

**Final Year Evaluation**  
**of**  
**The School for Social Entrepreneurs'**  
**Enterprising Community Advisors**  
**Programme**

**February 2013**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

The Enterprising Community Advisors Programme (ECAP) developed the personal skills of 39 students over 3 years which resulted in:

- Students feeling less isolated and developing a network of support;
- Students being clearer about their vision as social entrepreneurs;
- Students feeling more confident, resilient and able to tackle challenges.

The ECAP also developed students' business skills, specifically in:

- Drafting funding applications and securing funding;
- Recruiting trustees;
- Adopting the appropriate legal structure for their enterprise;
- Drafting and adopting policies and a Business Plan;
- Financial management;
- Employing staff.

Students, however, were only able to employ these skills to good effect with the support of ECAP peers and staff. It was this support that gave them the confidence and self belief to use their newly acquired business skills and found or develop their social enterprises.

Students feel that the ECAP could be enhanced by:

- The development of an Alumni network;
- More one to one tailored support;
- More practical support with business planning;
- The option to change mentors.

However students understand the resource limitations and are overwhelmingly positive about the programme.

The ECAP supports social entrepreneurs, embedded in their communities, who develop imaginative, innovative and engaging projects. These projects work with some very disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and groups. There is evidence that these projects are having an impact – making new skills, resources and services available to marginalised groups. The ECAP Fellows themselves attribute much of the positive impact that they are having in their communities to the ECAP course.

## **2. Recommendations**

### 2.1 Recommendations for SSE

- That SSE continues to develop programmes that provide social entrepreneurs with both the personal and professional support which enables them to develop the skills and confidence to make a difference in their local communities.
- That SSE ensures that it maintains a programme that offers business skills alongside support that strengthens confidence and resilience and makes it possible for students to employ these business skills.
- That SSE develops an Alumni network, more tailored one to one support for students and options regarding mentors, where resources allow.
- That SSE collects more quantitative data and longitudinal research to evidence the impact of its work.
- That SSE provides Fellows with more support in measuring their impact in local communities once the course has ended

### 2.2 Recommendations for the Social Enterprise sector

- That more programmes are developed which pay due attention to the importance of personal development and 'soft skills', without which students can find it difficult to utilise business skills.
- That funding is invested in measuring the long term impact that social entrepreneurs have on their communities, specifically on their capacity to address disadvantage and inequality in an economic climate which is resulting in severe cuts to more traditional models of challenging disadvantage.

### 3. Background to this programme

The School for Social Entrepreneurs was founded in 1997 by Michael Young. Its mission is to address inequalities and social exclusion by supporting social entrepreneurs from all backgrounds to transform their talent into real social outcomes, in the form of sustainable solutions to poverty and disadvantage in their communities. Through the use of action-learning based programmes of personal and organisational development, the SSE supports individuals to realise their potential and to establish, scale and sustain, social enterprises and social businesses across the UK, Australia and Canada. The practical, action learning focused programme, offers a range of support, including:

- **Witness Sessions:** the chance to meet, and learn from, experienced social entrepreneurs.
- **Expert Sessions:** led by experts, on a range of practical skills such as financial management, business planning, securing funding, marketing and other essential skills.
- **Action Learning Sets:** opportunities to reflect on your experiences and learning with others in the same position as you.

This support complements one to one tutorials and visits to existing, successful social enterprises.

In 2009, SSE secured three year funding from the Equality and Human Rights Commission to develop the Enterprising Community Advisors Programme (ECAP). This programme was to consist of three 12 month learning programmes for a total of 39 social entrepreneurs setting up new, or developing existing guidance, advice and advocacy organisations to serve the disadvantaged areas or underrepresented groups from which they come.

The programme was funded to achieve two key outcomes:

- **Outcome One:** To support 39 community-based guidance, advice and advocacy organisations to become sustainable and to provide more effective, tailored and far-reaching advice and support, meeting community need.
- **Outcomes Two:** To increase people's awareness and understanding in 39 communities of their rights to accurate social welfare advice, and their knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in society.

SSE worked with its partners Advice UK, Voice4Change and MODA, to provide tailored learning opportunities to assist and support social entrepreneurs developing guidance, advice and advocacy organisations for marginalised communities. At a time when agencies were facing rapid changes in welfare rights and dramatic public sector cuts, by working with Advice UK, the UK's largest support network for free, independent advice centres, SSE could offer relevant and current expert advice to ECAP students, above and beyond that offered on its existing programmes.

In 2012, SSE appointed Esme Madill to evaluate the ECAP programme, measuring progress against the prescribed outcomes. This report summarises the findings of the evaluation and makes recommendations as to how these findings could be used to develop the work of SSE and to inform future practice in supporting social enterprise in disadvantaged communities.

I would like to thank the social entrepreneurs, children and young people, volunteers and staff who have shared their thoughts, ideas and ambitions with me and who have made me welcome and taught me so much in the course of my evaluation visits and phone calls.

**Esme Madill**

**Madill Parker Research and Consulting Ltd**

**January 2013**

#### 4. Context

The Enterprising Community Advisors Programme (ECAP) developed by the SSE and evaluated in this report was funded by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) as part of a strategic funding programme which sought to provide guidance, advice and advocacy services to help break down discrimination and inequality in areas including education, health and employment.

Britain has become a more diverse, tolerant and equal society. In February 2013, MPs approved same-sex marriage in England and Wales in a key Commons vote, while less than 25 years ago Section 28 of the Local Government Act which stigmatised same-sex relationships became law on 24 May 1988. The EHRC cite the following examples of progress towards a fairer and more equal society:

- Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi pupils have begun to catch up with the average performance at GCSE.
- The gender pay gap has narrowed considerably since the Equal Pay Act 1970 came into force in 1975.
- The criminal justice system now recognises different forms of hate crime and has begun to provide more appropriate support to people who experience it.<sup>1</sup>

However, there are still entrenched inequalities in society which result in certain groups experiencing poor outcomes in education, in work, in health and in public life. The ECHR cites the following data in support of this claim:

- Men and women in the highest socio-economic group can expect to live up to 7 years longer than those in the lower socio-economic groups (based on life expectancy at birth).
- Black African women who are asylum seekers are estimated to have a mortality rate 7 times higher than that for White women, partly due to problems in accessing maternal healthcare.
- In England and Wales, men and women living in the most deprived areas are twice as likely to commit suicide as those in the least deprived.

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<sup>1</sup> 'How Fair is Britain?' Equality and Human Rights Commission Triennial Review, 2010, Executive Summary.

- 1 in 4 women have experienced some form of domestic abuse in England and Wales since reaching the age of 16;
- Homophobic bullying is widespread in British secondary schools. Nearly half of all secondary schoolteachers in England acknowledge that such bullying is common, and just 1 in 6 believe that their school is very active in promoting respect for LGB students.
- The relationship between ethnicity, literacy and numeracy is very strong and in specific cases extremely negative. For example, being Black and male appears to have a greater impact on levels of numeracy than having a learning disability.
- Muslim people have the lowest rate of employment of any religious group. Only 47% of Muslim men and 24% of Muslim women are employed and 42% of young Muslim people are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).
- Disabled men experience a pay gap of 11% compared with non-disabled men, while the gap between disabled women and non-disabled men is double this at 22%.<sup>2</sup>

Those groups most likely to experience discrimination and inequality are also the groups who have been most seriously affected by the global economic downturn and the public sector cuts which have accompanied it. For example:

- Drastic cuts to legal aid in 2011 led to the closure of Refugee and Migrant Justice and the Immigration Advisory Service leaving many migrants and asylum seekers unable to access justice.<sup>3</sup>
- The failure to undertake Equality Impact Assessments before cutting services has resulted in the Black and minority ethnic voluntary sector as well as women's services and those run by and for disabled people being disproportionately affected by public sector cuts.<sup>4</sup>
- There is serious concern that the reductions in services following from cuts to budgets will lead to an increase in the amount of violence against women and girls. Thirty-one percent of the funding to the domestic violence and sexual abuse sector from local authorities was cut between 2010/11 to 2011/12. 230 women, just under

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<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2011/jul/15/legal-aid-cuts-migrants>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/social-care-network/2012/mar/05/cuts-black-ethnic-minority-carers-hardest>

9% of those seeking refuge, were turned away by Women's Aid on a typical day in 2011 due to lack of space.<sup>5</sup>

- The Government's proposed welfare reforms will see 3.5 million disabled people lose over £9.2 billion of critical support by 2015 pushing them further into poverty and closer to the fringes of society.<sup>6</sup>

The Enterprising Community Advisors Programme (ECAP) was delivered in this economic, social and political context.

The ECAP is based on the belief that social enterprise can challenge inequalities and be a force for positive change in local communities, in the face of cuts to charities, the public sector and more traditional models of tackling disadvantage. This report sets out to measure how far the ECAP was able to support the development of more sustainable, effective and far reaching community based organisations and how far these organisations were able to increase people's awareness and understanding of their rights to accurate social welfare advice, and their knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in society.

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<sup>5</sup> Professor Sylvia Walby, 'Measuring the impact of cuts in public expenditure on the provision of services to prevent violence against women and girls Key Findings' 2011 Trust for London and the Northern Rock Foundation.

<sup>6</sup> 'Destination Unknown', 2010, Demos, Scope and the Barrow Cadbury Trust.



## 5. Methodology

This report seeks to evaluate the progress of the Enterprising Community Advisors Programme (ECAP) in achieving the following outcomes:

- Outcome One: To support 39 community-based guidance, advice and advocacy organisations to become sustainable and provide more effective, tailored and far-reaching advice and support, meeting community need.
- Outcomes Two: To increase people's awareness and understanding in 39 communities of their rights to accurate social welfare advice, and their knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in society.

In collecting data for this evaluation the evaluator has:

- Interviewed the ECAP programme manager;
- Reviewed the internal evaluation forms completed by students at the beginning, mid way points and end of the programme assessing their own progress and that of their social enterprise;
- Reviewed the demographic data of all students on the programme;
- Undertaken a focus group with five students who had completed the programme or who were currently on the programme;
- Undertaken telephone interviews or face to face interviews with five Fellows from the programme;
- Visited 'The Feeling Tree' a social enterprise established by a Fellow from the ECAP programme which helps children struggling in school to effectively communicate their feelings. The evaluator took part in a session in a north London primary school for young people on the verge of exclusion and spoke with the young people about the impact of 'The Feeling Tree' on their lives;
- Visited 'Enabling Enterprise' a social enterprise established by a Fellow from the ECAP programme which equips young people with the skills, aspirations and experiences they need to succeed in life. The evaluator took part in a session introducing more than 50 young people to the concept of enterprise through a visit to a corporate bank. The evaluator interviewed bank staff, teaching staff and young people about the impact of 'Enabling Enterprise' on their lives;
- Reviewed the work plans and monitoring data for this project.

The limitations of this evaluation are primarily due to the restriction of time and resources. Only a sample of students took part in the focus groups, interviews or project visits: nine in total. Five students took part in the focus group; five took part in one to one interviews, one of those interviewed also took part in the focus groups, and two of the students who were interviewed then arranged for the evaluator to visit their projects.

## 6. The Findings

During the three years that the ECAP programme was running 39 students completed the programme. The monitoring forms completed by these students provide the following information:

56% were women and

44% were men

10% were 0 – 24 years old

70% were 25 – 44 years old

20% were 45 – 64 years old

3% defined themselves as White Other

3% defined themselves as White and Black Caribbean

3% defined themselves as Indian

3% defined themselves as Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish or Asian Welsh

5% defined themselves as Scottish

13% defined themselves as Black Caribbean

13% defined themselves as Black British, Black English, Black Scottish or Black Welsh

15% defined themselves as White British

21% defined themselves as Black African

23% defined themselves as White English

3% described themselves as having a substantial learning difficulty

8% described themselves as Gay or Lesbian

92% described themselves as Heterosexual.

The findings in this section will be grouped under the two outcomes listed above and an assessment will be made as to progress against each of these outcomes.

**6.1 Outcome One: To support 39 community based guidance, advice and advocacy organisations to become sustainable and provide more effective, tailored and far-reaching advice and support, meeting community need.**

The SSE seeks to address inequalities and social exclusion by supporting social entrepreneurs, developing their personal and professional skills to enable them to establish, grow and sustain effective organisations tackling poverty and disadvantage in local communities across the country.

### **6.1.1 Progress in developing social entrepreneurs' personal skills**

All the social entrepreneurs interviewed or who took part in focus groups were able to identify significant personal development as a result of their taking part in the programme. What they described can be grouped in the following ways:

#### **i. No longer alone, developing a network and realising the importance of that network**

Many social entrepreneurs described how important the programme was for them because they realised, often for the first time, that they were not alone. The majority of those interviewed and taking part in the focus group described a sense of relief when they met likeminded individuals who shared their passion and drive. It was apparent to the evaluator that for some the journey to the SSE programme had been a lonely one and the sense of being part of a network was liberating and empowering, leaving people, in the words of one woman, feeling 'invigorated'.

*I realised that there were other people like me, working out of their homes, with offices in their bedrooms and visions and plans that drive them forward.*

#### **Woman (1) taking part in a focus group**

*I didn't know anyone who worked in it (social enterprise) when I started out. It was nice to be able to share stories with other people and it was really helpful... it was nice to have things to talk about with people who did not think you were on a path to nowhere.*

#### **Man (2) in a telephone interview**

Many described this realisation that they were not alone as a step towards realising the importance of networking and working with others.

*I no longer feel alone (now) I think we are all in this together.*

**Woman (1) in a telephone interview**

*I wanted a bit of support. To feel that I wasn't alone. No one around me understood what it was like (before). They were all in regular jobs and it did not make sense to them and so it was good to meet others going along a similar journey. To share with different people who were also wanting to change the world and help others...*

*Having a network of people I can contact who have become friends as well now. [It's] being part of something bigger and not feeling isolated.*

**Man (1) in a telephone interview**

*So even when we were doing different things, we were coping with common challenges and it was massively reassuring that they were going through something similar, hearing other people, can stop you thinking you are completely rubbish.*

**Man (2) in a telephone interview**

*The people I met, that was interesting and useful. People doing similar things and struggling with similar sorts of things. That was useful and we have those contact that we can draw on and we can keep in touch with people.*

**Woman (2) in a telephone interview**

For some social entrepreneurs the change went beyond realising that they were not alone, to realising that they could not manage alone and that networks were vital. One young social entrepreneur (under 20 years of age when he attended the programme) described how:

*While at SSE I realise that the project was entirely dependent on me. If anything happened to me that would be the end of the programme. I realised I need to build a team and develop partnerships.*

**Man (1) taking part in a focus group**

*The one thing that came to me is that you realise that you can't do these things on your own. If you try to do this on your own you are doomed to fail. That is the message I came away with.*

**Woman (2) in a telephone interview**

**ii. Gained an understanding of social enterprise and a sense of their own vision for their social enterprise**

For many, coming on the course gave them an insight into what it means to be a social entrepreneur and a sense of direction as social entrepreneurs in their own right.

*The witness sessions were brilliant because they sort of give you role models in the social enterprise world. It was really helpful, it gave me a sense of direction and what to aspire to in being a social entrepreneur.... some of the witnesses we had were people who had really developed very successful social enterprises and I suppose when I stared out I didn't have any sense of what a social enterprise looked like after a couple of years. So although I was already doing the work when I went to SSE it was only after attending the SSE that I began to think strategically about what I wanted to achieve in the next couple of years.*

**Man (2) in a telephone interview**

*Well it has broadened my understanding of social enterprise. When I went into this I was not aware of social entrepreneurs, or of what they were, or of the terminology of business. I was working with children in the public sector – I was from another working model. It opened a new opportunity to me and the whole world of business skills. At my first session at SSE I did not know what a business plan was – it helped me understand about planning and managing my business.*

**Man (3) in a telephone interview**

*It has given me a more holistic view of what a social enterprise is – a bit of theory and some real life examples.*

**Woman (2) in a telephone interview**

*It has made me believe in myself and that it is ok to be a social entrepreneur. I just had an idea and I just set something up on a whim almost and then when I went to SSE I learnt how to set it up as a non profit company and to formalise it a bit more. So it became more than just a hobby it became a formal social enterprise.*

**Man (1) in a telephone interview**

### iii. Resilience, a belief in self and staying power

The most overwhelming impression gained by the evaluator from all nine social entrepreneurs who took part in the focus group or in an interview, was the impact that the SSE programme had on their resilience and belief in themselves. This translated into very practical problem solving skills but for many the most important aspect of the programme was its capacity to engender in them a belief that they can solve the problems they face. The Action Learning Sets provide a supportive, facilitated, space where students can discuss challenges they face and are then asked questions by members of the group to assist them in reflecting on these challenges and in developing their own ways forward. For many this was an extremely powerful process which increased not only their problem solving skills but their confidence. Many of those on the ECAP programme had been working in the voluntary sector for years and were feeling frustrated and exhausted. The ECAP programme gave them the space to stop and think strategically and develop their own solutions to some very entrenched problems.

*I had spent many years in the voluntary sector feeling high levels of anger and frustration at the situation with grants and funding. Coming to SSE gave me the time to slow down and to process my thoughts and to plan and think strategically. It gave me 'thinking time' and time to distil ideas... SSE values and praises strategic thinking.*

#### **Woman (2) taking part in a focus group**

This woman described learning how to use the ALSs to solve problems herself was 'worth its weight in gold'.

*The programme gave me the space to do some blue skies thinking – to look at my vision and to take some care of myself. I realised that I and my relationships with staff and volunteers mattered more to my project than the bureaucracy and the funding bids. The programme gave me time to reconnect with my vision and not to lose sight of myself. I have learnt to invest in the moment and collaborate and build partnerships.*

#### **Woman (3) taking part in a focus group**

This woman felt that the programme had given her 'resilience' and 'staying power'. She said without SSE she would have 'given up a long time ago' but that with the support of the programme she is better able to 'deal with the blows' because she knows 'others have gone before her and trodden this path'.

*[In the ALS] you had a chance to raise any issues you had and then the chance to resolve these yourself – rather than the other members coming up with the solutions. They helped you find solutions yourself – that was very useful.*

**Man (1) in a telephone interview**

*It enabled me to think about things much more ambitiously and much more strategically. Rather than just doing a bit more each year to have really ambitious milestones in a strategic and logical manner. So the biggest break would be the transformation from a hazy sense of wanting to do more to having goals, aims and a strategy of how to get there.*

**Man (2) in a telephone interview**

*It increased my confidence. I went through a process of feeling unable...It helped me realise I could do this myself.*

**Man (3) in a telephone interview**

*It has consolidated my vision, developed my resilience, increased my practical skills.*

**Woman in face to face interview**

The evaluator has collected evidence that the ECAP programme has developed the personal skills of all the social entrepreneurs. For many who have felt isolated and cut off from others it is a welcome revelation that successful social entrepreneurs have shared their challenges. The structure of the ECAP programme invites students to identify with successful social entrepreneurs (via the witness sessions) and then to develop a network of peers who can assist them in coping with the challenges they themselves face as social entrepreneurs (via the ALSs). The focus on personal development and not just the development of business skills gives the students on the programme the time and space to really develop their confidence and their vision in a nurturing environment. The students themselves when asked what was the most important aspect of the course spoke of the



relationship with their peers and the skills they developed through the action learning sets, even as they acknowledged the value of learning to budget and writing a business plan.

*The impact personally has been to recognise my own abilities, to confidently say I can do this and to feel that I can do it.*

#### **Man (3) in a telephone interview**

*My vision became a reality*

#### **Woman in face to face interview**

### **6.1.2 Progress in developing social entrepreneurs' business skills**

When asked to identify the business skills that they acquired during their time at SSE the students were quick to list many skills, including:

1. The ability to write funding applications;
2. An understanding of the role of trustees and the capacity to recruit a skilled board of trustees;
3. An understanding of legal structures and the capacity to adopt the appropriate legal structure for their enterprise;
4. Skills in drafting and adopting the appropriate policies and a Business Plan;
5. Financial management skills and developing sustainable services
6. Becoming an employer.

However, frequently the development that was made in the social enterprise was not credited solely to the acquisition of business skills, but to the combination of an increase in business 'know how' and a parallel process whereby confidence increases and the student takes a step forward as a social entrepreneur .

One social entrepreneur who is now supporting vulnerable children and young people in schools in North London described the impact of attending SSE on his social enterprise.

*Before it was just an idea but now the project itself has developed from SSE. I now have the **confidence** to write funding applications, to develop the project so I could get the grant – it is a small grant but I had the ability and **confidence** to do that and*

*also I managed to put together a group of people who are now trustees and the Feeling Tree is registered as a charity ...So I feel that I achieved quite a lot in a short space a time.*

### **Man (3) in a telephone interview**

Another student who works with young people to develop their skills, aspirations and experiences through enterprise, when asked about the difference attending the course had made to his social enterprise, explained:

*Well it is difficult to quantify...There was a shift from 600 to 3,500 pupils in a year – a big shift then and actually during that time as well I took on my first couple of employees as well. Now I think about it a bit retrospectively it is about having the **confidence** to do that. I was having a few conversations about it in my ALS and I was apprehensive about being responsible for someone else and it felt like a leap and I think I got the **confidence** to do that from the group otherwise I think I would have hung back.*

### **Man (2) in a telephone interview**

One student running programmes for gay men to enable them to work on past negative experiences, recalled the impact of a session on finances:

*I had a one to one session with my tutor where we looked at the project's income and expenditure and realised the project was not self sustaining. After discussions and looking at the figures in detail I became much more creative in developing different programmes priced at different rates to ensure that the project could be self financing while also identifying and implementing measures that would ensure price was not a barrier to those who could not afford to attend. **It was like growing up in a way... like moving into the real world and taking ourselves seriously.** This resulted in a 'radical rethinking' which has ultimately enabled the project to become sustainable.*

### **Man (2) taking part in a focus group**

A woman working to address the holistic health needs of other women described how the SSE programme enabled her to secure premises for her social enterprise. This sounds like

a very practical step forward but she attributes this to her increased confidence in herself and her ability to communicate her vision for her social enterprise.

*I learnt to communicate my vision. I was able to speak to the collective to whom the premises belonged, describing my vision and how it would help to achieve their objectives. As a result I obtained premises with a rent reduction for 6 months and sponsorship for a further 3 months.*

#### **Woman (2) taking part in a focus group**

### **6.1.2 What could the ECAP programme have done better?**

All those taking part in this evaluation were asked how SSE might improve the ECAP programme. Responses fell into the following categories:

- i. The need for the programmes to be more individualised. Some described this as a need for a greater element of ‘one to one’ support.**

This was mentioned by six students.

*I think one of the challenges was that we were all at different points. Some people had not written a business plan at all and others had not got a project and were planning to set it up at the end of the programme. While some of us had set up projects as legal entities and so those sessions were less useful. Maybe we could have had smaller groups and differentiated the levels of instructions being given.*

#### **Man (2) in a telephone interview**

But there was also some acknowledgement that it was difficult for one programme to cater to all the different levels of need.

*The courses are for people from very different levels and some people have a lot of business knowledge and some people were just starting out like me so we did not get to the practical stuff until the very end. I probably needed some basic input at the same time as I got the other help... Maybe it would not have been possible as there were so many people from different levels.*

#### **Woman (2) in a telephone interview**

- ii. **The need for someone to develop an Alumni programme to enable students to stay in touch and network once the programme has ended, someone responsible for ‘weaving together the people who are part of the programme’.**

There was a strong sense from five of the students that the networks and contacts that they had made on the programme were important and valuable. There was acknowledgement that staff went out of their way to continue to offer support after the end of the programme but many felt that the level of support needed to keep an Alumni network functioning justified a dedicated staff member.

- iii. **The need for more practical support, particularly with Business Planning**

Four students felt that they would have benefited from more specific, practical support about how to develop a Business Plan.

- iv. **The need for mentors to be matched more carefully with students**

Some students had had very positive experiences with their mentors but two felt that their mentor was a poor match and that they had not ‘clicked’ but there was no potential on the ECAP programme to change mentors.

- v. **Miscellaneous suggestions**

One student felt that SSE administration was sometimes a little complex and that process such as the application process could be more streamlined. While another student felt the course would benefit more from advising students to get their vision and purpose right from the outset.

### **6.1.3 Progress towards achieving Outcome One**

There is ample evidence in the transcripts of the interviews and focus groups, as well as in the Project Assessment forms (completed by students at the beginning and end of their time on the programme) that students acquired business skills and for the first time applied for funding, negotiated rental contracts, employed staff, balanced books and wrote a Business Plan. However, what is apparent from talking with students is that this was only part of the process. To be able to take the leap forward, convey the vision and believe in

the venture was necessary if those business skills were to succeed. The evaluator was left with the impression that for many of the students interviewed, who are now successful social entrepreneurs, employing staff, offering volunteering opportunities and providing marginalised communities with services and resources, the technical business skills can only be put into practice with the support of the programme. So knowing the details of employment law and how to offer someone an employment contract is one thing. Having the confidence to actually employ someone is another. The student who took on staff for the first time explained the process:

[It] turned out to be absolutely the right decision – but if I had not had that support I don't think I could have made that choice then.

**Man (2) in a telephone interview**

**6.2 Outcome Two: To increase people's awareness and understanding in 39 communities of their rights to accurate social welfare advice, and their knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in society.**

The 39 students on the ECAP programme were selected because they were embedded in and working for communities affected by disadvantage or discrimination. Many were developing projects to address issues they had encountered in their own lives:

*(My) passion stems from my own journey through education which helped liberate me from an existence primarily rooted in offending.*

**Founder of a project working with ex-offenders, extract from Project Assessment form**

*The passion for this project comes from my own experiences as a young person who had not been supported and challenged to reach my optimum in my chosen career in sport.*

**Founder of a project working to increase young people's life skills through sports, extract from Project Assessment form**

*My Grandma was a victim of the mental health system, spending the majority of her life in institutions in the North of England. During this time she did not receive a*

*culturally appropriate service, nor the offer of psychological therapies. This is not a unique story and I hope my project will change this.*

**Founder of a project to provide culturally appropriate psychological therapies, extract from Project Assessment form**

*...coming from a low income household I am passionate about trying to provide extra support for young people from disadvantaged back grounds.*

**Founder of a project making tutoring accessible to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, extract from Project Assessment form**

During the course of the evaluation the evaluator spoke with social entrepreneurs who had graduated from the ECAP programme or who were currently attending the programme. The guidance, advice and advocacy organisations they were developing in order to serve the disadvantaged areas or underrepresented groups from which they come included:

- Work with young people in school who were having difficulty expressing their emotions and who were on the verge of school exclusion;
- Work with young people from schools across London to develop their skills, confidence and knowledge through social enterprise;
- Estate based community work;
- A programme providing young people from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds with tutors to boost their attainment in school;
- Coaching and group work with gay men whose identity and self esteem is affected by previous difficult life experiences;
- Group work with people with social phobias;
- A project providing refugee and migrant women with support in gaining employment and becoming financially independent through the use of mentors;
- A project focused on women's holistic health;
- A Community Interest Company offering parents and their children training and mentoring support.

From conversations with the Programme Manager and an audit trail of the ECAP's paperwork, the evaluator also learnt of many other fields in which Fellows from the ECAP programme are working including on projects that

- tackle gang crime;
- develop training with people with autism to be delivered by people with autism;
- provide outreach services for isolated Asian women;
- offer rehabilitation services to survivors of torture and trafficking;
- develop inclusion work with young offenders;
- provide culturally appropriate support to people with mental health problems;
- launch a bakery to provide training and employment opportunities;
- use acupuncture to help those in recovery and the homeless;
- engage young people through sports to develop their life-skills.

Please see [Appendix A](#) for a list of the twelve projects developed by social entrepreneurs attending the 2012/13 ECAP programme.

There is evidence from the Project Assessment forms that projects increased their turnover, employed staff for the first time, engaged volunteers and develop the scale and quality of their services over the course of the ECAP programme. An extract from SSE’s internal evaluation forms below indicates the growth made by Tutors Unlimited a project providing tutoring in primary schools to children from disadvantaged backgrounds:

<b>May 2012</b>	<b>August 2012</b>	<b>November 2012</b>	<b>December 2012</b>	<b>Jan 2013</b>
Ideas stage but well developed ideas	Big step – bookings in two schools to start in Sept	Tutors in place	Funding withdrawn and replaced; Started in schools; Request for private tutoring; More contracts from schools.	£6,000 cash injection; On track for a part time administrator; Another school booked.

The evaluator visited two social enterprises taking part in and observing their programmes to get a sense of the impact the ECAP programme has had on people’s awareness and understanding of their rights to accurate social welfare advice, and their knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in society.

### **6.2.1 The Feeling Tree**

The Feeling Tree, a social enterprise which aims to help children communicate effectively was established by a Fellow of the ECAP programme who had himself grown up in the care

system. The project runs programmes for children in a north London Borough who are struggling to manage their anger and who are identified by learning mentors as being likely to benefit from learning about how to communicate their emotions.

I observed and took part in the delivery of a session run by the SSE Fellow and a learning mentor from the school, which sought to encourage children to identify their emotions, recognise the impact these emotions had on them and ultimately learn less damaging ways to express these emotions. A great deal of thought had gone into the structure of the sessions and the presentation of the classroom which was rearranged to make the children feel safe – using specific images, resources and a circle of chairs in one corner.

During the course of the session the six children in the group discussed issues of parental substance misuse, domestic violence, bereavement (death of a parent and grandparent), seeking asylum, fights at school, and divorce/ separation and being cared for by step parents.

The session was structured in such a way as to make the children feel safe and supported. The children opened up about very complex emotions and discussed traumatic life events with insight. They were supported in and encouraged to express empathy for each other and they often discussed and reflected back the views of their peers in a mature, considered and respectful manner.

The learning mentor described the value of the group to the evaluator – explaining how entrenched were the problems facing many of these young people and how helpful it was to have someone come in and give the children a space where they could discuss their emotions safely and a language with which to talk about their feelings.

An evaluation of this nature is not able to assess the long term impact of an intervention such as that delivered by The Feeling Tree. However there is an evidence base for the effectiveness of interventions which develop the social and emotional competencies of children living in poverty.<sup>7</sup> The children and young people were engaged and responsive and the learning mentor, while being realistic about the challenges in changing behaviours

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<sup>7</sup> Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services, 'Effective classroom strategies for closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty, including white working-class boys', Research Summary, January 2011.



among the young people attending the group, was also very positive about the contribution that The Feeling Tree made to the school's work with these young people.

### **6.2.2 Enabling Enterprise**

Enabling Enterprise was founded in 2009 by an ECAP Fellow who while teaching in inner London, had realised that at school young people were not developing the skills to make a successful transition from education to the world of work. Through teaching enterprise skills and making links between schools and enterprise, Enabling Enterprise seeks to ensure that students of all backgrounds develop the wider skills, experiences and aspirations they need to be successful.

In 2012, Enabling Enterprise worked with over four hundred teachers and six new business partners, who inspired and hosted trips for students from over ninety schools, enabling over 11,700 students aged from 7 to 19 to complete an Enabling Enterprise programme.

Enabling Enterprise has a staff team of ten and delivers programmes across the country. The work has been evaluated and its impact assessed in five case studies. Findings include the fact that the projects can go beyond the school and benefit the community in a meaningful and substantial manner.<sup>8</sup>

The evaluator took part in a visit to UBS by year 5 and 6 pupils from two inner city primary schools taking part in the Enabling Enterprise 'From Trash to Treasure' challenge. The evaluator was able to speak with children, teaching staff and staff and volunteers from UBS and Enabling Enterprise. Teaching staff were enthusiastic, describing how:

*Children learn skills they would not get at all, or certainly not so directly, from the curriculum. For example decision making, team work, ideas about careers and self direction.*

#### **Teacher from an east London primary school**

Staff working for Enabling Enterprise were enthusiastic, engaged and engaging, taking the young people on an amazing journey which involved planning how to develop a new world on a new planet. There was no sense that the children's age, class, social background or abilities could limit their participation in the adventure. Everyone was swept along by the

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<sup>8</sup> Enabling Enterprise 'Impact Report: 2012 A Year in Five Stories', 2012.

staff and volunteers' enthusiasm. Using games and imaginative exercises, young people were captivated while never being talked down to. The whole day appeared to be based on an assumption that everyone had a right to be heard and valued as a team member and everyone had the capacity to contribute to the task in hand.

*It raises their aspirations. It is outside their normal environment. They are working with children they didn't know before today. They are developing team work, confidence, a very useful skill, exposure to a new environment, new adults as well as new children. They overcome shyness in the classroom and are not feeling intimidated and separate. They see that Canary Wharf and the City are not other worlds. They are part of London, their city.*

### **Enabling Enterprise staff member**

The children themselves talked of learning 'determination', 'to work together and include everyone and take part in the team, 'to have fun' and 'about recycling'.

As with the visit to The Feeling Tree, it is not possible for this evaluation to assess the long term impact of the Enabling Enterprise programmes. However after having reviewed the evidence of the programmes' impacts and having spoken with teaching staff, UBS partners, staff and volunteers from Enabling Enterprise and having been interviewed by and having interviewed young people herself, the evaluator came away with a strong sense that Enabling Enterprise increased the knowledge, understanding and skills of young people from all backgrounds to participate in society.

### **6.2.3 Progress towards achieving Outcome Two**

The limitations of an evaluation of this size are such that it would be impossible to state conclusively that the ECAP programme has increased people's awareness and understanding in 39 communities of their rights to accurate social welfare advice, and their knowledge, understanding and skills to participate in society.

What it is possible to conclude from reviewing the paper work, interviewing SSE staff and Fellows of the ECAP programme and visiting two projects and interviewing their partners and service users, is that SSE supports social entrepreneurs who then go on to develop imaginative, innovative and engaging projects. These projects are working with some of the

most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our communities from children with autism through to torture survivors. There is evidence that these projects are having an impact: they are employing staff and volunteers, teaching skills, generating ideas and social capital, offering services and opening up people's minds to new ways of meeting old challenges. The Fellows themselves attribute much of the impact that they are having in their communities to the ECAP course.

*It was a fantastic course*

**Man (1) in a telephone interview**

*We are still here and able to offer women (migrant women) a great service. Without SSE we would not still be here. The empathy and care and love that the SSE showed me I can now mirror and show that empathy to the women who come to our service. I offer a professional and compassionate service because of the compassion shown to me by SSE. I can then mirror that and show it to the women I work with. They were unconditional in their acceptance of me and I can be unconditional in my acceptance of the women I work with. They (the SSE) support me to this day with kindness and I do the same for my clients.*

**Woman in face to face interview**

## 2012 Cohort of ECAP Students

Project	Aim	Target group	Project Assessment May 2012	Project Assessment Nov & Dec 2012, Jan 2013
Noor	To help those furthest from the labour market access scholarships and work	Ex-offenders	Project at embryonic stage	Contracts to deliver on release; spoke on panels; brokered partnerships with the LSE; UP & RUNNING
Goals Programme	To help young people engage and develop life-skills through football	Young people	Need to make business plan stronger	Running low in financial resources, bought in £8.5k but need £40-£50k; created deadlines for the new year; Stretched to capacity
Parents Skills2Go	To help families develop skills that will enable them to move into more positive situations e.g. manage their money, gain employment, parent better	Parents of young children and their children	Very busy with Children's Centres & running courses	Project getting bigger; good leadership; better understanding of finances; new projects with community groups
Insider Autism Training	To deliver autism training devised & delivered by people with autism	Professionals & others working with people with autism	Some paying session and some unpaid	In depth planning; Business plan; grants v paid income; need to work at business level
The Quest	To run workshops for gay men to enable them to release past pain & create authentic relationships with themselves/their communities	Gay men	Workshops delivered	Integrity; beginning to monitor finance closely; one-offs; entrepreneur club; continued relationship with SSE
The Rewind Project	Alternative to custody which will dramatically reduce reoffending rates	Young offenders	Lots of ideas in head	Steadily working through project
Tutors United	To provide young people from low income households with private tutoring at primary school, delivered by students gaining work experience	Disadvantaged young people	Ideas stage but well developed ideas	£6,000 cash injection; on track for a part time administrator; another school booked
PILI – Psychology Improving Lives & Inspiring	To provide culturally/socially appropriate psychological therapies, support & workshops to alleviate mental health problems	People with mental health problems	Idea, freelance, 3 board members quickly join	Increased demand for structure, services, organisation; Contract worth £2k, Funding gained
Collaborate2 Grow	To facilitate joint ventures for SMEs, the urban community and marginalised groups and individuals	Individuals and SMEs from marginalised groups	Ideas stage but clear idea of what I want it to be; need to put a proper model in place	Made things more tangible; am starting to feel like I've built a community of support.
Bakery	To launch a bakery providing training and employment	Local unemployed people	Project at embryonic stage; couple of ideas so really need guidance in where to go	Website up and running; good contacts made and networking coming more naturally
7th Generation Arts & Sustainability project	To make positive changes in local communities through new generation of youth leaders	Young people	Project at embryonic stage; ideas only, have a vision but no concrete steps	Workshops in place for environmental talks with groups of young girls
Green Leaves Acupuncture	To use acupuncture & therapeutic gardening to aid recovery & healing through growth & development	People in recovery, the homeless	Worked out SROI; spoke at House of Commons, launched campaign	Can see how to make business work; Making links with others; financial backing in place; writing proposals for UnLtd & National Lottery funding

