



Policy Forum Annual Report September 2003 - September 2004

24 September 2004

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Women's Resource Centre

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Foreword from Darlene and Isabel

The Policy Forum had been a dream for WRC for some years before we received funding to make it a reality. Now, after the first year of it being in place, we wanted to share some of our thoughts about working on the Forum, and what we hope for its future.

WRC had seen for some time that our traditional ways of working with policy makers, such as responding to consultations, were not only time consuming and directed by the Government agenda, but they also often failed to make an impact upon public policy development. We wanted to explore ways to effectively influence public policy in more proactive ways, to develop processes or mechanisms to harness the expertise of the women's sector. We wanted to gain a clearer understanding of the key issues impacting upon women's voluntary and community organisations, from the ground up and proactively develop campaigns on these issues. We wanted to find ways to develop the capacity of women's organisations to 'do' more policy themselves. From these dreams grew the idea of the Policy Forum.

We spent some time thinking about what we wanted the Policy Forum to look like. We wanted to create a structure for the Forum that would reflect our values: essentially, to have a feminist and equalities-based foundation. For this reason we have shaped the Forum to include a wide diversity of women's organisations in terms of size/capacity, field of work and communities of women worked with (especially those marginalised communities and issues). Process is as important to us as outcome, and we have tried hard to build good practice into the shape of the Policy Forum.

We acknowledge that members working at grass roots level are best placed to critique and shape public policy as they have specific knowledge and understanding of the issues they work on, and the communities that they serve. However, whilst these women's groups hold a large amount of expertise and knowledge, they often do not have any time or capacity to push for their voice to be heard. We also acknowledge that larger organisations with greater policy and other capacities are well placed to input into public policy development and share their learning with smaller, stretched organisations. The Policy Forum is designed to enable a wide variety of women's organisations to increase their impact on public policy and help other organisations to do so as well.

Over the last year, we have had the privilege of working with women with incredible experience and expertise covering a range of different areas, and working with very different communities of women. This diverse representation has been a key strength of the Policy Forum.

This annual report of the first year of the Policy Forum outlines the work of the Policy Forum and what we have managed to achieve so far, what the Policy Forum members think of how the Forum is progressing (including many good suggestions for change) and what plans we have in place for the future.

This last year has been an incredible learning experience for us, and we appreciate all the hard work put in by last year's members, who have helped us create and shape the WRC Policy Forum. We believe a strong foundation has been laid for making greater impact upon public policy that impacts upon the women's sector, and women, in London.

We want to take this opportunity to thank the Policy Forum members for getting involved in the Forum, whether you are a new or existing member. We wish you all the best of luck in helping create a strong and effective mechanism for women's groups to identify and act upon the issues that most affect them.

Please feel free to contact us at any time.

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2. THE POLICY FORUM

2.1 The Role of the Policy Forum

The aims of the Policy Forum are to:

1. Inform and guide the WRC Policy Team on issues of importance to WRC's members and the London women's voluntary and community sector.
2. Pro-actively identify policy issues that affect WRC members and the women's sector at community level.
3. Develop strategies for policy change to benefit WRC members and the women's sector.

Policy is defined as a plan of action adopted by an individual or social group, or a line of argument rationalising (justifying) the actions of a government. **Social policy** is a policy for dealing with social issues (like mental health, violence or equality). **Public policy** is laws, rules, guidelines and court decisions by which an open society organises and conducts its affairs (for example, the Sexual Offences Act, or the government strategy on women's mental health – 'Women's Mental Health: Into the Mainstream'). One definition of **Lobbying** is to try to persuade politicians that our opinion is the right one, or to attempt to influence the thinking of people who make laws or other public officials for or against a specific cause. **Policy affecting the women's sector** includes government funding priorities, plans for how to deal with violence against women, and strategies about how to work with voluntary organisations.

2.2 Membership of the Policy Forum

WRC acknowledges the huge diversity within the women's sector. We also acknowledge that not all of us are coming to the table as equals, because of constraints such as time, resources and funding, and also the under-representation of particular communities in policy consultation. WRC wants to promote diversity and equality through positive action, so we have targeted groups that have been traditionally marginalised, and developed a range of equalities seats for the Policy Forum membership, to ensure that there is both a minimum of diverse representation on the Forum and a solid commitment to working towards equality for all women.

In the first year of operation (2003-2004), the Policy Forum was made up of 19 women representing 19 diverse voluntary and community WRC member organisations. The following seats were set and filled for organisations run by or working with specific groups of women:

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Black, Minority Ethnic or Refugee women | 3 seats set | 7 organisations on forum |
| Lesbian and Bisexual women | 1 seat set | 2 organisations on forum |
| Transgender women | 1 seat set | 1 organisation on forum |
| Disabled women | 1 seat set | 1 organisation on forum |
| Older women | 1 seat set | 1 organisation on forum |
| Young women | 1 seat set | 1 organisation on forum |
| Organisation working on violence against women | 1 seat set | 4 organisations on forum |
| Organisations with less than £100,000 annual income | 4 seats set | 6 organisations on forum |
| Service provider organisation | Half of Forum | 13 out of 19 organisations (70%) |

The Policy Forum has members with varied skills and knowledge of public policy from larger second tier groups who specialise in policy work to very small service providers with limited or no policy experience. Policy Forum members bring a range of skills and work across a number of fields including health, violence against women, employment, legal rights, education, training, criminal justice etc.

While not all Forum members have attended each meeting, we usually have at least 50% - 70% turnout. Forum members who are unable to attend are able to input on particular issues via the Policy Team. Correspondence between the Policy Team and Forum members takes place between meetings on a regular basis.

Membership to the Policy Forum is decided annually (in September) and current members are able to choose if they would like to continue being a member. Ten Policy Forum members from the first year have decided to stay on the Forum for the second year. Lists of last year's members and the coming year's members are below.

In addition to members who commit to attending all the Policy Forum meetings in 2004-2005, we have also developed an E-Contact membership for people who cannot be attending members. This network will work alongside the Forum, receiving updates on the work of the Forum and be able to give feedback, suggestions and resources related to the Forum's projects. Updates on the work of the Policy Forum are also regular features in all WRC publications, website and email newsletters.

Last Year's Policy Forum Membership 2003 - 2004

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Njeri Matenjwa | ABANTU for Development |
| Jane Lanyero | African Women's Care |
| Shaminder Ubhi | Ashiana Project |
| Paula Thomas | Broken Rainbow Forum |
| Allison Livingstone-Whitton | Consortium of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Voluntary and Community Organisations |
| Brenda Ellis | Greater London Action on Disability (GLAD) |
| Rachel Carter | Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP) |
| Dzifa Afonu | Helping Empower Youth Activism (HEYA) |
| Nezahat Cihan | IMECE, Turkish Speaking Women's Group |
| Johnette Brown | Kulubi Centre, Camden Black Sisters |
| Emily Grabham | Lesbian and Gay Employment Rights (LAGER) |
| Claudia Hasanbegovic | Latin American Women's Rights Service |
| Beryl Douglas | Older Feminists' Network |
| Sandy Greenfield | Outmates |
| Lynda Dearlove | Providence Row |
| Bethan Rigby | Rights of Women |
| Surer Abshir Musse | Somali Community Information Centre |
| Vivienne Hayes | Wandsworth Women's Aid |
| Cordelia Mayfield | Women's Alcohol Service |

Current Policy Forum Membership 2004 - 2005

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Jane Lanyero | African Women's Care |
| Shaminder Ubhi | Ashiana Project |
| Paula Thomas | Broken Rainbow Forum |
| Christina Julios | Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO) |
| Zuzie Poskitt | Girl Diva at Project for Advocacy, Counselling and Education (PACE) |
| Brenda Ellis | Greater London Action on Disability (GLAD) |
| Rachel Carter | Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP) |
| Dzifa Afonu | Helping Empower Youth Activism (HEYA) |
| Nezahat Cihan | IMECE, Turkish Speaking Women's Group |
| Claudia Hasanbegovic | Latin American Women's Rights Service |
| Lindsay Rivers | Polari |
| Yvonne Traynor | Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) |
| Elaheh Rambarzini | The Refugee Council |
| Rupa Sarkar | Urban Forum |
| Cordelia Mayfield | Women's Alcohol Service |
| Lynda Dearlove | (in the process of setting up new women's organisation) |

2.3 The Role of the Policy Team

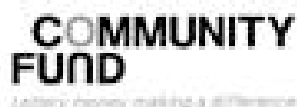
The Policy Team in WRC is responsible for administering and resourcing Policy Forum meetings and events. It also develops the workplans in conjunction with Forum members to take forward the issues raised in the Policy Forum, and carries out the projects as guided by the Forum.

The Policy Team also:

- Facilitates events on various policy issues that will help women's groups to improve/sustain service delivery and/or their organisations.
- Increases policy capacity of women's groups by providing information and training on policy making processes and how to influence them.
- Provides opportunities for women's groups to network.
- Monitors and provides information on policy developments which affect the women's voluntary and community sector.
- Organises policy consultations with women's organisations and submits responses.

2.4 Funding of the Policy Forum

The Policy Forum is funded by the Community Fund and City Parochial



3. POLICY FORUM PROGRESS TO DATE

3.1 Overview of Year 1

April 03 Darlene Corry appointed as Policy Officer (part-time).

April – Sept Research was undertaken on forums, draft Terms of Reference completed and systems for managing the project put in place including monitoring and evaluation.

Publicity about membership on the Forum widely disseminated. Applications for Forum membership were received and assessed against criteria and minimum representation targets. Successful applicants were contacted.

July Darlene Corry appointed full-time.

August Isabel Hudson appointed as Policy Officer (part-time).

September **Meeting one: 30th September 2003.**

Introduction to the Policy Forum, structure and aims. Members brainstormed the key policy issues impacting upon the women's sector. Beginning of development of key policy priorities for the Policy Team to develop work on.

December **Meeting two: 8th December 2003.**

The Policy Forum decided on key policy priorities for the women's sector. These are:

- 1 How to bring the women's sector together, and how different sectors work together
- 2 Sustainable funding / evidenced based research
- 3 Violence against women
- 4 Health
- 5 Analysing and responding to legislation from a gendered analysis
- 6 Raising the profile of the women's sector, including lobbying and access to media.

Plans begun on policy toolkit and training.

Infrastructure Review Consultation - Government consultation on voluntary sector support organisations. There were two parts to this consultation – an event and outreach (one-to-one interviewing).

Dec–Feb 04 Workplans developed (based on Policy Forum's decisions on priorities and activities at December meeting).

February **Compact Funding Code Response** – Review of the agreement between voluntary sector and Government on funding. Response.

Meeting three: 9th February 2004. Policy Forum Workplans reviewed and changed. Decisions made on range of activities.

Community Capacity Building Review (CCBR) Consultation – Government consultation on civil renewal and capacity building. Briefing, consultation (event) and response.

March **Launch of factsheets** about the women’s voluntary and community sector.

1st Media Training for the women's voluntary and community sector.

April **Outcome Evaluation Seminar.**

Sexual Violence Service Providers Event held jointly with Lillith Project. Establishment of the Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network at this meeting.

May **Meeting four: 10th May 2004.** Project plans were collapsed from the six key priority areas into three key projects, as there is overlap between them. They are:

- 1 Improving funding for the women's sector
 - 2 Increasing women's sector involvement in public policy
 - 3 Raising the profile of the women's sector
- (Summary of these projects below, Section 3.2)

6 month review with sample number of Policy Forum members.

Sexual Violence Funding Consultation – ongoing. Individual interviews and an on-line survey.

June **Women with No Recourse to Public Funds Training and Strategy Meeting** held jointly with Southall Black Sisters.

Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network meeting.

July **Meeting five: 8th July 2004.**

Discussion on content and format of the Policy Toolkit. Review of workplans.

2nd Media Training for the women's voluntary and community sector.

Commission for Equality and Human Rights – Government consultation on proposed new Commission, which will incorporate existing strands and also age, sexuality and faith/belief. Briefing, consultation (outreach) and response.

Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network meeting.

Aug - Sept Annual Evaluation and recruitment.

Sept **Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network** meeting.

3.2 Summary of Policy Forum Project Plans

| Priority | Tasks | Examples |
|---|--|---|
| Improve funding for the women's sector | Increase funders' awareness of women's sector and promote good practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate info on funding issues Invite funders to events |
| | Develop body of evidence on variety of different funding issues affecting women's groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research experiences of women's projects within generic organisations for factsheet Consultation on sexual violence funding |
| | Disseminate relevant funding information to women's groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding consultation updates in enews, Source newsletter |
| Increasing Women's Sector Involvement in Public Policy | Build capacity of women's organisations to input into public policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media training Policy training Compact awareness raising |
| | Increase women's sector access to policy makers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold events Facilitating meetings between policy makers and women's groups |
| | Improve consultation processes by policy makers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate info to policy makers on what works for women's groups |
| | Promote use of gender and equalities tools in public policy development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy toolkit |
| | Support women's voluntary and community sector to improve implementation of policies that impact upon the women's sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy toolkit |
| Raising the profile of the women's sector | Strategically support marginalised or struggling areas of the women's sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate networks Hold events Disseminate info to funders etc on struggling sub-sectors To produce and publicise written statement on how WRC can support marginalised areas of the women's sector |
| | Build capacity of women's organisations to input into and develop media campaigns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media training Media toolkit |
| | Raise profile of the women's sector through greater media exposure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold events Media training Media toolkit |
| | Provide opportunities for relevant networking and partnership building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold events |

4. ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE POLICY FORUM

4.1 Policy Forum Members - Evaluation of Year 1

It has been essential to ensure plenty of opportunity for Policy Forum members to tell us how they think the Policy Forum is going, for our funders and for us to evaluate what is quite a new and experimental project. For this reason, we conducted a sample evaluation six months into the project, to give us an indicator of our progress and interviewed the first year Policy Forum members¹ in September 2004 in some depth. Women who were not going to stay on the Policy Forum were given an exit interview as part of this evaluation. What follows is a summary of the annual evaluations, with some highlighted quotes to illustrate points. (Both the complete annual evaluations and the six-monthly sample evaluations are available.)

Q: Why did organisations join, and what impact has the Forum made on their organisations?

Organisations joined the Policy Forum to network, to be with and work with other women's groups, to promote women's issues and the women's sector. Many groups also wanted to open space for the voices of the marginalised communities of women they work with, and others felt it would mean being part of a powerful voice for women.

"Because I felt women have generally been left off the agenda."

"We can be part of a more powerful voice by uniting as a forum."

The biggest impacts of the Policy Forum on the members were networking opportunities, training, and learning more about policy and the women's sector.

Q: What has been successful about the Policy Forum?

There was lots of positive feedback about what has been successful about the Policy Forum so far. Some members thought the Forum was very well administered, well thought through, and allowed groups to have real space to raise issues, that it focuses both on process and outcome, is a model of good practice, and has 'good ethics'. Others thought the Forum did well at identifying policy issues impacting upon the women's sector, and that it was about bringing people together, sharing expertise and breaking down isolation. Many members said the diversity of membership was a real strength of the Forum, and helped groups learn more about what problems different parts of the sector were facing, and also what issues impacted on organisations across the board.

Communication was raised by a few members as being done well, particularly breaking down emails into categories of Information / Response by (date), etc. Though the amount of information has been difficult for some of the smaller groups, most members raised that email communication was very useful in keeping them up-to-date and informed.

All Forum members thought the Forum was accessible on a range of levels, but this is always an area we need to keep on top of. Organisational lack of capacity and resources impacts upon access to the Policy Forum as well.

¹ Excluding three policy forum members we were unable to contact.

Many members said that issues raised within the Policy Forum have been taken on board, and the Forum has been successful in translating issues into proactive work, such as No Recourse to Public Funds meeting, Media training, Outcome Evaluation Seminar and the Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network, etc.

“Helps create partnerships and helps identify where expertise lies, and also see what groups have similar projects going on. I think the Forum has done well in identifying policy impacting upon the sector. Progress is slow anyway, but we are definitely moving forward.”

"That it (the Policy Forum) still exists... Each organisation is committing time to the Forum, without necessarily seeing the results immediately, yet they are still committing. This is success”.

“The Forum can continue to support policy development by developing the tools and models of good practice.”

Q: What could WRC be doing better?

Ideas for what we (the Policy Team) could be doing better included re-evaluating how we work, and a few members thought WRC needs to take more of a lead to keep people focussed. A central theme that emerged is that we need to address the issue of capacity of groups to be involved, and how to support them better. One Forum member raised that some meetings have been poorly attended, 'and the energy that we had in the first few meetings were lost toward the end'.

“It also brought home to me just how poverty stricken the sector was, not just financially, but also in time.”

Suggestions for Change

We would like to explore the following further with the Policy Forum:

- Finding ways to be more creative in how we consult, in order to enable more access and reach more groups.
- Use email or forums to distribute the information and work from the policy forum to a wider audience of the women's sector.
- Making forum members work a bit harder in meetings, eg, mini workshops.
- Having a firm chair.
- Making resources and information accessible on the web.
- Summarising information more (small organisations don't always have time to read it).
- Making sure the language is always accessible – one member described the language as a bit obscure.
- Meeting groups one-to-one, especially those who are not always able to make the meetings.
- Hold one-off meetings for women who cannot attend regularly. Ask them when they would like to attend/what issues they want on the agenda.
- Raise funds to provide cover for workers to attend meetings.
- Ensuring we use email or discussion groups to keep members and others updated and involved.
- More clearly identifying any policy impacts we are making, where the work we are doing is going.

Hopes and Dreams for the Future

Hopes and dreams for the future work of the Policy Forum include:

- Making policy more accessible to people and “giving the more marginalised groups a chance to have a voice rather than having to go through loads of documents and writing responses”.
- More training and development.
- Strategic planning.
- “Getting the women's sector on the map”.
- “Showing policy is not frightening”.
- Continuing to build policy capacity and “giving people more skills and confidence” on tackling policy issues.
- “To begin to have a broader understanding of the inter-relationship of women's needs” to recognise issues of different sectors and ensure inclusion.
- To increase the profile of women's organisations.
- To get more funding for the women's sector.
- To increase membership by email, and reach a wider audience.
- Better networking and better access to information.
- Better understanding of the resources available for the women's sector, especially funding.
- Changes to specific pieces of legislation.
- Getting women's groups on key forums and networks.

“Mobilising women's organisations and helping them to work together so that the sector is more cohesive.”

“I strongly believe in the process. I believe in hearing the voices of those that policy affects.”

“I want to stay on because I think we are really making progress.”

Exit interview Notes

Forum members left for a variety of reasons – because their organisation closed, lack of time and capacity, lack of contribution, or because they left their place of work. All Forum members said they were able to participate fully, and that their issues were listened to.

“No problems participating. The Forum is definitely good at hearing our voices.”

4.2 Policy Team - Evaluation of Year 1

The Policy Team completed their own evaluation process, including a written evaluation, and ongoing dialogue. Our thoughts are summarised below.

Successes

Overall, we are very pleased with year one of the project. From our own observations, informal comments and evaluations we believe that the successes of the project so far are:

- A strong equalities agenda throughout both representation and activities.

- Building a sense of solidarity and greater acknowledgement of the need to support each other and share information through providing networking opportunities.
- Decreasing organisations' isolation and greater knowledge of other women's organisations and issues impacting on them.
- Information about important policy issues is widely disseminated.
- Working from the Policy Forum priorities to develop clear projects (e.g. Media Training, Outcome Evaluation Seminar and Women with No Recourse to Public Funds Training and Strategy Meeting).
- We have put considerable time and energy into developing systems to enable the Policy Forum to be both effective and accessible. We believe that we are developing a model of good practise.
- As a learning organisation, we are constantly assessing our services and the ways in which they are delivered (e.g. we have changed our consultation methods to try and engage more women's groups).
- Participants have said in their evaluations that they will be able to pass on learning and information to colleagues.
- Increasing information and skills so that improved services can be delivered to service users (e.g. Women with No Recourse to Public Funds Training and Strategy Meeting).
- The Policy Forum has a good balance of being both proactive and taking forward issues identified by women's groups (e.g. Sexual Violence Funding Consultation) as well as being responsive and able to facilitate organisations views on current Government consultations (e.g. Infrastructure Review).

The Policy Forum and activities have also benefited WRC and the Policy Team, in many ways. The Policy Forum provides a mechanism to rapidly seek advice about various policy issues. Forum members have provided us with clear direction on what the women's voluntary and community sector needs (e.g. a funding directory has been identified as a much needed resource, and we have passed this information to the WRC Development Team who are now working on this). Through Policy Forum events we have been able to gather evidence about the women's sector to use in our policy work and also to use WRC wide.

Challenges

While the Policy Forum project has had many successes over a short period, there are several on-going challenges.

One challenge for us is the Policy Team's capacity. There are so many important issues that have been identified by Policy Forum members, and there are many aspects to the ways in which we can work with these issues – training and capacity building, accessible policy information, one-off events, supporting marginalised sectors and responding to Government consultations – and it has been difficult for us to prioritise these.

Many of the Forum members also have significant capacity issues. The issue of capacity and resources remains a key issue for the women's sector as a whole, and has impacted upon the ability of smaller and more marginalised groups to take part. We will look at how we can support these groups to participate in the Policy Forum, within our own limited capacity. There are many

good ideas that have come out of this evaluation, which are keen to explore further, and see what we can incorporate into our work practices.

Not all Forum members are able to come to all meetings and maintaining momentum (especially recently) involves considerable energy. This issue relates strongly to that of capacity within the sector, and is an issue we are keen to address.

Consultation events are much less popular than workshops or trainings. In order to engage women's groups in the various consultation events, we have had to develop a range of methods including outreach (i.e. meeting or doing telephone interviews with women on a one-to-one basis). Again, this is very resource intensive, and is still not very wide-reaching. We want to continue to explore different ways of consulting.

Communicating the work of the Policy Forum to a wider audience is currently happening through our networks. However, we want to explore more effective ways to tap into the expertise of the women's sector more effectively, as the information flow is quite one way at present.

Another challenge for us has been how we structure the involvement of Policy Forum members so it is clear how what members say gets put into action, but without loads of bureaucracy. Finding ways to take direction from the Policy Forum without involving them in every decision has been a difficult fine line, and we will continue to learn how to do this better.

Events

To date, we have delivered seven (main) events to 164 participants representing 146 organisations. The events were the Infrastructure Review Consultation, Community Capacity Building Review consultation, Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network meetings, two Media Trainings, Outcome Evaluation Seminar and Women with No Recourse to Public Funds meeting.

Feedback from participants at these events included:

"The general debate on issues was very good because we got to hear views and ideas from other participants."

"Found this an informative and very worthwhile event. Good speakers and well organised. Many thanks to WRC."

"Lots of useful tips and other sources of help. Good to see my problems with evaluation are typical i.e. I'm not alone."

"A tightly packed, well delivered, interesting and highly informative training. Thank you very much. It's well timed and much needed. A delight to attend."

"I'm certainly going to work on my control and clarity! Brilliant training. Will carry it for life. Thank you."

5. OVERVIEW FOR YEAR 2

5.1 Events and Ideas for Year 2

These are some of the events to take place in September 04 – September 05. However, we will continue to work with the Policy Forum to identify other key issues and develop further work plans.

| | |
|---|--|
| Media training | We have developed a media training programme with Presswise. We will be delivering two further introductory training (as was delivered in March 04) in November and February. These will run alongside advanced training days, one in November on interviewing techniques, and another one in February on building a campaign. |
| Policy | We will be delivering one of each (a total of three) policy trainings: an introductory course in December, lobbying at local level and regional level, and lobbying at national and international level. |
| Toolkits | We will be developing both a policy and media toolkit. These will learn from the trainings and compliment future trainings. |
| SVAAN (Sexual Violence Action and Awareness Network) | On-going network meetings, developed from initial meeting in May 2004. |
| Forum meetings | Four or five Forum meetings in year two. |

The following are ideas for future WRC work (yet to be confirmed) and we will be asking the Policy Forum for guidance.

| | |
|---|---|
| Funding consultation | To gather greater evidence on funding issues impacting on women's groups for a briefing. |
| LSPs consultation | Problems with and solutions for engaging the women's voluntary and community sector. |
| Women's groups working in mental health | An event for women's mental health groups to discuss their experiences and how women's groups can better work with women with mental health issues and support efforts against discrimination. |
| Disabled women's groups | An event for disabled women's groups to discuss their experiences and how women's groups can better work with disabled women and support efforts against disability discrimination. |
| Factsheets | The following factsheets will be developed: Transgender Women's Groups, Using the London Plan, Consultation, Funding Policy, Gender Mainstreaming / Women only services and Women's Projects in Generic Organisations. We will also be updating the current factsheets in April 2005. |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Directory | One of the issues repeatedly raised in the Forum and other events is the need for a comprehensive directory of women's groups in London. We will actively seeking funds to do this. |
| Compact | Delivering information to women's groups about the Compacts and liaising with NCVO and the Compact advocacy group about engaging with women's groups. |
| Involving service users' project | Working in partnership with service providers, we want to develop a model of good practise on how service users can effectively participate in policy. |
| Other issues | Responding to other issues as they arise. |