

My name is Eniola and I was the Southwark Census Advisor. And my role was to engage the community. Tell them about census and encourage them to participate.

Also I like to tell them what the census is and why census is important. So I will tell them, for example, that the census in your community might improve the number of GPs you have or the number of schools.

Because of the community I worked in there were a lot of people maybe with immigration issues so a lot of people were scared of participating in the census, thinking it's going to be used as an immigration issue against them. So I had to educate them about that as well. Well I'd then tell them that the census is not used with the immigration department. The immigration department that's got nothing to do with the census. The census is a head count of the people in this borough and this is what the outcome is being used for. The role I took was a role to sort of engage with communities together in a place rather than go from house to house.

And the reason I took that role is I believed that it was easy to do more work with communities because they influence each other so when I go to the Mosque and I speak to them and they ask questions, then they encourage each other. Oh, we need to really do this and we really need to unite. We need a new primary school in my area. Come let's build the form, let's participate in this.

It fit in perfectly into my schedule because most of my roles I had to go in the evenings or at the weekends to the various communities I was going to address. And the rest of the time was going to do my paperwork.

I learned a lot about my borough that I've been living in. I learned a lot about how the result of the census is being used for. I learned a lot about the history of the borough of Southwark and some of the buildings there I could now relate better because I knew the history of it. Doing the census opened my eyes to different issues when I would visit the big estates and you know I went places where I would normally not go and seeing what is happening in those places, you really helped me at my work to have more understanding of people as individuals, towards their issues.

So it is a brilliant thing to work on the census if you are ready to sort of have a new experience.