

## DARD Direct Interview Notes

**Organisation:** NICEM  
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***Have we accurately captured the impacts of the implementation of the DARD Direct proposal on farmers and farm families / DARD staff for each of the section 75 categories?***

- DARD itself is one of the most diverse public agencies in terms of employing ethnic minorities.
- The DARD Direct proposal is a useful way for people to uptake a varying a number of service aspects.
- Opinion over the choice of locations is influenced by political opinion, it may be an option to look at apportioning offices within each council area under the NI Review of Public Administration, whilst being aware of the inefficiencies faced by PSNI when they undertook roll out of their command centres.
- The service function of DARD Direct should not be influenced by race issues. Some ethnic minority workers are involved in fishing and farming but may not personally use the service.
- However, information flow from DARD Direct could impact on ethnic minorities and as such printed documentation and websites will have to account for language issues.

***What other impacts do you feel may be experienced by farmers and farm families / DARD staff through the implementation of the DARD Direct proposal?***

- Ethnic minority population in the migrant population is typically young and well educated, with 80 per cent below the age of 30 and many holding degree level qualifications – with a number being educated in rural studies. Basic information on these statistics are not being shared.
- Location of offices will also be important as many ethnic minority's will not have access to a car.
- Further access issues exist – public transport system into rural areas is very important but at present very limited.
- Language issues exist in providing telephone and internet translation as well as in-office interpretation
- All public departments have communication issues, as they don't have available data to improve their services.

***What other mitigating actions do you feel we should consider to minimise any impact on farmers and farm families / DARD staff?***

- Interpretation service provided by NICEM
- Language issues resolved in printed documentation and on websites
- Political awareness that 'local people for local jobs' is not always the most productive option, that many people of ethnic minority will have the appropriate skills and that recruitment and job promotion should account for this. The skills in the ethnic minority population can benefit the economy as a whole.
- Conscious effort needs to be made to bridge the wage and working condition exploitation faced by ethnic minorities – a point agreed by CIB and TUC.
- Translation and interpretation services could be provided within the roll

out of DARD Direct, something that NICEM could assist with.

- The use of internal mainstreaming could be used to help develop communication and enable effective use of data towards improved service provision.
- The issue of locations/buildings could be overcome by pooling all services into one location – health, education etc. This might not be possible given existing budget and resource constraints.