



**Music In Detention**

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## **Evaluation report**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010**

**Report by Karin van Maanen**

***This one is straight from prison from detention centre  
Reaching out to all the people in the world  
Those that locked up behind bars  
Those that lost their liberty  
Those that are in starvation  
This reaching out to you all from straight behind bars***

Lyrics from *Voice of the People*, written by detainees at IRC Harmondsworth

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# CONTENTS

## **1 Introduction (p. 3)**

- 1.1 Music in Detention (MID)
- 1.2 Music for Change (MfC)
- 1.3 Traditional Arts Projects (TAPS)/Drum Runners Trading (DRT)
- 1.4 Oxford Concert Party (OCP)
- 1.5 The Asian Music Circuit (AMC)
- 1.6 Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs)

## **2 Evaluation overview (p. 6)**

## **3 Framework (p. 8)**

## **4 How was *Music in Detention* able to meet its aims? (p. 10)**

- 4.1 The music interventions (p. 10)
  - 4.1.1 Self-expression (p. 10)
  - 4.1.2 Culturally relevant music provision (p. 13)
  - 4.1.3 Group dynamics (p. 14)
- 4.2 Quality of life (p. 16)
  - 4.2.1 Stress relief (p. 16)
  - 4.2.2 Cultural wellbeing (p. 20)
  - 4.2.3 Enjoyment (p. 22)
- 4.3 Channels of communication & community exchange (p. 25)
  - 4.3.1 Detainees, places of detention and music organisations (p. 26)
  - 4.3.2 Detainees, places of detention and local communities (p. 27)
  - 4.3.3 Detainees, places of detention and the wider public (p. 30)

## **5 Community Exchange case studies (p. 32)**

## **7 SWOT analysis (p. 36)**

## **8 Recommendations (p. 38)**

## ***Appendix (p.)***

Song lyrics

# 1. Introduction

**This report covers a three year period (1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010) during which Music in Detention (MID) was able to significantly increase its delivery of music projects in Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs), working in partnership with independent music providers. The evaluation is a participant-focussed evaluation and the aim of the report is to demonstrate the impact of all MID's work on detainees and IRCs, and the impact on members of the wider community involved in MID's distinct Community Exchange programme.**

**The report looks at whether MID's main aims were achieved, and identifies strengths and weaknesses of the work, as well as threats and opportunities. This evaluation is summative and follows two interim, formative evaluations which were completed in June 2008 and June 2009.**

## 1.1 Music in Detention (MID)

Music in Detention (MID) works through music to give voice to immigration detainees and create channels of communication between them, immigration and detention staff, local communities and the wider public. MID was formed by a group of organisations and individuals inspired by a pilot programme that took participatory music activities into four of the UK's Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs). This pilot found that the life-affirming experience of group music-making crossed cultural and language barriers and had a significant impact in relieving the stress suffered by detainees. Since 2005 MID has facilitated delivery of music, dance and performance workshops inside all of the UK's IRCs, to date working with four main delivery partners, Music for Change (MfC), Drum Runners Trading (DRT)<sup>1</sup>, Asian Music Circuit (AMC) and Oxford Concert Party (OCP). The music interventions covered in this report were provided by MID's delivery partners. The organisations work in close partnership with MID, but the delivery partners are directly responsible for staffing the work in the IRCs and in the community, designing the local project work, and managing the projects. Delivery staff contribute directly to evaluation and the development of evaluation methods, and to the development of MID's best practice guidelines for work in this unique context.

MID supports the delivery partners in a variety of ways, through training, networking and facilitating the relationships between the IRCs, the community partners and the music organisations. MID is also responsible for raising the profile of music in detention and advocating for the use of music in IRCs. As an independent charity, MID raises the funding and manages the overall budget for the programme.

## 1.2 Music for Change (MfC)

Music for Change (MfC)<sup>2</sup> is an educational charity that promotes awareness, understanding and respect for cultural diversity through music and the performing arts in order to achieve beneficial change. MfC believes not only in the intrinsic value of music and the arts, but also that music can play a vital role in breaking down barriers between people and cultures. Their aim is to encourage people to challenge cultural

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<sup>1</sup> DRT developed out of an organisation called Traditional Arts Projects (TAPS), which ceased to exist in April 2008 due to a lack of funding but its work in IRCs is being continued by former staff who are working under the name of Drum Runners Trading (see section 1.3)

<sup>2</sup> [www.musicforchange.org](http://www.musicforchange.org)

preconceptions and celebrate not just cultural diversity but cultural commonality. From one-off live events to ongoing projects, the theme of intercultural understanding for a better and more tolerant world lies at the heart of all of Music for Change's work.

### **1.3 Traditional Arts Projects (TAPS)/Drum Runners Trading (DRT)**

Traditional Arts Projects, commonly known as TAPS, delivered workshops and performances that made links between traditions of people living in England (including English, Asian, African, Caribbean, Middle Eastern, Latin American and others), creating a strand of intercultural English music and dance in educational, community and professional settings. Their ethos was one of cultural unity in England. TAPS closed its doors in April 2008 after essential funding was withdrawn. However, the work that TAPS began and developed continues in the further work of former TAPS staff as Drum Runners Trading.

TAPS was one of MID's founding members and played an active role on the partnership group. TAPS delivered music, dance and performance workshops inside the UK's IRCs since the MID pilot programme in 2005. This role is now continued by two of TAPS former staff, Jason Knight and Paul Midgley, who founded Drum Runners Trading<sup>3</sup>. This partnership has continued to lead on the work in IRCs. Between them, Paul and Jason have over 35 years experience of working directly in the arts and DRT now delivers ongoing projects, one off workshops and festival events management, employing a number of freelance artists from a wide range of cultures and disciplines.

### **1.4 Oxford Concert Party (OCP)**

Led by Arne Richards, a consultant music therapist, Oxford Concert Party<sup>4</sup> is a group of highly professional and experienced musicians who have toured throughout the UK and Europe. They have been working in community settings for fifteen years, in prisons, schools and residential homes, in the belief that music is accessible to everyone and is, in the broadest sense, a healing, educative and therapeutic medium.

Oxford Concert Party was one of MID's founding members and played an active role in the partnership group. Oxford Concert Party has delivered music & dance activities inside the UK's IRCs since the MID pilot programme in 2005 and worked with MID until March 2010.

### **1.5 The Asian Music Circuit (AMC)**

The AMC<sup>5</sup> has set national benchmarks for excellence and high standards in Asian music promotion since 1991. It now aspires to connect the future with the past by presenting the great music traditions of Asia which are increasingly rare and often fragile. Artists chosen by the AMC retain the integrity and spiritual heritage of these traditions and are treated with the dignity, respect and sense of equality they fully deserve. To make the music accessible to all sectors of society the AMC promotes an innovative UK-wide touring and education programme, which since 2008 has included working with MID.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.drumrunners.org](http://www.drumrunners.org)

<sup>4</sup> [www.oxfordconcertparty.org](http://www.oxfordconcertparty.org)

<sup>5</sup> [www.amc.org.uk](http://www.amc.org.uk)

## 1.6 Immigration Removal Centres

About 30,000 people a year (including men, women and children), most of them asylum seekers, are administratively detained in Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) around the UK. Their detention can last from anything from a few days to a few years. Most detainees have distressing or traumatic histories, including violence and torture; high levels of stress, depression, self harm and suicidal thoughts are common.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of detainees have claimed asylum in the UK at some stage. Current UK immigration policy allows for detention to be used in this context to prevent absconding, to establish identity, to remove people from the UK at the end of their asylum or immigration case and for the purposes of making a decision on a claim for asylum that is deemed to be “straight forward” and therefore “capable of being decided quickly”. At any one time, there are around 2,500 detainees held in the UK’s IRCs. Many immigration detainees (about a third) are not removed, but released into the UK. There are now eleven IRCs in the UK. Most are run by private companies contracted to the UK Borders Agency (UKBA). Three are run by Her Majesty’s Prison Service.

The starting point for MID’s work is the recognition that detention is a stressful experience that has a damaging impact on the well-being and mental health of detainees. Separation from friends and family, the indefinite nature of detention which may last days but can last years, the threat of imminent removal to countries that for many bring painful memories and inspire fear, and a lack of access to legal advice and information, means detention can be stressful, depressing, and frustrating for many of those held.

The documentation that was collected to inform this report was from projects that took place at the following nine IRCs:

*Run by Her Majesty’s Prison Service*

IRC Dover (Kent)  
IRC Haslar (Gosport, Hampshire)  
IRC Lindholme (Doncaster)

*Run by the GEO Group Limited*

IRC Harmondsworth (near Heathrow Airport)  
IRC Campsfield House (Kidlington, near Oxford)

*Run by Serco*

IRC Colnbrook (Harmondsworth, near Heathrow Airport)  
IRC Yarl’s Wood (Clapham, Bedfordshire)

*Run by the G4S Group*

IRC Brook House (near Gatwick Airport)  
IRC Oakington (Longstanton, near Cambridge)

Further information about each IRC and its population and regime can be found at [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/organisation/immigrationremovalcentres/](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/organisation/immigrationremovalcentres/)

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<sup>6</sup> [www.musicindetention.org.uk](http://www.musicindetention.org.uk)

## 2. Evaluation overview

Karin van Maanen was commissioned to work with MID over three years to evaluate the impact of their work inside and outside IRCs, looking at three of MID's strategic aims:

### Aims

1. To promote and ensure delivery of music as a creative vehicle for self expression by immigration detainees
2. To encourage and support those throughout the immigration detention estate who seek to improve detainees' quality of life through independently-delivered music activities
3. Using music, to create channels of communication between detainees, places of detention, local communities and the wider public.

This is a summative report, put together at the end of a three-year delivery programme, to answer the following questions which were derived from the above aims:

- a. What types of music interventions MID has been delivering are most effective in facilitating self-expression? (Supporting MID strategic aim 1)
- b. Have MID activities to date improved detainees' quality of life through independently delivered music activities? (Supporting MID strategic aim 2)
- c. To which extent has the community exchange work created channels of communication between detainees, places of detention, local communities and the wider public? (Supporting MID strategic aim 3)

The evaluation is a participant-focussed evaluation, looking at the responses of detainees actively participating in the project, members of IRC staff who were directly involved, and responses from members of the community involved in community exchange projects. The report also investigates how MID followed up recommendations from the two formative interim reports preceding this report.

### Documentation of the three-year programme

Karin van Maanen, aided by MID's staff, delivery partners' staff, IRC staff and participants, gathered documentation focussing on project activities that took place between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. This report is based on this evidence.

The following documentation was gathered:

- Observation – the evaluator (Karin van Maanen) visited projects in IRCs Dover, Haslar, Campsfield House, Colnbrook and Yarl's Wood, and community exchange projects with IRCs Dover, Haslar, Colnbrook and Campsfield House. This included observing activities facilitated by Drum Runners, Asian Music Circuit, Music for Change, and Oxford Concert Party.
- In addition, Ceri Hutton (consultant for MID), MID staff and James Underhill (undertaking PhD research with MID) submitted observational reports which were used to inform this report

- 88 detainees, 18 workshop facilitators, 31 members of IRC staff and 76 participants in community exchange groups were interviewed
- 223 completed artists' logs were returned
- 9 members of IRC staff completed questionnaires and informal feedback
- Staff from all delivery organisations provided feedback at the practice forums, attended by Karin van Maanen in 2008, 2009 and 2010
- MID staff provided feedback
- A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis was undertaken based on the evidence gathered with input from MID staff

## **Limitations of the evaluation**

Due to initial budget constraints, direct contact between the evaluator and detainees was fairly limited in the first year, and the majority of the feedback received was provided and gathered by project staff. Additional evaluation resources were put in place by MID for year two and three of the programme, and tools were re-designed to collect direct feedback from detainees more systematically, therefore enabling the evaluation to reflect a larger number of detainees' views.

The evidence presented in this report is based on research and evaluation undertaken during and shortly after project activities, and provides a useful insight into the immediate workings of the programme and its short term outcomes.

Efforts are being made by MID to develop and fund more in-depth research into the effect of music participation on detainees, with a pilot research project planned in IRC Dover this year.

# 3. Framework

## Performance indicators and evidence

The table below outlines the evaluation framework and the processes used to gather the evidence which will show MID’s progress in terms of achieving the three aims mentioned in section 2.

<b>Evaluation question</b>	<b>Desired outcome</b>	<b>Performance indicators</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
What types of music interventions MID has been delivering are most effective in facilitating self expression? (Supporting aim 1)	Detainees are able to express themselves through MID activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainees tell us they have been able to express themselves</li> <li>• Detainees take active part in sessions</li> <li>• Detainees are able to express their own culture through activities</li> <li>• Detainees are most able to express themselves through participating in specified musical activities – evaluation to distinguish between different instruments, music and workshop styles/vocals/lyric writing/dance/other art forms used/facilitation styles</li> <li>• Detainees show preference for specific workshop content/style</li> <li>• Detainees are consulted as to the creative direction of the workshops/projects</li> <li>• The group dynamics allow everyone to play an active part and have some creative input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with detainees</li> <li>• Informal conversations with IRC staff and detainees</li> <li>• Observations (by evaluators, facilitators, IRC staff)</li> <li>• Staff questionnaires and interviews</li> <li>• The music/lyrics produced as a result of the activities</li> <li>• Artists’ logs</li> </ul>
Have MID activities to date improved detainees’ quality of life through independently delivered music activities? (Supporting aim 2)	Detainees’ quality of life within the IRC is improved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainees tell us they feel better/less stressed/less isolated/more positive about their situation during and/or after activities</li> <li>• Detainees tell us the activities take their mind off their problems</li> <li>• Detainees are able to express negative feelings, concerns and worries during the activities (“let off steam”) – the activities have a therapeutic effect</li> <li>• The activities improve group dynamics</li> <li>• The activities improve relationships between detainees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with detainees</li> <li>• Informal conversations with IRC staff and detainees</li> <li>• Observations (by evaluators, facilitators, IRC staff)</li> <li>• Staff questionnaires and interviews</li> <li>• The music/lyrics produced as a result of the activities</li> <li>• Artists’ logs</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The activities improve relationships between detainees and IRC staff</li> </ul>	
<p>To which extent has the community exchange work created channels of communication between detainees, places of detention, local communities and the wider public? (Supporting aim 3)</p>	<p>Channels of communication are created through the community exchange programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainees are linked to the outside world through the activities – channels of communication are created – f.i. through the sharing of recordings</li> <li>• Detainees tell us they feel less isolated and more aware of the society outside</li> <li>• Community participants have an increased awareness of the IRC system</li> <li>• Community participants have an increased awareness and understanding of the reasons why people are detained in IRCs</li> <li>• The activities generate positive local/regional/national PR</li> <li>• Activities include events that bring people together (f.i. IRC staff, detainees, members of the community)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with detainees and community participants</li> <li>• Informal conversations with IRC staff, detainees and community participants</li> <li>• Observations (by evaluators, facilitators, IRC staff, community partners f.i. school teachers)</li> <li>• Staff questionnaires and interviews (artists, community and IRC)</li> <li>• The music/lyrics produced as a result of the activities</li> </ul>

# 4. How was MID able to meet its aims?

## 4.1 The music interventions

What types of music interventions MID has been delivering, are most effective in facilitating self-expression?

### Summary

The range of activities provided by MID partners during the period this evaluation covers has overall been very effective in facilitating self-expression. All the musicians interviewed as part of this report and all evidence from the Practice Forum sessions for musicians confirms that the sessions are designed to encourage detainees to feel they can relax and have the freedom to express themselves in a safe space.

Self-expression takes place on different levels, and the longer running projects, for example the Community Exchange recording projects which take place over several days, have enabled the detainees to express themselves on a significant level and create a “message to the world outside”:

*“It’s very helpful for me to record my music and send it out. So that people can hear me. So that I can communicate with the outside world.”*  
(Detainee)

One-day celebratory activities, for example Chinese New Year celebrations, are different in nature but still provide opportunities for cultural expression and for detainees to share their personal stories in informal ways.

On a small number of occasions, self-expression for more shy or withdrawn detainees was hindered due to group dynamics (see 4.1.3), but the make-up of the programme generally lends itself to encouraging people to actively participate, whether they have existing musical skills or not, and activities have been successful in involving detainees from over 40 nationalities. According to IRC staff, MID has been particularly successful in engaging detainees from ethnic groups who are much less likely to be involved in education or other activities available in the IRCs.

This section looks at self-expression, cultural relevance and group dynamics in more detail.

### 4.1.1 Self-expression

For the purposes of this report, self-expression is defined as follows:

*Expression of your personality, emotions or ideas, especially through art, music or acting.*<sup>7</sup>

The following quotation suggests that self-expression is closely linked to communication – i.e. expressing one's self to others:

*"Self-expression must pass into communication for its fulfilment."* (Pearl S. Buck)

In the context of this report, the evidence that would indicate that people have the opportunity to express themselves during MID activities, is closely linked to providing them with a measure of freedom to be creative, and giving them the space and opportunity to contribute to the session in a way that suits them – mainly through performing music, which could be as simple as clapping their hands, tapping their feet, dancing, singing along, or playing an instrument – but also through contributing to ideas for the sessions, composing music and/or lyrics, experienced instrumental playing or singing, leading or directing a group performance, improvising (for example rapping) and on some occasions using visual arts to express themselves.

Enabling self-expression is also linked to providing culturally appropriate session content (see 4.1.2). When analysing programme content and session feedback, the following elements would indicate self-expression was taking place:

- Encouragement of creativity and experimentation
- Encouragement of participants contributing to the session (in a way that suits them) – evidence of active participation
- Evidence of participants being able to share their own cultural heritage
- Freedom to express thoughts, emotions and opinions in lyrics and speech
- Freedom to share opinions and experiences during sessions
- Creating opportunities for detainees to communicate with each other as well as with staff and external facilitators
- A commitment to providing culturally relevant and appropriate activities
- Consultation with detainees as to the creative direction of the workshops/projects

### **Evidence of self-expression**

There is a lot of evidence that indicates that self-expression of detainees was central to the MID activities. It is evident in the lyrics that were produced, the content of the music workshops, and in the way that the facilitators ran sessions:

*"The workshops provided the participants with an opportunity to gain someone else's perspective on their situation. These perspectives come from the other participants and from the artist, who brings their own perspective, and that of the other community groups involved in the project. Through H's [MfC facilitator] posing of insightful questions (using the activity of song writing as an impetus) the participants are led to articulate and investigate their own thoughts and feelings, arriving at a point where they have settled on a summarisation of their thought processes. They are able to pin point the crux of the matter from their point of view."* (MfC internal report)

Creative processes and time for reflection was built in, and participants were encouraged to find similarities and differences between music traditions from around the world, to create their own rhythms, and to make choices about which music to play.

*"Good music using body and no instruments. Really creative stuff..."* (Detainee)

Several detainees who were interviewed made comments about self-expression:

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<sup>7</sup> dictionary.cambridge.org, July 2008

*"I express myself through the songs. I sing about things that happen to me."*

*"I can express myself here. Talk about feelings. It makes me feel a lot better."*

*"It's very helpful for me to record my music and send it out. So that people can hear me. So that I can communicate with the outside world."*

*[The best thing about the workshop was] "The ability to express emotion."*

*"I come to try to express myself in a different way."*

*"The workshops are the only space for freedom of choice and speech in the centre."*

*"This is your day, this is your space."*

*"Use your mind like a whip."*

*"I come back next one because I got more things to say."*

*"It's all about messages."*

*"Is that music or is it anger?"*

Many detainees indicated that they felt safe to express themselves, and that the facilitators gave them the confidence to do so:

*"This place [the music session] is perfect for me. It has given me confidence."*

*"I sang in public here for the first time. With Téa [MID musician]. Before that I was too shy."*

Many of the comments from detainees themselves indicated that the music set them free for a short while and took them away from their problems – even though a lot of the time, the lyrical content of the music produced had their common situation of confinement and separation from their friends and families as its theme (see appendix for examples of lyrics produced). It seemed important to the detainees to be able to share their plight with the outside world through their lyrics, particularly when songs were being recorded and they know they would be distributed on the outside. Feedback from facilitators confirmed this was the case:

*"Most of the group enjoyed singing about their situation and love for their partners and families." (TAPS facilitator)*

There was also evidence that the sessions enabled the participants to be creative, although in some cases basic music skills had to be learnt first.

*"The combination of artists delivering ideas for rhythms and tunes was a great foundation for the groups to add their own variations and interpretations too and everyone took part utilising the vocals as a central focus." (TAPS facilitator)*

It is clear from the programme of activities that great efforts were made to include a range of musical influences and instruments from around the world, and that the activities attracted a wide range of nationalities (21 in the session the quote below refers to):

*"Everyone seemed comfortable to have a go on the instruments (Darabukas, Balafon, Congas, Surdo, Percussion) and respect was established between different ethnic groups. A member of IRC staff commented that there was someone from every continent making music together." (TAPS facilitator)*

*“The detainees were absolutely delighted and had a great time. One of the detainees enjoyed singing traditional songs from his country. They all really enjoyed the sitar. It was great, it was different”.* (Member of staff, IRC Haslar)

Detainees confirmed the sessions enabled them to get to know other detainees and staff, and for many it was the best thing about the workshops:

*“I enjoyed working with people I did not work with before.”* (Detainee)

*[The best thing was] “Meeting other people more important than any other factor.”*  
(Detainee)

*[The best thing was] Meeting people I hadn’t spoken too before.”* (Detainee)

*“It’s brought us closer to certain ones [detainees].”* (Member of staff, IRC Harmondsworth)

#### **4.1.2 Culturally relevant music provision**

Due to working with an extremely diverse participant group in the IRCs, it is essential that the facilitators that deliver the MID programme are effective cultural facilitators or enablers, drawing out the stories, messages, communication and self-expression which feel culturally appropriate to the participants.<sup>8</sup> Although music is a universal language, detainees involved in the MID programme are from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. For some detainees, aspects of music created or related activities may be religiously or culturally taboo or undesirable.

Working with these groups, it is not possible to offer ‘one size fits all’ provision. What is required is sensitivity, a flexible approach, and a high level of awareness of the needs, interests and expectations of the participants. All musicians who have been involved in delivering the programme are asked to follow this approach and are offered support from MID or from more experienced facilitators to help them to develop the confidence and the sensitivity to work in this way. MID has not hesitated to withdraw musicians from the programme who were unable to adopt this way of working despite the support on offer.

MID and the IRCs are keen to provide a musically diverse programme, which has certainly been achieved. The musicians delivering the programme are themselves from a wide range of cultural backgrounds (some have direct experience of being refugees) and there has been a great sense of skills development and sharing between the musicians over the last three years, as well as between musicians and detainees. This commitment from MID to ensure there are plenty of opportunities for networking between artists and support for new musicians becoming involved guarantees a very solid quality to the MID work. This is emphasised by the comments from detainees and IRC staff and is one of MID’s great strengths:

*“This project brought together different cultures as one.”* (Detainee)

*“People have to come out and share their cultures so that we can join all the bits.”*  
(Detainee)

*“This has been one of the easiest ways for us to integrate different cultures. It’s just exceptionally good value.”* (Diversity & Race Equality Advisor, Dover IRC)

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<sup>8</sup> Eames, P, *Cultural provision for Black, Minority and Ethnic offenders in Criminal Justice Settings*, Anne Peaker Centre, 2008.

*“The best thing is having different people from different backgrounds, with different ideas, that can really relate to the guys.”* (Diversity & Regimes Manager, Colnbrook IRC)

*“A good mix of cultural workshops from around the world is important.”* (Member of staff, IRC Dover)

*“The detainees really appreciated and have commented on the excellent quality of the dancing and the tabla playing. What everyone commented on was how lovely it was to see Africans, Chinese as well as the Asian countries joining in.”* (Member of staff, IRC Haslar)

*“I think MID allows cultural expression beyond the norm.”* (Member of staff, IRC Campsfield House)

*“The most memorable moments are when the visiting artists are treated with a welcoming display of culture experiences that the detainees are willing to share. The overall result is one of cultural adoption of styles that allows people to make music together.”* (TAPS facilitator)

Working alongside IRC staff facilitated a further exchange of knowledge, benefiting both IRC staff and the musicians:

*“It [the MID programme] gives staff a more open view of different cultures.”* (Diversity & Race Equality Advisor, Dover IRC)

### **4.1.3 Group dynamics**

Several facilitators mentioned that small groups of detainees or individuals would “hijack sessions”, or wanted “to do their own thing.” Of course “doing your own thing” could be self-expression too but if it means other people are at risk of feeling or becoming excluded from the activity it needs to be managed. Managing the group dynamics, to enable everyone to express themselves, and managing the fine line between some people expressing themselves at the exclusion of other people having the space to do so has been a challenge at times:

[What was the worst thing about the workshops for you?]

*“Certain detainees showing no respect/did not want to be there.”* (Detainee)

*“Some assumed they were in a worse state than any other, self-pitying themselves.”* (Detainee)

Various tactics to manage this were used by facilitators and IRC staff:

- Choosing a neutral space for the sessions – i.e. not a space that would normally be used for general recreation, and a space that is free from other distractions
- Being pro-active about where people sit in the space – separating people from their usual groups, ensuring detainees mix
- Facilitating a sharing environment where people take it in turns to contribute
- Ensuring participants know why MID is there, and what the focus of the sessions is

The evidence suggests that facilitators are committed to creating a positive and respectful group atmosphere, and most of the time group dynamics were managed successfully:

*“What we aim for in the facilitation is for everyone’s strengths to shine.”* (DRT facilitator)

*“The overall ambience (albeit loud and energetic) was full of vibrant expression and at times the group showed empathy to pull towards a group dynamic. Individual expression was also displayed and efforts were made to either highlight solo achievement or to blend the rhythms for clarity within the group.”* (TAPS workshop facilitator)

*“There was also one quiet Jamaican young man who didn’t want to make any noise or play any instrument but he really enjoyed making a flag with ‘Jamaica’ on it and was happy to be in the background – later on he really joined in with the singing and the flag dance and became quite expressive. [...] During the last high energy session there was a lovely surprise when a Pakistani man, who had been very shy about dancing, got up and danced magnificently! I thought that it showed that he felt in a safe place and was amongst friends and I think he surprised himself too.”* (DRT workshop facilitator)

Clearly MID facilitators on the whole are understanding and flexible as to what circumstances external to the workshop may be influencing the atmosphere, group dynamics and individuals’ moods:

*“DRT book me in around Chinese New Year to run a session a day or two before or after Chinese New Year, for MID. Often the [Chinese] detainees are quite stressed then, really frustrated. Immediately when they saw someone Chinese they started talking to me and it was difficult to get them dancing. Another time they were complaining that the meal on Chinese New Year had not been Chinese.”* (DRT workshop facilitator)

Other frustrations and emotions often need to be vented before everyone can settle down into a workshop. This can be challenging to manage but the facilitators are all adept at working with this and coming in with a plan which can be abandoned or adapted as the situation calls for.

Overall, the workshops appear to be very helpful to bring people closer together and to create increased cohesion amongst the IRC populations:

*“There is a definite impact. MID breaks down barriers between ethnicities and everyone is involved. Musicians are very good at involving everyone.”* (Diversity & Equality Officer, Haslar IRC)

## 4.2 Quality of life

Have MID activities to date improved detainees' quality of life through independently delivered music activities?

### Summary

There is more and more evidence emerging from science and medicine that music making is beneficial for health and wellbeing. It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to discuss this research, but preliminary evidence suggests music contributes to health and mental health on many different levels.

In terms of MID, feedback from detainees were mainly comments on how MID helped them to forget about their situation, the relaxing nature of the activities and the resulting release of stress (see 4.2.1). IRC staff, musicians, and detainees' visitors, confirmed this further from their observations and feedback given to them. IRC staff also fed back that the opportunities MID offers helps new detainees to settle in.

Furthermore, the culturally diverse nature and the commitment of the music providers to providing culturally relevant musical activities helps to increase participants' cultural wellbeing (see 4.2.2), encourages bonding, and makes them feel respected – not only by MID's musicians, but also by IRC staff, many of whom get to see the detainees in a different light as a result of the activities. Even IRC staff not directly involved benefit because the workshops often became a topic for positive interaction and conversation.

Last but not least, the fact that the vast majority of detainees enjoy the activity (see 4.2.3), even to the point where one detainee managed to get himself transferred to an IRC where MID is operating because he was so keen, is an indication that it improves their quality of life within the IRC, at the very least in the short term. As MID's activities are becoming more wide-spread and regular within the detention estate, MID starts to make a real difference to participating detainees' lives.

### 4.2.1 Stress relief<sup>9</sup>

Stress is a well-known trigger for depression and it can also affect physical health. Therefore, if the MID activities relieve detainees' stress, they are likely to improve their mental and physical wellbeing and therefore their quality of life. Activities that are widely accepted to relieve stress include:

- 1) Talking to someone about what is causing you stress

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#### <sup>9</sup> Sources

Clift & Hancox, *The perceived benefits of singing: findings from preliminary surveys of a university college choral society*, The Journal of The Royal Society for the Promotion of Health; December 2001, 121 (4), pp. 248-256

*Dance and Health, the benefits for people of all ages*, Arts Council England & NHS, 2006

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk, July 2008



- 2) Letting off steam in a harmless way
- 3) Removing yourself from stressful situations
- 4) Spending time with people who are rewarding rather than critical or judgmental
- 5) Practise slow breathing, extending the exhalation

There are clear links between the above activities and the MID programme, shown in the table below:

<b>MID activities</b>	<b>Stress relieving aspects (1 to 6 as above) incorporated</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Taking part in a social, enjoyable activity – communal music making</b>	3, 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detainees have indicated they feel that MID activities take them away from their problems</li> <li>• The workshop facilitators take an encouraging role and are not involved in the IRC regime, and can therefore build a more equal relationship with detainees</li> </ul>
<b>Writing lyrics</b>	1, 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vast majority of the lyrics produced by detainees are on the theme of freedom, or discuss how it makes them feel to be living in captivity</li> </ul>
<b>Singing</b>	1, 2, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singing encourages the lengthening of the exhalation which lowers blood pressure and naturally helps the body to relax</li> <li>• Expressing the lyrics physically helps to release negative feelings, and “let off steam”</li> <li>• The fact that the songs are recorded and distributed outside the IRC means detainees’ messages are heard outside which reduces their isolation</li> </ul>
<b>Drumming</b>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drumming is a safe, natural way to let off steam<sup>10</sup></li> </ul>
<b>Dancing</b>	2	<p>The personal and social benefits of dance are reported to include:<sup>11</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved general and psychological well-being</li> <li>• Greater self-confidence and self-esteem</li> <li>• Increased trust</li> <li>• Better social skills</li> <li>• Reduced social isolation and exclusion</li> </ul>

Aside from the inherent stress-relieving benefits of music and dance activity, direct feedback from detainees and IRC staff confirms that the MID programme is stress relieving for participants:

<sup>10</sup> Some studies are now being undertaken into the benefits of drumming on health. Natural Health magazine published an article with an overview of some of the research a few years back. Studies have been small and results preliminary but clearly music and drumming have an impact on health and wellbeing. See *Sound healing: can you drum your way to better health? Sing your way to serenity? Tune up your immunity with a tuning fork? Science takes a surprising look at the restorative powers of chant, rhythm and music*, Jill Neimark, *Natural Health*, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> *Dance and Health, the benefits for people of all ages*, Arts Council England & NHS, 2006

*"Singing and dancing makes me happy. It makes time go faster."* (Detainee)

*"I think it's a good project. Uplifts people. You touch my heart already."* (Detainee)

*"I got hope in myself and a lot more."* (Detainee)

*"You made me forget my worries. I can face things again."* (Detainee)

*"Takes you away from the pressure."* (Detainee)

*"More relaxed."* (Detainee)

*"It makes you feel better temporarily. You forget your problems whilst you're doing it."* (Detainee)

*"We want to forget problems. We go crazy, all the same here. Just thinking, thinking. This makes us happy. You forget problems for one minute. Can't forget problems outside this room."* (Detainee)

*"It brings us together. Maybe you think your situation is worse, but then you realise it isn't when you hear about other people's situations."* (Detainee)

*"It helps you to expose hidden things within you."* (Detainee)

*"I leave with a great feeling, done something musically productive."* (Detainee)

*"Everyone when they come here they feel happy. Music makes it better."* (Detainee)

*"If you practise [music] then you can relax your brain, body, your energy and anger. Music is created from the love. The sound comes from love."* (Detainee)

*"I was in a better mood than normal."* (Detainee)

*"I feel nice mentally and physically. It helps you to relax."* (Detainee)

*"Watching the detainees relax and enjoy themselves, it quite obviously has high stress release value."* (Member of staff, IRC Dover)

*"MID definitely reduces depression and gives the residents something to learn that is productive. (...) This gives them all a sense of worth."* (Member of staff, IRC Yarl's Wood)

*"We could see them a little bit more happy. Interacting with others, dancing. They looked more happy and relaxed."* (Member of staff, IRC Harmondsworth)

*"It has a calming effect."* (Member of staff, IRC Harmondsworth)

*"The music events reduce conflict – people have a way of venting frustration. Otherwise they are just sitting and staring at the wall."* (Member of staff, IRC Yarl's Wood)

*"We need something like this as they are quite depressed, it makes me feel quite humble actually, this should be here weekly, are you coming back regularly?"* (Member of staff, Brook House)

*"I wanted to join in and felt the atmosphere change around the wings, well done, have not seen them with such a smile on their face".* (Member of staff, Brook House)

At the moment it is difficult to ascertain how long the positive impact lasts. Some detainees noted that the positive impact did not last very long, indicating that possibly a longer term, regular presence of MID would be helpful:

*"It makes you feel better whilst you're doing it, but as soon as you get back to your room you feel depressed again."* (Detainee)

*"I feel better for a little while, but we need them to come back."* (Detainee)

However others said it changed their mindset to help them take a different attitude to their situation, which may have a longer lasting impact:

*"People here are going through mental torture, you know what I mean, physical problems, spiritual problems. It is only these kinds of programmes that can get people's minds down. Talking about self-harm and stuff, if you attend workshops like this, you rarely think about things like that. It gives you a freedom that you can still be happy. Ah, so I can still be happy for one minute, it means I can be happy for two minutes. Before you know what is happening, you change your thinking. It can go a long way to help."*

During a children's session at Yarl's Wood, the music had a calming effect on a small baby:

*"One small baby was crying quite a bit but my Jaws harp sound soothed them which allowed the session to continue."* (Music facilitator)

Sessions were shown to leave an impact on the children after they finished:

*"A follow up call on [a week after the session] revealed that children and staff were still talking about the session and were amazed by the results. The children wrote two more verses for the song [that was created during the session]."* (Music facilitator)

The music activities and interaction with musicians from outside often provides detainees with the opportunity to share how they feel:

*"Music is a powerful art form that seemed to open an emotional space within the detainees in different ways. Those who were more expressive started singing gospel songs, others danced & some joined in and played various instruments. Some [detainees] also started talking about how some guards didn't talk to them respectfully at times. They felt that as they were going through immense pressures this didn't help."* (Music facilitator)

*"Detainees expressed feelings of missing family and children, through being in prison. Also talked about life and conditions in detention."* (Music facilitator)

*"If that person is singing to me then I can do what the message is telling me, like if I had that track in my collections and it's all about change, then I can decide to change."* (Detainee)

Detainees confirmed the music enabled them to feel in a different place for a while:

*"Moments like this you could be back outside."* (Detainee)

*"It gives you a feeling that you are outside."* (Detainee)

*"You made me forget my problems."* (Detainee)

*"Good feeling, positive mood, took mind off legal battle (escape)."* (Detainee)

*“One thing that has been said by detainees is that the music has the affect on removing them outside the fence and the locks and bolts, and they can forget where they are for a while.”* (Member of IRC staff)

*“They tend to loose the ‘I am in captivity mode’ for the two hours or so. It’s great, it’s fabulous.”* (Diversity & Equality Officer, Haslar IRC)

Even the prospect of MID activities coming up and having something to look forward to was a factor in helping new detainees settle at IRC Haslar:

*“It helps [with my role as Diversity and Equality Officer]. When we get new detainees come in, sometimes they don’t settle so easily. Unlike a prison, we don’t know when they’re leaving. I tell them to get involved when MID is coming up. It tends to help them to get a bit more settled, they know there is something for them to do.”* (Diversity & Equality Officer, Haslar IRC)

Many detainees felt that the quality of the musicianship of the MID facilitators was so high, it exceeded their expectations:

*“I expected nothing but got more. Got loads of talent in here. Want them (MfC) back to build on the talent they found.”* (Detainee)

*“The detainees couldn’t believe we had such a high quality sitar player”* (Member of staff, IRC Haslar)

Enjoyment is a factor in the relief of stress, and feelings of depression, and over the three years all but one detainee who took part in the programme gave very positive feedback (see section 4.2.3).

## 4.2.2 Cultural wellbeing

### Context

Arts in prison research undertaken by Penelope Eames of PSE consultancy, commissioned by Anne Peaker Centre for Arts in Criminal Justice<sup>12</sup> in 2008, emphasises two core principles that underpin arts in criminal justice and music in detention activity:

*Firstly, that all offenders [detainees] have **the right to express themselves creatively and within their own culture**, as advocated in the UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity<sup>13</sup>;*

*Secondly, that expressing their culture through the arts enables offenders [detainees] to develop **a sense of social connectedness and well-being** which supports their reintegration into society.*

Penelope Eames and Anne Peaker Centre view the arts, including music, as an expression of culture, and culture as an expression of histories, values and ideologies<sup>14</sup> – the ‘ways of being’<sup>15</sup> and ‘webs of significance’<sup>16</sup> that give people a sense of identity and

<sup>12</sup> Eames, P, *Cultural provision for Black, Minority and Ethnic offenders in Criminal Justice Settings*, Anne Peaker Centre, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> UNESCO (2001) *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, Paris.

<sup>14</sup> Eames P.S (2006) *Cultural Well-being and Cultural Capital*.

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO, *Our Cultural Diversity*, 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Gorringer T (2004) *Furthering Humanity: A Theology of Culture*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Aldershot

belonging. The UNESCO definition of culture, adopted in the 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity, is:

*“...culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and... it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.” (UNESCO 2001)*

Cultural rights are part of a basic rights entitlement, expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>17</sup>. This cultural entitlement is seen to be essential to the process of personal growth and cultural and spiritual well-being:

*“Cultural liberty is vital to human development because being able to choose one’s identity – who one is – without losing the respect of others or being excluded from other choices is important in leading a full life.”<sup>18</sup>*

Well-being is defined as *“the state of feeling healthy and happy”* in the Cambridge dictionary.<sup>19</sup> Penelope Eames acknowledges in her report that it is increasingly being recognised that “social connectedness” is a significant part of living a healthy life. Being able to express oneself and one’s culture is an important part of that social connectedness and cultural well-being.

The following quote refers to arts and culture in the integration of refugees and asylum seekers:

*“Arts activities are about expression and communication, enabling us to share our unique personal experience of life. They enable us to connect with the identity and values that are formed through that experience. Arts activities are also about creativity – that wellspring from which we find new and original pathways to the future. And they are about participation, about joining with others, and sharing our humanity in an inimitable way. Through the creative processes of expression, communicating, connecting, imagining and sharing we learn and grow.*

*As such, arts activities can make a significant contribution to helping refugees and asylum seekers adapt to and integrate within British life, and they can help existing British communities to understand, value and welcome the diverse cultures and experiences of refugees and asylum seekers as newcomers to their society<sup>20</sup>”.*

Although most of the MID participants will ultimately be deported from the UK, many are released on bail or end up staying in the UK. In the context of the MID programme the music activities are tools for personal as well as community development – the community within the IRC and the community outside, as is the focus of MID’s community exchange programme (see 4.3). Arts activities enable detainees to explore their cultural identity whilst held in IRCs, and provide them with tools to enable them to achieve cultural well-being, communication and social connectedness with other detainees and IRC staff as well as UK society generally.

## **The wellbeing of MID participants**

Many detainees confirmed that music was important to how they felt. This is clear from many of the quotes above, but for many detainees it was an integral part of their life:

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<sup>17</sup> United Nations (1948) *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, Article 22 and 27 United Nations, New York.

<sup>18</sup> UNDP (2004) *Human Development Report*, New York.

<sup>19</sup> dictionary.cambridge.org, July 2008

<sup>20</sup> Gould, H. (2005:6) *A Sense of Belonging – Arts and Culture in the integration of Refugee and Asylum Seekers*

*“Music is powerful for everybody.”*

*“These sessions are the only thing that keeps me going.”*

*“Music is the medium for human beings caring.”*

*“The music gives you a life, it give you reason every day, the music makes you feel love. The music is part of life.”*

*“It’s like water, there’s a kind of sound is like water. The plant needs water. Water is the main thing that keeps people alive. Like drinking it keeps people alive.”*

*“To me it’s like breathing, it is natural.”*

*“I’ve been locked up for years and this is the first place where I can play music.”*

They also said it helped them communicate:

*“Communicate with everyone...Show the love, show the respect...”*

*“It helps us to understand each other.”*

Detainees interviewed at Dover IRC said they would feel much worse if they did not have the music activities to come to, and one detainee who had been in detention for over a year said this was the first opportunity he had had during that time to enjoy music:

*“R spoke to us at length at the end of the session and he was very appreciative of the session as he had been in detention for nearly a year. He said that the session was excellent and went on to say that this was the first time he had the opportunity to both listen to music and make music in almost a year.”* (DRT facilitator)

One person also felt more respected because of the music activity:

*“Thank you, thank everybody for showing us respect.”*

The activities also promoted a sense of group cohesion, and in some cases even had a positive effect on the atmosphere with the centre:

*“I would have expected the vast majority of detainees to remain within the comfort zone of their own friendship groups. However, detainees from different cultures shared musical suggestions that resulted in a very positive group dynamic.”* (TAPS facilitator)

*“The atmosphere did change; the workshop had a calming effect on the centre.”*  
(Member of staff, IRC Dover)

*“Much better, better mood everywhere.”* (Detainee)

### **4.2.3 Enjoyment**

As the activities are voluntary, we would expect most of the participants to enjoy the experience. We have not been able to systematically record feedback from those that left sessions early, but where an explanation was offered, detainees generally said it was because they had to make an important phone call, attend the gym or an education class they had signed up for, or had a visitor – not because they were not enjoying themselves. Many of them would return later on or come back to a later session. One detainee said he managed to get himself transferred to IRC Dover from Tinsley House. He had worked

with MID at Harmondsworth before, and had heard the programme in Dover was really good! Those that took part for any length of time all gave very positive feedback. Feedback from detainees includes:

*"Thank you, I really enjoyed myself."*

*"I had fun."*

*"I liked playing the drums."*

*"Thank you so much, that was brilliant!"*

*"All who joined in said they had enjoyed it immensely".* (Member of staff, IRC Dover)

A big factor in the enjoyment was the sense detainees had that they were learning new skills, as well as taking part in an enjoyable activity, and being productive rather than bored or just passing the time, as shows from recorded interviews with detainees.

*"Being a musician passes the time – not waiting time, but being productive."*

*"I appreciate what you do... for us it helps us to grow".*

*"It helps us to learn new things".*

*"We are here for a learning experience".*

*"I also learned a lot - this is my first time and I hope it's not the last because it's a really beautiful experience."*

*"One detainee joined after saying that he wasn't musical and couldn't play an instrument. He was taught some basic rhythms and quite rapidly became enthused by the process of creating music. He left with a huge smile, visibly pleased with his new found skill."* (Observation report from MID researcher)

Staff also commented on the impact on individuals:

*[the lead vocalist in a MfC recording project] "is usually very quiet. He has had the greatest week of his time in detention."* (Member of IRC Dover staff)

This member of staff of later reported:

*"He was quiet before you guys came in doing the project, now he won't stop singing!"*

The detainee himself said:

*"I am very proud of it. The best thing for me is putting the headphones on and singing. I didn't know it was so easy to make a song. I've had these ideas for ages, but never done this before. It was really good to get advice and help from H and Alex [facilitators]. Music has been very important to me since I was very young."* (Detainee)

Many comments were recorded by IRC staff and musicians about a change in facial expressions and body language in participating detainees, also confirming people are enjoying themselves during MID activities:

*"The words 'great' and 'thank you' combined with warm handshakes and smiles speaks volumes about the escapism from any issues that the detainees might be facing. This can only be explained by the face changes that occurs over the period of the workshops, from despair and dubious to smiles and relief."* (TAPS facilitator)

IRC staff feedback confirmed the music activities were well received and were used, in the case below, to make a family day less emotionally charged and a happier experience for all involved:

*“Yes they really enjoyed it. They were really pleased that their children had such a good time with George [MfC facilitator]. In such a difficult position it can be very difficult and painful for detainees when they have a visit but on that day everyone had such a wonderful, positive experience that everyone was happy. Some detainees spoke to their children on the phone that night and the children were still talking about the George and the tortoise and the crocodile – Great! What was really good though was that George [got] everyone to participate - IMB members, teaching staff, uniformed staff, children, parents. It was a very happy experience.”* (Member of IRC staff)

There was only one recorded incident of a detainee expressing negativity about the music activity:

*“One detainee was very negative about us [MfC and AMC] being there. He said that we could not expect him to sing and dance when they were having such a hard time.”* (Music facilitator)



## 4.3 Channels of communication & community exchange

To which extent has MID's work created channels of communication between detainees, places of detention, local communities and the wider public?

### Summary

The activities have had an impact on communication between detainees and the outside world through the community exchange programmes, but also on internal communication within IRCs – between staff and detainees. Many IRCs report improved relationships between staff and detainees, and IRC staff being newly motivated to take part in and run their own music activities. One IRC reported that sick leave was less on days that MID was due to come in.

Over the last three years, there have been 17 community exchange projects, which aimed to create a link between the IRC and the community outside, particularly the detainees and local people, but in fact these projects have also had a wider impact on the IRCs as organisations, and IRC staff. During two projects in Dover, the IRC's music teacher joined MfC musicians in working with the community groups outside. At Yarl's Wood, after a local choir visited the centre and performed there as a result of a community exchange, IRC staff set up a choir inside the IRC. IRC Haslar is now making stronger links with the local community having formed a local MID steering group, and a youth group who took part in a community exchange performed at a council-run public event in the Gosport Discovery Centre, which also showcased an exhibition of detainees' art.

There is some anecdotal evidence that the community exchange programme reduces some detainees' sense of isolation. It has certainly increased awareness of detainees' circumstances and the immigration detention system amongst local communities, particularly in the projects that took place in schools, and has generated empathy for detainees.

To sum up, the community exchange programme has worked on the following levels:

- It has raised awareness of IRCs and the people inside them, and why they are detained, amongst community participants
- It has in many cases increased empathy for detainees' circumstances amongst community participants
- It has created links between IRCs as organisations and community groups
- It has created a dialogue through music and visual arts between detainees and community participants, mainly through the exchange of recorded music, stories, interviews and visual art work
- A range of high quality sound and music recordings have been produced (14 in total) which are in circulation within the detention estate as well as in the community
- Six community exchanges resulted in performance events for wider audiences (for instance parents and pupils at schools) and/or the general public, three of which received local media coverage
- One community exchange resulted in detainees and members of a community choir meeting
- For some detainees, the community exchange has reduced their sense of isolation

MID's community exchange programme involves music activities taking place in the communities outside the IRCs, linking them with activities inside the IRC. Groups outside the IRCs who have taken part in this exchange have included schools, day centres for people with disabilities and older people, youth provision of various kinds, a community choir and a university. This section of the report looks at the various channels of communication that are created as a result of MID's work, including the community exchange work. Specifically, it explores links between:

- Detainees, places of detention and music organisations (4.3.1)
- Detainees, places of detention and local communities (4.3.2)
- Detainees, places of detention and the wider public (4.3.3)

### **4.3.1 Detainees, places of detention and music organisations**

All MID's work involves bringing artists into IRC's, and there is plenty of evidence confirming that the detainees appreciate the opportunity to meet new people, both other detainees and external facilitators (see section 4.1.1, page 12). This aspect is also highly valued by IRC staff. New people coming into the centre for detainees to talk to and make music with, was seen as one of the main benefits of the programme by IRC staff:

*[the most valuable part of the activity was] "New people in the centre for detainees to talk to."* (Member of staff, IRC Haslar)

Many of the musicians fed back that detainees enjoyed talking to them, particularly if they spoke the same language:

*"We had a chance, during our tea break, to exchange a few words and experiences with couple of detainees from Kosovo. They both happen to speak my language and I was pleased that we were able to communicate some basic problems and needs within the centre. They were generally grateful for the shelter and food but typically were longing to be reunited with their families as soon as possible. We also wholeheartedly agreed that music is a great catalyst as is a very important part of everyone's heritage. It helps to release the sorrows and longing as well as enhance the joyous moments."* (MfC facilitator)

It is also of great benefit to IRC staff who are able to play an active part in the activities:

*"I take part in all workshops whenever possible. Being exposed to music from other cultures played by talented musicians is always of benefit to me, both personally and professionally."* (Member of staff, IRC Dover)

There is evidence that the activities improve relationships between staff and detainees:

*"I have seen another side to the detainees. The interaction between detainees, staff and performers can only be beneficial to all involved. It was worth every minute invested, one can never fail to benefit from this type of workshop."* (Member of staff, IRC Dover)

*"I think it helps the detainees see that the officers are people too and make them more approachable."* (TAPS facilitator)

*"The officer who took part really enjoyed himself. From my point of view it was great because it meant I did not have to stay for the evening, he took full responsibility of making sure it would run smoothly, believe me it is a fantastic milestone. It was quite*

*surprising as he is usually quite a quiet officer and quite sombre but he was beaming and wanted to tell me all about it.*” (Member of staff, IRC Haslar)

*“It’s brought us closer to certain ones [detainees].”* (Member of staff, IRC Harmondsworth)

*“IRC staff who are musicians try to get involved. This sends a message to detainees that MID involves everyone.”* (Diversity & Equality Officer, Haslar IRC)

It remains a challenge to engage significant numbers of staff, as the participation figures show (most of the sessions were attended by only 1 to 3 members of staff, usually from the education department). One IRC education officer explained:

*“Education staff always try to participate if they have time. It is not so easy for officers who are on duty, since they have to remain alert to security issues at all times.”*  
(Member of staff, IRC Dover)

Analysing the evidence over the last three years, there seem to be more and more reports of staff being very supportive of the MID programme and actively joining in, particularly in the IRCs where MID has been delivering activities for a while. In IRCs where MID has done less work, for example IRC Lindholme, there was a sense that staff were more resistant or hadn’t been briefed properly. Depending on the organisational culture within the IRC, it can take a while for the positive impact of MID to filter through and become evident to a wider range of staff, particularly uniformed staff.

#### **4.3.2 Detainees, places of detention and local communities**

It has generally been more challenging to engage detainees in the community exchange projects. In comparison with activities that were celebratory in nature, for example Chinese New Year workshops, or activities based on a taster session or “jamming” model, the numbers of participants were significantly lower and it was difficult to achieve continuity with detainees dropping in and out of sessions, people not returning to the activities spread out over more than one session, and new people coming along who didn’t necessarily know what the activity was about.

However, because the facilitators were working with smaller groups, a more creative approach could be adopted and there was more emphasis on teaching specific skills and individual expression. In addition, there was a more developed relationship between facilitators and detainees, and therefore a deeper impact in terms of detainees being able to express themselves, feeling less isolated and feeling more positive.

In one case, the community exchange left a lasting legacy, with a choir being formed at IRC Yarl’s Wood as a result of the exchange with a local community choir (see section 5, Community Exchange case studies). The exchange projects have all focussed on creating recordings, songs, visual art work and in one case a recipe book with recipes from detainees that could be exchanged between the IRC and the community outside. As a result, they were more focussed on an end result (a product that could be shared within the restrictions of the situation – in all but one exchange project, the community and the detainees could not be brought together to meet).

Some detainees really enjoyed this aspect of the exchange process and felt it was a tangible link with the outside world. During a session at IRC Dover, one detainee was particularly concerned that the music recorded and distributed would be of good enough quality:

*“We have to do this over. I don’t want them [children at Archer’s Court] to judge me on this.”*

Some of the quotes relating to self-expression (see section 4.1.1) also relate to communicating with the outside world:

*“It’s very helpful for me to record my music and send it out. So that people can hear me. So that I can communicate with the outside world.”*

*“I haven’t had contact with the outside world for more than two years. I don’t know what is going on. This project is the first contact in 2.5 years.”*

Some detainees said it had not made them feel less isolated:

*“No, you still feel isolated.”* (Detainee)

Some IRC staff were unconvinced about the benefits of the community exchange elements to detainees:

[Do you think the community exchange programme made a link between the detainees and the local community?] *“Not the ones we have had so far. What it does do which is very positive is raise awareness in the community as well as dispel myths.”*

[Do you think the exchange aspect has helped detainees?] *“No not necessarily, because most of the time the detainees did not see the outcome partly because by the time the project would be complete the detainees would have moved on. I am unsure what a joint CD production brings to them. I think, my thoughts, that the community benefits and I expects that if perceptions are changed detainees as a whole benefit but individual detainees I am not sure.”*

Others did say it gave them a link with the outside which had reduced their isolation as they felt it had increased awareness of their situation amongst members of the community:

*“It helped them to know that their story would be taken outside the confines of the centre.”* (Member of staff, IRC Dover)

One detainee said:

*“It [the community exchange programme in Dover] was very successful. They understand what goes on here. We were part of the community so we understand them.”* (Detainee)

It was clear from observations and interviews that detainees did not always fully understand or appreciate the ideas behind the exchange – due to language barriers or because they had not been involved in the project from the start. For some, it simply wasn’t what they were interested in doing, or other pressures of organising their case work would take over:

*“Participation and willingness to ‘opt-in’ greatly decreased when the group was encouraged to sing and create a song.”* (Member of IRC staff, Haslar)

*“Detainees were not particularly keen to be made to contribute to the session. Want to ‘lose themselves’ in the music. This resulted in no-one returning for the afternoon session.”* (Member of IRC staff, Haslar)

*“One thing about the community exchange element was that it was quite dominating – there was a task to do, and this needed to be managed. I felt that Lucky handled it well, but had to keep ploughing on with generating a song and this took a lot of energy. He managed to get people to join in at the end, and in the second session this took off and really worked. It required skilful facilitation, though.”* (Observation report)

Another facilitator reported it took “sheer persistence” on the facilitators’ part to get recordings done, due to difficulties with continuity in participation. One observation report referred to difficulties one delivery organisation experienced when introducing the community exchange idea to detainees. There was a lack of understanding amongst the majority of the detainees due to language barriers. It is clearly a challenge for experienced facilitators and even more so for relatively inexperienced facilitators, particularly those who are not used to working with people whose first language is not English, to explain the intricacies of the community exchange idea. In addition, circumstances within the IRCs can introduce a chaotic element into sessions which can hamper efforts to undertake “product-led” work – i.e. detainees constantly coming and going, delayed start of sessions due to administrative errors/lack of communication between IRC staff, and rooms not being set up in a way that is helpful to the running of a structured session.

The community exchange element was further challenged by some of the community groups, particularly the youth groups, continually changing – not dissimilar to the situation within IRCs as one music facilitator put it:

*“The group this evening saw a few new faces and we still managed to get through the core content. Though we were a little frustrated by the ever changing faces throughout the project we realise that this is an essential pattern of the community and has similarities with the turn over at IRC Haslar.”*

Despite reported challenges, for the participants these projects were extremely beneficial in different ways. Community exchange sessions observed were generally of a high standard, with practice being fine-tuned over the three years this report covers. They often have a high musician-participant ratio and expert skills and knowledge being shared for the benefit of participants. For many community participants this was an opportunity they had never had before:

*“The children thought deeply about the lives of people in the IRC and the journey they had made to get there. None of the children knew about IRCs before the programme.”*  
(Teacher, Kirtlington School)

*“It is something that involves misconceptions, fear and myths in the community. Being able to teach the students from the primary source of the immigration centre and people in there themselves, provided an important insight I believe will stay with the students. They got to know the detainees because they heard their recordings [recorded interviews and personal stories as well as songs].”* (Teacher, Archer’s Court School)

*“The project was really unique. The idea that you could have two groups talking through music. It was very emotional actually, to understand all the issues. When we were sent the CD, this was even before we met the women, we were overwhelmed. The sense of pride, achievement and the sense of togetherness with the detainees... A sense of shared space and hearing we had used some of the same words. The artists were so inspirational and worked equally well with children and adults, and the women in Yarl’s Wood.*

*[The best thing about it was] the idea that we increased our knowledge and awareness of something so near but that we hadn’t really thought about it. We knew the centre was there and that there were families, women and children, but we didn’t have anything to do with it. We were kind of detached. But now we realise that it is part of our community, even though we don’t see it. It made us go out and find more information. We want to know more and get a better understanding. It highlighted things, made us take more of an interest. You want to understand fully and get lots of viewpoints.”* (Fusion project coordinator)

*“I think it was a step forward in his [community participant at Walmer Day Centre for people with disabilities who was an accomplished key board player] creative life, to be able to work with professional musicians.” (MfC facilitator)*

Several detainees in Dover said that they had been involved in music professionally, outside the IRC, and that the projects were creatively challenging for them and therefore a positive experience. The artist’s log from a session at Yarl’s Wood explains the in-depth processes that were part of the community exchange sessions:

*“They [detainees] rehearsed the songs and rhythms to make a really good recording. We did many takes of the songs and people wanted to listen to them back and they self-evaluated their work and then made adjustments to their songs. There were many moments when the group added debateful comments and we explored the meanings and expressions that everyone was portraying. The room was a roller coaster of fun and inner reflection as the songs made people feel happy yet they also reflected on the meanings in a deep sense.” (Music facilitator)*

As all but one of the exchange groups never actually got to meet the detainees as part of the project, the concept of communication between the community and detainees remained relatively abstract to some of the community exchange participants, particularly detainees with a poor command of English, younger children, two groups of people with learning disabilities and some of the Age Concern members who were interviewed. There was however a shared sense amongst facilitators interviewed that a link was being created between the detainees and the community groups.

### **4.3.3 Detainees, places of detention and the wider public**

The evidence available so far suggests that the impact of the work on the wider public, beyond the local community groups involved, was still limited during these three years. There was positive press coverage generated in local press<sup>21</sup>, and in the arts press. It is also worth noting that at the time of writing this report a public performance took place on the South Bank, the culmination of a very recent project which is not included in this report, and a community event is planned in Bedford.

The exchange projects in Gosport did engage with several local decision-makers through community based events which involved audiences:

*“Through the medium of music, dance and visuals both performers (x20) and audience (x30) were enveloped in the cultural exchange of words, rhythms and artwork which started as input from detainees at IRC Haslar. This first contact in a remote way saw a theme that touched the hearts of both communities as they both explored their own changes in their respective environments. Parental support and community support was very high with the Mayor and Mayoress of Gosport attending, alongside x 6 Police Officers/PCSOs and the Echo Newspaper. At the end of the performance the children went back on the drums closely followed by the Mayor and the Police who also enjoyed their own mini-performance.” (Artist log)*

In Dover, one project culminated in a public event at which children from St Mary’s C of E Primary School performed music created by them and detainees. This event was publicised on local radio and was attended by approximately 100 people.

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<sup>21</sup> Media coverage in Dover, Gosport and Bedford during the 3 years included: 7 newspaper reports, 2 newspaper features, 2 radio bulletins (Dover), 5 newspaper reports, 1 community newspaper report, 3 radio bulletins (Gosport), 1 newspaper feature, 1 radio bulletin (Bedford) and articles in Arts Professional and Zone Music Education

Thirty audience members completed questionnaires. Twenty-nine audience members thought the event was excellent, one rated it as good. Many of the people in the audience were family and friends of the pupils, and the event did change the view some people had of the immigration detention system. Nine people said the event had changed their view positively – i.e. made them more aware and more empathetic towards detainees:

*“It makes you realise about what they go through.”*

*“It has shown me that these people are not what the press portray.”*

*“More aware of issues.”*

*“I know that detainees are merely people and now hope others do too.”*

One audience member now felt more positive about IRCs:

*“Immigration are trying to help detainees.”*

Most of the people whose views did not change were either already working for MfC, MID or IRC Dover.

# 5. Community exchange case studies

## 5.1 Yarl's Wood IRC and Fusion, Bedford

*"If I don't see you again, I will see you in heaven."* (Detainee)

Between February and June 2009, artists from Drum Runners with guest artists from Music for Change worked with Fusion, a community choir brought together by All Saints' Parish Church in Bedford. The choir involved women and children, and linked to female detainees and children in IRC Yarl's Wood. Initially the exchange was limited to shared recordings and it was unsure whether the groups would actually be able to meet. A chicken pox outbreak in the IRC further complicated matters, but eventually the Fusion participants got to meet the women and children in Yarl's Wood in the culmination of the project which took place at an event on 6 June in Yarl's Wood.

This is the only community exchange to date where the detainees and the community participants were able to meet face to face, and perform for each other. They also sang together, and the children in Yarl's Wood performed the songs they had rehearsed in the months leading up to the event.

Only the adults involved in Fusion went into the IRC to meet detainees but the children and young people involved in Fusion were very engaged with the project from the start:

*"Everyone got on really well and to say this has been a great start to the project would be an understatement. The depth of understanding of the issues surrounding detainees has been remarkable and a lot of soul searching has unearthed some very poignant lyrics."* (Drum Runners facilitator in artists' log)

Everyone involved in the project agreed that the event in Yarl's Wood was a very special occasion:

*"WOW! The atmosphere and energy that both groups created was amazing, everyone took turns in singing their own songs that they had been rehearsing following the initial workshops. It was great to see that complete ownership, and that the identities of both groups allowed a very mutual respect and understanding."*

*The "Overcomers" [the detainees' choir formed as part of the exchange] sung their song "We shall overcome" again to Dawn, the IRC Director, who had arrived at the end. This was brilliant and you could see tears well up in a lot of people's eyes as it was very moving. The comments and friendships you could see at the end of the performance were testament that this community exchange will live on in both memories and actions to continue the work. One detainee said "If I don't see you again, I will see you in heaven". Such a special day, which saw an amazing realisation that making music together can make things change in both a short term and long term way."* (Drum Runners facilitator in artists' log)

The project resulted in a permanent choir being formed at Yarl's Wood, run by IRC staff. New participants for the detainee choir were recruited straight after the performance in Yarl's Wood. The choir exists to date, a year later, showing that MID has left a lasting legacy through this project.



The community group embraced the project fully and really understood its purpose:

*“The project was really unique. The idea that you could have two groups talking through music. It was very emotional actually, to understand all the issues. When we were sent the CD, this was even before we met the women, we were overwhelmed. The sense of pride, achievement and the sense of togetherness with the detainees... A sense of shared space and hearing we had used some of the same words. The artists were so inspirational and worked equally well with children and adults, and the women in Yarl’s Wood.*

[The best thing about it was] *the idea that we increased our knowledge and awareness of something so near but that we hadn’t really thought about it. We knew the centre was there and that there were families, women and children, but we didn’t have anything to do with it. We were kind of detached. But now we realise that it is part of our community, even though we don’t see it. It made us go out and find more information. We want to know more and get a better understanding. It highlighted things, made us take more of an interest. You want to understand fully and get lots of viewpoints.”* (Fusion project coordinator)

The community choir later wrote to MID explaining that they had taken the difficult decision not to continue working with MID and Yarl’s Wood. They explained that the project had given them such insight into the issues that they were unable to continue, because they felt that their participation would send a message to the outside world that they condoned the detaining of women and children in Yarl’s Wood. The letter showed an in-depth insight into the issues surrounding detention and working in detention and paradoxically, MID could not have hoped for a more committed group, despite their decision to withdraw from future collaborations.

This particular community exchange project was accompanied by a media campaign undertaken by RM Communications, a PR company based in Hampshire. The aims of the media campaign were to positively influence the media in Bedford and the surrounding area during the period of the exchange and to raise the profile of the project and MID’s work. Local media proved very interested in the story and they seemed genuinely interested in the work of MID. The project was very well received by regional and local press.

## **5.2 Dover IRC, Teen Café youth group at the Dover Discovery centre, and PACE youth group**

**This case study is a summary of a detailed report written by Katy Hirst for Music for Change and MID.**

Artists from Music for Change worked with detainees in Dover IRC and with young people at the Teen Café and PACE youth group, delivering a series of three workshops with each group. In addition to the workshops, participants from the Teen Café and PACE attended a final event with the artists.

### **DOVER IRC**

During three workshops in Dover IRC, detainees wrote a song expressing their feelings about being in the IRC and how the outside world perceives them (see appendix for the lyrics). The workshops provided an opportunity for the participants to articulate their thoughts and feelings and share them with others – the artists, the youth groups and anyone who might later listen to the recordings. As well as simply being given a chance to share their thoughts, these sessions provided the detainees with a rare opportunity to

be able to structure their thoughts. The participants are all very insightful, engaged in social and political opinion and have all got a particular philosophy on life and their situation. However they were encouraged to gain more insight into their own thoughts by putting them down on paper and discussing the meaning of the message they wanted to express. This structuring of thoughts was helped by the fact that the workshops provided the participants with an opportunity to gain someone else's perspective on their situation. These perspectives come from the other detainees involved and from the artist, and from the two community groups involved in the project. By the artist posing insightful questions (using the activity of song writing as an impetus), the participants are encouraged to articulate and investigate their own thoughts and feelings, arriving at a point where they have settled on a summarisation of their thought processes. They are able to pin point the crux of the matter from their point of view.

Over the course of this project, a song was created, through the combined efforts of at least ten detainees. The detainees were able to go away with a product, evidencing the work they have done and their talents (it is very important to Music in Detention and Music for Change that every participant receives a copy of the recording, even if it has to be sent to overseas to reach a now-deported detainee). The value placed on recording, illustrated particularly well in this project through the organisation of an extra recording session, communicates to the detainees that their thoughts and ideas are valued as they are included in the final recording, which is played to people outside the IRC.

The recording aspect is obviously important, but there is also a particular emphasis on the quality of the process, and a commitment to respond to individuals' and group needs and preferences. This flexible approach undoubtedly leads to a more fulfilling experience for the participants and makes their contribution appear valued. The quality of the creative process is the most important thing, and a balance needs to be maintained between giving the participants ownership and creative oversight, and the artist steering the project so that a quality product is produced. This way the feelings of achievement for the participants are maximised.

## TEEN CAFÉ

The first session involved an interactive discussion about the stereotypes surrounding the IRC and asylum seekers, relating this to stereotypes of teenagers. The young people listened to recordings from a previous community exchange. Whilst the young people were capable of coming up with opinions and stereotypes about asylum seekers (most of which were untruths), the participants were unable to think of anything positive to say. Apart from what they have heard from their parents and the local media, they have no frame of reference to help them to engage in this subject matter.

Variable attendance was a significant problem with this group, as apart from a couple of people, there were different participants each session. This meant that the artist had to repeat the same drumming workshop for the first two sessions. Another downside was having only three sessions with them, as ideally the kind of information Music for Change tried to impart to raise awareness about detainees and the IRC would need to be filtered into sessions over a period of time in a more interactive and meaningful way. This is particularly the case with youth groups of this nature where young people are often resistant to educational work and a relationship between the artist and the young people needs to be carefully developed. Feedback from the youth leader confirmed this point as she said that one participant said it *'was too much like school'* and she suggests that the participants may *'have benefited more from hands on before learning about the aims of music for change, to hook them in more before the social education'*. It is hard to tell whether their attitudes were changed significantly, but this project has certainly made them more aware of the IRC and will hopefully provide a more accurate frame of reference for them for the future.

Musically the workshops were brilliant. The group composed a song together, inspired by the troubles that the participants face in life, inspired by the detainees' lyrics from this project (see appendix). Overall the participants responded to the music sessions very well and learnt a lot. The youth worker said that *'the young people learned a variety of hard skills (such as drumming, percussion, singing, lyric writing and composition, performing and performing together as a group). I also felt that they increased in soft skills such as confidence and self esteem'*.

## PACE

With this group, there were a number of people who drifted in and out of every session, but there was a core group of about three that attended every session. The group were taught DJing and mixing, and participated in an educational session, during which they talked about the IRC and asylum seekers and discussed what it is like to come into a new country and to leave a life behind. This was something that many of the participants, or their immediate family had experienced. In contrast to the Teen Café group, there was a lot of empathy and understanding. The discussion proved very productive and two girls wrote a song based on these experiences. The ideas that came out of the discussion were further used in a rap that was written in a lyric writing workshop. The words were then mixed with the DJing tracks the participants created (see appendix for lyrics).

## FINAL EVENT

The final event was a successful evening during which the two groups performed music created during the project. The young people from PACE all joined in to perform the rap and enjoyed showing off their new scratching and mixing skills. The two most consistent attendees from the Teen Café came and showed the PACE group an impressively polished performance incorporating drumming, call and response songs and the song that was written by the Teen Café group. The two young people visibly enjoyed themselves and the youth worker said that they were *'proud of their achievements'*. One of the boys had initially been quite difficult to engage now thanked the artists repeatedly towards the end of the event. For these young people, it can be rare that people take the time to teach them something new and interesting and give them the freedom to express themselves – not dissimilar to the situation the detainees find themselves in. This project had provided them with that, allowing them to be themselves, rather than putting up a typical teenager front. Additionally the encouragement they received from the artists had a visible effect on their attitudes and a genuine sense of pride was achieved.

All the words that were written by both groups were displayed on the walls, including the words of the song written in the IRC, and after the performances there was a discussion about how the songs all had a running theme of acceptance and respect, again illustrating the fact that a lot of the issues raised in this project are universal. Hopefully this encouraged the young people to continue thinking about these things.

# 6. SWOT Analysis

## Strengths & Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

Based on comments from detainees, IRC staff, community exchange participants and music facilitators

### STRENGTHS

- MID provides quality opportunities for detainees to express themselves
- The high quality of musicianship and the strong commitment of the musicians to the programme
- The ability of MID to provide a refuge from immediate problems/situation detainees find themselves in (3<sup>rd</sup> space)
- The appropriateness of cultural and creative activity
- Ability of facilitators to create positive group dynamics between people from different cultures
- Ability to improve relationships between detainees
- Ability to improve relationships between detainees and staff
- MID and delivery partners' ongoing commitment to evaluation, quality assurance and learning – MID's social aims and the setting MID works in are very specific, unusual and challenging and this challenge is being met
- A high level of output – over 240 workshops in 2010-11 delivering regularly in 6 out of the 11 centres in England and on an occasional basis in all but one of the other five
- Participatory and adaptable nature of activities – activities are self-led by detainees to a large extent, giving them choice and a sense of power in a tightly controlled and restrictive environment. The musicians are highly committed to this approach
- MID has positively influenced the IRC's own work – see examples of a choir started at Yarl's Wood by IRC staff, modelled on the Community Exchange project there, and the music room at IRC Colnbrook
- Workshops give IRC staff and detainees something to talk about which is neutral and positive – this way the activities appear to have influenced a wider circle of staff than previously thought
- One IRC fed back the work has helped with conflict resolution between different nationalities – reducing the risk of fights and making it easier to “manage detainees”, making it easier to diffuse tension without using restraint
- Detainees appear more likely to engage in education and other communal activities provided by the IRC after taking part in MID activity (exact figures not available)
- Further impacts noted on staff sick leave being reduced during MID activity – figures were not available but it is something MID could investigate further in future evaluation
- Reports of MID activity having reduced fines from the UKBA (penalties for disruption)

### WEAKNESSES

- Two reported issues (known by the evaluator) in three years around maintaining quality when engaging new artists (see threats).
- As identified by MID, a limited pool of Asian musicians are available to MID at the moment when there is a large number of Asian detainees in the IRCs and a

generally observed reluctance of Asian detainees to participate in education or leisure activities provided by IRCs.

- The evaluation is based mainly on anecdotal and qualitative evidence. An increase in the resources allocated to evaluation and research will help build MID's case
- Apart from on one occasion, it has not been possible to arrange meetings between IRC's and community exchange participants. One youth group did perform at a local event in which the IRC was involved, although detainees were not present. NB: MID is currently working with Harmondsworth to develop a project during which detainees and community participants will work together throughout the project
- MID reported there are resource issues internally with the expanding programme, there is a need for more staff to ensure the level of external communication, administration and advocacy needed to reach the wider public can continue to develop alongside the programme, as well as time dedicated to fundraising

## OPPORTUNITIES

- James Underhill's research planned in Dover may provide MID with more evidence and a pilot project which can help make the case for further research
- MID's developing relationship with G4S, which is likely to commit 50% of the funds needed for new programmes in all 4 of their centres
- The sense that *"we have now reached a point where no IRC wants to be without our service. They know it makes a real difference."* (John Speyer, Director, MID)
- MID has secured funding to develop their website which will help address the internal resources issues

## THREATS

- Changes in IRC staff/regime can affect MID's work by delaying or potentially interrupting programmes. MID needs to ensure ongoing commitment at senior level so that IRCs continue to part-fund and support the programmes.
- Operational issues can affect planning and delivery – for example Dover IRC has introduced extra security measures.
- Funding – It is also becoming more challenging to raise funding in the current budget cuts/recession climate. In addition MID's work is specialist and not necessarily a priority for many funders. MID has indicated that it needs IRCs to contribute a higher percentage of the costs, but this may not be easy to achieve. Increased volume of work could affect quality of delivery.

# 7. Recommendations

## 1. To embed music making activities in IRCs, raise awareness of the value of MID's work, and improve communication and relationships between detainees and IRC staff

*Year 1 & 2 recommendations:*

- To reach out to more IRC staff, including uniformed staff (staff training/staff training sessions to be developed after initial pilot in year 1)
- To advocate staff involvement with senior managers within the participating IRCs.
- To identify more internal publicity opportunities amongst IRC staff.

### **Update:**

Further IRC staff training or taster sessions have not materialised because the constraints are simply too great to get a significant number of IRC staff involved. These include complex practical issues which are out of MID's control, surrounding the engagement of uniformed staff in training and workshop sessions taking them away from their security duties. However IRCs are increasingly very positive about the work and senior management is committed, but they are often unable to allocate more than one member of staff to a session simply due to budgeting restrictions. IRC staff in centres where MID is becoming more established seem to become more and more involved and some uniformed staff seem more likely to pop in and observe a session for a few minutes, and show their appreciation and encouragement, or even take part if their duties allow it. MID is finding other ways to link with staff in more informal ways, for example by encouraging officers to perform alongside detainees or community groups at events, and MID's 2010-11 delivery plan includes a "practice forum" with IRC music teachers and other staff who use or wish to use music with detainees as part of their work.

MID continues to receive positive mentions in internal IRC communications, and MID staff have visited a high number of sessions and have met and spoken to IRC staff at many different levels to advocate for the work.

All IRC staff who participated in the evaluation were very supportive and willing to contribute their time and efforts to make the programme as successful as possible.

Suggestions IRC staff made to embed the work into IRC programmes and raise awareness amongst a wider range of staff included:

- Post-event photo displays within the centres – perhaps these could be accompanied by MID logos/insignia etc.
- Inviting other staff members to Education Managers' meetings

There is some effort by individuals within the IRCs to engage other members of uniformed staff, notably in IRC Haslar who are developing a "Haslar's Got Talent" event involving detainees and staff.

## **2. To raise awareness amongst detainees of the nature and the value of the activities on offer**

*Year 1 & year 2 recommendations:*

- To develop marketing and outreach methods to attract and retain participants.
- Sharing successful approaches developed by delivery partners
- Encourage IRC staff to be more pro-active in engaging detainees (IRC staff confirmed that they are trying to do more to engage detainees and that they feel it is their responsibility to improve attendance).

### **Update:**

The same issues seem to persist to some extent but there have also been successes with very high attendance, and innovative ways to engage detainees such as the “singing poster” and getting detainees to design and create music for tannoy announcements.

## **3. To build capacity to deliver the programme**

*Year 1 & year 2 recommendation:*

- Further delivery partners will be needed (AMC were recruited in year 2).

### **Update:**

MID worked with OCP for some time but has decided OCP’s way of working is not the best way to deliver MID’s objectives. MfC, DRT and AMC continue to be active partners. MID has plans to engage two more providers.

## **4. To broaden the reach of the community exchange programme**

*Year 1 & year 2 recommendations:*

- Opportunities to raise awareness amongst a wider range of members of the public should be developed as part of the community exchange work.

### **Update:**

More opportunities for this could potentially have been created but resources are limited. Public events and publicity take a lot of time to develop and coordinate. MID and delivery partners have responded to as many opportunities as possible and are looking at ways to develop this further (see point 5 below).

## **5. Review the community exchange programmes**

*Year 2 recommendations:*

- Revisit the aims and objectives of the community exchange work
- Decide whether the fact they have become product-led programmes is a desirable way of working (there are advantages and disadvantages as outlined in the report).

- Further skills-sharing to take place around the delivery of community exchange work
- To assess whether these programmes have sufficient resources allocated to them in order for MID to achieve the desired publicity and communication with the wider community.

### **Update:**

Guidance for artists/delivery partners is now available and one practice forum was dedicated to community exchange.

MID's board and staff had an away day with the evaluation consultants and looked at community exchange in-depth, which led to the decision to develop local partnerships to increase the impact of the work through local partnership working. This approach is being piloted around IRC Haslar.

New ways of creating the link between detainees and communities have been explored by delivery partners, with good results, particularly in raising awareness of IRCs and detainees' lives

### *Year 3 recommendation:*

- Consider working with hard to reach community groups (see case study 5.2) over a longer period of time to enable artists to build up a positive relationship with the groups, in order to maximise the social learning outcomes.

## **6. Evaluation**

Gathering direct feedback from detainees has significantly increased in year 2 and 3, thanks to the active participation of artists in the documentation of the programme, and increased resources for independent evaluators to visit and observe sessions. Documentation processes were reviewed after consulting with the delivery organisations and musicians at the practice forum and were re-designed for year 3. IRC staff have also been very willing to provide feedback as well as community partners in the Community Exchange programmes.

Future evaluations may be able to look more closely into the impact on IRC staff, for example investigating the notion of less staff phoning in sick on days that MID is working in the IRCs. More in-depth research on the impact on detainees would be extremely useful and MID is working on this – including investigating the concern expressed by a facilitator that detainees may be at risk of experiencing low moods once a project finished (see paragraph below).

## **7. The need for follow-up, sign posting and regularity**

One facilitator expressed a concern which may be worth investigating in further research and evaluation:

*“One of my concerns as an artist is that whenever I have done a great gig or really enjoyed myself then a day or two later you can feel quite the opposite. Most artists get this slump or depression after a gig and I am sure that the detainees could be experiencing the same thing after such an enlightening experience, it really does need a follow up or a closure on the session or a clear indication of when and how it could happen again. We also encouraged everyone to take part in the twice weekly music sessions that the centre is now adopting, giving hope and continuity.”* (DRT facilitator)



If it were possible to let detainees know when the next activity is happening at the IRC before the end of the current activity, this may be helpful to detainees – to know they have something else to look forward to.

Another facilitator mentioned that on a few occasions detainees have asked him for contact details. It may be a good idea for MID to distribute business cards with MID details on it to all facilitators so they can hand these out to detainees when requested, and at the end of each project. One detainee recently managed to contact MID after his release, but it had not been easy for him to do so. MID's original ideas for the programme included finding ways of working with ex-detainees and there seem to be opportunities there which are perhaps not maximised at the moment, but could potentially lead to another interesting strand of MID's work.

## **Appendix – song lyrics**

### **Song of Freedom (by detainees at IRC Harmondsworth)**

Free yourself from oppression and shame  
Free yourself from the fire and flame  
When the flame rise do you run away  
Or like Malcolm and Martin will you stay  
Moses led his people to the promise land  
Freedom from bondage we all understand  
But what about the freedom that starts in your mind  
Freedom is a goal we all have to find

#### *Chorus*

Freedom oh freedom, Freedom oh freedom  
Freedom is a must I know  
Freedom is a must I know  
Freedom is a must I know  
Freedom is a must I know

Sometimes freedom waiting outside the gate  
Sometimes freedom come a little too late  
Freedom is a feeling of liberation  
Freedom is a song that come from meditation  
By any means necessary freedom must be ours  
Even if a sacrifice means wreath and flowers  
So think about the freedom that starts in your mind  
Freedom is a goal that we all have to find

#### *Chorus*

### **Voice Of The People (by detainees at IRC Harmondsworth)**

I want to be free  
To be free is what I wanna be  
Free like the birds and the bees  
Free like the fish in the sea  
I want to be free  
To be free is what I want to be  
Free from brutality  
Free from captivity  
Oh Oh Oh Oh

I believe in being free like the air that we breathe  
That we needin' like carbon dioxide and oxygen to live  
Wondering if one day I would lose hope  
By myself how would I cope  
(only through the Lord)  
Locked up behind this detention centre is a mental torture  
A lot of things that I've told ya I wanna hold ya  
But every time I wanna approach ya

This one is straight from prison from detention centre  
Reaching out to all the people in the world  
Those that locked up behind bars  
Those that lost their liberty  
Those that are in starvation

This reaching out to you all from  
straight behind bars

I want to be free  
To be free is what I wanna be  
Free like the birds and the bees  
Free like the fish in the sea  
I want to be free  
To be free is what I want to be  
Free from brutality  
Free from captivity  
Oh Oh Oh Oh

I believe in being free like the air that we breathe  
That we needin' like carbon dioxide and oxygen to live  
Wondering if one day I would lose hope  
By myself how would I cope  
(only through the Lord)  
Locked up behind this detention centre is a mental torture  
A lot of things that I've told ya I wanna hold ya  
But every time I wanna approach ya

*Chorus to fade*

**'Nothing don't last forever' (by the detainees at Dover IRC – community exchange with Teen Café and PACE)**

**Verse 1**

Outside its boarderline living,  
Inside its straight up surviving  
Them claim say that they are winning  
But that's what me keep them believing

**Pre Chorus**

The Engine inside keeps burning through the night  
If you keep it strong you'll make it through the fight  
With a V6 you're alright  
But with a 1.3 you can't keep up  
The engine inside keeps burning through the night

**Chorus x2**

Nothing don't last forever  
No matter the road you take  
Everything passes away  
Everything A gye nya me

**Verse 2**

Dignity comes from the creator  
Dignity don't come from creation  
Some people live for a purpose  
Others joke around with no aspirations

**Pre Chorus**

The Engine inside keeps burning through the night  
If you keep it strong you'll make it through the fight  
With a V6 you're alright  
But with a 1.3 you get pop down

The engine inside keeps burning through the night

**Chorus x2**

Nothing don't last forever  
No matter the road you take  
Everything passes away  
Everything A gye nya me

**Verse 3**

People outside aren't all angels  
People inside aren't all criminals  
Left my home to fulfil my ambition  
So why are we treated like animals?

**Pre Chorus**

The Engine inside keeps burning through the night  
If you keep it strong you'll make it through the fight  
With a V6 you're alright  
But with a 1.3 you're left behind  
The engine inside keeps burning through the night

**Chorus x2**

Nothing don't last forever  
No matter the road you take  
Everything passes away  
Everything A gye nya me

**Popularity (by Ivan and Jamie from the Teen Café - Community exchange with IRC Dover)**

Popularity ain't working for me  
If that's the case then I might just flee  
But fleeing ain't the right thing to do  
Have self confidence and keep being you  
Let people see positivity in you

**Differences (by Natalie and Natalie from the PACE group - Community exchange with IRC Dover)**

In Czech it's different to England  
It's sunny, nice and friendly  
In the town of Kladno, my family lived near by  
They were always by my side  
In England it's different to Czech  
The weather changes every day  
Yesterday was a sunny day, but today is a rainy day!  
But you can always come out to play!  
In Czech are different people of different sizes  
Some are friendly, some are unfriendly  
In England there are people from different countries  
Sometimes they get bullied because of how they look  
People from Czech and people from England are all humans  
I wish the country was free for everyone  
You could always make everything fun  
So remember:  
Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery

And today is a gift, that's why they call it the present.

**Czech to England (rap by PACE youth group - Community exchange with IRC Dover)**

In England sometimes people are nasty  
They make fun of you  
I'm not talking about a party  
All we wanna do is live our life like the rest of you  
Every body respect each other and tell the truth  
So we gotta stand up  
Everybody hands up  
Czech to England  
All day from the ground up  
Immigration all across the globe  
Doesn't matter where you're from or who you know  
I wish the country was free for everyone  
No fighting just happiness with the sun  
Words are just words  
People are people  
Walking the earth with so many reasons  
Yesterday is history  
Tomorrow is a mystery  
Every day is a gift like today it's a lesson  
That's why there is, past, future and present  
So let's remember the good and the bad just forget it