perspectives in GYW.
- Seminar III – a mixed event for Black and white participants to examine understandings, definitions and roles in the delivery of Black perspectives in GYW.

Apart from the three national seminars and the discussions held by the working group, a number of other activities were also undertaken to gather evidence and spread the word about this work:

- Regular reports back to the GYWSG and the staff of the DEA;
- Collection of relevant resources, materials and literature;

- Presentation of interim findings and discussion about these at events such as the Training Agencies Conference on GYW (1999);
- Networking with key agencies involved in this field;
- Advertising and seeking field participation through publications such as the DEA's GYW and Black and Ethnic Minority Development Education (BEMDE) newsletters and the National Youth Agency's "Young People Now" magazine;
- Publication of related articles in journals such as the Development Education Journal.

A Note on Terminology

The journey from the local to the global, and vice versa, is a dynamic learning process. To undertake a journey of this kind it is important to tread cautiously as language, professional terminology, values, beliefs or even life experiences that are taken for granted may well not be applicable in other national or social environments. It is therefore important to acknowledge that our discourse, though drawn from different parts of the world, is heavily influenced by our life experiences in the UK. In no way does this devalue the discourse we are entering into, but it does highlight some of its limitations.

Within the context of this country, the term 'Black' is used inclusively to refer to Asian, African and African Caribbean and other minority ethnic peoples in Britain. It is recognised that the term is a contested one and actually that the Black community consists of multiple communities quite diverse in terms of culture, religion, origins, class and so on. It is acknowledged also that there are differences in the range and type of labels that different Black people apply to themselves and others like them e.g. a African young person may not first and foremost describe themselves in terms of their ethnicity whereas their parents or grand parents may.

Despite such internal variances, these diverse communities share significant common experiences shaped by migration, settlement, colonialism, the label of being a 'minority', white racism and so on and these experiences often form the basis of a shared identity and/or political platform.

Within a global context, this report uses the term 'majority' to refer to those people who either live or have their origins in the South. The majority population in the Southern Hemisphere are Black i.e. 'non-white' but share a common experience of being subjugated to global domination by Western (white) nations. Clearly if we were to conduct a cultural analysis of this Black majority world then there would be numerous perspectives, each with a unique outlook on life. For instance, the experiences and lifestyles of the traditional peoples of the world (e.g. Aborigines) are bound to be different to say peasant farmers in Pakistan.

The use of the term 'majority' serves to highlight the marginalisation of the Black majority people from global decision-making processes as well as the need for the world to listen to Southern voices.

Neither the term 'Black' nor 'majority' is perfect but the working group has found them to be useful analytical tools for the purposes of the current enquiry.
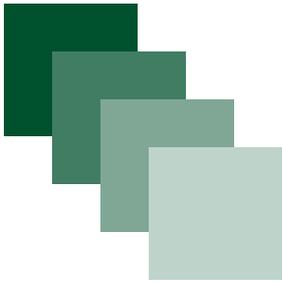
Section 2

Towards a Global Black Perspective in Global Youth Work

Introduction

Aglobal Black perspective cannot be merely an extension of the Black perspective that has been developed in the UK. This would be an imposition of local British experience on the world, of seeing the world through Black British goggles. A Global Black Perspective is about examining Black people's experiences globally and identifying common structural causes that describe that experience. Although global structural causes may be similar, local experience could well be distinct and different.

A Global Black Perspective

The global Black perspective adopted in this report has evolved from the various debates, seminars and discussions by the working group and is defined as:

> *"A perspective that aims to strive for global democracy and place Black people at the forefront of global and local decision-making. Far from being kept on the fringes of global society, Black people ought to be at the heart of global society, securing fair and just rewards for their contributions to a shared and interdependent world. The majority world cannot simply be ignored or wished away."* **(Black Perspectives in GYW Working Group)**

The global Black perspective described above aims to be inclusive, acknowledging the interdependence of civilisations and the sharing of ideas and values that have led to modern day global society. The perspective challenges the narrow and exclusive worldview, dominant in the west that describes the world in terms of the 'rich' North and the 'poor' South. Although it gives voice to Black people and the majority world it does so with the intention of generating a more holistic outlook that genuinely celebrates the diversity of culture, knowledge and values that exist locally and globally.

It is also holistic in that it aims to promote an understanding of the world that needs to address all forms of inequality. A Black perspective is not a single-issue political strategy. It recognises that the process of western globalisation over the past five hundred years has not been a neutral process and that it has imposed upon the world a cultural and political outlook that is sexist, racist, ageist, homophobic and exploitative of working people. The impact on the Black and majority world

communities has been one of either reinforcing and legitimising existing inequalities or introducing new ones where previously they did not exist.

Global Black perspectives draw on the experiences of the majority Black world that aimed to create a united stand against colonialism, imperialism and now globalisation. Alliance building, internally and externally to the majority world, is a critical feature of the global Black perspective developed in this report. This perspective recognises that the world's communities are locked into 'interdependent' relationships and that alliances not only need to be developed within the majority world but between the majority and minority worlds too. It is also essential that strategic relationships are developed with movements for equality such as those concerning gender, age, disability, sexuality, 'race', environment, economic exploitation and so on which cut across both the majority and minority worlds.

Key Themes and Issues

The discussion below considers global relationships from a Black and majority world perspective. It is neither an exhaustive nor a definitive account but more an attempt to reflect on the current status quo and the themes that dominate current world affairs. It also identifies areas where further work is needed if we are all to begin laying new foundations for deconstructing previous relationships and building new ones.

Globalisation

For many people, the predominant world-view in Britain today is based on the notion of the 'West' being the best. Capitalism, the nuclear family, individualism, materialism and modern science have become values almost beyond question. Aided by advances in technology, it is claimed, the world has moved into an information age where such values have become no longer merely the aspirations of the West but also desired by the rest of the world.

Globalisation has often been portrayed as a neutral process benefiting all equally or at least assuming that all have an equal access to steer its path. In fact it is dominated by Western/Northern interests and veneers over the often exploitative relationship of the Black majority by a white minority. Instead of 'universalisation' (Bauman: 1998)[1] we see the advent of globalisation that is unfair, unjust and unequal.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that globalisation is leading to the creation of a new global economic and cultural elite while segregating and excluding the rest. For the exploited, excluded and alienated people of the world, globalisation has meant the progressive modernisation of their own poverty.

For people in the majority world, globalisation represents the imposition of a western global outlook and the displacement of traditional indigenous ways of life. It has inevitably stimulated powerful reactions and forms of resistance, not just in the majority world, but in the minority world too. The

[1] Bauman, Z (1998) *Globalization – The Human Consequences,* Polity Press, Cambridge.

anti-slavery, independence, civil rights, anti-apartheid, Black and anti-racist struggles were all part of a broader family of resistance campaigns that challenged the values and beliefs that underpin western globalisation. Black perspective(s) are drawn from this tradition of resistance and liberation.

The contributions of Black civilisations to the world and humanity have been significant though not always fully appreciated. It is to a large extent an untold story. If we were Egyptian, it would be a four thousand year story, or five thousand year story if we were Chinese or Indian. To be unaware of these histories is to hold a narrow view of the world, to live in a world of your own. To be aware of it is to recognise the world as a single living organism, an indivisible whole, sustaining many rich civilisations.

The Colonial Legacy

Colonialism, as slavery before it, was a significant phase in the globalisation of the world. The British colonial project has left a strong imprint upon the lives of Black people globally. It remains a major hurdle to be overcome by Black and white communities alike. White communities need to liberate themselves from racist ideology that has lost all semblance of credibility but which remains doggedly persistent in spite of efforts to eradicate it.

When ex-President of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere was asked what the anti-colonial movement's greatest contribution to humanity was, he replied:

> *"The first is simply that the suffering of a whole chunk of human beings through the actions of others was halted. The arrogance of one group of people in lording it over the human race and exploiting the poorer peoples was challenged and discredited – and that was a positive contribution made by the liberation struggle to all humanity. Second, the liberation movement was very moral. Gandhi, for instance, argued for a moral case and did not treat simply liberation in a vacuum. Liberation freed white people also. If we take the example of South Africa, the anti-apartheid victory freed whites as well as Black people."* **(Ikaweba Bunting, 1999)[2]**

The political liberation of the majority world, the former colonies, has no doubt been a major achievement in the last century. That, Black and white societies have not been able to overcome the legacy of colonialism should not come as any surprise. Fifty years of political independence in former colonies has clearly not been long enough and there is also an increasing realisation that political independence without economic independence is meaningless. The struggle continues.

The colonial legacy, however, provides a crucial contextual framework for an understanding of the impact that globalisation has had on Black people, their political and economic status in the world today, their contribution to global society and their continued oppression and exploitation.

[2] Bunting, I. (1999) *The Heart of Africa*, New Internationalist No. 309, p13

Internalised Racism

The legacy of slavery, colonialism and imperialism has inextricably bound the majority and the minority of the world. However, because world historical events have often been re-written and sanitised to fit a narrow euro-centric viewpoint, any hints of the negative impact of colonialism and imperialism appear to be removed. More significantly, Black history, civilisations and rights to self-determination have been negated.

The power of this ideology has been enormous and has affected the Black psyche in a very substantial and fundamental way. Fanon states:

> *"Because it is a systematic negation of the other person and a furious determination to deny the other person all attributes of humanity, colonialism forces the people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly: 'In reality, who am I?'"* (Fanon: 1967: 200)[3]

Memmi argues that colonial racism is the bedrock that creates such ideological, political and social subordination and is governed by three components:

> *". . . one, the gulf between the culture of the colonialist and the colonised; two, the exploitation of these differences for the benefit of the colonialist; three, the use of these supposed differences as standards of absolute fact."* (Memmi: 1974: 71)[4]

What the above shows is that there is a symbiotic relationship between racism and past colonisation and that current globalisation continues to be tainted by this relationship. The brain drain, the mimicking of western cultural lifestyles, the adoption of western approaches to education, health, lifestyle and so on often reflects the workings of an internalised mind-set. Who would argue that the sap from a coconut has less nutritional value than that of Coca-Cola?

Although most countries in the majority world have achieved political independence the internalised form of racism continues to survive. Internalised oppression is the result of not being able to perceive clearly the 'order' which serves the interests of the oppressors and aspiring at any cost to be like your oppressor, to imitate him/her. (Freire: 1972: 38)[5]

S. Gurumurthy, in a commentary in The New Indian Express, posed the following question:

[3] Fanon, F. (1967) *Black Skin White Mask*, Penguin.

[4] Memmi, A. (1965) *The Coloniser and the Colonised*, A Condor Book, New York.

[5] Freire, P. (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Penguin Books.

"Why are we celebrating their 2000, instead of our 5000? We (Indians) are, unlike Egypt or China, mere carbon copies of the West. The result: instead of celebrating our own past 5,000 years, we are glorifying the coloniser's 2000. Can we see the damage to the nation's mind from the left-over colonial consciousness, which has legitimised itself as the modern mind of India?" (Gurumurthy: 2000)[6]

Global Racism

Modern globalisation is a continuation of the past exploitation that occurred through slavery, colonialism and imperialism. What modern globalisation has managed to achieve is to create a more direct relationship between international (white) capital and localised (Black) labour. This has been achieved through the work of trans-national corporations (TNCs) as well as intermediary bodies such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO). The net effect of this has been largely negative on the Black majority.

Racism as a global phenomenon has a long established history that few in the North challenge or question. It was not too long ago that the former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, was labelled a terrorist! His stature as a world leader today is unparalleled illustrating Nyerere's convictions, that to liberate Black South Africans is to also liberate white South Africans. It freed them from relationships based on fear, hatred and violence.

Colonialism installed racism as an ideology right across the globe. That is not to say that similar forms of prejudice and/or racism did not exist in other societies prior to colonialism. Colonisation provided Europeans with the opportunity to institutionalise and enforce their own particular brand of colour coded racism on a global scale. The ideology of racism and white supremacy has been so deeply ingrained that it is proving extremely difficult to eradicate.

Oppression and liberation are a condition of life for most people from the majority world. It characterises their whole lives, their survival, aspirations, identity, movement, economic security, values and attitudes, reflecting tensions between being modern (which often means being western) and being traditional.

This oppression is characterised by economic exploitation, the imposition of cultural values and military interventions, all of which were justified through racist ideology and beliefs. In attempting to describe the 'start of racism' as it affected India, T.J.S. George[7] commented that the success of European/Christian theories was that they were sustained by intellectuals of merit, such as Max Weber, with little challenge from the denigrated schools of Hinduism.

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[6] Gurumurthy, S. (1999) *'Why're we celebrating their 2000, instead of our 5000?'*, The New Indian Express, 23 Dec, Kochi, India.

[7] George, T.J.S. (2000) *'The millennium is dead . . . Long live the millennium'*, The New Indian Express, 1 Jan , Kochi, India.

It followed that those who did not adhere to Christian faith, as Europe defined it, were either decadent or, at best, static. From this it was but a short step to seeing Europeans as better than others, European skin colour as superior to other skin colours and European attitudes as more modern that other attitudes. This reading of its own destiny led Europe into recognising racism as an intellectually credible theory and Christianity as a divine dispensation for Europe to assert itself over the rest of the world.

The Local is Global

Global relationships are mainly indirect and distant, often mediated by powerful new global actors, the transnational corporations. In most cases, not only do the majority world producers and the minority world consumers live in different neighbourhoods but also on different continents.

What is out of sight is often out of mind, unless the media corporations decide to broadcast stories and pictures of devastation and destruction directly into our homes and neighbourhoods. It then becomes uncomfortable, with many moved to donating money or unwanted goods, but rarely is there an examination of the relationships between 'me', 'us' and 'them' that has led to the crisis situation in the first place.

The vile global trade in sex, particularly underage sex, provides an excellent illustration of the nature of the real relationship when privilege meets poverty face to face. Instead of recognising that people in the West depend on the labour of the poor for their comforts and privileges, they perceive the relationship to be the opposite of what it is; that they contribute to the 'development' of the poor by means of aid, humanitarian assistance and 'free trade'.

Seabrook argues that the relationship remains, for the most part, full of lies, evasion, pretence and illusion:

> *"Their experience of Western sex workers is that they tend to be functional, mechanistic and loveless. When they meet Thai women, they believe they have found something special . . . Only when he discovers that he is expected to pay for and help keep many dependants, when he learns there is a hospital operation for a grandmother urgently needed, a brother to put through school . . . [does] he become swiftly disillusioned . . . Self-righteous anger and resentment come to the surface. He begins to see himself as victim. 'I was conned, cheated, betrayed.' He reaches for other racist stereotypes, which are always readily available in the Western psyche. 'You can't trust them.'"* **(Seabrook: 1997: 1)**[8]

[8] Seabrook, J. (1997) *North-South relations: the sex industry*, Third World Network Features [online] Available from:
   www.twnside.org.sg/souths/twn/title/1556-cn.htm

The Role of Global Institutions

Major global institutions, like the World Bank, the WTO and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), with the support of western governments, have pursued policies that have promoted the interests of the minority world at the expense of the majority world.

> *"The result has been indirect colonisation by transnational corporations, supported by teams of US economic advisors who have effectively dictated economic policy to debt-ridden Third World governments."* (Campaign Against Racism and Fascism: 1999: 1)[9]

The World Trade Organisation (WTO), formed in 1994, has been responsible for creating regulations that promote the global expansion of corporations, almost allowing them the freedom to make a profit out of any area of life in any country, without fear of government regulation.

These regulations have serious consequences for the majority world. For instance, proposals to introduce a single global patenting system for living materials, especially seeds, threaten the traditional systems of shared seed ownership in the majority world. They would, however, encourage transnational corporations, such as Monsanto or Zeneca, to monopolise production and distribution in order to maximise profits. Majority world countries, whose people are heavily dependent on agriculture, will once again fall prey to decisions made by organisations thousands of miles away.

The impact of so-called 'free' trade, as is typical of racist or unequal relationships, has been to deepen the divisions between the poor and the rich, Black and white, majority and minority worlds.

> *"The WTO is killing off the small farm producers, and accelerating greater inequality between the rich and the poor within and between countries. How can Indian farmers compete when for every dollar of incentives it gives its farmers, the US gives $100,000?"* (Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, Leading Agricultural Scientist, India, quoted in Campaign Against Racism and Fascism: ibid.)

If global trade is an illustration of the 'greed' of the North, then the arms trade is an expression of its moral corruption and complete disregard for life beyond its immediate borders. A more cynical view might be that there is complete disregard for life that is non-European. The UK is the world's second largest arms exporter, supplying weapons to corrupt regimes often led by dictators. The suppression of the Kurds in Turkey or the East Timorese in Indonesia has been made possible by the supply of "small arms, tanks, military electronics and fighter aircraft to both governments throughout their reign of terror" (Campaign Against Racism and Fascism: ibid.)

[9] CARF (1999) *Uniting Against Globalisation*, August-September.

Free or Fair Trade?

> *". . . the 'freer' trade is, the wider the gap between rich and poor invariably becomes. Two hundred years ago, an equivalent headline might well have read: 'Slaves – the real losers of abolition.'"* **(Ransom: 2000: pp 10)[10]**

Proponents for fair trade argue that there is little to challenge the prediction that many NGOs, including Oxfam, made back in 1995, that by 2002 the European Union would have gained $80 billion from trade liberalisation while Africa would have lost $2.6 billion.

Those for free trade, however, argue that if leaders of developing countries want free trade, who are unelected NGOs to deny them? They argue that NGOs give the impression that developing countries' governments are acting against the interests of their populations.

Whatever the merits of the arguments may be, and there may be aspects of both positions that can be of benefit to poor people in the majority world, it is the relationships between the Western governments, transnational corporations, NGOs and majority world governments that are interesting to note. Who represents the interests of the world's poor? Given that democracy functions in most countries from the majority world what excuse is there to discard the opinions of their elected leaders? Do NGOs, who ought to be able to build natural alliances with governments of the majority world, have a better idea of what is in the interests of the world's poor than those countries' own governments do? Are we witnessing the pursuit of neo-colonialist relationships here?

What is apparent in this situation is that, despite competing claims to represent the 'real' interests of the world's poor, working relationships have yet to be built up between the poor people and their organisations, their elected governments and the majority of the NGO sector in the North. Negotiated solutions have to be found that represents the interests of the poor. However, for this to take place, those that claim to know better need to 'suspend' their judgement to make space for opinions and strategies of the poor to be heard. The whole debate and future strategy has to be led by them.

Educational efforts need to be built around the idea of developing the capacity to connect with what is being articulated by poor people and their organisations. The majority world is littered with examples of failed projects that were pursued by minority world NGOs, or other global institutions, often against the wishes of the poor. Equally education efforts could be targeted at the poor themselves to enable them to develop and articulate their own agendas.

The Concept of Development

It will not come as any surprise that for many Black people in the UK, or the majority world, the very term 'development' is problematic, not simply because of what development is about, but because

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[10] Ransom, D. (2000) *'Fair trade: small change, big difference'*, New Internationalist 322, pp.9–12.

they do not wish to be developed by anybody else. To regard them as underdeveloped and in need of the minority world's charity is a reflection of arrogance and perceived superiority, or as Sachs argues, an outdated monument to an immodest era. (Joseph 1996[11]; Sachs 1992[12])

'Development' as an equal partnership has gained favour in some quarters, but this too misses a simple point. If people in the majority world wish to be developed they will want to define and lead it for themselves. People develop themselves; others cannot do it for them.

It is perhaps for this reason that a recent study into Black and ethnic minorities and development education in the UK revealed that many are reluctant to become involved. Some were put off by the patronising attitude adopted by western development agencies and others disliked the way underdevelopment is portrayed. (Ohri 1997)[13]

If 'development' is not about developing others (except if it is to support others on their terms) then perhaps it becomes necessary to think in terms of our own roles in the world, either as individuals, or as representatives of organisations, or as citizens of a country. Development, in other words, is about 'us' and not 'them'.

There is a critical need to raise public awareness in the minority world of the root causes of global poverty and conflict. The consumerist lifestyles and unethical practices of governments, transnational corporations and global financial institutions need to be challenged. If sustainability is to be achieved, then the development of global democratic institutions that effectively represent the interests of the world's poor ought to be pursued.

Conclusion

Black perspectives in GYW calls for a reassessment of past and present relationships with the majority world. As global interdependency grows there is a need to move from colonial and hierarchical relationships of the past to democratic partnerships of the future. This would apply to relationships with local Black communities just as much as it would apply to communities in the majority world.

The history of Black people has essentially been about resistance and liberation. The anti-slavery, anti-colonial, independence, civil rights, anti-racist and anti-apartheid movements represent significant milestones in the global history of Black people. These movements inspired, and were inspired by, other global struggles for liberation, most notably, the labour, feminist and green movements.

Black people's contributions and achievements to all these movements have yet to be fully acknowledged. As we enter the new millennium it is perhaps not surprising that the minority world continues to live in a culture of denial, claiming the 20th century has been, 'The American Century', victorious, as its values and interests have successfully been imposed upon the rest of the world. (Brazier, 1999)[14]

[11] Joseph, J. (1996) *'Global Youth Work: Reconceptualising Development Education?'*, Development Education Journal, no5

[12] Sachs, W.(1992) *'Development: a guide to the ruins'*, New Internationalist, no 232

[13] Ohri, A. (1997) *The World in our Neighbourhood: Black and Ethnic Minorities Communities and Development Education*, DEA

[14] Brazier, C. (1999) *Forward*, New Internationalist No. 309, p8.
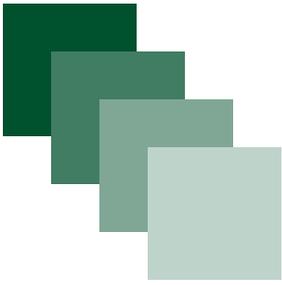
Section 3

Black British Perspectives in Global Youth Work

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to examine the relationship between the notion of global Black perspectives as outlined in the previous section and Black British perspectives in GYW. The section will explore the evolution and continuing validity of the term 'Black' as a form of political expression to refer to peoples of African and Asian origins and how such political concepts evolve out of struggle and the need by oppressed communities to identify themselves in their own terms.

Within a global context, this section will also highlight the fact that communities in struggle, here and abroad, are not just passive victims of oppressive regimes. Instead, as the analysis below will show, Black communities have fought back against racism and other forms of oppression and Black liberation thinking has informed other struggles, here and abroad, both Black and white.

An understanding of this context will enhance our understandings about the basics of anti-oppressive GYW principles and practices and particularly help us look at more pro-active ways of engaging with all communities, here and across the world.

Global Connections

Though earlier contacts existed between the minority and majority world, over the last 500 years or so, these connections were a direct consequence of white colonialist expansionism. Britain had an established record of trading with many Black nations across the world and the East India Company, for instance, had been operating in India since 1600. (Visram: 1987)[15] In 1771, the British Royal African Company transported 47,000 slaves and made it possible for England to become the leading slave trader and carrier in the world. The slave trade was responsible for uprooting and inhumanely transporting 9-10 million people of African origin and scattering them in the economic heartland of the Empire. (Institute of Race Relations, 1982)[16]

Though the Church normally is seen as a body that stands up for all humanity especially the oppressed, Christianity did play a crucial role in legitimising and morally underpinning slavery. British and other European expansion into Africa and other parts of the world was enabled by the military might that these countries had at their disposal as well as the weaponry of religion. It would be true to say that in

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[15] Visram, R. (1987) *Indians in Britain*, Batsford, London.

[16] IRR (1982) *Roots of Racism*, IRR, London.

some instances local collusion, out of greed or naivety, played a role in the oppression of the colonised. In other instances the generosity and/or powerlessness of the oppressed determined their political fate.

Through such contacts and relationships, white psyches absorbed the ideology of Black inferiority and savagery. Hartmann and Husbands (1974), state that the "... main ideas about race and colour that have been current in Britain developed as a result of colonial expansion from the late 16th century onwards. Since that time the essential character of relations between the British and the indigenous inhabitants of other continents has been the domination of the non-white by the white ... As the colonial period progressed, these ideas became elaborated and more and more widely diffused, until by the end of the 19th the idea of white superiority held central place in British national culture". (pp 20)[17]

History of Black Presence in Britain

Records show that Black people have been in Britain and other parts of Europe for centuries. As far back as the third century AD, an African division of Roman soldiers was stationed near Carlisle defending Hadrian's wall (GLC: 1986)[18]. Between 193–211 AD, Septimius Severus, a north African, ruled England as the Roman Emperor. (Hiro: 1973[19]; Fryer: 1984[20])

Since the Middle Ages, there have been significant numbers of Black people settling in Britain. It was not until the 17th and the 18th centuries that communities of Black people began to emerge in places such as London, Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff and Glasgow. Many of the new settlers were domestics, lascars (sailors), ex-slaves, entertainers and African and Asian aristocrats. (Fryer, 1984; Law et al, 1981[21])

> *"The fact is that British history, from at least the 16th century, is inextricably woven with that of Black people, through slavery, imperialism, and colonial domination. Black people have been present here in Britain, since at least 1507 in different material conditions, in significant numbers and with sufficiently wide talents to have penetrated every level of British society."* **(GLC, op cit: 4)**

This period also saw the development of 'cultures of resistance' against the forces of oppression. Black people in this country, in the Caribbean and in America were not just passive victims but were at the forefront of the struggles against racism, colonialism and imperialism as well as domestic issues such as poverty and the negative consequences of industrialisation. Slavery, for instance, was not abolished solely because of the efforts of white people such as William Wilberforce; Black abolitionists such as Ottobah Cugoano and Olaudah Equiano also played an integral role in the struggle for slave emancipation. The Indian national rising of 1857 was seen as a sy mbol of resistance to the domination of the East India Company.

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[17] Hartmann, P. and Husband, C. (1974) *Racism and the Mass Media: A Study of the Role of the Mass Media in the Formation of White Beliefs and Attitudes in Britain*, Davis-Poynter, London.

[18] GLC (1986) *A History of the Black Presence in London*, GLC, London.

[19] Hiro, D. (1973) *Black British, White British*, Monthly Review Press, London.

[20] Fryer, P. (1984) *Staying Power – The History of Black People in Britain*, Pluto Press, London.

[21] Law, I. and Henfry, J. (1981) *A History of Race and Racism in Liverpool 1660–1950*, MCRC, Liverpool.

The Birth of the Black Communities

According to current estimates, the Black community consists of four million people (7.1 per cent of the total population). Half the people in the Black community were born in this country. Although the Black presence in Britain is a historical phenomenon, it was the post-1945 mass Black immigration that resulted in the birth of Black communities in some of the key industrial heart lands of Britain (CARF/Southall Rights: 1981[22]).

> *"Attendant with the synonymity of 'Blacks' with immigration has been the assumption that immigration, and therefore the immigrant, is a problem. Given the perceptions of post-war Black immigration to Britain, Black people are not only blamed for present economic ills, but are given no credit for – nor are believed to have made any positive, useful, or productive contributions to Britain whatsoever."* **(GLC, op cit: 4)**

However, despite the fact that there was active recruitment of Black labourers from places such as the Caribbean, it did not mean that these human products of the Empire were welcome on this shore. Indeed, in the '50s, '60s and '70s immigration was seen by politicians and lay people alike to be synonymous with Black immigration and therefore problematic despite Britain's past with its colonies. The skills and the labour provided by these new Black migrants were needed but not their colour, creed or religion. This could be seen as another further attempt to extract the humanity out of the Black communities and de-humanise them into mere units of labour.

The state fuelled the anti-Black climate further by introducing ambiguous and paradoxical race and immigration legislation such as the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act and the 1968 Race Relations Act. Such legislation was designed, on the one hand, to outlaw racial discrimination and, on the other, to promote the assimilation of the Black community. Thompson[23] writes that "...the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act made the state directly responsible for enforcing racial oppression. Race now took its place at the centre of national political life." Such paradoxical policy measures have served to reinforce, legitimise and perpetuate white racist assumptions and stereotypes about the Black community and still continue to do so (you only need to look at the current debate surrounding refugees and asylum seekers and the latest controversy about the need for new arrivals to learn English).

Organisations such as the Indian Workers Association, the Black Power movement and the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) were instrumental in forcing the state to introduce anti-discriminatory legislation. International influences from America (Vietnam, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, the Black Panthers), Africa (Kenyatta, Nyerere, Nkrumah) and India (Gandhi) served to place the plight of Britain's Black community and its discriminatory treatment by successive governments, on an international arena.

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[22] CARF/Southall Rights (1981) *Southall – The Birth of a Black Community*, IRR and Southall Rights, London.

[23] Thompson, K. (1988) *Under Siege*, Penguin, London.

> *"In the workplace and the community, Afro-Caribbean and Asian, we were a community and a class, we closed ranks and took up each other's struggles. We had such a rich infrastructure of organisations, parties and self-help projects. Self help was what we did, exactly, because we were outside mainstream society . . . learning in the process to weave from the differing but common traditions of our anti-colonial struggle a common struggle against racism."* **(CARF/Southall Rights, op cit: 65–6)**

Black British Perspectives

While there undoubtedly exists many Black perspectives, the Black British perspective used in this report is derived from the political union of African-Caribbean and Asian people in their struggle against racism in the UK.

> *"A Black perspective is not just an ethnic or a cultural perspective, but an anti-racist perspective. And, it derives not from some abstract academic definition, but from the living struggles of African-Caribbean and Asian working people in this country, in the 1960s and 1970s, against an undifferentiated and brutal racism. And it denotes a common unity against oppression, forged in a culture of resistance and producing a sense of community."* **(Sivanandan: 1993: 63)[24]**

In this sense 'Black' evolved into a political expression to include ". . . all those systematically oppressed by white racism . . ." (Chauhan:1989: 9)[25] and usually included peoples of African, Asian and Caribbean origins. The term attempted to reclaim the Black political agenda and demonstrate a sense of solidarity and alliance building among those communities who were discriminated on the grounds of race, colour and ethnicity. The definition served to emphasise ". . . the state of power relationships between the Black community and white society. It also helps to reassert and re-establish the centrality of racism and anti-racism in any analysis of the position and life chances of Black young people . . ." (ibid.: 9)

It is important to acknowledge that the above interpretation is not always accepted by all sections of the African-Caribbean and Asian communities in the UK. As with any attempt at giving communities a label, the use of the term 'Black' has been subject to many debates. Also, in other parts of the world, the term 'Black' has a cultural and political interpretation different to the above, often referring specifically to those people who have their origins in Africa.

Despite the fact that it is often seen as a shorthand label for people of African origins, the term 'Black' was reclaimed across ethnic lines and was inclusive of the Asian, Caribbean and African communities. It was used both as a means of self-validation and a statement against white racism.

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[24] Sivanandan, A. (1993) *'The Black Politics of Health'*, Race and Class, Vol. 34: 4: pp 63–69.

[25] Chauhan, V. (1989) *Beyond Steelbands 'n' Samosas: Black Young People in the Youth Service*, NYB, Leicester.

Conclusion

All good GYW practice should incorporate the contributions of Black people to all aspects of the development of British economic and cultural life. It has to incorporate understandings about how Black people have been integral to the relatively peaceful evolution of a multi-racial, multi-faith and multi-lingual society in this country through their contributions to the worlds of business, arts, music, sports, academia, voluntary work and so on.

This history needs to be acknowledged and reflected in discourse with young people about aspects of British life. Opportunities need to be sought for inclusive not exclusive approaches that start from a position of respect for Black people. Racism has a long and powerful history, which has become entrenched in British cultural life and is etched on the psyche of the nation. As part of countering this, GYW needs to incorporate Black perspectives that explicitly acknowledge Black contributions to this country and the rest of the world.

Creative work and consciousness raising also needs to be carried out in the Black community. It cannot be taken for granted that just because a person is Black they have detailed knowledge about the rest of the majority world. Similarly, just because there may be creative youth and community work carried out with Black young people and their communities, it does not mean that Black perspectives are integral to this work.

There is diversity within the Black community and sections of it will have differing and often ambiguous relationships with their countries of ancestry. For example, an Asian from East Africa may have a different outlook on the plight of Africa or India and their role in its future compared to say an Indian from the Sub-continent. Similarly, many of the Black young people born in this country may have a different attitude and perspective towards their parents' countries of origins. Many migrants and their descendants no longer have any sense of solidarity with or allegiance to their countries of origin. All these are issues that can form the basis of further dialogue for good GYW practice within the community.
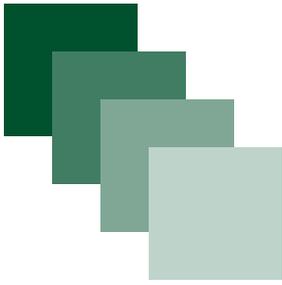
Section 4

Principles of Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work

Introduction

Black perspectives in GYW refers to that process of investigation and education that necessarily includes a Black viewpoint and incorporates the perspectives and experiences of Black people into any analysis of contemporary and historical global life. That is, a systematic and deliberate process of learning about and understanding Black peoples' viewpoints about world events.

GYW is not for Black people only. Neither are Black perspectives about the exclusion of white people. It is however about the need to incorporate the reality of racism into any work on GYW whether this is with Black or white young people and their communities.

Rationale

For many Black young people and their communities GYW could be an important social education facility through which issues of identity, history, the Black presence in this country and so on can be usefully explored. For both Black and white young people GYW offers an opportunity to locate themselves in a global context and one which is marked by inequality on a number of grounds – political, economic, military, food production and distribution, as well as race and ethnicity. Both Black and white people, though not equally, are involved in the problem and should therefore be involved in the solution.

The inclusion of Black perspectives in Global Youth Work is a valuable opportunity to promote learning that would otherwise be inaccessible. It is about learning from our past, advancing the struggle one step further, and energising a collective dialogue about how to:

- Give voice to people who are excluded from global decision-making processes and power structures;
- Promote an understanding of history from different viewpoints including majority world views;
- Raise awareness about anti-oppressive struggles and how they are related to each other;
- Encourage people to become active citizens by developing a greater sense of their local-global identity;
- Enable people to connect with historical struggles for equity and justice and counter the legacy of colonialism, institutionalised global racism and internalised oppression;
- Develop global education initiatives that reflect and are led by the aspirations of local communities;

- Recognise the merits of alliance building within and between the majority and the minority worlds as a necessary step in the struggle for liberation;
- Ensure that NGO movements in the minority and majority worlds also direct more of their resources towards challenging and changing attitudes in the North.

Core Principles of Black Perspectives in GYW

At the heart of Global Youth Work are the principles of starting from the young person's experiences, offering educative, participative and empowering opportunities, working to a negotiated agenda and using critical analysis to understand the relationships and inequalities that exist in the world. When working with young people and their communities the following core principles of Black perspectives in GYW need to be incorporated:

1. **Make more explicit and visible Black contributions to the development of all humanity.**
2. **Highlight the fact that Black people are in the majority in this world.**
3. **Accept that Black people have the right to self-determination ("Swaraj").**
4. **Challenge white supremacist views of globalisation and the world.**
5. **Acknowledge that Black perspectives are inclusive and require equal responsibility by Black and white people.**
6. **Acknowledge that Black people are holistic, cultural, spiritual and gifted human beings and not just economic units for exploitation by the minority or victims of poverty to be pitied.**
7. **Encourage people from the minority world to take responsibility for their behaviours, choices and actions on the global stage, acknowledging that not all minority people have equal access to power.**
8. **Explore how systematic racism against Black people is also related to other forms of oppression and the need to connect the oppressed with the oppressed.**
9. **Ensure that Black young people and their communities are involved in the determination of global agendas.**
10. **Ensure that Black young people and their communities are involved in the design and delivery of all youth and community work, of which GYW should be an integral component.**

The above principles are designed to form the foundation for developing Black perspectives in GYW practice. They are designed to raise discussion and enable young people and their communities as well as the people who work with them to actively engage with the issues. They are also designed to provoke debate and interest in Black perspectives and GYW and enable young people, their communities and the people who work with them to engage in creative educational opportunities and practical actions.
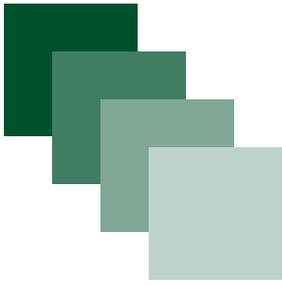
Section 5

The Practice of Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work

Introduction

The practice of GYW is in its infancy. Practitioners are either only just beginning to make sense of what GYW is and/or state that they are already practising GYW. It is not disputed that some practitioners are already working on international and development education issues with young people. The question is whether or not their practices and their underlying principles would stand up to scrutiny against the template of GYW principles as they currently stand. Whether or not such practices would stand up scrutiny against some of the Black perspectives, principles and values contained in this report is even more questionable. Without doubt, the practice of GYW needs to be more widely developed and shared and there needs to be a fuller investigation of the degree to which existing practices constitute GYW.

The practice of Black perspectives in GYW requires a conscious application of the underlying principles of GYW in every facet of youth and community work, not just as another approach or issue to be tagged on. To achieve this it is essential to understand:

1. What Black perspectives in GYW means in practice;
2. Identify the processes required;
3. Explore the range and type of activities that could be carried out; and
4. Identify some strategies for change.

The challenge for GYW is, in a broad sense, one of rebuilding relationships and genuine two-way relationships between unequal partners can only be developed if there is a commitment to addressing issues of equality and justice.

Aims of Black Perspectives in GYW

The practice of GYW needs to include an examination and recognition of the experiences and perspectives of Black people in this country and across the world. Informal education processes, the hallmark of effective youth and community work practice, should include the concerns and perspectives of Black people as well as celebrating their contributions to the world. Although such acknowledgements and celebrations are often a common feature of youth and community work with Black young people, it should not just be restricted to them. These should be extended to all groups of young people so that important events such as the Black History Month are not just seen as the preserve of Black people but as the history of all peoples.

In this country, the development of effective and sustained Black perspectives in GYW can enable young people and their communities to:

1. Make connections with other young people and organisations here and across the world;
2. Validate and celebrate Black achievements and contributions and explore how racism has affected outlooks towards the majority world;
3. Enable them to make connections between their political struggles and lifestyles here and those of oppressed people elsewhere in the world;
4. Articulate the oppression of Black people and connect with Black political struggles and movements throughout history and explore what roles Black young people and their communities want to create for themselves in tackling global issues;
5. Ensure that majority voices are heard, and organise more effectively to lobby UK Governments about foreign policy and the general condition of the Black communities here and abroad;
6. Advocate a Black-determined and Black-led global education agenda including working through and with the Black voluntary sector.

Learning Outcomes

Effective youth and community work should be demonstrable through say, the type of learning achieved by young people. Although a lot of youth and community work is carried out informally, programmed activity is also recognised as a valid and important method of engaging with young people. The learning outcomes for programmes of activity, curriculum development or informal education in relation to Black perspectives in GYW should address the following:

1. **Challenge and motivate young people to question everyday local-global issues.**
2. **Have a holistic, inclusive and anti-oppressive view of the world and work jointly to secure the rights of all global citizens.**
3. **Equip young people with anti-discriminatory skills, language and attitudes and facilitate an understanding of colonialism which challenges myths about majority world people.**
4. **Develop an understanding of the inequality in global relations marked by the exploitation of the South by the North and our individual and collective roles in this.**
5. **Celebrate the achievements of all humankind especially the forgotten contributions of Black people to the development of global society.**
6. **Equip young people with the knowledge, skills and methods to resist the effects of globalisation and enable them to take actions locally to influence the lives of people globally.**
7. **Raise awareness of the global relationships and recognise that these relationships are real even if they are distant and indirect.**
8. **Acknowledge that there is much to learn from and share with people in the majority world and the need to build ethical alliances and partnerships with them.**

Delivering Global Youth Work

Language and perceptions

To deliver GYW more effectively, youth and community workers have to change the vocabulary and language that is currently used to describe global relations. Words like 'developing', 'underdeveloped' or 'third world' need to be challenged and changed and dialogue initiated to arrive at more appropriate terms. This is so as to counter dominant perceptions that Black people were discovered, civilised, educated and saved from sin and idol worship by the 'more developed' (meaning white) nations.

Such perceptions and conceptions of the majority world need to be countered by the education of young people and their communities on issues such as the contributions that the South has made to the development of the North and the world.

The Role of the Youth and Community Worker

Because of the unique relationship between young people and youth and community workers, it is not only the words of the worker that count but also their attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours.

This means that youth and community workers need to be competent in and trained to adopt a style of working that incorporates Black perspectives into all of their work including GYW. With the support of youth and community workers young people can be enabled to critically re-examine their perceptions and views about Black-white global relations. In particular, the social education process should enable young people and workers alike to think creatively about globalisation and its impact on Black-white relations.

Organisational Practices

Incorporating global Black perspectives into youth and community work poses major challenges not just for workers but also their employing organisations. Organisations need to examine their structures, procedures, beliefs and principles and these need to allow greater diversity and ensure that systems are not exclusive to white middle class people but include the poor, the marginalised and Black people.

Many youth organisations, local, national and international ones, maintain 'closed' styles and systems which prevent the promotion of Black perspectives. Some of these organisations and indeed the whole of the youth and community work world should work towards revamping their practices. This can be done by incorporating the ideals of global citizenship, working more closely with Black people in this country and developing methodologies, which also draw from the experiences of the majority world.

Incorporating Global Black Perspectives

Youth and community workers need to ensure that the materials, resources and sources of inspiration

that they use for working with young people are not just drawn from white, male Eurocentric perspectives. A wider resource and intellectual base will enhance the full range of educational opportunities that are available to all young people.

Examples of such inclusive approaches include:

- From Gandhi we can learn about non-violence, self-determination and political organisation;
- From Kwame Nkrumah and we can learn about the independence movements, national youth movements and Pan-Africanism;
- From the Rani of Jhansi we can learn about leadership and resistance;
- From Martin Luther King we can learn about civil rights;
- From Mary Seacole we can learn about dedication and compassion;
- From Marcus Garvey we can learn about the principles of organising in the Diaspora;
- From Augusto Boal we can learn about the techniques and methodologies of art and theatre in tackling oppression.

The 'Goal Orientated Empowerment Approach' to Black Perspectives

The empowerment of young people and their communities is central to the practice of GYW. This is *not only* about informing and enthusing young people to act but also giving them confidence and capacity to sustain their actions and engagement. The process should develop individual and collective values, goals, beliefs, attitudes and skills in such a way that a young person is seen as a complete human being with needs, problems, dreams and opportunities. This principle is key if young people in this country are to view other young people in the world as being equal to them. Viewing a young person in this light also calls for the design and delivery of GYW social education packages that have moral, spiritual, educational and action-orientated content.

The learning outcomes identified earlier need to be supported by an effective informal education approach. Though in essence this approach is no different to the one already practised by youth and community workers, it is suggested that a more deliberate method be used: the 'Goal Oriented Empowerment Approach'.

The 'Goal Oriented Empowerment Approach' is an informal social education approach that sets broad common goals, is empowering and challenging but most of all creates a force of resistance against oppression of any shape or form. It is a purposeful and deliberate approach to social education and active citizenship and hinges on the four cornerstones of youth and community work: empowerment, education, equal opportunities and participation.

A Model for Developing Black Perspectives in GYW

The practice of Black perspectives in GYW can be developed and incorporated through a series of steps and activities. There are four dimensions to our model of Black perspectives in GYW:

Me

The analysis at this level is one of coming to terms with who you are. As young people are very concerned about how they look, often the first port of call is for image repair and validation. At this stage young people are encouraged to explore issues that commonly affect them such as sex, sexuality, culture, religion, spirituality, future hopes, experiences of family life (single parent, nuclear and/or the extended family) and so on.

My world

It is recognised that the individual does not live in isolation but within a family network and also as a member of local, national and international communities. As such young people have to be aware of their rights and most importantly their responsibilities not only to themselves, their families, the locality, and the global community but also to 'Asasi Yaa' – the Mother Earth. For many young people this is the opportunity to connect truly with their global being.

My place in it

This stage encourages young people to see themselves, their families and communities in relation to the rest of the world. How do their lifestyles, customs and ways of living compare and contrast with other people around them? Are they able to make the connections between their lives and those of other young people and their communities around the world?

What I do about it

This stage tries to identify the perspectives and views that young people have about certain issues and what stance they have about issues such as world poverty. In crude terms, it asks them to question on which side of the fence they are standing and whether or not they see themselves as part of the problem or part of the solution. Young people can be encouraged to consider exercising greater choice over the products that they buy, influencing Government foreign policy or linking with Black communities globally. This is also an opportunity for white young people to examine their beliefs and values introspectively about Black/majority people and other forms of oppression and make choices about these beliefs.

Stages in the Development of Black Perspectives in GYW

In order to work through the above four dimensions, a staged approach is suggested. A number of steps can be followed to work through issues with young people:

Stage 1: Downloading

In this first stage young people are encouraged to explore and analyse the above four dimensions as they see them:

- Me;
- My world;
- My place in the world;
- What I do about it.

Stage 2: Processing

At this stage the young person has explored his or her self (that is goals, values, beliefs and so on). The second stage allows young people to implement and process the information from stage one using the following steps:

Status	What have I learnt about myself as a global citizen?

Options	What can I do? This step is for the exploration and listing of all the possible options available to the young person.

Priorities	What must I do? This step helps to sift through the options to identify the ones that seem imperative and which are fundamental to bringing about change.

Capacity	What will I actually do? After prioritising, young people have to examine themselves and identify what capacity they have to achieve or implement. If at this stage they realise they are not well equipped to do what has to be done, focus on what can be done.

Stage 3: Uploading

This final stage deals with the planning and implementation of the targets set:

Objectives	By the end of the intervention/ action what do I hope to have achieved?

Action plan	How am I going to achieve it?

Time frame	How much time do I have? By when should/could it be finished?

Implementation	What specific actions am I going to take?

Evaluation	Have the right methods to achieve the maximum result within the time frame been used? What have we learnt about ourselves, about the system and about others? Has anything changed? Did we achieve the desired effect?

Practitioner Checklist

How does your existing work with young people and their communities:

1. Incorporate Black perspectives into your principles, policies and practices?
2. Give voice to the oppressed and marginalised of the world?
3. Promote an understanding of history from different viewpoints?
4. Raise awareness of political struggles?
5. Encourage people to become active local-global citizens?
6. Allow people to connect with historical struggles for equity and justice?
7. Encourage people to locate themselves in the world by exploring themselves?
8. Enable majority voices to be fed into your work?
9. Enable young people to develop a local-global identity?

Conclusion

A comprehensive approach to Black perspectives in GYW will mean a move away from theoretical education to planned training and practical application. In order for GYW to be properly embedded into youth and community work, there needs to be more emphasis on not just informing people but also on:

1. Equipping people with the skills, knowledge and attitudes;
2. Accessing appropriate resources;
3. Providing the environment for achieving real change.

> *"If you always do what you've always done you always get what you've always got and what you've got is not good enough."*
> **(anonymous)**

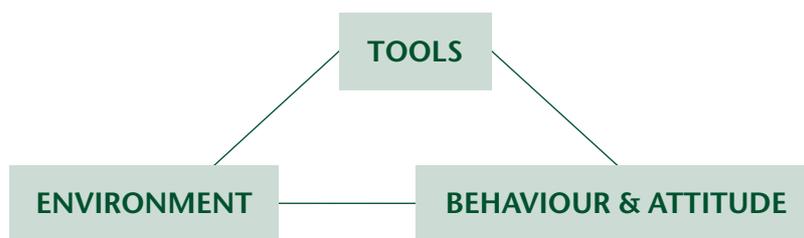So the time for real change is now. It is time to apply global Black perspectives to your work.
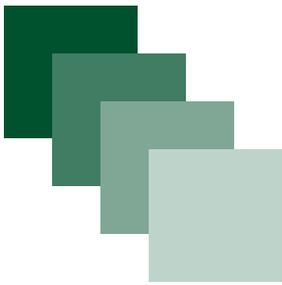
Section 6

Resources and Activities

Introduction

The activities below have been tried and tested and can be used with young people and their communities. These activity tools are a starting point and it should not be assumed that just because you have these you could apply them indiscriminately. The implementation of an effective GYW agenda that also includes a Black perspective will require two further strands: the attitude and behaviour of the youth and community worker and the environment in which the work is taking place.

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Youth and community workers have to change the vocabulary and language they use into a more positive and empowering approach. Existing words and interpretations need to be changed and reclaimed.

The environment in which such work is carried out has to be conducive, warm and welcoming to all concerned. There ought to be positive images that celebrate the achievements of Black people all over the world and the general environment should be inclusive.

Activity 1: Download-Process-Upload

To enable young people (either white or Black) to empty themselves of insecurities and negativity (for example, low self-esteem, inferiority and superiority complex and internalised racism).

Aim: To identify and critically analyse the reasoning behind some key historical events and better understand how they happened.

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: Flip chart paper and pens, issues card.

Activity 2: Two Sides of a Coin

Aim: To enable participants to discuss issues from two perspectives. Either from Black/southern perspectives or from white/northern perspectives. Or as oppressed and oppressor, rich and poor, male and female and so on depending on the issues being discussed.

Time: 60 minutes.

Materials: Cardboard, markers and flip chart.

Activity 3: Story Telling

Aim: To bring home to young people some of the global events in the history of humankind that may be too abstract or difficult to understand. These events can be shared in the form of a story, which will have characters (animals, aliens, etc) as metaphors of the real. A good example is George Orwell's book *Animal Farm*.

Procedure:

1   Take a historical event or issue and change the characters, dates, places and objects. Make it interesting without losing the facts.

2   List all the characters or objects in the story on a card each and do the same for the real life parallels.

3   Tell the story and at the end ask relevant questions that will reveal some of the inequalities and injustices that may be in the story. The questions could include the following, how do you feel about the characters? Do you think there was fairness in some of the events and issues that took place in the story?

4   If you were in the story above, what would you do to bring about positive change? This question is a compulsory one that should be asked last and the responses recorded on a flipchart.

5   Ask if participants see any similarities between the story and real life, and list the points.

6   Form two groups give the cards of the characters in the story to one group and the cards of real life characters to the other group and ask them to pair them up with your support.

7   Refer to the list of what they would do if they were in the story, separate out the positive things and ask participants why they are not doing those things now to bring about change.

Time: 60 minutes.

Materials: Flip chart, markers, and coloured A6 cards.

Activity 4: Discussion Starters

Aim: To stimulate discussions around an issue or topic using drawings or photos or video.

Procedure:

1 Make a drawing about an issue or look for magazine pictures, or take your own, or show a short video (feature or documentary) clip.

2 Allow participants time to analyse it and question them about what they see, feel about the picture and the issue it may be drawing attention to.

3 Use some of these questions:
   - What do you see in this picture?
   - What do you think is happening?
   - How do you think it happened?
   - Why is the situation this way?
   - What caused it?
   - Have we had this experience before?
   - Does this happen in our locality or to us?
   - How has the situation been dealt with?
   - What can be done to bring about change?

Time: 30 minutes.

Materials: A picture, photo drawing or video clip.

Activity 5: I am a Star

Aim: To identify and explore issues about individual identities, values and beliefs.
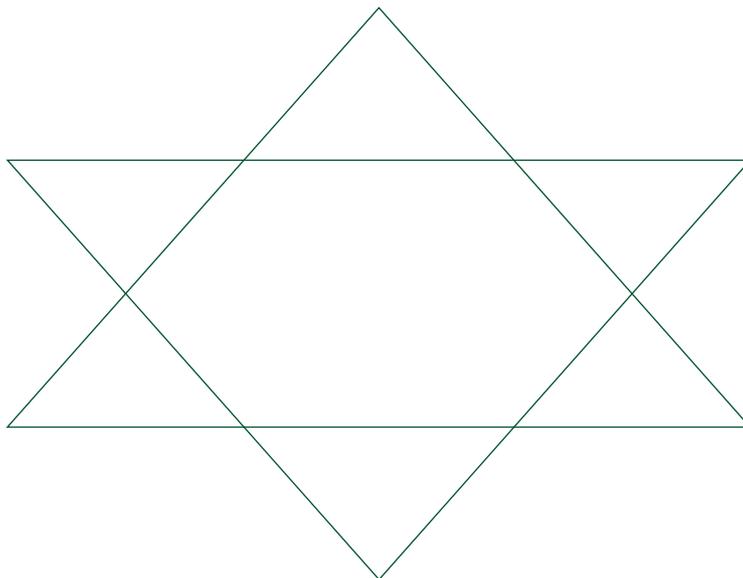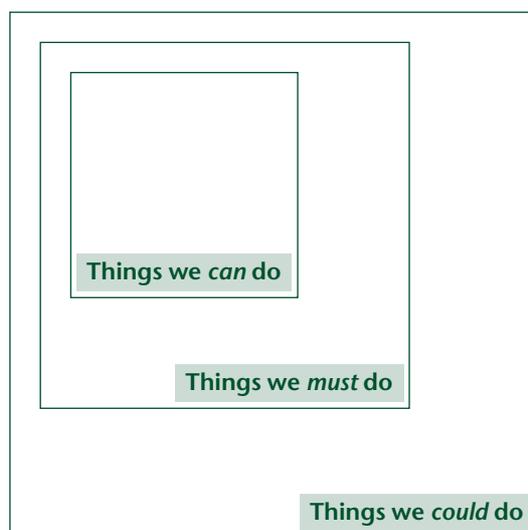
Procedure:

1. Write up this quote on a flip chart and read it out to participants.

   "The beginning of wisdom is to know yourself." By Ali Mazuri. Ask if they know themselves.

2. Photocopy the star and distribute it. Ask participants to draw in or complete it according to the following criteria.

3. Centre, Me: When you refer to yourself as me what do you mean? What are the other attributes or characteristics that can be associated with you?

4. My environment: On the outside triangles list all the things you would refer to as the environment you live in; this includes family, locality, as well as the social, political and economic environment.

5. My place in it: Identify the aspects of your environment that are comfortable and the ones that are not. Label the ones you feel you have contributed to and the ones that are outside your control. Select three that you think are serious and number them in order of priority.

6. Display your star and share the issues that come on the top of the priority list. List them on a flip chart and devise a plan to address the most common issue by asking the question what should we do? (See options activity for details)

Time: 45 minutes.

Materials: A4 sheets with a six-pointed star on it, flip chart and markers.

Activity 6: Options Squares (or Circles)

Aim: To enable young people to narrow down options available to them to ones they have the capacity to implement sustainably.

Things we *can* do

Things we *must* do

Things we *could* do

Procedure:

1. Ask group to do a thought shower ("brainstorm") and list the issues on flip chart.

2. Put participants in groups of four; give them a flipchart with three squares written on them (see above).

3. Ask participants to transfer from the thought shower into the first square those things which they think they can implement.

4. Of that list, they are to transfer into the second square items they feel they must be doing.

5. Finally, they should narrow down that list into the final square, which represents things they could do in their present circumstances.

Time: 45 minutes.

Materials: Flip chart and marker pens.

Activity 7: Music and Songs

Aim: To discuss issues in a fun and interactive way by analysing songs and making new ones.

Procedure:

1. Play a piece of music to the group and ask them to listen quietly.

2. Provide copies of the lyrics and ask the group the following questions. What do you think the musician is singing about? What exactly is s/he saying? Are there any situations you know of that are similar to the content of the song? What caused the situation? How can it be solved? What can we do to bring about change? All the questions do not have to be used. The music could be analysed just as an awareness-raising exercise.

3. Here are a few songs that could be listened to and analysed: "War, Them crazy, Redemption song, Stiff necked fools" by Bob Marley. "I try, I've committed Murder" by Macy Gray.

Time: 45 minutes.

Materials: Tape/CD player, sheets with the lyrics on, flip chart and markers.

Other Games and Resources

Activities that can be developed by youth and community workers but this time from a Black perspective include:

- **Balloon game**
- **Cushions**
- **Perceptions**
- **Room for two more**
- **The world upside down**
- **What is my life?**

- **Building a tetrahedron**
- **I know a culture**
- **Power inventory**
- **Star power**
- **Trading game**
- **Where is the door?**

- **Chocolate game**
- **Not in my back yard**
- **Reverse role play**
- **The world on chairs**
- **What is culture?**

Please refer to "Changing the World – A Directory of Global Youth Work Resources", DEA, 1996 for further ideas and contacts.

Reading Materials

A common complaint or excuse used to omit the inclusion of Black perspectives has been the absence or lack of information on the issue. It is not enough to read a few books because although they provide an excellent background to some of the issues the 'modus operandi' or process of delivery is equally, if not more important. Those who seriously want some reference material or resources to support their work can start off with some of these books:

- Fanon, F. (1967) *Black Skins, White Masks*, Penguin, England.
- George, S. (1994) *A Fate Worse Than Debt*, Penguin, England.
- Petras, J. and Veltmeyer, H. (2001) *Globalisation Unmasked*, Madhyam Books, Delhi.
- Rodney, W. (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Bogle-L'Ouverture, London.
- Alexander, T. (1996) *Unravelling Global Apartheid,* Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Hope, A. and Timmel, S. (1988) *Training for Transformation – book 4,* ITDG, London.
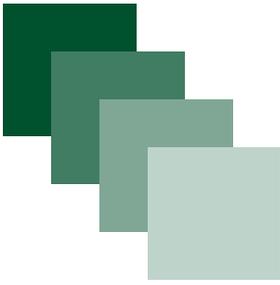
Section 7

Policy Issues in Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work

Introduction

This section will look at the implications for policy for organisations that wish to develop and/or consolidate their work on Black perspectives in GYW. Any developments on Black perspectives in GYW will also act to ensure that GYW itself has greater currency among policymakers, managers and practitioners. At an organisational level, we can examine the implications of policy for agencies involved in the determination and delivery of youth work, community development and development education. Agencies here include the youth and community services (voluntary, statutory and independent sectors), international youth organisations, local Development Education Centres (DECs), NGOs, Government departments and so on.

Rationale

Organisational policies are tools for formulating, guiding and framing the philosophy, practice, culture, operation and service delivery of organisations.

Organisational policies play a central role in the governance of bodies be they private, public or voluntary sector. They act as the broad framework within which organisational activities are performed, sanctioned and regulated. They act as instruments of compliance as well as instruments against which acts of defiance and non-compliance are gauged and dealt with.

The policy objectives for the development of Black perspectives in GYW need to include the following:

1 To enable a much wider penetration of GYW principles into the policies and practices of key stakeholders;
2 To ensure that the practice and philosophy of GYW and development education is informed by the needs of the Black and majority world;
3 To develop more effective anti-oppressive practices that recognise the rights and needs of Black and majority communities;
4 To acknowledge and influence Black-white/South-North/majority-minority power dynamics in any organisational exchange or initiative;
5 To acknowledge the obligations of institutions towards a global multi-racial society.

Policy Context for Black Perspectives in GYW

The rise of new managerialism in the public sector, including the voluntary sector, and the import of private sector managerial styles and philosophies have resulted arguably, in a steady erosion of the fundamental value bases of the organisations operating in these sectors.

This situation has been compounded by diversification in the sectors and the culture of competitive bidding, short-term project funding and the increased pressures of responding to the Government's social agenda.

Self-determination, empowerment and a common sense of identity and purpose are some of the key ingredients to the development of Black perspectives. However, the dominant thinking seems to be how to make the Black and other excluded communities more socially inclusive without necessarily tackling the root causes of oppression such as racism. The idea of Black perspectives then, hardly features in current social exclusion debates because it is the excluded who need to be changed in order to make them more inclusive rather than also contemplating other parallel changes in say, discriminatory or exclusive institutional practices.

How integral are Black perspectives in organisational practices or is it the case that white, Eurocentric norms and values are allowed to dominate and subjugate Black experiences? An understanding of institutional or systematic racism is essential to our understanding about how organisations, either covertly or overtly, work against Black people and other oppressed communities.

> *"Institutional racism consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people."* **(Macpherson: 1999: 321)[27]**

What the Macpherson report has done yet again is to say to British society that racism does exist; something that the Black community has always been saying. The report's conclusions state the need for organisations to accept the notion of institutionalised racism and their responsibility in shaping social change through changes in organisational practices.

Barriers and Blockages

Apart from the issue of acknowledging institutionalised and other forms of racism and oppression, other barriers impede the introduction of Black perspectives in GYW. There are concerns that:

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[27] Macpherson, W. (1999) *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*, The Stationary Office, London.

- Additional financial resources will be required rather than just a re-prioritisation of existing resources;
- The work would be on top of existing work commitments and priorities rather than as a routine and integral part of everyday practices;
- This will be another hobby horse for the race lobby rather than an acknowledgement and acceptance by all professionals and volunteers to have a shared responsibility for Black perspectives;
- It has nothing to do with me as a locally based youth and community or development education worker;
- Developing Black perspectives work will clash with other priorities;
- Professionals and volunteers have to move beyond a global cultural appreciation perspective to one that may be more challenging and dynamic.

The Creation of Change

In this country, we are witnessing the wholesale demise of anti-racist politics, policies and practices in many organisations. Developing Black perspectives in GYW offers white institutions a practical opportunity to continue developing their anti-racist practices. It simultaneously offers anti-racists an opportunity to continue arguing that racism and discrimination is still rife. More critically, effective GYW provides a further opportunity to educate and empower young people and their communities about the effects of racism and their role in tackling it. This is not to say that GYW is the same as anti-racist work – it is just another window of opportunity for working with young people and their communities on social issues. It is another mechanism through which white people and people in the North generally, can be empowered to take responsibility for who they are, their historical past and current relations with all peoples of the world, especially Black and majority peoples.

GYW needs to be an integral part of youth and community work and development education. These professions train reflective practitioners and enable them to work experientially with young people and their communities. All young people and their communities have an attitude about the world in which they live: whether that is positive, negative or indifferent. The youth and community development process should enable all young people and their communities, including Black communities, to explore their relationships to the world on an experiential basis.

Currently, a number of issues are at the forefront and which provide the youth and community services, development education centres and others with a unique opportunity to incorporate Black perspectives into their policies and practices. The calls for increasing Europeanisation, active and global citizenship debates, the events of September 11 and its aftermath, the Stephen Lawrence inquiry and so on provide a favourable climate for the receptiveness of Black perspectives in GYW. These developments help to illustrate the reality of Britain as a pluralistic society and the continual need to involve all young people and their communities in the consolidation of this society and the world as an inclusive place.

Maintaining Change

Internal cultures and external deliveries of organisations like youth and community services, NGOs and DECs are inevitably shaped by the dynamics of racism. It is significant that key national and local organisations that are in the business of influencing policies and practices, make conscientious efforts to address their own affairs and approaches and enable the assertion of Black/Southern rights and self-determination.

There are a number of strategies that managers, trainers, practitioners and policy makers can use to reshape policies and perspectives and introduce more creative approaches to developing Black perspectives within their organisations:

1. Ensuring that the core mission and purpose of the organisation makes more explicit references to Black perspectives, GYW and the role of youth work and community development in a global society;
2. Offering high quality training and staff development on Black perspectives at all levels of the organisation;
3. Increasing the numbers of staff dedicated to the development and consolidation of Black perspectives;
4. Auditing the service delivery outputs of agencies to assess what they are currently offering regarding Black/majority and/or global experiences;
5. Appraising supervision procedures to ensure that all workers are clear about their responsibilities to integrate Black perspectives into their routine work;
6. Considering organisational strategies for supporting Black/majority only initiatives;
7. Incorporating Southern perspectives into the work of the organisation;
8. Increasing the levels of Black and majority community involvement in all their operations;
9. Having more staff, management committee members and volunteers from the Black/majority communities within their agencies;
10. Developing systematic monitoring, evaluation and appraisal mechanisms in order to ensure that policies and practices are effective.

Conclusion

Policy frameworks provide the organisational context within which individual and collective practices can be resourced, implemented and evaluated. A policy framework is essential for effective development and implementation of Black perspectives in GYW, especially if the responsibility for developing and implementing Black perspectives in GYW is going to shift from the realms of the individual to the corporate. Such frameworks are useful mechanisms for developing staff development support and for accessing and securing further resources to carry out the work.
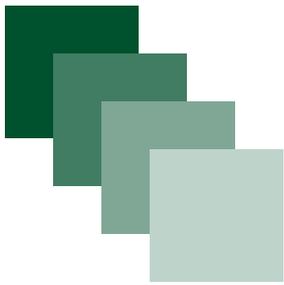
Section 8

Conclusions and Recommendations

This report has attempted to capture the spirit of the debates held at the various working group meetings, the three national seminars, the readers' seminar as well as other forums where the Black perspectives work has been discussed. The report is offered to the field of community and youth work for further exploration, discussion and experimentation. It also is an offering to the growing field of GYW and its mother ship – development education – to help it consolidate its place in the world of youth and community development work. It is hoped that the report will not only spark debates in the field about Black perspectives but also add fuel to existing debates about the role and place of GYW within the youth and community work agenda.

The report has shown that there is a need for arriving at conceptual understandings if we are to make sense of and put labels to the local-global events that affect our lives. It has also shown that while the theme of Black perspectives is a difficult one to gain consensus on, it is possible to offer ideas and thinking in order to promote debate. It is hoped that other people will one day be able to refine and give further offerings.

The working group has not sought to arrive at a definitive view about Black perspectives in GYW but to offer a considered perspective on Black perspectives. This the working group has done through debate, study, research, practice and open dialogue. Though not wishing to present it as the authoritative piece on Black perspectives in GYW, it is **a unique report**. What this report offers is a framework for action to develop Black perspectives in GYW with young people and their communities.

The need to advocate for and assert the rights of the Black majority world has been the centrepiece of this report. It did not start out like that but as discussions progressed in the working group, understandings about our task and the meanings of Black perspectives started to become clearer. After a number of false starts, the group became more conscious that we needed to explore **global** Black perspectives and not fall into the danger of conducting the analysis solely from a Black British perspective. Otherwise, there was a danger that all this was going to do was to see the world from Black British goggles rather than global Black goggles.

NGOs as well as youth work and community development organisations, (local, national and international ones) need to examine how their existing practices may prevent the active promotion of Black perspectives in all their work. Such organisations need to re-examine their historical modes of working and evaluate their existing practices to weed out all forms of institutional racism.

The working group believes that organisations could benefit by:

- Reviewing their existing practices and better locating them within a global context;
- Working more closely with Black young people and their communities and Black voluntary organisations in this country;
- Developing methodologies drawing from the experiences of the Black majority world so that Black perspectives becomes a natural component of their work;
- Involving Black people in this country on an ongoing basis and not exploiting and sidelining them once their expertise has been tapped.

The challenges for face to face workers are even starker. They have a special relationship with young people and their communities and so they need to be able to check not only their words and intentions but also their attitudes, values and beliefs. Incorporating Black perspectives into youth and community development work is not about lip service. Youth and community workers need to be skilled up, possibly through training; to adopt a style of working that incorporates some of the principles laid out in this report.

There is a clear role to be played by governmental departments such as the DFID and the DfES in influencing the attitudes of citizens in this country about how they see and interact with the citizens of the world, especially Black people. Many people in this country do not know about development education or about the role of their country in the perpetuation of global inequality now or in the past. Thus, the need for formal and informal education for all citizens on global issues is paramount.

The relationship to anti-poverty work, the oppression of people in Black countries and the Black experience here has to be an explicit part of GYW. Many Black young people are socially excluded in this country and should be enabled to explore their relationships with other peoples of the world. Part of such exploration should include the rights of the majority world to determine their own destiny as a means to creating more equal global relations and mutual interdependence. In this sense, Black perspectives in GYW have to be informed by a rights based approach.

The work of UK-based Black community organisations, the links that they have throughout the Diaspora, plus the educational, charitable and cultural work that they do has to be positively welcomed. Youth and community work practitioners may wish to learn from such practices and approaches as well as exploring the range of methods used to work with young people and their communities in other parts of the world.

The report has shown that there is ample scope within existing youth and community development practices as well as development education agencies to incorporate Black perspectives into routine work with young people and their communities. Most certainly, there is scope for progressive reflective practitioners to critically review their existing practices and policies and consider how to embrace the ideas raised in this report.

Incorporating Black perspectives into youth work and community development processes may pose major challenges for many organisations but it is necessary to start the journey. This journey requires an examination and reconstitution of how organisational practices, principles, structures,

and procedures can be developed so as to ensure diversity. It also means the introduction of systems and ways of working that are not exclusive to white middle-class people but includes the poor, the marginalised, the majority world and Black communities.

Recommendations

1. This report should be more widely disseminated to bodies such as NGOs, DECs, Black community and voluntary organisations and youth and community services.

2. This report ought to be published and distributed to key target audiences such as the youth and community services, Black voluntary and community organisations and development education bodies.

3. This report should be presented to the DEA Council and a strategy developed to enable the DEA to carry out further work in this area.

4. The DEA should establish a Black perspectives section on its website and make this report available on it.

5. The key elements contained in this report should now be considered for incorporation into the GYW Trainers' Manual.

6. Presentations ought to be made to targeted audiences to publicise the report and highlight its key findings.

7. The DEA should carry out further work and identify case studies of organisations and practitioners working on Black perspectives in GYW. This should include the provision of direct funding to Black/majority organisations and individuals to document their work on Black perspectives on global issues.

8. Further investigation and work needs to carried out to identify the key skills and competencies that are essential to the practice of Black perspectives in GYW.

9. The DEA should continue in its endeavour to further links with and between Black networks: local, national and global.

10. Further work needs to be carried out to explore the implications of this report for the initial training and in-service staff development of youth and community work and development education personnel.

March 2002
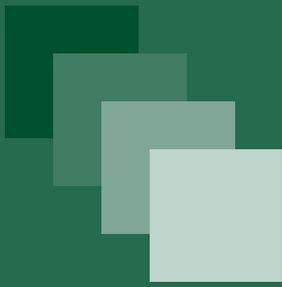
"A perspective that aims to strive for global democracy and place Black people at the forefront of global and local decision-making. Far from being kept on the fringes of global society, Black people ought to be at the heart of global society, securing fair and just rewards for their contributions to a shared and interdependent world. The majority world cannot simply be ignored or wished away." **(Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work, Working Group)**

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of work carried out on behalf of the Development Education Association (DEA) by a working group on Black Perspectives in Global Youth Work (GYW). This report was commissioned by the DEA and examines both the theoretical and practical considerations involved in the development of Black perspectives in GYW and it is hoped that this report will act as a catalyst for wider debate in the youth work field. Though this report is written for the DEA, the analysis should also be of interest and relevance to:

- Development education and global youth work practitioners;
- Organisations responsible for policy development including Government departments;
- Youth and community services (statutory, voluntary and independent sectors);
- International youth organisations;
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs);
- Training agencies;
- Black voluntary and community organisations;
- DEA members.

This report is based on the premise that both Black and white people have a role and responsibility to incorporate Black perspectives into GYW practices and policies.

The report is also available on our website at *www.dea.org.uk/youth*