



Agbero2100 Learning Journey
10 to 14 July 2023

A summary overview report of the week



Erasmus+



Day1: 10 July 2023

Opening and context

POLICY DRIVERS

Localism Act 2011
Levelling Up 2021
Community Ownership of Assets 2021
Adebowale Commission 2021
Dormant Assets + Community Wealth
Building Fund 2023

LEARNING AND IMPACT

Community Asset Development
Erasmus +
Health and Wellbeing
Leadership Programmes
MEL London
MEL England
Social Impact Reports (2021/2022)



RESEARCH

- A Place to Call Home 1.0 (2015)
- MALI Enterprise Leaders England + London (2019/2021)
- Health and Wellbeing Research (2020/2021)
- VCSE during Covid X 2 (2021)
- Booska Papers (2021)
- BAMERS report (2022)
- CORE Social Leadership (2022)
- Social Prescribing 2022
- GLA Barriers Report (2023)
- Harakati (2023)
- A Place to Call Home 2021 2.0 (2023)
- Navigating Space Under Lock Down (2021)

COMMUNITY BASED PRACTICE

- Advocacy
- Anti Racist Practice
- Bayo Platform
- Capacity Building and Support
- CiN grant influencing/ support
- Asset Development
- Community Engagement / Empowerment
- Graphic Facilitation / Social Labs / Creative Methodologies
- Gida Housing Co-operative
- Incubation/Innovation
- International Partnerships
- Leadership Development
- Safety Fund
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Systems Change / Thinking
- The Phoenix Way



AGBERO2100 - WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Agbero is a Yoruba word used to refer to people operating in the informal transport industry as bus conductors or taxi drivers. We use the word 'Agbero' to signify 'sustainability' because Agberos have important similarities to what Agbero 2100 seeks to achieve.

Agberos do not own these buses yet toil throughout the year for very low pay. They direct, guide and facilitate the movement of people and goods.

Assets in Black and racially minoritized communities are often not owned by the communities that manage and interface with the people.

Agbero 2100 will direct, guide and facilitate the process of making sustainable the assets of Black and racially minoritised communities so that those spaces remain a contributor to the movement and development of the people who use those assets and the communities they serve.

By turning this word on its head, we recognise the resilience and tenacity of Agberos who work under very difficult circumstances with little or no support from the government yet are surviving and making a living for themselves in the face of oppressive systems and structures.



WHY THE NEED FOR AGBERO 2100?

There is growing recognition of the need to divert from short-term projects and programmes which have limited impact. Also, an increased awareness of the need to achieve more equitable outcomes through systemic change offers us a rare opportunity.

Agbero 2100 aims to make a long-term strategic intervention across England helping to achieve Ubele's mission of creating sustainable communities through redeveloped community assets, intergenerational leadership development and community enterprise.

Our experience suggests that targeted and tailored support is required for at least three to five years, if we are to achieve real and sustainable results.


Underpinned by our four strategic aims we will connect new and current programmes with those of other partners.

Furthermore, it allows us to draw from and sharpen our organisational experience and knowledge thereby contributing to the delivery of the original recommendations in 'A Place to Call Home', 2015.

WHAT DOES AGBERO2100 INTEND TO DO?

Agbero2100 will make a long-term strategic intervention across England in line with Ubele's mission to create sustainable Black and racially minoritised communities through redeveloped community assets, intergenerational leadership development and community enterprise.

The project aims to:

- 1. Increase the sustainability of a cohort of community assets run by, and for, Black and racially minoritised communities;**
 - 2. Establish and share a coherent and effective approach to supporting Black and racially minoritised community organisations, leaders and assets;**
 - 3. Mobilise a network of organisations to challenge the issues facing Black and racially minoritised communities and advocate for better solutions at a systemic level.**
- 
- A decorative geometric pattern in the bottom right corner, featuring a series of overlapping triangles and polygons in white, purple, and red, set against a yellow background.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINES YEAR 1

Agbero2100 (national – 2yrs)

- September 2022 – September 2023: Strategy Development (including Meetings, Concept Note; Comms Strategy and securing additional funding and strategic partners)
- July 2023: Lisbon Learning Journey (funded through the Erasmus Ubuntu Social Leadership Academy programme)
- September – December 2023: Phase I (up to 50 organisations to be supported) – Advertising and Initial Selection process
- January – May 2024: Online Sessions for up to 50 organisations (Phase 1 cohort)

Further selection to reduce group numbers for programme of tailored support: 5-10 days per group

- July – December 2024: Phase II – Tailored Support for up to 30 groups



KEY ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINES YEAR 1

(CONTINUED)

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Support
- Learning Partner role

Agbero2100 London (3yrs)

- 3 x Community Development Manager roles
- Incubation Support for Black Rootz: staffing, equipment, mentoring /coaching etc.
- 3 x Communities of Practice
- 9 capacity support programmes per year (3yrs): leadership development, asset development, enterprise and environmental building practices



FUNDING FOR AGBERO2100

£190k over 2 years – National - Joseph Rowntree (*secured June 2022*)

£1.4m over 3 years – London – Propel (*secured May 2023*)

£450k over 1 year - 2 regions in England plus London 'small top up' - Phoenix Way (*potentially secured Sept 2023*)

Additional funding will be required to:

Roll out of Agbero2100 across England (up to 6 regions)

Cover costs of capital building works (e.g. Wolves Lane x 3 new buildings is costing £2.3m)



HOW THE LISBON LEARNING JOURNEY FIT WITH AGBERO2100?

- ***Contribute to the Planning Phase:*** helping to surface local, regional and national needs
- ***Develop and Test Ideas*** for potential inclusion in Year 1
- ***Formation of networks*** that will work closely towards the aims of Agbero2100
- **Does not guarantee your organisation a place...*you will still need to apply and meet criteria!***



What is community wealth building?

- Key questions to explore over the course of the week:
 - What is a new definition of CWB that we can come up with here?
 - What has kept us apart in the past?
 - How do we get collective leadership and communities ready for the future transfer of assets?
 - What is a community asset transfer as opposed to community ownership and understanding the processes?
 - How do we create and sustain a network to share knowledge and skills?
 - Challenging institutional racism and mistrust within funders/councils/organisations



Opportunities and challenges...

- Core funding helps open other doors of more funding and activities (e.g. staffing roles: Trust for London and GLA)
- Funding-challenges to access core funding, requirements and shift to meet, size of the team or growing and scale up without losing benefits of being on the ground: how do we get financially independent?
- More funding needed, as resources are stretched with limited financial sustainability independence.
- Communities are resourceful and resilient but that can go against what we are trying to achieve and can't access resources as we are just trying to get it done
- Partnership work, passionate and capable but not able to access resources for money and payment and more staff
- Mistrust in our own community and fear about sharing as organisations are diverse.
- Negative perceptions of BME organisations from stakeholders and decision makers.
- Limitations are our weakness: how can we have all the systems in place, could we share resources to fill the skills gaps to help organisations move to the next step?
- We are not seen as leaders and mistrust abound, especially in relation to how public institutions see the sector.
- Opportunities exist to create and develop an infrastructure support role, to convene platforms to bring networks together, learn from each other and leverage our communities as those assets and skills do exist and we need to mobilise.
- Space to deliver their services
- Succession planning: what does that look like and how do you find the right people?



Open sessions...

★ OPEN SPACE ★ CONVERSATIONS

Session 1

- ★ 1 Community Ownership of assets
- ★ 2 Succession planning
- ★ 3 Trust in // With our Communities

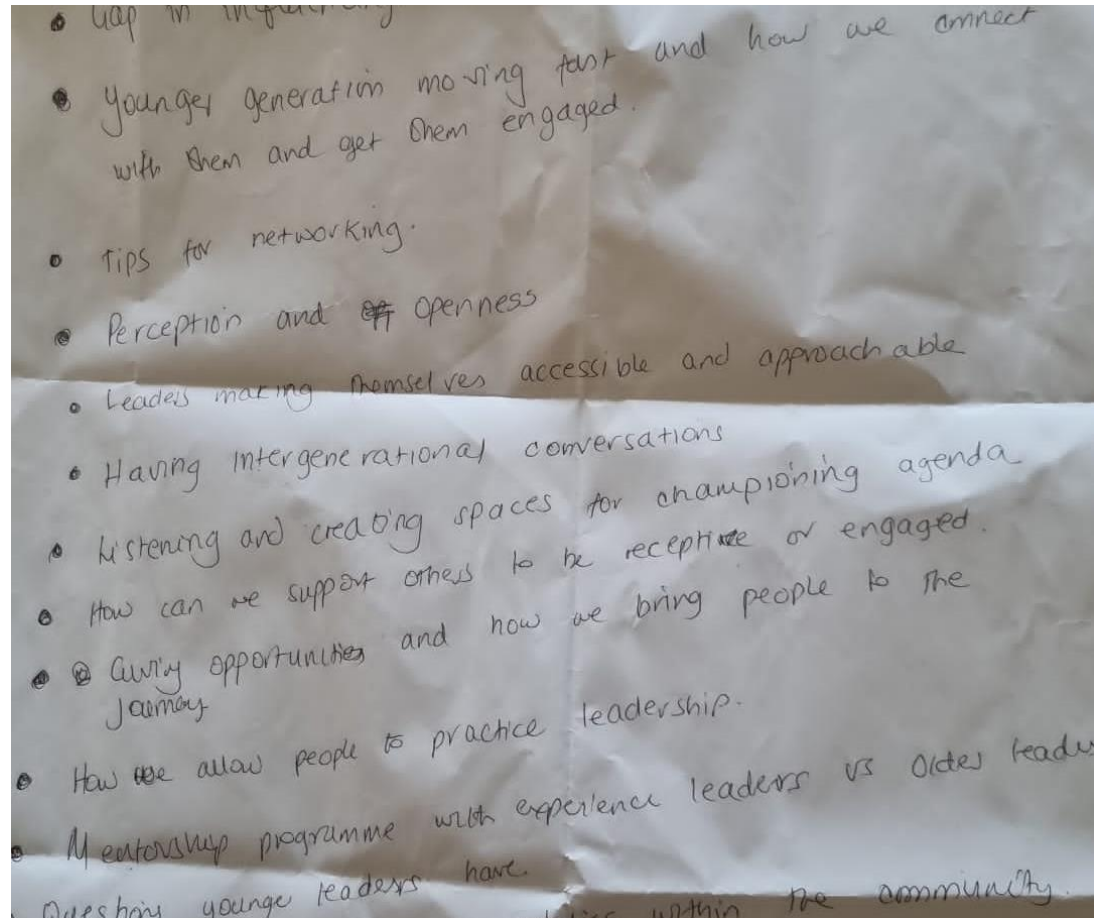
Session 2

- ★ 1 Community Wealth building
- ★ 2 Collaborations: How do Communities form partnerships
- ★ 3 Our Stories: How and when did we start our journeys of activism



Breakout groups...

Succession planning....



What do we need to do to ensure transition and knowledge is passed on to the next generation:

- Legacy planning
- Employing from within the community
- Gap in influencing
- Younger generation, moving fast and how we connect with them and get them engaged.
- Tips for networking
- Perception and openness
- Leaders Making themselves more accessible
- Having intergenerational conversations
- Listening and creating spaces for championing agenda.
- How can we support others to be receptive or engaged
- Given opportunities and how we bring people to the journey.
- How we allow people to practice leadership
- Mentorship programs with experience leaders versus older leaders
- Questions young leaders have.
- Self-care and navigating the policies within the community.




Some Actions and next steps: Day 1

- The challenge is back to us [organisations and funders] and how we get people talking about racism and discrimination that is so systemic and institutional
- Capacity building and pushing funders into acknowledging they are part of an ecosystems and ensure it supports people to have capacity and support all those who apply
- Working together to take the action, network and build trust
- Leadership development to manage assets and maintaining them
- Explore community asset transfer and ownership and understand the process
- What are grant funders looking for, criteria that is internal that we don't meet and pooling resources like apps and AI to see what's new to streamline the process
- Learn more about running a business and how to get community involved and engaged
- Embed environmental sustainability in our vision to meet 2030 targets

Day 2: 11 July 2023

- A Place to Call Home 2.0
- Some emerging themes and challenges....





How does the research Fit with Agbero2100....

- Agbero2100 will make a long-term strategic intervention across England in line with Ubele's mission to create sustainable Black and racially minoritised communities through redeveloped community assets, intergenerational leadership development and community enterprise.
- The project aims to:
 - Increase the sustainability of a cohort of community assets run by, and for, Black and racially minoritised communities;
 - Establish and share a coherent and effective approach to supporting Black and racially minoritised community organisations, leaders and assets;
 - Mobilise a network of organisations to challenge the issues facing Black and racially minoritised communities and advocate for better solutions at a systemic level.
- *The outcome from AP2CH 2.0 aims to support these aims.*

What the research set out to explore...

THEMES

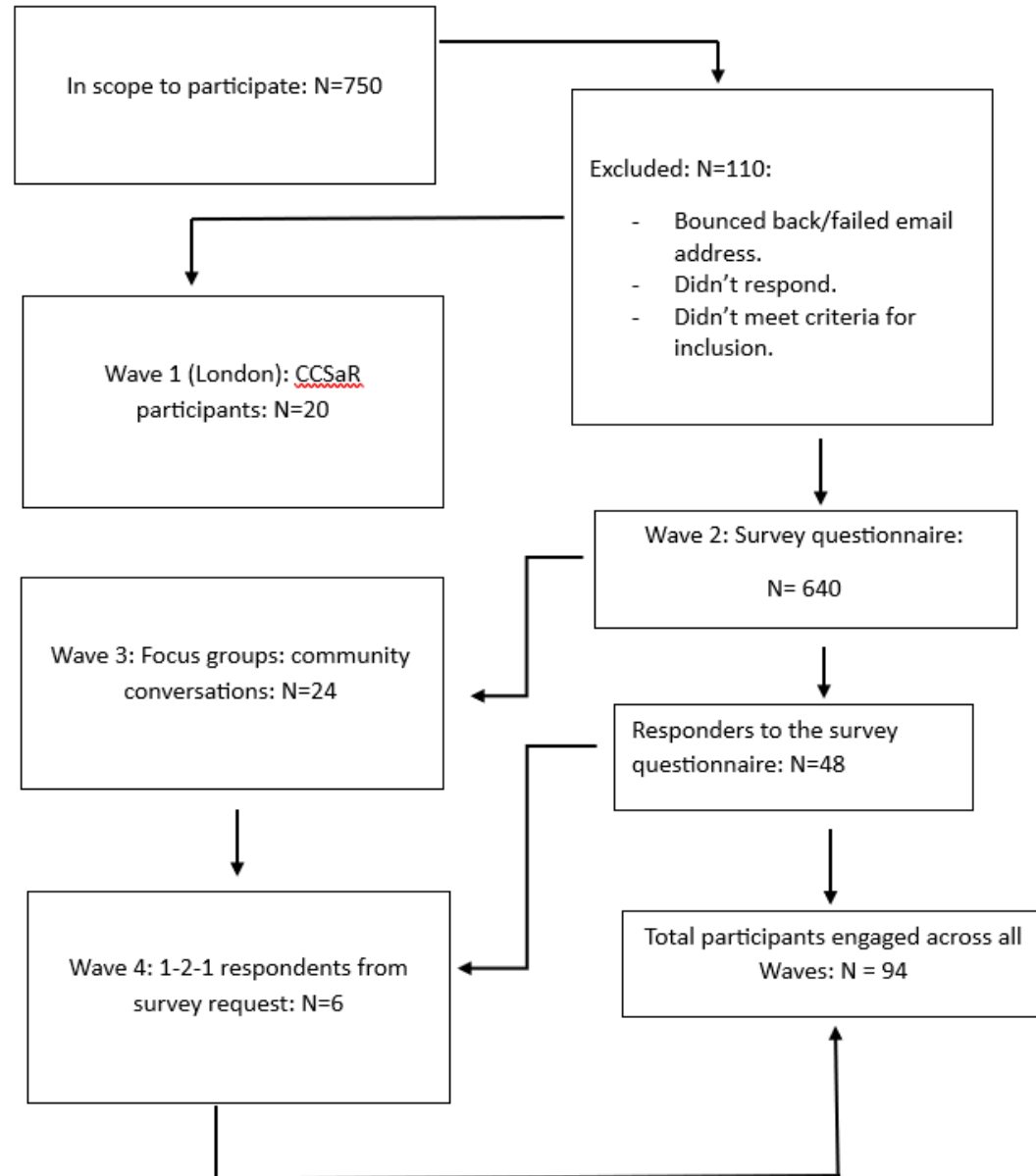
Five themes (or areas of exploration) will be covered as follows:

- Theme 1: Geographical spread and type of community assets
- Theme 2: Service provision and take-up
- Theme 3: Ownership/ governance and leadership
- Theme 4: Support and sustainability strategies
- Theme 5: Future development opportunities

Key questions that AP2CH 2.0 is trying to explore...

- **What has happened to those organisations that were in scope to the first publication 2015: where are those groups now? Have their situation worsened or improved?**
- **Are there new organisations who should now be captured in the research, and do they reveal same, similar or different perspectives?**
- **To what extent has the pandemic worsened or improved their position?**
- **Are there other perceived needs beyond the ‘financial’?**
- **Are there differences across the regions?**
- **What initiatives have emerged since the initial research in 2015 which might give rise to hope (within and outside Ubele)?**

FIG 1:
PARTICIPANT
FLOW CHART
METHODOLOGI
CAL APPROACH





Summary overview...

- Very little has changed since the 2015 report with respect to the status of the majority of the 143 organisations that were then captured. The vast majority remain in the same position as then reported, especially those at risk of closing at the time: they have either closed (as with the Welbourne Centre in Haringey; African Caribbean Centre in Leicester) or still trying to secure long term tenancy agreement with the local authority, as with the Camberwell After School Project in Southwark.
- 143 organisations were identified in the 2015 research as either open, closed (or in the throes of closing) or under serious threat of closing. Of this, 54% are still open while 29% have either closed or are under threat of closing with a further 17% whose status is unknown.
- As part of this revised research, 50 organisations responded from a data-base of 640 organisations across the UK, including the 143 that had been captured in the 2015 research. We were able to exclude 15% (n=110: Figs 1 - 4) as they did not meet the criteria of being based in the UK and not BAME led.
- Contact was made through email and telephone to the 640 organisations that were now in scope to the research. From this approach, 81% indicated that they are open and operating; the others are either under threat or have closed.
- Not all the organisations identified were seeking to secure freehold or long-term lease agreements, but they all shared the need for sustainable financial support (i.e. core funding to sustain the organisation).
- Organisational state of readiness for investment (incl. grant funding) is seen as a critical stumbling block, alongside poor governance and leadership and some structural inequalities.

Summary overview (cont'd)...

• *Infrastructure support organisations* were seen in ambivalent light, in that participants felt they were seen as potentially helpful but felt they were unable to support organisations to grow or develop. Their role and significance were questioned as being unclear and offered low level capacity support. Where Organisations found them useful was in signposting to potential funding stream and helping them to draft applications. Shared back-office spaces, administrative support to small organisations and functions such as finance, auditing, marketing and design, were said to be capacities needed which they felt many were not able to provide.

• *Partnerships, mergers and amalgamation:* this was something that not many organisations were wanting to contemplate, as this meant giving up on why they were established in the first place. The general view coming through was that the larger body would not recognise where they were coming from, the history and the journey made to get to where they are (i.e. 'sacrifices').

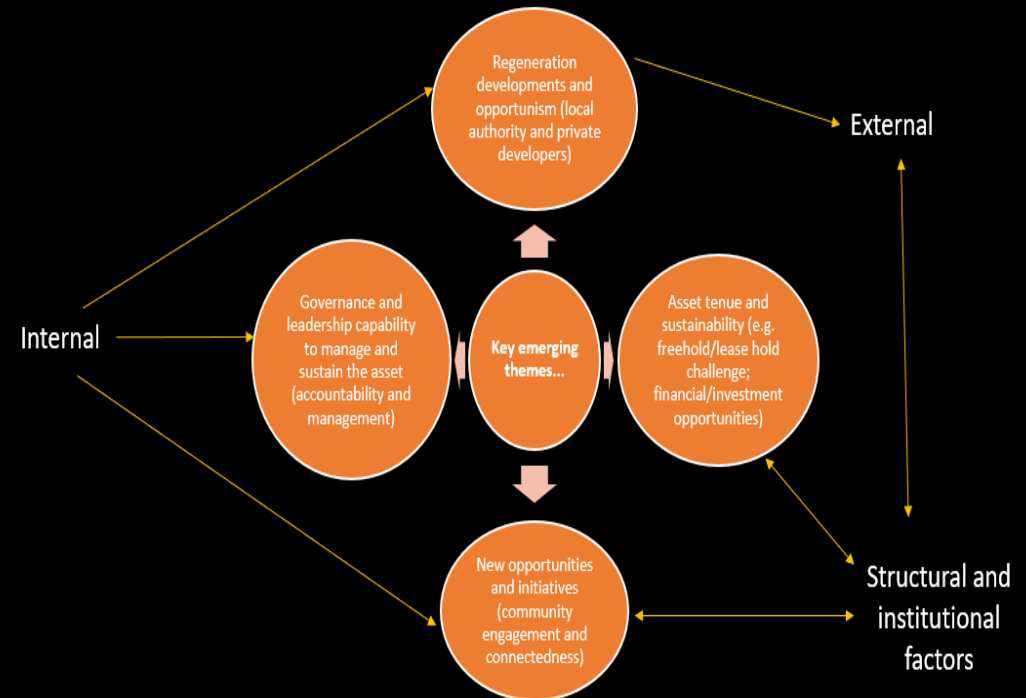
• *Sharing spaces with like-minded organisations* delivering similar, if not same programmes, was another aspect that was being rejected in favour of single organisational physical asset acquisition. This seemed not to be a consideration even where it was known that there were some assets that were under-utilised and have been so for many years.

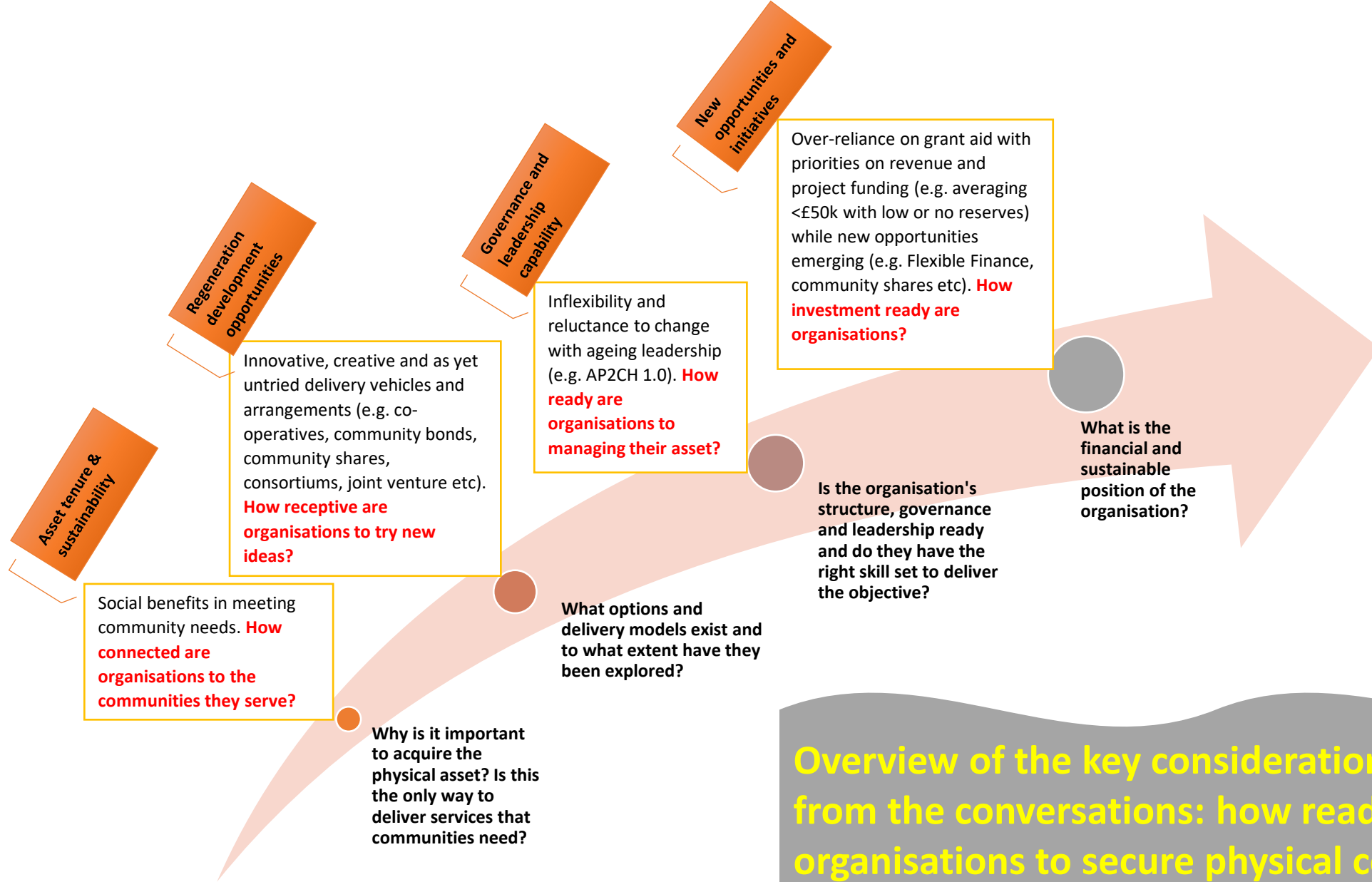
- *Funding and financial resourcing possibilities and options:* Organisations, on the whole, have found it difficult to access appropriate levels of funding to enable them to sustain their service delivery. In part this can be as a result of internal organisational considerations and factors, and in part, to external factors, some of which could be said to be perceived structural concerns [see diagram below]. Coming through the interviews, focus group conversations and responses to our survey, participants were unaware of new and innovative funding models on the market. In the most part they were very much focused on grant aid as the funding model of choice, and within that, they were more focused on short term project and activities delivery. The overwhelming majority were looking to access grant aid to purchase or somehow acquire through long leases a physical asset where they could develop and deliver programmes.
- *Governance and leadership:* Many of the closed local authority centres that had been given to community bodies to run were poorly managed with weak governance and leadership in place with insufficient funds being generated to sustain beyond grant from the local authority. Some showed signs of mismanagement while others just did not have calibre of trustees and workers to make the provision self-sufficient. Poor governance and leadership raised questions about the 'readiness' of organisations to access capital and large funding required to either purchase physical community asset or sustain an existing one.

Key questions underpinning the research and engagements...

- Why is it important to acquire a physical 'community asset'?
- What other options exist that has not yet been explored or tried?
- Is the organisational structure and leadership the right one to secure asset acquisition (i.e. is the organisation driving the journey the right one)?
- What is the financial and sustainable position of the organisation?

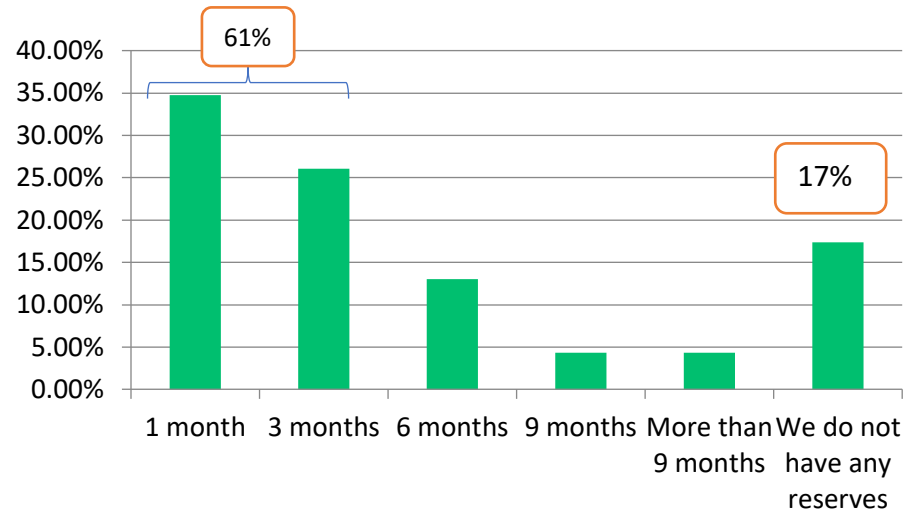
Fig 2: Emerging factors and opportunities where focus should be directed....





Overview of the key considerations to emerge from the conversations: how ready are organisations to secure physical community assets?

Fig 2: Reserves held by responding organisations [n= 48]



78% of organisations with no to 3mths worth of reserves are financially insecure.

What did the survey reveal?

Fig 3: Please tell us the size of your organisation by average total annual income (i.e. averaged over 3yrs) [n= 48]

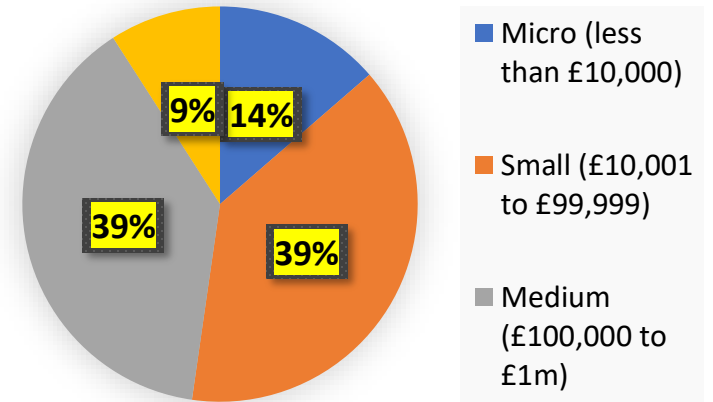


Fig 4: Within which of the below regions of the UK is your organisation based (n= 48)?

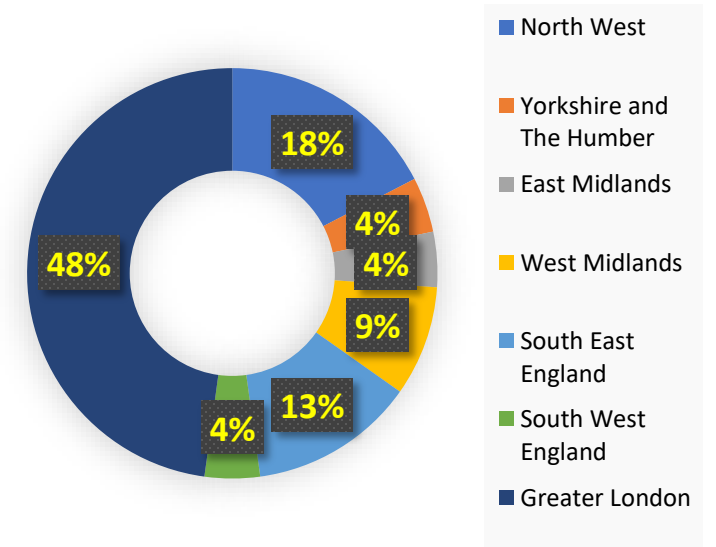
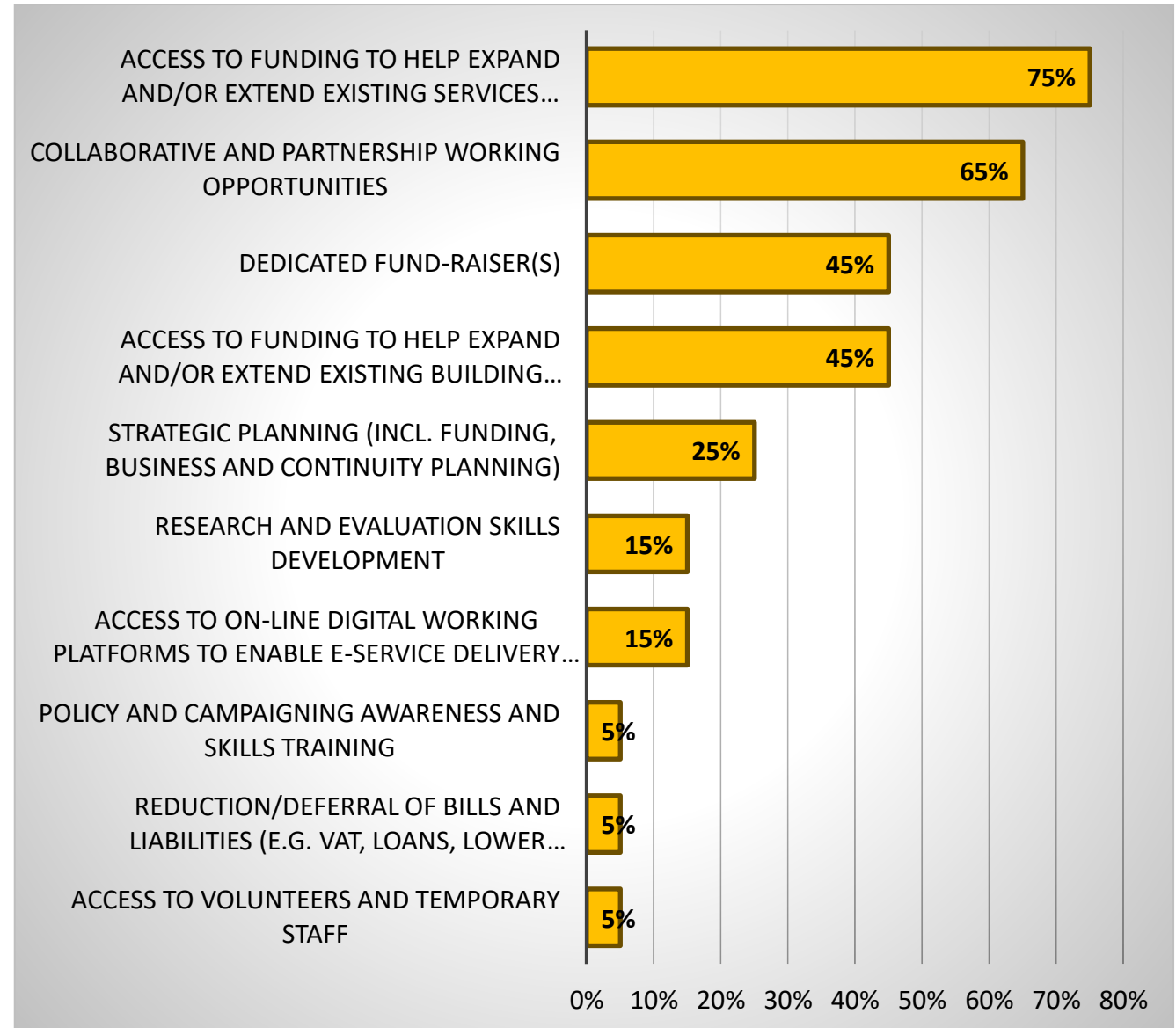


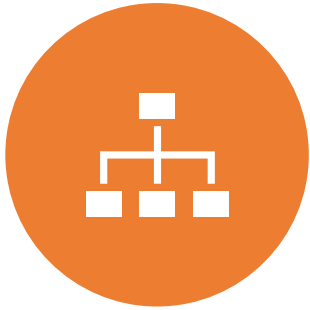
Fig 5: Thinking about the type of support you might need going forward, which ones would you say will have the greatest impact on the sustainability of your organisation and/or retention of the community asset?



Investment readiness to secure community assets: an emerging framework



ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY LEVELS



LEVEL 4: HIGHLY
DEVELOPED



LEVEL 3: DEVELOPED



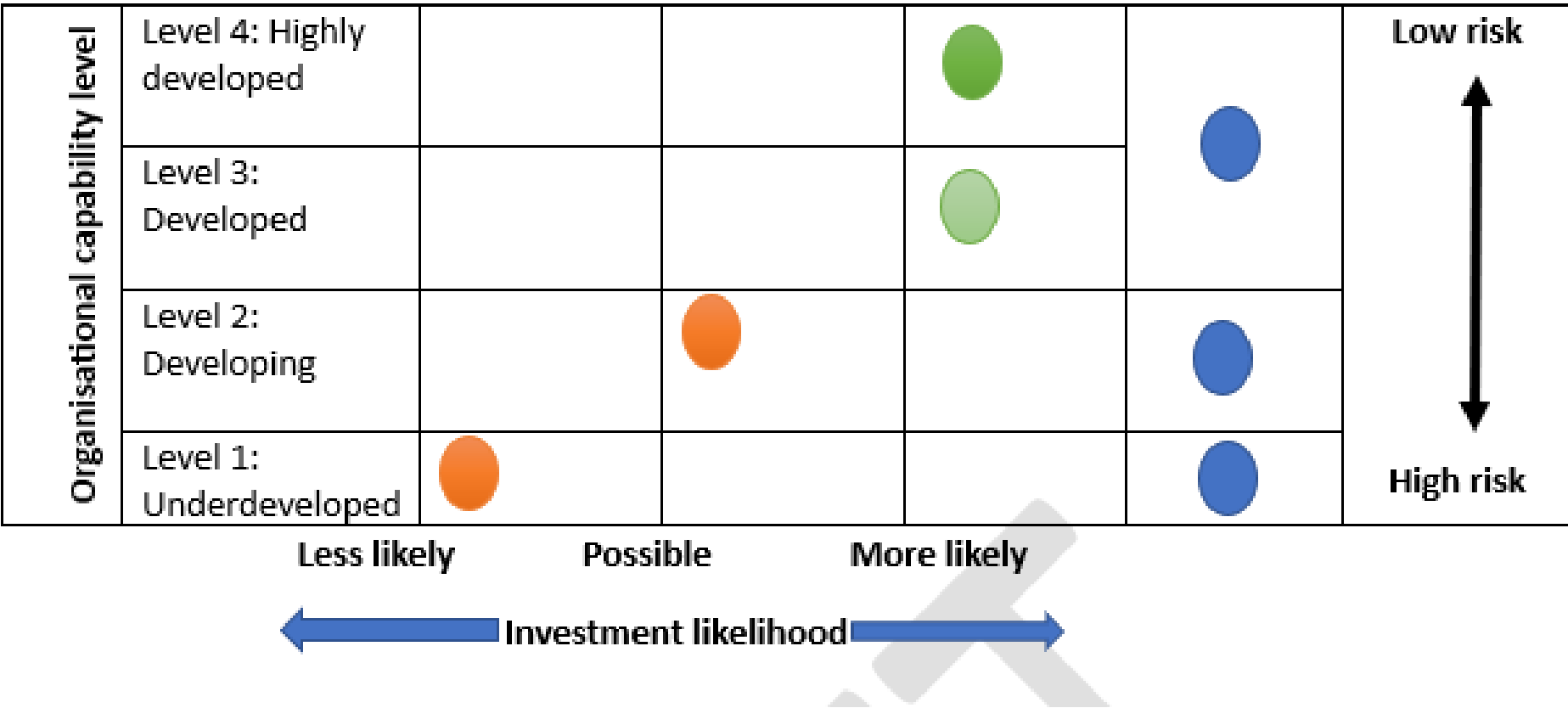
LEVEL 2: DEVELOPING



LEVEL 1:
DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Typological model: readiness to secure community assets (principles)v2.0

Table 3: Investment readiness and investor risk summary (cluster-gram)



Investment readiness themes...



Governance and
leadership



Operation and
infrastructure



Financial
resources



Physical asset
ownership



Impact and
effectiveness



Connectedness
and engagement

FINANCES

UNDERDEVELOPED
↓
IMPROVE GOVERNANCE

Kilo Mbo Governance
BAYO - do it now! Ji kadach

no Bad & One
maggan d

4

4

Understanding gov
finding the right
relationships - 1/2/20



What support and development needs would be required at each level?

Organisational capability by investment readiness and support and development need (following breakout group feedback)

ORGANISATIONAL INVESTMENT READINESS LEVEL	SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT NEEDS					
	Governance and leadership	Operation and infrastructure	Financial resources	Physical asset ownership	Impact and effectiveness	Connectedness and engagement
Level 4: Highly developed	Finding the right people: advisory board relationships (e.g. corporate involvement)		Long term investment funding options	Working with experts Peer to peer /coaching organisational support (mentorships)		Theory U/social labs
Level 3: Developed		Day to day operational management			CRM and similar systems and processes etc	
Level 2: Developing	Roles and responsibilities of board members		Fundraising and income generating opportunities			
Level 1: Development phase	Understanding governance		Fundraising and income generating opportunities		Understanding key impact and assessment processes etc	How to engage and facilitate consultative and involvement process



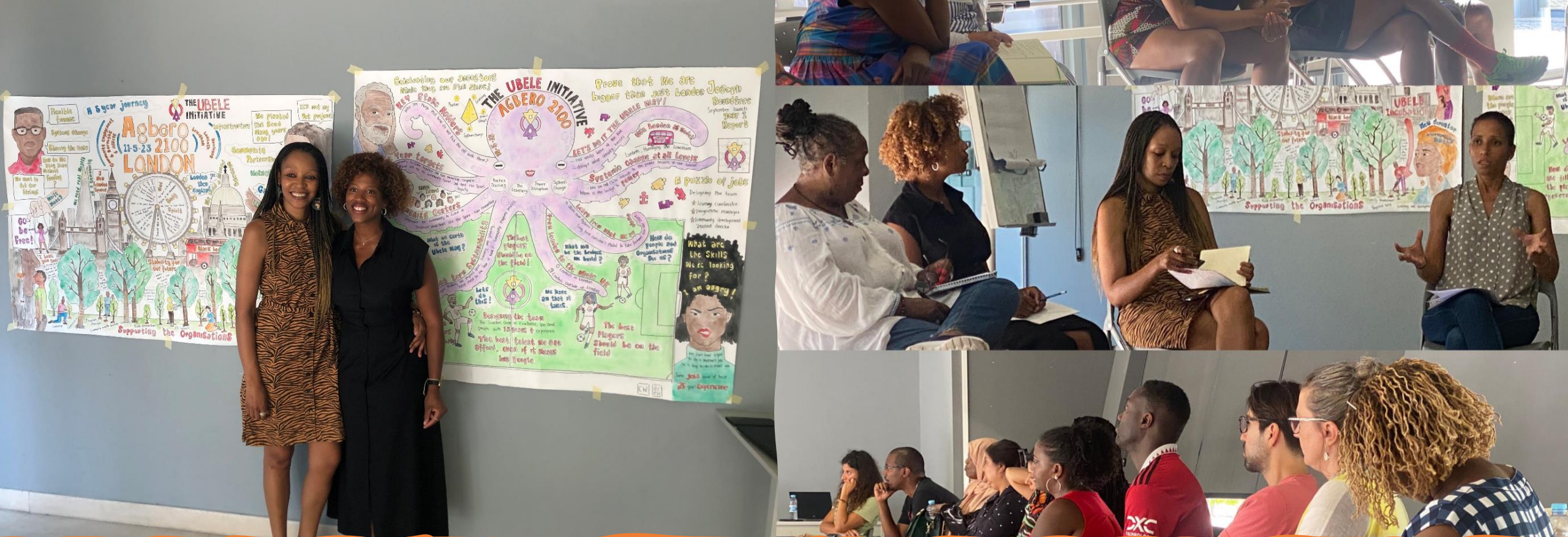
Next steps...

The conversation is not over; this is part of a longer journey.

There will be a formal launch in October preceded by a series of 'roadshows' around some of the key themes shared today.

Do keep your eyes peeled.





Presentations...

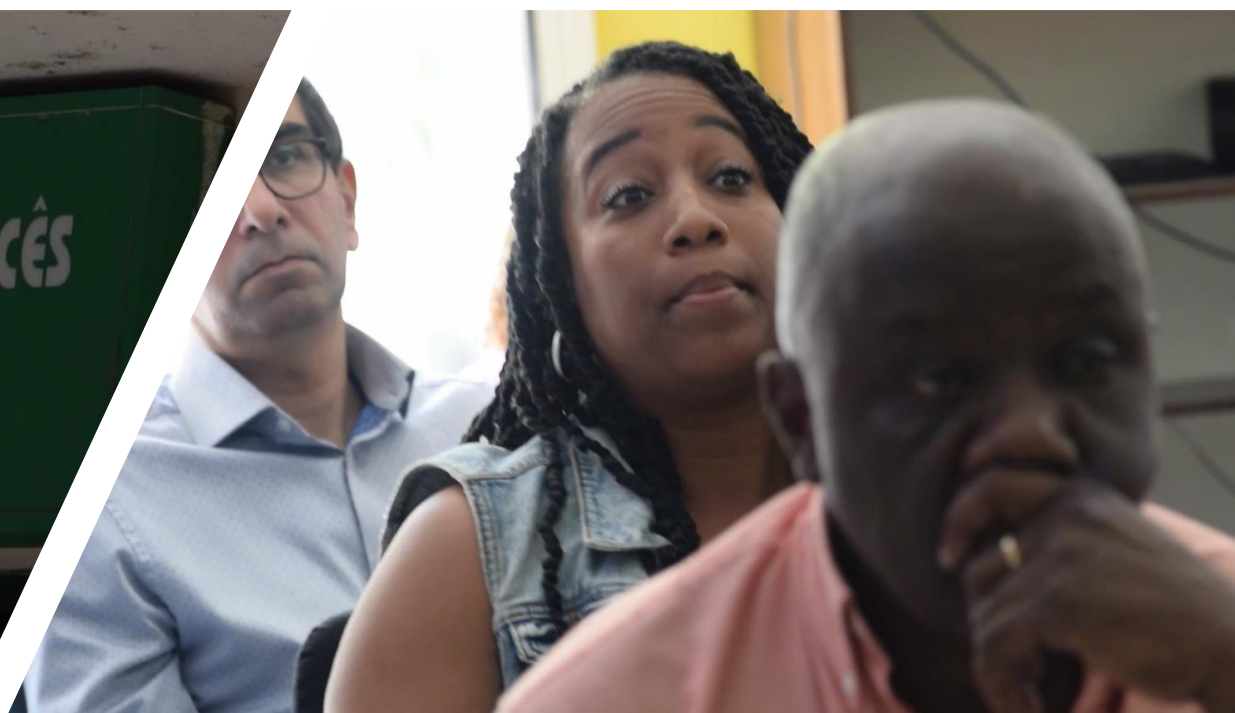
- Paula Cardoso: From Journalism to Activism
- Sofia: City Councillor for migrants
- Sandra: former president of immigration and integration

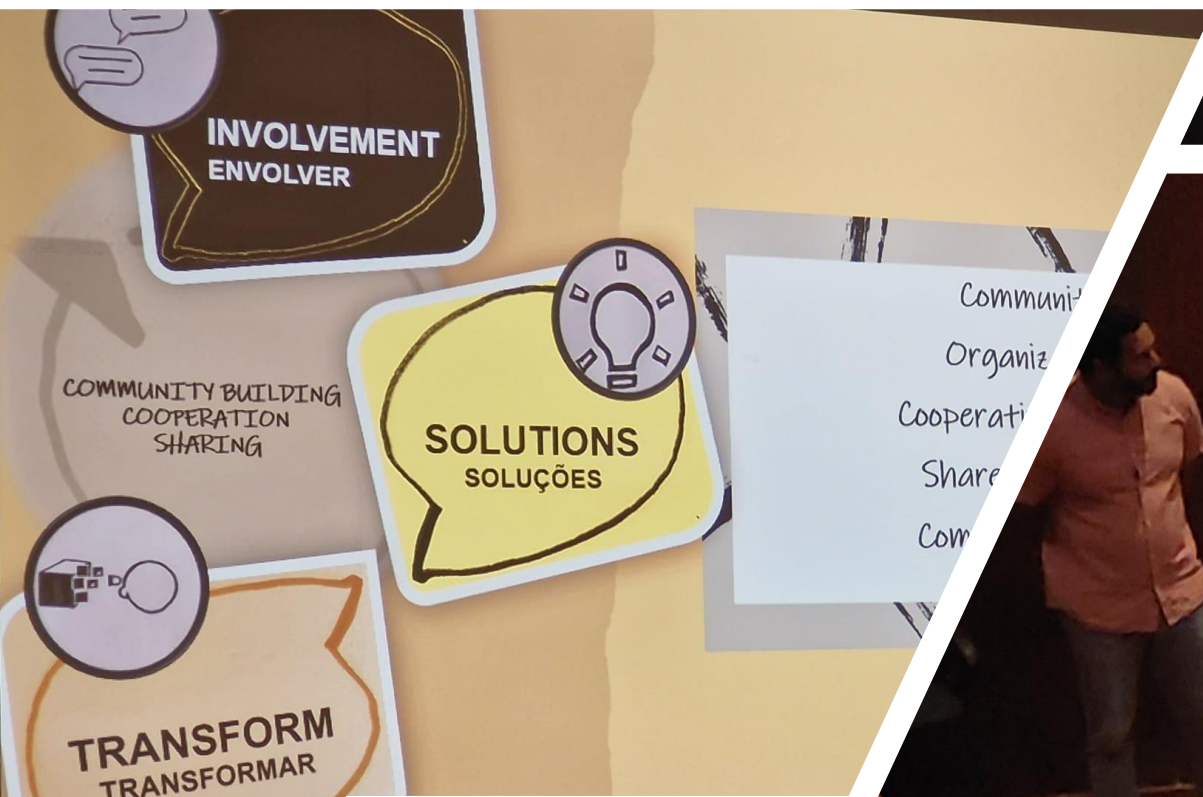


Day 3: 12 July 2023

- Learning Journey











Day 4: 13 July 2023

- Community Wealth Building
And
- Learning Journey





What is community wealth building?

Dependency culture-long leases and grants were given and now the landscape has changed which requires a different way of thinking as assets are under threat due to gentrification and leas renegotiations coupled with an overall reduction of grants.

Concerns indicate:

- Mismanagement of assets can lead to loss and renegotiation
- Educating and skilling the community to move towards a sustainability model and not grant reliance
- '80s/90s funding landscape placed BME organisations in competition with each other which has been divisive.
- Communities mistrusting funders and its right and not unfounded

Five principles defining what this is....

- Plural ownership of economy
- Making financial power work for local places
- Fair employment and just labour markets
- Progressive procurements of goods and services
- Socially productive use of land and property

The five Principles

- 1 Plural Ownership of the economy
- 2 Making financial power work for local places
- 3 Fair employment and just labour markets
- 4 Progressive of goods and
- 5 Socially produced use of land and property



Exploring the principles
underpinning community
wealth building...

Learning Journey...





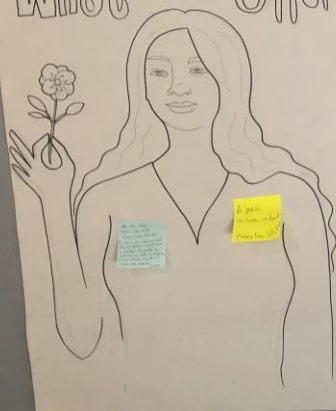
Day 5: 14 July 2023

- Evaluation and next steps...

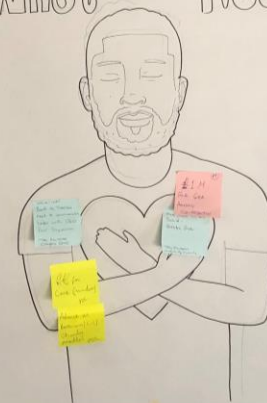
Reflections from the dialogue Walk



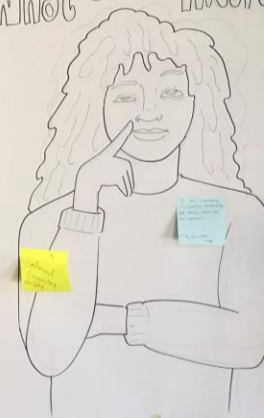
What can I Offer!

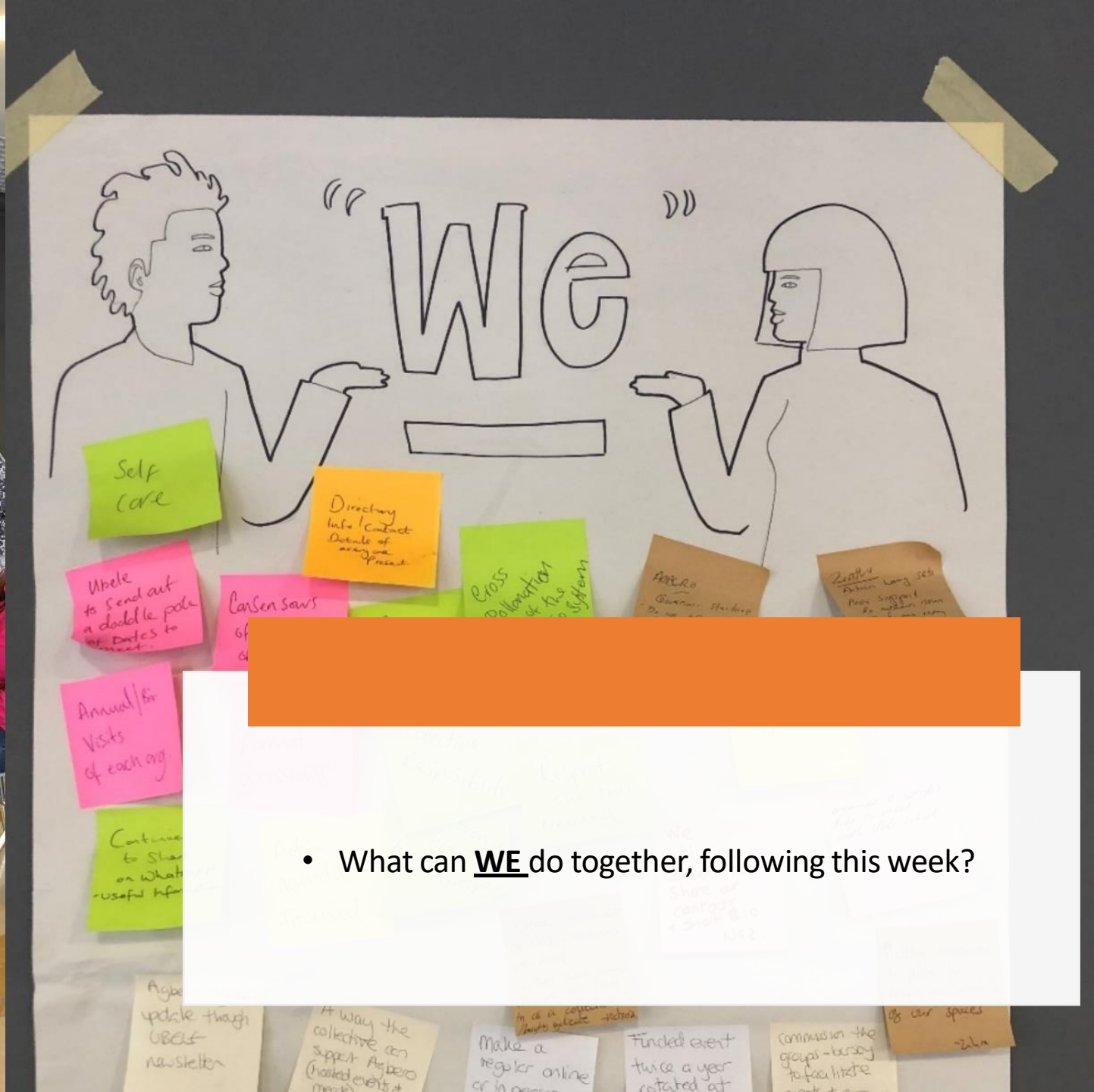


What do I Need



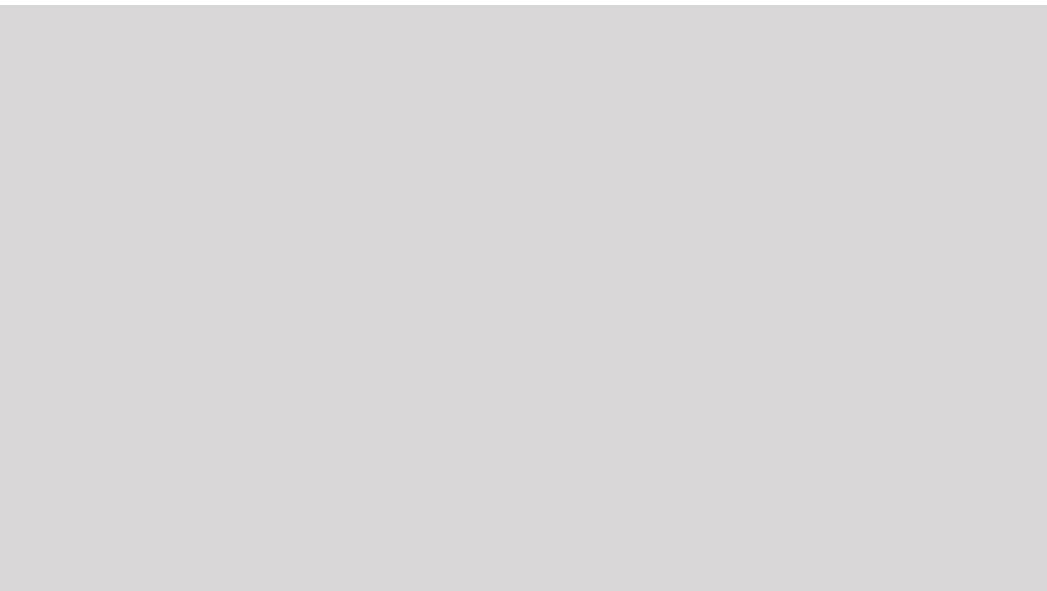
What am I Interested in







- What does the **SYSTEM** need to do following this week?





Certification and awarding ceremony



For Michael -
missed but
not
forgotten.

Get well
soon...

