

Commercial in Confidence



Somali Development Services Ltd



Contents

1. Organisation – Information, Introduction and Overview.....	1
2. Areas of Particular Strength	2
3. Areas for Continuous Improvement.....	3
4. Methodology	4
5. Aims, Objectives and Outcomes	5
6. Findings Against the matrix Standard	7
7. Conclusion.....	13
8. The matrix Standard Evidence Grid.....	14

1. Organisation – Information, Introduction and Overview

Somali Development Services Ltd (SDS) is a company registered by guarantee and a social enterprise based in the Highfields / St Matthews area of Leicester. Since the last **matrix** Assessment, they have continued to deliver a range of services in the area to support Somali people and other disadvantaged groups and facilitate access to community services. Despite reductions to funding more recently, they remain focused and offer the following service provision:

- A core one to one information and advice service delivered on a drop-in basis from their Centre. This offers information, interpretation and translation, and the opportunity for service users to gain support in, for example, sorting out bill payments, registering with GPs, council tax issues, and referral to appropriate agencies for further support such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. This service, now available Monday to Friday in the mornings at the Centre, is helping to connect people with community services and stop them from being isolated.
- A family support service focuses on the core objective but offers home visits and community awareness raising activities, such as their work on health, education including their recent work on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). This is generating increased understanding of the impact of FGM within the Somali community and in particular, to enable professionals in the health, social and education sectors to have a better understanding of how to help them support the Somali community.
- Young people's services is centred around their delivery of Leicestershire Talent Match Programme targeting young people (18-24) who are furthest from the jobs market, including those who are completely outside of the benefits, work and training system and facing severe barriers to gaining the skills they need to get into work. They are offering one to one support to engage and sustain young people. In addition, through working in partnership, they are supporting a pilot programme of meaningful social and sports activity on a Saturday night. This combines with the work of the Talent Match Programme and is part of an overall initiative of the Police Commissioner to reduce anti-social behaviour.

The organisation also provides an onsite childcare facility that is supporting people in the community as well as those attending the services provided.

Managed through a Board, Managing Director, Deputy Manager and Lead of Family Services, Operational Manager and Lead of AIG Services; the team includes Youth Support Workers, Personal and Career Advisors, Senior Administrator and General Advisor, Volunteer AIG Advisor and a new Business Support Administrator. SDS has successfully maintained their accreditation for the delivery of information, advice and guidance across all of their provision.

2. Areas of Particular Strength

A number of strengths were identified during the assessment. These are detailed below. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard.

- The organisation continues to maintain and develop a range of partnerships and networks that form an important platform for their service delivery, e.g., APL, Leicester College and Leicester City Council. They are actively working through service user issues, and are seen to be a 'leader in the community', providing first level support and signposting. They are particularly effective at connecting individual service users who are unable to or not confident in speaking and writing English through form filling and making connection for them by telephone to achieve outcomes. (1.8, 3.5, 3.6)
- SDS has continued within its limited resources to deliver services in order to achieve its aims and objectives. Their drop-in service is impactful and provides access for all. They are reaching out on Saturday nights as well now to young people and are welcoming all in the community to use their services. Service user feedback is consistently positive about the impact they are having.(3.2)
- The team have expanded their provision to support others outside of the Somali community in the area who need a grass roots first level support service. They have a broad range of language support in their team. Service users consistently reported the nature of the individual support from team members to be particularly professional and inclusive. (1.3)

3. Areas for Continuous Improvement

A number of areas for continuous improvement were identified during the assessment which may develop or enhance the service delivered. These are detailed below and for the organisation to consider as part of its ongoing continuous quality improvement actions. The numbers in brackets refer to the element and criteria of the **matrix** Standard. These will form the basis for discussion at the Continuous Improvement Checks (CIC) conducted twelve and twenty-four months from the date of this Assessment, along with any other notable developments.

- The organisation has started the redevelopment of their website and is currently trying to complete it. As part of that work, it may be helpful to link their social media, such as Twitter and Facebook to provide current and fresh content. Thinking through which are the main stakeholders that they want to use the site, and looking at usage information as provided by Google Analytics could possibly help to provide content that is more meaningful and sharpen their ongoing development. (1.6, 4.7)
- SDS is displaying a range of information for their service users throughout the Centre and look to deliver more through their website. As part of their ongoing development, they have recruited a new Business Support member of staff who will be taking responsibility to ensure that information is current and appropriate on the website, and in the Centre. As part of that early work, it may be useful to have a 'centre walk' to review the look and feel, and accuracy of all displays; there were one or two notices that were out of date and the displays may benefit from review and development to make them accessible and appropriate to service users. (2.2)
- The organisation is regularly using written case studies as a part of its quarterly monitoring and annual reporting. As part of their future development, they may wish to explore how they could possibly present these in video format as well; distributed on the new website as well as possibly available on a screen in the centre they could be in language formats to support and engage with new service users. (4.2).
- The team are using a simple feedback form that is successful in capturing qualitative feedback in the language of the service user. It may also be helpful to consider as well how they might use distance-travelled tools such as outcomes stars to feedback on the individual development of the service user and to help articulate their individual success in becoming engaged in local service provision. For example, this could be on a Tablet, to assist with capturing and recording of information as well as being visually easy to use. (1.7, 4.2, 4.3)
- As part of their delivery, the team may wish to consider how they might usefully review and develop further their code of practice for information, advice and guidance. For example, this could be through adopting a Code of Ethics such as that promoted by the Careers Development Institute. (2.3)

4. Methodology

The following methods were used to gather evidence against the **matrix** Standard during the assessment process.

- A planning discussion held with the Managing Director.
- Face to face interviews with the Managing Director and two senior managers.
- Group based interviews with seven members of staff, and twenty-one service users. (An interpreter supported two of the service user groups).
- Telephone interviews with three partner representatives.
- Visit to their Development Centre on Abingdon Road.
- The opportunity to review a number of documents and systems including their Business Plan, Annual Report and Quarterly monitoring Progress Report, a range of promotional information, feedback forms and evaluation, and their website.
- A feedback meeting held with the Managing Director and Deputy Manager.

5. Aims, Objectives and Outcomes

The overall aims of SDS are *to improve the quality of life of the Somali community and other disadvantaged groups by providing culturally sensitive services and support social cohesion; achieve economic and social inclusion for disadvantaged people*. They relate this to acquiring skills, accessing employment, education, and contributing to economic development of the local community.

Their core service aim is about providing information, advice and support that facilitates access to community services; they are aiming for improved awareness of and participation in services with reduced social exclusion. They have a target for 125 people to receive support through the drop-in sessions each month during 2015/16 and are monitoring the total number of cases supported; people supported with benefit advice, form filling, bill payments, GP registration, support with letters, other support provided, and referrals to other organisations. In the year to date, they continue to exceed their target; there is considerable demand for their services. In the last quarter, they consulted or engaged with 445 cases.

Through their family support work, they are aiming on a quarterly basis to work with 45 parents and their children through home visits and individual and group discussion. They deliver a range of community based forums and courses that are raising awareness. Recent work on the Female Genital Mutilation Project has figured strongly and has involved running workshops for a range of professionals working in other organisations, e.g. GPs, social services and health professionals.

The young people's support service focuses on empowering and supporting newly arrived Somali young people and those that are at risk of underachievement or exclusion. Through the Talent Match Programme that they deliver in partnership with the Prince's Trust, they are targeting to get six young people (aged 18-24) each month who are NEET into receiving training, learning, and employment. In the last quarter, they were successfully forty-one people. They have started to work in partnership with Contact Point on a project that centres on reducing anti-social behaviour through the provision of meaningful activity. This pilot work led by Contact Point is aiming to provide weekly social and sports activity on a Saturday night and to have 20 people attending; they have been working hard and they have around sixty young people on some occasions now. It also links to the work of the Talent Match Programme as well with an advisor attending and providing informal contact and support.

The organisation has in place a quarterly monitoring and reporting process that is enabling them to review how they are performing against their targets. Each service area monitors performance throughout, and the quarterly report and management review process ensures that they are on track. They monitor and record outputs so that they can see that they are delivering activity that relates to the service aims and objectives. Case studies and reports on events allow them to reflect qualitatively as well on their progress. Case reviews in management meetings and document audits support to ensure that they are delivering appropriately. They use an Investment Scorecard and Project Progress Tracker in Talent Match to enable them to monitor their progress on a quarterly basis.

Individual service user outcomes are defined in a number of ways such as the completion of the Skills Action Plan for the Talent Match Programme, in the initial reception contact conversations, in Advisor meetings and support sessions, within the learning plan for workshops and as part of the planning discussions with partners for community forums and awareness sessions. Examples of outcomes included understanding FGM and 'how to protect yourself', successfully filling in a form and being able to resolve a question, to improve employability skills including interview techniques, getting a work placement or volunteering opportunity to increase skills and self-confidence, successfully completing a Food Hygiene course, and understanding where to go for additional help and signposting.

Managers and staff were clear in their understanding about the various service delivery components and explained how they ensure that people understand the service offering. This is through promotional work, initial contact at the reception in the centre, through outreach discussions and the provision of posters and leaflets. The multi-lingual approach of the team means that potential service users feel positive in the early engagement and understanding. One to one meetings with the various support workers and advisors provide the time to explain the service provision. Service users were positive about their experiences and could describe the nature of the service provision and the benefits that they could hope to gain.

*"They make you feel confident –your issue is put at rest –you can put your trust in them."
(Service user)*

Managers and staff members described various approaches in place that enable the team to reflect on the achievement of individual service user outcomes. They include the extensive quarterly monitoring and reporting work including the use of case studies, team meetings, discussions with partner organisations, review sessions with service users and course evaluation forms. They have been able to respond to support the range of service users and have utilised their languages effectively, they have upgraded their own Safeguarding Policy to reflect FGM, and have improved the engagement process with young people. Monitoring the types of support provided has enabled them to ensure that their partners and network contacts are developed and maintained.

6. Findings Against the matrix Standard

1. Leadership and Management

The way in which the organisation is led and managed to develop an effective service

SDS Annual General Meetings, team meetings and regular one to one meetings are providing the opportunity to share the success of the organisation as well as mapping out the plans going forwards. Managers and staff members were able to explain how the organisation provides clear leadership through team meetings, sharing of the Strategic Plan, the Annual Report as well as an open door approach and drive of the senior managers to make a difference for the community. There is a sense of all staff members having connectivity with the organisational ambitions.

The organisation has a range of policies and procedures in place to support their work including those covering Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity, and Data Protection. They have been particularly effective in being able to offer their broad range of language support to many people in the community, over and above those of the Somali Community, e.g. Polish and Bangladeshi from Italy. Youth Support Workers have panic alarms for their work 'on the streets'. They complete risk assessments for their Centre and induction processes support fire evacuation procedures; there is clear management responsibility. Service users explained how they are supported in a confidential way and felt comfortable in sharing information; staff always asking if information can be shared with any contact they are making on their behalf. They reported a strong level of trust with the organisation and the breadth of translation and language support was giving helpful reassurance to people. SDS is recording and reporting on ethnicity of those people attending their core service and have they seen their service extend to approaching 20% not from the Somali community.

An annual review of their policies is regularly taking place and any changes relating to legislation made. Examples provided included changes to Safeguarding to accommodate the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, and modifications relating to childcare regulations notified by Leicester City Council. They are regularly receiving information from their partner and network contacts about changes to various aspects of legislation and guidance relating to, for example, housing benefit and immigration.

SDS sits in the middle of the Highfields and St Matthews areas of Leicester; many people are referred to them from the local community. Some service users highlighted how they were able to drop-in and receive support. Word of mouth and promotion through other local agencies are important to engaging with potential service users. The childcare provision is also useful in connecting to potential service users. The outreach Youth Support Workers are actively engaging with young people on the local streets and using conversation and leaflets to draw them to the activities provided on a Saturday night; they have seen numbers grow through this approach. The Talent Match Advisor attends the activity session on a Saturday night and promotes CV development through informal contact. They promote Talent Match at the local mosque, restaurants and parent groups; they are receiving regular referrals from the National Careers Service.

SDS is redeveloping their website and they plan to work more closely with social media although the organisation recognises that these channels of promotion have limited impact directly with potential service users although will enable them to link with partners and networks.

Managers and staff members are actively involved in the design and development of services; each of the delivery areas has seen areas of improvement through their input. For example, the development of the FGM courses, changes to the promotion of Talent Match services and development of the Work Club. Service users are able to feedback using feedback forms and end of workshop evaluation forms. The suggestions box is collecting the simple feedback form, many people writing in their own language about their experience. Managers and staff explained how this approach was working particularly well and had enabled them to learn more about scheduling their times across the week as well as reducing queuing times for a drop-in session.

The organisation engages with a broad range of partners and networks that enables them to have the necessary contact to support their service provision. Examples included working with Leicester College to secure places on funded training courses, Prince's Trust as the prime contractor for Talent Match in the area, being a member of Advice Leicester Partnership (ALP) to support their signposting and referral activity as well as the development of potential funding opportunities. They have also developed their relationships with key local authority and council departments including health and housing, as well as representatives from the local police. They are members of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and work closely with local organisations, running a series of awareness courses about preventing FGM.

2. Resources

The assets invested and applied in providing an effective service

SDS is working hard to develop potential funding options to be able to maintain their service provision. They are now unfortunately not able to offer adult learning on their premises but have worked with other partners to develop routes into funded options for service users. They operate the Work Club on a Thursday afternoon and have been able to continue offering a drop-in service on a daily basis. They have extended their provision to work with young people on a Saturday evening. They offer childcare facilities that can support their IAG services. A newly appointed Business Support Assistant will focus on developing the back office systems and marketing of the services as well as the quality of displays and leaflets available.

Service users explained the range of information that they are accessing such as utility companies to help with repayment plans, registering with doctor's surgeries, contacting the housing benefit office to appeal against charges, legal support from solicitors and contact with other local authority services and agencies such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau and the Race and Equality Centre. Managers and staff explained how they access current job vacancies from the government website and the National Careers Service website for job profiles, e.g. pharmacy technician. They provide a range of posters and leaflets in the reception area, e.g. Community Advice and Law Service, Leicester Lifeskills Centre, and the Domestic Violence Helpline. Regular research on-line and contact through ALP and other networks are providing the opportunity to gather up to date information about services available. The main offices carry a range of resources to support each service provision such as a flow chart to understand the process relating to EEA National registration.

SDS has continued to ensure that their main advisory team members are qualified to Level three or four in IAG. They are recruiting people with a broad range of professional experience and backgrounds to add value to their delivery, e.g. Social Work, PTLLS, and project management. Members of the team provided examples of CPD and included understanding the changes to Universal Credits, increased awareness of NHS careers, and how to effectively support service users that have Dyslexia. There is a sense that staff members are well supported and as funding allows are able to grow and develop in their roles; SDS are aware of the need to build succession planning in to their development.

There is a planned approach taken to the induction of staff members and any volunteer, that covers Health and Safety, Data Protection and ensuring relevant DBS checks are completed. Examples of induction activity included shadowing the Senior Advisor early on and reading the Annual Report and Strategic Plan.

3. Service Delivery

The way in which the service is delivered effectively

Individual service user needs are identified through the early engagement activities. On the Talent Match Programme, a Skills Action Plan is developed that enables the individual to identify their skills and work goals. Observation, peer discussion and file audits are ensuring that information, advice and guidance is impartial and objective. Service users attending the Centre explained how they are provided with a clear and objective picture of the support through translation. The team are monitoring and reviewing their work through the quarterly review process and this helps them to see where people are being referred to, and the nature of support being provided.

*“Respect here for all people – welcome and a feeling of help when you walk in.”
(Service user)*

Service users explained the nature of their support. Young people on the Talent Match Programme described how they had been encouraged to explore a number of career ideas and options; in some cases they are exploring them using Adult Directions and looking at job profiles. Service users feel that the nature of the support is very encouraging and there is regular contact taking place. They commented:

“Very encouraging – made me more open to looking and trying my choices.”

“Different career pathways in IT that I didn’t realise.”

“Good advisor – I get regular updates and ideas about jobs and training –text and e-mail.”

“You keep getting the latest job vacancies that apply to you – sent by e-mail.”

For those accessing the core service at the Centre the nature of the support can range across the provision of benefits advice, support with form filling, referrals to other agencies as well as help in translating and writing letters. Service users commented about their experiences:

“Broke it down into housing, schools and benefits and we worked through it in my way.”

“They read the letter and explain it to you –the issues. Then they make contact and let you know what they are doing on the phone.”

“With language difficulty it is hard to engage with others about their systems. They help us to be precise so don’t make a mistake that might catch us out.”

“So happy – such a broad service –don’t make you feel like cattle with a number.”

“Came here to make sure that I can getting it right each time on Tax Credits.”

“They have an open approach – listen to your words and will stay with you to help.”

Access to computers is available in the Work Club and Advisors work with laptops and PCs, providing research opportunities.

Service users talked about their experiences of support to complete application forms, personal statements for UCAS and making applications on-line. The organisation is very active in referring and signposting people to other agencies and organisations and monitor the benefits of doing so through Action Plans and follow up meetings. Examples of the benefits have included to Citizen's Advice Bureau for support with a benefits appeal, SAFE for victim support, Braunstone Learning for a more local learning centre and Leicester College for a funded into work programme.

4. Continuous Quality Improvement

The way in which the service provided is reviewed and improved on an ongoing basis

The organisation is completing a full monitoring and review every quarter and feedback is gathered and reviewed at that time. They reflect on both quantitative and qualitative feedback and take action to improve their service delivery. The Talent Match prime contractor collects feedback directly from discussions with service users as well as recorded in the action planning documents. The review of the Centre feedback forms often involves translating the language used by service users. Examples of service improvement from all forms of feedback have included changes to the booking arrangements with Jobcentre Plus for potential Talent Match service users and scheduling of the drop-in service provision across the week. They provided an example of how the organisation handles complaints.

SDS has set out to work with a new partner organisation, Contact Project as the lead in the delivery of the Forward Together pilot project and actively review progress. They have already developed the promotion and engagement approaches in the work as described earlier. SDS is working to support practitioners in health and education to understand the particular Somali background to FGM and have developed a range of courses. Feedback is helping them to tailor these programmes further to involve other agencies. The organisation is facilitating community forums for people, such as to access senior managers of health and housing services with a question and answer event. They have worked with BYCS to deliver staff training. In this way SDS are working with new partners and networks to promote their work and achieve their aims and objectives.

The organisation uses a structured approach to monitoring and evaluation. Through the quarterly process, it is identifying what works well and how they might develop their services. The management team are working closely with the delivery teams to work on these as well as preparing the Annual Report. Observation forms a regular part of their work and contributes to service development planning and CPD.

Members of staff confirmed that regular one to one meetings and a formal appraisal process provide support. They were able to describe how this was helping them on an individual basis to develop their practice such as improving their on-line researching, learning how to promote their service, and improving questioning techniques.

SDS is offering service users the opportunity to access computer systems to research and make applications, support them in making telephone calls and access on-line translation services to help in CV development and letter writing. They are using Facebook to promote their work and connections such as publicising SDS participating in Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group Staff Conference and other cultural events and community forums.

As already detailed in this report, SDS has been taking positive actions to improve their service provision. In the context of reduced funding, they continue to find ways to move forwards; managers and staff are committed to continuous quality improvement.

7. Conclusion

SDS demonstrated through this successful Accreditation Review that they have continued to maintain and develop their partnerships and networks to provide connection for those that they support, continue to operate effective delivery models within very limited resources, and have developed to offer first level grass roots support for outside of the Somali community.

They welcomed the feedback at the closing meeting and the annual matrix Continuous Improvement Check will allow them to demonstrate on an ongoing basis the developments they are continuing to make in order to support individuals. These may include the Areas for Continuous Improvement identified earlier in this report.

(Please note that continued accreditation is subject to annual Continuous Improvement Checks at twelve and twenty-four months following assessment and three-yearly on-site accreditation reviews. If checks/reviews are not undertaken in a timely way this will have an impact upon the organisation's accreditation. <http://matrixstandard.com/continuous-improvement-checks>.)

Assessment Type	ACCREDITATION REVIEW
Assessor's Decision	STANDARD MET
Assessor's Name	ROB BARLOW
Visit Date	30/11/15-1/12/15
Client ID	C12142
Assessment Reference	PN101297

8. The matrix Standard Evidence Grid

Element 1 Criteria		Met	Strength	AfCI
1.1	The service has clearly defined measurable aims and objectives which link to any wider organisational strategic aims.	✓		
1.2	The service is provided with clear leadership and direction	✓		
1.3	The organisation implements policies to promote equality and diversity, impartiality, confidentiality and professional integrity in all aspects of service delivery	✓	✓	
1.4	The organisation complies with existing and new legislation which might impact upon the service	✓		
1.5	The organisation defines client outcomes and uses them as a measure of success for the service	✓		
1.6	The organisation promotes the service in ways which are accessible to all those eligible to use it	✓		✓
1.7	Clients and staff influence the design and development of the service	✓		✓
1.8	The organisation establishes effective links with other appropriate partnerships and networks to enhance the service	✓	✓	

Element 2 Criteria		Met	Strength	AfCI
2.1	The organisation uses its resources effectively to deliver the service	✓		
2.2	Clients are provided with current, accurate and quality assured information which is inclusive	✓		✓
2.3	The organisation defines the skills, knowledge, competencies and qualifications, in line with current national recognised professional qualifications and frameworks, for individual staff roles, linked to the aims and objectives of the service	✓		✓
2.4	Staff are supported in undertaking continuous professional development and provided with opportunities for career progression	✓		
2.5	Effective induction processes are in place for all staff	✓		

Element 3 Criteria		Met	Strength	AfCI
3.1	The service is defined so that clients are clear about what they might expect	✓		
3.2	The service is delivered effectively to meet its aims and objectives	✓	✓	
3.3	The service provided is impartial and objective	✓		
3.4	Clients are given appropriate options to explore and understand that they are responsible for making their own decisions	✓		
3.5	When exploring options, clients are provided with and supported to use appropriate resources including access to technology	✓	✓	
3.6	Clients benefit from signposting and referral to other appropriate agencies or organisations	✓	✓	

Element 4 - Criteria		Met	Strength	AfCI
4.1	The organisation measures and evaluates the service against its stated aims and objectives and identifies improvements	✓		
4.2	The organisation monitors and evaluates client outcomes to support and improve service delivery	✓		✓
4.3	The organisation evaluates feedback on the service to build upon its strengths and addresses any areas for improvement	✓		✓
4.4	The organisation evaluates the effectiveness of its partnerships and networks to improve the service	✓		
4.5	The organisation defines quality assurance approaches which are used to improve the service	✓		
4.6	Staff performance, linked to their role within the aims and objectives of the service, are reviewed and evaluated to improve the service	✓		
4.7	Effective use is made of technology to improve the service	✓		✓
4.8	The organisation continually reviews improvements to help inform the future aims and objectives of the service	✓		