



THE IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) ON BAME COMMUNITIES

CASE STUDIES

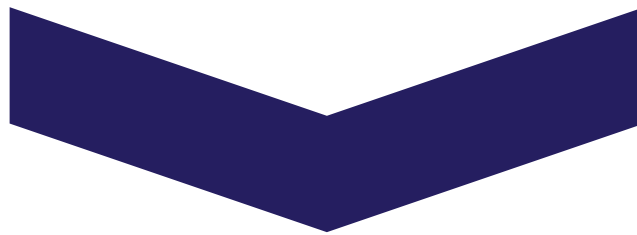
SOCIAL BUSINESS

I believe I can - Limited Company (April 2020)

Kineara (May 2020)

Coinstreet Community Trust (May 2020)

DigiBridge (CIC) (June 2020)



If you would like to share your story, please get in touch with us
at info@ubele.org and tell us about:
your challenge, best practice, impact (financial etc).

I BELIEVE I CAN - LIMITED COMPANY



I believe I can is a limited company which delivers personal development workshops, 1:1 personal development coaching and consultations.

The virus has had a severe impact on this small business. The young entrepreneur behind this business has been prevented from delivering workshops in the community and to the businesses that they had arranged consultations with. It is possible to work with some clients online however, they had some clients who had a preference for meeting in person. These meetings have had to be put on hold because of the restrictions that are in place, which has understandably had huge financial implication for this small business.

Tarnya

ibelieveican.co.uk/

KINEARA



Kineara works with low-income households and specialises in supporting those with multi-complex needs. This includes, specifically: social/private renters threatened with eviction, single people with complex needs in temporary accommodation, and low-income families with young children in our school support programmes. Around 60-70%% of their service users are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Kineara's senior leadership is made up of women primarily from Black and Asian backgrounds and their team as a whole is very diverse, with 6 of 7 team members from ethnic minority or migrant background.

They are a community interest company that delivers our support programmes through contracts with housing providers, schools and local authorities. At the start of the year, their contracts were with primary schools in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, and with Bexley Council, delivering a payment by results project which we formally began in October 2019. All three of Kineara's principle contracts have now been suspended, meaning they can only continue to deliver support the clients that were mid-intervention when the lockdown began and no new future referrals can be taken on. In addition, social distancing rules mean that vital face-to-face support has to be suspended, so the support they deliver can only be minimal despite almost all of their service users living in some form precarity.

They continue to make regular calls, and are preparing to run activities with some of the children and their parents online, but not all families have regular or fast internet access. This is also the case with their single households in Bexley, who are all in temporary accommodation.

Last year, they had been solicited to submit a large grant application with a charitable trust – our first grant, having survived almost entirely on public sector contracts since 2012 – for a new project focused on housing and public health.

At the point of the lockdown was at its final stages; this is still potentially on the table but the outcome of this has now been delayed. In the meantime, they are applying for smaller grants to tide us over.

Since the end March, the team has been working remotely for the most part, with their practitioners keeping up regular contact with service users and connecting them to relevant local services where possible. They are fortunate in this sense; because their practitioners are mostly based in the schools or in the community, they had set up secure IT systems for remote working some time ago, including email and video conferencing, Cloud office phone systems, and remote/cloud-based file storage.

They are also concerned about the aftermath of this crisis: what about the post-traumatic stress our communities may experience following this? And in addition, how do we ensure what is rebuilt in our communities serves the communities needs? How can it contribute to improved sustainability – better financial health, better support systems, better health? Even at this early stage, they want to make sure that we are thinking about the future beyond the crisis.

kineara.co.uk

COINSTREET COMMUNITY TRUST



Coinstreet Community Builders are a social enterprise working in Waterloo and North Southwark, London. They provide a range of activities for families, working to enrich lives through providing childcare; family support, youth provision, and work and play spaces, the organisation is based on the land which the organisation has owned since 1984.

The organisation works regularly with 375 people, championing co-operative housing and working to influence local and national housing policy as well as providing employment, volunteering opportunities, support of new enterprises and health and well-being classes. They deliver a diverse range of weekly programmes and activities.

The emergence of the Coronavirus Pandemic has led to the need to focus on the most vulnerable families, many of them who are elderly or families with young children. They are having to quickly build new ways of working; updating their database, prioritising needs and exploring the most appropriate on-line platforms to use; building support for those not so used to using technology and guiding them to sign up for new on-line sessions.

The Coinstreet team of Staff and volunteers are responding actively to the urgent need of families that are struggling with this necessary period of isolation. This includes driving or cycling directly to deliver food to the doorsteps of those in most need. They are also busy creating and running on-line sessions for youth engagement via the ZOOM platform in replacement of their usually well attended 'Youth Night' and 'Fitness Friday' sessions. In this changing landscape, it has proved especially essential for them to anchor their survey of immediate and on-going needs with best practice General Data Protection Regulations and the update of all on-line communication safeguarding procedures.

coinstreet.org

DIGIBRIDGE (CIC)



DigiBridge (CIC), was founded in 2005 by Liberian born Entrepreneur Diye Wariebi. The company's vision was created in response to their research showing that there was a lack of IT infrastructure and computers amongst low income families and in the BAME community specifically. They also recognised the urgent need to reduce landfill globally by effectively recycling and re-using goods. In 2011 they partnered with Islington Council to launch a three year funded community based project called 'Bright Sparks'.

Their stated goals were very clear:

- To maximise the repair, re-use and recycling of small electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) to minimise the amount of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) entering the Islington waste stream
- To reduce the carbon impacts arising from WEEE
- To provide learning, training and employment opportunities in repair, reuse and recycling.

DigiBridge is constantly evolving with the times and they now have partnership arrangements with a range of councils across London including Camden, Islington, Waltham Forest and London & Quadrant Housing Association in Newham. They provide a range of services; collecting unwanted household items, thereby diverting from landfill, supporting low income families with new and re-used items (furniture & white goods) to make their house a home, managing a surplus food project and providing purposeful activities for their volunteers.

Between 2012 & 2013, DigiBridge funded and established 'Wariebi Academy' in Liberia. A low cost private school, with 25 students per classroom that now hosts 300 students and includes a full library, and an IT suite. The school is now fully powered by solar energy.

The sudden arrival of the Coronavirus Pandemic has presented both challenges and opportunities for this innovative company. As the lockdown began they were forced to shut down three of their stores causing a drastic drop in their income and put staff on furlough. With reduced staffing they have managed to keep some of their core services going with increased demand from partners to ensure vulnerable people are catered for.

They have spotted new opportunities in this challenging environment and are gearing up to maximise the potential of those opportunities now and after the lockdown. Inadvertently, the lockdown has raised a new on-line awareness of their services and orders have substantially increased. Most importantly the Covid 19 slow down has provided the company with a much needed opportunity to reflect and review and use the time afforded to build more seamless processes, making sure that the company emerges from this time more robust than ever.

digibridge.co.uk/