

PRESS RELEASE:

**Let's talk about Discrimination ...
Youths discussing their commitment against discrimination and for equality**

“We can feel the pain of those youths who are discriminated against”; “Youths should have more responsibility and be more aware of issues related to discrimination and equality”... These were some of the opinions that young people gathered in a Seminar for Youths shared while discussing a future that is free from discrimination and committed to equality for all. This Seminar for Youths was organised by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE), as part of the PROGRESS 2007-2013 co-funded project *‘Think Equal’*. Its aim was to further raise awareness and spur development in the area of equality and non-discrimination.

Are young people different? Are they stereotyped? Do they experience discrimination because of their age? - These were some of the questions that Mr Niall Crowley, moderating this Seminar for Youths, asked to the youths present who then discussed them in round-table discussions. Mr Crowley who is also external consultant of *‘Think Equal’* Project, in his introduction, explained how there is the tendency among young people to see themselves as a group different from other groups in society; how age is deemed to shape expectations and judgements and how stereotypes contribute to discrimination.

The Seminar for Youths brought together youths, persons who have experienced discrimination and experts from different racial, sexual and cultural backgrounds who reflected on local cases of discrimination and the causes and consequences of these experiences. Video clips of various individuals speaking about discrimination and their experience of discrimination helped to stimulate the youths’ discussions.

Youths present actively participated in these discussions assertively voicing out their opinions on what one can do to take action when faced with cases of discrimination. They described discrimination as a challenge that has the potential to make someone stronger if action is sought to remedy the situation. Youths emphasised how persons who are discriminated against can contribute to a change in mentality and an equality-oriented culture by trying to raise more awareness on the cases of discrimination they encounter.

Discussing what needs to be done for a society to be more committed against discrimination and for equality, youths suggested that children from a young age should be more exposed to these issues with educators raising awareness for equal treatment. They also highlighted how politicians have an active role in building a society free from discrimination. The media was also repeatedly mentioned as means by which the general public could be informed on such cases of discrimination and what could be done.

In her concluding remarks, NCPE’s Executive Director Dr Romina Bartolo, urged youths to continue to voice out their concerns on the subject matter and report to the competent authorities any cases of discrimination they come across.

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