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DIVERSITY

THE ABC OF BAME

New, mixed method research into black, Asian
and minority ethnic groups and their motivations
and barriers to volunteering



The Diversity In Volunteering (DIV) group: partners, authors and contributors

Recognising that we know little about the issues affecting volunteering amongst black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals in the UK, some of the UK's leading organisations in the business, heritage, health and sport sectors came together to commission a more detailed review of ethnic diversity in volunteering.

The DIV partnership consists of Cancer Research UK, The National Trust and Sport England, which all operate in sectors where volunteering is fundamental to their objectives, and British Telecom (BT) which has, for decades, pioneered employee volunteering. All partners have a common goal of enabling more people to benefit from volunteering and of understanding how we move towards greater access to volunteering for everyone.

The research was led by Dr Ricky Lawton and Will Watt at Jump Projects with major contributions from Professor Kevin Hylton at Leeds Beckett University (literature review) and Hannah Wright and Kim Williams at Breakthrough Media (qualitative research).

As part of this work a number of critical friends were asked to review early drafts of the report. We did our best to address any issues raised in the report. Sincere thanks go to all who helped: Laurence Gouldbourne at the National Trust, Salma Parveen at St John Ambulance, Hanna Latif at Empowerment Charity, Shaheen Bi at Sporting Equals, Rimla Akhtar MBE at the Muslim Women's Sport Foundation, Muks Miah, Hattie Clayton, Rita McLean and Gail Waters at The Royal British Legion¹.

¹ Please see each organisation's websites for more details: National Trust (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk>), St John Ambulance (<http://www.sja.org.uk>), Empowerment Charity (<http://www.empowermentcharity.org.uk/>), Sporting Equals (<http://www.sportingequals.org.uk/>), Rimjhim Consulting (<http://rimjhimconsulting.com/>), Muslim Women's Sport Foundation (<http://www.mwsf.org.uk/>), The Royal British Legion (<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>)

Preface

A key objective of this work was to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure the work was useful and practical to all partners and more widely. The literature review, performed by Leeds Beckett University is attached in full as Appendix 1. The main findings are split into **what we do know** and **what we don't know**.

Leeds Beckett identified a clear gap in the knowledge, stating that “*there is still a dearth of available information for policymakers and practitioners to make informed decisions about a diverse BAME voluntary sector*”. Also that diversity in volunteering suffered from being “*under-researched*” with a “*relative lack of coherence of the evidence base*”.

What we do know

- There is wide variety of data available to confirm who does and does not volunteer in the UK but little knowledge on why this might be in terms of understanding the different motivations and barriers to volunteering of different ethnic groups.
- There is initial evidence to suggest that individuals from BAME backgrounds volunteer less but the evidence is not conclusive and does not break down BAME into constituent ethnicities.
- There are different forms of volunteering (informal and formal²) and there is a sense that engagement in different types of volunteering varies across socio-demographic and economic groups.

What we don't know

The lack of research in the sector has created a situation where “*the imperative to disaggregate BAME research and data emerges clearly*” (Kevin Hylton, Leeds Beckett University, Appendix 1).

- A need for qualitative and mixed-methods, and studies that can better draw out the contextual story around volunteering.
- There is some ambiguity concerning volunteering and how it is understood by less active and/or diverse groups through the development of an inclusive typology of what we mean by volunteering.
- Existing research does not explore the breadth of benefits of volunteering across the diversity of BAME communities/volunteers.
- Existing research does not explain the significance of socio-economic status and its influence on access for diverse volunteer groups.
- Existing research also does not explore the circumstances and conditions of volunteering for different BAME and religious groups, which may include exploring the variations of volunteering experience across different religious groups.
- Aspects such as inclusion, motivations, perceptions, values, and the impact of real and perceived racism are less well understood³.

²Please see “[What do we mean by ethnicity, BAME and volunteering?](#)”: Formal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help through a group, club or organisation, while informal is defined as giving unpaid help to individual people who are not relatives, and not through a group, club or organisation

³We investigate motivations but do not look at the impact of real and perceived racism. The Guardian's recent “Bias in Britain” poll explores the experiences of people from BAME and White backgrounds. Booth, R., Mohdin, A. & Levett, C. (2018, December 2). Bias in Britain: explore the poll results. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/ng-interactive/2018/dec/02/bias-in-britain-explore-the-poll-results>

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DIVERSITY

1. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction and methodology

Volunteering has been found to have health and wellbeing benefits for the volunteer in addition to benefiting society. However, there has been mixed evidence around the levels of participation of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals in volunteering in the UK. This report, commissioned by a partnership of sector leaders, builds on a literature review, statistical analysis of national surveys and qualitative research to answer the following question:

How do BAME groups in the UK differ from the general population in terms of their motivations for volunteering and barriers to engagement, and what can organisations change to engage with those motivations and reduce those barriers?

This report is the most comprehensive research into BAME volunteering in the UK so far and uses advanced data analysis methods to get as close as possible to identifying barriers and motivations specific to ethnicity (instead of inadvertently picking up socio-economic barriers for example). It is hoped that it will help organisations engaging with volunteers to better recruit and retain BAME volunteers, producing a great experience for volunteers and a fantastic outcome for the communities they volunteer in.

Value and benefits of volunteering - and why this is important

In 2014 the Chief Economist at the Bank of England, Andy Haldane, gave a speech on the 'Social Value of Volunteering' (September 2014).⁴ The economic figures suggested volunteering could be worth between £50bn and £200bn to the UK economy (roughly the size of the energy sector). Since 2014, the team at Jump Projects⁵ have undertaken a number of studies looking at the wellbeing impact of volunteering on the volunteers themselves. The 2018 GIVERS report⁶ used fixed effects regressions of wellbeing on volunteering, a technique which better isolates the association between volunteering and wellbeing than previous studies for UK data.⁷

We summarised these findings in 'Benefits of Volunteering'⁸ and found volunteering to be:

- Associated with improved wellbeing measured as life satisfaction, happiness and a greater sense of purpose, as well as better general health;
- Roughly equal to the effect of living in a safe area and about one-seventh of the effect of full-time employment on life satisfaction;

⁴ Haldane, A. (2014, September 9) In giving, how much do we receive? The social value of volunteering. *Bank of England*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/-/media/boe/files/speech/2014/in-giving-how-much-do-we-receive-the-social-value-of-volunteering.pdf>

⁵ Jump Projects (2018) <https://jump-projects.com/>

⁶ Fujiwara, D., Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2018). GIVERS: Using behavioural science to recruit and retain volunteers more effectively. Sports and Recreation Alliance. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>, see page 24

⁷ Fixed effect regressions control for a wide range of factors, including time-invariant factors (fixed effects) such as personality characteristics, preferences towards volunteering and allow for much better causal attribution in the results.

⁸ Lawton, R. & Watt, W.(2018). Benefits of Volunteering, *Jump Projects*. <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

- Higher levels of trust in other people, influence and engagement in community life⁹;
- More mixing with people of different backgrounds;
- Higher levels of self-efficacy and skills leading to enhanced education and employment outcomes.

These reports took a new approach to valuing the social benefits of volunteering by including the wellbeing impact on the volunteers themselves. Such methodology, known as ‘wellbeing economics’¹⁰, is recognised by the government as a way to show the value to society of things like volunteering, sport, culture, heritage and many other forms of civic engagement¹¹.

Previous work on diversity in volunteering has focused on the importance of reflecting the voices of ethnic minority beneficiaries in the services delivered by volunteers, and for volunteers from ethnic minorities to be better able to engage with beneficiaries of the same ethnicity, as well as simply being able to recruit more volunteers (it is estimated that 91% of charities are entirely volunteer-run¹²). However, the stream of work on the wellbeing benefits of volunteering for the volunteer makes understanding the representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals in volunteering a much more pressing question. Is a group which is often marginalised also missing out on the important benefits of volunteering?

1.1. Inequality in volunteering. Who is and is not volunteering?

As previous research on volunteering and wellbeing has focused on establishing the benefits of volunteering, there has been less of an explicit focus on who those benefits go to. Using data from 2012-4 ‘Community Life’ and 2014-5 ‘Taking Part’ surveys, the 2018 GIVERS¹³ report found that a lower percentage of black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals volunteer than White individuals.

Analysis of the Active People Survey 2005/6 for Sports England found that non-White respondents were less likely than White respondents to volunteer in sport for at least an hour a week (3.6% vs 4.8% respectively)¹⁴.

The Youth Social Action Survey 2014 found that 40% of White young people had participated in “meaningful social action” in the past 12 months compared with 39% of young people from

⁹ Hidden Diamonds, (2014) *Join In*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/volunteering-research>

¹⁰ Layard, R. (2009). Well-Being Measurement and Public Policy. In Krueger, A. B. (Ed.) *Measuring the Subjective Well-Being of Nations: National Accounts of Time Use and Well-Being*, (pp. 145 - 154). Retrieved from:

<http://www.nber.org/chapters/c5058>

¹¹ See the 2018 HM Treasury Green Book, which provides central government guidance on policy evaluation. The Green Book: appraisal and evaluation in central government. (2018). *HM Treasury*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

¹² Report of the Inquiry into Charity Senior Executive Pay, (2014). NCVO. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/images/news/Executive-Pay-Report.pdf>

¹³ Fujiwara, D., Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2018). GIVERS: Using behavioural science to recruit and retain volunteers more effectively. Sports and Recreation Alliance. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

¹⁴ Long, J., Hylton, K., Spracklen, K. & Ratna, A. (2009, July). A Systematic Review of the Literature on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Sport and Physical Recreation. *Carnegie Research Institute, Leeds Metropolitan University*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/3267/systematic-review-of-the-literature-on-bme-communities-in-sport.pdf>, p.45

an ethnic minority background although note the small sample sizes¹⁵. Sport England's 'Active Lives'¹⁶ found that there is a slight overrepresentation of people from White British backgrounds and underrepresentation of women from South Asian (British Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi) backgrounds.

From the current picture, it appears to be an **under-representation of BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic) individuals in volunteering compared to the numbers in the population, however, as highlighted in the rapid literature review (Appendix 1), we currently know little about how this breaks down to the constituent ethnicities, and what barriers underlie those headline numbers.**

The sample sizes of ethnic minority groups on the Community Life data pre-2016/7 were too small to break down this any further¹⁷ in the 2018 GIVERS¹⁸ report; however, with new data and looking at other open data sets, we are able to dig much more deeply into the experiences of black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals around volunteering. This new look at the quantitative data is guided by a rapid literature review by Leeds Beckett University (Appendix 1), both of which then form the basis for in-depth qualitative research into the motivations and barriers experienced by people from BAME backgrounds with regard to volunteering in the UK.

1.2. What do we mean by ethnicity, BAME and volunteering?

This project looks in detail at ethnic diversity among volunteers in the UK. The limitations of research in this area to date has been to look only at BAME as a catch-all term for all ethnically diverse groups (a limitation of which has been raised in the last few years: 2015¹⁹ and 2018²⁰). Clearly, there are many different cultures, religions, and communities that make-up the broad BAME group in the UK, and each of these can be expected to have different experiences of volunteering motivations and barriers to volunteering. The literature review for this work conducted by Professor Kevin Hylton of Leeds Beckett University, made clear the need to disaggregate the constituent ethnicities that make up BAME and is available in Appendix 1 of this report.

One of the reasons that previous research has not disaggregated BAME experiences of volunteering is that the sample sizes of such individuals in existing national household

¹⁵ Pye, J., James, N. & Stobart, R. (2014, November 24). Youth Social Action in the UK – 2014 A face-to-face survey of 10-20 year olds in the UK. *Ipsos Mori*.

http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7764/mrdoc/pdf/7764_report_youth_social_action_in_the_uk.pdf, p.4

¹⁶ 'Active Lives' Adult Survey May 17/18 Report (October 2018). *Sport England*.

<https://www.sportengland.org/media/13563/active-lives-adult-may-17-18-report.pdf>

¹⁷ Volunteering. (2018, October 18). *Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/culture-and-community/civic-participation/volunteering/latest>

¹⁸ Fujiwara, D., Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2018). GIVERS: Using behavioural science to recruit and retain volunteers more effectively. Sports and Recreation Alliance. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

¹⁹ Okolosie, L., Harker, J., Green, L., & Dabiri, E. (2015, May 22) *Is it time to ditch the term 'black, Asian and minority ethnic' (BAME)?* *The Guardian*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/may/22/black-Asian-minority-ethnic-bame-bme-trevor-phillips-racial-minorities>

²⁰ Sandhu, R. (2018, May 17). Should BAME be ditched as a term for black, Asian and minority ethnic people? *BBC*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-43831279>

surveys are limited. For this reason, this report adopts a mixed method approach, triangulating between the existing data and qualitative research.

Definitions: We outline the key definitions for consistency throughout this report, based on national datasets like ‘Understanding Society’ and ‘Community Life’:

Ethnicity:

Black Asian, or other minority ethnicity (BAME): Defined as any ethnicity other than British/English/Scottish/Welsh/Northern Irish, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, or any other White background.

For the purposes of analysis we break down the detailed data on BAME background as collected by the two surveys we focus on in the quantitative analysis (‘Understanding Society’ and ‘Community Life’):

- Multiple ethnic background including White-Black; White-Asian; Other
- British Indian
- British Pakistani or Bangladeshi
- British Chinese or other Asian
- British African / Caribbean
- British Arabic
- Other ethnicity

Volunteering (any volunteering in the past 12 months): ‘Understanding Society’, the UK’s leading household survey for social research (University of Exeter), defines volunteering as: “In the last 12 months, have you given any unpaid help or worked as a volunteer for any type of local, national or international organisation or charity?”

Formal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help through a group, club or organisation. This accords with the definition in ‘Understanding Society’.

Informal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help to individual people who are not relatives, and not through a group, club or organisation.²¹ This distinction is not made in the ‘Understanding Society’ data, so we caveat that initial analysis of population level data in ‘Understanding Society’ is based on formal volunteering.

Informal volunteering is only available in the ‘Community Life’/‘Citizenship’ Survey, which we explore in additional quantitative analysis (see below).

Lower socio-economic group defined based on those who have a household income below the median level of all survey respondents in any given year.

²¹ The variable in Community Life is ‘IHlp’ preceded by the ‘Intro1’ introduction: “The next section asks about any unpaid help you as an individual may have given to other people, that is apart from any help given through a group, club or organisation. This could be help for a friend, neighbour or someone else but not a relative.” (‘Intro 1’) “In the last 12 months, that is, since [DATE ONE YEAR AGO], have you done any of these things, unpaid, for someone who was not a relative?” (‘IHlp’) Community Life Survey 2016-17 Self-Completion Questionnaire. *HM Government*. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/567536/CL1617_Web_questionnaire_v3.pdf, p.30

1.3. Quantitative methodology

The rapid review of the existing literature by Leeds Beckett University (Appendix 1) on BAME groups and volunteering/civic engagement demonstrated that:

- As an aggregate group, BAME individuals seem to volunteer less frequently.
- There are different forms of volunteering (informal and formal), and different types of organisations that volunteers help - there is a sense that participation by form and type of organisation may vary across ethnic groups.
- There is little currently known about the barriers, benefits and motivations of minority ethnic groups with regard to volunteering.

This provided the foundation for a clear methodological approach for the project in two stages:

1. An exhaustive and comprehensive analysis of existing data from UK Government surveys 'Citizenship Survey', 'Community Life' and 'Understanding Society' which together have sample sizes of over 200,000 volunteers. We used advanced methodologies (logistic regressions) to control for other factors which may affect volunteering rates (e.g. household income) so that we isolate the associations with ethnicity specifically.
2. Based on what we found in the data, we would investigate the key issues with a mixture of qualitative research groups and in-depth data analysis.

'Understanding Society' (140,047 respondents with 25,188 volunteers of which 2,010 are from BAME backgrounds) – who is volunteering?

'Understanding Society' is a large longitudinal survey which repeatedly interviews the same respondents over successive waves, providing nationally representative data and detailed categories of ethnic groups. We restrict our analysis only to those waves of the survey that include data on volunteering (140,047 respondents in Waves 2, 4, and 6, which cover the years 2010-2011, 2012-2013, and 2014-2015).

We use 'Understanding Society' to report the current state of volunteering coming from lower socioeconomic and BAME groups in the UK, because this survey provides the most robust and nationally representative sample of the three datasets available. Note that 'Understanding Society' is generally used for reporting representation of demographic groups in the national population. However, for some analysis e.g., formal vs informal volunteering, or volunteering sector (not collected in 'Understanding Society') we use 'Community Life'/'Citizenship Survey'.

In these circumstances we urge more caution extrapolating findings to the wider population in particular because they include a boost of 5,000 BAME respondents. 'Community Life' and the 'Citizenship Survey' are nonetheless invaluable for their insights on volunteering motivations and barriers.

‘Community Life’ (17,046 total respondents with 12,008 volunteers and 1,833 BAME volunteers) + ‘Citizenship Survey’ (62,132 total respondents with 38,957 volunteers and 15,002 BAME volunteers) – why are people volunteering?

‘Community Life’ contains ONS detailed ethnic group data for the years 2012-2016, which gives a total sample size of 17,046. The earlier ‘Citizenship Survey’ (2007-2011) follows the same structure and question format, with a total sample size of 62,132. The ‘Community Life’ survey is described as *“a survey of adults (16+) in England that explores levels of community cohesion and engagement”*. It includes detailed questions on motivations, barriers, and attrition for volunteering which can be analysed across demographic groups and data on formal/informal volunteering. It also provides data on trust and social cohesion which are not provided by the other two datasets.



DIVERSITY

2. BREAKING DOWN BAME:

DEMOGRAPHICS, MOTIVATIONS,
BARRIERS TO VOLUNTEERING
(QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS)

2. Breaking down BAME: demographics, motivations, barriers to volunteering (quantitative data analysis)

First, we explored the data to find out how volunteering within BAME groups (both as a whole and in detailed categories) compares with the representation of these groups in the general population using data from the ‘Understanding Society’²² survey. ‘Understanding Society’ is an annual nationally representative panel survey conducted at the household level, with the same individuals re-interviewed over successive time periods.

This survey provides the most robust and nationally representative sample of the three datasets available. Respondents are asked about their ethnicity, a range of other demographic variables and about volunteering “In the last 12 months, have you given any unpaid help or worked as a volunteer for any type of local, national or international organisation or charity?”

We apply statistical tests to ascertain whether BAME individuals are more likely to report themselves as volunteers, after controlling for other factors that may drive the likelihood of volunteering, such as education, health, employment status.²³ Controlling for other factors is important to allow us to be more confident that the effect we see is due to factors surrounding ethnicity instead of any other drivers.

Table A1 shows the likelihood of volunteering for each ethnic group (controlling for the other factors just mentioned), the proportion of the volunteer sample made up by each target group to their relative proportions in the general population sample (the nationally representative sample that includes both volunteers and non-volunteers) and the share of volunteers in the target group compared to the share of volunteers within the national average.

The data shows that:

- **Overall, BAME groups are under-represented in volunteering, compared to the national average:** BAME groups represent around 13% of the total number of volunteers in country, but represent 18% of the national population. While 19% of the national population volunteer at least once in the past 12 months, only 12% of BAME groups report the same.
- **Overall, BAME groups are less likely to volunteer than White British groups:** People from BAME backgrounds have **26% lower odds of volunteering** compared to White British groups.²⁴
- However, among the multiple demographics that make up BAME, **British Asian groups (made up of British Asian/Asian British: Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese and other Asian groups) in particular have significantly lower odds of**

²² ‘Understanding Society’ provides nationally representative data and detailed categories of ethnic groups. We restrict our analysis only to those waves of the survey that include data on volunteering sample of (140,047 with 25,188 volunteers: Waves 2, 4, and 6, which cover the years 2010-2011, 2012-2013, and 2014-2015).

²³ We estimate the likelihood of people from different ethnic backgrounds having volunteered in the past 12 months (among the BAME sample only) within the ‘Understanding Society’ dataset, which is the largest and most closely representative of the UK. We apply logistic regression, which assumes a constant ratio of the odds for different groups in society (such as BAME and White) reporting an outcome (such as volunteering), while accounting for other factors which may drive selection into volunteering such as health, education level.

²⁴ We can interpret the odds ratio in the following way. Suppose a White person with a certain level of income has 1:1 odds of being a volunteer corresponding to a likelihood of 50%. This implies that a BAME person with the same income will have 0.737:1 odds of volunteering (corresponding to a likelihood of 42.4%), and that they have 26.3% lower odds to volunteer compared to White groups ($1 - 0.737 = 0.263 = 26.3\%$).

volunteering, with 35% lower odds of volunteering compared to other ethnic minority groups.

- And there was **no difference between the odds of volunteering for Black and Other Minority Ethnicities and the average odds** for the total population²⁵.

Table A1 shows that British Asian volunteers make up only 7% of the volunteer population, but form 10% of the national population and the difference is statistically significant. While 19% of the national population report volunteering at least once in the past 12 months, only 11% of the British Asian ethnic group report the same. This under-representation of British Asians in volunteering in the UK seems to drive the lower likelihood of volunteering we see at the aggregate BAME level.

This is a finding supported by the literature review (p.15, Appendix 1), which found that volunteering in sport among mixed ethnic groups was above average, while British Asian volunteering was lower on average. This is a key finding, from a large national representative sample of UK residents, which gave us a clear steer for the advanced quantitative and qualitative analysis.

To further explore the cultural differences that may drive different levels of volunteering among BAME seen in the ‘Understanding Society’ data, we break down the data into the constituent demographics of BAME. Importantly, we are able to divide the broad ‘British Asian’ group into its composite parts, based on geographic and cultural commonalities:

- British Indian Asian community
- British Pakistani and Bangladesh Asian community
- British Chinese and other Asian community
- British African/Caribbean community
- British Arabic community
- Multiple mixed White ethnic backgrounds

Table A1 Volunteering in last 12 months: ‘Understanding Society’ (2010-2011, 2012-2013, and 2014-2015)

Social group	Odds of Volunteering (relative to comparison group)	Target group as a % of all volunteers	Target group as % of national population	% of target group who volunteer
Total population (UK)				19.2% (25188/131305)
Low socio-economic group	0.830***	41.6% (10448/25128)	50.0% (73122/146235)	14.3% (10448/73122)
High socio-economic group		58.4% (14680/25128)	50.0% (73113/146235)	20.1% (14680/73113)
Black Asian Minority Ethnicity	0.737***	12.6% (2010/16000)	17.7% (16281/91919)	12.3% (2010/16281)
Ethnicity: White		87.4% (13990/16000)	82.3% (75638/91919)	18.5% (13990/75638)

²⁵ We did find a significant difference with the minority group ‘Other’ but do not include this in the main report because of the size and heterogeneity of the sample.

Detailed ethnic background				
Ethnicity: White British / Irish / Gypsy / Traveller / Other		87.4% (13990/16000)	82.3% (75638/91919)	18.5% (13990/75638)
Ethnicity: Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: White & Black Caribbean / African / Asian / Other	1.124	1.8% (280/16000)	1.8% (1615/91919)	17.3% (280/1615)
Ethnicity: British Asian/Asian British: Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese; other	0.648***	6.5% (1040/16000)	10.4% (9564/91919)	10.9% (1040/9564)
Ethnicity: Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	0.924	3.5% (562/16000)	4.6% (4260/91919)	13.2% (562/4260)
Ethnicity: British Arabic	1.065	0.3% (54/16000)	0.5% (420/91919)	12.9% (54/420)
Ethnicity: Other	1.393**	0.5% (74/16000)	0.5% (422/91919)	17.5% (74/422)

Source: 'Understanding Society' (2010-2011, 2012-2013, and 2014-2015), including N.Ireland. Lower socio-economic group defined as below sample median household income in any given year. Numbers in brackets in columns 3, 4 and 5: the numerator is the number in the target group in the sample and the denominator is the total number in the sample. Column 2 notes: The odds come from a logistic regression model. Odds of less than 1 mean individuals from the group are less likely to volunteer, and odds of greater than 1 mean they are more likely to volunteer. The more "stars", the more confident that we can be that we did not just see this result by chance. *** <1% significance; ** <5% significance; * <10% significance. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors used. Standard socio-demographic controls (from Fujiwara & Campbell 2011) including equalised household income (BAME model only), age, gender, marital status, educational level, employment status, rural/urban, general health, dependent children, carer status, geographical region, housing status, ethnic group (total sample only), and date and year of survey.

2.1. Intersectionality: Socio-economic status and ethnic diversity

Individuals from BAME backgrounds are more likely to be in a lower socio-economic group (Table 2 in Appendix 2 shows that 62% of BAME groups classify as low socioeconomic status, compared to 47% for White British groups).

The literature review and report 'A Bit Rich'²⁶ (using the same UK datasets as Table A1) find that people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to volunteer (17% lower odds compared to those from higher socio-economic backgrounds). How can we ensure that we are not simply picking up the impact of being from a lower socio-economic group in the lower odds of volunteering amongst people from BAME backgrounds?

Being able to control for socio-economic background and other relevant factors is one of the advantages of conducting logistic regressions instead of simply comparing the percentages of people from different ethnicities who volunteer. The odds ratios quoted in Table A1 account for the socio-economic group of the individual, and so we are closer to estimating the association of ethnic group membership and the odds of volunteering in a way which is not biased by other factors.

However, we do see that lower income BAME individuals have 40% lower odds of volunteering compared to other groups and higher income BAME individuals have 12% lower odds of volunteering (Table 4, Appendix 2).

In other words, while BAME individuals are less likely to volunteer in the UK compared to their White British counterparts, lower income BAME groups are even less likely to volunteer. More

²⁶ Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2019, January). A Bit Rich. *Jump Projects*. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

work needs to be done to establish whether these odds are lower than would be expected given our knowledge of an individual's background as both BAME and low socio-economic.

2.2. Advanced analysis: 'Community Life' & 'Citizenship Survey'

We investigate these headline statistics further with data from the 'Community Life' (2012-2016) and 'Citizenship Survey' (2007-2011), which both collect more detailed data on volunteering and civic engagement. Although older, the 'Citizenship Survey' contains an ethnic minority boost sample of 5,000 respondents, allowing more focus on the experiences of these groups. In combination with the more recent 'Community Life' (which asks almost identical questions around volunteering), this provides over a decade of information about how and why people volunteer, which allows us to ask deeper questions about barriers, motivations, and whether other characteristics intersect with ethnicity.²⁷

The 'Community Life' and 'Citizenship Survey' ask: "about your involvement with groups, clubs or organisations"...*"That's anything you've taken part in, supported, or that you've helped in any way, either on your own or with others. Please exclude giving money or anything that was a requirement of your job or organised through your employer"*. The survey then asks about whether you have given any "help" or "unpaid help" to this organisation and then asks about the frequency and type of help given e.g organising activity, giving advice, administration, transport etc.

Thus, the activity, volunteering, is always described as 'help' or 'unpaid help' which reduces the risk of just capturing a narrow subset of what we mean by volunteering, as can be the risk with asking about "volunteering" directly, which is often associated with preconceived ideas of what "volunteering" looks like or not identifying with the label "volunteer".

2.3. Types of volunteering among BAME groups – formal and informal

The 'Community Life' survey then also asks about help given to "other people" rather than any group or organisation – *"this could be a friend, a neighbour or someone else but not relative"*. This is what we refer to as 'informal volunteering'.

Once again this helps to capture what different cultures²⁸ may define as simply part of their day to day way of life rather than something they would call volunteering. This allows us to expand analysis into formal vs informal volunteering using 'Community Life'²⁹. Across all demographics (including White British), people volunteer more informally (giving unpaid help to individual people who are not relatives) than formally (through a group, club or organisation). We find that **BAME individuals volunteer at lower rates than White British individuals for both formal and informal volunteering although the gap is smaller for**

²⁷ Note that the 'Citizenship Survey' collected data via face-to-face survey mode only. The 'Community Life' survey also contained experimental web and postal surveys up to 2016. However, these were experimental, and contained missing data around key variables like income, which we require for our analysis. We therefore combine only face-to-face data from the 'Citizenship Survey' and 'Community Life' surveys in this report to ensure comparability of results and minimise survey mode effects. This enables us to maximise the sample of BAME groups in the 'Citizenship Survey', providing a rich combined source of UK data over a ten year period.

²⁸ We recognise that ethnicity is only a proxy for culture - self-reported ethnicity is how we pick up the cultural variations in the data.

²⁹ 'Community Life' contains ONS detailed ethnic group data for the years 2012-2016, which gives a sample size of 17,046, with 12,008 volunteers. 'Citizenship survey' gives a sample size of 62,132, with 38,957 volunteers.

informal volunteering (24% gap for formal and 18% gap for informal)³⁰ (Appendix 2, Table 7). This is an interesting finding given that the focus on formal volunteering in surveys is often offered as a hypothesis to explain lower levels of volunteering amongst BAME individuals (see the literature review in Appendix 1). Breaking this down further, formal volunteering was again highest among multi-ethnic groups (38%) and once again lowest among British Pakistani/Bangladeshi (25%), British Chinese and other Asian (30%) and other ethnic groups (25%).

2.4. Motivations and barriers to volunteering

The Join In GIVERS report (2018)³¹ explored the ‘Community Life’ survey to identify the main motivations behind volunteering in the UK and turned the data into a set of simple principles to help engage, recruit, manage and retain all volunteers across different population groups.

‘Community Life’ asks: “Which, if any, of these are reasons why you have not / don’t give unpaid help to groups, clubs or organisations more regularly / in the past 12 months?”³² and the respondent is asked to select all answers that apply. The design of the question captures all possible reasons, not only the most important ones so we can establish the proportion of people who cite the reason. This means that we’re capturing all barriers but don’t have an idea of how important that barrier is.

The main motivations and barriers for volunteering are shared commonly across all demographics (Table A2 and Table A3). The most commonly cited reasons for volunteering across all groups are the altruistic reasons of wanting to improve things/help people (over half of all respondents), having spare time to do it (over a third of all respondents), and the importance of the cause (over a quarter of all respondents). The main barriers are a lack of time due to other commitments in life (work, family). The GIVERS principles are the product of looking at this consistency across all demographics and GIVERS remains relevant for every demographic group.

The key question for this report is: how do motivations for volunteering and barriers to engagement differ between people from different ethnic backgrounds?

First, we explore the common barriers to volunteering across the whole BAME population, and compare these to White British respondents in ‘Community Life’ and the ‘Citizenship Survey’ (Table A2). We explore the results in greater detail in the subsections below, alongside the qualitative research. We also attempt to break down the motivations and barriers for the constituent ethnic groups in BAME.

³⁰ Although there is a 10 percentage point gap for formal volunteering and an 11 percentage point gap for informal volunteering, because of the higher rates of informal volunteering, the percentage gap is smaller (18% compared with 24%).

³¹ Fujiwara, D., Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2018). GIVERS: Using behavioural science to recruit and retain volunteers more effectively. Sports and Recreation Alliance. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

³² The question is variable ‘VBarr’. The exact wording depends on the answer given to a previous question around whether or not the respondent volunteers. (2017) Community Life Survey 2016-17 Self-Completion Questionnaire. HM Government. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/567536/CL1617_Web_questionnaire_v3.pdf, p.29

The reported barriers to volunteering differ significantly between British BAME and White British groups. Compared to White British individuals, British BAME individuals have higher odds of reporting:

- Children/home barriers;
- Study barriers;
- Information barriers: “don't know any groups that need help”; “haven't heard about opportunities to help”; “new to the area”.

Table A2 (Appendix 2, Table 9) Barriers to volunteering, Ethnic group: ‘Community Life’ (2012-2016) + the ‘Citizenship Survey’ (2007-2011)

	Odds of citing barrier: BAME vs. White	% who cite barrier: BAME (n/N)	% who cite barrier: White (n/N)	% who cite barrier: All respondents (% , n/N)
I have work commitments	0.770***	47.6% (4800/10087)	54.1% (7964/14716)	51.5% (12771/24815)
I have to look after children / the home	1.429***	37.4% (3772/10087)	29.5% (4339/14716)	32.7% (8114/24815)
I have to look after someone elderly or ill	0.619***	5.5% (550/10087)	8.5% (1254/14716)	7.3% (1805/24815)
I have to study	2.652***	19.4% (1956/10087)	8.3% (1224/14716)	12.8% (3180/24815)
I do other things with my spare time	0.595***	17.9% (1807/10087)	26.8% (3948/14716)	23.2% (5760/24815)
I'm not the right age	0.541***	3.6% (364/10087)	6.5% (953/14716)	5.3% (1317/24815)
I don't know any groups that need help	1.190***	13.2% (1336/10087)	11.4% (1673/14716)	12.1% (3011/24815)
I haven't heard about opportunities to help	1.202***	16.2% (1631/10087)	13.8% (2035/14716)	14.8% (3668/24815)
I'm new to the area	1.335***	9.1% (919/10087)	7.0% (1028/14716)	7.9% (1949/24815)
I've never thought about it	0.933	8.4% (851/10087)	9.0% (1323/14716)	8.8% (2175/24815)
I have an illness or disability that prevents me	0.495***	6.0% (607/10087)	11.5% (1685/14716)	9.2% (2292/24815)

Notes: First column - The odds come from a logistic regression model. Odds of less than 1 mean individuals from the group are less likely to volunteer, and odds of greater than 1 mean they are more likely to volunteer. The more “stars”, the more confident that we can be that we did not just see this result by chance. *** <1% significance; ** <5% significance; * <10% significance. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors used. Weights not applied due to sample size issues. Standard socio-demographic controls including household income (ethnic group regressions only), employment status, marital status, geographical region etc. included but not reported in this table. Numbers in brackets in columns 3, 4 and 5: the numerator is the number in the target group in the sample and the denominator is the total number in the sample.

On average, British BAME groups have higher odds of volunteering (formal and informal) for community and religious reasons (compared to White British groups):

- In response to a need in their community;
- To improve things/help people;
- As part of a religious belief to help people.

British BAME groups are also more likely to volunteer for instrumental reasons related to career, skills, and social outcomes:

- It helps me get on in my career;
- To meet people/make friends;
- A chance to learn new skill.

Table A3 (Appendix 2, Table 8) Motivations: Reasons started volunteering, Ethnic group: 'Community Life' (2012-2016 + 'Citizenship Survey' 2007-2011)

	BAME Odds ratio	BAME (% , n/N)	White (% , n/N)	Total observations (% , n/N)
I wanted to improve things/help people	1.106***	58.9% (2795/4745)	56.5% (7595/13454)	57.1% (10397/18214)
I wanted to meet people/make friends	1.066*	30.3% (1439/4745)	29.0% (3900/13454)	29.3% (5342/18214)
The cause was really important to me	0.790***	34.3% (1627/4745)	39.8% (5353/13454)	38.3% (6984/18214)
My friends/family did it	0.995	19.3% (915/4745)	19.4% (2605/13454)	19.3% (3523/18214)
It was connected with the needs of my family/friends	0.553***	16.5% (784/4745)	26.3% (3544/13454)	23.8% (4329/18214)
I felt there was a need in my community	1.279***	30.5% (1446/4745)	25.5% (3433/13454)	26.8% (4883/18214)
I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skills	1.275***	22.6% (1073/4745)	18.6% (2509/13454)	19.7% (3586/18214)
I thought it would give me a chance to use my existing skills	0.828***	19.2% (911/4745)	22.3% (2999/13454)	21.5% (3915/18214)
It helps me get on in my career	2.476***	18.9% (896/4745)	8.6% (1156/13454)	11.3% (2053/18214)
It's part of my religious belief to help people	1.826***	27.1% (1285/4745)	16.9% (2274/13454)	19.6% (3561/18214)
It's part of my philosophy of life to help people	0.725***	14.3% (678/4745)	18.7% (2516/13454)	17.6% (3197/18214)
It gave me a chance to get a recognised qualification	0.994	9.7% (460/4745)	9.7% (1311/13454)	9.7% (1771/18214)
I had spare time to do it	0.402***	13.5% (640/4745)	28.0% (3762/13454)	24.2% (4407/18214)
I felt there was no one else to do it	0.434***	3.9% (183/4745)	8.5% (1139/13454)	7.3% (1323/18214)
None of these	1.137	2.2% (60/2704)	2.0% (192/9811)	2.0% (252/12526)

*Notes: First column: the odds come from a logistic regression model. Odds of less than 1 mean individuals from the group are less likely to volunteer, and odds of greater than 1 mean they are more likely to volunteer. The more “stars”, the more confident that we can be that we did not just see this result by chance. *** <1% significance; ** <5% significance; * <10% significance. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors used. Weights not applied due to sample size issues. Standard socio-demographic controls including household income (ethnic group regressions only), employment status, marital status, geographical region etc. included but not reported in this table. Numbers in brackets in columns 3, 4 and 5: the numerator is the number in the target group in the sample and the denominator is the total number in the sample.*



DIVERSITY

3. MIXED METHOD RESULTS

3. Mixed method results

3.1. Qualitative methodology

Informed by the core findings from ‘Understanding Society’ that British Asians have significantly lower levels of formal volunteering, the partnership commissioned Breakthrough Media to run a series of focus groups with British Asian participants. The objective of these groups was to explore the barriers and motivations concerning voluntary activity for these communities in more detail.

The small scale of the qualitative research required a sample that would in some way give a voice to the diverse experiences of British Asians whilst also uncovering commonalities. Focus group participants were recruited from the British Bangladeshi and British Pakistani population, as these two groups make up the largest proportion of the British Asian community.³³

The respondents’ identity as Muslims and how that identity relates to volunteering also comes through in the focus groups. We would welcome the opportunity to perform further focus group research in the future with other non-Muslim British Asians to better separate out the impact of ethnicity and religion³⁴. Breakthrough conducted six focus groups in total, with a mixture of first and second generation males and females. To ensure geographical representativeness across England³⁵, groups were run across the country, with two in London, two in Derby and two in Greater Manchester.

This qualitative work was conceived to further explore the following findings from the in-depth quantitative work:

Findings from the review of data:

- Asian groups in particular, are the only BAME group who are significantly less likely to volunteer, compared to White British groups.
- Female individuals within BAME groups have significantly lower odds of volunteering compared to other groups.
- Home/child commitments are more prevalent among BAME groups (39% compared to 28% of White British groups), with 63% higher odds
- Home/child barriers were more pronounced in the Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups (53%), Arabic groups (52%) and Chinese/South East Asian Demographics (38%).

³³Population of England and Wales. (2018, August 1). *Office of National Statistics*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/british-population/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest>

³⁴ The majority of British Asians are Muslim but it would be useful to work with non-Muslim British Asians to separate out the ethnic and religious identity effects. Ethnic Group by Religion. (2013, July 31st). *Nomis*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/LC2201EW>

³⁵ Although we are interested in BAME volunteering across the UK, we were limited by resource as to the location of the focus groups. There has been some work undertaken by Volunteer Development Scotland (A Way of Life: Black and Minority Ethnic Diverse Communities as Volunteers. (2004). *Volunteer Development Scotland*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bemis.org.uk/full%20report%20way%20of%20life%20vds.pdf>), and also from Sports Council Wales as quoted in Long, J., Hylton, K., Spracklen, K. & Ratna, A. (2009, July). A Systematic Review of the Literature on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Sport and Physical Recreation. *Carnegie Research Institute, Leeds Metropolitan University*. Retrieved from: <https://www.sportengland.org/media/3267/systematic-review-of-the-literature-on-bme-communities-in-sport.pdf>, p.21. We are not aware of any work focusing on BAME volunteering in Northern Ireland.

Data findings that were explored in the qualitative groups:

- Understand any specific barriers to volunteering amongst British Bangladeshi and British Pakistani communities;
- Explore barriers to volunteering as they pertain to age, gender and recency of immigration (alongside those already identified e.g. family commitments);
- Understand how motivations to volunteer are understood culturally;
- Understand what might encourage more members of the British Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities to take up volunteering.

Participants were included only if they do not currently undertake any voluntary activities³⁶, which allowed the moderators to explore the perceived barriers to volunteering amongst this group. The decision to run distinct groups for first generation and second-generation participants was taken on the hypothesis that second-generation immigrants, who had been born in the UK would experience volunteering very differently from an individual for whom English was a second language and who had not had the same opportunities to build a social network and understanding of life in the UK. We also captured the length of time respondents had been resident in the UK as it is entirely possible to be first generation immigrant but also very settled in the UK as a resident.

As time commitments are frequently cited as a barrier to voluntary activity, all respondents in the six groups were asked to complete where possible a week-long diary recording their daily activities, in order for researchers to triangulate findings from the focus group discussions.³⁷ Below we explore together the findings from the in-depth quantitative analysis, the focus group discussions and the time use diaries. The findings are grouped into broad themes that concur across the different methodologies, and then we examine the additional findings from the qualitative analysis.

3.2. Gender and BAME volunteering

We compare volunteering rates of men and women in BAME and non-BAME groups (the sample size for respondents identifying as ‘Other’ gender is too low to do detailed analysis). Women from BAME backgrounds have significantly lower odds of volunteering compared to BAME male and White British groups of either gender (Appendix 2, Table 10). This is particularly notable as White British women have significantly higher odds of volunteering compared to their White British male counterparts.

There is no significant difference between the odds of volunteering between men from BAME backgrounds and the average odds in the population, which suggests that BAME women are the group who are most disengaged from formal volunteering.

The motivation data from ‘Community Life’ and the ‘Citizenship Survey’ (Appendix 2, Table 11) do not immediately explain this difference between male and female BAME volunteering. However, there is a larger difference between men and women reporting “I have to look after children/the home” as a barrier to volunteering in the BAME group compared to the total sample but there’s also a larger difference in the proportion of men citing “I have work commitments” than women in the BAME group compared to the total sample. We dig deeper

³⁶ The definition of voluntary activity was taken from the ‘Community Life’ survey.

³⁷ Respondents in groups 3 and 4 had much lower levels of English proficiency and were therefore not asked to complete the task.

into potential reasons for this difference between BAME and non-BAME female participation in the qualitative work (detailed in Appendix 3).

3.3. Home and family commitments

‘Community Life’ and the ‘Citizenship Survey’ (Table A2) show that:

- A higher proportion of BAME than White British groups identify barriers of home / child commitments (37% compared to 30% of White British groups), with 43% higher odds.
- Child/home commitments are a significant barrier in particular to volunteering for British Pakistani or Bangladeshi respondents, with 45% citing this as a barrier to volunteering, compared to 37% within the BAME group as a whole (Appendix 2, Table 12).
- For most other ethnic groups, child/home commitments hovered around the 33% mark. These barriers affected White British individuals the least (30%).
- Child and home commitments are more common barriers to volunteering among women (41%) compared to men (23%) in the general population. This difference is more pronounced among BAME groups, where nearly half of BAME women (49%) report having to look after the children/home as a barrier to volunteering, compared to 25% of BAME men (Appendix 2, Table 11).

3.4. Gender and family in volunteering – a barrier and opportunity?

We triangulate the motivation data from ‘Community Life’ and the ‘Citizenship Survey’ with the focus group discussions. A lack of time was the most common reason for not volunteering. Family commitments were particularly significant: the sense that “family comes first” meant that participants felt that, where possible, spare time should be spent with relatives. In addition to childcare, providing care for older family members was also common, particularly for women.

While women commonly cited time barriers, in time use diaries the women recorded more spare time than the men. In the discussions, the time barrier was discussed more in the context of the judgment around appropriate use of that free time (sometimes by the women themselves, their husband, mother-in-law etc).

The role of a women was commonly described as one of dutiful care for the family (the top five activities between 7am and 10pm were: working, meals, housework, sleeping and childcare). The decisions around how to use free time varied across a number of themes:

- **Me time:** Free time is ‘me’ time - at the end of a day of family duty, it was time to relax.
- **Social attitudes:** Wasn’t “worth the argument”³⁸ from husbands or parents questioning why the women wanted to take on other commitments outside of the home.
- **Status:** A perception that if you are going to go out to help others and do work outside the home then it should bring money into the home, rather than create additional costs or demands on time.

³⁸ “Basically, he’s just going to put you in a stressful position! It’s just not worth the argument” (participant, Group 1) as quoted in Appendix 3 (p.9).

3.5. Age and ethnicity in volunteering

Older individuals (aged over 46) within BAME groups have significantly lower odds of volunteering compared to other groups (both older White British and younger BAME/White British groups) (Appendix 2, Table 13). There is no significant difference in the odds of volunteer for younger people from BAME backgrounds and the average for the general population. This suggests that the lower odds of individuals from BAME backgrounds volunteering is partly driven by older BAME individuals.

This may reflect older BAME people's likely experience as first generation immigrants rather than their age per se. The literature review suggested that the challenges experienced by first generation immigrants within civic life may spill over into barriers to (particularly formal) volunteering. The qualitative focus group research revealed the following barriers related to age and generational differences within the British Pakistani and Bangladeshi population:

Speaking English barriers: For many of the first-generation participants, low English language proficiency was a significant barrier to volunteering. This echoes quantitative findings from 'Community Life' and the 'Citizenship Survey':

- 62% of those who have English as first language have volunteered in the last 12 months compared to less than half of those who have another first language (47%). The same patterns apply to all subtypes of volunteering: formal, informal, and employer-sponsored (Appendix 2, Table 15).
- Simple bivariate analysis (i.e. not controlling for any other factors) indicates that speaking English as a first language and volunteering are statistically positively correlated. (Appendix 2).

However, it's worth noting that there are of course still younger individuals who are first generation also. Furthermore, high levels of transnational marriages mean there may be a 'first generation in every generation'. These younger individuals may also face considerable similar barriers with respect to language and cultural integration which may affect their volunteering³⁹.

Although these participants were some of the most motivated to volunteer in order to gain skills, they expressed concern about communicating and many did not feel comfortable travelling to unfamiliar locations.

Travel barriers: The travel required to volunteer was also seen as a barrier, both in terms of time, cost and difficulty, which was a particular concern for some first-generation women, who lacked confidence in navigating public transport alone. This was partly as they rarely travelled far from home, and also due to their lack of confidence in speaking English.

Family perceptions: Women in both the first and second-generation groups noted that family members might raise questions⁴⁰ around motivation and personal safety if they expressed a

³⁹ The Casey Review quotes the cohort study 'Born in Bradford' (<https://borninbradford.nhs.uk/>) which found that 80% of babies of Pakistani ethnicity had at least one parent born outside of the UK (Casey, L. (2016) The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration. Department for Communities and Local Government. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575973/The_Casey_Review_Report.pdf, p. 32).

⁴⁰ Questions suggested included: "Why would you give time to X, not your family?"; "Who else will be there?"; "Will other men be there?"; "Will you be safe, if it's in the evening and dark outside?"

desire to volunteer. As a result, many felt that volunteering may not be worth the friction it would create within the household.

Skills motivations: Focus group work found that amongst younger and first generation participants, there was a very strong sense that volunteering was an effective route to employment and offered the chance to improve and practise English-language skills along the way. We explore this further in Section 3.6, below.

3.6. Volunteering: skills and status, the benefits and the barriers

We know that a higher proportion of the BAME community (62%) are in the lower socio-economic bracket compared to White groups (47%) (Appendix 2, Table 2). The quantitative research from Community Life and the Citizenship Survey (Table A3 above and Table 8 in Appendix 2 and other work on socio-economic groups and volunteering motivations using the same data⁴¹) shows that BAME individuals share similar motivations to those in lower socio-economic groups in reporting higher motivations to volunteer for career and skills development:

- A higher proportion of people from a BAME background are motivated by career (“It helps me get on in my career”) (19%) and skills (“I thought it would give me a chance to learn new skill”) (23%) compared to White British individuals (9% and 19% respectively), and by improving their English (Appendix 2, Table 14).
- *The chance to learn a new skill* was the strongest career motivation across all BAME groups (except for British Pakistani or British Bangladeshi for whom the strongest career motivation was “help me get on in my career”), and was strongest in respondents with multiple ethnic backgrounds (26%), British African/Caribbean (23%), and British Chinese or other Asian (24%) groups (Appendix 2, Table 14).
- “It helps me get on in my career” was highest overall amongst British Pakistani/Bangladeshi respondents (23%) compared to other BAME groups, but was high for all BAME respondents at 19% (Appendix 2, Table 14).
- The British Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, and Chinese or other Asian were the groups with the highest incidence of volunteering for the *chance to get a recognised qualification* (around 11%). Nonetheless this remains a rather rare reason for taking up volunteering (Appendix 2, Table 14).

The converse of career and skills motivations are barriers related to work and study:

- A higher proportion of BAME than White British groups identify the barrier of having to study (19% compared to 8% of White British groups), with 165% higher odds of citing this barrier) (Appendix 2, Table 9).
- Work commitments were highest for British Indian respondents (58%). It is notable that British Indian was the only ethnic subgroup where the frequency of work commitments as a barrier to volunteering was even higher than for White British respondents (Appendix 2, Table 12).
- Work commitments were lowest (compared to all ethnicities) for the British Pakistani or Bangladeshi community (43%) (Appendix 2, Table 12).
- Study commitments were a significant barrier to volunteering for Chinese/other Asian respondents, with 23% of British Chinese/other Asian respondents citing this as a barrier, compared to the BAME average of 19%.

⁴¹ Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2019, January). ‘A Bit Rich’. *Jump Projects*. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

Although the chance to learn a new skill is phrased positively in the ‘Community Life’ survey question, the qualitative research (Appendix 3) suggested the association between volunteering and learning a new skill can also be perceived negatively:

- **Not skilled enough already:** some participants were put off volunteering because they felt they simply would not meet the entry criteria, or they saw upskilling as a large time commitment.
- **Low status:** skills building was perceived as being for those who didn’t have or couldn’t get a job, and a number of participants questioned why a person would work for free when they could find paid employment. We do not currently know whether this low status of volunteering as for the ‘jobless’ is a perception across all BAME volunteers. This may be an important area of future research.
- **Cost:** a number of the participants expressed that they thought that volunteers tended to be rich people because they didn’t need to spend the time earning more money.

In summary, volunteering motivations are strongly linked to careers and skills for all BAME groups, but in particular those from British Pakistani/Bangladeshi backgrounds.

This is particularly notable given the unusually high levels of economic inactivity amongst women from Pakistani/Bangladeshi backgrounds: as noted by the Casey Review 57% are economically inactive compared with 25% of White women and 39% of all ethnic minority women⁴².

Volunteering may act as a way into work. These groups also are the least likely to cite work as a barrier to volunteering of any ethnic group surveyed, although this is still a common barrier overall.

However, focusing on volunteering as an opportunity to build skills needs to be done carefully so that it does not lead to negative associations between volunteering and a failure to secure paid employment. In other words it should be presented as an aspiration rather than a low status activity.

3.7. The role of religion and personal philosophy

We see from the Understanding Society data (Appendix 2, Table 17) that religion plays a significant role in why people volunteer: religious people are statistically more likely to volunteer in the population as a whole (White British and BAME) and also just BAME groups (Appendix 2, Table 18).

We now turn to the data on motivations associated with religion and philosophy from ‘Community Life’ and the ‘Citizenship Survey’. In response to “Did you start helping these

⁴² Casey, L. (2016) The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration. *Department for Communities and Local Government*.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into-opportunity-and-integration>

groups, clubs or organisations for any of the following reasons?”⁴³, respondents have the option to select (amongst other non-religious motivations):

- Part of my religious belief to help people;
- Part of my philosophy of life to help people;
- There was a need in my community.

More BAME respondents overall quote religion (27%) or community need (31%) as a reason for volunteering compared to White British groups (17% and 26% respectively), and are less likely to quote personal philosophy (14% compared to 19% of White British) (Appendix 2, Table 17).

When we break down the BAME category into its constituent ethnicities, **being motivated to volunteer as part of one’s religious belief is most common among British African/Caribbean (30%), and British Indian groups (28%).**

These two ethnic subgroups are the only ones for which the frequency of this reason lies above the BAME average. The least likely ethnic minority group to quote this reason were those with multiple ethnic backgrounds (20%). It is noteworthy that all BAME groups are more likely than White British respondents to quote religion as a reason for volunteering (17% as above) (Appendix 2, Table 17).

Interestingly, we see the reverse pattern in the frequency of citing it’s “part of my philosophy of life”: British African / Caribbean (13%) and British Pakistani or Bangladeshi (8%) groups have the lowest proportion of individuals citing this reason whilst multiple ethnic backgrounds (18%) or other ethnic groups (19%) have the highest. It could be that these options simply substitute for each other, depending on whether the individual is religious, but are getting at the same core motivation (Appendix 2, Table 17).

In the focus group discussion, participants often noted that the activities discussed were simply part of “being a Muslim”. This tallied well with 25% of British Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents citing it’s “part of my religious belief to help people” (Appendix 2, Table 17). However, discussions of altruism within the focus groups were tightly tied to ‘Zakat’ – the mandatory giving of 2.5% of income to charity which is one of the five pillars of Islam so the donation of money instead of time.

3.8. Additional insights from the qualitative research

We have so far reported the findings from the focus group discussions with respect to how they add context to the quantitative evidence (Appendix 2) on motivations and barriers from ‘Community Life’ and the ‘Citizenship Survey’.

An additional advantage of qualitative research is that it is exploratory and we may find additional results that we don’t initially expect. We report the initial findings of such exploratory work below though please note that such findings need to be confirmed with a larger, quantitative sample.

⁴³ The question is variable ‘VolBen’. (2017) ‘Community Life’ Survey 2016-17 Self-Completion Questionnaire. *HM Government*. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/567536/CL1617_Web_questionnaire_v3.pdf, p.25

Raising awareness

There was a low level of awareness of the volunteering opportunities available. There is a big job to do around raising awareness of organisations in need of volunteers. In addition to this, clarity around the role played by volunteers will be crucial to recruiting a more diverse audience.

The heroics

For most participants, volunteering was very much viewed as a burden/duty: the positive outcomes associated with volunteering were therefore not immediately recognised. There is an opportunity to highlight the benefits of volunteering – its heroic nature and benefits “for the soul” – as well as for the community.



DIVERSITY

4. BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING FOR BAME INDIVIDUALS

4. Benefits of volunteering for BAME individuals

We have so far assumed that the average wellbeing and health benefits of volunteering observed in the GIVERS work and subsequent research translate into benefits for individuals from BAME backgrounds.

This is the premise of volunteering being a “good thing” that BAME individuals are potentially missing out on and the motivating premise for trying to understand ways of engaging with BAME volunteers and reducing their barriers to volunteering. We now go back and bolster this initial assumption that volunteering is also a “good thing” for people from BAME backgrounds.

4.1. Health and wellbeing

As discussed in the introduction to this report, volunteering has considerable wellbeing and health benefits. Additional work focusing on low socio-economic groups, the report ‘A Bit Rich’, accompanies this report⁴⁴ and finds that the wellbeing and health benefits of volunteering are considerably higher for lower socio-economic groups. The findings for BAME volunteers are more mixed, and in some cases negative, although this may be driven by sample size issues.

4.2. Volunteering, trust and social mixing

Trust in society and community is an important indicator of social cohesion and wellbeing⁴⁵ and is increasingly seen as an important driver of not just our wellbeing⁴⁶ but also the economic health of wider society in terms of social cohesion and productivity by the likes of the OECD⁴⁷. Previous Jump Projects team research, with BT, highlighted the significant trust and social cohesion outcomes that are associated with volunteering in sport. People who volunteer in sport are more likely to trust people in their community and understand the importance of playing a role in their local community⁴⁸. We build on this work and look in particular at the impacts of volunteering on social mixing (mixing with people of different backgrounds) and trust.

4.3. Social mixing

In the right conditions, social mixing can have a range of positive social benefits, increasing trust and decreasing prejudice between individuals from different groups. The 2017 Casey Review stated “social mixing and interactions between people from a wider range of backgrounds can have positive impacts; not just in reducing anxiety and prejudice, but also in

⁴⁴ Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2019, January). A Bit Rich. *Jump Projects*. Accessible from:

<https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

⁴⁵ Well-being and trust in the workplace. *Journal of Happiness Studies* 12.5 (2011): 747-767; Lundmark, Sebastian, Mikael Gilljam, and Stefan Dahlberg. Measuring generalized trust: An examination of question wording and the number of scale points. *Public opinion quarterly* 80.1 (2015): 26-43.

⁴⁶ Helliwell, J. F & Wang, S. (2010, April). Trust and Well-being. *National Bureau of Economic Research*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nber.org/papers/w15911>

⁴⁷ See for example: OECD (2017), OECD Guidelines on Measuring Trust, *OECD Publishing*, Paris.

⁴⁸ Hidden Diamonds, (2014) *Join In*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/volunteering-research>

enabling people to get on better in employment and social mobility” (Casey, 2016, p.8)⁴⁹. Research for the Social Integration Commission in 2015 estimated that the cost of low integration is approximately £6bn a year in long-term unemployment, recruitment and career progression, and health and wellbeing amongst the isolated⁵⁰.

The data analysis in this report shows that volunteering correlates with higher levels of social mixing: 44% of all volunteers reported having mixed with people from different ethnic backgrounds or religions in the past 12 months, compared to only 31% of the general population (Appendix 2, Table 21). Alongside this, significantly higher proportion (over three quarters, 77%) of BAME volunteers reported mixing with people from different ethnic groups/religion while volunteering, compared to 58% of White British groups (Appendix 2, Table 22).

What we cannot say for certain is whether these groups mixed with people of different ethnic groups/religion *because* they volunteered: it may be that volunteering encourages more social mixing, or that people who volunteer are inclined to mix more, and have self-selected into volunteering. More research tracking individuals volunteering over time is needed to distinguish between these two hypotheses.

4.4. Trust

Volunteering is positively associated with trust: volunteers have significantly higher odds of reporting trust in people living in the neighbourhood, compared to non-volunteers (for both BAME and individuals from lower socio-economic groups (SEG)) (Appendix 2, Table 26).

Levels of trust are in general lower for BAME and lower SEG individuals but volunteering appears to have a buffering effect: lower SEG / BAME volunteers have levels of trust that are not significantly different from 1 which indicate that the odds are the same as non-BAME / high SEG individuals and in turn significantly higher than their BAME / lower SEG non-volunteer counterparts. (Appendix 2, Table 26). So although volunteering doesn't have an especially positive effect for BAME communities in this respect, it is still beneficial.

In summary, the wellbeing and health benefits of volunteering for BAME individuals do not look as positive as for other groups in society. But there are initial indications that volunteering might offer a buffering effect for low levels of social mixing and trust amongst people from BAME backgrounds.

⁴⁹ Casey, L. (2016) The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration. *Department for Communities and Local Government*.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-casey-review-a-review-into-opportunity-and-integration>

⁵⁰ Kingdom United? Thirteen steps to tackle social segregation. (2015). *Social Integration Commission*. Retrieved from: http://socialintegrationcommission.org.uk/images/sic_kingdomunited.pdf



DIVERSITY

SO WHAT?

SUMMARY OF KEY
FINDINGS AND PRACTICAL
RECOMMENDATIONS

5. So what? Summary of key findings and practical recommendations

Despite all the positive benefits around volunteering⁵¹, almost all the research to date demonstrates that BAME groups are underrepresented as volunteers. In this report, we have:

- Broken down the data to investigate the levels of volunteering at a greater granularity of ethnicity, controlling for other factors which may influence volunteering levels;
- Investigated barriers and motivations for volunteering amongst people from BAME backgrounds.

The Prime Minister's '**Racial Disparity Audit**' (October 2017)⁵² laid down an explicit challenge to "explain and change" the disparities. Alongside this, the **2016 Casey Review** into 'Opportunity and integration' advocates a number of interventions to improve integration between different groups in society:

"the promotion of English language skills, empowering marginalised women, promoting more social mixing, particularly among young people, and tackling barriers to employment for the most socially isolated groups." (Casey, 2016, p.17)

Our results suggest that similar barriers (English language, specific difficulties facing women) are at play with respect to accessing volunteering as with other opportunities, but also that volunteering may be part of the solution (encouraging social mixing and offering skills development).

We have divided up our summary into 3 stages:

- Key findings
- Key recommendations
- Areas for future research

5.1. Key findings

The picture is broadly more positive than we thought – ethnically diverse groups volunteer in significant numbers. The 'Understanding Society' data shows that, for the most part, when the BAME demographic is broken into its constituent ethnicities, the levels of volunteering are broadly in line with the representation of these groups in the national population.

The underrepresentation of BAME in volunteering appears to be driven by British Asians who are underrepresented compared to their numbers and are less likely to volunteer than members of the general population.

⁵¹ Fujiwara, D., Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2018). GIVERS: Using behavioural science to recruit and retain volunteers more effectively. Sports and Recreation Alliance. Accessible from: <https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

⁵² Race Disparity Audit: Summary Findings from the Ethnicity Facts and Figures website. (2017, October). *Cabinet Office*. Retrieved from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/686071/Revised_RDA_report_March_2018.pdf

More than socio-economics: while socio-economic background is a significant factor in volunteering, there are specific reasons related to ethnicity that contribute to the lower prevalence of some ethnically diverse groups volunteering in the UK.

Gender in BAME volunteering is significant: the data reveals women within BAME groups have significantly lower odds of volunteering compared to other demographics. The data, alongside the deeper qualitative research among these target groups showed consistent and broader barriers for South Asian women.

Age: older individuals within BAME groups (aged over 46) have significantly lower odds of volunteering compared to older White British groups, and younger groups from BAME and White British backgrounds. Volunteering is often seen as a route to skills and jobs, which may make it less relevant later in life and less aspirational.

Not explained by formal / informal distinction: In the literature, some hypothesise that lower levels of volunteering amongst BAME communities may be explained by BAME individuals not recognising their informal volunteering as “volunteering”, or by BAME individuals helping out informally in their local communities than undertaking formal roles. In contrast to some work cited in the literature review, we do not find that lower levels of reported volunteering are explained by higher levels of informal volunteering amongst BAME individuals.

The evidence is there to suggest that this informal help is focused around family but this type of help is not included in any definition of volunteering.

In addition, the structure and wording of the ‘Community Life’ Survey is sensitive to the use and understanding of the word ‘volunteering’ and offers what we suggest is best practice. The survey captures formal and informal volunteering as a form of active citizenship through asking about membership of and providing unpaid help to groups and the wider community (beyond directly family).

5.2. Key recommendations

We now have a more nuanced understanding of which particular groups amongst people from BAME backgrounds, organisations working with volunteers need to do a better job at providing opportunities for: British Asians, women and older individuals.

The opportunity and risks around targeted, transactional appeals – highlight the heroes.

Volunteering motivations are strongly linked to careers and skills for all BAME groups, but in particular those from British Pakistani/Bangladeshi backgrounds. Emphasising skills building to recruit volunteers, however, must be done with care.

The qualitative work demonstrated that there are risks with focusing on the volunteering as a way to build skills: the volunteering opportunity may seem unattainable, or be framed as something for the unemployed to do, and therefore low status.

The qualitative research also highlighted how volunteering can be seen as a burden, and in conflict with ‘me time’ in the free time after they’ve taken care of other responsibilities. So it

may be that there's an opportunity to highlight the health and wellbeing elements of volunteering.

For most participants the positive outcomes associated with volunteering were therefore not immediately recognised. There is an opportunity to highlight the benefits of volunteering – its heroic nature and benefits “for the soul” - as well as for the community.

British Asian women may respond more to localised opportunities

We see in the data that BAME groups have higher odds of volunteering in response to a need in their community.

In addition, the qualitative work with British Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups suggested travel was a barrier but that volunteering locally was much more practical, attractive and consistent with the values of family and community within this demographic. Local opportunities which are accessible to families so that the women can volunteer with the family may appeal more to this group.

BAME individuals may respond more to appeals to their religious beliefs

BAME individuals more frequently cite religion as a motivation to volunteer so presenting volunteering as in line with religious beliefs presents a significant opportunity.

For example, the Islamic concept of *Zakat* (which prescribes donating a set amount of your income) was mentioned several times during the focus groups. In addition, Islam also has broader concepts such as *Fard Kifaya* around the duty to the whole community to ensure certain rights and needs are met.

As another example, *Sewa* involves performing an act of kindness without expecting a reward and is prominent in Indian traditions and promoted by several different faiths. Christianity also emphasises following the example of Jesus in helping those in need.

It may be that emphasising different religious concepts like *Fard Kifaya*, *Sewa* and Christian duty in conversations about volunteering is effective in helping people link volunteering to their religious beliefs.

The health and wellbeing benefits

There is an opportunity with both the lower socio-economic and BAME demographics to highlight the health (physical and mental), trust, and community cohesion of volunteering.

5.3. Future research

The influence of income and ethnicity on rates of volunteering must be considered carefully alongside each other

The data in this report and the report titled 'A Bit Rich'⁵³ shows that both BAME communities, specifically, British Asians, and also lower socio-economic groups (SEG) are underrepresented in volunteering.

These groups do overlap with a higher proportion of BAME groups also belong to lower socioeconomic groups (62% v 47% White British) so we'd expect many of the barriers and motivations to volunteering experienced by lower SEG to map to those of BAME groups more broadly.

We do find that BAME individuals from lower socio-economic groups are less likely to volunteer than BAME individuals in general but initial findings suggest that there's no interactive effects⁵⁴ between being a member of both BAME and lower SEG. However, this is a complex phenomenon to study and requires much more research before being able to draw more robust conclusions.

Religion

The opportunities to engage people in volunteering by appealing to their religious beliefs is a complex and sensitive issue – we don't want to pigeon hole individuals into particular opportunities – and so this requires further research. At present we do not know how volunteering opportunities offered by faith groups compare with non-faith alternatives.

For example, it may be that faith-related opportunities offer a sense of belonging and the opportunity to help their community, allowing the individual to not be concerned about expressing faith, to feel comfortable wearing religious dress or pray if that is part of their everyday life. We also need to be mindful of broader trends around religion to evaluate the significance of the opportunity to engage people in volunteering through emphasising how it links with the religious beliefs: the number of people identifying as non-religious is increasing. However, this seems mostly to be associated with a smaller proportion of the population identifying as Christian, and other religions are seeing healthy growth⁵⁵. But with religion consistently linked with motivations to volunteer – a more nuanced look at religion and volunteering would be useful.

⁵³ Lawton, R. & Watt, W. (2019, January). A Bit Rich. *Jump Projects*. Accessible from:

<https://jump-projects.com/our-work/>

⁵⁴ In other words, the observed likelihood of volunteering for individuals who are a member of the lower socio-economic group and are also from a BAME background is not lower than would be predicted knowing the observed likelihoods volunteering for low SEG individuals and BAME individuals separately.

⁵⁵ Religion in England and Wales 2011. (2011). ONS. Retrieved from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/articles/religioninenglandandwales2011/2012-12-11>

The benefits of volunteering for BAME individuals and remaining questions on the role of real or perceived racism

This project suggests focusing on providing better local opportunities to volunteer in particular for British Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups, women and older individuals to address the underrepresentation of BAME individuals observed by other researchers. However, our initial findings unfortunately suggest that the wellbeing and health benefits of volunteering for BAME individuals do not look as positive as for other groups in society. Whilst the current research has focused on barriers to BAME non-volunteers, investigating the negative experiences of BAME volunteers is a crucial area of future research to establish why BAME individuals may not be deriving as many benefits and what can be changed about the volunteering opportunities to make the experience more beneficial.

The literature review (Appendix 1) identified “real and perceived racism” as an issue that is less well understood. While we have been able to investigate motivations and barriers; we do not look at the impact of real and perceived racism.

Not feeling welcome as reason for not volunteering isn't covered in the national surveys and so was not available to us for analysis. The Guardian's recent “Bias in Britain” poll explores the experiences of people from BAME and White backgrounds⁵⁶ and shows that individuals from BAME backgrounds are more likely to have negative experiences such as being abused in the street or being thrown out of a club for no good reason. How far instances of real or perceived racism are affecting the experiences of BAME volunteers is certainly worthy of further study through qualitative and lived experience methods. Is this the reason that the benefits of BAME volunteers in terms of health and wellbeing seem to be dampened in the existing data?

Types of volunteering – informal, formal, what is already working

There are some differences in the amount of formal versus informal volunteering that is done within the BAME community. However, BAME groups have lower odds of giving unpaid help in both a formal and informal setting. The motivations and barriers data as collected by the ‘Citizenship Survey’ and ‘Community Life’ surveys allows us to analyse all forms of ‘unpaid help’, which gives us greater confidence that we are capturing a wider array of voluntary activities. Further research should seek to better understand the different types of informal volunteering that exist and the opportunities that each provides for BAME groups.

Future studies may try to dig deeper into the different barriers, motivations and benefits that volunteering with one's family, neighbours, community, and faith group provides. For example BAME communities are more likely to live in urban environments⁵⁷ which will affect choice and

⁵⁶ Booth, R., Mohdin, A. & Levett, C. (2018, December 2). Bias in Britain: explore the poll results. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/ng-interactive/2018/dec/02/bias-in-britain-explore-the-poll-results>

⁵⁷

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/british-population/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest>

types of volunteering that are available and practical. Qualitative work with BAME groups who do currently volunteer may also help to understand the current experiences of diverse groups volunteering (our qualitative study was limited to the barriers and experience of the British Pakistani and Bangladeshi demographic).

Finally looking into case studies of successful projects in diverse communities could help to further understand what is already working and why.

The status of volunteering

We found in the qualitative research with British Asian groups that volunteering was perceived as an activity for those 'out of work' and was therefore not aspirational, not something to be proud of. At this point we do not know whether the low status of volunteering as for the 'jobless' is true across all BAME groups and whether it might be dependent on the type of volunteering role. This may be an important area of future research.

Age/gender and generational intersectionalities

Lack of confidence or ability in speaking English was more frequently cited as a barrier for many first-generation focus group participants. Although these participants were some of the most motivated to volunteer in order to gain skills, they expressed concern about communicating and many did not feel comfortable travelling to unfamiliar locations. Travel barriers were a particular concern for some first-generation women, who lacked confidence in navigating public transport alone.

Family perceptions: Reflecting the centrality of family, women in both the first and second-generation groups noted that family members might raise questions around motivation and personal safety if they expressed a desire to volunteer.

The opportunity around group or family volunteering may be a fruitful avenue to explore but it may be necessary to investigate how this barrier and opportunity exists beyond the British Pakistani and Bangladeshi demographic that formed the focus of the qualitative work in this report.

Appendices

Appendices 1, 2 and 3 can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlinks below:

[Appendix 1: Rapid response literature review and gap analysis](#)

[Appendix 2: Detailed analysis on UK data volunteering datasets](#)

[Appendix 3: Qualitative research report from 6 focus groups](#)