

Reaching Out

FINAL EVALUATION



AUGUST 2009

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1. Reaching Out aimed to build capacity to deliver advice and guidance within the voluntary and community sector in West London. It was developed in the context of the City Strategy Pathfinder, West London Working, which identified that there was low awareness of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services among hard to reach groups, and that this was contributing to high levels of worklessness, low income and child poverty.
2. Nord Anglia Lifetime Development (NALD) was the lead partner delivering the Reaching Out, but a range of other partners were involved. The project worked through ten providers of IAG (project delivery partners) to provide employment support to economically inactive people, focusing on specific groups that it was thought were not already accessing services.
3. Reaching Out also took an innovative approach to building capacity to deliver IAG within the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in West London. It did this by engaging individuals who were working or volunteering in VCS organisations to do National Vocational Qualifications in advice and guidance, linking them up with project delivery partners, who acted as coaches. The trainees received support and training from the Reaching Out team at NALD, and were able to learn 'on the job' by observing and delivering IAG alongside their coaches. The idea was that trainees could then go back to their own organisations and provide IAG themselves, and in doing so, broadening out the range of providers of IAG in the area.
4. Reaching Out was funded from the London Development Agency's (LDA) Opportunities Fund Round 2. Overall, it provided job advice to 733 West London residents, basic skills courses to 23 people and Skills for Life to 22 people – achieving or exceeding its targets in all these areas.
5. In total, 20 trainees achieved an NVQ in advice and guidance – two at level 2, 14 at level 3 and 4 at level 4. Getting trainees on board was difficult, and the project did not quite achieve its targets for number of trainees completing. Nevertheless, for those that completed, the training was really beneficial. It enhanced trainees' knowledge of areas of IAG, including legal aspects, data protection and recording requirements, which helped them and their organisation to deliver IAG more professionally. On its own Reaching Out may not have been sufficient to progress trainees into a fully qualified IAG adviser role, particularly where qualifications were gained at level 2, but it introduced trainees back into learning, boosted their confidence and enabled them to get a qualification whilst working. Several trainees were hoping to progress to further qualifications after Reaching Out.
6. Overall, then, Reaching Out met its objectives. It was successful in building capacity within

- voluntary organisations in West London to deliver IAG about learning and work. The project also improved joined up working between Jobcentre Plus and project delivery partners through delivery partners working with Jobcentre Plus more actively to achieve their targets.
7. Our research also showed very high levels of satisfaction with the employment support that client beneficiaries received from project delivery partners and trainees. Our survey of 50 client beneficiaries showed that since receiving support, 25% had moved into learning or training and 10% had found a job. In addition, most clients felt more employable and confident through an improved CV or awareness of opportunities.
 8. The evaluation suggested that the key strengths of the project included its strong focus on outreach in recruiting trainees; although trainee recruitment was one of the biggest challenges for Reaching Out, the outreach approach meant that the team succeeded in engaging trainees who would have not gone into training otherwise. The quality of training was also high, with very practical training workshops, supportive staff to provide ongoing assistance to trainees and hands-on project management.
 9. Our research found that the some aspects might be improved if a similar project was to be set up in future. The biggest problem Reaching Out faced was in finding suitable trainees who did not already have a first level 2 or first level 3 qualification (as these were the only ones who were eligible to take up training, under the project's contract). Opening up the project to a wider range of potential trainees would have helped the project meet its target numbers. In addition, project delivery partners would have benefited from some training in coaching skills, as some found this difficult.
 10. Reaching Out only paid for one employment support session per client, but this was not usually enough to move clients into learning or work. Introducing follow-on employment advice sessions would have helped trainees by enabling them to get experience of more different aspects of IAG delivery, as well as helping client beneficiaries.

1

INTRODUCTION

The evaluation brief

- 1.1. In May 2009 Shared Intelligence (Si) was commissioned to evaluate Reaching Out, a project managed by Nord Anglia Lifetime Development London and South East Ltd (NALD) and funded from the London Development Agency's (LDA) Opportunities Fund Round 2.
- 1.2. Reaching Out aimed to build capacity to deliver advice and guidance within the voluntary and community sector in West London. It was developed in the context of the City Strategy Pathfinder, West London Working, which identified that there was low awareness of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services among hard to reach groups, and that this was contributing to high levels of worklessness, low income and child poverty. The project engaged with 10 project delivery partners to provide employment support to a range of economically inactive people. It also took an innovative approach to building capacity to deliver IAG, by engaging individuals working or volunteering in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to do NVQs in advice and guidance, linking them up with project delivery partners who acted as coaches.

Evaluation approach

- 1.3. The evaluation, carried out between May and July 2009, used a mix of primary and secondary data sources, and involved the following activities:
 - data and document review: analysing monitoring and output data from Project Progress Reports (PPRs) submitted to the LDA, reviewing the original appraisal of the project
 - in-depth interviews with 10 Reaching Out project delivery partners
 - interviews with 18 trainees, including 12 who were on course to complete and six who withdrew from the project before achieving a qualification
 - four case study visits to trainees' organisations, including in-depth interviews with trainees' managers

- interviews with three members of project staff at NALD
 - interviews with three project stakeholders, representing the LDA, Hounslow and Harrow Councils
 - a telephone survey with 50 employment support clients (client beneficiaries); an additional postal survey yielded eight further respondents.
- 1.4. This report describes the results of this research.

Structure of report

Chapter 2 provides an overview of Reaching Out, including the original rationale for the project, its aims and objectives and delivery model. It also includes a 'logic model' linking the original context, objectives and intended activities with hoped for impacts.

Chapter 3 looks at the project expenditure and the outputs that were agreed with the LDA at the start of the project. The section also gives unit costs calculations: the expenditure per output.

Chapter 4 looks at whether the project reached its intended target groups. It explores in more detail the beneficiaries of the project, including both the trainee beneficiaries and the client beneficiaries (employment support clients).

Chapter 5 explores the quality, effectiveness and outcomes of the training and employment support, looking at what difference the project has made to trainee beneficiaries and client beneficiaries. This chapter also contains an analysis of the effectiveness of the project management arrangements.

Chapter 6 deals with the 'strategic added value' generated by Reaching Out and how the project has contributed to LDA's cross-cutting themes – equalities, health, crime and sustainability.

Chapter 7 brings together the evaluation findings, analysing the project's strengths and exploring what could be improved.

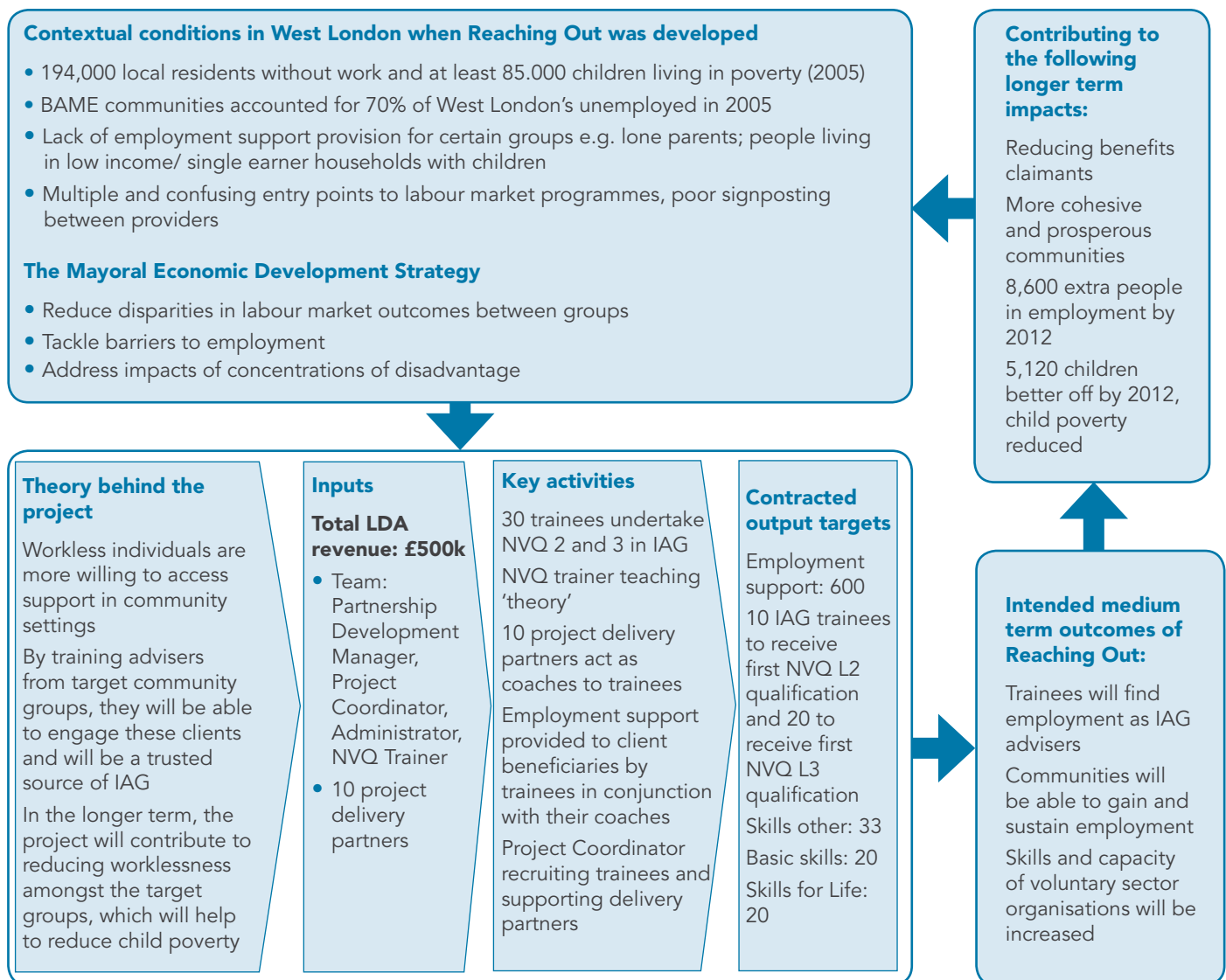


OVERVIEW OF REACHING OUT

2.1. This section explores the aims, objectives, activities and delivery model of Reaching Out. Subsequent sections of the report analyse the extent to which aims and objectives were achieved, and the outcomes and effectiveness of the project's activities and delivery model.

2.2. The diagram below summarises the 'logic' behind the project at the start: the contextual conditions it addressed, its inputs, activities, output targets and intended outcomes and impact. These elements are explored further in the remainder of the section.

Reaching Out project: underlying logic, intended outcomes and impacts



Sources: Reaching Out Project Application Form (2007), West London Working Business Plan (2007)

Baseline and rationale for the project

- 2.3. Reaching Out was developed by Nord Anglia Lifetime Development London and South East Ltd (NALD) as a project bid to the LDA's Opportunities Fund Round 2.

Strategic fit

- 2.4. The project was designed to contribute to the delivery of the West London Working City Strategy Pathfinder's objective to 'create a joined-up, culturally sensitive employment support service that increases the number and breadth of local residents assisted', enabling the Pathfinder to work with those currently 'outside the system'. One of the key strands of WLW's programme is outreach and personal advice, within which Reaching Out sits.
- 2.5. The project bid also noted strategic fit with boroughs' objectives set in Worklessness Action Plans and Local Area Agreements (LAAs). LAAs have been refreshed since the project's inception, but each of the West London boroughs apart from Hillingdon have included a target around reducing the number of working age people on employment benefits, suggesting that the project continues to fit with boroughs' high level objectives.

What needs was the project responding to?

- 2.6. Although Reaching Out's project bid did not include a detailed assessment of needs (space on the application form was limited), it referred to needs identified by WLW, such as:
- to widen access to local services so that more people are in contact with agencies that can help them think about and move towards work
 - to foster improved quality and consistency of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
 - to train more frontline workers able to assess the employment and skills needs of workless residents and signpost them to appropriate provision

2.7. In fact, in developing its business plan, WLW mapped employment services delivered by 200 West London providers and noted gaps in provision specifically for lone parents, workless parents living in low income, single earner households, and residents who claim incapacity benefits. It noted that there were multiple and confused points of contact for residents and employers, and a lack of personalised customer focused provision with few referrals between providers.

2.8. WLW also identified that Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups suffered the highest levels of worklessness - in fact, 70% of those unemployed in West London in 2005 were from BAME groups. Poor awareness of local IAG and employment related services, alongside poor advice across the life cycle, were identified as key barriers to accessing training and jobs amongst harder to reach groups.

Rationale for the project's approach

2.9. In the application form for Reaching Out, NALD argued that the project would respond to these needs by training IAG advisers from target community groups, who would be able to engage with target groups and become trusted sources of support. At the same time, the capacity of voluntary and community organisations to deliver IAG would be increased, and the quality of IAG would be improved by making sure that more advisers were qualified.

2.10. The project application form did not specifically set out the arguments for why the public sector should intervene to address the problems outlined, but from the project's design and analysis of needs, it can be seen that there are some arguments for intervention implicit in the project design. These include addressing inconsistencies in information available to individuals to help them get into work or learning (both quality of information, and availability in suitable settings), and intervening to train more advisers where these would not be provided by the market alone (as potential advisers from the target groups may not otherwise consider IAG as a career option or have the means to pursue a qualification).

Aims and objectives

- 2.11. As set out in the project's application form, Reaching Out aimed to widen the IAG adviser base specifically to target groups including unemployed people, especially unemployed women in the six West London boroughs, who are lone parents, (BAME) communities, disabled women, and women with economically inactive partners.
- 2.12. Its key objectives were to:
- recruit and train 30 new advisers from the target community groups so that:
 - the workforce is reflective of the client group
 - the employability of the target group is increased
 - trained advice workers can increase the provision of employment support work in the community
 - expertise is increased and developed in the IAG sector to support workless groups by recruiting them into advice roles
 - provide accessible provision and personalised services to 600 client beneficiaries in West London and give an opportunity for personal development and life improvement through increased local employment possibilities
 - coordinate improved joined up working, particularly between statutory organisations, including Jobcentre Plus and outreach organisations
 - increase the capacity of VCS organisations' ability to offer free impartial IAG to equality groups

What did the project involve?

Funding

- 2.13. £500,000 was allocated to the project at the start. The budget was later reprofiled in Year 2 and reduced to £477,000 (for further details, see chapter 3). Funding was allocated by the LDA for three years, but NALD negotiated to deliver

the project within a shorter timescale, from 1 April 2007 to 13 June 2009. Since the Project Co-ordinator was not recruited until September 2007 and the project indeed needed longer than two years to deliver its outputs, the project was extended to 31 August 2009.

Delivery model

- 2.14. The project was led by NALD and delivered through 10 project delivery partners, who provided coaching to Reaching Out trainees in the delivery of employment support to unemployed people. These included:
- Action Acton (based in Ealing)
 - Community Careers (Brent)
 - Iranian Association (Hammersmith and Fulham)
 - Harrow Association of Disabled People (Harrow)
 - Head to Head Training (Ealing)
 - New Challenge (Brent)
 - Refugees into Jobs (Harrow, Brent)
 - Royal National Institute of Blind People (Ealing)
 - Tasha Foundation (Hounslow, Ealing)
 - Young Women's Christian Association (Ealing)
- 2.15. One more project delivery partner was recruited to provide additional Skills for Life (ESOL) courses – Acton Community Learning.
- 2.16. Project roles and key responsibilities are set out in Table 1.

Training activities

- 2.17. Reaching Out's core activity was to train and support individuals, who were employees or volunteers with West London voluntary and community organisations, to gain their first NVQ2 or NVQ3 in Advice and Guidance.
- 2.18. All trainees were first assessed for suitability for the training by the Project Co-ordinator, who suggested the level of qualification they should aim for.

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Table 1: Reaching Out - roles and responsibilities

Role	Key responsibilities
Project Co-ordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall project management, quarterly reporting to LDA Recruitment of project team Recruitment of trainees Liaison with project delivery partners and provision of support to help them reach targets; reprofiling targets between partners where necessary; organising quarterly steering group meetings Preparing marketing materials Commissioning evaluation
Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processing of invoices and paperwork from project delivery partners; liaison with partners to receive monitoring forms in time Data input from monitoring forms Support to Project Co-ordinator in quarterly reporting to LDA Support to Project Co-ordinator in recruitment of trainees
NVQ Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangement and development of resources for workshops for levels 2, 3 and 4 Work with Freelance NVQ Assessor and Internal Verifier to make sure everyone is working to the same standards Arrangement of one-day networking event with guest speakers for all participants Observation of candidates towards their NVQ Work with candidates one-to-one and in group sessions to develop a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate reaching the NVQ level
Freelance NVQ Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing additional resource to observe trainees towards their NVQ on a freelance basis
Internal Verifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Holding standardisation meetings with Freelance NVQ Assessor and the NVQ Trainer Ensuring City and Guilds standards are met Visiting NVQ Trainer and Freelance Assessor to verify standards Verifying the trainees' portfolios before external verification
Project delivery partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching one or more trainees Engaging beneficiaries to receive employment support, including outreach activities in some cases Organising employment support sessions to involve trainees, client beneficiaries and coach Delivering employment support services, individually and in groups, in conjunction with trainees Acton Community Learning contracted to deliver Skills for Life (ESOL) and basic skills (numeracy and literacy) outputs

2.19. The trainees then attended monthly workshops facilitated by an NVQ trainer. The resources for the training were developed by the trainer to cover relevant contents for NVQ levels 2-4, but the trainees could choose which topics they wanted to cover within the resources. The trainer also worked with the trainees either in groups or one-to-one to develop a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate their ability to perform at their NVQ level.

2.20. Each trainee was allocated a 'coach', an experienced IAG practitioner from a project delivery partner organisation. The coach was responsible for organising employment support (IAG) sessions, where the trainee could participate, first by observing and then practice delivering a part or a full session of employment advice. The requirement for the trainees was that they visited their coach twice per month for either two half days or one full day. The frequency and number of coaching sessions that each trainee

participated in varied widely, and depended on the availability and commitment of coaches, trainees and clients. Towards the end of the training programme, the trainer or an assessor visited the trainees to observe them during advice sessions both in their own organisations and at their coach's organisation.

- 2.21. The majority of trainees participated in both the coaching and workshop element of the training. Those who started in the second year of the programme participated mostly only in the workshops.
- 2.22. Trainees were also able to benefit from other forms of training, alongside their NVQ programmes. The project was contracted to deliver 'skills other', 'skills for life' and 'basic skills' outputs, all of which were initially envisaged as additional support trainees might require. In practice, most trainees did not need support with basic skills and skills for life, so these outputs were subcontracted out to Acton Community Learning Centre who provided ESOL and basic skills for people who aspired to work in the IAG sector or a related area, e.g. youth work in the future, but who did not yet have the required language skills to apply for jobs in those areas. Trainees nevertheless benefited from training to help build confidence and Health and Safety training, which counted towards the project's 'skills other' outputs.

Employment support activities

- 2.23. Delivery of employment support to client beneficiaries was a secondary aim of the project, which some stakeholders saw as a positive 'by-product' of the training programme, as employment support sessions were set up in order to help trainees gain experience and confidence in delivering IAG.

- 2.24. Project delivery partners were paid on delivery of employment support sessions to client beneficiaries and could only claim once for each individual beneficiary. In practice, different project delivery partners provided slightly different services to beneficiaries - some delivered employment support mainly one-to-one, whereas others used group sessions; some provided CV writing support; and some provided one follow-up session (this was not claimed as a separate output). All beneficiaries were to receive an action plan detailing what they should do next, and many were referred to other services provided by the project delivery partners (under different funding streams) or to other appropriate providers of support.
- 2.25. All six West London boroughs were targeted (Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow). In particular, the project aimed to reach trainees who were women and/or from BAME groups. In delivering employment support, key target groups included BAME communities, lone parents and women with economically inactive partners.

3

PROFILE OF FUNDING AND OUTPUTS

3.1. This section looks at project budget and expenditure, the contracted and achieved outputs and unit costs - the amount of funding spent per contracted output.

Expenditure

3.2. Reaching Out was originally allocated £500,000 from the LDA's Opportunities Fund; there was no other source of funding for the project. The LDA suggested reviewing the budget to account for a late start and the overall allocation was reduced to £477,000 in January 2008. Some funding was originally allocated for the trainees to deliver IAG sessions independently after achieving their qualification, and this was cut back when it appeared that all qualifications would be achieved at the final year of the project leaving no time for these independent sessions.

3.3. The funding was divided between NALD and project delivery partners. Each partner was originally allocated £15,420 per year with a target to deliver 88 employment support outputs. The Project Co-ordinator adjusted allocations to the actual delivery as some partners delivered more outputs than others.

Approved output targets and gross outputs achieved

Skills and employment support output targets

3.4. Reaching Out had six contracted output targets (see table 2), including one employment support target and five skills and qualifications targets. The LDA definitions for these outputs can be found in Appendix C.

3.5. The **employment support** target was overachieved by 22%: instead of the contracted 600 clients, the project delivery partners have supported 733 people.

3.6. Reaching Out aimed to train 10 people to NVQ **level 2** and 20 trainees to NVQ level 3 in Information, Advice and Guidance and LDA

output criteria specified that this needed to be the trainees' first qualification at either level. In total, 20 people gained an NVQ qualification through Reaching Out. However, only two gained level 2 (20% of the target) and 14 achieved **level 3** (70% of the target). A further four gained a level 4 qualification, which is counted as 'skills other', because these trainees already had a level 3 qualification.

3.7. In addition to an NVQ level 2, 3 or 4 qualification, Reaching Out provided trainees with '**other**' **skills** courses, e.g. Basic Health and Safety, First Aid and CLAiT computer courses. 33 trainees received this training, and output targets were met.

3.8. Reaching Out also aimed to provide **basic skills** and **Skills for Life** training. As there was little demand from trainees for these courses, Acton Community Learning was commissioned to recruit West London residents who aspired to work in IAG-related positions onto skills courses in order to deliver these outputs. Both targets have been met – 23 people have gained a basic skills qualification and 22 people Skills for Life qualification. Two of these were Reaching Out trainees.

Equalities targets

3.9. Like most LDA-funded projects, Reaching Out had '**equalities**' targets for gender (women), disability and ethnicity (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic - BAME - groups): a proportion of people under each target needed to be from these equality groups. The equalities target for the employment support were to reach 50% from BAME groups, 71% women and 14% who had a disability. As for the trainee beneficiaries, the aim was that the majority would be from the equalities groups: 80% of level 2 and 50% of level 3 were to be BAME; 80% of level 2 and 60% of level 3 to be women; 40% of level 2 and 20% of level 3 to have a disability (see table 2).

3.10. Reaching Out has been generally **successful in achieving its equalities targets**. The project engaged with almost twice as many client beneficiaries from BAME backgrounds as

Table 2: Reaching Out outputs - contracted and achieved

the calculations are based on

Output		Total outputs					BAME outputs		Disability outputs		Women outputs	
		2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Output 1 Employment Support	Target	55	457	88	600		300		85		425	
	Actual	55	612	66	733	122%	575	192%	115	135%	430	101%
Output 2 Skills (Basic)	Target	0	19	1	20		9.5		4.8		14.3	
	Actual	0	23	0	23	115%	22	232%	0	0%	14	98%
Output 3 Skills (Level 2)	Target	0	0	10	10		8		4		8	
	Actual	0	0	2	2	20%	1	13%	0	0%	2	25%
Output 4 Skills (Other)	Target	1	27	2	33		20		5		20	
	Actual	1	37	0	44*	133%	38	190%	4	80%	34	170%
Output 5 Skills for Life	Target	0	20	0	20		15		5		10	
	Actual	0	22	0	22	110%	21	140%	0	0%	13	130%
Output 6 Skills (Level 3)	Target	0	0	20	20		10		4		12	
	Actual	0	0	14	14	70%	11	110%	2	50%	10	83%

Source: Project Progress Reports

*This includes four NVQ level 4 qualifications and two partially completed NVQ level 2 qualifications.

contracted (575 people); provided advice to 115 people with a disability; and 430 of client beneficiaries were women.

- 3.11. The majority of trainee beneficiaries were representing the equalities groups, although the targets were not entirely met due to a lower number of trainees than expected overall. In total 12 of the 16 trainees who achieved a level 2 or level 3 qualification were women, 12 were from BAME groups and 2 had a disability (see table 2).
- 3.12. For skills outputs, equalities targets have also been mostly met or overachieved.

Unit costs

- 3.13. The value for money of Reaching Out was calculated by dividing project expenditure by number of outputs to give an indication of 'unit cost'. The total expenditure was first apportioned between different activities based on an estimation of time spent on delivering different outputs. The unit cost calculations should be treated with caution, as the funding spent was not actually recorded according to outputs and

Project Co-ordinator's estimates. However, we can use the unit costs for comparisons between the projected and actual unit costs (see Table 4).

- 3.14. Overall, Reaching Out achieved most outputs at a lower unit cost than forecast by the original output targets. The exception is the Level 2 and 3 NVQ qualifications that took more effort to achieve than originally anticipated. Level 2 qualifications were considerably more expensive, as only two trainees qualified, whilst Level 3 qualifications were closer to the target.

Table 3: Reaching Out unit costs - target and achieved

Output	Time spent (est.)	Target output	Achieved output	Target unit cost	Gross unit cost
Employment Support	20%	600	733	£159	£130
Skills (Basic)	10%	20	23	£2,385	£2,074
Skills (Level 2)	15%	10	2	£7,155	£35,775
Skills (Other)	10%	33	44	£1,445	£1,084
Skills for Life	15%	20	22	£3,578	£3,252
Skills (Level 3)	30%	20	14	£7,155	£10,221

CASE STUDY

Sandra, Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Development Agency

Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Development Agency (H&F VDA) is a not for profit organisation that helps people get into voluntary work. H&F VDA has a number of other projects, including youth projects, education and employment programmes. When she started her NVQ level 2 training with Reaching Out, Sandra was employed as a receptionist and administrator having started out as a volunteer two years ago.

In addition to achieving a level 2 qualification, Sandra hoped to 'understand IAG better' and get practical experience through coaching. Sandra found Reaching Out workshops very useful and helpful in getting back into learning, as the staff was very supportive in explaining the material. "There are things you do all the time at work, but the workshops made me think about how I'm doing things." The coaching sessions were 'nerve wracking' to start with as Sandra had never conducted advice sessions before, but they were getting easier with practice.

The training gave Sandra a lot of confidence in delivering IAG both over the phone and one-to-one. As a result she has taken on new responsibilities in H&F VDA – she does outreach for lone parents at Jobcentre Plus and runs events.

Sandra's manager has noticed that her level of professionalism has improved because of the IAG training: 'she was already good but is even better now'. Her interview techniques when speaking to clients at Jobcentre plus have improved in particular. The manager is more confident now in giving Sandra further responsibilities in doing outreach for the organisation.

On reflection Sandra felt that Reaching Out has helped her get back into studying and renewed her interest in it. She is hoping to find another IAG course to progress to level 3.

4

WHO BENEFITED FROM THE PROJECT?

4.1. Reaching Out had two groups of beneficiaries: the trainee beneficiaries who participated in the training programme and client beneficiaries who attended the advice sessions. This section focuses on the background of both beneficiary groups, whether the project reached its intended target groups and the activities that beneficiaries engaged in.

Trainees

Trainees' background

4.2. In total, 20 trainees gained an NVQ qualification as a result of Reaching Out. The trainees came from VCS organisations across the six West London boroughs – Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow and Hillingdon.

4.3. The project aimed to train people who were yet to complete their first level 2 or level 3 qualification. However, it proved difficult to engage enough trainees to carry out qualifications at level 2 - reasons for this are discussed in section 5. Therefore, the project accepted some trainees with a previous level 3 qualification to complete an NVQ level 4; these were counted as 'skills other' for monitoring purposes.

4.4. In reality Reaching Out engaged with a much larger pool of trainees, but more than **one in two** participants **dropped out** of the project before gaining a qualification. The reasons for withdrawal are explored further in section 5. Compared to other levels, more people working towards a **level 2** qualification dropped out (see Table 4).

Table 4: Reaching Out trainees

	Started training	Completed training	Withdrew
Level 2 qualification	13	4*	9
Level 3 qualification	24	14	10
Level 4 qualification	10	4	6
Total	47	22	25

*Including two who partially completed.

4.5. The evaluation carried out 18 in-depth interviews with Reaching Out trainee beneficiaries, including six interviews with a sample of those who withdrew from the project. Of those interviewed:

- All trainees interviewed were working or volunteering in organisations that offered **advocacy, advice or support** service to the local community, e.g. a housing association, a support organisation for women, a youth centre, an ethnicity advocacy group. A full list of voluntary organisations participating can be found in Appendix B.
- Most trainees were **full-time employees**, although many had started out as volunteers in the same organisation and had progressed into employment. Only two trainees were currently volunteering
- Nearly all trainees were working with **vulnerable groups**, such as lone parents, refugees, disabled, people with mental health needs, unpaid carers, and homeless people
- The majority of trainees were **already providing advice and guidance** as their main activity at their workplace, although typically this was not on employment and learning but on a different topic, e.g. benefits, educational mentoring or outreach. Some trainees were in administrative posts but were hoping to progress into an advice-related post within their organisation

4.6. The main motivation for the trainees to join the training programme was to **progress in their career** through gaining a qualification and skills required by employers, as the following quotations exemplify.

"I was volunteering at the time [I started the training] and thought it was the best way to progress into a full-time job. I also wanted to boost my skills."

"Because I was moving into advice and guidance work [from an administration post] I thought it would give me some experience and knowledge."

Reaching Out trainees

- 4.7. Trainees with little previous experience in advice and guidance were interested in the practical coaching element of the programme and were hoping to get **practical experience** in advising clients.
- 4.8. Finally, some trainees commented that they had not been able to go into training for financial reasons and that Reaching Out had enabled them to do this since it was free.
- 4.9. The majority of trainees interviewed had found out about Reaching Out through the Project Co-ordinator directly contacting or visiting the organisation they worked or volunteered for. Many commented that the Project Co-ordinator's visit and talk had convinced them to 'have a go' at studying and some had not known about IAG qualifications before. Only a few trainees had heard about the project through a leaflet, newspaper advert or other marketing materials. In some cases the first contact had been made with the trainee's manager, who then passed the information on.
- 4.10. Although most trainees had considered training in the past, the majority had not been actively looking for training in IAG at the time when they found out about Reaching Out. Indeed, most trainees commented that they would probably **not have gone into training** without Reaching Out.

"[Without Reaching Out] I probably would not have done a training course. I wasn't thinking about doing a course before I applied. I did once think about doing an NVQ but this was years ago."

Reaching Out trainee

Employment support

Client beneficiaries' background

- 4.11. Reaching Out monitoring data gives information on some of the background characteristics (gender, ethnicity, disability) of client beneficiaries. In total over the two years of the project, 733 people were supported to get a job. The majority of them - 78% - were from BAME backgrounds. The largest ethnic groups were African (155) and Caribbean (88).

Table 5: Background details for client beneficiaries

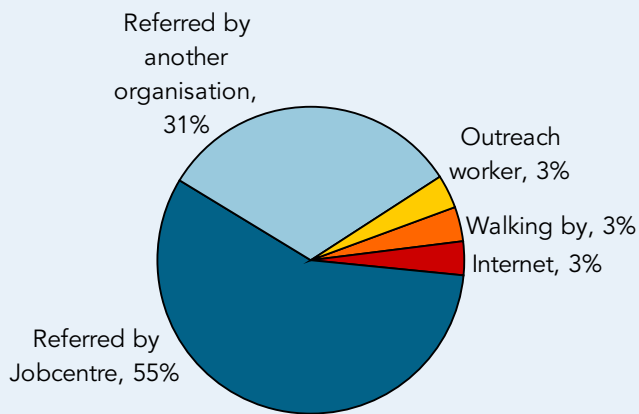
	All beneficiaries	BAME	Disabled	Women
Employment support	733	575	115	430
Skills for Life	22	21	0	13

- 4.12. More details on client beneficiaries' backgrounds were contained in the telephone survey. Our survey suggested that:
- the majority (62%) were aged between 35 and 49; 16% were 25 to 34 years old and 12% were under 24
 - the vast majority (90%) were unemployed when they received support with 55% unemployed 6-12 months and 40% longer; only one respondent had been unemployed for less than 6 months
- 4.13. Further details on clients' background can be found in Appendix A.
- 4.14. Just under a half (46%) said that something was making it difficult for them to find work or improve skills before receiving support. The most common barrier was 'disability' (17%), for 9% it was ill health or depression and a further 7% struggled with speaking English.
- 4.15. When asked about other forms of support received, the majority (65%) had used Jobcentre Plus services before and 40% had received advice about learning or work. One in five had done a course either in college or in the community.
- 4.16. The majority of client beneficiaries had found out about the service through a referral – some 55% had been referred by Jobcentre Plus and 31% by 'another' organisation, as the following chart shows.

Services used

- 4.17. The survey asked questions about what services were offered during the advice sessions. The results indicate that:
- 62% of client beneficiaries had been given advice about writing a CV, 52% received information about job vacancies and 24% were advised about career options (see following graph)

How did you find out about services?

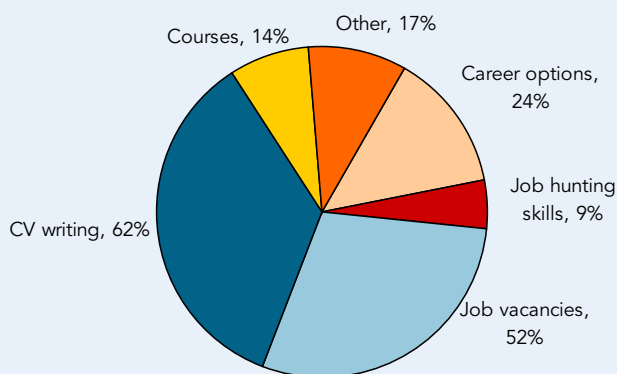


- 14% were given information about other organisations that could help and 83% were not signposted

4.18. Only 10% (6 respondents) remembered being given an action plan following the session and 85% said they did not get an action plan.¹ Of those who did, however, almost everyone said that they had found it useful – three respondents found it ‘very’ and two ‘quite’ useful.

4.19. Further details on services used are appended.

Advice given during the session



¹ It should be noted here that all client beneficiaries did receive an action plan as this was a mandatory part of the service. All providers had to present clients’ action plans to NALD to verify outputs.

CASE STUDY

Sandra, Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Development Agency

Located in Harrow, Choices 4 All is a charitable organisation that provides training to people with learning difficulties to get them into employment and assist with independent living. Henrik is a full-time employee delivering advice and guidance, and accompanying clients to interviews to talk to prospective employers. He is directly responsible for nine clients, needing varying levels of support.

Henrik signed up to Reaching Out to improve his work by “learning different techniques” in IAG delivery, and to ultimately gain an NVQ level 3 qualification. On reflection he thinks that he wouldn’t have done the training without the initial contact made by the Project Co-ordinator and thinks it would have been difficult for him to complete the project without the support from Reaching Out staff. Henrik was placed with the Harrow Association for Disabled People (HAD) as a coaching organisation for the duration of his training programme.

Henrik feels that the project is “above and beyond” his expectations, and he has learnt a lot from the programme. He is already putting this into action. He has adapted equal opportunities forms, started to apply data protection, and is collecting paperwork to record his contacts with clients. He thinks the strengths of the project are in the high level of tailored support from Reaching Out staff and the coaching organisation mentor, providing help with research and queries.

He is keen to continue his studies, wishing to complete NVQ level 4 but since the project is finishing, will have to look elsewhere.

Henrik’s manager saw the training as necessary for Henrik’s current work, and she has seen a visible improvement in his work and the way in which clients respond to him.

“Students seem to be happier to discuss issues with Henrik, especially regarding job requirements.”

She found that the training provided the level of support that the trainee needed to complete the programme whilst being full-time employed:

“The level of support provided the staff was more than I expected. He wouldn’t have got this support from anywhere else.”

She thinks the training has benefitted the organisation as the trainee now has the ability to assist the manager in her work, and he is beginning to pass on new delivery techniques to the rest of the staff.

5

EFFECTIVENESS AND OUTCOMES OF TRAINING AND SUPPORT

5.1. This section looks at the effectiveness of project activities and outcomes of training and employment support for project beneficiaries. The final section of the chapter explores the effectiveness of the project management.

Effectiveness and outcomes of training

Satisfaction with training activities

5.2. Overall, the trainees consulted were very satisfied with the training programme. Compared to other training programmes they had taken part in, the trainees felt that they were more supported through Reaching Out.

"With Reaching Out you get a lot of feedback from the trainers, they keep you up-to-date and make sure you're on the right track."

"We are all treated as individuals - we can tailor the training and have a lot of one-to-one."

Reaching Out trainees

5.3. Most trainees found the **monthly workshops** the most valuable part of the training and the topics covered very relevant. The trainees thought that the quality of the sessions and the training staff was very high. They also appreciated the opportunity to meet other trainees, discuss their experiences and support each other.

"Workshops were especially good. You need to talk to other trainees to ensure you're on the right track."

"The trainer has been fantastic, giving great examples in plain English. I had a great time."

Reaching Out trainees

5.4. **Coaching sessions** received more mixed feedback. Most trainees did find the coaching sessions useful, in particular trainees with less experience in IAG. Satisfaction levels also were generally higher where there was a good 'match' between the coaching organisation and the trainee's own background, e.g. where both had a disability background.

"I had a good match with the organisation – the clients I advised were relevant to my own background and the clients I deal with day-to-day."

Reaching Out trainee

5.5. Those with higher level of experience did not always find the coaching sessions as valuable as the workshops.

"I didn't gain that much from the coaching sessions because I already do interviewing in my work. Coaching is a good idea for those trainees who don't have previous experience."

Reaching Out trainee

5.6. Many found that in practice, the sessions did not always materialise as they had hoped due to a lack of clarity in the coaching organisation (e.g. coach changed and new coach was not briefed), unavailability of clients or the trainees' own workload or motivation. This meant that sometimes a lot of time was spent on arranging sessions from both the trainees' and delivery partners' side without any results, which both parties found frustrating.

"The co-ordination and arrangements of sessions are quite complex. There are three points of contact: trainer, trainee, and client and it can become very difficult to arrange a time that suits everyone."

"Our trainee found it difficult, as she would have to travel long distances to find clients had cancelled. We work with a client group that can be particularly unreliable."

Reaching Out project delivery partners

5.7. Some comments were also made on the quality of coaching. Whilst in most cases the feedback was positive, some trainees indicated that they were not always sure about the coach's approach. For example, some said that they would have liked to progress from observing to giving advice earlier, and were not sure why they were kept in the observing role. Others did not always understand why their coach interrupted during the sessions that they were leading. The trainees that had several coaches found that the quality of coaching varied with some providing more support and feedback than others.

Outcomes for trainees

5.8. All trainees commented that they had already applied what they had learnt in their daily work and taken tangible results from the training. They felt that their skills in client-facing work had improved through:

- **increased knowledge** of different areas of IAG, particularly around legal issues and regulations covered in workshops - health and safety, data protection issues, equal opportunities
- **applying new techniques** when advising/mentoring clients, e.g. time management, setting boundaries, asking for clients' feedback and doing action plans:

"The training made me realise that it is important to explore ideas in the action plan and also to summarise the action plan at the end so that the client understands it. This is what I always do now."

Reaching Out trainee

- **changing the way they work** though better procedures, e.g. recording information more carefully and keeping records of client sessions
- paying **more attention to client needs**, e.g. reading body language, applying different techniques to 'open clients up':

"It's helped me to be aware that different clients might have different needs and focusing on how to meet those needs."

Reaching Out trainee

5.9. The trainees found the learning most relevant when their main field of work was outside employment advice, e.g. mentoring, outreach or advocacy. They found that they had acquired **transferable skills** that enabled them to understand and help their clients more successfully.

5.10. In addition, nearly all trainees said that the training **had boosted their confidence** by making them feel **more professional** about the way they deliver IAG. This was something that the trainees' managers had also noticed:

"Her level of professionalism has improved and her interview techniques are better. It's boosted her confidence and that has a knock-on effect on others in the organisation."

"She is a lot more confident. She has a formula in her mind about how to conduct the advice and guidance session."

Reaching Out trainees' managers

5.11. It was not just the confidence to deliver IAG that had changed as a result of the training. The trainees also became more **confident about taking up further learning**. For many trainees, it had been a long time since they had taken up any learning:

"It's helped me to get back to studying and I've learnt discipline and prioritisation. I'd like to go on to the next level now, but I'm a bit concerned that they might not be as supportive in another programme as they were in Reaching Out."

Reaching Out trainee

5.12. Whilst none of the trainees had received their qualification by the time of the interview, most felt that the NVQ would help them in future. Indeed most trainees felt that they would have a better chance of **progressing in their career**, particularly those who opted for higher levels of NVQs. However, some felt that they would first need to study further to be able to compete in the job market.

"It's a necessity to have a qualification to move around or up in the company. Experience isn't enough these days – you need a qualification to get anywhere now."

"Yes it has improved prospects, but some organisations are looking for level 4 instead of level 3."

Reaching Out trainees

5.13. Whilst most trainees were still completing their studies at the time of this research, at least one trainee commented that the training had **helped them to progress into a new job**. In addition, one volunteer progressed into a full-time IAG job. Nevertheless, for most trainees, finding a new job was not an immediate priority, as they were already employed full time.

Outcomes for trainees' organisations

5.14. One of the aspirations for the project was to increase the capacity of the voluntary sector in West London to deliver information, advice and guidance about learning and work. This section looks at the evidence of impact on the organisations that participated in Reaching Out.

5.15. The organisations that provided trainee beneficiaries for Reaching Out were typically small voluntary organisations relying on a small number of employed staff and volunteers. The project was therefore valued by the organisations as an opportunity to up-skill the members of staff. It was hoped that the trainees would be able to take on more responsibility within the organisation as a result of Reaching Out.

"I hoped that she would develop the skills required for the role of an adviser in the employability field. It would enable our team to work more efficiently to give her employment advice roles so she could support the organisation to achieve greater outputs."

Reaching Out trainee's manager

5.16. All managers saw an improvement in trainees' performance and were able to explain how this had made a positive impact on the organisation. Some examples include:

- Improvement in **relationships with clients** leading to lower drop-out rates, helping organisation meet its targets: "We had to see over 200 people to meet targets and have had a low drop-out rate from the first contact to pre-employment stage."
- Improved **recruitment to organisations' programmes** through better outreach, achieved through trusting the trainees to do more outreach work
- Better relationships with **partner organisations**: "It's vital to give quality service to our stakeholders – it looks good if we can offer better services [through more qualified staff]"
- Improved **internal procedures** helping the organisations to offer more professional

services – several trainees mentioned that they had made changes in the procedures within their organisation, e.g. gathering equal opportunities information, improvement in feedback policy

- **Cascading knowledge** to other members of staff: "our trainee is working with other instructors and is passing on what he has learnt to them in the way he now collects evidence."

5.17. The managers found that one element within the training model limited the impact on trainees and their organisations. Since the trainees could only meet the clients once in the employment support session, they did **not develop skills to offer follow-on support after action planning**.

"I'm not sure how valuable the work with clients was, because it was quite limited one-off contact with a client. A smaller number of clients with follow-on might have been more useful. At the moment, [the trainee] is largely at the action planning stage and [hasn't developed the skills to offer] options and solutions at different stages."

Reaching Out trainee's manager

5.18. On its own then, the organisations did not feel that the training was going to help them to acquire an additional fully trained adviser. However, all organisations found that the training had helped to put the trainee in a good position to advance further, found it valuable and would like to have more opportunities for similar training for other members of staff in future.

Employment support

Satisfaction with support received

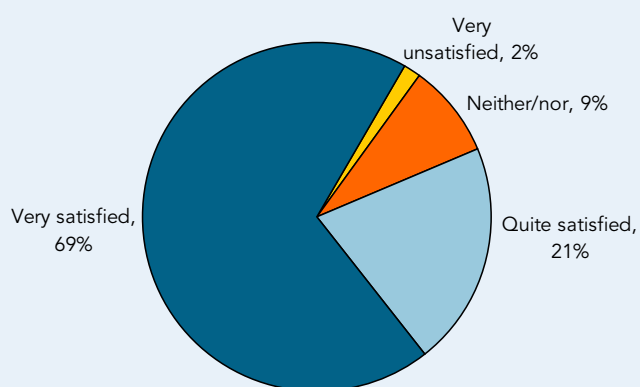
5.19. The telephone survey carried out among client beneficiaries suggests that support met beneficiaries' expectations. All respondents said that the adviser understood their needs with the vast majority (85%) saying their needs had been understood 'very well' with the remainder (15%) thinking that needs had been understood 'quite well'.

5.20. Indeed, some 93% said that they had been given all the advice and support they needed at

REACHING OUT FINAL EVALUATION

the time. In total, 90% of the respondents were satisfied with the service - the majority (69%) 'very' satisfied and 21% 'quite' satisfied. Just one respondent was dissatisfied.

How satisfied were you with the service?



5.21. Consequently, nearly all of the respondents – 98% - would recommend the service to others.

5.22. When asked how the service could be improved, the majority (66%) thought that no improvements were necessary and a further 16% did not know what to improve. From the remaining fifth of respondents, 6% (3 people) would have liked to have more follow-up support and another 6% suggested that more information should be given on other organisations. Two respondents suggested longer sessions and a further two that adviser took more notice of their needs.

Outcomes for client beneficiaries

5.23. The respondents were then asked what had changed as a result of advice received. Around **a quarter (15 respondents) had started a new course** or training and **10% (6 respondents) had found a new job**. One person had progressed in their current job. In total 36% of respondents reported at least one of the above outcomes.

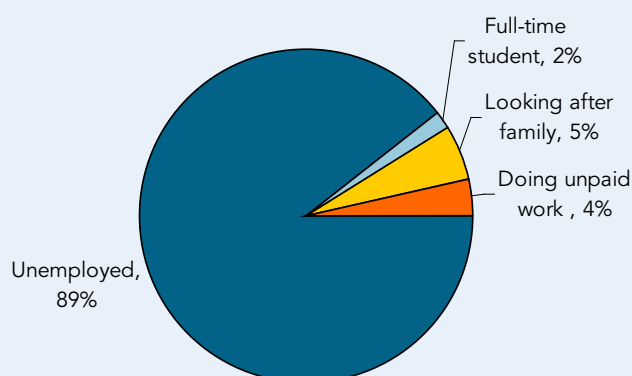
5.24. These respondents were further asked whether they would have achieved the outcome anyway, without the advice received. Among those, who had started a new course, some 27% (4 respondents) said that it would have happened anyway, but **53% (8 respondents) said it would**

'definitely' or 'probably' not have happened.

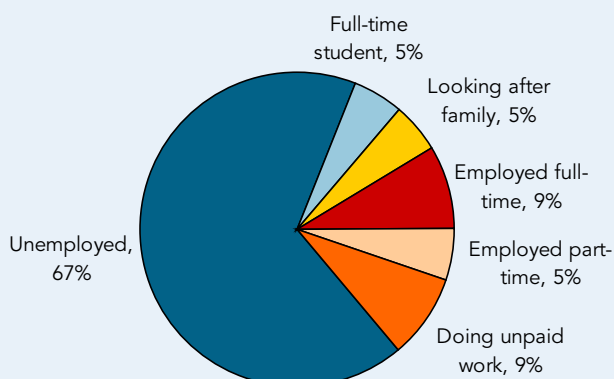
From those who had found a new job also the majority said that it would not have happened without the support (40% 'probably not' and 30% 'definitely not'). Just one person said that they would have probably found a job anyway.

5.25. When comparing respondents' employment status before receiving support and at the time of survey, **14% of previously unemployed respondents had moved into employment and a further 3% were in full-time education**. A further 5% were in unpaid work or volunteering. In total then the unemployment rate amongst the sample had fallen from 89% prior to receiving support to 67% at the time of the survey.

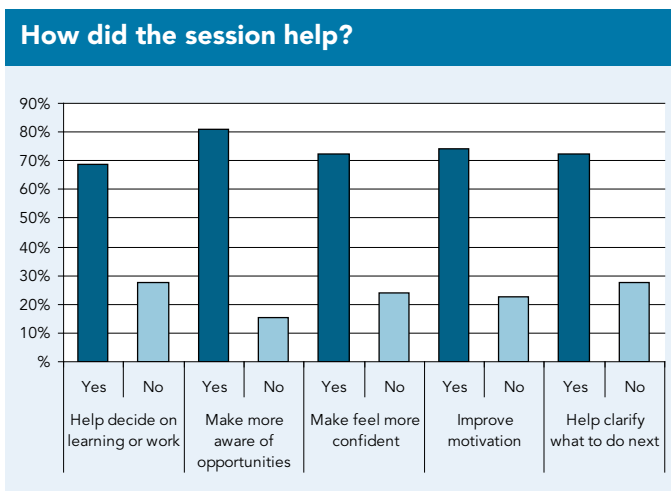
Employment status before receiving support



Employment status after receiving support



5.26. As most beneficiaries only received one advice session through Reaching Out, it is likely that there were other factors helping them to move into learning or work (for example, further advice received through other funding streams). Exploration of other, 'softer' outcomes through the survey showed that some 81% of beneficiaries had been made more aware of opportunities open to them and 72% said it helped them to clarify what they wanted to do next. Three quarters felt more motivated as a result of help received and 72% felt more confident. For 69% the advice helped them to make decisions about learning or work in future.



5.27. Around 46% of respondents had said that something had been making it difficult for them to go into learning or work. These respondents were then asked whether the support received helped them to overcome these difficulties. In total, 36% said that this had been the case, whilst 64% said it was not. Further analysis shows that of those who were not helped to overcome their difficulties, the majority (57%) had reported a disability as a barrier and a further 29% were respondents with ill health or depression.

5.28. Whilst most respondents felt more 'employable' as a result of help given, several commented that they were finding it difficult to find work in the present economic climate, even with the advice and support provided:

"I've done a course in Security Supervisor and have a CV. All I need now is a job, but it's hard to find anything at the moment."

Reaching Out client beneficiary

How effective was project management and delivery?

5.29. This section looks at the effectiveness of the project management and delivery of Reaching Out, focusing on how the project responded to the challenges of setting up a new innovative approach to training individuals and build the capacity of voluntary and community organisations to deliver information, advice and guidance about learning and work.

5.30. Overall, all consultees felt that the project had been **managed well and delivered effectively**. Nevertheless, as with most pilot projects, some challenges were faced in delivery and some aspects worked less well than others.

The project team

5.31. All consultees found the project team **accessible and responsive** and this was a strength that trainees found particularly helpful, which enabled them **to cope with the additional workload** that training gave on top of their full-time jobs. As the same Project Co-ordinator was in place for the duration of the project, there was continuity in project management and consultees also recognised this as a benefit.

5.32. While the team felt under some pressure to deliver and would have preferred to have more resources, in the view of other consultees the project was delivered efficiently and no gaps in resourcing were recognised. The structure of the team, including an in-house NVQ assessor, was thought to be appropriate and beneficial to the project.

"It was delivered very well and having a very good central team really helped. Bringing in the NVQ assessor in house was a good idea."

Stakeholder

REACHING OUT FINAL EVALUATION

- 5.33. Nevertheless, one problem the project faced was difficulties in recruitment to the team. Although funding was allocated for three years, the project was originally designed to run for just over two years (March 07-June 09). Difficulties in recruiting a Project Co-ordinator delayed the start of the project to September 2007. A further delay occurred recruiting the NVQ trainer, which meant that the training programme itself could not start until February 2008 when the trainer was in place.
- 5.34. The delays with recruitment put the project under pressure to make up for the lost time and the marketing of the project and the recruitment of trainees had to be done more quickly in a shorter space of time.

Support to project delivery partners

- 5.35. Project Co-ordinator worked closely with the **project delivery partners** to support their effective delivery and keep the overall performance on track.
- 5.36. The main challenge for the project delivery partners was to arrange coaching sessions, having to make arrangements that suited the trainee, the client and themselves. This proved difficult with cancellations occurring when any of the parties were unable to attend, meaning that the project delivery partners were unable to claim their outputs and meet targets. Project Co-ordinator worked with project delivery partners on a one-to-one basis and through the steering group meetings to find solutions to time management and attendance issues.
- 5.37. **Quarterly steering group meetings** were seen as useful, by helping the project delivery partners to share knowledge, discuss and overcome difficulties. For example, one provider introduced 'attendance' sheets to monitor trainees' attendance in coaching sessions. This was later introduced by all project delivery partners.
- 5.38. In order to keep the overall performance on track, the Project Co-ordinator redistributed output targets between partners, allocating a larger share to more active partners. Basic skills outputs also needed a rethink due to low level of interest in additional training from trainees. The Project Co-ordinator renegotiated a wider target group with the LDA, helping to ensure that the project delivered its targets.
- 5.39. Nevertheless, there were some difficulties in working with project delivery partners that the project tried to resolve over the course of delivery. For example, delays to the start of the project and a need to set up delivery mechanisms quickly resulted in some confusion over the expectations for trainees and coaching organisations at the start with both parties being unsure what the programme meant for them. This was helped with the development of a **learning agreement**, which set out the roles and responsibilities for the trainees.
- 5.40. There was also a level of uncertainty at the start around who would need to recruit trainees, with the original proposal suggesting that project delivery partners would find the candidates. In the event, the Project Co-ordinator took responsibility over the recruitment, receiving some help from project delivery partners in finding suitable organisations from which to recruit trainees.
- 5.41. Meanwhile, some project delivery partners had assumed that trainees would be able to provide client beneficiaries to receive employment support - but in practice, as employment support sessions were delivered at the coaches' organisations, it was up to project delivery partners themselves to recruit beneficiaries. Some project delivery partners felt that they were not adequately funded to carry out recruitment, organise sessions (ensuring that coach, trainee and beneficiary could all attend at the same time) and attend partnership meetings. Some project delivery partners did acknowledge the value of the level of support from the Project Co-ordinator in providing marketing materials and support in finding clients.

"We were initially successful at getting people, but then the numbers of clients slowed down. I contacted the Project Co-ordinator and she gave me fliers to take to Jobcentre Plus, which boosted the numbers again. Through this Reaching Out made the centre more popular and helped us meet our yearly targets."

Reaching Out project delivery partner

- 5.42. Some coaches would have liked further **support in coaching** and our other research also found that some guidelines in coaching would have been beneficial to ensure that all coaches followed similar standards.

Recruiting trainees

- 5.43. Recruiting eligible trainees was one of the biggest challenges faced by the project. A large number of interested individuals were **overqualified**, as according to its contract with the LDA, the project was only able to support people to achieve their first level 2 or level 3 qualification. The Project Co-ordinator spent a lot of time visiting candidate organisations, but finding few eligible candidates. Recruitment was later diversified by using other methods, such as adverts in local newspapers, which made the process less labour-intensive.

“We would not have had any difficulties in recruiting trainees [without the level 2/3 eligibility criteria]. I feel that the project would have benefited from more flexible criteria. People from different occupational backgrounds could offer valuable experience to the [IAG] profession.”

Reaching Out staff

- 5.44. Some consultees attributed the high drop out rate amongst trainees partly to the eligibility criteria, pointing out that those who had not yet received a first level 2 qualification were likely also to face other difficulties in learning or work - such as needing basic skills support, having difficulties with time management, etc. Coaches also mentioned time management and reliability issues amongst some trainees (with some problems occurring when trainees did not turn up for employment support sessions), although some trainees also experienced similar problems with their coaches.
- 5.45. It was also pointed out by some consultees that employers who would take on staff to deliver IAG would most often look for level 3 or 4 qualifications, and that therefore this would be a more appropriate qualification to offer. In the event, most trainees on the project were working towards NVQ level 3 or 4.

Drop out rate

- 5.46. As explained earlier, the project experienced a **high drop-out rate** amongst trainees. Our interviews with six trainees who had withdrawn from the project suggested that this was mostly caused by the level of commitment required from trainees on top of a full-time job. Several trainees dropped out when they went from volunteering into a full-time job. The **training commitment required employers’ support**, which with a change of jobs was not always there:

“When doing voluntary work it was easy for me. By the time I started to work, it was difficult to find time. When I started my new job I was on a probation period and I didn’t want to risk [jeopardising my new job].”

Reaching Out trainee, withdrawn from the project

- 5.47. Some more experienced trainees commented that the training programme was at a lower level than they had expected as even without a qualification they already had a lot of IAG practice.
- 5.48. One trainee, who had enrolled in an online IAG course after withdrawing from Reaching Out, commented that she had not found the project flexible enough to reflect the needs of its busy trainees, for example she would have liked the staff to email course materials when a session was missed, which she said would have encouraged her to continue.

Changes within the lead partner organisation (NALD)

- 5.49. Finally, some difficulties arose as result of the lead partner organisation Nord Anglia Lifetime Development (NALD) **relocating** from a West London location to Central London during the delivery of the project. This made participation for some trainees more difficult, as it required more time taken off work and for some trainees was the final factor that made them pull out.
- 5.50. Also, owing to structural changes within the organisation, there was little engagement with the LDA by existing senior staff within NALD when the Reaching Out team moved to Fleet Street from its previous Harrow office.

CASE STUDY

Yasmin, HAFAD

Hammersmith & Fulham Action on Disability (HAFAD) is a charity that provides advice and guidance to unemployed people with a range of mental and physical disabilities. At the time of the Reaching Out training, Yasmin was an administrator in the employment service, which supports clients into work.

Yasmin hoped that Reaching Out would help her to progress in her job and provide an opportunity to develop her skills. She had already taken on a more hands-on role of providing the first point of contact and assessment for employment support clients. In addition, her manager hoped that the NVQ level 3 qualification would give her more confidence and ultimately help her “compete in the job market”.

Yasmin was assigned to a coach from Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). She met with clients with a range of disabilities, not just sight impairment at the Ealing Centre for Independent Living. Sessions typically involved filling out an assessment form, discussing the clients’ employment aspirations, experience and skills.

Yasmin felt that Reaching Out met her expectations, and was useful both in helping to complete the NVQ level 3 qualification and in her day-to-day work. She found the trainer’s support really helpful and said the feedback helped her most in improving her skills of delivering IAG. She found that the long period of time between workshops was difficult without any support in between, but found that the trainer was easily reachable by phone and always happy to help.

The trainee’s manager found the project’s approach useful: “My impression was that it was well thought-out and could easily be integrated into somebody’s work.” However, he felt that the trainee could have gained more from the placement with RNIB through providing follow-on sessions in addition to action planning.

Both Yasmin and her manager felt that Reaching Out has had a noticeable impact on Yasmin’s IAG work. It had improved her confidence with clients and ability to put them at ease. Yasmin felt that the training had made her more aware that “different clients might have different needs”. She noted that some clients were “much more positive at the end of the session, that they know what they wanted to do next.” Her manager felt Yasmin had set a positive tone with the clients (numbering around 100) she had seen as part of a large employment contract, and this was reflected in a low drop out rate from first contact to the pre-employment stage.

Yasmin’s manager also felt that a project like Reaching Out is needed to train out more disabled advisers: “Disabled people are under-represented in this industry, as they are in most.”



STRATEGIC ADDED VALUE AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

What is strategic added value?

- 6.1. In this section we look at strategic added value (SAV) - the additional benefits of Reaching Out for those involved in delivering the project and others working to promote employment and training in West London.
- 6.2. SAV is defined broadly as “how Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) leverage funding and influenced partners’ and stakeholders’ behaviour, decisions and outcomes in ways that may not otherwise have occurred”.² Evaluations for RDAs usually explore five elements or ‘dimensions’ of SAV:
- **Strategic leadership:** articulating and communicating needs, opportunities and solutions to partners and stakeholders in the region
 - **Strategic influence:** influencing partners so that they commit to shared strategic objectives and behave and allocate their funds accordingly
 - **Leverage:** pulling in wider resources and support from partners
 - **Synergy:** improving information exchange, knowledge transfer, co-ordination and/or integration of design and delivery of interventions between partners
 - **Engagement:** setting up mechanisms and incentives for more effective engagement of stakeholders in the design and delivery of regional and sub-regional programmes

What types of SAV did Reaching Out generate?

- 6.3. Our evaluation found that Reaching Out generated some clear strategic added value around synergy and engagement.
- 6.4. There was less evidence of SAV generated through the LDA’s strategic leadership or influence. This is largely because the project was

funded as the result of an open tendering round, so the LDA itself was not involved in project development and there was less opportunity to generate these forms of SAV. Similarly, the project was not expected to lever in additional funding, although there is some evidence that it levered in additional resources, in terms of time spent on the project by delivery partners.

Synergy

- 6.5. One of the key benefits of the project that delivery partners and stakeholders in West London boroughs mentioned was the way in which Reaching Out produced “multiple benefits for all participants” (project delivery partner).
- 6.6. Consultees explained that the project benefited trainees individually, in raising their skills and confidence and giving them a qualification, and most saw this as the key aim of the project. The way in which the project was designed and delivered, though, also provided benefits for:
- clients, by giving them access to additional employment support
 - project delivery partners, by gaining new skills in coaching, and refreshing their own skills in IAG: “it makes advisers more aware of how they deliver sessions – when teaching others, you are also re-teaching yourself” (project delivery partner)
 - trainees’ organisations, by giving them capacity to deliver a new service to their clients
 - other stakeholder organisations - for example, Jobcentre Plus was able to refer clients to project delivery partners to receive employment support
- 6.7. The project also added considerable value by contributing to the aims of other organisations working in West London. For example:
- the project was designed to address gaps in provision and specific challenges, such as low usage of IAG services around learning

and work by some groups, that West London Working (WLW), the City Strategy Pathfinder in West London, had identified. Reaching Out objectives were aligned to those of WLW

- by targeting trainees without a first level 2 qualification, Reaching Out also contributed to WLW and LSC objectives as well as those of the LDA - although working with this target group also had drawbacks, as described in section 5. There is also evidence that several trainees have taken up further training after Reaching Out, or entered employment where they were not previously employed - this too contributes to WLW and LSC objectives.
- 6.8. There was also evidence that the LDA helped to support and build skills within the project team. For example, the Project Co-ordinator benefited from induction training provided by the LDA and capacity building support from GLE (as part of the Opportunities Fund) to set up monitoring systems that met the LDA's requirements. The contract manager relationship helped the project to stay focused on reaching its contractual targets and be innovative in finding ways to do this (for example, by changing marketing strategies to bring in more trainees, and by identifying client groups who could benefit from basic skills training, initially intended for, but not needed by, trainees).
- 6.9. Reaching Out's approach to training individuals in IAG was thought to be unique. No stakeholders knew of a similar local scheme. The employment support and IAG provided through the project was not, however, unique, and some project delivery partners mentioned complexities in managing multiple funding streams for similar IAG services but with slightly different eligibility criteria. One borough stakeholder mentioned some overlap between Reaching Out and the LSC's Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities programme, which also aimed to recruit voluntary sector staff to a training programme, and described how it was necessary to get teams to work together to make sure they were not duplicating each other's work.

Engagement

- 6.10. Reaching Out promoted engagement in several ways, including:
- In developing the project bid, Nord Anglia Lifetime Development consulted West London Working as well as project delivery partners. Borough partners were involved in setting up the project, with engagement strongest in Harrow and Hounslow
 - The project set up quarterly steering group meetings involving project delivery partners, offering them an opportunity to network. While not all partners attended (as no funding was available to cover staff time for these), those that did found that these helped to build awareness of each other's services
- 6.11. The LDA contract manager reported to West London Working on the project's progress and supplied information to enable WLW to update their website. Nevertheless, there was not much direct partnership working with West London Working during the delivery phase of the project, even though this might have been beneficial. There was some joint working with West London boroughs, although this too tended to be limited to the early stages of the project.

Cross-cutting themes

- 6.12. The project also contributed to the LDA's cross-cutting themes of equalities and health. There was little evidence of any contribution to promoting community safety or environmental sustainability - and these themes were less relevant for Reaching Out.

Equalities

- 6.13. As noted in chapter 3, Reaching Out achieved its targets for engaging BAME groups, women and people with disabilities in employment support. The choice of project delivery partners helped to make sure these targets were met: project delivery partners included voluntary organisations and training companies with good

² Evaluating the Impact of England's Regional Development Agencies, DTI, 2006

track records in providing IAG to BAME groups; some were specialist organisations working only BAME communities, such as Refugees into Jobs. Some other organisations (e.g. HAD, YWCA) specialised in working with women or people with disabilities.

- 6.14. In preparing marketing material for Reaching Out, the co-ordinator was also careful to make sure that the images used reinforced the target groups.
- 6.15. The majority of the trainees were also from the equalities groups: from the 22 trainees that completed the training, 18 were women, 17 were BAME and 3 had a disability.
- 6.16. One of the project's aims was to fill gaps in provision identified by West London Working, including a lack of provision for lone parents and people living in low income households with a single earner, and to reach people who previously would not have known about IAG or not have felt comfortable accessing services.
- 6.17. It is not clear how far Reaching Out was able to engage these groups. Project delivery partners, which were organisations that already offered IAG to groups disadvantaged in the labour market, stated that on the whole they reached their usual target groups through the project, although some had to do outreach to reach the required numbers of women or people with disabilities. Our beneficiary survey showed that most people who had received employment support through Reaching Out were referred through Jobcentre Plus - which means that they were at least in contact with mainstream employment services previously.
- 6.18. Nevertheless, as the trainees are now in a better position to deliver IAG to their own organisations' beneficiaries - and most of these organisations did not previously offer IAG about learning or work - it is likely that in future new groups of beneficiaries will be reached as a result of the project.

Health

- 6.19. Reaching Out contributed to this cross cutting theme primarily through working with disability organisations including Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD) and Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB) and Hammersmith and Fulham Action on Disability (HAFAD). 24% of the employment support beneficiaries that we interviewed (14 beneficiaries) stated that they had a long term disability or illness that limited their daily activity.
- 6.20. It is likely that those who found that ill health was affecting their progression in learning or work would need more than one employment support session to fully address this barrier. Indeed, of five survey respondents who cited ill health, depression or other mental illness as a specific barrier for them, only one thought that the support they received had addressed this. Nevertheless, the survey found that IAG helped to improve confidence and motivation amongst three quarters of beneficiaries, and helped 36% into training or employment by the time the survey was carried out. In the longer term, these outcomes may also help to improve health.

CASE STUDY

Irma, United Anglo Caribbean Society

United Anglo Caribbean Society (UACS) runs a number of programmes for African Caribbean people in Ealing, including a supported housing scheme, advice to homeless people and programmes for the elderly. Irma is a project manager for the supported housing scheme for young people and has been with the charity for six years.

Irma heard about the training programme through UACS's chair who had been approached by Project Co-ordinator directly. Whilst she had been in various adviser roles for over 20 years, she did not have a formal qualification and had never been trained in IAG.

Irma found the training overall very useful. Although she already knew a lot about the issues of IAG, she learnt how to apply this information in her daily work. She explained that UACS as a charity is 'less formal' in how it works with clients and the training has helped her to apply legislation more carefully. She found her coach organisation – Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) – a 'good match' as she was dealing with clients of similar background daily in her work at UACS. At YWCA Irma held group sessions to give education and training advice to young women. Because she had already a lot of experience in advice and guidance, she started to deliver sessions straight away without observation sessions.

Although Irma had already a lot of experience, she felt that she needed support to write it down for the portfolio to provide evidence for the NVQ qualification. She found that the trainer was helpful in giving useful prompts. The only drawback for Irma was the pressure of balancing a full-time job with the training and she found it especially difficult after the training venue was changed to Central London. However, her organisation was supportive and she got enough time off work to complete the course.

As a result of the training, Irma has updated UACS's confidentiality policy and is more systematic about the paperwork. Although she did not feel that she had to change anything in the way she advised clients, she felt that the qualification has helped her in her personal development and has, ultimately, improved her career prospects.

"I hope that they run the programme again, I'd like to recommend colleagues to do the course too."

7 CONCLUSIONS

Performance against contracted requirements

- 7.1. Reaching Out had achieved or exceeded four of its six contracted targets, as the Table 6 shows.

How far has the project met its objectives?

- 7.2. Overall, Reaching Out met its objectives.
- 7.3. Outcomes for training organisations described in chapter 5 show clearly that Reaching Out was **successful in achieving its objective of building capacity within voluntary organisations** in West London to deliver IAG about learning and work. The four trainees' managers consulted could all point to ways in which organisational performance had been improved as a result of the trainees' new learning and confidence. Given that the project offered few opportunities for trainees to learn how to provide follow up support to beneficiaries, managers felt that trainees still had more to learn - nevertheless, Reaching Out had put them in a good position to advance further and most were considering continuing their learning.
- 7.4. Reaching Out also **aimed to provide IAG to groups in West London that previously found it difficult to access IAG** or did not know that IAG

was available. It is difficult to know how far this objective was met during the project's lifetime. Project delivery partners were responsible for engaging with client beneficiaries and stated that, on the whole, the beneficiaries they engaged for Reaching Out were similar to those who accessed their other IAG services, so it was unlikely that 'new groups' were being reached. The survey of client beneficiaries also found that the vast majority had been referred to Reaching Out by Jobcentre Plus - so this group was at least in contact with mainstream employment services already.

- 7.5. So while the client beneficiaries were suffering exclusion from the labour market and faced barriers to entering learning or work, it is not clear that they were from groups that were previously under-served by IAG provision. Nevertheless, as trainees start to deliver more IAG from the base of their organisations, it is **likely that new groups of beneficiaries will be reached in the future**, as a result of Reaching Out.
- 7.6. It was intended that the trainee beneficiaries would be from the target groups themselves. The monitoring information suggests that the majority of the trainees were indeed from ethnic minority backgrounds and women, so the project has been successful in reaching the equalities groups. Whilst the majority were employed at the time of their traineeship, our research found

Table 6: Performance against contracted requirements

	Contracted target	Recorded outputs	Comments
Employment support	600	733	Contracted target exceeded.
Skills (Basic)	20	23	Contracted target achieved. Support originally intended to be taken up by trainees, but owing to low demand this support was offered to a wider group of West London residents instead, and delivered through Acton Community Learning.
Skills (level 2)	10	2	Contracted target not achieved owing to a high dropout rate and a shortage of eligible candidates.
Skills (level 3)	20	14	Contracted target not achieved owing to a shortage of eligible candidates.
Skills (Other)	33	44	Contracted target achieved. Support taken up as intended by trainees.
Skills for Life	20	22	Contracted target achieved. Support originally intended to be taken up by trainees, but owing to low demand this support was offered to a wider group of West London residents instead, and delivered through Acton Community Learning.

that many had progressed into paid employment from volunteering for the same organisation, indicating that they had experienced a period of unemployment previously.

- 7.7. There is evidence to suggest that the **project improved joined up working between Jobcentre Plus and project delivery partners**. As stated, most beneficiaries surveyed had been referred to the project by Jobcentre Plus, and project delivery partners stated that they had to build their links with Jobcentre Plus in order to reach their output targets. There was little ongoing engagement with other statutory partners during most of the project, although boroughs and West London working were kept informed of the project's progress.

Key findings

How effective was training?

- 7.8. Overall, our research suggests that the training programme has been effective. The training programme reached the intended candidates – employees and volunteers from voluntary sector advocacy, advice and support organisations working with vulnerable groups.
- 7.9. The training enhanced the trainee beneficiaries' knowledge of areas of IAG, including legal aspects, data protection and recording requirements, which has helped them and their organisation to deliver IAG more professionally. As a result of the training, the candidates have learnt to manage their relationships with clients more effectively through better time management and boundary setting, and more attention paid to clients' needs.
- 7.10. With the opportunity to choose modules that best suited their own background, the trainees could tailor the programme to their own and their organisations' needs. The managers for the participating voluntary organisations have noticed the difference in better client relationships leading to lower drop-out rates, improved recruitment, and better relationships with partner organisations.

- 7.11. Whilst it is too early to gather evidence on the extent to which this has helped the trainees to improve their career prospects, the training has boosted their confidence and made them feel more employable. For some trainees Reaching Out gave a renewed interest in professional development and they intend to continue this through further training.
- 7.12. On its own Reaching Out may not have been sufficient to progress trainees into a fully qualified IAG adviser role, particularly where qualifications were gained at level 2. Its real value for the trainees has been in introducing them back into learning, boosting their confidence and enabling them to get a qualification whilst working (or volunteering) full-time. As such it has been a valued programme for both the trainees and their organisations, which both felt filled a gap in the market.

How effective was employment support?

- 7.13. Providing employment support to West London residents was a secondary aim for the project. However, since the project did see over 700 client beneficiaries and the project delivery partners were funded essentially to produce the employment support outputs, the evaluation looked at the effectiveness of this support.
- 7.14. Our research found that the project delivery partners succeeded in reaching the unemployed target group with 90% being unemployed at the time advice was given, 40% having been unemployed for more than two years. A high number of clients were referred to the service either by Jobcentre Plus or another organisation, suggesting that the project was recognised as an addition rather than a duplication of mainstream services.
- 7.15. Our research showed very high levels of satisfaction with the support received (90%). A quarter had moved into learning or training and 10% had found a job since as a direct result of the advice given. Whilst the clients did feel more employable and confident through an improved CV or awareness of opportunities, this had not led to a job (yet) for the majority of clients.

This was at least partly caused by the increased competition for jobs in the labour market.

- 7.16. Reaching Out only paid the project delivery partners to provide one advice session to client beneficiaries. The delivery partners commented that there was a limit to what a one-off session could give to a client. It is widely recognised that long-term unemployed people with multiple barriers need ongoing support, which delivery partners were unable to provide – at least as part of Reaching Out. Where possible the project delivery partners regularly signposted clients to their other employment support programmes, but not all project delivery partners had this opportunity.
- 7.17. It is therefore difficult to assess the extent to which the survey results reflect the impact of Reaching Out in isolation of further support provided to clients through other funding streams.

Learning from Reaching Out

What were the key strengths of the project?

- 7.18. Our research suggests that the key strengths of the project were:
- **Strong outreach focus in recruiting trainees:** making direct contact and visits to voluntary sector organisations, the project recruited trainees, who would not have gone into training otherwise
 - **High-quality and practical training workshops,** which trainees valued and enjoyed. In the words of one trainee, the “programme was successful because it was designed by people who have already trained in this sector and understand the requirements”
 - **Supportive staff** that provided ongoing assistance to trainees who had to balance a full-time job with what was seen as a demanding training programme. In addition, the Project Co-ordinator’s and trainer’s visits to trainees’ organisations helped to get

managers’ support for the project. Without this, the drop-out rates would have been higher than the project currently experienced

- **‘Hands-on’ project management** – required to keep the project on track after a slow start and overcoming a number of challenges in recruitment and co-ordination of trainees, managing a high number of relationships between coaches and trainees
- **Linking trainees with coaches working with similar target groups:** trainees cited this as important in making the coaching relationship work

What were the key weaknesses?

- 7.19. Our research found that the following elements had an impact on the success of the project, and that might usefully be addressed if a similar project was to be set up in future:
- **No support was given to project delivery partners in providing coaching** – whilst being experts in IAG, the project delivery partners were new to coaching. The quality of coaching varied and clearer instructions to project delivery partners on coaching would have resulted in a more consistent quality.
 - **Employment support beneficiaries were only offered ‘one-off’ sessions** – this limited both the scope of training for the trainees and the level of support given to the client beneficiaries. Introducing follow-on sessions to the coaching element would have improved results for both parties.
 - **It proved difficult to deliver NVQ qualifications within a two-year period** – with a delay at the start, the project had little time for development and delivery of results. This too reduced the number of trainees potentially trained; some trainees were ‘fast tracked’ in the second year to boost the numbers, but this put the pressure on coaches and trainees.
 - **A large amount of administration was needed to co-ordinate advice sessions** between trainees, coaches and beneficiaries, and especially given the travel time needed,

this was a problem for some project participants.

- **Limiting recruitment to trainees without a first level 2 or level 3 qualification** prevented candidates who otherwise would have really benefited from the project from taking part, and made recruitment far more time consuming for the Project Co-ordinator. Stakeholders and trainees agreed that to be able to compete in the labour market (outside of their present organisation), even a level 3 qualification may not be sufficient as employers are expecting the minimum of level 4 from IAG advisers. Targeting the training at those without a first level 2 qualification was also cited as a reason for high levels of drop out by some consultees. Further, while the level 2 skills target was set for the project by the LDA, it was not crucial to the project's objectives. Reaching Out aimed to build capacity of voluntary organisations to deliver IAG, and was not at its heart an intervention designed to address the level 2 skills target. Overall, therefore, this did not seem an appropriate output target for the project - although where trainees at this level were engaged, this added value by helping low qualified individuals to improve their skills and formalise their experience.

Informing future approaches

7.20. The evaluation suggests that **Reaching Out's model of delivery was effective in building the capacity of voluntary organisations** to deliver information, advice and guidance about learning and work. As in West London no similar funded provision is available from other sources, the model could be usefully replicated if funding permitted, and it might be beneficial for West London Working to consider whether a similar project could be continued in future. In addition to the learning points listed above, the evaluation suggests that future projects of similar type would also do well to bear in mind:

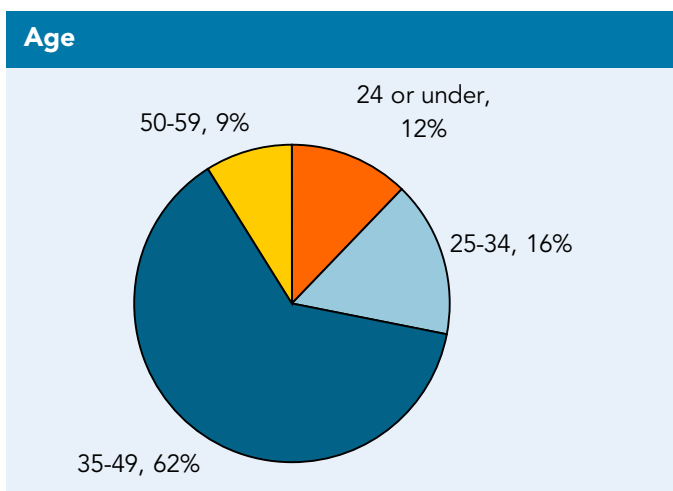
- **the length of time** it takes to set up a project with multiple project delivery partners and complex delivery methods. It would have been beneficial to plan for three-year delivery as the original project budget suggested.
- **the level of commitment and time required** from trainees, their organisations and project delivery partners. Reaching Out's experience showed that it is important to set clear expectations at the start and agree each person's role. Trainees might benefit from more induction/taster sessions to check that the course is for them, and to reduce drop out. Similarly, it is important to have buy-in from trainees' organisations, and while recruitment by outreach was time consuming for the coordinator, this method seemed effective in securing commitment from trainees' organisations.

8

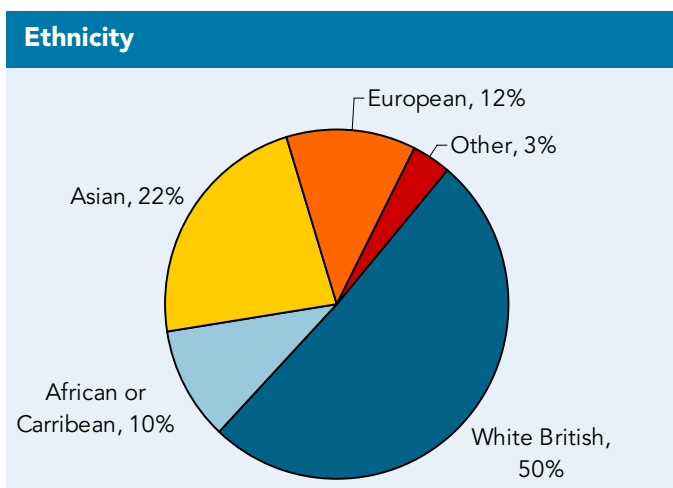
APPENDIX A: SURVEY RESULTS

8.1. This appendix gives further details on the results of the survey carried out among Reaching Out client beneficiaries. The majority of the feedback was collected through a telephone survey with 50 client beneficiaries. In addition the survey was sent out by post by three project delivery partners to a selection of their beneficiaries. Eight extra responses were returned from this cohort.

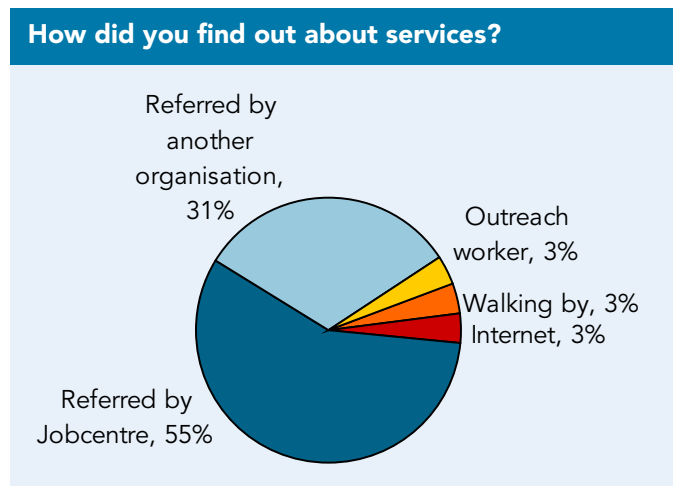
8.2. The largest proportion of client beneficiaries were aged 35-49 – 62%; 28% were younger than that, and 9% older.



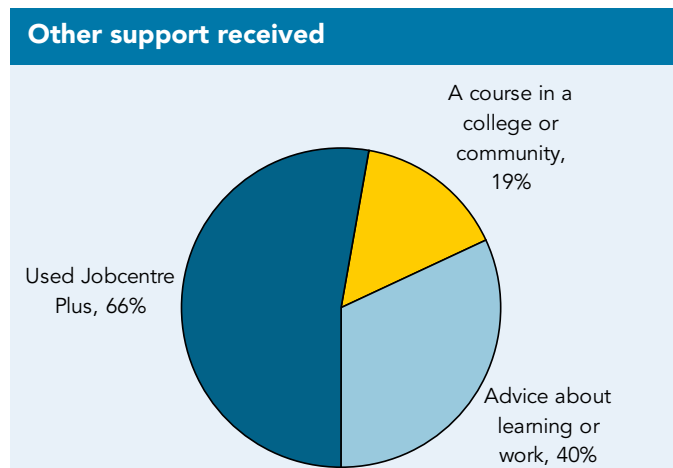
8.3. Around a half of respondents were from White British background. The largest ethnic minority group was Asian, followed by European (including Irish) and Black African or Caribbean.



8.4. The majority of client beneficiaries were referred – by Jobcentre or another organisation. Other ways of finding out about the services counted for just 9% of the sample.

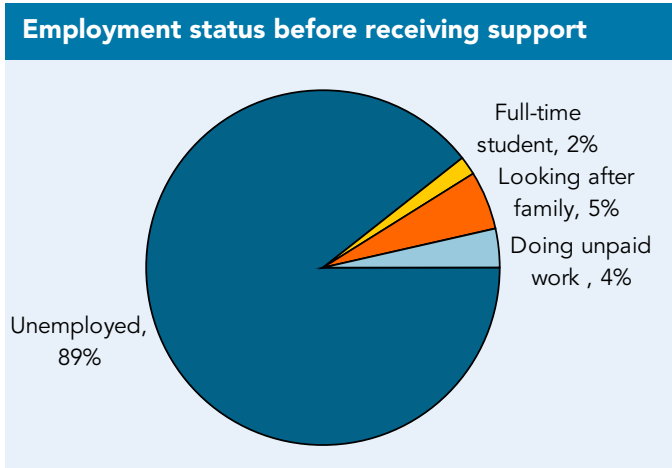


8.5. Consequently, 66% of client beneficiaries had previously accessed Jobcentre plus services and 40% had received employment support from another organisation. Just a fifth had previously been to a course.

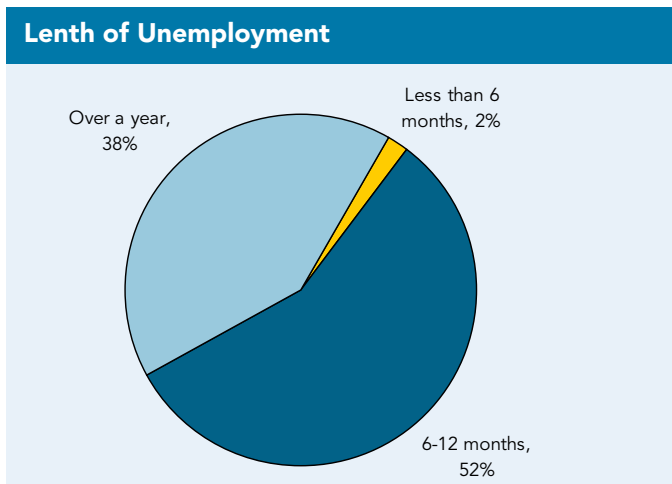


REACHING OUT FINAL EVALUATION

8.6. A large majority of beneficiaries had been unemployed before accessing the support from Reaching Out – 89%.



8.7. The majority of the unemployed client beneficiaries had been out of work for longer than six months – over a half had been unemployed between six months and a year.



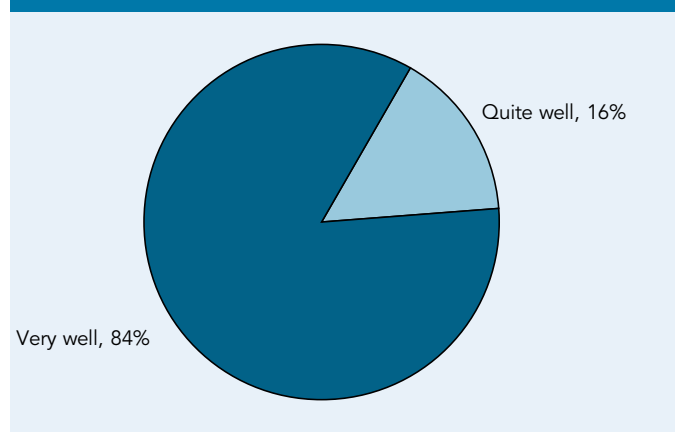
8.8. Disability and ill health were barriers most often mentioned by client beneficiaries – 10 out of 58 respondents said that a disability was making it difficult for them to get back to work or learning.

Table 7: Difficulties faced when going back to work

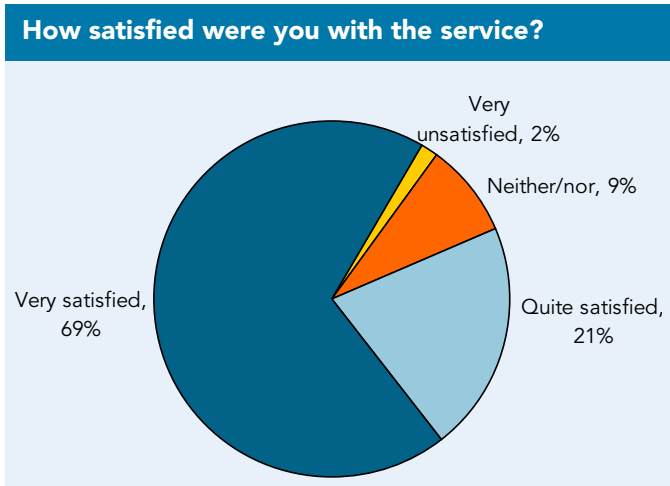
	Count	%
Disability	10	17.2%
Ill health, depression or mental illness	5	8.6%
Speaking English	4	6.9%
Out of job market a long time	4	6.9%
Childcare	3	5.2%
Low/outdated skills	2	3.4%
Cost of training/study	2	3.4%
Lack of confidence	2	3.4%
Age	2	3.4%
Problems with maths or reading	1	1.7%

8.9. All respondents said that the adviser had understood their needs and 84% thought the adviser did it very well. No one thought that the adviser did not understand their needs.

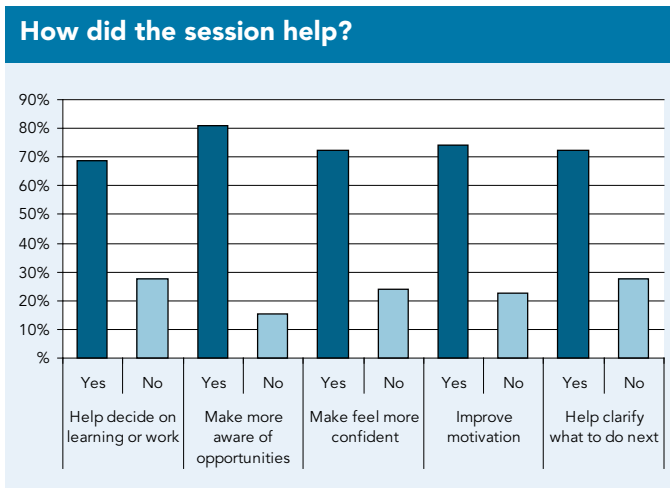
How well the adviser understood the needs



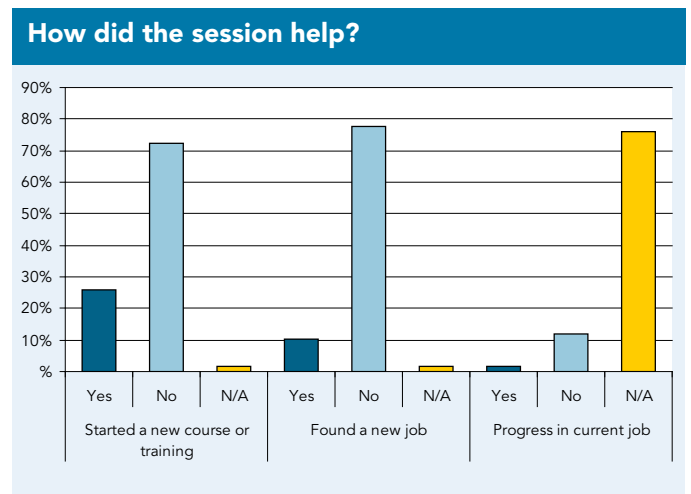
8.10. Consequently most client beneficiaries were satisfied with the session and 69% were very satisfied.



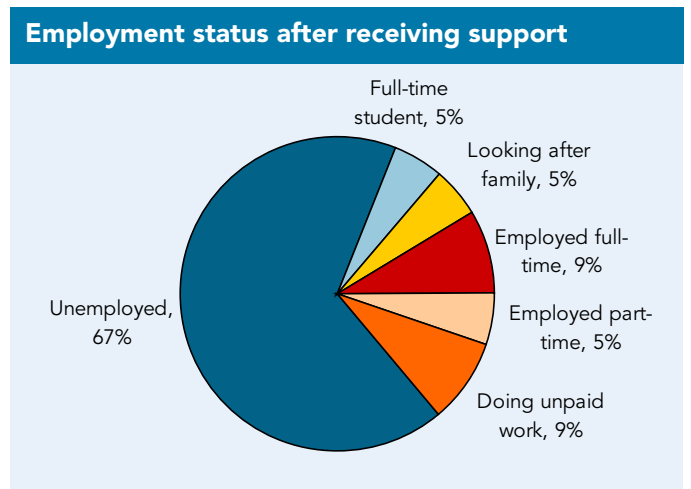
8.11. The project helped to move clients back towards the labour market through increased awareness of opportunities, improved motivation and having a better idea of what to do next – more than 70% of client beneficiaries said that they achieved these outcomes from the session.



8.12. However, the session did not help the majority of client beneficiaries back to learning or work straight away - around 26% said that they had since started a new course or training and 10% had found a new job.



8.13. When comparing the unemployment status before receiving advice and at the time of the survey, 14% of respondents had moved back to work. There were also some more people doing volunteering.





APPENDIX B: PARTICIPATING VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

R

9.1. The trainees came from the following West London voluntary organisations:

- United Anglo Caribbean Society
- Arabic Centre for Career Development
- Shaw Trust
- Princes Trust
- The Marlborough Centre
- deafplus'
- Shabab Al Mehdi
- Bosnia & Herzegovina Advice Centre
- Arabic Centre for Career Development
- Hammersmith & Fulham Volunteer Development Agency
- TASHA Foundation
- Gingerbread
- Catalyst Communities
- HAFAD Hammersmith & Fulham Action on Disability
- Zimbabwe Women's Network UK
- Princes Trust
- Carers Support Harrow
- A4E New Deal Mentoring
- Samaritans
- Homestart Hounslow
- P3s Kilburn Youth Centre
- London Refugee Voice

10

APPENDIX C: LDA OUTPUT DEFINITIONS

Definitions of outputs (Source: LDA Project Outputs handbook)

10.1. The following definitions were in operation from April 2005.

2. *Employment support – Number of people assisted to get a job*

10.2. This indicator focuses on people of working age who are resident in the region who are unemployed or economically inactive or in employment at risk who are assisted to get a job as a direct result of LDA activities.

- **Working age** is classified as between 16-59 (Women) and 16-64 (Males).
- **Unemployed** is classified as people who are out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last 4 weeks, and are ready to start in the next 2 weeks or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next 2 weeks.
- **Economically inactive** is defined as those who are either not looking for, or not available for work e.g. looking after the family and home, students and those who are long-term sick or disabled.
- **Employment at risk** is defined as those in paid employment but at risk of losing their job i.e. have received a statutory redundancy notification
- **Assistance** must be directed to assisting people towards getting a job and so will involve some form of interaction with individuals. These may be face-to-face or telephone consultations, conferences or workshops, and interactive/web based dialogue (but not including electronic or hard copy mail-shots). Forms of assistance include.
 - Provision of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) e.g. careers advice, CV writing, interview training
 - Removing barriers to getting back into the labour market e.g. return to work training, using crèche facilities
 - Advice on how to start own business

10.4. It is legitimate to include a person assisted in getting a job even where the latter is a construction job, seasonal or in the voluntary sector as long as it is subject to an employment agreement (which may not include payment)

6. *Skills (Basic) – Number of adults gaining basic skills as part of the Skills for Life Strategy that count towards the Skills PSA Target*

10.5. This indicator focuses on the number of adults who have gained a basic skills qualification as part of the Skills for Life Strategy that count towards the Skills PSA Target as a direct result of LDA activity.

- Adults for the purpose of this indicator is anyone aged 16 and over resident in the region.

10.6. Assistance must be a minimum of 6 hours training (or as advised by the Agency's designated project manager), either contiguous or as a number of sessions for the same individual.

10.7. To be counted individuals must achieve one of the following qualifications.

- Literacy, Numeracy or ESOL at Entry Level 3 and above
- Key Skills in Application of Number or Communication at Levels 1 or 2
- GCSE in Maths or English at Grade G and above

10.8. **Funded activities** must be consistent with the national Skills for Life Strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills e.g. on priority groups, a full report can be found on the DfES website using the following link: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus/bank/ABS_strategy_doc_w6_version.doc

10.9. **Counted:** This output is counted when the adult has achieved one of the above qualifications.

6(a) Skills (Level 2) – Number of adults in the workforce who lack a full Level 2 or equivalent qualification who are supported in achieving at least a full Level 2 qualification or equivalent

10.10. This indicator focuses on the number of adults who achieve at least a full Level 2 qualification or equivalent as a direct result of LDA support.

- **Adults in the Workforce** are for the purposes of this indicator aged between 18-59 (Female) and 18-64 (Male) who are resident in the region and are economically active (i.e. in employment or unemployed)
- **Economically Active** is defined as those in paid work (employee or self-employed and those temporarily away from the job e.g. maternity/paternity leave), out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last 4 weeks, and are ready to start in the next two weeks, or out of work and have found a job, which is due to start in the next two weeks.
- **Unemployed** is defined as those out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks, and are ready to start in the next fortnight or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next fortnight.
- **Assistance** must be a minimum of six hours training (or as advised by the Agency's designated project manager), either contiguous or as a number of sessions for the same individual.
- **Qualification** required is a main Level 2 qualification which include:
 - NVQ Level 2
 - One A Level or equivalent
 - GNVQ intermediate
 - RSA diploma
 - BTEC first or general diploma
 - 5 or more O level, GCSE grade A-C or equivalent

10.11. For information and advice on other qualifications that may be counted as Level 2 equivalents consult the Learning Skills Council.

10.12. **Counted:** This output is counted when an individual adult (as defined above) who lacked a Level 2 qualification gains a qualification at:

- Level 2 or equivalent or
- A higher qualification e.g. Level 3 or 4 (see notes for Skills Level 3 link)

6(b). Skills (Other) - Number of people assisted with their skills development as a result of LDA programmes

10.13. This indicator focuses on the number of people who have received assistance in any other skills development as a direct result of attending an LDA funded programme to improve the regional skills base.

- **People** can be of any age and may be in employment, unemployed or economically inactive.
- **Economically active** is defined as those in paid work (employee or self-employed and those temporarily away from the job e.g. maternity/paternity leave), out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks, and are ready to start in the next two weeks, or out of work and have found a job, which is due to start in the next two weeks.
- **Unemployed** is defined as those out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks, and are ready to start in the next fortnight or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next fortnight
- **Economically inactive** is defined as those who are either not looking for, or not available for work e.g. looking after the family and home, students and those who are long-term sick or disabled.
- **Assistance** must be a minimum of six hours training (or as advised by the Agency's designated project manager), either

contiguous or as a number of sessions for the same individual.

- General (management, IT) or vocational/job specific (marketing, engineering) training
- Out of school clubs
- Provision of equipment and materials to support direct skills development.

10.14. **Counted:** The output is counted when an individual has received a minimum of the prescribed hours of skills training

Skills (Level 3) - Number of adults in the workforce who lack a full Level 3 or equivalent qualification who are supported in achieving at least a full Level 3 qualification or equivalent

10.15. This indicator focuses on the number of adults who achieve at least a full Level 3 qualification or equivalent as a direct result of LDA support.

- **Adults in the workforce** are for the purposes of this indicator aged between 18-59 (Female) and 18-64 (Male) who are resident in the region and are economically active (i.e. in employment or un-employed).
- **Economically active** is defined as those in paid work (employee or self-employed and those temporarily away from the job e.g. maternity/paternity leave), out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last 4 weeks, and are ready to start in the next 2

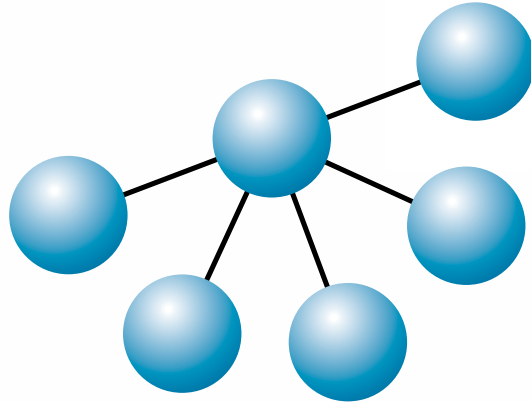
weeks, or out of work and have found a job, which is due to start in the next 2 weeks.

- **Unemployed** is defined as those out of work, want a job, have actively sought work in the last 4 weeks, and are ready to start in the next fortnight or out of work and have accepted a job that they are waiting to start in the next fortnight.
- **Assistance** must be a minimum of 6 hours training, either contiguous or as a number of sessions for the same individual.
- **Qualification** required is a main Level 3 qualification which include:
 - NVQ Level 3
 - One A Level or equivalent
 - GNVQ intermediate
 - RSA diploma
 - BTEC first or general diploma

10.16. For information and advice on other qualifications that may be counted as Level 3 equivalents consult the Learning Skills Council.

10.17. **Counted:** This output is counted when an individual adult (as defined above) who lacked a Level 3 qualification gains a qualification at:

- Level 3 or equivalent or
- A higher qualification e.g. Level 4 or 5



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