



**THE FORUM NEWSLETTER  
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**AFRICAN VOICES FORUM**

*Empowering People of African Descent*

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# EMERGING YOUNG LEADERS

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# EDITOR'S MESSAGE

## DEAR MEMBERS, STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERS

I am delighted to bring to you all the 8TH edition of our newsletter, "The Advocate".

The theme for this edition is 'EMERGING YOUNG LEADERS' within a cultural and educational context.



Recently the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent were in The United Kingdom & Ireland on a fact- finding mission and among key issues was Youth Development, education and Criminal Justice System.

The overall objective of the Decade is Recognition, Strengthening, Promoting, Protection and Fulfilment. There are various principal factors of developing Youth Leadership:

- We look for leadership potential in everyone, because every young person is someone who possesses leadership potential. Not everyone feels comfortable leading a meeting or speaking at an event, but they may be able to talk to their peers or teachers about a project or draft a letter to the school or community newspaper. It's worthwhile to think about all the ways youth can get involved in programs.
- Young People Develop as leaders when caring adults take the time to give them meaningful feedback and build their self- confidence, even though it can be difficult to find time to meet with young people individually, but it is crucial.

- Opportunities are when youth lead projects/ activities. Sometimes it's hard to take a step back and play the supportive role, but it is the only way to develop leaders authentically. You can have negative impact if you ask a youth to take ownership of a task and then decide to do it yourself,
- Offering lots of training and clear guidance. Youth need training to understand public health issues, education models, and methods of effective publicity. We must create different leadership development opportunities, furthermore, we must empower the youth/ young people to understand themselves in a diverse and changing world, accelerate their achievement and belonging, increasing their capacity in organizational systems and find opportunity to challenge them and solutions to systemic problems.

Another very important factor for us to transforming our young people for leadership, is for them to understand their various cultural background, because culture is a way of life, be it food, dress, music, language, dance, traditional beliefs and rituals. Once they are empowered, then they will be able to interact, recreate and deliver appropriately.

The leadership of this organisation continue to foster and strengthen our membership, by advocating, promoting, engaging and empowering the people of African Descent. This is manifested in our vision: One Voice and strength to our membership and our Mission: Building the Capacity of Our Membership Through Representation and support.

This edition features conversations with Jeremiah Dom-Ogbonna – current Youth Mayor in Bristol City Council who gives a perspective on leading, Aisha Thomas (MBE), Dr Lawrence Hoo gives us insight on the links between education, culture and leadership. From the global stage – we get a perspective on the theme from East and West Africa how it fosters capable leaders. At a local level, we want to keep you updated on our activities and upcoming events for your diaries.

My dear members, partners and well- wishers, please enjoy this your Newsletter, which is the 'MOUTHPIECE' of AVF. We need your contributions, articles on socio-economic, educational and cultural heritage issues, but above all your healthy criticism. I want to thank you all for your unflinching support.

**DAVID DRAVIE JOHN.**  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

# VISION FOR LEADERSHIP: SAUDA KYALAMBUKA B.ED. HONS, AVF EXECUTIVE MEMBER PUTS THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE **YOUTH MAYOR OF BRISTOL**



With the Elected Mayor Marvin Rees's position coming to an end next year May 2024, when the new committee model will kick in two whole years after the referendum. We reflect on the Youth Mayor **Jeremiah Dom-Ogbonna** who has just completed the first of two years in this role.

## WHO IS JEREMIAH DOM-OGBONNA?

I describe myself as a '**proud british Nigerian**' who is ready to ruffle some feathers in whatever I do to improve things. I have always been active in leadership in my school trying...

...to make things better for people in whatever environment I found myself in. One my teachers was inspired by me and encouraged me to become a Youth Councillor and then Youth Mayor.

## WHAT HAVE YOU ACHIEVED/LEARNT IN YOUR FIRST YEAR AS YOUTH MAYOR?

One of the key areas for me relates to the work being done on reducing Youth Violence in the city, which led to a Youth led Summit organised by the Creative Youth Network for Young People in Bristol. What stood out the most to me was the influential...



leaders that were there listening to what we had to say, no butting in or out.

Another highlight for me was the work we're doing in regard to making Bristol a **zero-inclusion city**... This leads me onto one of the biggest lessons I've learnt since becoming Youth Mayor, understanding that the most important thing is making sure the job gets done, not the time it takes. When there are multiple factors and organisations invested in bringing a project to fruition, it may mean that something may take more time than expected, even though it is always in the best interest of all involved. Even with regards to the work we're currently doing, there's a lot more to do.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES THAT YOUTH LEADERS FACE IN OUR CITY

I think there are a few challenges that Youth Leaders face in the city. My first one is the preconceived perceptions that people can have of you. A lot of people who have power to help you make change can look down on you and the work you're trying to do.

Therefore, I think that a lot more effort needs to be made from all stakeholders to ensure there is more interaction between influential leaders and leaders of the future.

My second one, is the fact that not enough young people are being engaged in politics and don't even know who to go to. This is one thing I've pushed hard to change in my own capacity as Youth Mayor, by making it known there are young people ready to represent you and bring your issues to

**the forefront.**

## HOW DO YOU INTEND TO MAKE AN IMPACT IN THIS YOUR FINAL YEAR AND HOW CAN ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN THIS COMMUNITY SUPPORT YOU?

Well, that depends if I'm still youth mayor for the 2nd year after our elections. If I am, then I hope to bring the Zero Exclusion City project to a **successful conclusion** but in my eyes, just the start of bringing a better experience for young people of colour in education and more in higher education, beating narratives that have been set and creating our own.

## HOW DO YOU ENVISION BRISTOL'S YOUTH LEADERSHIP GROWTH OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

I think there will be a lot of growth, as we see more and more young people take up the mantle of leadership, for the betterment of the city and the world at large. All it takes is every stakeholder involved with our young people, to take up this mantle to see youth leadership growth and **it will, believe me - happen.**

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**JEREMIAH DOM-  
OGBONNA**

# INTERVIEW WITH AISHA THOMAS

## WHO IS AISHA THOMAS?

"The simple answer is, I am a mum, an educator, a woman, a friend, an author and the founder of Representation Matters."



However, if I am honest, I am trying to figure this out. I have always been so focused and driven but my recent experiences in **Gambia & Jamaica** have been an awakening and epiphany, this profound experience has led to me try and understand the nuances of being a black British in comparison to what it means to be black in Africa and the Caribbean.

I have also come back with a sense of loss; I am lacking so much of my culture and who I am. If I can describe it, Gambia is like the root, it has given me an experience of being part of a community and culture. For the first time, I did not see myself as being black, I didn't think about racism or my colour. For the first time in my 37 years in Africa I was not Aisha the Black Activist, Aisha the Black teacher, Aisha the Black woman. All the things that formed **Aisha's identity** -

in this moment, they were not relevant and I had to work out why. Is my identity geographically determined? Isn't current identity universal? It has been quite an amazing experience which all Black British people should have.

As a child I have always understood that I was not in the majority. In my school year group, there were less than 10 students racialised as black or brown, most were white middle class. It was very clear to me that I was Aisha the girl from Easton in a White space and I did not know how to navigate this. I was Aisha loving, caring, standing up for anyone. I was a **go-getter** my qualities are still very much the same. I did not know how to exist in those spaces, I found coping mechanisms to get through. Because of the lack of representation, you become the representation, the caricature,

I played the role because I lost the connection I had with my own community, having this double consciousness. I spent most of my time going through this transition depending on what space I was in.

## WHAT DROVE YOU INTO TEACHING?

My mum exposed us to Education, she was a primary school teacher herself. Me and my brother often visited her places of work. Education and the need for it was drummed into us. I did not want to be a teacher in the beginning as I saw myself as an international lawyer or accountant – so I decided to study law. When I arrived at university, I still did not fit in, at the time I didn't realise what it was, but I knew I was trying to conform to the identity required in these institutions. I assimilated and code switched.

One of the biggest contributors to my change in career path, was my experience as a volunteer working for the **Prince's Trust**. Working with young black boys in prison had a profound impact on me. I wanted to disrupt the pipeline to prison. I wanted to help them on to a new pathway. Education was key! I wanted them to experience representation.

There is a fine line between “you can't be what you can't see” and having to be the first. Black female headteachers in the system such as Betty Campbell (Wales) and Yvonne Colony(England) – were the first Black female headteachers and I did not know they existed.

Nobody encouraged me to know them, I found out about them through research as an adult via (representation matters) not through my education or career pathway. Black students need to see themselves in all spaces, beyond stereotypes like media and sport. But what about the students who want to be scientist, or a marine biologist, yet do not see themselves?

## WHAT KIND OF LEADERS ARE WE NURTURING?

We might say we have the most ethnically diverse cabinet in UK history. You could argue that the UK is progressive. Is it enough that our MP is a person of colour? Does his racialised existence mean that he speaks for all of us and our lived experiences.

There is a saying “SKINFOLK DON'T MEET KINFOLK” – i.e., just because we have the same skin colour or racialised existence it doesn't mean we share the same values, principles and ideologies. Black people, particularly those in leadership or positions of power, are often put in a position where we are speaking for a whole community. We are treated as though we are homogenous, as if we have one voice. On the one hand it is great for young people to see this representation.

To see people that look like them in a variety of industries and in different positions of power. Equally it is important for them to be **empowered** to be their version of blackness. To understand that there isn't one way to exist.



# ALIGNMENT OF CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Culture is so powerful, whether that is of a school, community, or classroom. It is linked to progression and ability to succeed; we cannot strategize without culture. What is interesting to me is whose culture is dominant? Whose values and principles are we trying to emulate in our behaviour and attitude? I did not understand my own personal cultural identity and what it means to be Aisha Thomas because of my lack of knowledge about my **ancestral history**.



When I compare that to my experience of teaching at the City Academy, 1st / 2nd generation Somali Afrikan students were so strong in their identity. They knew what it meant to be as Somali Afrikan. They had a clear connect to their culture, a clear understanding of who they are. The weight of anti-blackness that was projected upon some of us who are 4th generation, didn't seem to exist.

The strength in knowing their culture history was so powerful. I wish I understood mine in the same way. Knowing who you are, having that cultural connection makes your education experience far greater than those of us who are battling with who we are before we get into the classroom.

# TELL ME ABOUT REPRESENTATION MATTERS

I started **representation matters** to support businesses and schools in their journey to inclusion and inclusive practices. Originally it was mainly schools but now in year 3 we now have a 60/40 split with clients in the culture sector, health sector and corporate sectors. Institutional racism and discrimination don't just exist in schools.

Representation Matters is rooted in antiracism, that is the main focus of our work. However, we also have a number of associates who talk about a number of exclusion issues i.e., neurodiversity, misogyny, LGBTQ+. Storytelling and authentic voice are an important part of the way we deliver our training and workshops.

## FUTURE LEADERS

What are the aspirations of our young people? What is important is they understand the difference between individual and institutional leadership. Understanding the geographic context, power dynamics that exist, their opportunities for success and recognising the context in which they want to operate. Equally important is knowing about their personal leadership. What makes me "Me"? how do I navigate my choices and power, decisions and privileges that I have access to and get on a trajectory that will work for me?

Leadership is not just about being a CEO, job role, management position. Leadership is about the way people can come along with you in your journey -

it is the inspiration and encouragement people get from interacting with you. Influencing is also another aspect that is linked to leadership, qualities that lead people to their ultimate goals as we can all be leaders. We can get hung up on titles, salaries and positions, but ultimately leadership comes from within. We need to reclaim what leadership means and understanding how we see it in our own lives.

In my most recent experience I have been reflecting on whether I have been leading my life or has it been leading me? Being in Gambia and Jamaica in terms of these profound experiences has made me realise there are times when I was governed or led by "Group Think" because of the context in which I am living.

## VISION

As an individual there is something about 3/4th generation being connected to who they truly are, where there is such a loss of understanding and as we are lacking so much of our identity. I want the education system to truly embed changes, such as improving curriculum, recruitment of those racialised as black / brown, and to genuinely have an education system that is inclusive -

**a genuine shift.**

For representation matters we want to continue to be part of the culture in activism and supporting organisations to become more inclusive. Since my recent journey to West Africa - I am beginning to question myself as I move to the next phase of understanding who I am. I am learning, growing, evolving and want to be the best version of **ME**. To do my part, to make the world a better place.



# INTERVIEW WITH LAWRENCE HOO



Earlier this year Lawrence Hoo was awarded an honorary degree by Bristol University.

He was awarded the Doctor of Letters degree in recognition of two decades of campaigning, which has seen him work with inner city communities, publish three poetry anthologies and create CARGO classroom (Charting African Resilience Generating Opportunities), a resource hub that helps schools teach African and African diaspora history.

Lawrence has been a long term member of the community who had made his name as a poet and communicator in the community.

...who had made his name as a poet and communicator in the community.

Lawrence has been able to document his own experiences as a young person, and that of so many talented Black young people who had fallen foul of an education system that we have later found to have been institutionally racist, a situation that protected the racist actions of teachers in the classroom by having levels of management that find ways to justify the actions of their front line staff.

Lawrence tells us that “In my youth I attended 6 secondary schools and in each of them I was expected to excel in the area of sports...

## **"I WAS LED TO THE TRACK BY TEACHERS WHO TOLD ME THAT I SHOULD BE ABLE TO RUN!"**

### **"WHICH I CANNOT"**

He tells us about an important experience in his life when he went to Tanzania in 1976 2006 as part of a group where he, for the first time saw African people in positions of real power "I remember when I went to Africa in 2006 I think I went to Laman Lamu, an island off Tanzania via Kenya and I went into the airport and saw all of the key players were Afrikan and I was allowed to film the experience even the cabin of the plane so I could share this with the people back home.

## **"I WAS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A PLACE WHERE COLOUR DID NOT MATTER"**

This experience was intense on a range of levels, not least in terms of Lawrence's learning about how 'things' worked in that country and how African people are still exploited in their own lands by outsiders where he talked about the amount of land on the continent that is being bought up by European who are legitimately securing Afrikan real estate.

Lawrence found conflict on the trip when he arranged to go fishing with a local family who came to the hotel to confirm the trip on the night before only to be disrespected by the group that he was with, leading Mr Hoo to do what he has always done and challenge perceptions and kick over the...

polite racist realities that many in the middle classes enjoy.

Having always written Lawrence was able to relate his growing awareness in his books but he was a person who was never satisfied with words and he moved to the world of action

That action manifested in the form of the CARGO project "Looking again at the narrative offered surrounding the enslavement of Afrikans there are a number of themes thrown up by the oppressors to act as the cover story for their actions that are rarely challenged- this starts with the idea of the trafficking of human beings was some kind of trade, the evidence tells us that the actions of the Portuguese and Spanish had nothing to do with trade, they were simply kidnapping Afrikan humanity and that there were records in the Bristol museum that identified down to the last individual the people who were removed from towns and cities that were subsequently destroyed".



The CARGO classroom is a place where the African truth can be told and where the negative and the immensely positive elements of African history, culture and tradition will be in place to inspire young people who need inspiration and others who desperately need an education

The growing impact of the CARGO experience which is including the programme going on line and securing recognition from around the world “There are schools from around the world are now using the Cargo CARGO learning materials which is one of the success criteria for the project as a whole



**"THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CARGO PROJECT IS THAT IT OCCUPIES A PLACE THAT DID NOT EXIST IN YEARS GONE BY AND OFFERS AN OPENING FOR FUTURE WORK TO BE DONE IN THE RAISING OF AWARENESS OF THIS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS"**

For Lawrence, the decision to take this award did not come easily..

“The doctorate is a level of recognition that the creates a question for me I was given it took me 4 to 6 weeks to accept it - understanding why it was offered and to undertake a process of self reflection that enable me to think about what I have done, what I could do in the future if the recognition was linked to the CARGO project and the simple fact that a call..

Lawrence says that:

**“OUR CULTURE IS PIMPED TOO MUCH BY OUR OWN “**

“I have pulled Black people up in the past and when criticising one of us who is not working for our benefit have been challenged by people saying ‘its our sister or our brother’ but I cannot feel comfortable withholding criticism of Black people when being Black has protected people who have not worked for us”



“I have found that over generations there are people in positions who if they had lived by their principles we would not be having this conversation”

“We have tolerated bad working practices for so long our people are believing that these are normal practices and this has led to their failure in the future”

“I was once asked what success would look like and I said that when the resources are being taught on six continents we will consider that a success though not reaching all six would not be failure”

“The Cargo CARGO is a free global resource that puts the pressure on teachers to pick up something that they would have an excuse to ignore if there was a cost attached - the aim of Cargo CARGO is to create change rather than to try and put change into the pockets of the organisers

**"THE AIM NOW IS TO PUT CARGOCARGO 2.0 ON THE CLOUD THAT WOULD ALLOW FREE ACCESS FROM AROUND THE WORLD"**

“While we are physically unchained our minds our chained, we must work to liberate our own minds and to protect our children and their children from the entrapments that are offered by a system that is predisposed to undermine the non European mindset”

“I realise that in the past the only way to be heard was to be brash, to kick off doors and scream and shout to be heard, and now that we can be heard I think the most ignorant thing we could do is to not engage”

**“EVERYTHING I WAS TOLD NOT TO BE HAS GOT ME TO WHERE I WANTED TO BE INDEPENDENT AND FREE SO PLEASE, JUST BE”**

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**LAWRENCE HOO**





# LET'S GO GLOBAL

## THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN EDUCATION – A PERSPECTIVE FROM SIR WERE CURTIS



In simple terms, Culture is a people's way of life (the food they eat and how it is prepared, how they dress, how they treat visitors and strangers, how they relate to one another etc). It is good to note that all communities in Africa have their own culture, that they believe in and which guides their day to day activities and ceremonies, including education.

For instance, within the Luo Nation in Kenya, young people, who were to be initiated to adulthood, were given proper education on what is expected of them...

...depending on the gender. Girls were taught by their grandmothers and boys by their grandfathers. This was to instil cultural values and ethics at a young age so that as they grow up, they do so in a culturally acceptable manner.

This type of education, plus many others, made one start preparing at a young age the type of leader he or she would like to be associated with. Those who believe in ruling with an iron fist leaned on the side of dictatorship while those who valued other people's opinions leaned on democracy.



This type of education, plus many others, made one start preparing at a young age the type of leader he or she would like to be associated with. Those who believe in ruling with an iron fist leaned on the side of dictatorship while those who valued other people's opinions leaned on democracy. They were further taught how various people led their communities at some point in the past using different styles of leadership and how each one of them performed in relation to the community's prosperity and growth at the time of their leadership.

Bearing all this in mind, one would easily select what type of a leader he or she would like to be and began perfecting it so that whenever called upon they are ready to realize the dream that they have worked so hard to achieve. This also gives the leaders the opportunity to choose different ways of approaching various situations for the benefit of the community.

It is significant to note that the role of culture in shaping today's leaders and leaders of tomorrow is really immense. A leader who does not have any cultural beliefs that guide him or her in leadership and service delivery is actually doomed. That's why for instance, Kenya's history and its past leaders are taught to young children in primary schools so that they can know how they got to where they are at the moment and the contribution of their past leaders in their current situation.

## **BRYAN WERE CURTIS**

### **GLOBAL YOUTH NETWORK (KENYA – EAST AFRIKA)**

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# THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN EDUCATION FROM A WEST AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE



The role of culture in education is a vital instrument to success, which is predominantly found in DNA of all African, hence “Culture is describe asour way of life, our music, dress, food, dance, languages, rituals, traditional beliefs and methods”. Education has many forms and, in any case, has in view only those classes and individuals who are capable of receiving it. Education is considered to be the most powerful instrument in bringing about changes within an individual.

On one hand, education acculturates an individual; on the other hand, it preserves, transmit and develops the culture of the society. It can be stated that education and culture are mutually interdependent, complimentary and supplementary in all their aspects and activities. Thus, the relationship between education and culture are indissoluble.

From the West African perspective, culture plays an important role in a man's life...

Awareness regarding various kinds of culture can help an individual in adjusting to the natural and social environment, developing an individual's personality, socialization of the individual, proper use of Freedom, and understanding other cultures and proper meaning of liberality.

Educational aspect and cultural aspect are imparted to an individual through their families, communities and the various educational institutions. One such institution are the secret societies for Men and Women,

The rites of passage, Bondo (FGM), Poro, Ojeh, Gbangbani, Wende, Soko Gbana, etc, were boys and girls undergo serious skills for life, family and health & Safety education, hunting, farming, animal husbandry, safeguarding, motherhood and fatherhood skill, traditional medicines, rituals and traditional spirituality.

If we further take into consideration the significance of culture and the role played by education in the socialization and the acculturation of an individual, it is meaningful to analyse the changes that have taken shape in our culture.



Before understanding what the impact of education on culture is, it is vital to understand the meaning of culture. By culture we mean the system of norms and standards that a society develops over the course of many generations and which profoundly affects the conduct of people living in that society.

Culture is stated to be the complete package of knowledge, beliefs, customs, arts, morals, law and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as the member of that society. The purpose of culture is to offer to the society by cognizant process of learning and experience, patterns of behaviour which are found useful for harmonious existence and smooth functioning in all occupations and interactions and thereby individual and group survival and perpetuation. It is the integrated, social, biological and ethnic modes of behaviour of a group or a society. It is implied that even the possession of ideas, attitudes, values are from culture. Education and culture are intimately and integrally connected. The cultural pattern of the society specifies its educational patterns. Every individual is born into a culture that provides him definite patterns of behaviour and values which guides his/her conduct in different walks of life.

Culture has played a significant role in man's life in adjusting to the natural and social environment, in developing his/her personality and in the communication process. It is through education that an individual becomes aware of the various modes of conduct that are suitable to that culture.

The purpose of education is to inform the individual about the nature of culture and how to follow those cultural patterns, norms, values, ways of communications, rules, standards, policies and behavioural conduct. In every field, education causes awareness to the students regarding the world, how changes have occurred in every area within the course of time and performing tasks in accordance to their country's principles.

Within educational institutions, cultural tendencies influence the ways children participate in education. In individualist perspective, students work independently, engage themselves in discussions and arguments to learn to think critically.

This is also reflected in the royal/ family chieftaincy or community structures and hierarchy, in which everyone within that background, have to go through the stages and process of succession, and that also involved the traditional rite, ceremonies, wearing the appropriate regalia, how to walk, talk, seat and conduct any functions, therefore, our culture and education are interwoven specifically from the African perspective.

**DAVID DRAVIE-JOHN**

**SIERRA LEONE – WEST  
AFRIKA**

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# PROJECT UPDATES

## UNHEARD YOUTH VOICES



Our Youth programme is underway, Delano and Dwelly our Digital Inclusion and Engagement Officers facilitated a session with Senegambia Unhidden Talents which was aimed at enhancing their digital skills. They intend to work with other AVF youth groups to facilitate other sessions and are primarily targeting Sleba Youth / Savannah to produce a blue-print which will be cascaded to other youth groups. Look out for further events on our social media platforms which are scheduled for the summer and winter seasons.

The new AVF website is under construction and will be launched in the Spring, our new website will enhance communication, provide resources which member organisations can use and also provide a platform for members to publicise their events.

Please contact [delanoavf@gmail.com](mailto:delanoavf@gmail.com) or [dwellyavf@gmail.com](mailto:dwellyavf@gmail.com) for information on how to collaborate on the youth programme.





# CAB UPDATE



The Common Ambition Bristol (CAB) is a major 3- year community powered project led by Brigstowe working with the African and Caribbean heritage communities in Bristol to reduce HIV diagnosis, stigma and generally improve sexual health. AVF is one of the delivery partners is seeking community researchers who will be paid at the rate of £15 per hour to support the delivery of the project. The individuals would need to have good links with specific groups so that they can liaise with and organise specific health promotion events.

As the project is approaching its second phase of delivery the lead partners facilitated a co-production workshop...

...to review progress and set the priority activities for the next delivery phase. We would like to commend our current community researchers who have actively supported the project delivery team in its ambitions to reach our communities and the staff at Brigstowe led by Aisha Namurachi, Rami Ghali and Heidi Andrews for their continued support. Please also note that the Mon 6th Feb to Sun 12th February is National HIV Testing Week. This is a campaign to promote regular testing for HIV. Testing regularly helps to reduce the numbers of people living with undiagnosed HIV and those diagnosed late. HIV Prevention England's new campaign is called 'I Test'. This strapline features across all National HIV Testing Week materials, replacing 'Give HIV The Finger'.

# EVENTS UPDATE



AVF was very privileged to participate at some very important race relations events this include:-

Visit to Bristol City Hall of the - United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (WGEPAD). This visit takes place every 10 years and the visit provides an opportunity to examine in detail the situation of people of African descent in the country, to identify any problems and to make recommendations for how these could be resolved. The Working Group was interested in all forms of racial discrimination faced by people of...

African descent in the UK including in the following areas of concern although not limited to Employment, Education, Health & Wellbeing, Law & Justice, Stop & Search, Climate Change, Culture Rights, Housing, Reparations & much more. AVF was represented by Delano Gournet (Digital Inclusion Officer), David Dravie John was a co-convenor and Faith Tariro who also attended the Un event in Geneva and gave an overview of the issues AVF is working on in relation to inequalities experienced by our communities. Watch this space for further updates following the visit.

# CO-POWER CONFERENCE

The Co-POWeR research project is a study of the combined impacts of COVID-19 and racial discrimination on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Families and Communities (BAMEFC). Survivors face ongoing damage to wellbeing and resilience, in terms of physical and mental health as well as social, cultural, and economic (non-medical) consequences. Systemic deficiencies have stimulated BAMEFC agency, producing solidarity under emergency, yet BAMEFC vulnerability remains, requiring official support.

Members of AVF and any associated Groups have engaged with Co-POWeR on some of the themes for....

for and the final conference was held on Thursday 26 January 2023 from 09.00am to 5.00pm, in Leeds to reflect on the Co-POWeR project findings. Other sessions were dedicated to our Community Engagement Panel and Research Participants to discuss how best to implement the policy recommendations.

AVF was represented by Peninah Achieng-Kindberg and Acomo Oloya. We look forward to sharing the resources from Co-Power please follow the link below which will also be available on the AVF website.

[HTTPS://CO-POWER.LEEDS.AC.UK](https://co-power.leeds.ac.uk)





# OTHER IMPORTANT UPDATES



Our Community Sector Development team will be providing a variety of support to help organisations improve and grow, including one-to-one assessments and recommendations, ongoing development support, workshops and advice sessions on key subjects, and support for funding applications.

Nathalie Sherring and Michelle Meredith are excited to offer support to Black and Minoritised community groups across the South West. Nathalie will share..

...good practices and coordinate solutions for challenges faced by many organisations, while Michelle will connect with existing and emerging groups to support their access to relevant information. They're looking forward to working together to make a positive impact in our communities.

Whether you're looking to build stronger governance, improve your team, or increase your financial sustainability, our team is here to help!

# MEMBERSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

**MEMBERSHIP  
ENGAGEMENT**

**CEED  
25TH APRIL  
5PM-10PM**

**ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING/SOCIAL  
NETWORKING**

**22ND APRIL**

**AFRIKAN  
LIBERATION  
AWARENESS  
MONTH**

**29TH MAY**

**YOUNG LEGACIES  
PROGRAMME -**

**TO BE CONFIRMED**

**MEMBER  
SUMMER  
EVENTS**

**JUNE-AUGUST**

**MEMBERSHIP  
ONLY  
WORKSHOP**

**29TH JULY**

**AFRIFEST '15TH  
ANIVERSARY'**

**OCTOBER**

**YOUNG  
LEGACIES  
PROGRAMME**

**DECEMBER**



# MEMBERSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

  
Ghana Community Bristol  
invites you to our Independence Day Party

# Ghana @

# 2000

**2023 theme: TBC**

**11TH MARCH 2023**  
**3PM - 9PM**

**EMERSONS GREEN VILLAGE HALL**  
**EMERSONS WAY, EMERSONS GREEN, BS16 7AP**

**ADULTs: £10pp**  
**GCB Members: £8pp**  
**CHILDREN (Under 16): £5pp**

**FREE FOR UNDER 5'S**

**DRESS CODE:  
CASUAL &  
CULTURAL  
ATTIRE**

**TICKET PRICE INCLUDES ENTRY TO  
THE 11TH MARCH EVENT, A PLATE  
OF FOOD, A SOFT DRINK OF  
CHOICE AND BOTTLED WATER.**

**FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE  
MESSAGE/CALL US ON:  
07940093281 / 07555815857  
EMAIL US AT:  
GHANACOMMUNITYBRISTOL@GMAIL.COM**

**BOOK NOW!**

# MEMBERSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

Supporting our community



## SLEBA ONLINE WORKSHOPS

**FREE**

## CHILD SAFETY ONLINE

Criminal, sexual exploitation of children use  
of social media app and gaming

 Friday 17th February 2023

 18:00

 Zoom

"IT IS NEVER GOING TO HAPPEN TO MY CHILD...?"

WHICH AIMS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE CRIMINAL, SEXUAL  
EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA APP AND GAMING



**Operation TOPAZ**  
Avon and Somerset Police

**ZOOM LOGIN DETAILS TO FOLLOW**



# MEMBERSHIP UPCOMING EVENTS / OPPORTUNITIES



AVON & SOMERSET CONSTABULARY  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO POLICING YOUNG PEOPLE

### OUR AIMS

- BUILD TRUST BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE & POLICE
- INFLUENCE POLICING STRATEGIES
- ASSIST TRAINING AND EDUCATION
- BE A KNOWLEDGE-SHARING FORUM

### WE ARE

- CONNECTED TO LOCAL YOUTH COMMUNITIES
- PASSIONATE ABOUT JUSTICE & EQUALITY
- WILLING TO SHARE VIEWS & EXPERIENCE
- COMMITTED TO EFFECTIVE POLICING

SCAN FOR INFO



AGED BETWEEN 16-24?  
GET IN TOUCH NOW.

TO FIND OUT MORE EMAIL:  
STRATEGICIAG@AVONANDSOMERSET.POLICE.UK

# A REVIEW OF OUR 3-YEAR STRATEGY 2022-2025

## OUR MISSION

We will highlight the unique role of the African and African-Caribbean community sector in Bristol.



## BIG SIGNALS

We will come together to listen and learn from each other.

We will bring attention to our rich and diverse culture & history.

We will work in partnership to support community pride & realise people's potential

We will invest our time to support and nurture young people's potential

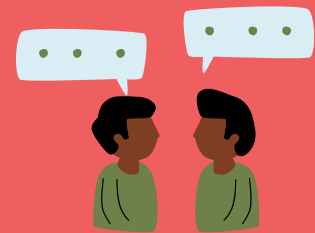
We will work together to promote dignity, respect and collaboration, recognising our strengths come from many sources.

We will work to support our partners to develop new ways of working across Britain's education, environmental & health sectors to support equality of access and outcomes.

## KEY ENABLERS



Partnership Working



Communications & Engagement



Strengthening & Connecting our Membership



Showcasing Black Excellence



# QUALITY & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Delivery of AVF's activities is dependent on our capability; be that through our volunteers, stakeholders or staff. Our approach is underpinned by a quality and performance management framework which, historically, has been primarily delivered through our projects and annual programme where we can access funding resources. We recognise the opportunity to build on such foundations and are committed to enhancing our approach, as set out below.

## QUALITY

We are committed to providing quality-based services and operational assurance will be enhanced through our governance system which will

- Stakeholder requirements, expectations and experiences
- Better Collaborative Relationships
- Effective Membership Engagement
- Increasing our social value and sustainability
- Programme and project management
- Integrity and Transparency in all levels of Governance
- Governance and accountability structures and behaviors'



These standards will be scoped, designed and implemented through a rolling annual programme of prioritised activity over the next 3-years. We recognise that we are operating under very tight financial landscape and will develop a financial strategy that supports growth in activity over the next 3 years.

## BENEFITS REALISATION

AVF will evolve its approach to benefits realisation, ensuring that the voices of our members remain at the heart of what we do and they are heard on the corridors of power and are taken into account in decision-making structures of service providers. This will enable us to demonstrate the success and effectiveness of our services. We will build on our previous benefits realisation approach, ensuring consistency across our key activities in response to the needs of our members.

# ABOUT AVF

African Voices Forum (AVF) is a Bristol-based network of African and African-Caribbean community associations/organisations, other community organisations working to empower Africans and African-Caribbean's to take active part in policies and initiatives that concern them, as well as other organisations that share and support the forum's values, principles, and objectives.

**Our vision:**  
To amplify the voices of African and African-Caribbean communities in Bristol in the pursuit of excellence.

**Our Mission:**  
We will highlight the unique role of the African and African-Caribbean community sector in Bristol.



## OUR MEMBERSHIP

- Afrika Eye
- Association of Uganda
- Bristol Zimbabwean Association
- Cameroonian Association
- Eney Child Minding
- Gambian Hidden Talent
- Senegambia Association
- Ghana Community Bristol (GBC)
- Children of God Association (COGA)
- Kenya Association in Bristol
- Kombo Sillah Association
- Nigerian Association Bristol (NAB)
- Pax Productions Ltd
- Savannah Development Foundation
- Sierra Leone Bristol Association (SLEBA)
- Sierra Women's Independent Group (SWIG)
- Tan Teddy Folk Group
- Women in Serious Endeavour

## EDITORIAL TEAM

JIMMY TAYLOR - DISTRIBUTION EDITOR

FORWARD MAISOKWADZO - REVIEW EDITOR

TAYLOR A-MCLESTER - DESIGN EDITOR

PENINAH ACHIENG-KINDBERG - DESIGN/ CONTENT EDITOR

DAVID DRAVIE-JOHN - EDITOR IN CHIEF

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