



Capacity Development Funding in Rural Scotland

The Scottish Rural Equality Network (SREN)

Interim Progress Report to EHRC

February 2009



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1. Introduction

The Highlands & Islands Equality Forum (HIEF) was appointed by the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) in September 2008 to develop a Scottish Rural Equality Network (SREN).

Over the last four months, HIEF has conducted an initial mapping exercise of existing networks in Scotland which support the equalities agenda in rural areas, and has met with local equalities stakeholders to seek out views on what is required from a SREN to add value to their current and future equalities work. This interim report details the activities carried out to date by HIEF and the emerging picture of the scope and functionality that is required from a SREN. An action plan of next steps towards delivering a product that will serve the needs identified by stakeholders is appended to this report.

2. Executive Summary of what the project has achieved to date

2.1 A vision of the SREN

A SREN is visualised as a multi-dimensional network in which rural equality stakeholders at all levels (viz. national and local public bodies, advocacy and support groups, individuals etc) can interact with others and share common concerns, issues, interests, ideas etc, thereby building capacity to tackle the barriers to equality in rural areas and effect positive change on the ground in their own areas.

It will be more than just a database of contacts: more a live organism of those who have a keen interest in dismantling barriers to equal opportunity and quality of life in rural Scotland. In other words, members will not communicate 'with the SREN' but use the SREN network to connect to real people. Communication should be clear and adhere to standards as expressed in agreed aims, objectives and values.

To be used – and therefore successful - the SREN must be seen as an essential tool that eases and adds value to the workload of its members. It must be accessible and extend beyond the parameters of online contact through use of intermediary agents who can reach the most isolated individuals in our rural communities. (NB the SREN will be Equality Impact Assessed). Each local area suggested locally-specific (and diverse) methods of delivering this outreach – from flyers in bus shelters on the small islands of Shetland and in community transport to inclusion in community council agendas etc. This information was a very valuable output from the regional meetings.

The SREN will have online and a face-to-face dimensions to facilitate the balance between enabling anonymous and more personal networking, as well as to make the SREN as accessible as possible. Seminars, conferences, workshops and conferences provide necessary human contact and relationship building. The database will provide the mechanism for communications of specific interest to reach those who have declared an interest in the topic. A website will offer high spec electronic communication facilities such as E Bulletins, toolkits, chat rooms, signposting and links etc (especially links to EHRC and HIEF).

2.2 The SREN Network to date

Building on existing knowledge of contacts, we now have details of approximately 1550 public, voluntary and private sector agencies, groups and individuals; intermediary groups, equality & diversity lead roles, advocacy groups, self-help and other support groups and interested individuals. Those we have contacted have agreed to cascade information (including the SREN membership registration form) through all of their local networks, so we envisage an immediate growth in the outreach of the network as soon as we commence communications.

2.2.1 Hubs and Gaps

It was heartening to find an active equality agenda in all parts of rural Scotland but we noted variations in the degree to which this activity was connected or aligned. Some areas have well defined, formal networks with local community planning partnership groups providing a strategic role; others seem to have little connection between the work of the public agencies and intermediary bodies. Geographical and historical influences, and the degree to which local authorities communicate across and beyond their own remits, make it problematic to define where 'local' networks should lie. However, evidence of overlap across these undefined borders gives hope for a healthy development of a rural network.

2.2.2 Local Forums

HIEF facilitated a half day workshop of interested parties in Aberdeenshire to explore what form of local forum or network would serve their purposes best, and it is expected that the Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Equality Forum will proceed as a user-led network with a few core agencies meeting more formally as a group.

2.3 Attitude towards the SREN and EHRC

Response to the concept of a SREN has been much more enthusiastic and ideas about its scope much wider and innovative than had been anticipated. All of this bodes well for future use of the network, and although this now puts pressure on us to deliver against high expectation, the benefits of public confidence in a Commission which delivers such a warmly welcomed, practical measure of investment is of real value. HIEF has witnessed the EHRC being held up as an exemplar to the nascent SHRC and sees exciting opportunities for joint working of both agencies through the SREN, bringing benefits to many people in rural Scotland. We must, therefore, deliver on this project – to fulfil expectation and to utilise the ground swell of enthusiasm which, if harnessed, will be instrumental to positive change in rural equalities.

2.4 Next steps

The next steps of the SREN project are detailed in an Action Plan in App (ii) on page 25 of this report and include:

- The dissemination of a questionnaire/member registration form; responses will feed into the SREN database and inform the functionality of the network
- Testing of the network functionality by a ‘Welcome’ communication which will include a Survey Monkey link to a monitoring form to capture (anonymously) the diversity of the SREN membership
- Ongoing growth of the network
- Planning of subsequent phases of the SREN including face-to-face summer seminars on rural identity and the build of a SREN website resource

3. More detail on the project to date (cf App (i) page 13)

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Mapping Exercise

An initial contact list was collated - both to serve as a starting point for the final SREN database, and for use in inviting parties to the consultation exercise. We gathered the information in a number of different ways: HIEF -

- Collated existing contacts – predominantly our own network of almost 1300 equalities stakeholders in Highlands & Islands (including public agencies, voluntary groups, advocacy groups and individuals experiencing discrimination), but also from our previous activity on rural equalities such as our Conference on Rural Equalities (February 2008) and a series of round table discussions facilitated between the EHRC and local equality

stakeholders in Dumfries, Glenrothes and Inverness
(March/April 2008)

- Carried out internet searches to identify agencies involved in community planning partnerships
- Added the rural Councils of Voluntary Service (CVS)

3.1.2 Consultation Exercise

- Invitations were sent to all of the above contacts to attend a local round table discussion on the development of the SREN. We recognise the limited reach of this, but felt that, however restrictive, it did represent a first crucial step in what we expect to be a long-running process to build up contacts by cascading invitations through as many existing networks as possible.
- Consultation meetings were then held in 9 venues across the length and breadth of rural Scotland. These meetings were minuted; the draft minute was circulated and verified; final minutes were then circulated to all who attended along with those who had sent apologies, thereby opening up the opportunity for a wider audience to be informed about the progress of the SREN and offering the chance to add their comments.

3.2 Activities and outputs to date

3.2.1 Meetings of HIEF/EHRC

An inception meeting was held on 18th September 2008. This meeting ensured there was a shared understanding of the study brief and proposed research methods. A further meeting was held on 15th January 2009 to ensure that the understanding of both parties continues to be aligned.

3.2.2 Growth of contacts

Through a combination of methods, we have grown our contacts list to approximately 1550, comprising a diverse mix of public, voluntary and private sector agencies, groups and individuals; intermediary groups, equality & diversity lead roles, advocacy groups, self-help and other support groups and interested individuals. Those we have contacted have agreed to cascade information (including the SREN membership registration form) through all of their local networks, so we envisage an immediate growth in the outreach of the network as soon as we commence communications.

3.2.3 Network Hubs and Gaps

Local network boundaries were clearer in some areas than in others: Public agencies often cover different geographical areas and the overlaps are complex. Local areas are often less well defined where they border with different local authority areas, urban areas, and the border with England. In places like Ayrshire, which has three separate local authority regions, networking can be fragmented and evidence little cross-regional working, yet the Highlands & Islands demonstrates a very strong joined-up approach despite its very varied geography.

Historical influences were evident in how networks have evolved: For instance, the Common Ridings in Scottish Borders have influenced very distinct localised identities that are more important to people than the sense of belonging to the Borders. In Dumfries & Galloway and parts of Ayrshire, there are strong links to Ireland and England and this, together with a misunderstood geography, leaves Dumfries & Galloway more divided from the Scottish Borders than you might assume from looking at a map.

Islanders feel a commonality with other islanders and yet there are localised identities *within* island groupings. Arran emerged as belonging sometimes to Ayrshire (as in the Ayrshire & Arran Health Board) and sometimes to Argyll and Highlands & Islands (as part of the Highlands & Islands Enterprise area)

3.2.4 Urban/Rural Divide

Because of the 'blurring' of rural areas as they encroach on urban areas, Aberdeenshire and Ayrshire evidenced polarisation of issues: Gypsy Travellers are a focus in South and East Ayrshire but in-migrants are more of an issue in areas closer to Glasgow. Stakeholder activity in Aberdeenshire is situated around Aberdeen city and we see much joint work between Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Councils and partner agencies.

It is apparent that we have not clearly captured which areas with the Central Belt define themselves as experiencing rural issues, and so we plan to hold another round table discussion in Fife in February/ March to which we will invite stakeholders from Angus, Fife, Perth & Kinross and Stirling. And because of the gap between Highland and Aberdeenshire, we also plan to hold another meeting in Moray.

3.2.5 Strategic Forum activity

There was evidence in most areas of local authority partners coming together to consider equality issues as part of their community planning partnership (CPP) activities but the formality of such groups varied greatly. There was also evidence of a diverse range of equality work within the voluntary sector but the degree to which the sectors communicated varied. Areas which seem to lack formally-developed, strategic forums include Argyll & Bute, Ayrshire, Dumfries & Galloway and Aberdeenshire. The islands are currently 're-energising' their equality forums and there seems to be moves in most places to develop connections across the sectors.

The only region to request support in forming their forum was Aberdeenshire: HIEF facilitated a half day workshop of interested parties to explore what form of forum would serve their purposes best. Following this, it looks like the Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire Equality Forum will proceed as a user-led network with a few core agencies meeting more formally as a group.

3.2.6 Local round table discussions

Meetings were held during the period 13th October to 9th December 2008 in Argyll, Orkney, Shetland, Western Isles, Aberdeenshire, Ayrshire, Dumfries & Galloway, Scottish Borders and Highland. Attendance was low but the debate was of high quality and evidenced a real welcome for capacity building in regard to rural equalities. Attendees were gratified by such a useful and practical initiative from the EHRC after what they perceived as an extensive period of consultation. HIEF is reassured by this response and feel that delivery of the SREN, having demonstrated that the Commission's keen listening has led to a considered practical response, secures a mandate for future consultation.

3.2.7 How the SREN will overcome barriers to equality in rural areas

A clear commonality of issues emerged from the consultation process. A SREN can help local equality stakeholders overcome the barriers of rurality by:

- Maintaining focus on rural equality issues
- Networking opportunities
- Information sharing
- Joint working / Sharing of resources
- Building critical mass / capacity building

- Signposting
- Support service provision
- Identify communication hubs to and from isolated groups
- Links to media
- Provide a mechanism to explore trends and issues
- Enabling consultation
- Maintaining non partisan hub through non-statutory nature of SREN.

4. Next Steps

4.1 Train the Trainer Sessions

Train the Trainer Sessions were to have been devised. However, we have had next to no declaration of interest in these and this may be because there is a need firstly to build the capacity of local forums (through involvement in the SREN) before they are aware of their training requirements. Until that time is reached, it makes better sense to devote our limited time, energies and cash resources to the task of delivering the database and network that people are requesting - with a much higher complexity than was originally envisioned.

4.2 Membership Registration – Questionnaire and Database

A questionnaire to prospective SREN members has been drafted and shared with EHRC for comment. This questionnaire will define the flexibility and functionality of the SREN database and HIEF is in talks with SCVO's I.T. personnel who will build the database to ensure that we can deliver the functionality in line with stakeholders' requests, and to ensure that we are asking pertinent questions in the correct way so that responses will automatically populate the database. We anticipate circulating the questionnaire to all of our existing contacts for them to respond and to cascade onwards with their endorsement to all of their contacts.

4.3 The Network

Once the database has been populated, we need to form the network, the SREN. Whilst we cannot deliver full functionality at the close of Phase I of this project, we feel it is very important to deliver some measure of functionality to maintain the momentum achieved in the consultation and scoping phase of the exercise. Further discussion is required - both with our I.T. advisors and with the EHRC - but initial thoughts centre on some measure of email functionality from a simple

web page access, even although this webpage will not at this stage be populated with the other online resources and facilities.

We think it would be good to test the functionality of the SREN by cascading an email of welcome with a link to a Survey Monkey page with a monitoring form. This will allow us to collect information on the diversity of our members – in an anonymous way separate to the less personal information collected through the questionnaire where we can offer security of data but not anonymity. It will thereby test the communication mechanisms in both directions, welcome our members, announce the functionality of the network and provide us with a profile of the diversity of our members.

4.4 Phase 2 of SREN development

Following a successful completion of Phase I of the EHRC's Capacity Development in rural Scotland, we would be keen to deliver further enhancement of the SREN functionality in line with the requests of rural equality stakeholders. This will involve building a high spec website onto the front of the database and is likely to be costly and take some considerable time. Dependant on further discussions as to what is feasible within timescales and funding provision, our hope would be to formally launch the SREN by the end of 2009.

In the summer of 2009, however, we plan a series of independently-funded seminars on rural identity which would use the SREN to bring together people in a series of five face-to-face events where Scottish rural equalities are the key topic.

And we continue to:

- Grow understanding of local forums and their role in local networks
- Offer support in the setting up of new local forums
- Grow understanding of localised training needs for potential future train the trainer sessions

Interim Report Ends

Morag Redwood

Project Leader, Highlands & Islands Equality Forum

HIEF Interim Report Appendix (i) Work completed to date (end January, 09)

Action	Activity	Outputs
1. Meetings of HIEF/EHRC	Initial meeting of HIEF/EHRC – on 18.09.08 to discuss project plan	Agreed way forward
	Subsequent meeting – on 15.01.09 to update EHRC on progress	Understanding of next steps required
2. Desk mapping ex to identify current networks	Desk research into existing equality contacts – CPPs, invitees to rural conference, HIEF network; used Google searches and emails/telephone calls to known contacts to ascertain their key contacts	<p>Contacts list of 1550 people representing largely the public and voluntary sectors, who have declared an interest in rural equalities. This includes the existing 1300 people on the HIEF network – some of whom live and work outside of Highlands & Islands but subscribe to the HIEF network because of its usefulness on rural and other Equality & Diversity issues (largely because of lack of existing alternative networks')</p> <p>It was agreed at SREN round tables that questionnaire to invite SREN membership will be further cascaded through as many local networks as possible</p>

<p>3. Facilitation of local seminars</p>	<p>HIEF facilitated 9 local seminars in the period 13th October to 9th December, 2008 in Lochgilphead (Argyll), Kirwall (Orkney), Lerwick (Shetland), Stornoway (Western Isles), Aberdeen (Aberdeenshire), Ayr (Ayrshire), Castle Douglas (Dumfries & Galloway), Galashiels (Scottish Borders), Inverness (Highland). Attendance was low at most of the meetings – due in part to our tight timescale and the associated lack of flexibility in the dates we were able to offer – but this did not detract from the quality of debate. Interest in rural equalities and the SREN itself was consistently high amongst those who attended and those who were unable to attend.</p>	<p>Minutes of all meetings produced, verified and then further cascaded to attendees and other local stakeholders to enable them to add their own opinions</p>
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts</p>	<p><u>Geography</u> It was problematic to clarify the geographical delineation of local networks as many of their members had work remits that differed from each other. Eg in Highlands, some agencies cover just the Highland Council area, others include the islands, and some extend out to Moray and down to Argyll etc. Arran sometimes aligns itself with Highlands & Islands (part of HIE and ESF area) but may also associate itself with Ayrshire as a legacy of inclusion in Strathclyde (eg Arran is included in Ayrshire & Arran Health Board).</p>	<p>Our mapping of where rural Scotland borders on urban areas has shown that it is unclear as to where the limits of rural work remits apply. In particular, we don't know enough about rural parts of central Scotland and so are planning another local seminar in Cupar, Fife in February/March and will invite key stakeholders from Angus, Fife, Perth & Kinross and Stirling. We also plan to hold a final event in Moray as we have identified gaps between the outreaches of Highland and Aberdeenshire.</p> <p>We were contacted by the CVS in South Lanarkshire who feel that large parts of their area experience barriers to inclusion caused by rurality, and on the basis of this have decided to consider this as an area of interest within the SREN.</p> <p>Key Findings:</p> <p>Argyll & Bute (includes W Dunbartonshire but not Arran) Islands are well-defined areas for local networks Grey areas around urban areas eg Aberdeenshire, S Lanarkshire, parts of Ayrshire etc – and grey areas around what is Scottish eg where Scottish Borders meets England (such as Carlisle and Langholm) Of particular note was the huge separation between Borders and Dumfries & Galloway caused by geographical barriers.</p>
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p><u>Hubs & Gaps</u> The well-developed HIEF network gives a strong hub in H&I. The CPP partners and Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) in various local authority areas are an obvious focus for local groupings but we found varying levels of activity in different parts of the country although all areas did show some activities around the equalities agenda and expressed interest in rural equalities. What was interesting to note was the degree to which pockets of good work were or were not linked up into local networks.</p>	<p><u>Key findings:</u> No formal strategic local forum in Argyll & Bute although several key staff from public agencies meet in a variety of groupings. We know from the activity of the CVS that there is also activity in the voluntary sector, but we could find no evidence of any established cross-sector working on equalities</p> <p>Orkney’s Equality Forum has recently been ‘re-energised’ and there is clear evidence of interaction between stakeholders, but they want to develop a more extensive network to support their work.</p> <p>Shetland has very many groups and there is a feeling that better inter-connectedness would avoid the need to attend so many meetings</p> <p>W Isles has a healthy series of local forums etc but faces the challenges of other islands in ensuring that people from outlying, more remote islands can participate.</p> <p>Ayrshire is problematic in that its 3 divisions, North, South and East, have very limited connectedness. Some parts of Ayrshire connect more to Glasgow, some to Dumfries & Galloway and Ireland. Issues such as immigration and gypsy travellers are geographically specific and so reinforce these divides.</p> <p>Dumfries & Galloway is reported to have a CPP group but we could find little information on its equalities activities. Although there are evidently several groups which meet to discuss equalities, we need to find out more about the CPP forum and the role it plays in networking with other local groups.</p>
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p><u>(Hubs & Gaps continued)</u></p>	<p>Scottish Borders is a hive of equalities activity with the Scottish Borders Equality Forum as a local focus. Divisions within the area are historical to mirror the different ‘Common Ridings’ and strong localised identities reinforce internal delineations. Borders is very separate from Dumfries & Galloway, die largely to geographical reasons, but also because of historical reasons.</p> <p>Highland has a well-developed network in HIEF but also an effective local Equality Forum as part of the CPP. In touring other parts of Scotland, it became apparent that the Highlands and its Islands evidence a greater degree of partnership and joint working. Inverness is a new city which displays both rural and urban characteristics and this provides a challenge when considering rurality issues.</p> <p>Aberdeenshire has similar issues in that many of its stakeholder groups are likely to be situated in the city but have rural remits. Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Councils work closely together because of this and are in the process of developing a local Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Equality Forum.</p>
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p><u>How can a SREN help local equality stakeholders overcome the barriers of rurality?</u></p> <p>This question was asked at our series of local seminars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain focus on rural barriers to equality (especially in regard to islands/very remote areas) and bring about positive change that addresses the issues • Networking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support local authorities with community engagement/consultation - match people to opportunities (eg volunteering) - build relationships between different groups and individuals: local and national agencies; cross sector; cross strand; intra strand, other groups etc - developing lists of contacts - connect to 'difficult-to-locate' people - connect to agencies of expertise - include different methods (eg anonymous online methods) to encourage contact/ confidence/ preserve privacy - provide consistent point of contact through changes in local/ national personnel - connect equalities groups to wider society and to new interest groups such as farmers (re migrant workers), elected members etc - creating links that overcome geography and inter- / intra- strand tensions - provide alternative methods of contacts that reduce time allocated to meetings - bring EHRC closer to grass roots groups and the issues of people living in remote rural areas
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p>How can a SREN help local equality stakeholders overcome the barriers of rurality? (ctd)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case studies, good practice, knowledge of successful/ unsuccessful initiatives - needs of certain groups/ general issues - understand cultures/ combat myths including that of a homogeneous rural identity - create understanding that facilitates flow of people, businesses, resources etc across the country - rural areas can learn from urban and vice versa • Joint Working/Sharing Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training - toolkits and other resources (library) - funding - practical help eg support for BME women isolated in the home - build alliances through shared need/causes - joined-up thinking through complex issues such as rural transport - brainstorming to identify practical ideas • Building Critical Mass/ Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - link up groups to give them a voice, inform service providers of their needs, and potentially provide services eg through advocacy services, befriending schemes etc – focus on people not numbers - lobbying validated by joint approach - build confidence that paves the way for ‘invisible’ groups to become ‘visible’ - give more authority to voice of marginalised people
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p>How can a SREN help local equality stakeholders overcome the barriers of rurality? (ctd)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signposting<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Key information- Welcome Packs/Local information- Equalities support groups• Support services eg translation & interpretation• Identify hubs for communications flow to and from isolated groups and individuals without internet access eg advocacy groups, home visitors etc• Highlight issues for Research<ul style="list-style-type: none">- recurring trends- suggested training needs- open up sensitive issues• Link to media and local communication methods eg establishing local notice boards• Mechanism for schools etc to explore internal trends eg Is homophobia an issue?• Consultation with wide diversity of people on key issues – particularly in regard to Public Equality Duties• Maintain non partisan hub through non-statutory nature of SREN
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p><u>What resources/ functionality are required (ie what is the look and feel of a SREN)?</u></p> <p>This question was asked at our series of local seminars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The SREN is visualised as a multi-dimensional network in which rural equality stakeholders at all levels (viz. national and local public bodies, advocacy and support groups, individuals) can interact with others and share common concerns, issues, interests, ideas etc, thereby building capacity to tackle the barriers to equality in rural areas and effect positive change on the ground in their own areas. It will be more than just a database of contacts; more a live organism of those who have a keen interest in dismantling barriers to equal opportunity and quality of life in rural Scotland. In other words, members will not communicate ‘with the SREN’ but use the SREN network to connect to real people. The SREN - - Needs to be needed in order for it to successful. It needs to add value to existing good endeavours and reduce workload rather than create yet more. - Needs to be accessible by all and must consider how to engage outside of electronic communication channels. In particular, it must exercise caution not to exacerbate the divide between mainstream society and marginalised groups and individuals. - Should be ‘visible’ to various search engines such as Google - Should give heed to clarity of messages, communication etc ie should ‘market’ itself to attract a diversity of relevant audience - Should have clearly stated aims and objectives, values, code of conduct etc, but will be largely ‘self policed’. Members will be required to give contact details when registering to safeguard against anonymous inappropriate conduct. - Should be able to measure its impact – we need to know the ‘distance travelled’ in delivering positive change in equalities - Needs to be Equality Impact Assessed
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p>What resources/ functionality are required (ie what is the look and feel of a SREN)? (ctd)</p>	<p>The SREN will offer different ways of networking:-</p> <p><u>Online</u></p> <p>At its core, the SREN will have a robust electronic database that allows flexibility of contact between members, largely without any intermediary contact. It will be set up such that members will be able to communicate to particular interest groups and in return receive communication on issues that are of interest to them. Those who attended the seminar meetings in October – December 2008, have determined the categories of interest. Members will be able to change their ‘communication profile’ at any time to ensure the SREN is flexible to changing needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E Bulletins - Social Networking options such as chat rooms, notice boards, blogs, online forums etc - Emails to selected interest groupings – and facility for responses ie two-way communication – can be either anonymous or to named recipient where details are voluntarily disclosed - Web page for resources such as toolkits, case study material, story tellers’ testimonies etc as well as for other information, signposting etc. This webpage will be visible to the general public but registration is required to use the services. - Survey function - Links to EHRC
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<p>4. Analysis of seminar/mapping ex findings. Compilation of contacts (ctd)</p>	<p>What resources/ functionality are required (ie what is the look and feel of a SREN)? (ctd)</p>	<p><u>Other technologies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Texting - Textphones - Type Talk - Freephone number for contact (EHRC Helpline or later SREN dedicated information line?) - Freepost facility for postal surveys <p><u>Face-to-Face</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roadshows and training events - Seminars and conferences, - Consultations <p><u>Outreach through human agents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of variety of local media - Hard copy materials handed out to local groups/community - Use of localised methods of dissemination including CVS newsletters, information posted in bus shelters, village halls, community post offices, mobile libraries and shops, health services (surgeries and community carers, nurses etc), community transport, learning centres, schools, CABx, SWRI, Faith Groups and Church Guilds, - Intermediary and advocacy groups to assist in extending communication to their members/clients
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<p>5. Facilitate face-to-face meetings of local equality forums</p>	<p>Anticipated that HIEF would offer this support to 2 or 3 local areas, but to date only Aberdeenshire accepted. We will continue to offer our services as we meet different people as our network extends.</p>	<p>At the invitation of Jeannie Felsing, Grampian Racial Equality Council and Mercy Yaor of Aberdeenshire Council, HIEF facilitated a meeting of equality stakeholders in Aberdeen & Aberdeenshire on 28.01.09.</p> <p>Approximately 24 people from a wide range of public and voluntary sector agencies attended a structured workshop in which it was agreed that a user-led network of local equality agencies would be useful to all. This group is likely to be formed and a date has already been agreed for the next meeting.</p>
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Appendix (i) ends

HIEF Interim Report Appendix (ii) Action Plan of Next Steps

ACTION	DETAIL	OWNER	DATE (2009)	EVIDENCE/MEASURE
Produce SREN Membership Registration Questionnaire	HIEF to liaise with EHRC and SCVO I.T. team to produce final version of the questionnaire for prospective SREN members to complete <i>NB All timescales relating to activities involving the SCVO I.T. team have yet to be verified and are dependant on their resource capacity</i>	Matt Tyrer	Mid March	Questionnaire produced
Equality Impact Assess the SREN (Phase I)	Scrutinise the actions within this plan for any potential barriers to inclusion	Morag Redwood /Douglas Guest /other equality stakeholders as relevant	Mid March	EQIA report and action tracker of any remedial steps required
Prepare the SREN Database	HIEF to work with SCVO I.T. team to develop a database that meets the networking functionality of the SREN	Matt Tyrer	End March	Database produced
Disseminate Questionnaire	Questionnaire to be sent to all on existing SREN contacts list, requesting that it is further cascaded as widely as possible through local networks (together with endorsement of local contacts).	Matt Tyrer	Q out first week in April	Distribution email
Populate Database	Questionnaire responses will be entered electronically through a web portal and will automatically populate the database	SCVO I.T. team	End April	Populated database

ACTION	DETAIL	OWNER	DATE (2009)	EVIDENCE/MEASURE
Compile a Monitoring Survey	Use Survey Monkey to create a monitoring survey to anonymously capture data on the diversity of SREN members	Matt Tyrer	End April	Survey questionnaire
Test the Network	Disseminate the first communication through the SREN to all members, requesting that they complete an anonymous monitoring survey that captures evidence of the diversity of members. This will both test the functionality of the database and highlight if we need to take any positive action to ensure we are reaching a representative diversity of people in rural Scotland (by region, interest, role etc)	Morag Redwood/ Matt Tyrer	End April	Database of anonymised monitoring information
Launch the email dimension of the SREN	Announce through the SREN that members are able to use it. Publish guidance notes for use of SREN	Morag Redwood/ Matt Tyrer	End May	Announcement and Guidance Notes published
Face-to-face aspect of the SREN	Offer the opportunity for members of the SREN to attend a series of seminars on Rural Identity	Morag Redwood	Summer	Events planned, publicised and delivered

/Ongoing Actions continued on next page

In addition, note the following ongoing actions:

ACTION	DETAIL	OWNER	DATE (2009)	EVIDENCE/MEASURE
Grow understanding of local forums and their role in local networks/ activity	Checking of membership data Information gained through networking	HIEF	Ongoing	New forums noted
Offer support in the setting up of new local forums	Send regular offers of help to areas where no formal forums exist	HIEF	Ongoing	Requests for support received
Grow understanding of localised training needs for potential future train the trainer sessions	Monitor network communications for opportunities to build local capacity by offering training to key personnel in local regions, and follow up with discussions to explore if or how HIEF can support. If a demand is found, HIEF will aim to develop and deliver train the trainer sessions that meet local needs (subject to funding restrictions)	HIEF	Ongoing	Requests for support received Training courses developed and delivered
Phase 2 of the SREN	Continue dialogue with strategic partners to secure funding for development and delivery of a fully functional SREN website, populated with the tools and functions requested by members. <i>NB. Our aim is to launch this website by the end of December 2009 but there are still no guarantees that this will happen, or who will be contracted to carry out the work. However, HIEF will continue to push for a positive outcome for all those who have invested time in the SREN consultation process and for those in rural areas who would benefit from this facility</i>	HIEF with strategic partners	June	Funding identified and next steps outlined

Appendix (ii) ends