**3 December 2020**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

**“BAME led community and voluntary sector organisations need a national supporting infrastructure body**, **if they are to take advantage of regional and national supporting initiatives”, says report**

The Ubele Initiative undertook a follow up ‘deep dive’ interview and survey process with 31 micro and small Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) led community and voluntary organisations in the UK. The aim was to ascertain what had changed since the survey in March and whether there were any new possibilities, challenges and opportunities that now need to be taken into account.

The report, *Impact of Covid-19 on the BAME community and voluntary sector: A follow up,* reinforces much of what we already know about the trauma and anxiety brought about by the pandemic on individual lives. The report revealed that the BAME community and voluntary sector, were embracing new digital opportunities and benefiting from ‘COVID-19 Emergency Funding’ and that there was a need for a national infrastructure supporting’ voice. Part of the fear of respondent’s was that they could “*find themselves at the ‘back of the queue’ as they may not have the voice or influence to help shape discussion and action.”*

Based on the response to the interview and survey process, the report showed that more than half of respondents (54%) felt that there does not exist a national BAME infrastructure body while there existed “numerous’ national infrastructure bodies”, all of whom purport to speak on behalf of the sector. Based on the overall responses obtained through the approach, four themes emerged as to the benefit of having a national infrastructure supporting body:

* Strong voice for the sector (e.g. giving visibility to the sector);
* Training and leadership development to build strategic influences/alliances;
* Community engagement and dialogue;
* Campaigning and influencing.

**Yvonne Field, The Founder and Managing Director of The Ubele Initiative, said:**

The report shows that how the sector is supported will be critical. A strong conclusion from the report points to an emerging priority around the recognition of the role and potential of catalyst organisations alongside the recognition of a wider Black, Asian and minority ethnic infrastructure body to support and help develop the sector specifically. It is therefore important, as the report states, that “*Black, Asian and minority ethnic led catalyst and infrastructure organisations take the lead in building and developing the sector by providing the needed spaces and platform upon which organisations can grow and thrive as services reshape to meet new approaches forced on us from the COVID pandemic.”*

**Karl Murray, the author of the report, said:** More than anything, the report shows that against the challenges of COVID-19, micro and small organisations are delivering services that benefit beneficiaries, and more importantly, sustaining the organisation during this period. However, there are signs emerging from those voices who shared their experiences that they could benefit from catalyst organisations as well as from infrastructure supporting organisations. What became clear also was that doing nothing was not an option.

The report is published online and can be obtained through visiting: [www.ubele.org](http://www.ubele.org)

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**Notes to Editors**

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**About The Ubele Initiative**

The Ubele Initiative (Ubele), is a civil society organisation based in London, though works across the United Kingdom and Europe, working with disadvantaged communities, most notably black and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. Ubele, in Swahili, means ‘The Future’ and is an African Diaspora led intergenerational social enterprise founded in 2014. Our primary mission is to help build more sustainable communities across the UK.

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The report, *Impact of Covid-19 on the BAME community and voluntary sector: A follow up,* is published online on the Ubele website from Thursday, 3 December 2020.

The first phase report was published on 30 April 2020, *Impact of COVID-19 on BAME community and voluntary organisations*, which can be downloaded from: [www.ubele.org/publications](http://www.ubele.org/publications)