

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

April 2022-
March 2023

THE
UBELE
INITIATIVE





Contents

1. Executive summary	4
2. Acknowledgments	6
3. Acronyms	7
4. About Ubele	8
4.1 Introduction	8
4.2 Hubs' overview	9
4.2.1 Developing our people, groups, and organisations	9
4.2.2 Strengthening our communities through assets and enterprise development.....	10
4.2.3 Advocacy for equity and justice	11
4.2.4 Central Hub	12
4.3 Meet the Ubele team.....	13
Ubele's organogram	14
5. Achievements and Impact	15
5.1 Key achievement statistics	15
5.2 Developing capacity and capability of individuals, groups, and organisations	16
5.3 Strengthening our communities through assets and enterprise development	28
5.4 Advocacy for equity and justice	35
5.6 Influence and impact	40
6. Reflections on success factors	43
7. Future priorities	51
8. Appendix 1 - Ubele's 28 Initiatives at a glance	54

1. Executive summary



Between April 2022 and March 2023, Ubele, a Black-led organisation rooted in the African diaspora, underwent a year marked by a strong commitment to systemic change, social justice, and racial equity. Operating as a Community Interest Company, Ubele demonstrated impact locally, regionally, and nationally, with a focus on assets and enterprise development, entrepreneurship, and intergenerational

leadership. With a diverse and skilled team, including a 3-member directorial board and 4 strategically positioned hubs, Ubele worked with a workforce equivalent to 17 full-time employees and 12 self-employed associates in this reporting period.

Ubele's impact surpasses statistics, evident in our growing public visibility, long-term funding support, and invitations onto national decision-making bodies. In this reporting period, Ubele engaged 8,886 individuals and 1173 organisations, secured 49 grants totalling £2,099,554, and actively participating in 28 initiatives nationally and internationally.

The *Developing people, groups, and organisations* hub employs social lab technology to empower organisations addressing issues like safety, youth employment, and services for Black and racially minoritised elders through programmes such as the Safety Project, Young Emerging Leaders Collective (YELC), Youth Futures Foundation (YFF), and Alagba.

Ubele's *Assets and enterprise development* hub, guided by the 'Ubele ecosystem' and an emergent development approach called the 'Ubele Way,' developed the Wolves Lane Centre, National Community Wealth Building Strategic Alliance and the Black and Racially Minoritised Community Enterprise Development Programme focused on sustainable development, aligning with Ubele's commitment to resilient and thriving communities.

Ubele's multifaceted advocacy approach was evident in initiatives like The Phoenix Way, the Elevate Programme and the Leading Routes incubation. Through its *Equity and justice* hub, Ubele influenced the practices of national grant-making organisations, emphasising racial equity, systemic change, transparency, and accountability.

The *Central* hub, comprising Ubele's communications, business systems/Salesforce, Human Resource (HR), and finance team, plays a pivotal role in Ubele's success. Achievements in this reporting period include a 62% increase in turnover, adoption of QuickBooks, and the co-design of a Content Management System (CMS). Future plans in this hub involve further strengthening of the communication and HR functions while extending outreach to racially minoritised-led community groups.

Ubele's commitment to transformation is reflected in models under development. These include the Community Development Leadership Model, Alagba Learning Coalition Model and the Agbero2100 Model, among others. They aim to address systemic challenges and promote positive societal changes that benefit Black and racially minoritised communities.

Ubele's influence was evident in increased interest from funders, invitations to national decision-making bodies, and active participation in diverse fora. The CEO and other senior leaders contributed to discussions, publications, and podcasts, showcasing Ubele's engagement in influential spaces and its role in fostering racial inclusivity.

Ubele attributes its success to skilled staff, dedicated associates, strategic partnerships, internal growth strategies, financial backing, and effective project governance. The organisation actively engaged with over 60 funders in this reporting period, fostering transparent and collaborative partnerships for systemic change.

Ubele's strategic priorities for the coming year include sustaining community organisations, further strengthening of its internal

infrastructure, reducing funding gaps, empowering emerging leaders, and aligning partnerships more closely with its overarching goals. Plans involve fortifying accountability systems, refining internal processes, and securing unrestricted funds to support the organisation's continued growth and impact.



2. Acknowledgments

Ubele extends its heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated staff, associates, and partners for the invaluable contributions that made the achievements of the 2022/23 period possible. Our work within a rapidly expanding organisation that employs innovative methodologies to craft tailor-made solutions demands a unique blend of patience, skill, profound social empathy, forgiveness, and resilience; qualities not often required in many other organisations. While many of our colleagues are drawn to Ubele for these very qualities, it doesn't diminish the inherent challenges we face.

Ubele wishes to thank most sincerely the following funders instrumental in advancing our social investments and initiatives for the past fiscal year.



We express our sincere appreciation to the countless individuals who have benefited from Ubele's initiatives. Your involvement and support give profound meaning to our work. Our efforts, services, and products are carefully tailored to enhance your well-being. Your welfare is not just a goal; it is the core of our purpose.

To all those who follow us on our social media platforms, attend our events, and generously offer suggestions and encouragement, we are truly grateful. Your engagement and support fuel our drive to continue making a positive impact.

3. Acronyms

Acronyms	
APTCH2.0	A Place to Call Home 2.0
BBC CiN	BBC Children in Need
BMCEDP	Black and Racially Minoritised Community Enterprise Development Programme
BSC/GLA	Building Stronger Communities - Greater London Authority
CCSaR	Cultural and Community Space at Risk - the Barriers Project
CIC	Community Interest Company
CiN	Children in need-Youth Social Action Fund
CLH	Community Led Housing (CLH) London
CoP	Communities of Practice
CWB	Community Wealth Building
DWP	Department of Works and Pensions
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
EWG	Eat Wood Green
GAM	Good Ancestor Movement
Gida	The Hausa (Northern Nigerian) word for "home"
Gida	GIDA Housing Cooperative
GLA	Greater London Authority
HHP	Housing and Homelessness Programme
HMRC	His Majesty Revenue and Customs
HR	Human Resources
HSBC	Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation
IoUH	Impact on Urban Health
IVAR	Institute for Voluntary Action Research
LCRF	London Community Recovery Fund
LLCC	Lloyd Leon Community Centre
MALI	Swahili word which means 'of Value' or 'Precious'.
MIND	National Association for Mental Health
NCWBSA	National Community Wealth Building Strategic Alliance
NHS	National Health Service
NHS NELCSU	NHS Northeast London Commissioning Support Unit
NLCF	National Lottery Community Fund
NLHF	National Lottery Heritage Fund
OCS	Office of Community Services
P2E	The Pathways to Economic Opportunities Programme
RIFG	Rootz into Food Growing
RSA	Royal Society for Arts
SIB	Social Investment Business
StART	St Ann's Redevelopment Trust
TPW	The Phoenix Way
UHR	Universities Human Resources
UKRI	UK Research and Innovation
YELC	Young Emerging Leaders Collective
YFF	Youth Futures Foundation London Lab

4. About Ubele

4.1 Introduction

Founded in 2014, Ubele [oo-beh-leh], a name derived from the Swahili word for 'the future,' has established itself as a dynamic, Black-led organisation committed to driving systemic change. While rooted in the African diaspora, Ubele's inclusive team collaborates with diverse cultures and works closely with community-based groups and organisations to foster growth through assets development,



entrepreneurial ventures, and intergenerational leadership programmes.

Ubele shapes its interactions with individuals, community organisations, funders, and stakeholders guided by an unwavering commitment to social justice and racial equity. The organisation's approach is rooted in the pillars of collaboration, community connection, empowerment, experiential learning, innovation, and intergenerational relationships. These values are intricately woven into Ubele's four strategic aims:

- Developing our people, groups, and organisations
- Strengthening our communities through assets and enterprise development
- Strengthening our infrastructure and voice
- Advocating for equity and justice in our communities

Rather than imposing solutions, Ubele supports groups and organisations in devising contextually relevant answers to their challenges. This approach nurtures ownership, sustainability, and empowers Black and racially minoritised communities to confront racial and social injustices. It also ensures that Ubele's solutions are not only impactful but also deeply meaningful and sustainable. This approach requires turning experiential insights into new models to alleviate, challenge and overturn structural racism's impact on Black and racially minoritised communities in the UK.

Ubele not only nurtures grassroots initiatives as both an end and a means to a systemic end; it also proactively engages on regional, national, and international platforms. Through partnerships and guided by its own research and that of others, it influences policies and campaigns that shape London and the broader national landscape. Notably, Ubele serves as the Black and racially minoritised infrastructure group for Greater London (appointed by the GLA in February 2020); is an Equity Partner for Propel; collaborates with other equity organisations and London Funders; and is the National Convener for The Phoenix Way, collaborating with Black and racially minoritised community leaders throughout England.

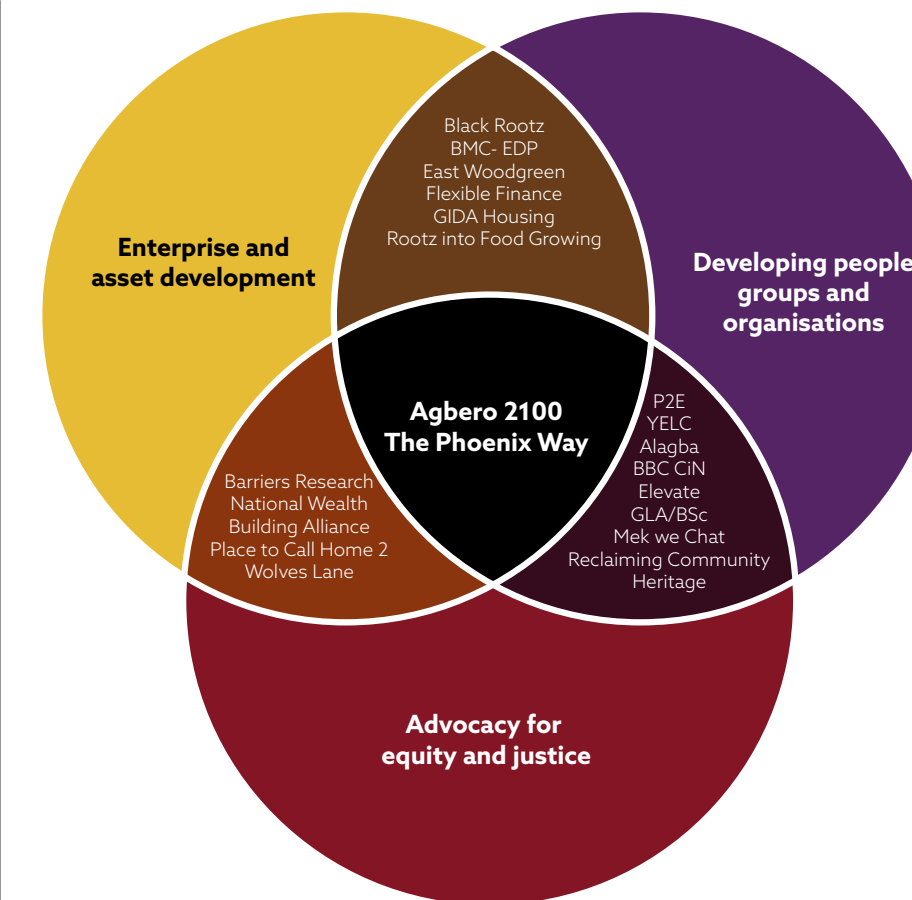
Ubele transitioned from its status as a Company Limited by Guarantee in 2014, to its current designation during the 12-month period under review, now operating as a Community Interest Company (CIC) with an asset lock.

Ubele's foundational framework now comprises four vital hubs, namely: Assets and enterprise development; Developing people, groups, and organisations; Advocacy for equity and justice; and Central.

4.2 Hubs' overview

4.2.1 Developing our people, groups, and organisations

Throughout the past year, the Developing our People, Groups, and Organisations hub at Ubele has laid down robust foundations, shaping the organisation's vision for the communities it serves. Committed to community service and recognising the wealth of skills present at every level, the hub has prioritised the development of practices and methodologies aimed at amplifying the Ubele voice while providing purposefully crafted spaces for clients, partners, participants, and friends.



The hub has embraced Social Lab technology, employing the 'U Process' template as a cornerstone for planning. Three concluded social labs, namely The Safety Lab, the London Employment Lab, and Alagba Lab, exemplify Ubele's commitment to crafting enduring systems of change tailored to the distinct needs of Black and racially minoritised communities. Beyond social labs, the hub collaborated with various organisations, companies, and local authorities to catalyse positive change.



The Capacity Building initiative provided extensive support to 67 Black youth-led groups benefiting from the BBC Children in Need We Move Youth Social Action fund. Personalised support to 22 organisations identified as needing extra assistance resulted in strengthened governance structures and operational strategies.

The Mental Health Strand brought together Black mental health professionals and activists, organising a weeklong retreat and a Mental Health Community Day. The “Bayo” website now features a directory of over eighty nationwide organisations supporting “Black Joy” as a defence against racism. Training sessions and the Black Mental Health Manifesto unite the community to advocate for change.

Internationally, the hub is actively involved in leadership development initiatives in Kenya and Uganda.

As we look ahead to the coming year, our hub’s focus questions are:

- What characteristics do we need to embody to maximise the effectiveness of our relationships with the community?
- What are the essential elements that foster maximum risk-taking, openness, and transformative change in our collaborative efforts

with communities?

- What adjustments should be made to our current practices, whether through addition or removal, to enhance our ability to effectively challenge the impact of racism and racial oppression in our work?

The year ahead promises continued commitment to community-driven initiatives, social labs, capacity building, mental health advocacy, and international involvement, reflecting Ubele’s dedication to positive social change.

4.2.2 Strengthening our communities through assets and enterprise development

The programmes and projects delivered through the Assets and Enterprise Development hub, align with Ubele’s overarching strategic aim of “Strengthening our communities through assets and enterprise development.” At the core of this hub is a commitment to fostering the growth and resilience of enterprises and community assets. The delivery of this support is grounded in systems change methodologies, giving rise to the conceptualisation of an ‘Ubele ecosystem’ and the emerging ‘Ubele Way’ methodology, explained below.

Ecosystem Development

Ubele’s commitment to creating an equitable system for Black and racially minoritised communities is evident in its involvement in the National Community Wealth Building Strategic Alliance (Strategic Alliance or SA). The Strategic Alliance is made up of members dedicated to developing and securing wealth in their communities, disseminating information and opportunities and advocating for change. Through research and consultations, the alliance, including Ubele, addresses inequities. An instance of this is the analysis of the Community Ownership Fund, revealing inherent inequities posing

barriers to Ubele’s communities in accessing substantial capital and revenue funding and consultancy support.

Further ecosystem development initiatives involve the co-design and co-production of the Flexible Finance programme in collaboration with Social Investment Business group (SIB) and supported by Access, the Foundation for Social Investment. This initiative builds on research from the Adebowale Commission, highlighting structural barriers faced by Black-led social enterprises in accessing finance. SIB’s diversity dashboard analysis, covering over 4,000 organisations, underscores the systemic and historical underinvestment experienced by organisations from Ubele’s communities.

Assets Development

Ubele’s assets development projects within the Community Wealth Building framework include the Wolves Lane Centre, a central initiative challenging race-based injustices in the growing and food systems. This initiative not only forms a central aspect of Ubele’s efforts but also serves as Ubele’s home. Home to Black Rootz and the Rootz in Food Growing programme, Wolves Lane collaborates closely with the Eat Wood Green project. Another key project is the Gida (The Hausa, Northern Nigerian, word for “home”) Housing Co-operative, incubated by Ubele, aiming to secure 58 homes for its members in perpetuity as the community-led housing partner for the Greater London Authority (GLA).

Enterprise Development

The Black and Racially Minoritised Community Enterprise Development Programme (BMCEDP or EDP) is a cornerstone of Ubele’s commitment. Implemented in collaboration with the Social Investment Business (SIB) and backed by Access, this programme, initiated in 2021, aims to establish a legacy for its cohorts by providing funding, enterprise development support, and networking opportunities until its conclusion in 2024.

Ubele follows an evidence-based approach, drawing on its seminal 2015 report, ‘A Place to Call Home’ (APTCH). The upcoming APTCH 2.0, launching in 2024, is expected to provide additional evidence shaping future programmes, including the ambitious Agbero 2100. Drawing from nine years of experience in strategic intervention across England by Ubele, this flagship, multi-year, strategic intervention focuses on sustainable communities through asset redevelopment, intergenerational leadership development, and community enterprise. Supported by funding from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and Propel London, Agbero 2100 reflects Ubele’s unwavering commitment to realising resilient and thriving communities.

Looking forward, Ubele anticipates updating the progress of these initiatives in its next Social Impact Assessment Report, demonstrating transparency and accountability in fulfilling its vision.

4.2.3 Advocacy for equity and justice



Advocacy for equity and justice is a deep thread that runs through all our work. It is clearly demonstrated within the work of our hubs, programmes and projects (described above and in the project summaries in Appendix 2) and through other practical and policy related initiatives. Our commitment extends to being a part of the London

Mayor’s Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Group, where we actively contribute to the formulation of the new *Building a Fairer City* strategy. This strategy is designed with four strategic priorities and associated actions, placing a strong emphasis on the empowerment and strengthening of civil society.



Our national convening role for *The Phoenix Way* (TPW), a transformational change grant making initiative was strengthened through the partnership with *Global Fund for Children* (GFC) and six regional partners. A year of negotiations following the *Phoenix Fund* during COVID-19 culminated in securing £13.7m over 3 years from Chanel Foundation, Youth Endowment Fund and Lloyds Bank Foundation. The funding is being deployed to support grant making to grassroots groups, capacity building the sector, regional infrastructure, innovation, learning, leadership development and systems change. The overarching vision of TPW is to ensure more equitable grant outcomes for Black and racially minoritised communities and this has involved deep and often challenging conversations with funders to ensure alignment with the Phoenix vision.

Our active pursuit of equity and justice by transforming the grant making sector started during COVID-19 pandemic. As one of five London Equity Partners collaborating with London Funders, we made a significant contribution to the design and implementation of the *Propel Fund*. Propel provides up to three years of grant support to deliver three of the nine London recovery missions including *Building Stronger Communities*. We initially secured two-year funding from *Joseph Rowntree Trust* in June 2022 to scale up our community

wealth building strategy nationally. This foundational work which has focused on community (people and physical assets) since 2015, was given a significant boost in January 2023 through pan-London Propel funding over the next three-year period.

Acknowledging our growing expertise in these areas, senior staff members continue to be actively engaged in shaping regional and national grant-making strategies. This involvement takes various forms, such as participating in roundtable discussions, panels, one-on-one consultations, and contributing to the design and implementation of new programmes, some of which have been mentioned previously.

Ubele's Equity and justice hub also incubates *Leading Routes* through mentorship, guidance, network access, resource provision, and financial management aid. A 2016 initiative, *Leading Routes'* mission is to prepare the next generation of Black and racially minoritised academics and empower black and racially minoritised students and professionals in academia.

4.2.4 Central Hub

The central hub, comprising communications, business systems/ Salesforce, Human Resources (HR), and finance services, serves as Ubele's backbone. Its seamless functioning is essential for the success of outward-facing initiatives. Ubele is actively engaged in its ongoing development and refinement, focusing on personnel, systems, and overall structure. Substantial progress has been made, moving us closer to achieving stronger systems and protocols in finance, communications and HR.

In finance, we expanded the team's capacity to address the need that arose when we had only one full-time equivalent finance manager after the organisation's initial year of revenue, of £20k. Ubele's turnover in this reporting period was £2,660,203, a 62% increase on that of the previous year's £1,645,645. We added another full-time

finance officer and implemented QuickBooks, marking a significant digital advancement.

The communications team has been strengthened, transitioning from 1.5 FTE to a more robust structure with two full-time positions. Objectives include streamlining briefing processes and developing a robust communications strategy. Notable achievements include significantly boosting activity and engagement across all social media platforms, and growing Ubele's newsletter subscribers to over 5,000.

In business systems, a collaborative process has been initiated to co-design our Content Management System (CMS) on Salesforce, with plans for implementation from 2023 into 2024. In Human Resources (HR), we partnered with an outsourcing platform, BrightHR to provide a comprehensive range of resources to support all our HR needs.

The *Central* hub relies on the broader staff team to embrace new policies, procedures, and systems. This isn't a straightforward task, necessitating a cultural shift that is continuous and demands unwavering support, training, and occasionally, gentle persuasion. Even the leadership within the organisation may exhibit a reluctance to swiftly embrace change, a challenge that we are actively addressing. To embed these changes into our work practices, we are implementing strategies such as incorporating dedicated segments for Communications, Human Resources, and Finance in our routine team meetings.

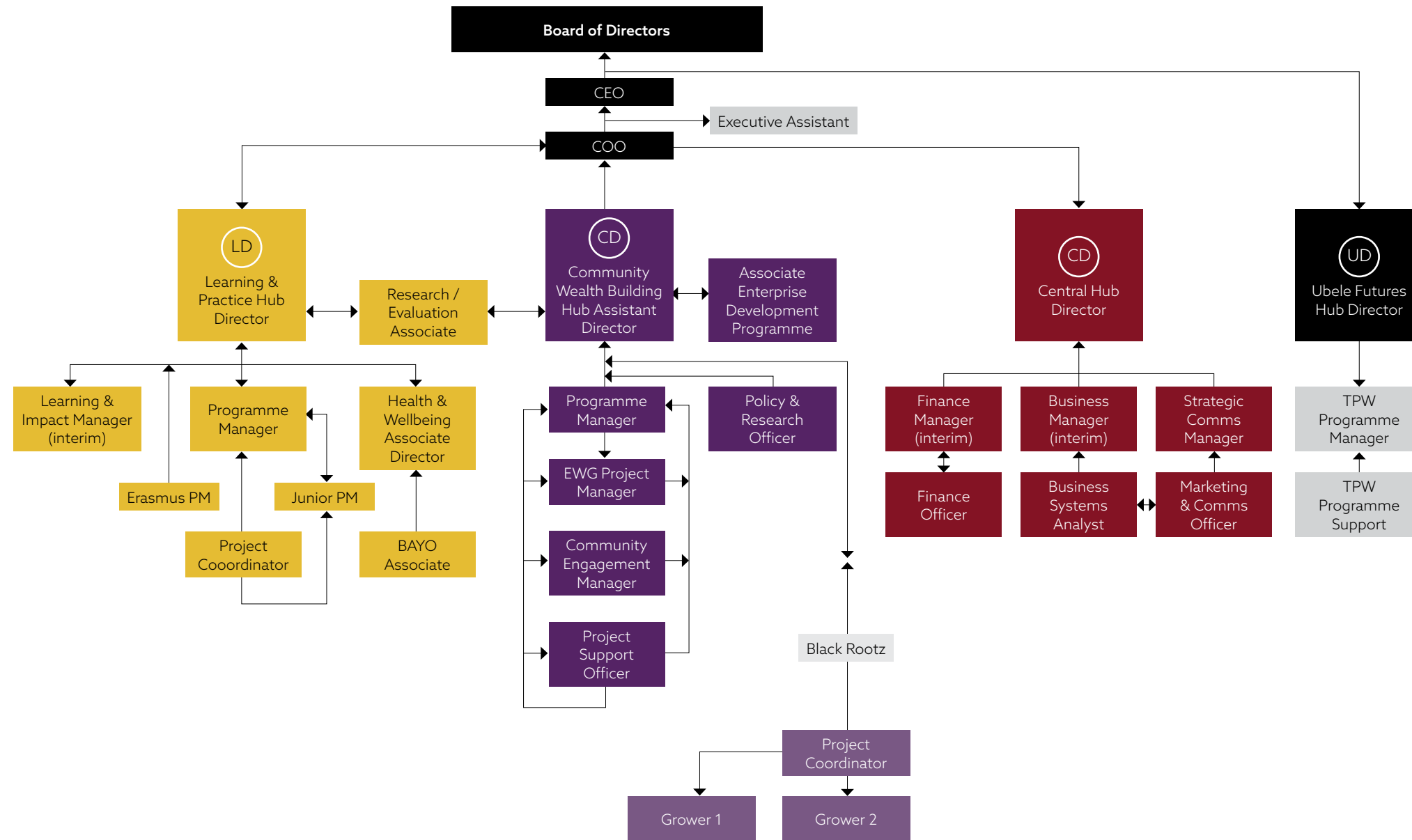
Our objective is to continue implementing significant changes across the *Central* Hub in the next reporting period (2023/24), focusing on strengthening the core of the organisation for greater resilience. This plan includes reinforcing both our communication, HR and finance functions. Additionally, in 2024, our finance function will adopt an external-facing dimension, with dedicated team members focused on community engagement. This strategic outreach is designed to empower Black and racially minoritised-led community groups, enabling them to strengthen their financial resilience.

4.3 Meet the Ubele team

The organisation operates with a three-member directorial board, of which the CEO is one. Each director heads a distinct hub: Developing people, groups and organisations Hub, Equity and justice; and Central hub. The fourth hub, Assets and enterprise development, is overseen by an Associate Director. Additionally, two other Associate Directors lead health and wellbeing, and research initiatives, respectively.

The rest of the team comprises three programme managers overseeing the Black and Racially Minoritised Enterprise Development Programme (BMCEDP), *Assets and enterprise development hub*, and *Developing people groups and organisations* hub, respectively. Other crucial roles include two project managers, a junior project manager, manager of Ubele research initiatives, a strategic communications manager, a finance manager, an interim impact and learning manager, interim business manager, a business systems officer, finance officer, marketing and communications officer, policy and research officer and programme support officers. Our staffing complement for the period under review is equivalent to 17 FTE.





5. Achievements and Impact

5.1 Key achievement statistics



5.2 Developing capacity and capability of individuals, groups, and organisations

Ubele empowers individuals, groups, and organisations to advocate for and make progress in achieving equity and justice for Black and racially minoritised communities. For the individual the emphasis is on good health and economic empowerment, and for the community leadership their self-awareness, self-reflection skills, an understanding of how to intervene to effect change, and their abilities to mobilise and inspire. The third critical unit for transformation is the Black and racially minoritised community group or organisation, necessitating attention to refining the group or organisation's social mission, leadership and management approach, commitment to developing its accountability and other internal systems, and the promotion of its long-term economic sustainability.

All 28 initiatives reported upon in this reporting period were dedicated in some way to the development of people, groups, and organisations. However, 14 of these initiatives focused exclusively on this purpose, namely:

1. Alagba
2. Building Stronger Communities – GLA
3. Children in Need – Youth Social Action Fund
4. Erasmus+
5. Health and Wellbeing activities
6. Lloyd Leon Community Centre
7. London Thrive
8. Mek we chat
9. Paths to Economic Opportunities (P2E)
10. Playing Out
11. Reclaiming Community Heritage
12. The Safety Project
13. Young Emerging Leaders Collective (YELC)
14. Youth Futures Foundation London Lab (YFF)

The remaining 14 projects integrated this objective with either assets and enterprise development or equity and justice, and so are referenced under the narrative of the two respective hubs.

Developing people

Health, Mental Health, and Wellbeing activities

During this reporting period, Ubele initiated or participated in a range of initiatives including its online mental health platform, awareness raising, and research-driven advocacy.

BAYO

The BAYO online platform supports 108 community organisations, from across England, addressing mental health challenges worsened by COVID-19. Also, BAYO provided grants and workshops, benefiting organisations like New Wave and the Congolese Development Project.

"We were delighted to receive funding from the BAYO Grants scheme, a pivotal step for our nascent organisation. New Wave, an unincorporated association, is dedicated to mentoring at-risk young black men, combatting the 'schools to prison pipeline,' and aiding reintegration. Thanks to the grant, we have initiated impactful changes in our organisation. Through social media, we extended our reach, while an affordable mailing hub streamlined our communication. A dedicated phone line enhanced our identity. This grant has truly changed the game, propelling us closer to our vision for a brighter future. Sincere gratitude to the BAYO Grants scheme."

Andrew Morris, New Wave

"The Congolese Development Project is really thankful for the £2000 grant from The Ubele Initiative's BAYO grant scheme. This money has made a big difference, especially during Covid-19 and when things cost more. We asked the people we help about their needs, and they said they wanted things like heaters and warm drinks. The grant also supported volunteers by paying for their travel and meals when they helped out. Our office used to be cold, but now it's better, making it more comfortable for everyone who comes in, especially for our Refuge project participants who share their experiences."

"We are very grateful for Bayo's support, and we want this partnership to continue. This grant has done more than just give us things – it has made people feel respected and stronger. The pictures and logo we've shared show how much this means to us. With thanks, we look forward to a brighter future together."

Congolese Development Project
ssap.org.uk/english/congolese-development-project

Suicide prevention

Our health and wellbeing initiative conducted a training event for 60 trainers on suicide prevention in the Black and racially minoritised communities. We also collaborated with Living Works to enhance suicide prevention efforts, emphasising cultural sensitivity and early intervention. Information is found here livingworks.net



Substance abuse, end of life and bereavement

The *Grief and Loss Conversations in the Community* conversation aimed at alleviating the impacts of addiction on individuals and communities explored substance misuse and self-destructive behaviours.

The *Living Life with A Deadline*, workshop encouraged open conversations about end-of-life decisions and needs of terminally ill individuals and their families.

Our Grief film screenings and immersive bereavement workshops provided platforms for sharing experiences and understanding grief within Black communities. Workshops explored traditions, and rituals of various communities, benefiting professionals and community workers.

On a different but related note research conducted in 2022 by Bristol and Cardiff Universities and funded by UKRI/ESRC, revealed disparities in access to bereavement especially for Black and racially minoritised communities affected by COVID-19. Its online survey and qualitative interviews with 147 different bereavement service providers underscored the importance of culturally sensitive support and the role of voluntary organisations in addressing the challenges.

Karl Murray and Dr Yansie Rolston, study co-authors from the Ubele Initiative said:

"The inability to be able to say farewell to a loved one within culturally sensitive and recognised circumstances goes beyond the burial; the before and after celebrations and reminiscence paves the way to being able to manage the stress and anxiety that the actual loss situation generates."

The work of many voluntary and community sector organisations in this space deserves some recognition for their sterling work, which is reflected well in the research. Often, however, the mainstream organisations struggle to support people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities. This is, in part, due to lack of understanding of how to approach those communities – a one size approach does not fit all – and in part due to lack of engagement with and understanding of those communities. For some it is a personal matter and, as one respondent to our support network puts it, 'we do t'ings different!' More support is needed to support local organisations best able to reach into these communities."

Karl Murray and Dr Yansie Rolston, study co-authors from Ubele. More information can be found here bereavementcommission.org.uk

Overall, Ubele adopted an empathetic and culturally sensitive approach to addressing the unique health and well-being needs of Black and racially minoritised communities.

Erasmus+

Ubele, engaged in two Erasmus+ projects in this reporting period, namely Journeys - empowerment through exploration of cultural heritage (JEECH) and MALI (Europe).

Led by Ubele Journeys was a partnership among the UK, Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia and Turkey that promoted European Cultural Heritage by accentuating diversity and addressing challenges in preserving ancient heritages, including European, African-Caribbean, Indo-Javanese, and Roma.

Employing formal and non-formal learning the programme included study visits, workshops, mapping, research, and learning material development across transnational visits. Journeys emphasis on participatory methodology, leveraging existing work, and linking cultural heritage to modern technology positions it as an innovative initiative with potential for broader impact beyond its current funding framework. Key outputs included a toolkit and a digital map, and mobile application. The project evaluation highlighted the project's success in enhancing skills and perspectives, engaging 300 participants. The digital application and toolkit received acclaim, inspiring use in other projects.

The project envisions opportunities beyond its current scope, with recommendations for a flexible project manager, clarity in partner contributions, and incorporation of experiential components in mobility programmes

Mali Enterprising Leadership (MALI Europe), inspired by Ubele's MEL (England) programme, aimed to empower skilled community leaders from Black and racially minoritised communities in the UK. The programme prioritised the cultivation of leadership skills and competencies, offered an international learning perspective, fostered transnational partnerships and addressed the distinct needs of women leaders.



Over a 36-month period the programme involved structured courses, training events, and job shadowing opportunities in various fields across European countries. It covered topics such as participatory design, appreciative leadership, resilience building, black activism, empowering women leaders, 'social lab' methodology, and youth leadership. Key characteristics of the 221 participants, included 88% from Black and racially minoritised communities, 67% women; and an age range of 19 to 70 years with 35% being young leaders and 69% holding senior management roles. Participants expressed increased confidence, knowledge sharing, and strengthened cooperation with partner organisations.

Recommendations for future programmes included improvement in pre-course preparation, sharing theoretical frameworks, creating safe and exploratory learning spaces, and offering in-depth professional development.

The quotes below reflect participants' positive experiences from the two programmes, highlighting impact on organisational resilience, leadership development, and community engagement. The initiatives underscore the importance of collaboration, cultural exploration, and innovative approaches in fostering social inclusion and leadership growth and contributed to the development of Black and racially minoritised community leaders across European countries.

"Undertook lots of learning sessions where I learnt from theory but also from own reflection of our organisation's working but also seeing other people sharing and learning from them. I have also learnt about ways of facilitating different discussions and how it enables engagement at different levels."

Appreciative Learning participant, Crete, June 2022

"I feel like each key element contributed to the overall understanding, interest, and enthusiasm of the course / programme... The amazing people that were part of the programme are some of the most inspirational and beautiful people I've met."

Post-programme feedback respondent

Thrive London Communities of Practice (CoP)

Thrive London CoP sought to empower mental health practitioners dedicated to serving Black and racially minoritised communities and foster collaboration, facilitate idea sharing, and promote knowledge exchange within these communities.

Guided by Otto Scharmer's U-Process framework, the CoP engaged participants in stages of initiating, sensing, presencing, and co-creating through activities like storytelling, systems mapping, and one-on-one interviews. Four 2-hour CoP sessions, a mix of in-person and online gatherings, along with one-on-one interviews and continuous support, contributed to participants' understanding of London's mental health landscape. Participants expressed a desire for its continuation recommending extending interaction time, the embrace of digital solutions, and incorporation of expert presentations. Enrichment activities such as residencies, reflective practice circles, and cultural competency training were also proposed as follow up actions.

One participant expressed enthusiasm for linking up with public health and voluntary sectors, while another affirmed readiness to stay engaged well beyond the project's scope.



"I was very excited about the potential to link up in a cross-sector London based network. We are engaged with arts networks but the opportunity to work with the public health and voluntary sector was really appealing."

"Sustaining this CoP is imperative, given its potential as a valuable sector resource. The CoP should serve as a platform for the exchange of knowledge. I am prepared to remain engaged well beyond the project's scope, provided that the CoP's structure revolves around the concept of utilising shared bonds to maintain cohesiveness."

Mek We Chat

The 'Mek We Chat' project which started in February 2023 and due to end in June 2023, explored the perspectives of 65 UK Black leaders using the Transformative Scenarios Process (TSP) and various artistic media. Funded by the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and stemming from a study funded by CLORE Social Leadership, the project sought to shape a new narrative for Black leadership models in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and George Floyd's murder. A key theme was equity and voice with an emphasis on the role of "art as a process of creating meaning" in diverse settings. The initiative will produce three art pieces inspired by interactions with community leaders, dialogues, and artists' perspectives. Another planned outcome is a Future Black Leadership exhibition that envisions impactful Black leadership in the next 3-5 years.

The workshop provided a safe and welcoming space for meaningful conversations, fostering a sense of inclusion and value for participants' views. The timing and structure of the workshop were commended, and overall, participants described the experience as a

Quotes from participants:

"The event was like no other. It was a wonderful and unique way to get us to talk and address issues on the ground via art. I really and truly appreciated the thought and concept behind it. Big massive thank you to all those involved"

"The day was great. I was able to have deeper conversations about what it means to be a Black person in our society, how others feel about this experience, and what we can do to improve the Black experience for the present and future day"

"I enjoyed the timing of the workshop, we were given enough time to work on the task, reflect, and then discuss. It felt like a safe, welcoming space, where we could all put our opinion in and have an actual polite debate. Nothing felt forced, the workshop flowed very well"

"The day was fantastic. I engaged in profound conversations about the Black experience, perspectives, and enhancing the present and future for the Black community."

"I felt included in the event and my views were valued"



fantastic and profoundly engaging exploration of the Black experience and perspectives.

The Youth Foundation Futures (YFF) London Social Lab

YFF London Social Lab 24-month youth intervention which started in April 2022 is focus on the integration of Black and racially minoritised youth into quality jobs, addressing barriers such as representation and financial issues. Youth workers, local authorities, campaigners, and employers participate in its three key components namely, the Enquiry Team, Round Table Events, and development up to seven prototype interventions.

The March 2023, 2-Day Lab Session encouraged participants to explore the impact of their intersectional identities on employment journeys. While engaging Black-led organisations presented challenges, Roundtable events proved vital in bridging gaps and gathering insights.

The YFF London Social Lab's learning journey planned for May 2023 will involve visiting a Black-led social enterprise; and a June 2023 Roundtable event will explore the impact of the evolving work landscape. A £35,000 grant supports the development of a prototype intervention for securing stable employment for young Black and racially minoritised individuals. The initiative has successfully engaged 40 participants from six London areas, collaborated with 22 organisations and is building a compendium of best practice.



Playing Out

Playing Out, which started in Bristol in 2009, with the closure of a street for children's play has evolved into a national movement, advocating for children's outdoor play rights for health and happiness.

Ubele's Playing Out project is a collaboration between Ubele and the

national Playing Out organisation. It sought to address disparities faced by Black and racially minoritised youth in outdoor activities, recommend solutions for racial equity within Playing Out, and inspire Black and racially minoritised communities to overcome barriers through play.

Three organisations in the UK, Jamaica, and Somaliland conducted participatory research to document street games, songs, and activities shared across generations. Short video clips produced showcase the evolution of outdoor play and involve grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, and researchers. Expected outcomes include a



report and an 8–15-minute advocacy film that provides an insight into and highlight challenges and remedies in the outdoor play landscape for Black and racially minoritised communities.

Reclaiming Community Heritage

Inspired by the 1981 uprisings in Brixton *Reclaiming Community Heritage* aimed to preserve and promote community heritage for social change. Partnering with organisations like The Brixton Project and Ubele Initiative, it secured support from Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Activities included community leadership groups, heritage participation experiments, and projects like the Empathy Museum's "A Mile in My Shoes" and the Reclaim Black Heritage Fund. The outcomes reflected generational shifts, evolving roles, and the impact of funding on sustaining social movements.

Challenges such as governance transitions, delays in project implementation, and funding limitations arose. Despite some setbacks, the project maintained a commitment to community-led experimentation, exploring identity and priorities organically.

Developing groups and organisations

Ubele understands the limitations of individuals to effect systemic change and so empowers groups, organisations, and systems to safeguard community well-being in its multifaceted aspects. Seven of our initiatives provided support in the areas of accessing resources, enhancing leadership capacity and research.

Alagba

The Alagba (coined from the Yoruba word for "Elder,") Project is a collaborative initiative of seven organisations empowering those working with Black and racially minoritised elders in London post-COVID-19. Launched in June 2022 with support from The Mercers Foundation, and the Greater London Authority (GLA) Roots programme funding, the project addresses funding uncertainties



A mile in My Shoes campaign

and organisational instability. Social labs facilitated discussions, and creative exercises like origami fostered intergenerational exchanges. The Ring Toss activity underscored the importance of system inclusivity. Incorporating personal stories and surveys during prototyping, the project applied Otto Scharmer's 'U' process for systemic analysis, leading to more effective strategies. Approaching its October 2023 conclusion, the Alagba Project has solidified

partnerships, elevating organisations' profiles and influencing policy recommendations for London's Building Stronger Communities Recovery Mission. Engaging 12 individuals from 9 London organisations, it has made significant strides in supporting groups working with elders from Black and racially minoritised communities.

"I am facing several crises with my organisation when it comes to securing future funding. For the past 4 years instead of having three-year contracts, it has now been extended annually. This means there is a lot of uncertainty, and it makes it harder for me to plan long-term. I can't recruit anyone to replace me to continue the work, I have been doing for many years."

"There is a huge challenge between organisations and the local authority. The local authority had tried to run down the building."

Building Stronger Communities - Greater London Authority (GLA)

The GLA Building Strong Communities Fund, initiated in July 2022, aimed to financially support Black and racial minority-led voluntary and community organisations in specific London boroughs post-COVID-19. Three funding rounds, including in-person sessions, were conducted, with 200 individuals from 49 organisations seeking guidance. Applicants were introduced to equity-led initiatives, risk assessment, and organisational capacity. Challenges included misconceptions about COVID-19 recovery aspects, eligibility concerns for new organisations, and issues with trustee/member requirements. While the initiative received praise for its personalised approach, suggestions included a promotional online seminar for increased participation.

Commendations from beneficiaries

Thank you so much for your time yesterday, it was a pleasure to meet you in person! I really appreciate your advice, and belief in me and what I'm doing with the organisation. I'll book a session with the disability team and get in touch with the organisation's you mentioned. Please forward any links you feel will be helpful. Have a lovely day, I look forward to seeing you soon.

Best wishes,
R.d.G, Founder & Director

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all the helpful information and recommendations. I have received the information and working on it, I will definitely update you on the outcome.

Kind regards A.D.

It was nice to meet you on Friday. Really appreciated your time. Thank you for sharing this information and will keep in touch.

Kind regards, P.

It was great meeting you too, such a wealth of experience and knowledge, do hope we can keep in touch. Many thanks for the link, we'll explore that and see how we go. Did you recall the details of the person who assists with getting trustees? We hope to get a board together by the Autumn.

Best wishes, J.



Children in Need

Children in Need - Youth Social Action Fund

The *We Move Fund*, a £1 million BBC *Children in Need* initiative partnered with Ubele to empower Black and racially minoritised youth-focused organisations in the UK. Ubele provided tailored pre-application guidance and planning for 44 (of 67 applicant) organisations working in the areas of diversity, mental health, leadership development, and social change advocacy. Ubele's support included strategic planning, enterprise development and capacity building. The experience revealed the challenges of CEO isolation, funding gaps, and a need for guidance in bid writing. The case study below of *Survivors Can Shine CIC* hints at the impact of the intervention on one of the organisations that Ubele supported.

Case Study - Survivors Can Shine CIC

Situated in Camden, the newly formed Community Interest Company (CIC) specialised in programmes tailored for young individuals, particularly those who have undergone traumatic experiences or abuse. Notably, the organisation composed a music track targeting the youth audience, garnering recognition from DJs. Their primary objective was to effectively communicate the experiences and challenges faced by young people, emphasising the issue of abuse. Dealing with severe dyslexia, the founder lacked confidence in drafting the application. Expert advice was given to explore support from Camden Voluntary Action, local volunteers, Dyslexia Society, and NCVO.

The Lloyd Leon Community Centre (LLCC)

Since 2019 Ubele has been commissioned by Lambeth Council to collaborate with The Lloyd Leon Community Centre to strengthen its leadership capacity and establish a replicable model for community development. Various interventions, including community envisioning, leadership workshops, governance establishment, infrastructure planning, and coaching resulted in LLCC's transformation into a vibrant community hub, with improvements





in provision, governance, and policies. Notably, LLCC secured £600K in funding from Lambeth Council for a new roof, windows, and interior redecoration for their grade 2 listed building. Robust governance structures are in place, and a three-year business plan is being implemented. Ongoing negotiations aim to extend the lease from 10 to 25 years, and LLCC will benefit from technical support and

training offered by Ubele's Agbero2100, contributing to a promising and sustainable future for this community hub. This collaboration involved Ubele working closely with 4 individuals and 2 organisations.

"I have learned quite a lot using the portal. I have been able to navigate through various digital skills. I have been able to use Facebook, JamDom to play dominoes and other platforms. The Portal Worker has been supportive, patient, and timely with me. She walked me through the setup process, supported me to recover email accounts and helped me learn to connect to zoom calls using my portal. Though this was done virtually, it was very successful, and the skills will now stay with me. I must thank Ubele as this portal has been life changing as I now have knowledge of the digital world that I will cherish. This will allow me to be able to function better in my interactions with my family and at work."

Errol Richards of Clapham Dominoes Club

"Setting up my Portal device was easy with support from the Portal Project Worker. I love the fact that I can use this as a hands-free device; so, if I'm in the kitchen, bedroom or living room, I can quite happily move around freely and still converse. I am pleased that some of our more vulnerable members plus our club committee have benefited. I'm hoping that using the portal allows us to be more closely connected while we are not in our club building. The other benefit is being able to contact family members and having a much bigger screen than your mobile phone to see them. So far I'm enjoying it and hope to gain more as I keep exploring the benefits of using this great Portal."

Sandra Borland, Club Secretary Cosmopolitan Domino & Social Club



Pathways to economic opportunities (P2E)

The P2E programme, initiated by the London Community Foundation and supported by JPMorgan Chase, aims to fortify community organisations offering specialised Employment, Enterprise, and Financial Health services to black and racially minoritised communities.

Grants were distributed to foster peer learning through Action Learning Sets (ALS). Despite recruitment challenges of delivery delays the project successfully engaged with target groups, and improved employment skills among beneficiaries. Recommendations for programme enhancement involve organisational sustainability, pro-bono support and an Inspiring leadership programme and a 2-tiered consultancy approach and resource-sharing through an Intranet. A review of action and delivery plans were also suggested for ongoing success and sustainability.

Case study 1 - employment

Client A is a single woman who, during COVID-19 lost touch with both friends and family and began to suffer from social isolation and depression. She learnt about the course from one of our flyers. She started off by doing one of our other sessions, which is dance. She decided she would like to undertake a leadership course as well as a First Aid course. The client has increased her confidence, made new friends, and learnt new skills. She is now volunteering part time and working part time. In her exit interview she said that she was previously feeling increasingly worthless, and wanted to find a job but was not motivated to apply. Now she is motivated to work. She stays connected with staff and is doing well.

Case study 2 - enterprise

In her mid-thirties, AK describes her job as "paying my bills and living". Her business idea began when she was diagnosed with pre-diabetes and other lifestyle-related health conditions which she could not effectively manage. Not finding sugar-free and low-carb options, she researched and implemented a keto diet. She reversed her pre-diabetes and attracted interest from others with her baking skills after sharing on social media. AK decided that this could be a profitable alternative to her current job where she was unsatisfied. AK was reluctant as she has no business experience and unsure how to set up, charge and market her business. AK registered for the business workshop run by Aishah. She learned various aspects of running a business and was eager to learn how to set, advertise and market. This support helped her understand everything she needed to do before starting up a business. AK stated: "The programme was designed exceptionally well, and it removed the fear factor, gave me confidence and was designed so that it did not overwhelm me nor deter me from continuing my ambition of owning my own business and being my own boss. This is precisely what I needed".

Case study 3 - financial health support

Fifty-seven-year-old D was made redundant after working for 17yrs for the same company. D who was referred to the project by Hounslow Job Centre Plus suffered with depression but did not want to present his ailment to his general practitioner (GP) for fear of not securing future work. He had a debt of £300 that had grown to £1200. D was supported to find work as a warehouse operator and is now receiving discreet mental health support. His debt is now reduced to £675. D is happy and even offered to buy our staff a present for the support provided.

The Young Emerging Leaders Collective (YELC)

In 2022, YELC, with support from REOS Partners, initiated a listening process to assess its leadership needs and formulate strategies for its local and international impact. A strategy weekend involving twelve young leaders led to a refinement of goals and the establishment of guiding principles. Securing funding, YELC revamped its structure into an annual cohort-based social justice leadership programme



that emphasises the 4 pillars of Social Justice; Healing and Personal Growth; Intergenerational Relationships; and Learning, exploration, and entrepreneurship.

YELC will contribute to Agbero2100 by designing and delivering leadership development programmes. The intended outcomes are improved conceptual clarity and allocation of resource allocation, the prioritisation of young voices and a reduction in the generational gaps, and a more cohesive ecosystem and improved power dynamics.

YELC engaged 25 individuals and 4 organisations in this reporting period.

The Safety Project - Impact on Urban Health (IoUH)

Over an 18-month period the *Safety Project* utilised a social lab approach to enable Black and racial minority-led organisations and community groups in Southwark and Lambeth to influence the *Safety Fund* and redefine its concept of 'safety.'

Through interactive interviews, storytelling, learning journeys, retreats, graphic harvesting, participatory research, and system analysis Black and racially minoritised influencers, community members (including youth), and safety experts gathered insights to collaboratively produce a 'safety'-oriented Grant Making Framework and model for distributing a £500,000 safety grant in 2022/23. Prototypes are currently in development to bring about systemic

changes within the grant-making process.

The project involved 20 individuals representing 20 organisations.

Ubele's commitment to developing people, groups, and organisations has resulted in meaningful transformations that have



positively impacted the well-being and growth of individuals and communities, fostered positive change and advocated for a more just and equitable society. Over the reporting period this hub worked to transform 408 local, regional and national black and racially minoritised community groups and organisations and reached 1537 people in this process.

5.3 Strengthening our communities through assets and enterprise development

Assets development

Wolves Lane Centre, *A Place to Call Home 2.0* (APTCH2.0), the *Culture and Community Spaces at Risk* (CCSaR) research and *Gida Housing Cooperative* focused on assets development.

Wolves Lane Centre

The *Wolves Lane Centre*, Ubele's official home, is undergoing major capital development consisting of 3 new buildings using environmentally sustainable building techniques and material. With support from Haringey Council, National Lottery, Oak Foundation, GLA, and Clothworkers Foundation, the goal is to transform the existing space into a model for food growing and distribution, education, entrepreneurship, leadership and community events, and recreation. Funding has been secured for design, construction, and site operations, with over £3m raised so far.

The *Wolves Lane Consortium*, managed by Organic Lea and Ubele, is overseeing the £2.2m capital building project. The 25-year lease acquired in August 2022 solidified the *Wolves Lane Centre* as a diverse community space emphasising racial inclusivity and sustainability.

Current activities at the Centre include the Black Rootz food project, outreach, and community engagement. The first building, housing Ubele's offices and classrooms, is set to be completed by mid-2024.



Wolves Lane Centre: proposed designs



Wolves Lane Centre

A Place to Call Home 2.0 (APTCH2)



A Place to Call Home 2.0 research initiative builds upon its predecessor, *A Place to Call Home 1.0*, with a focus on asset retention and development for Black and racially minority-led organisations. The research aimed to answer key questions regarding the benefits and challenges of owning physical, cultural and community assets. Activities included outreach to 640 organisations, conduct of 25 interviews, survey of 250 organisations, hosting national focus group meetings, site visits, and networking events.

The findings highlighted the innovative strategies employed by organisations for their financial sustainability. They also revealed that 81% of organisations contacted in 2022 were still open and 35% of these had financial reserves for only one month.

The research introduced a 'model of investment readiness,' linking funders' views on the organisation's risk profile to the organisation's chance of securing community assets.

A Place to Call Home 2.0 engaged with over 700 people and Ubele aim to is findings to inform policy reform and reduce closure rates.

You can access the full report for *A Place to Call Home 1.0* [here](#) and *A Place to Call Home 2.0* [here](#).


The Culture and Community Spaces at Risk (CCSaR) research

The GLA funded CCSaR research, a collaboration between Locality and Ubele, addressed challenges faced by historically marginalised groups managing cultural spaces. It drew data from 7 London Boroughs and 121 interviews, revealing that successful organisations often had political support discrimination. It also revealed funding gaps, and gentrification as obstacles to organisational success. Recommendations included policy shifts, merging ownership with regeneration strategies, expanding funding avenues, ensuring lasting leases, and promoting resilience. Other specific suggestions involved turnover-based rent, targeted business rate exemptions, and collaborative redevelopment plans. The full report detailed these findings and can be accessed [here](#).

Barriers to operating, owning, and using cultural and community spaces.

Discrimination	Multiple disadvantages and gentrification
Overreliance on increasingly scarce grant resourcing	Succession leadership
Insecurity of tenure	Strategic and transparent relationships
Limited knowledge and understanding among key stakeholders.	Limited capacity to innovate

Methodology

-  Literature review
-  **121** interviews
-  **7** cultural and community organisations
-  **7** London Boroughs
-  **20** in-depth case studies

GIDA Housing Co-operative

Gida Housing Co-operative was established in April 2021 through a collaboration between Ubele, Rode Housing Co-operative, and Bahay Kubo Housing Association. The aim is to address the substandard quality of privately rented housing in Black and racially minoritised communities in Tottenham and London and to empower residents by granting them influence and collective control over home management and maintenance. Key activities over this reporting period included 24 community consultation sessions, and meetings with various stakeholders. The project gained recognition for its co-operative housing approach, secured funding from organisations like the Oak Foundation, Community Led Housing (CLH) London, and St Ann's Redevelopment Trust (StART), and aims to secure one housing block by 2026/27. Gida's success will lead to a model that can be developed to benefit other Black and racially minoritised communities in England.

This collaborative effort which has involved 325 individuals, and 3 community organisations.



Together, Ubele's home, the Wolves Lane Centre, APTCH2.0, The CCSaR and GIDA Housing Cooperative reflect resilience, community empowerment, and a commitment to sustainable futures.

Enterprise Development

Ubele's enterprise initiatives namely Black and Minoritised Communities' Enterprise Development Programme (BMCEDP), Flexible Finance, Black Rootz, Rootz into Food Growing, Eat Wood Green, emphasise community empowerment, environmental sustainability, and food justice. Additionally, strategic interventions like the National Community Wealth Building Strategic Alliance and Agbero showcase the power of collective advocacy.

The Black and Minoritised Communities' Enterprise Development Programme (BMCEDP)

Ubele's Enterprise Development Programme is a targeted initiative supporting Black and racially minoritised organisations in preparation for future opportunities such as the Community Ownership Fund, Flexible Fund and other investment and support

Quotes from the BMCEDP

'I think we needed more time to cover different topics.'

'The trainer provided some great tips on the approach for completing a tender including examples covering panel selection and interviews.'

'The course duration was adequate and there was time for questions and answers for clarification in case you missed any important information.'

'Clearly and concisely delivered.'

Other helpful learning reported by participants:

'How to move from funding to trading and methods to do so.'

'The importance of taking time for self-care, balance, and showing gratitude and appreciation for your colleagues.'

'How to write a business plan.'

programmes including Agbero2100. In this reporting period, 49 organisations received grants and enterprise support in cities like Birmingham, London, and Manchester. The programme welcomed 28 new organisations, guided by 15+ business advisors from our communities, covering topics from market identification to social impact measurement. Twelve organisations have completed the programme, 14 are halfway through (expected to finish by December 2023), and 23 are set to complete by March 2024. Ubele is committed to negotiating further support for late-joining cohorts, emphasising long-term impact and viability.

Collectively these EDP organisations serve over 500 people.

Further information on EDP can be found at www.enterprisedevelopmentprogramme.org.uk

EDP Case study - Cede Foundation

Cede Foundation is a catalyst organisation committed to combatting poverty by empowering individuals and cultivating sustainable communities to drive positive change. Operating across six interrelated spheres encompassing education and training, health and wellbeing, social inclusion, recycling and regeneration, arts, culture, and heritage, as well as active citizenship, Cede Foundation streamlines services to enhance the well-being of vulnerable individuals while concurrently bolstering community welfare. They particularly focus on those grappling with severe and multiple disadvantages, tailoring solutions to their unique deprivation challenges. Ubele's EDP programme has significantly contributed to Cede's growth, boosting sales revenue, increasing sales of recycled products, and enhancing training programmes. Moreover, it has facilitated staff recruitment, supported marketing initiatives, and covered essential expenses like building insurance, strengthening Cede Foundation's mission to uplift communities and combat poverty.



Flexible finance

The Flexible Finance programme, delivered in partnership with the Social Investment Business (SIB), Access – The Foundation for Social Investment and Create Equity, aims to improve the accessibility of social investment for Black and racial minority led charities and social enterprises contributing to societal and environmental improvement. The objectives of the programme include increasing engagement of Black and racial minority led organisations with social investment opportunities, improving the accessibility of finance and advocating for more inclusive practices by social investors. The programme offers blended social investment loans between £50k-£1.5m alongside grants of up to £200k. A total of £2m committed by Access supports the grant element of the finance available. SIB administers the loan fund with Ubele and Create Equity delivering outreach to Black and racial minority led organisations and providing both application and post-investment support to the organisations engaged in the fund. The programme has led to a 16% increase in the proportion of Black and racially minoritised led organisation receiving loan investment from SIB. From October 2022 to April 2023, 12 eligible applications

secured, collectively, over £1.5m for their organisations. Ubele's advocacy is gaining traction, contributing to systemic change. Ubele will continue as a partner until September 2024 or until the funding is fully committed.



Food justice

Black Rootz, Rootz into Food Growing and Eat Wood Green form a trio, interlinked by enterprise development, their commitment to food justice, community empowerment, and environmental sustainability.



Black Rootz

Black Rootz is the UK's pioneering anti-racist multigenerational worker-owned food growing project utilising 1,068 square metres of land in Haringey. It was established to enhance opportunities for individuals from Black and racially minoritised communities in the horticultural sector. Black Rootz utilises agroecological methods to provide veg boxes and culturally relevant food bank

donations to North and East London. Despite challenges like dry weather, Black Rootz successfully produced 47.3kg of saleable crops in this reporting period and enhanced soil quality without chemicals. Alongside food production Black Rootz organises community events, markets, and educational workshops. Engaging with the Enterprise Development Programme and collaborating with Ubele's Eat Wood Green project, Black Rootz stabilised its incubation project, broadened market reach, and secured strategic funding for two years. The organisation collaborated with 5 organisations and engaged with 50 individuals, including regular and corporate volunteers.



Rootz into food growing (RIFG).

Incubated by Ubele and funded by Farming the Future, RIFG attended to structural inequalities for Black and racially minoritised communities in the UK's food cultivation sector. RIFG also supported the community by providing paid employment, a placement programme with training, and aided in acquiring the Eat Wood Green food-growing site. Networking efforts resulted in a pan-London network, while advocacy with organisations like GLA and other collaborations expanded support for peri-urban farming.

RIFG's outcomes include 14 individuals transitioning to food growing livelihoods and supporting 20 agricultural startups. It fostered community cohesion, knowledge sharing, and empowered food growers. Funding was extended for three months until February 2023. Ubele has commissioned an independent evaluation to explore project continuation options.

Eat Woodgreen (EWG)

Eat Wood Green is a community initiative located on the Bury Road car park and aimed at addressing the decline of Wood Green High Street, marked by vacant parking lots, pollution, post-pandemic unemployment, and limited green spaces. Led by Ubele and Black Rootz and supported by grants from the GLA and Haringey Council, EWG aims to revitalise the area through food cultivation and education. It will feature raised beds, a multipurpose space, a health food café, and sustainable elements like rainwater harvesting. EWG plans to collaborate with the community and businesses to enhance cohesiveness, reduce crime, provide job opportunities, and benefit local institutions.

In this reporting period, the initiative actively engaged with 30 young people from the local youth club, deepening culinary expertise and consulting with residents. Partnerships with 10 organisations in Haringey focused on entrepreneurship and community development.

Strategic interventions

The Strategic Alliance, Agbero2100, and The Phoenix Way (TPW) initiated by Ubele, underscore the power of collective advocacy. The common threads among them lie in their commitment to addressing racial inequalities through community-led initiatives, systemic change, collaboration with stakeholders, and the development of assets and enterprises.

The SA and Agbero operate within the Assets and enterprise hub while the Phoenix Way operates within the Equity and Justice Hub.

National Community Wealth Building Strategic Alliance (NCWBSA).

The Strategic Alliance in England, led by Ubele and supported by The Oak Foundation, National Lottery, and Power to Change, aims to empower Black and minoritised communities through advocacy for policies aligned with their needs. The Alliance focuses on principles like local economic ownership, financial empowerment, progressive procurement, fair employment, and socially conscious land use.



Recent activities include formulating terms of reference, expanding beyond London, and conducting impactful meetings on topics like the Community Ownership Fund (COF) and consultations on the Dormant Assets Fund. Research on the COF, conducted in partnership with Impact Hub Bradford, explored distribution, barriers faced by minority communities, and opportunities for access.

In the English Dormant Assets Funding Consultation, the Alliance advocated for inclusivity and a Community Wealth Fund tailored to our communities. Despite success, internal challenges persist, including fluctuating attendance and difficulties in determining optimal meeting frequency and format.

The Alliance engaged with 20 individuals from 8 organisations, providing a platform for exchanging priorities and support.



Agbero2100

Agbero2100 (The term "Agbero" symbolises the resilience of low-paid bus conductors and taxi drivers facing oppressive systems) is designed and led by Ubele to advance race equity actions and ensure equitable outcomes for Black and racially minoritised communities in England. Over an initial 3-year period, the initiative will focus on sustainable community development through assets redevelopment, intergenerational leadership, and community enterprise. Supported by a 2022 grant from Propel and in collaboration with the Good Ancestor Movement and other partners, the project will offer values-driven investment strategies, workshops, and customised assistance to 40 UK community-based organisations. Agbero2100 will benefit from a small part of funding secured from The Propel Fund London.

Planning meetings have resulted in a finalised concept note and methodology. Funding of over £200k over 2 years has been secured from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust alongside £1.4m over 3 years from Propel London. In July 2023, a pre-launch expedition to Lisbon will bring together a diverse group of up to 30 professionals from Black and racially minoritised communities who manage community assets, infrastructure organisations, and charitable foundations united in a mission to foster systemic change in community wealth building.

In this reporting period the Assets and enterprise development hub reached out to 738 groups and organisations touching the lives of 6796 individuals.

5.4 Advocacy for Equity and Justice

Advocating for equity and justice for Black and racially minoritised communities permeates all Ubele initiatives, each employing a multifaceted and layered approach. Strategies include modelling good practices, conducting research to inform advocacy, and empowering individuals, groups, and organisations to reshape narratives and practices. Ubele also collects data that informs advocacy, exemplified by *A Place to Call Home 2*, and the *Playing Out* project. Another dimension of Ubele's advocacy involves expanding black and racially minoritised funding spaces within the mainstream, already reported upon. Interventions like the Strategic Alliance, Agbero (both already presented) and The Phoenix Way are strategically positioned to address the systemic roots of racial disadvantage. The two strategic interventions draw from the power of unified voices of multiple organisations.

In this section we focus on The Phoenix Way, Elevate and Leading Routes, three Ubele initiatives operating within the Equity and Justice hub.

The Phoenix Way (TPW)

The Phoenix Way (TPW) is a response to the heightened focus on racial justice following the impacts of COVID-19, George Floyd's murder, and the Black Lives Matter movement. This national partnership seeks to become a replicable model with a mission to dismantle systemic barriers and address inequalities faced by Black and racially minoritised communities often unheard or ignored, especially those dealing with poverty, exclusion, and discrimination. Guided by principles emphasising equity of opportunity, the embodiment of generous leadership in action, prompt grant funding, and a focus on organisations rooted in communities, TPW is committed to driving positive social change.

The Global Fund for Children has been entrusted with the role of fund manager for TPW which is structured around six core elements namely The Phoenix Fund, Collective Leadership, Innovation Spaces & Resources, Learning, and Systems Change. Through collaborative partnerships with the Youth Endowment Fund, Chanel Foundation, and Lloyds Bank Foundation, TPW has secured a commitment of £13.3 million over a three-year period.

In March 2023, the Phoenix Fund initiated a £1,000,000 Children and Youth Emergency Round, providing swift financial support to organisations addressing the needs of children and youth under 18 and at risk of violence involvement. The Phoenix Fund provided one-time emergency grants to 50 organisations through collaborative efforts from various groups.

Ubele, as the national Lead Convenor for Phoenix Way, supported the development of 6 regions and established a Black and racial minority-led national platform. This platform aims to amplify the voices of these communities in grant-making, with initiatives such as commissioned digital maps and in-person events. The TPW team, including a full-time programme manager and programme support, has been instrumental in expanding decision-makers' involvement and engaging Black and racially minoritised communities nationally and regionally. Governance



The Phoenix Way

and decision-making processes within TPW are in their early stages, emphasising the need for transparency and accountability. TPW aims to influence not only institutional practices but also broader social behaviours while maintaining autonomy.

The National Funding/Grant Giving Programme is a visible component of TPW, with key components outlined, such as a rolling programme a two-stage application process, and alignment with national priorities. A key feature of the first round of funding is that at least 90% of the decision makers leading this participatory grant making process will be young adults under 30 years. The regional aspect of TPW is crucial in influencing the National Phoenix Fund Programme and addressing regional variations. Developing regional infrastructure and priorities catering to local needs maximises impact and acknowledges intersectionality.

TPW Partners are creating an 'Insight/Excellence' strand to integrate learning, policy, and research within the programme. This involves developing a monitoring and evaluation framework emphasising knowledge, individuals, and narratives, with a focus on strategic initiatives for Black and racially led organisations within TPW.



Elevate

Elevate

Currently in its 2nd cohort the Elevate Programme was conceived by the University of Bristol and facilitated by Ubele to empower Black and racially minoritised academics and professional female staff from the University of Bath, University of Bristol, Cardiff University, University of the West of England, and University of Exeter. The annual programme which runs from January to June, emphasises self-awareness, effective leadership, and advocacy for equity.

Utilising diverse methodologies like oral history and shared narratives, the curriculum aims to instil faith in leadership's transformative power. Participants discard the idea of being "fixed" and embrace developmental thinking, recognising personal growth as a catalyst for systemic change. The initiative actively promotes collaboration and mentorship, fostering an environment conducive to both academic and professional growth. Elevate enhances strategic knowledge, communication, relationship-building, and risk management skills.

The programme's impact extends beyond its duration, influencing long-term careers and personal lives. The outcomes showcase personal and professional growth, preparing participants for leadership roles and



creating a supportive network. The programme's success is also reflected in its recognition as the overall winner for the Universities Human Resources (UHR) Award for Equality and Diversity (EDI). The community impact includes the ability to question and raise awareness of equality, diversity, and inclusion issues within institutions.

Participant testimonials highlight the transformative nature of Elevate, describing it as "pure magic." They recommend ongoing engagement

with the Elevate community, suggesting improvements in technical support and programme logistics and urge institutions to recognise and leverage the participants' experiences for effective EDI initiatives, emphasising the importance of sustained momentum and avoiding tokenistic approaches.

Elevate quotes

"I have never felt so seen, especially in a work environment. What was created was pure magic!"

"As I was new to Bristol, Elevate was a lifeline... It was also an opportunity to make professional and personal connections that helped me along my journey while challenging me not to settle for less than I was worth."

5.6 Influence and impact

The increasing interest from funders seeking partnerships, along with invitations from diverse stakeholders to engage in national decision-making bodies focused on promoting racial inclusivity, as highlighted below, serve as a testament to Ubele's growing influence and potential impact. Although Ubele does not yet have a systematic process for collecting destination data on its beneficiaries, we periodically receive valuable feedback, predominantly in the form of written correspondence and verbal comments, from those who have benefited from Ubele's initiatives. This section of the report shares illustrative examples of such feedback.

Ubele's representation at various fora



Ubele frequently receives invitations to speak at events. While the CEO serves as the primary representative on many occasions, other members of the Ubele team also play integral roles, ensuring a diverse and inclusive representation.

The Associate Director, who leads the *Assets and enterprise development* hub, represents Ubele on the board of the Wards Corner Community Benefit Society which seeks to secure and restore the Wards Corner buildings for the community and deliver the Wards Corner Community Plan. In February, the *Assets and enterprise development* hub's programme manager represented Ubele at two fora. He contributed to the Equality Impact Investing Project Taskforce, dedicated to using finance to advance equality and human rights. He

also represented Ubele at an Addressing Imbalance Community event sponsored by Good Finance, a trusted source of social investment information.

In March, Ubele's interim impact and learning manager contributed to the reimagining of BUDS' Theory of Change and participated in the Mayor of London's International Women's Day event.

Programme manager for *Developing people, groups and organisation* hub represents Ubele at weekly meetings with Propel, a collaborative fund uniting funders and equity groups/charities. Teaming up with Ubele's CEO, they co-produce the programme with funders and equity partners. Both attend away days and learning events, and Ubele's CEO also contributes to quarterly strategic meetings for projects' advancement.

In October 2022, the CEO served as a panellist at the British Academy and Nuffield Foundation Understanding Communities Launch. In November, she spoke at the Diaspora Innovation at Work event and in December, she contributed to the Good Synergy Podcast. In January of this year, Ubele's CEO attended the BME London Landlords Collaboration meeting and participated in a panel discussion at the London Anchor Institutions' Network. In March, she was prominent at the Global Philanthropy Event and the Community Ownership in Tottenham event. Below is an excerpt on feedback on Ubele's contribution:

Internationally, the CEO also represented Ubele in the Elder Leadership programme in Crete in this reporting period.

Ubele's work is also being chronicled. It was featured in a book chapter entitled: *Developing a New Generation of BAME Community-based Leaders: Lessons from an Ongoing Journey*. This case study explored Ubele as an organisation that works to promote the sustainability of the African diaspora in the UK doing so through building leadership using the skills of older experienced Black leaders, community activists, social change workers and social entrepreneurs.



A quick note to say a huge thank you for your time, energy, and wisdom at our Global Summit this year. Your conversation was a perfect way to kick off the Summit and set the tone for a profound and joyful couple of days. We have received some great feedback from the session from participants as well. Personally, I have learned a lot speaking to both of you - I am already looking forward to reading more on the stories of Sybil Phoenix and the other "Unsung Sheroes" from Yvonne's blog - and to learning more about your work going forward.

From Sam Underwood, Global Director of Programmes, The Philanthropy Workshop



Beneficiaries' stories of impact

The three testimonials below showcasing beneficiaries' experiences with Ubele, including Erasmus+ programmes from years ago, highlight the time it can take to realise impact.



From: Markos Perrakis
Sent: 10 April 2023 11:20

Regarding Wangu and many other participants and participating organisations, we have received similar outcomes, credentials and very touching and from their heart comments of gratitude for the work we have done together - Ubele and Fractality

In brief, they have said that it was the best experience they had in their life, an eye opener, new projects afterwards, collaborations, support, etc. They are grateful to Ubele that gave them the chance to come and to Fractality for the deep dives, unconditional care and the state of the art trainings J!

As you already know, we continue to support nonstop anytime your people when they ask for help. We address and promote always Ubele as the best black led organisation in UK!

Speak soon and Happy Easter!

Kind regards,
Markos Perrakis PhD
Leadership Development & Process Facilitator | Trainer |
Psychologist |Speaker
Kifissia, Greece
www.fractality.gr



✉ From: Wangu Mureithi
Sent: Friday, April 7, 2023 8:05:41 PM
To: Yvonne Field

Hi Yvonne,

I participated in the Action Learning course hosted by Fractality in Athens, Greece in 2019. I enrolled because I heard great reviews of the Action Learning practice from colleagues; that it had enhanced their communication abilities in both their private and professional lives. What I gained from the course was this, and much more.

Throughout, questioning was a central tenet - enhancing our ability to ask and respond to questions. One of my big life questions was "how do I earn a living from a family estate whilst positively impacting my community future generations?" Through rigorous thought-provoking activities, we were encouraged to be introspective. It became apparent to me that I needed to return to my home country Kenya and build a tea brand that will sell and champion practices that benefit people and planet.

In January 2022, I packed my up and moved to Nairobi. By February 2023, my tea brand was retailing across Kenya, with other markets in the pipeline.

Action Learning with Ubele and Fractality provided the space to dig deep and be interrogated on my ideas and assumptions. I now use the skills routinely and will be forever grateful for the gift of critically analysing my own life to gain new ways of handling complex problems in simplified ways.



✉ Centre 151 - Phoenix Fund testimonial
From: Centre 151
Sent: 21 August 2023 23:57

To whom it may concern,

Our organisation received a Phoenix Fund grant during the pandemic which has been key to keeping our organisation going and ensuring our members would continue to receive the support they need.

We are organising an Open Day on 10th September, and we send you enclosed an invitation. If you are able to attend on that day, you will be able to witness the impact that your funding has had on our organisation and members, allowing us and the community to recover and restart our in person activities.

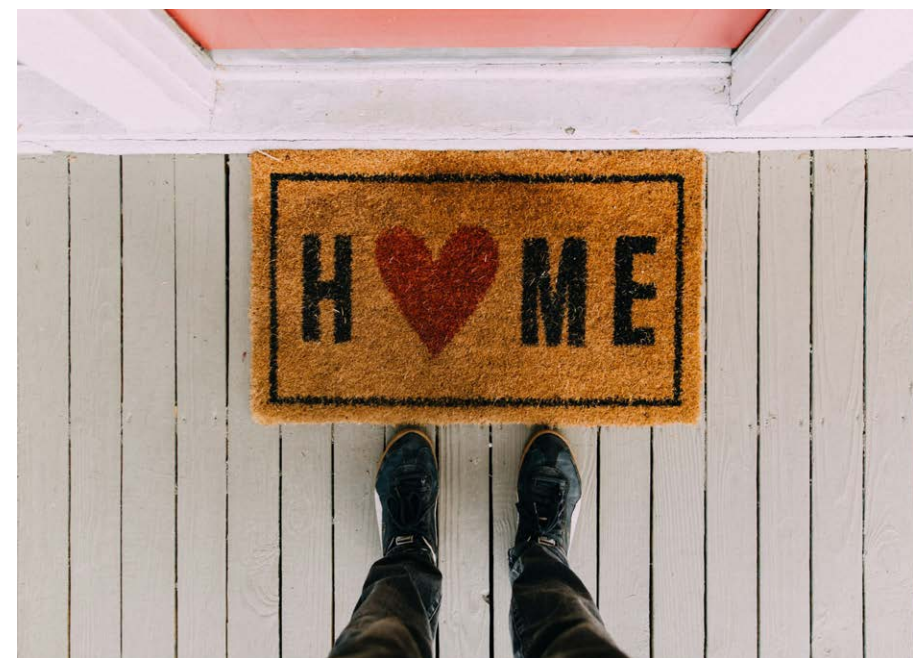
Please feel free to share this invitation within your networks and do come along if you can.

Best,

Pierre and Cam Tu

Centre 151-VLC Open Day
Vietnam, Laos & Cambodia supporting the community.

6. Reflections on success factors



Within this section, we shed light on key elements that have shaped Ubele's present success. Ubele's accomplished staff and committed associates, highlighted in Section 4 of this report, have played a crucial role in our achievements. Here, we draw focus to four other factors, namely, Ubele's innovative approach, our strategic partnerships, internal growth strategies, and financial backing.

Ubele's innovative approach

Ubele, as an organisation, emerged in response to the inadequacies of existing societal structures in meeting the needs of Black and racially minoritised communities. To address these inadequacies, Ubele has embraced an innovative approach that is reshaping prevailing paradigms and is resulting in the development of new methodologies and models. These are influenced by a systems change approach, are firmly grounded in research findings and co-created by and for our communities.

The Community Development Leadership Model (LLCC) exemplifies an iterative, trust-fuelled approach, blending community visioning, leadership workshops, infrastructure planning, enterprise initiatives, coaching, and deep listening. The Alagba Learning Coalition Model a regional pilot, bridges generational gaps and leverages diverse experiences. Meanwhile, the Agbero Model (Agbero2100) focuses on research, policy advocacy, sustainable community spaces, and intergenerational leadership.

Ubele's transformative models extend to the Intergenerational Food Growing Model (Black Rootz), emphasising social enterprise development, climate-conscious agroecological methods, and community engagement rooted in Black and racially minoritised food cultivation history. The Community Ownership of Assets Models, including Wolves Lane Centre and Eat Woodgreen, showcase

community ownership that create sustainable physical spaces through collaboration and inclusivity, facilitated by financial support and partnerships. Additionally, the Elevate Model is an annual platform for positive change through self-development, effective communication, and inter-university collaboration.

The diverse range of models, including the BMCEDP Model, the National Community Wealth-Building Strategic Alliance Model, the Gida Housing Co-operative Model, the Investment Readiness Model (A Place to Call Home 2.0), and the Ubele Grant Making and Investment Model, collectively reflect Ubele's approach to fostering transformative change.

It is crucial to emphasise here that all models are currently in the developmental phase, making it challenging to assess their complete impact. Ubele however remains dedicated to ongoing refinement, collaboration, and deep listening to ensure these models evolve to meet the dynamic needs of the communities they serve. As these models advance, they possess the potential to shape national policies and make substantial contributions to systemic change.

Strategic relationships

Achieving the systemic changes needed to sustainably enhance the quality of life and opportunities for Black and racially minoritised communities demands not only the collective efforts of diverse stakeholders but also relies on fostering transparent and collaborative partnerships among them. Ubele possesses expertise and continuously explores innovative ways to facilitate and nurture meaningful and fruitful relationships.

During this reporting period we have held two in-person in-depth planning meetings for Agbero2100 (national) given the cross-cutting nature and importance of this strategic intervention. We have also built strong relationships with a broad range of funders including Global Fund for Children, Youth Endowment Fund, Lloyds Foundation, Chanel Foundation, Impact on Urban Health, BBC Children in Need,



The National Lottery Community Fund, Lankelly Chase, Clothworkers, Paul Hamlyn, the GLA, London Funders and the Baobab Fund. These relationships go beyond acquiring financial, capacity, and organisational support for our sector. It also includes the broader objectives of serving as advocate, providing a voice, and catalysing transformative shifts within national grant-making systems. For instance, our collaboration with Baobab was designed to amplify the unified voice of our sector rather than function as distinct individual funds. A milestone in this endeavour was a day-long session in London attended by twenty participants, complemented by the creation of a digital map highlighting 'by and for' funds. There is potential for the continuation of this impactful work.

To meet our regional and national commitments and sustain our funding relationships, we have forged partnerships with key entities such as Locality, Social Investment Business, Power to Change, and the Access Foundation. Through these alliances, we strive not only to



secure support but also to contribute meaningfully to the realisation of our collective vision for systemic transformation.

We continue to inform and influence the London policy agenda for Black and racially minoritised communities through membership of the Mayor's EDI Advisory Group and the London Funders Race Equity Partners for the Propel Fund. Our emerging Strategic Alliance is a main conduit to ensure that planned policies and programmes consider and support the needs of Black and racially minoritised communities across England.

We have strengthened local relationships with Haringey Council, local businesses, and the voluntary sector for both Eat Wood Green Project and through our key consortium membership of Wolves Lane Centre. We also continued to provide incubation support, both technical and financial for Black Rootz food growing enterprise.

Internal growth strategies

Project governance, leadership, project management and staffing

During this reporting period, we strengthened programme and project management through employing core staff across three hubs and established an Associate role for The Phoenix Way. We have also strengthened our financial management infrastructure by creating 2 full-time posts within our Central Hub.

Our 2 full time national programme managers work within and across hubs boundaries to support project implementation, establish and share systems and processes, as well as contributing to organisational strategy, staff recruitment, supervision, management, health, and well-being. They have also been involved in direct project delivery. Projects and programmes are reviewed in staff, hub and directors' meetings.

Our dedicated team remains actively involved in volunteering at events that showcase the meaningful work we undertake. In parallel with our growth, we have invested in the professional development of our staff through various initiatives. Notably, our participation in the Erasmus+ Programme has broadened the horizons of our team members, providing them with enriching experiences and cross-cultural perspectives. Additionally, we have implemented coaching sessions, public speaking workshops and healthy eating workshops, all aimed at nurturing the holistic development of our staff. In line with our dedication to employee growth, we are proud to have partnered with The Learning Curve Group to support one of our team members in her apprenticeship training as a Salesforce Business Analyst. This collaboration exemplifies our commitment to empowering our staff with the skills and opportunities they need to thrive both personally and professionally.

Our commitment to the well-being of our employees remains steadfast. We recognise the importance of achieving a harmonious work-life balance, and to support this, we continue to provide



flexible work arrangements for our staff. Understanding that each team member has unique needs and responsibilities outside of work, we actively promote a culture that values flexibility. This approach empowers our employees to manage their professional responsibilities effectively while tending to their personal and family commitments. By fostering a workplace environment that prioritises work-life balance, we believe we not only enhance the overall job satisfaction of our team but also contribute to their overall health and happiness, fostering a more resilient and dedicated workforce.

Management of risk

Ubele is a rapidly growing organisation using creative processes and methodologies which are often far from straight forward. Due the emergent nature of our work, this can sometimes appear messy or unplanned to those not closely involved. However, the level of skills, experience, and professional qualifications of those involved in this work provides a strong basis for our approach. We also recognise that this emergent approach comes with some risks; not only set against increased delivery demands but within the context of needing to demonstrate robust governance arrangements, systems, and processes.

As a way of creating a good balance, between January and March 2023, Ubele directors completed a series of in-depth complex strategic sessions and agreed a clear strategic plan and priority actions for the next 12-18 months. The plan acknowledges increasing demands on the current Founder / Chief Executive Officer's time following the Phoenix Way funding; a rapidly growing staff demanding clear areas of human resource support and infrastructure; and the need to further strengthen governance, financial, grant reporting arrangements, HR, business systems and other structures and systems.

Communications

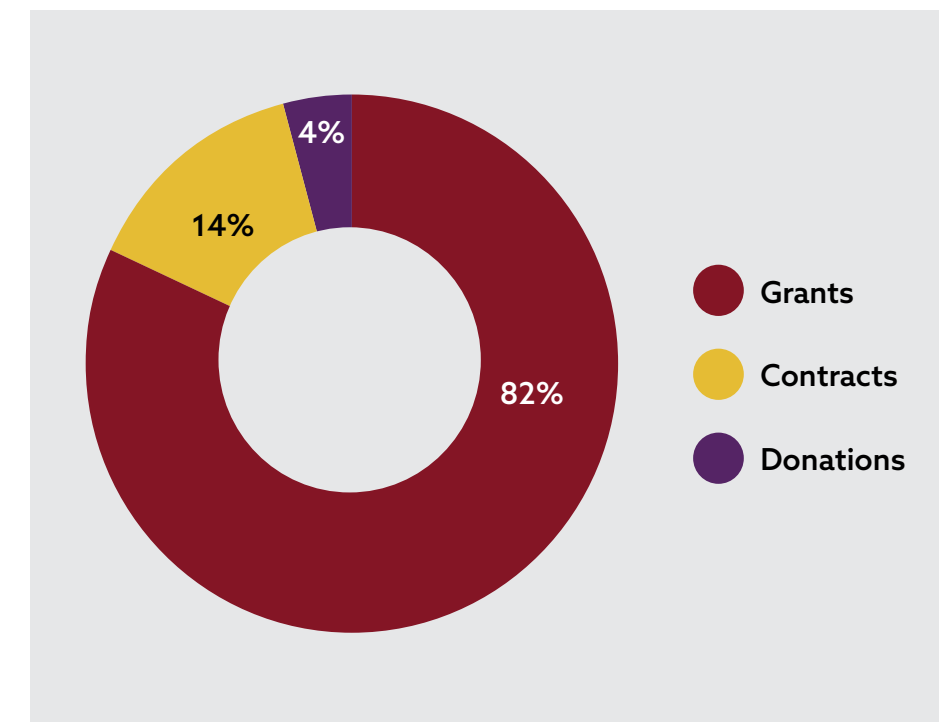
Monthly update meetings and a revised support request system have boosted internal efficiency. Utilising technology like email, instant messaging, and video conferencing speeds up stakeholder communication, enhancing productivity. Regular social media and website analytics evaluations help us to refine strategies. We promote our programmes and projects across major social media and other platforms. On Twitter we have 5,646 followers. Instagram attracts 2,963 followers, New Facebook page 90 followers, LinkedIn has 877 followers and YouTube 581 subscribers. Ubele produces a weekly bulletin for staff and associates, a website news update, and a monthly newsletter circulated to 5,123 organisations and individuals. Positive feedback on our newsletter content is regularly received. Since October 2022, our social media reach has grown by 1,231 followers, and our newsletter has gained 673 new subscribers due to a more integrated approach with online marketing.

Funding and funders

In the past fiscal year, Ubele's programmes and projects received backing from over 50 different funders. This included core funding, project funding, and, in many cases, assistance in the form of training and collaborative learning partnerships. Funding comprised 49 grants, 7 contracts, and 4 donations.

The grants which totalled £2,099,554, ranged from £175 to £227,379. The larger grants were provided by organisations such as Impact on Urban Health, The Oak Foundation, National Lottery Heritage Fund National Lottery Community Fund, and European funding for the final three Erasmus+ programmes. Ubele secured seven contracts totalling £364,146, with most of this sum attributed to a substantial contract with Mind, amounting to £244,740. The remaining contracts were of values ranging from £8,035 to £54,443 and were awarded by the following organisations: Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust, YMCA George William College, Impact on Urban Health, Guys and St Thomas Foundation, and BBC Children in Need.

The 4 donations made to Ubele totalled £90060 and ranged between £6000 to £45586.



The Oak Foundation

In autumn 2022, Ubele provided a grant of £20K, through The Oak Foundation, to Leeds Community Homes to conduct vital research on Black and racial minority Community Led Housing (CLH). Spearheaded by two Black researchers, this study sought to shift the prevailing narrative surrounding Black

and minoritised communities from 'victims of homelessness' to becoming proactive owners of their housing: a significant step towards increasing diversity of thought within the predominantly white sector of community-led housing. The outcomes of this research included the creation of an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Toolkit as a Benchmarking Tool for CLH Boards, along with a capacity-building programme in Nottingham aimed at empowering Black and racially minoritised individuals to establish a self-finish housing scheme. Additionally, a funding report and a proposal for a heritage and arts research project emerged from this endeavour, with the research projected to conclude by June 2023.

The Oak Foundation's support also extended to the Strategic Alliance and Gida Housing Co-operative in Tottenham. This amounts to £200K each year for 5 years. This assistance has significantly strengthened Ubele's Community Wealth Building by facilitating key role appointments and implementing an advanced online employee management system, thereby streamlining workforce processes, and enhancing data accessibility.

“ At Oak, we are dedicated to supporting not-for-profit organisations with multi-year, core support (unrestricted grants) where we can and when it fits within broader efforts. At Oak, core support has increased, from 22 per cent in 2013 to 42 per cent in 2021, and the intention is to continue this upward trend in the coming years. However, sometimes Oak pursues a specific objective within a partner organisation’s broader focus. In those situations, we may explore flexible project support where our priorities align. We aim to cover the true cost of project grants so that our partners can avoid living in a cycle of starvation in funding.

L.R. Programme Officer, Housing and Homelessness Programme (HHP), Oak Foundation **”**

Clothworkers

Clothworkers provided Ubele with unrestricted funding of £300,000 over three years. This is facilitating Ubele’s capacity expansion, enabling the recruitment of a Finance Director, and promoting the well-being and professional growth of its existing staff. Additionally, in 2022, Clothworkers, in partnership with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Lankelly Chase, extended further support with a grant of £50,000. This collaborative effort helped Ubele successfully navigate the challenges of that year, leaving the organisation in a significantly improved position by the end of 2022.

National Lottery

The National Lottery has provided funding for various Ubele initiatives. Phoenix Way received a grant of £141,421. Reclaiming Community Heritage, spanning from July 2021 to September 2023, secured a total funding of £377,384 from the National Lottery

Heritage Fund. Additionally, core funding is earmarked to continue from October 2022 to September 2027, supported by a sum of £1,738,320 from the National Lottery Community Fund.

Ubele continues to influence and enjoy good relationships with Access and SIB, extending the Flexible Finance programme for a second year and receiving £100k for two-year systems change initiative. Power to Change (P2C) is offering £25k annually for three years to aid policy and research efforts, collaborating with Co-ops UK on an Access Connect Fund application to enhance community shares accessibility.

Joseph Rowntree

Ubele has received two years of funding from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to advance three interconnected strands of work, aiming to enhance the organisation’s sustainability and support up to 20 Black and racially minoritised community-based organisations across England.

The first strand involves collaborating with the Good Ancestor Movement (GAM), a social purpose business that challenges conventional notions about the economy and resource distribution, to explore financial sustainability options, potentially including an endowment for the sector. GAM assists Ubele in evaluating financial strategies and providing professional financial advice. In the second strand, Ubele focuses on the financial sustainability of its Health and Well-Being portfolio, drawing from the outcomes of a strategic planning process facilitated by an Erasmus+ funded Ubuntu Mental Health Lab. The third strand entails designing and implementing a capacity building programme for at least 20 organisations with a minimum turnover of £200k and three years of operation, offering tailored support including financial health checks and reviews over 6-12 months.

Commendations from Foundation for Social Investment

“ Ubele is a delivery partner on one of our programmes, the Enterprise Development Programme. Their role is to recruit and support Black and Minoritised organisations that have an enterprising idea and to match those organisations with technical and other support to develop that idea into a sustainable enterprise. They are also able to provide an enterprise development grant as part of that support package.

Ubele have provided reach and insight into a sector that we would not be able to easily reach and provided enterprise development support to organisations led by and providing essential services to Black and Minoritised Communities. They have demonstrated a deep understanding of the needs of leaders/enterprise development in that sector and have advocated an approach that meets that need.

Ubele is a key part of the enterprise development ecosystem and, where appropriate, we would like to work with Ubele on future projects. They have been upfront and transparent about challenges they have faced whilst delivering the programme which has helped us to collectively think through appropriate solutions. **”**

M.B. Access – The Foundation for Social Investment

“ SIB have an excellent working relationship with Ubele, especially with EDP and the Flexi Finance grant (a grant for BAME led organisations that sits alongside our current Recovery Loan Fund). Ubele work in partnership with us to support customers and bring in a unique and most

needed perspective on processes and applications. Ubele work with customers from application stage to summary and partner with us to ensure that all eligible resources for the customers are available.

Having Ubele on our Flexi Finance grant has made the programme possible. Comparing statistics from our previous loan fund to our current one with the Flexi Finance fund sitting alongside it, we can see a noticeable difference in applicants



and success rates. This is partly due to Ubele bringing in applicants and supporting them through the process:

RRLF - of the 213 applicants:

- 56 have been Black and Minority-led organisations (27%)
- Of the 105 who were eligible only 13 were Black & Minority-led (12%)
- And of the 64 approvals, only 3 were/are Black and Minority-led (less than 5%)

RLF - of the 130 applicants:

- 61 have been Black and Minority-led organisations (47%)
- Of the 104 who were/are eligible 43 were/are Black & Minority-led (41%)
- And of the 27 approvals, only 7 were/are Black and Minority-led (26%)

Working with Ubele on our Enterprise Development Programme we have also been able to support 49 Black and Minoritised Led organisations with 12 having now completed their time on EDP. We have found working with Jacy as Enterprise Development Manager for this EDP sector invaluable and have learnt a lot from working with her to support Black and Minoritised Led organisations to develop their enterprise ideas. What we have learnt from working with Ubele has directly influenced our approach to fund design to ensure we reduce the barriers to Black and Minoritised led organisations accessing the vital funding and finance that they need.

Utilising specialist partners and allowing more collaborative working is needed to ensure a more equal landscape for the



Social Investment Sector. Having Ubele collaborate with us on a number of different products, we've been able to gain insight and different perspectives from what we'd usually hold. And with Ubele having a wide network of organisations who may not have known about us, it also gives them more benefit to work with organisations such as Ubele.

It has been and continues to be a real pleasure working with Ubele on our programmes and we continue to grow our knowledge, reach, and impact on Black and Minoritised Led community organisations as a result.

H.L., Partnership Manager, Social Investment Business (SIB)

7. Future priorities



In the next year Ubele will focus on building and sustaining thriving community organisations, strengthening its internal infrastructure, and achieving a more balanced funding portfolio. The organisation's commitment to reducing the funding gap for Black and minority-led organisations remains central, as we continue to share our learning and develop replicable models to foster sustainability and racial equity in the sector. We aim more actively to empower our emerging young leaders to participate in Ubele's governance, fostering collaboration and inclusive decision-making for a stronger intergenerational organisation.

Ubele, however, finds itself at an inflection point. On the one hand, our growing strategic partnership role with funders, social investors, and other organisations in the social sector has opened doors to diverse types of work. On the other, it has occasionally diverted attention from our own strategic priorities, leading to imbalances in funding allocation, resource distribution, and staffing. Additionally, while this growth underscored our exceptional delivery capabilities, it came at the expense of inadequate investment in internal systems and processes. Our senior leadership team is diligently working to foster partnerships that align with Ubele's overarching goals, to align strategic priorities with available funding, increase our unrestricted funds and ensure that the right people are in the appropriate roles. For this, the Oak Foundation commitment of £1 million over five years



from January 2022, is a step in the right direction. The overall effect of added capacity and expertise has moved the finance function from day-to-day operation to better management and reporting. There remains an element of catch-up but overall, the direction of travel is towards consolidation and adaptation to respond to Ubele's needs.

Hub development

Through the *Central* Hub Ubele plans to strengthen accountability with Programme Boards for each hub, along with specialised boards for strategic programmes and large cross-generational projects. These will provide vital support and oversight, emphasising transparency in decision-making. After hastily establishing finance, HR, communications, and business systems during the pandemic-

driven expansion, Ubele now aims to refine and enhance these elements.

Ubele engages in diverse projects, incorporating varying monitoring and evaluation methods based on funders' requirements. Ubele acknowledges the benefits of standardisation and is developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing short-term progress and long-term impact.

In communications, key initiatives include extensive analytics, daily social media posts on four platforms, promotion of 10 events monthly, video content for YouTube, and resource restructuring with a campaign budget. Three targeted campaigns, and a 10-year anniversary celebration are also planned. Objectives include a 15% increase in website traffic, gaining 700 new followers on Facebook and YouTube, expanding to TikTok and Instagram Threads, growing newsletter subscriptions by 300, boosting staff meeting attendance by 10%, and improving internal communication through regular updates and enhanced networking. Staff training and workshops on the communication platform, marketing, and communications are planned for process streamlining and innovation.

The *Assets and Enterprise Development* Hub will continue its focus on community wealth building, social investment, and supporting Black and racially minoritised organisations. Key initiatives include the completion and launch of *A Place to Call Home 2.0* and the *Culture and Community Spaces at Risk* research. It aims to assist Gida in securing homes, expand its membership, and work towards Registered Housing provider status. The *Black and Minority Ethnic Enterprise Development Programme* (BMC EDP) will continue empowering organisations with various enterprise development approaches, offering capacity building support and negotiating additional assistance for late cohorts. Ubele will support organisations through the Flexible Finance process and engage with mainstream funders and the Connect Fund for Black and racially minoritised communities. Black Rootz plans to ensure financial stability by hiring

an enterprise manager and expanding food production. LLCC and Wolves Lane Centre have redevelopment plans in with funding and training secured for the former and additional funding to be raised for the latter. Agbero2100 will enable Ubele to test and replicate strategies for thriving community organisations, including a pre-launch trip to Lisbon for a multi-stakeholder group.

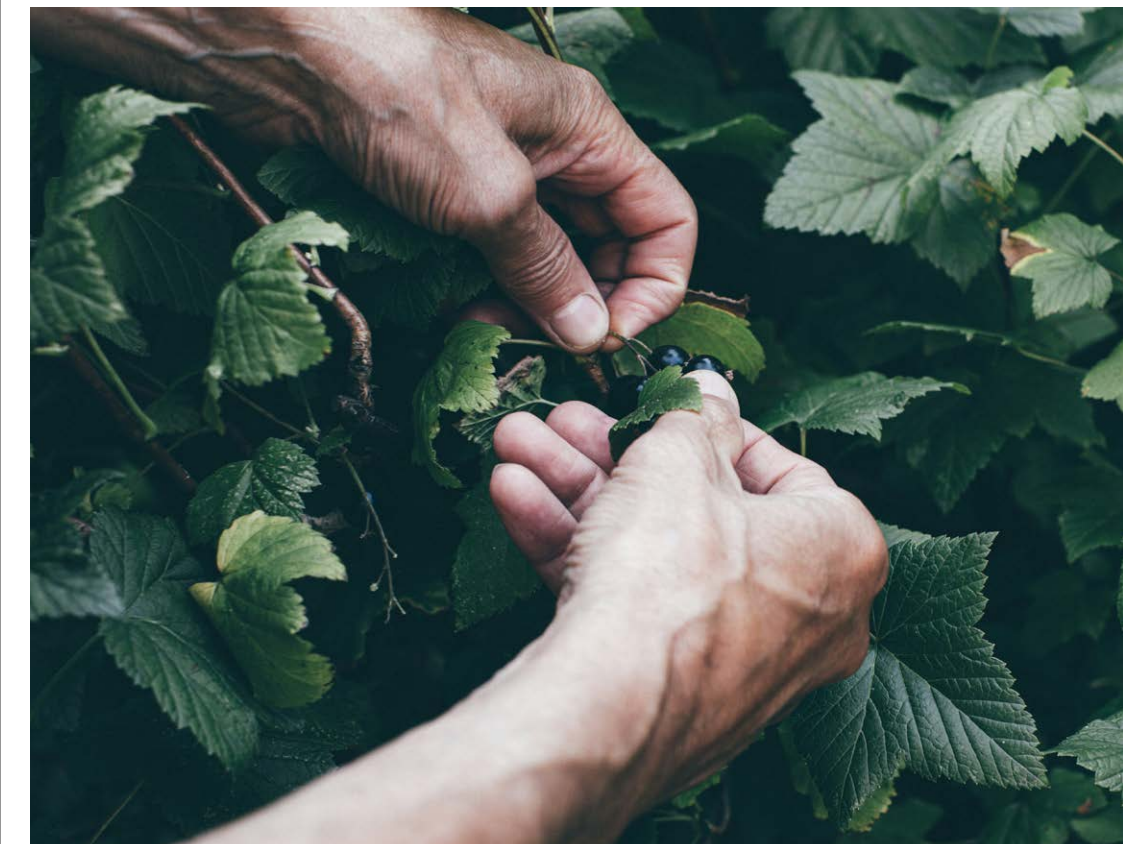
The *Developing people groups and organisation* hub prioritises project delivery and securing resources for expansion through engagement organisation-wide events to boost its visibility and widen its access. The *'Social Action and Rehabilitation of Young Offenders'* research undertaken in collaboration with IVAR and funded by The Jane Hatfield Award programme will be published, followed by a roundtable discussion. Access UK's social lab plans to visit a Black-led social enterprise dedicated to supporting Black and racially minoritised youth in education, employment, and enterprise. The goal there is to conduct a Roundtable discussion and prototype an intervention aimed at fostering sustainable employment within these communities.

To embed YELC into the organisation three inquiry teams will meet seven times annually for social labs, learning journeys, knowledge-sharing, and insights dissemination. Participants will also undergo a community organising course, refining skills in campaign development, public speaking, fundraising, conflict management, and boundary setting. Ubele will seek three years of funding to fuel YELC's mission within the Agebero2100 framework.

Through the *Advocacy for equity and justice* hub Ubele will consider how we might offer leadership to new equity funding strategies with Esmee Fairbairn, Clothworkers and Trust for London and influence the flow of financial resources from National Lottery Community Fund into TPW programme. Ubele's CEO will actively contribute to the Fairer City Action Plan and advise on the Deputy Mayor's EDI group. Future influence depends on effectively managing Ubele's internal demands and the CEO's capacity over the next two years.

Recognising the post-Covid-19 landscape Ubele will initiate dialogue with Trust for London to examine their Race Equity Strategy, funding model, and national network expansion.

TNLCF has committed £50 million over five years to support community-led groups representing Black and minoritised communities across England, with an additional £13.5 million over three years from three new funders, including the Youth Endowment Fund. Ubele plays a significant role in this national partnership, through TPW, and will continue contributing to expand the fund's reach, maintaining its ethos, and shaping its operational methods.



8. Appendix 1 – Ubele’s 28 Initiatives at a glance

Projects	Systemic Change			
	Advocacy for equity and justice	Assets and enterprise development	Developing people, groups, and organisations	New models
1. A place to call home 2				
2. Agbero 2100				
3. Alagba				
4. Barriers - CCSaR				
5. BBC Children in need - Youth Social Action Fund				
6. Black Rootz				
7. BMCEDP				
8. Building Stronger Communities - GLA BSC				
9. Eat Wood Green				
10. Elevate 2				
11. Erasmus+: Journeys and MALI				
12. Flexible Finance				
13. GIDA Housing Co-operative				
14. Health, mental health, and wellbeing activities				
15. Leading Routes				

Projects	Systemic Change			
	Advocacy for equity and justice	Assets and enterprise development	Developing people, groups, and organisations	New models
16. Lloyd Leon Community Centre (LLCC)				
17. Mek We Chat - RSA				
18. National Community Wealth Building Strategic Alliance				
19. Paths to Economic power (P2E)				
20. Playing out				
21. Reclaiming Community Heritage				
22. Rootz into Food Growing				
23. Safety Project - IoUH				
24. The Phoenix Way				
25. Thrive Community of Practice (CoP) London				
26. Wolves Lane Centre				
27. Young Emerging Leaders Collective (YELC)				
28. Youth Futures Foundation (YFF) London Lab				



Mailing address

The Ubele Initiative CIC
Wolves Lane Centre
London N22 5JD

E: info@ubele.org
T: 0800 772 0220
w: www.ubele.org

