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# ETHNIC PERSPECTIVES IN POLICY

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## Part Three: Guidelines

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## Introduction to Ethnic Perspectives Guidelines

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“Ethnic Perspectives in Policy” described in Part 1 identifies the Government’s objectives and desired outcomes for the ethnic sector; and the roles, policy values and outcomes to develop public policies and services for the ethnic sector.

These guidelines have been developed by the Office of Ethnic Affairs to help agencies working with or for ethnic people, or whose work has a significant impact on ethnic people, to identify factors that are likely to be important in that process.

The guidelines are a resource to be used to identify and respond to ethnic peoples’ perspectives on policies and services. The guidelines will help agencies to identify, plan and evaluate policy and services that are appropriate for the ethnic sector.

Initially three guidelines have been developed. They are:

- **policy guidelines**, which pose questions that will help to clarify and identify interrelated issues effecting ethnic people
- **consultation guidelines**, which provide information about engaging with ethnic communities
- **ethnic responsiveness guidelines**, which provide a set of self-help standards to enable any agency to review its operations and services to determine how well it is responding to ethnic communities.

While these guidelines have been developed primarily as a resource for departments, people working in other areas may also find these resources useful to inform their work with ethnic people.

The Office of Ethnic Affairs is available to advise on the application of the guidelines and the ethnic perspectives approach to policy and service development.

Feedback on these guidelines is welcome, and they may be refined over time to reflect this.

Other guidelines may also be developed where substantive needs are identified.

Guidelines can also be viewed on the Office of Ethnic Affairs website:

[www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz](http://www.ethnicaffairs.govt.nz)



# Ethnic Perspectives: Policy Guidelines

## Introduction

These guidelines are intended to assist people familiar with the policy development process, by identifying those factors that are important in identifying ethnic perspectives. The depth of analysis is dependent on the impact of the issue, and will be affected by time and resource constraints.

The Office of Ethnic Affairs has followed a similar approach to that used by other population-based agencies such as the Pacific analysis framework developed by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs or the gender analysis framework developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs (and other similar population-based initiatives such as the youth development strategy). The Ethnic Perspectives approach described in Part One fits comfortably beside these other frameworks.

**Figure 1: The Policy Analysis Cycle**

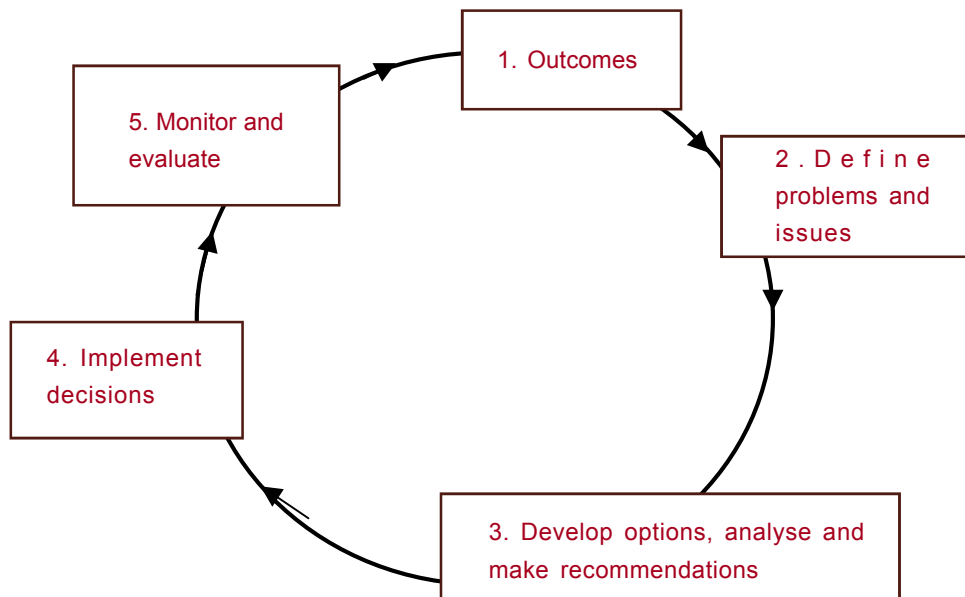


Figure 1 gives a simple representation of the policy analysis cycle. This is often a dynamic process e.g., there may be consultation with the ethnic community at different phases of the process, and monitoring and evaluation of, so applies to service delivery. Consultation and self-evaluation components are described in more detail in the following guidelines.

Policy analysts should ask specific questions about ethnic issues at each step of the policy analysis cycle i.e. when defining desired outcomes, identifying problems and issues, developing and analysing options leading to recommendations, implementing decisions; and monitoring and evaluating results. Doing this ensures that ethnic issues are identified and fed into the policy process.

Policy advice needs to identify the effect of current policies, the intended outcomes, the risk that these may not be achieved (and of unintended outcomes), and how it will be known if the policy intervention has succeeded.

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## Stage One: Outcomes

### Identifying outcomes

What are the intended outcomes for the ethnic sector? What data or research is available to throw more light on the problem or issue?

Do you need to consult with ethnic communities at this stage to clarify issues that may be applicable to mainstream services, or to help scope the nature of the problem? (If yes, check the Consultation Guidelines that follow).

### Assessing the impact

Have you evaluated the impacts of policies? What outcomes have been achieved? How do these compare with the intended outcomes for the ethnic sector?

Do you know if other government or non-government agencies have policies, programmes or services which may affect the desired outcome? Is this an area that would benefit from greater coordination or collaboration amongst agencies? If so, how can this be achieved?

Contact the Office of Ethnic Affairs if you are not sure about:

- government's outcomes for the ethnic sector
- how your policy/service might further these
- or what other government agencies are doing.

## Stage Two: Identify problems and issues

### Diversity

Just as there are a great number of different countries of origin, there is often ethnic diversity within each country, e.g., there may be different factions, tribes or religions. It is important you check for and acknowledge these differences. Do not assume that the sector, or parts of it, is homogeneous. Similarly it is important you acknowledge diversity due to geographic location and length / status of residence.

What are the critical ways in which the ethnic sector's needs / experiences differ from the rest of the New Zealand population? Are the underlying causes of difference related to:

- information/services prior to and on arrival in New Zealand
- settlement policies and services
- different cultural or religious needs
- different needs of specific groups such as women, children, teenagers, or older people
- language and communication: are interpreters or translations needed
- special needs of refugees
- specific views e.g. approaches to health/healing and well-being
- social or economic exclusion within the host country

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- some other factor?

Is there diversity within the group? e.g.

- ethnic communities or ethnic groups within a community (e.g. tribes or factions). What are the main groups?
- New Zealand-born generations and those who have come from overseas
- migrants who are well settled / established and new settlers
- groups who have settled in different parts of New Zealand?

Are there any groups within each ethnic community who are likely to be at risk or have special needs, e.g. refugees, children, adolescents, women, or older people?

### **Data**

What data or research is available to illuminate the problem or issue? What are other government agencies doing that might affect the policy or service?

Do you need to consult with key organisations or communities in the sector to find out more? How do these organisations think people from the ethnic sector are affected and what solutions do they suggest? Are there new ways of reaching out to people in ethnic communities, and creating a dialogue? (Please also refer to Consultation Guidelines).

### **Policy response**

Is a policy or service response appropriate? Are any of the issues likely to be improved by coordination or collaboration with other agencies? If so, what steps do you need to take to achieve the outcomes for ethnic people?

Do you need to develop any special provisions to meet the needs of ethnic people, specific groups within the community such as ethnic women, children or youth, older people or refugees?

For each problem/issue – list the specific needs and priorities for each of the different ethnic groups.

## **Stage Three: Develop and analyse options, make recommendations**

This section assumes you have defined the problem, gathered data and analysed the options to determine a preferred approach and recommendations. The questions to inform this process follow.

Have you taken into account the diversity identified in Stage Two? Are there specific groups who should be targeted?

Do each of the options address the issues or priorities listed for the different groups identified in Stage Two? How will each option affect the ethnic people? Are the benefits, disadvantages, risks, and costs clear? How will risks be managed? Do you have enough information about the likely impact of each option or do you need more information. Is each option consistent with the government's international obligations?

Have you identified how each option will contribute to the outcomes identified in Stage One?

Which option best meets the needs / issues / priorities of different ethnic groups? What strategies can reduce,

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or preferably remove, any negative impacts on the different groups?

Have you identified needs for inter-agency collaboration or coordination? Can you continue to involve ethnic people in designing and delivering the service? What criteria or indicators will you use to measure the success of this policy / service?

Check that the recommended option:

- is supported by the information gathered
- is consistent with the analysis applied
- meets the needs of each relevant subgroup identified
- contributes to the outcome(s) identified.

## Stage four: Implement decisions

### Communication

Have you identified the key ethnic groups to be informed/affected? How will the ethnic people and any specific subgroups, such as new migrants or women, find out about the new policy/service? Is language likely to be a barrier? Does information need to be translated or interpreters used? Have you identified contacts with the ethnic community and any ethnic media? Refer to the Consultation Guidelines for more detail.

### Delivery

Are people from the ethnic groups involved in delivering the service? If not, is there scope for funding other organisations who work with ethnic people to deliver the service?

Has an ethnic liaison person been appointed to provide a point of contact between your agency and the ethnic community, to ensure the policy or service being implemented is meeting the needs identified?

Appoint one person who is responsible for:

- liaison with the ethnic communities
- ensuring that implementation is consistent with the identified needs.

## Stage five: Monitoring and evaluation

Please also refer to monitoring and evaluation in the Ethnic Responsiveness Guidelines for additional information.

### Identifying indicators

Does your organisation have the base-line data from which to measure any change?

Does the collection and classification of data reflect the diversity of the sector?

Are there measures or measurable indicators for each of the outputs? Are the measures or indicators appropriate to accurately measure results? If not, what changes should be made?

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Have you established benchmarks and performance indicators to identify best practices? Will monitoring establish long-term trends? Has the data obtained been analysed to shed light on factors that might affect the different groups within the ethnic sector?

### **Involvement of ethnic people**

Have you consulted with ethnic people about how they would measure progress and define success? Are they involved in monitoring and evaluation? If the indicators are not relevant or they are not involved, what changes should be made?

Will the organisation's monitoring systems collect data from the ethnic community?

If not, what do you need to do to get this data? Are there sensitivities around data collection?

### **Outcomes**

Are the policy or service objectives being translated into action? Is the policy or service relevant to the circumstances of ethnic people? If not, what changes need to be made?

Have you informed other agencies involved of the results of the monitoring and evaluation?

Does the policy or service being monitored and evaluated effectively contribute to the intended outcomes for ethnic people?

If not, how should the policy or service be modified to meet these outcomes?



# Consultation Guidelines

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## Introduction

Effective consultation is essential to identify the views and needs of ethnic people about appropriate policy and services. Consulting does not mean that any one group's views will be translated into policy, and it is important that all those involved in a consultation process understand this.

In developing these guidelines, the Office of Ethnic Affairs has followed a similar approach to that used for other population-based initiatives such as those identified below in "Who to Consult". These guidelines sit comfortably beside other policy frameworks.

"Ethnic Perspectives" is additional to requirements to consider Treaty of Waitangi implications in the preparation of policy advice. In certain circumstances it will be appropriate to consult with Māori or to seek advice on this from Te Puni Kokiri.

## Basic principles of consultation

Effective consultation with any ethnic community group requires you establish trust and win the confidence of the people with whom you are to consult. Effective consultation requires developing and maintaining an ongoing relationship with two-way communications, so you can obtain information from and provide feedback to the community. A consultation process should not be left to the last minute.

Consultation can be costly and can place huge demands on community participants. Be reasonable with your demands on people – wherever possible use your links with other agencies to find out what people think.

It is important to consult when you are developing new policies and programmes. You may need to consult to determine if there are likely to be any particular issues for the ethnic sector or groups of the ethnic community.

Time is important. Most non-government or community groups will require plenty of time if you want detailed consultation or feedback. In addition, be flexible about when meetings can be held.

While these guidelines encourage consultation by inviting ethnic communities to provide input on policy issues; it should be explained to those participating that that government agencies will balance this advice with other issues and perspectives in the formulation of policy advice to Ministers and Cabinet.

## Regional or National

Before beginning, determine the scope of your consultation

- What is the scope of the consultative process—is it regional or national?
- What structures will allow all ethnic members to feel part of the process?

## Who to consult

Who are the key stakeholders with whom you need to consult?

Consultation with other government and non-government organisations is an important means of:

- identifying issues of concern to ethnic groups
- determining appropriate policies and services
- sharing information
- identifying effective coordination and implementation.

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Local government and non government agencies are also an important source of information about ethnic communities.

### **Government**

Within government, some topic areas have specific consultation requirements. The Cabinet Office has a comprehensive list of department and subject responsibilities listing departments and other agencies that should be consulted.

The following departments should be consulted as indicated for specific policy advice or forms of analysis:

- Te Puni Kokiri on Māori and Treaty of Waitangi issues
- the Ministry of Justice on human rights and Treaty of Waitangi issues
- the Ministry of Women's Affairs on gender analysis
- the Ministry of Social Development on the Positive Ageing Strategy and principles (Senior Citizens Unit), the Disability Perspectives Strategy, and the Agenda for Children
- the Ministry of Youth Affairs on the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa
- the Ministry of Health regarding the Disability Perspectives Strategy.

### **Service providers**

A number of the service providers to ethnic communities should be consulted as part of the agency consultation process. However, it is not appropriate to rely on their views rather than consult with the ethnic communities themselves.

### **Within the ethnic sector**

We have already noted the diversity of ethnic communities. Ethnic communities and groups can be categorised by nationality, race, religion, gender, length of residence and settlement history (migrant or refugee), and geographic location. Because no one agency can represent all communities and groups, particular effort needs to be put into consultation.

Consultation should not be rushed. Organisations should have networks that foster ongoing relationships with ethnic communities, and to ensure that the consultation process proceeds appropriately.

### **Community organisations**

A number of groups have been set up to represent the interests of ethnic people. It is important not to rely on just one of these groups as inevitably no one group can represent the views of the whole sector. Groups that you may consider consulting include:

- the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils and Regional Ethnic Councils
- refugee councils of New Zealand
- local authorities

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- ethnic councils or community forums: many territorial local authorities have set up ethnic councils – or have links into their ethnic communities
  - local iwi or tangata whenua may be appropriate in certain circumstances.

There are also community-based groups that serve a variety of needs:

- groups that focus on specific needs or areas; such as teaching English or services for refugees and/or migrants
- community associations. Most ethnic groups have their own community organisation. Often several organisations may represent different interests of one ethnic group. Some may be based on country of origin or religion; others may be identified with specific tribal groups or geographic regions.

### **Contacts for Consultation**

The Office of Ethnic Affairs encourages other agencies to consult ethnic people and can advise on the most appropriate way to do so. The Office is also compiling data covering:

- ethnic community and other non-government agency contacts
- departmental contacts
- the roles and activities of departments with specific types of responsibilities for the ethnic sector
- forums such as interdepartmental committees set up to consider specific issues e.g. the Interdepartmental Committee on Refugee Resettlement.

This data will identify agencies and community groups that should be included in any consultation prior to a policy or service being developed or reviewed.

### **How to consult**

There are a number of ways consultation can be achieved.

Typically, a policy paper with options is developed and circulated with a call for written submissions. This approach may give some insight into ethnic issues, provided agencies who work with ethnic communities are included in the consultation process.

Consulting other departments and non-government agencies is not a substitute for contacting ethnic communities directly. You can do this by engaging ethnic communities in a number of ways e.g., you can use a discussion/submissions process, a survey or interview process, or a case study method.

Each of these approaches has its benefits and limitations, and needs to be planned carefully. You will need to identify if there are any customs, language and other communication barriers for the ethnic communities. Some communities prefer to make oral submissions. Similarly, where English is a second language, will interpreters or translations help communities to understand better, so you get the information you need?

For significant pieces of work, it would be worthwhile to develop a consultation plan by first using selected individuals or focus groups to identify and refine issues (including to identify any barriers to participation in a consultation process and how these might be overcome).

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An approach to using focus groups and interviews is described below. The issues and points to consider are also relevant to any form of consultation.

### **Focus groups**

A focus group is one whose members are hand-picked to provide qualitative information about a specific issue. Those involved may not all share the same view, and you may need to sample a selection of views to better identify the needs and aspirations of the ethnic community about a topic. Overall, a series of well selected focus groups will often provide sound information and advice. Be aware that in many ethnic communities there are different factions, e.g. based on kinship or tribe, religion or race.

Establish criteria for selection. These may vary according to the issue under discussion. Always consider issues of gender, age, territory, and community status. These factors particularly affect participation of women, younger people, and older people and will influence who does the talking in a group and where should consultation take place. Settlement history may also be important. If you want representative views of each group, it can be more effective to organise a different session for each.

While a focus group should include some of the community leaders, this may not always be practical. Use your networks to identify other people from the ethnic communities in question who have the knowledge and experience to participate in the focus group discussions.

Focus group data is not statistically valid, but it is a very useful way of identifying the likely issues or views of the community.

### **Children and Young People**

The needs of children and young people (0-24 years inclusive) from different ethnic backgrounds should also be considered. These needs may be substantially different from those of their parents, families and the wider community. There may also be instances where, due to culture/ethnicity, a young person may not feel comfortable about speaking in an adult setting and the consultation process must acknowledge this.

Young people should be consulted on issues that affect them, to get input into decision-making, policy-making and service development.

Obtaining the views of children requires special training and care, as there are a number of additional ethical and practical issues to consider in designing the consultation process.

### **Individuals**

There are often some key individuals in the sector who, when taken as a group, might be used to “test the water” on some ideas, or begin the process of identifying issues. The research and policy staff from your agency may develop their own networks of people. These people are often important sources of quick information.

The Office of Ethnic Affairs is developing a database of people who may make themselves available on certain issues.

### **Getting the questions right**

Before embarking on any consultation exercise, it is important to have the basics right:

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- ensure the process is in the “spirit of partnership” and those being consulted are comfortable with the processes the questions
  - what are you consulting about?
  - how will consultation inform the problem definition or solution?
  - will the questions used give you the right type of information?
  - is your consultation group likely to be representative of the range of views being sought?
  - what type of information do you need? Different information lends itself to different methods e.g. obtaining views or opinion requires different methods to obtaining quantitative data.

Does the group need background information? Do you need to check out assumptions beforehand? Make sure the costs of participants being consulted are covered.

Test your questions and consultation or interview method for cultural sensitivity and appropriateness to the information being sought. Questions that focus on specific issues may not draw out any useful information. Avoid too many closed questions or questions which appear to have right answers.

The best question format provides a space for individuals’ personal comments and observations (concerns) to be fed into the process.

### **Ethics and confidentiality**

Before the consultation begins, make sure all are agreed that any personal information obtained is confidential, and who will be involved in the process.

As with any form of investigation or research, there are ethical issues about obtaining and using information, which can be compounded when the respondent has a different first language and culture. Do not use data that can be traced to an individual, unless informed consent to make that information available has been obtained.

Do not seek information unless it is relevant and will be used.

Include a process for independent peer review to assess any ethical or cultural sensitivity as well as methodological risks.

Ensure interviewers are trained to identify culturally sensitive issues and respond appropriately.

### **Fostering participation**

What specific steps might you take to ensure the community or respondents participate? It may be useful to:

- discuss with the target community the work being undertaken, to inform them of the process and the advantages of participating
- check with key informants at the beginning about timing and organisational issues e.g. what times would suit most people – evening or day?
- check out issues about costs to those participating e.g. would meeting costs for travel and / or childcare

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allow people to participate?

- identify any processes that will ensure that women, youth, or older people are involved. Might you need sessions aimed at particular groups e.g. women only sessions?

### **Giving Feedback**

Providing feedback to those who were consulted is an essential part of any consultation process. Wherever possible send those who have attended a focus group:

- a summary of the information gathered via the consultation process
- information about the final service or policy
- a thank you note and further contact point.

Keeping faith with those who have given time to the process of consultation is important if you want to go back to the community another time.

As noted above, the Office of Ethnic Affairs will be able to provide information about consultation contacts for the ethnic sector, including representative and community groups.



# Ethnic Responsiveness Guidelines

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The following guidelines will be useful to any organisation that wants to determine how well it has identified, and responded to, the views and needs of ethnic people, and those ethnic communities, likely to be affected by the work of the organisation.

## Accountability

An organisation's documentation of its activities, planning, and how it goes about its job are means of checking accountability. Its responsiveness to ethnic issues can be checked as to whether:

- data by ethnicity is published in the agency's annual report and forecasts, and/or made accessible to the public
- ethnic responsiveness objectives are built into job descriptions and performance indicators for staff and managers
- objectives have been developed, promoting cultural diversity and responsiveness to ethnic issues
- ethnic objectives are included in purchase agreements and in chief executive's performance agreements
- ethnic responsiveness is included in performance agreements for managers, policy analysts, and service and product designers
- the organisation has an ethnic sector liaison person and that person's name and contact details have been notified to the Office of Ethnic Affairs.

## Coordination

- is the organisation well-informed about other government or government-funded agencies' policies or programmes which might have an impact on initiatives for the ethnic sector?
- are appropriate coordination and collaboration mechanisms in place and have they been checked for overlaps or gaps?
- have regional, national, or international networks with other agencies been developed and / or supported?

## Policy

In addition to the use of the Policy Guidelines, the following points should be considered:

- are new policies examined (by policy staff) to ensure the needs of the ethnic sector are recognised and taken into account?
- do ethnic sector policies provide for the needs of specific groups at risk of multiple discrimination, e.g. on the grounds of age, gender, disability, religion etc?
- does the quality assurance process consider implications for ethnic perspectives?

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## Planning

### Documentation

- does the organisation's mission statement include, as one of its goals, a commitment to help develop strong, secure, self-reliant, self-confident communities, free from unlawful discrimination?
- is there an ethnic-inclusive statement in the plan?
- is there a plan to identify and provide for the needs of ethnic communities?
- has the organisation identified the Government's desired outcomes for ethnic people and the relevant outputs that contribute to achieving them?

### Data and Information Collection

- is data collected in a consistent and detailed way? Does the organisation collect data by ethnicity? Is the data consistent with the classifications used for the New Zealand Census by Statistics New Zealand?
- do you have data or other sources of information for the ethnic sector and each ethnic community to:
  - profile existing and potential clients, and their needs, to assist in design of policy and services
  - determine how ethnicity/gender/age/language needs compare with the norm
  - identify what other differences exist within the ethnic group(s) e.g. family size, age structure of the population
  - indicate subgroups such as by gender or by age?
- is the organisation committed to supporting ethnic peoples' participation in policy or evaluation processes e.g. if language is a barrier, are interpreters made available?

### Use of the data

- is the data used to enable effective comparisons to be made, and better inform policy and planning e.g.:
  - is ethnicity data from the Census used to establish targets and plan services
  - are targets monitored and fed into the existing policy review mechanism
  - do corporate/departmental assessments of community needs take into account the present and future needs of ethnic communities?

## Consultation

In addition to the ethnic Consultation Guidelines:

- have you established and built up networks with relevant community organisations? Do you conduct regular surveys and focus groups to inform service development and delivery?
- do you know what the ethnic sector hopes are for the services and policies of your organisation?

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- do you feed the results of consultation into reviews and target setting exercises? How does consultation inform or help shape policy development and resource allocation? What documented evidence is available to demonstrate that it does?

## **Service delivery**

### **Establishing means of service delivery**

- does the organisation have an up-to-date ethnic responsiveness policy or plan? Have service users been consulted about it?
- how does the organisation take into account the needs of ethnic people when planning new services?
- what procedures are in place to review any decisions to increase, decrease, or reallocate funding for ethnic people to use the service?
- is a professional interpreter or translation available if language is likely to be a barrier to obtaining information or services?

### **Monitoring service delivery**

- does the organisation monitor the effectiveness of ethnic community consultation and its influence on service delivery?
- does it use standard procedures to monitor take-up of all services by ethnicity?
- is this data used to inform policy review and target setting?
- what procedures are there to consult with the relevant community organisations about the suitability of service provision?
- is there a liaison person to advise on ethnic and cultural sensitivity issues for consultation/service delivery?

## **Complaints**

- do you have a client services charter and culturally sensitive complaints handling mechanism of which clients are aware?
- are complaints procedures made available – in the right language – in the right place?
- are all complaints monitored by ethnicity?

## **Human Resources**

### **Training**

- do all staff and managers, including policy analyst and counter staff have training that reinforces the organisation's commitment to responsiveness to ethnic issues and cultural awareness?
- have all service delivery staff been trained so that they can provide a culturally appropriate and sensitive

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service for the ethnic sector, and for specific client groups as may be appropriate, such as recent migrants or refugees?

- is staff training in ethnic responsiveness linked to performance appraisal?

### **Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO)**

- does the organisation have a designated advisor on EEO best practice?
- does the agency have an EEO plan that identifies and removes barriers to attracting, training, retaining and rewarding ethnic people?

### **Selection**

- Does the organisation promote ethnic diversity within its workforce by, for instance:
  - by advertising job vacancies and employment opportunities through mechanisms that will encourage applicants from ethnic communities?
  - by ensuring recruitment and selection procedures are designed so that ethnic people are equally considered?
  - by removing barriers to observing cultural or religious practices.

### **Monitoring**

- does the agency gather data by ethnicity in terms of personnel performance, recruitment and reward?

### **Information and publicity**

- does the organisation publicise policy and its successes both internally and externally?
- is all public information available in plain English?
- is it included on your organisation's website?
- are advertisements, leaflets, and other sources of information about services, democratic structures, and community participation translated into community languages?
- is training provided for ethnic community groups and voluntary organisations on the decision-making process and how to access it? E.g., so that ethnic groups can participate in service planning consultation.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

In addition to the monitoring and evaluation considerations set out in the Policy Guidelines, the following also apply:

- are all policies and programmes monitored and evaluated for their impact on:

- 
- ethnic people and ethnic communities?
  - the expected outcomes. Are there any unintended outcomes?
  - are members of the ethnic sector involved in this monitoring and evaluation?
  - do you collect statistics and other information:
    - to measure progress in achieving better outcomes for the ethnic sector
    - to determine whether equitable decisions are being made, e.g. whether ethnicity or components such as language are a barrier to accessing services
    - to identify “good performers” and establish best practices?
  - have you identified any gaps or overlaps in service delivery?
  - do you revise programmes, policy objectives and activities to take account of the results of monitoring and evaluation?
  - do you report back to the ethnic communities of interest, with the results of monitoring and evaluation?
  - do you make this information publicly accessible?

