



“Highlighting the Barriers and moving on”

**A one-day conference organised by Africa Centre and AkiDWA to mark the 5th anniversary
of the founding of the two organisations**

Royal Dublin Hotel

O’Connell Street

Dublin 1

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THE JOSEPH ROWNTREE CHARITABLE TRUST

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Presentations by key note Speakers:	
Africans in Ireland: Hopes, Expectations and the Quest for a Space	6
Funding Issues for Black and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations	8
Diversity Matters: Learning from the European Experience	10
Africans in 21st Century Ireland: Will they stay?	13
Parallel workshops:	14
Participation in Employment	14
Political Participation and the 2007 General Election	16
Immigration, Residence and Protection Scheme	17
Funding and Resource for African and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations	17
Conclusion	18
Appendices	20

Introduction

OCTOBER 2006 marked the 5th anniversary of the founding of both the Africa Centre and AkiDwA (African Women Network). During the last five years both organisations have played a noticeable role as leading migrant voices and have positively engaged in advocacy, awareness raising and collaborative work with stakeholders - highlighting issues that hinder the full participation of African and other minority ethnic communities in Irish society.

To mark the five years history of this activism, the two organisations jointly organised a major one-day conference titled *'Highlighting the Barriers and Moving On.'* The theme was chosen to allow for a reflective discussion on the work of the two organisations over the past years and to highlight barriers to the full participation of members of African community in wider society. Broadly, the objectives of the conferences included the following:

- to celebrate and mark the 5th anniversary of the founding of Africa Centre and AkiDwA;
- to promote solidarity and build links with Governmental and non Governmental bodies.
- to provide a platform for African and minority ethnic communities in Ireland to share experiences and explore opportunities for overcoming barriers to participation.
- to increase the potentials of African and minority ethnic led organisations in Ireland.

This conference targeted, primarily, participants from the African and other minority ethnic communities in Ireland, service providers, governmental and non-governmental bodies as well as other bodies with interest in issues involved. The conference involved a main plenary session in the morning. Speakers were Sr. Anne Itotia, Ada Maduakoh CEO, Pro-diverse UK, Abel Ugba, Lecturer of Media & Cultural Studies, University of East London and Dier Tong, Coordinator of Africa Centre. This session was followed by four parallel workshops on the following themes:

- Participation in employment;
- Political participation and the 2007 general elections;
- Immigration, residence and protection scheme;
- Funding and resources for black and minority ethnic-led organisations/groups

The conference concluded with a final plenary session which involved participatory discussion on the findings of the four workshops reports.

Africans in Ireland: Hopes, Expectations and the Quest for a Space

Anne began her presentation thanking Africa Centre and AkiDwA for their work and their role in providing the African community with a voice given the limited resources and the opportunity space available to them. She mentioned that Africa Centre and AkiDwA's cultivated a strong partnership with the different communities in Ireland as well as giving the African people a sense of pride and dignity and a belief that someone is positively connected. This is something both organisations have worked tirelessly and achieved for the last five years. But she raised the following questions as challenges to key stakeholders;

- Will the government support them, no matter how productive they have been in their efforts?
- Will the Churches and Religious Organisations support them?
- Will the NGOs, the Civil Society and the Communities at large become aware of their needs?
- Will the media report a more balanced and positive reality of their contributions to the society in Ireland?
- Will the African people in Ireland commit themselves to building positive values and attitudes in building cross cultural communities in Ireland?
- Will the learning institutions, schools, colleges, universities become aware that you have something positive to contribute to the knowledge economy in Ireland and the global society?

The questions she raised are actually the beginning to highlighting the barriers and moving on, but one thing she brought up was encouragement words by Nelson Mandela, who said "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure and it is our light, not our darkness, that most frighten us". In her experience of AkiDwA and the Africa Centre, the dual stands as a beacon of hope for many ethnic minority

groups in Ireland especially those from Africa. Many of these people are fleeing their home country and are often traumatised, broken, battered and bruised.

Many people may think that these people can integrate within days but that is not the case, they need to be helped to settle and to find their place in their new country. An immigrant mother here in Ireland, shared her story with Sr. Anne saying;

“I have been here for twenty years, but I am still a refugee. I don't mind being called a refugee because that is what I am. I think I will be a refugee for the rest of my life and I think my son will be refugee for the rest of his life too. He was four years when we left our country. But my granddaughter was born in Ireland, she is not a refugee... she belongs. I do have citizenship now and my son has but we will still be refugees. At least nobody ever came to tell me that I am not a refugee anymore. But I never allow people to call me a refugee. The image given to a refugee is that of a person who is very dirty, very sad, alien. When people hear you are a refugee, they think you have come for a better life. That is not my story; I came because of the horrible things that were happening in my country. Nobody leaves their own country and own family for nothing.

Back at home, I left behind a profession, a good salary and a good house. I had a home that I could call my own but I had to flee from persecution. In my country I don't know whether I still have anyone belonging to me. I am not yet ready to explore that part of my life for it is too painful to go there yet.”

Sr. Anne went on to say, living and working in a multicultural setting would be really easy if everyone spoke the same way and behaved in the same way. But, as soon as you leave your own culture it quickly becomes clear that things are not the same.

For many ethnic minority persons, they know the pain and the agony of endless nights where they thought that life had come to an end. Finding a place where one can settle the mind and believe that one can be heard and trusted one more time is the gift. The African people in Ireland look unto AkiDwA and the Africa Centre as a place of hope and nourishment. A place where one can seek guidance, be informed and find a minute just to be many times, the persons who manage to free home have great potential that need to be unlocked.

The communities AkiDwA and Africa Centre are advocating for are capable people willing to do any work in Ireland and elsewhere, but how can they find a job that best suits their qualifications? In a multicultural reality what will help Ireland to build a cross-cultural environment and openly face the issues of race and ethnicity at work place is the tolerance and acceptance for immigration and integration.

In reality every person who leaves home has a story to tell. There are issues that face ethnic minority groups. Minority groups experience exclusion when you are continuously excluded; it becomes difficult to face life positively. Eventually one develops fear and isolation One begins to regress when hopes and expectations are not met One might end up being doubly discriminated if one enters into anti-social behaviors.

According to Sr Anne, both Africa Centre and AkiDwA have the potentials to become a centre of hope, education and development as well as a resource to migrant students and communities and the Irish communities and this will be a positive trend for the future of black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Ireland.

Funding Issues for Black and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations

Dier Tong, the Coordinator of the Africa Centre, started his presentation by looking at the history of immigration in Ireland. He reveals that immigrants are trying to engage and be part of the transformation of Ireland. The country they have now adopted as their new home and that led to the formation of ethnic minority led organisations to cater for the needs of these new communities. However the establishment of these organisations is one thing, but their sustainability in terms of funding is their biggest problem.

Most of these organisations were initiated by the members of the ethnic minority and concerned Irish, to address and respond to immigrants' situation and the specific problems they face. That is, isolation, racism (verbal & physical attacks, negative media, etc). But apart from this role, the groups also provided a channel for migrants to engage and build links with members of the host community. He gave a few examples of contributions made by ethnic minority group members

who are activists themselves and were committed in attending meetings in large number and often spend several hours every weekend in these meetings looking at the welfare of immigrants.

However, all the contributions made by these groups has not kept pace with the ‘mainstream’ Irish-led groups working with immigrant, even though many of these organisation entered the sector, years after the ethnic minority groups were founded.

Although many factors are cited to explain this situation, funding and resource issue have been rated as major barrier to the development of these groups. Not only that these groups are having the difficulties in obtaining funding, but also access to information about funding sources has been a big problem for them. Also certain funding agencies are making their funding procedures and application processes too complex for many ethnic minority groups (black and minority ethnic groups), who may lack the capacity and resources to complete these application forms.

In his deliberation Dier raised many key issues arising from the difficulties ethnic minority groups are face at four levels; government, private funders, NGOs working with immigrants and immigrants themselves.

At government level, the strategic framework for integration and the role expected from all stakeholders including ethnic minority groups themselves are not well developed in a way to provide the provision of funding to this sector in Ireland. Dier mentioned a study at the time by the Fitzpatrick, which was commissioned by Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform. He hopes that this study will come up with practical recommendation that the government will implement in due course.

There is a perception among ethnic minority groups that, policy makers and funders lacks recognition the role played by immigrant-led groups’. This is evident from the fact that there are only a few funders who have put these organisations among their priority beneficiaries and encourage their eligibility to other funding agencies. Lack of funding consequence these groups to become under resourced and not in a position to build the required capacity.

This seminar found out that there is a stereotype perception of immigrant groups by funders as risky when it comes to funding and questions are often raised as to trustworthiness, honesty and the financial incompetence of individuals or groups.

Although one can not deny the role that is being played by many Irish NGOs working among immigrants, there is no doubt that some have not been very helpful. However some have contributed to the demise of the ethnic minority group sector. Relations with the ethnic minority group sector have often been characterized by what is not less than exploitative and manipulative relationship. Some ethnic minority groups experienced in a number of times, occasion when some of these groups will rush an application at the last hour asking to sign up as a partner and often this will be the last time you will hear back from them, particularly if the application is successful! This has made migrant-led organisations/groups to feel they are being colonized and gradually distance themselves from such fake partnerships. Africa Centre has developed its own guide line which outlines criteria that need to be met before we sign up to such partnership.

For the way forward, government, private funders and NGOs should have a policy and long-term strategy for the integration and social inclusion of ethnic minority groups. Such strategy should include a commitment to the provision of an adequate budget, with commitment to long-term, core and stable funding to the ethnic minority groups. This should include ensuring that specific resources are made available for the migrant-led sector. It should also ensure that access to mainstream funding takes account of the needs and aspirations of the ethnic minority-led organisations.

Ethnic minority led-organisations/groups need a strong, well-resourced infrastructure. The role of such infrastructure is crucial in supporting the sustainable development of their activities. These could be in a form of coming together to form an umbrella body that will act as a focal point for the sector and to be a source of advice to the sector and to policy makers.

Diversity matters: Learning from European Experience

The Prodiverse (UK) Ltd is an organisation in the UK that was form to take a holistic approach engaging employers and other stake holders to be aware of the needs of minority groups,

especially in the areas of job opportunities and training. In her speech, Ada Maduakoh CEO, Prodiverse UK Ltd recommends that the best way ethnic minority groups should operate in a way to motivate their members through action orientated programmes, that will aimed at tackling barriers to employment. These activities can be in the form of engaging with employers through job fairs, diversity awareness seminars or positive action training and support to offer motivation to members of the ethnic minority community. This will maximise their potential for personal development in a non-threatening and culturally sensitive environment.

In her advice to minority groups Ada, asked them to engage stakeholders (government, the private sector and NGOs) to have an equal opportunities policy and practice that will in cooperate diversity awareness training for employer-client matching relationship-building.

With Ireland's present economic boom that is bringing unprecedented levels of prosperity and its recent transformation into a 'country of immigration'. There are challenges that this brings when a society is transformed from what used to be a very homogenous society to a more ethnically diverse and multicultural one. For generations, migrants from across the world have settled and prospered in Europe, making a significant economic and cultural contribution.

Migration contributes to the prosperity of European societies and to that of migrants themselves. Migration, however, also brings challenges and successful integration and this requires investment to set up work with individuals, companies, organisations, and communities in creating a society that is strengthened and empowered by its diversity. The Africa Centre and AkiDwA through our programmes and services can lead efforts to increase communication, understanding and respect among diverse groups and address important issues of multiculturalism facing our society.

According to Ada, research indicates that migrants face a number of barriers in accessing employment and training opportunities. It is important that programmes and services are created to address the barriers to ensure equality of opportunity and social inclusion and to ensure that the benefits of diversity are gathered. This is an opportunity for Africa Centre and AkiDwA to tailor programmes for their beneficiaries in consultation with stakeholders.

Ireland has an opportunity that most countries do not; we are in a position to draw upon the experiences from a number of countries with much longer histories of managing migration and best practices from around the world by selectively learning from the positive and negative policy experiences of other countries. Not only learning from other countries in the sub region that have experience of immigration for many years, but also the Irish government to work with ethnic minority groups like the Africa Centre and AkiDwA in designing policies and strategies relating to immigration and integration.

The conference found out that tackling the barriers faced by the migrant communities needs to be tailored to meet the needs of the migrant community and this need the involvement of the ethnic minority led organisations. It is important that community organisations like the Africa Centre and AkiDwA are empowered and their capacity built to deliver programmes to these communities.

It is important to understand migrants' access to mainstream services so that the services, assistance and other support underpinning the process of integration are appropriate, efficient and cost-effective. A starting point is to understand the patterns of migrants' access to services, and this can only happen through having many contacts with service users.

While many migrants are successful in the labour market and enjoy positive relations with other residents, there is substantial evidence of disadvantage and exclusion. In education, there is disproportionate under-achievement at school, in which poor language skills are one factor, and this also will lead to disproportionate unemployment and underemployment in the labour market.

There is therefore a need across Ireland for more effective integration strategies. Ireland needs an educated, trained workforce to fill skill shortages in a tight labour market and even the new accession countries cannot solve that problem. Ireland cannot afford to neglect the talents of migrants already in the workforce and, if employers are to compete for the "brightest and the best," potential migrants must be confident that they will not face discrimination and exclusion. Every migrant African in Ireland has a skill that they can use to earn a living if they are given a

chance. Organisations and groups should work closely with these people to facilitate a process for them to put their skills into best use.

The Africa Centre and AkiDwA have to developed programmes which tackle both the needs of minority groups in accessing employment and training opportunities. Engage with employers through seminars which highlight the benefits of a diverse workforce and provides them with the tools they need to recruit and retain a diverse workforce. Whilst at the same time offering them consultancy on how to ensure that they have the right policies and processes in place to retain a diverse workforce through confidential tailored consultancy services

The importance of racism and discrimination and the rejection felt by minority groups in a white dominated society should not be over-looked. As this issue involves changing attitudes and overcoming prejudices, a good amount of time, effort and commitment is needed to address this issue. There is a role for the Africa Centre and AkiDwA to take in this, and the best way is to have dialogue with stakeholders and practically involve in creating awareness in Irish society.

Africans in 21st Century Ireland: Will they stay?

Mr. Abel Ugba, who is a Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies at the University of East London, looked at will Africans find a space in 21st Century Ireland? He took an example of a relationship between a mangrove tree and the river, which stated; “The fact that a mangrove tree dwells in the river does not make it a crocodile”...He went on saying, it will be difficult for Africans to be fully integrated in Irish society, but with time, progress can be made. However Africans and other ethnic minority groups should see Ireland as their home and contribute to the development of this new home.

“...This is my home now; it will remain so for the foreseeable future...I have the right to be here. My house is here, as are my dearest friends and job. I have worked hard to make Dublin home and I will defend my right to remain and call it home - in the face of any hostility” (African female, 2002). Africans in Ireland will always have different perspectives on things, especially in relation to the way African Immigrants are perceived by the Irish public and because of that some are already leaving because they can’t take it anymore.

There are lots of obstacles to creating spaces and making Ireland home for migrants and in order to tackle uncertain residency status, racism/discrimination, loneliness/lack of social network, underemployment/unemployment and access to education and training, ethnic minority groups have to organize themselves to take a proactive role in the integration process in Ireland.

Parallel workshops in the seminar

Parallel workshops were carried out and attended by the workshop participants. The themes of discussion in the four workshops were;

- Economic viability/Participation in Employment
- Political participation and the 2007 General elections
- Immigration, Residence and Protection Scheme
- Funding and Resources for Black and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations/Groups

Economic viability/Participation in Employment

The workshop participants believed that access to work should be a fundamental right provided for every resident in Ireland, especially for Asylum seekers and refugees, because this will bring freedom to decide their living condition. However the non-Irish parents of Irish children are experiencing few problems, including barriers to accessing employment; Language, qualification, status,

Language has been considered as a key factor for the non-Irish parents of Irish children not accessing employment in Ireland. From their experiences, even they apply for jobs advertised and have the same qualification with their other competitors; they will be drop from initial sort listing for interviews. Even they were sort listed and attended an interview, but their accent will disqualify them, as most of the interviewers see them not English speakers.

Most of the immigrants, especially asylum seekers and refugees living in Ireland are highly qualified people in their own countries, but their qualifications from their respective countries are not recognised in Ireland and that is resulting them not having a job, even those having right to work. These qualifications need to be recognised by employers, whether it will be in a way of assessment or through an agency that can match qualifications. Minority led organisation should

offer some help in counselling or some sort of career guidance to these people and make recommendations to employers on their behalf to employ them. Also these organisations should be able to give examples of role models as good examples of success stories to these employers and those seeking employment, but this is lacking.

The residency statuses of immigrants in Ireland contribute lots to their chance of access to employment. The spouses of immigrants, who possess a work permit, cannot work according to the new legislation and this is a huge frustration for the immigrant community. Asylum seekers who have been in the country for many years and their cases are pending in the justice system cannot work or seek employment in any form, before they have their refugee status.

The workshop found out that these people should be allowed to work. Spouses of work permit holders should be allowed working when they arrive into the country. They should be allowed to seek employment and be given help to get a job, and also asylum seekers should be given the chance to work if they live in the country for a period of time before a decision is made on their case.

Other issues that were raised include the lack of; proper child care facilities for immigrants to allow them to work, skills trainings and the cost involved in acquiring the trainings. Even if skill training is available the cost of training programmes is very expensive for immigrants, especially if one is unemployed charged a non-European fee rate. Suggestions were made also in relation to adopt the experience in the UK to offer services to immigrants helping them in preparing curriculum vitae, interview skills and linking them with job centres. Employers were urged to stop discrimination against immigrants at work place.

The workshops attracted numerous contributions to find solutions to the above stated problems and participants came up with a few points including; offering of trainings to migrants, minority led organisations to challenge negative images of Africa, organisations and agencies to follow the footsteps of the GARDÁ Síochána in recruiting from new communities. Also they want employers to recognise foreign qualifications, allow foreign employees to join trade unions and the government to make sure that employers have equality and diversity in place for their recruitment policies.

Political Participation and the 2007 General Election

Political participation and the coming general elections have been on the high agenda at the conference by most participants. They see the forum as a chance to discuss issues that affect their daily life, especially for the representation in the Dail that constitute of people who have a big impact and influence in the life of immigrants in this country. The next coming general election will be the process by which representative will be elected who will decide the fate of many immigrants in this country.

Participants held the group discussion in the following categories, eligibility, immigration and integration and image.

Most participants' belief that the eligibility for an immigrant to participate in this coming election will not change and those who will be allowed to vote will be those holding Irish citizenship. However, it was noted that, due to the importance of the coming election, there is a need to raise the issue with the authorities to consider certain changes that will allow immigrants, especially those with refugee status to vote. Australia was given as an example, where immigrants are allowed to participate in general elections and they think this should be an opportunity to have dialogue with the government to adopt a similar system.

Recommendations were made to actively involve the political parties in a debate, where they can come with a clear legislation as to how they will go about integration and immigration as most of the organisations working with migrants are not happy with the current legislation. Concerns were raised on the current legislation where is the minister who only has the power in deciding the fate of individuals, and in fact the draft legislation is not clear to many as so many important things were left out.

The workshop agrees that ethnic minority led organisations should engage positively through the media to challenge the bad image representation of Africa with the political parties and other

support groups during the coming general elections. This will not only be an exercise as political participation, but also to show the positive side of Africa as well.

Immigration, Residence and Protection Scheme

A lot of discussion has taken on this topic as the government is preparing a new bill on immigration, residence and protection for immigrants coming to Ireland, but mostly the African immigrants, who are the large group of immigrants coming to the country from non EEC countries.

There were few issues raised on the proposed bill; procedures of issuing visas and requirements were not clear in the draft bill as well as issues related to eligibility to entry to Ireland. Some participants also suggested that the asylum process was not mentioned on the previous draft previous one, but mentioned in the recent documents release by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, which is creating doubts among concern organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers.

Concerns were raised that, couples getting marriage have to seek permission from the minister of Justice if one of the partners or both are non Irish and if the minister rejects, the marriage cannot go ahead, which many people felt is an infringement on people's right.

Funding and Resource for Black and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations

Funding and resource for Black and minority Ethnic led organisation is a major problem and Africa Centre and AkiDWA are not exception to this. The discussions in the group found out that, many funding agencies and government bodies do not trust ethnic minority organisations as there were many such organisations set up by individuals who are only operating for their self interest. Organisations operating in such a way are only affecting genuine organisations like AkiDwa and Africa Centre to get funding from funders that already have experience dealing with bogus organisations.

There was an expressed of the lack of access to mainstream funding for Black and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations. Mainstream funders criteria are high for such organisations and mostly you have to plan your operation as they like, which in most cases will not march with your organisational mission statement and objectives.

At times monies given to small organisation cannot employ a fulltime staff and that itself is a problem, because it is always difficult to have only volunteer/volunteers running an organisation. Their commitment to the organisation will not be forthcoming as they need some form of financial support for themselves and their families.

However, recommendations were made for minority groups to come together to restructure themselves into bigger groups, so that they can attract funding if they joint to carryout certain together. Also if groups can work in partnership to each other or even have a data base of funders that they can share information with one another.

CONCLUSION

One hundred and sixteen participants from ethnic minority organisations, government agencies, volunteers, asylum seekers, refugees and other development organisations attended the seminar. They represented a diverse audience of ethnic minority groups and organisations. The conference achieved its principal objective: Highlighting the Barriers and Moving on.

The seminar has been a success in the sense that most of the participants and funders became aware of the obstacles faced by ethnic minority led organisation, especially when it comes to carrying out their development work, due to lack of adequate resources. Conference content was interesting and thought to be provoking the realities of the debate on issues that are really affecting the lives of immigrants in Ireland.

Four speakers all from different backgrounds, but all members of the ethnic minority, spoke about the problems face by minorities and challenged their audience to critically think about the future of ethnic minority led organisations. Success stories and challenges faced by ethnic minority led organisations were mentioned and examples of good practices in response to these challenges were highlighted in the deliberations.

The presentations in the morning and afternoon sessions of the conference were followed by lively debates that allowed for intensified dialogue on specific topics and assisted the participants in identifying guidelines for future actions. A clear need for better interaction and co-operation (i.e. networking) between all relevant players both ethnic minority groups and their host communities was identified.

The conference should only be seen as a starting point of opening a debate on the need for ethnic minority organisations like Africa Centre and AkiDwA to be supported and take an active role in development, especially on the issue of ethnic minority groups. This was also demonstrated by the following main conclusions:

1. To have a frequent consultation between ethnic minority groups and facilitate the promotion of networks among professional organisations of ethnic minority and of mainstream professional organisations, which are working with migrants.
2. . It was agreed that these organisations have to be involve in a more proactive way to support their target population, and this will attract more government and private funders support. Already AkiDwA and Africa Centre have paved the way and set an example for their determination and commitment involving in lots of activities, but the issue of sustainability is worrying, because they do not have permanent funding to carry their work.
3. Organisations working with migrants should organize means of training to build the capacity of migrants, at the same time engage the government in the formulation of legislation and policies that will have impact on their lives.
4. Ethnic minority organisations should have their own fund raising strategies as well and this will encourage funders and the private sector to provide them financial support, if they see they are proactive in collecting money themselves outside donor funding.

All the workshops have made recommendations and if put into perspective hopefully AkiDwA and Africa Centre should achieved something positive at the end of the day.

Appendix (1): Conference Programme

9.30am	Registration, Tea/Coffee
10.00am	Welcoming remarks; Salome Mbugua, National Director, AkiDwA
10.10am	Key note address; Mr. Niall Crowley, CEO, the Equality Authority
	<u>MORNING SESSION:</u>
	Chair: Mr. Philip McKinley, Chairperson, Africa Centre
10.30am	Africans in Ireland: Hopes, Expectations and the Quest for a space. Sr. Anne Itotia, RSM
11.00am	Chasing Cash; Funding Issues for African and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations; Mr. Dier Tong, Coordinator, Africa Centre
11.30am	Questions and Answers on the Morning Session
12.00pm	Coffee/Tea break
12.15pm	Four Parallel workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participation in Employment• Political Participation and the 2007 General Election• Immigration, Residence and Protection Scheme• Funding and Resource for Black and Minority Ethnic-led Organisations
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1.00pm – 2.00pm	Lunch break
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	Dance performance by AkiDwA Group
	<u>AFTERNOON SESSION:</u>
	Chair: Ms. Tinna Akinola Jinad, Chairperson, AkiDwA
2.00pm	Diversity Matters: Learning from European Experience, Ms. Ada Maduakoh, Chief Executive Office, ProDiverse (UK) Ltd
2.20pm	Africans in 21st Century Ireland: Will they Stay, Mr. Abel Ugba, Lecturer, Media and Cultural Studies, University of East London
2.40pm	Questions and Answers on the Afternoon Session
3.10	Feedback from the workshops and Introductory Remarks by iMEASC representative (The Network of Irish speaking Immigrants and Irish Speakers of Mixed Backgrounds)
3.50	Summary and close, Ms. Neltah Chadamoyo, Africa Centre
4.00pm	Reception

Appendix (2): Biography of Speakers and Contributors

Niall Crowley is Chief Executive Officer of the Equality Authority. The Equality Authority was established in 1999 to combat discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity under the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000. This legislation covers the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community. Previous to this he worked in the NGO sector on Traveller rights issues with Pavee Point and on a wider equality agenda with the Community Workers Cooperative and as a participant in the various arenas of social partnership. Niall has contributed a lot to the development of these two organisations (AkiDwA & Africa Centre) and has a good working relation with them. Niall was also the honorably guest at the lunching of the Africa Centre in 2001

Ada Maduakoh, CEO, ProDiverse (UK) Ltd, is a qualified barrister and management consultant. She has also held a number of senior positions in the private and public sectors in Nigeria. She joined the United Nations in 1993 where she served in Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Tanzania, before her appointment as Legal Adviser, Human Rights Liaison at the Department of International Protection, United Nations High Commission for Refugees Geneva. She and represented UNHCR at various UN Human rights committees based in Geneva and at top-level inter-governmental and international conferences on human rights in Africa, Asia and Europe. Ms. Maduakoh set up her consultancy business in the UK in 2001. ProDiverse (UK) Ltd has become one of the leading authorities on diversity and ethnic minority issues in the UK, clients include public and private sector organisations. The company has offices in the North and West of London and a branch in South Africa. She sits on a number of boards, she is an Executive board member of the North London Chamber of Commerce, member of the Institute of Business Advisers, and is an associate member of the Institute of Leadership and management. She is currently President, Avenir NEPAD International UK, an African Diaspora network organisation. She has published a number of articles.

Abel Ugba teaches journalism at the University of East London, London. His educational and professional background relates to journalism and sociology. Mr. Ugba has researched and published articles on Ireland's African communities and on immigration-related themes. He has also worked as a professional journalist in newspapers in Nigeria and Ireland. He was a co-publisher and the pioneering editor of *Metro Eireann*, Ireland's multicultural newspaper.

Dier Tong is currently the Coordinator of Africa Centre. Originally from Southern Sudan, Dier has been living in Ireland since 1995. He has B.Sc. in Business Administration from the University of Khartoum, Sudan and completed an MBA degree from the Smurfit Graduate Business School, University College Dublin in 1996. He worked in the Central Bank of Sudan for nine years. In Ireland, Dier worked for various NGOs, including Comhlámh, Volunteer Missionary Movement and was Financial Controller for SPIRASI, before he moved to Africa Centre in November 2004. He has also served on the boards of the Irish Refugee Council, the Debt and Development Coalition Ireland and the European Anti-Poverty Network.

Mr. Clement Esebamen is employed as the Equalities Coordinator of the Tallaght Partnership. His career interests lies in the changing Irish Identity occasioned primarily by the emergence of the 'Celtic Tiger' and the consequent changes in the Irish demographic profile. His involvement in promoting participation of immigrants as a mode of integration, led to the TallaZens Project which is supported by South Dublin Community Linkage Fund, to pilot an innovative model of integration and participation through municipal citizenship. This project recently won an EU INTI Transnational Partnership funding for the programme 'Integration through Participation'. He is active in promoting the interests of disadvantaged groups in the area and nationally, contributing submissions to public bodies including, the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights of the Oireachtas, and actively advocating for minority rights in a private and voluntary capacity. Mr. Esebamen obtained a combined honours degree in Political Science and Public Administration (BSc) from the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria in 1994; and Masters of Development Studies from the University College Dublin in 2002. He is currently on the Doctorate in Governance Programme in School of Law, Queen's University Belfast

Fiona McGaughey, Research and Policy Officer, NCCRI. Fiona McGaughey is Research and Policy Officer with the NCCRI. Fiona has an honours degree in Law with French from Queen's University of Belfast and a Masters in Human Rights Practice from Curtin University in Western Australia. Her previous post was Substantive Equality Project Officer with the Equal Opportunity Commission in Perth, Western Australia. Fiona was also a board member of the Centre for Advocacy Support and Education for Refugees in Perth. In 2005, she coordinated and presented the Australian NGO report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Philip McKinley is Chairperson of the Africa Centre and Church of Ireland Hard Gospel Project Officer for the Republic of Ireland. He is also founding member and secretary of the Discovery Gospel Choir, Ireland's first integrated Gospel choir. He has a keen interest in African, religious and youth affairs. He was President of the Trinity College Dublin One World Society, where he also completed a degree in Theology. His final year dissertation was on new movements in African Theology. He has traveled to Uganda and Sudan a number of times with the Church Mission Society of Ireland. He is involved in a number of Christian integration initiatives including the Discovery project and the All-Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism. He was invited by the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr John Neill, to be co-author of the booklet 'Welcoming Angels'. He has been a board member of Africa Centre since 2004 and has a special interest in African youth issues.

Salome Mbugua Henry is a native of Kenya and has been living in Ireland for the last 12 years. She has over 17 years experience of working with disadvantaged and marginalised groups especially women, children and the youth, in Kenya, Uganda and Ireland. Her background is in social worker and gender equality. Salome is the founder of AkiDwA (The African Women's Network Ireland) and currently National director. As a consultant she has developed and delivered a range of training programs targeted at both the migrant and indigenous communities in Ireland on topics such as personal and life skills, Equality and Diversity, anti racism and Inter-culturalism. Salome holds a masters degree on Equality studies from UCD

Pamela Chiriseri is a native of Zimbabwe and has been living in Ireland for over 5 years. She has been working with AkiDwA as a volunteer since 2001 and is now the Support worker for AkiDwA in a project that they are working in partnership with Business in the Community (BITC) - Employment and training for Parents of Irish born Children (EPIC). The Department Justice Equality Reform funds this project. She is a founder member of Women of Multi-culture Balbriggan and has delivered training to women groups and to service providers.

Monica Anne Brennan is Regional Coordinator at Integrating Ireland where she works to support member organisations and develop networking and training activities. As part of this work she organises the Working Group on Capacity Building and Funding for New Community Led organisations. She has previously worked as a Development Officer for the Public Health Alliance of Ireland, the Irish Forum for Global Health and Coordinator of the 'From the Margin Project' at the

National Women's Council of Ireland. Over last 20 years she has volunteered and worked with a variety of projects and campaigns in Ireland and Canada advocating on issues of equality, anti-racism, women's rights, health and HIV/AIDS.

Appendix (3): Conference Evaluation Form

Africa Centre/AkiDwA Conference
Royal Dublin Hotel, Dublin 1
Thursday 26 October 2006

We would be grateful if you would fill in this form to provide us with feedback on this conference.

1. **Please show whether you agree or disagree with these statements about the conference** (tick one box only for each statement)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The conference aims were well met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The conference met my own expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The discussions were clear and easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The group work was useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall the conference was a good experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write any comments explaining your responses to above statements

2. In your own words, what did you learn at this conference?

3. Please make any other comments about the conference

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation

Appendix (4): Conference Registration Form

Name: -----

Organisation (if applicable): -----

Address: -----

Telephone: -----

Email: -----

Please indicate in order of preference the workshop you would like to attend using numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 where 1 is your first choice:

- Participation in employment
- Political participation and the 2007 general elections
- Immigration, Residence and protection scheme
- Funding and Resources for black and minority ethnic-led organisations

Please indicate below if you have any special dietary or other access requirements

CONFERENCE FEES

Conference fee per person, including lunch (fee to be made payable by cheque or postal order to AkiDwA)

€50 Statutory Agencies/Government Departments, educational Institutions

€30 NGOs and Community Organisations

€20 Individual (waged)

€10 Individual (unwaged)

Some bursaries will be available to support the participation of individuals who may not otherwise be able to attend. If you would like to apply for a bursary, please contact Africa Centre or AkiDwA for details.

Places are strictly limited, so early booking is advised. Please complete the registration form and return with payment by Monday 23rd October 2006 to:

Please return by post or e-mail to:

Africa centre/AkiDwA,

9c Abbey Street Lower,

Methodist Church Building,

Dublin 1

E-mail: info@afriacentre.ie or info@akidwa.ie

Tel: 01-865 6951/814 858

Appendix (5): Participants

Serial No.	First Name	Last Name	Organization Name
1	Abel	Ugba	University of East London
2	Abosedede	Yusuf	
3	Ada	Maduakoh	ProDiverse UK Ltd
4	Addullahi	EI-Tom	NUI Manooth
5	Adesola	Mobolabigi	Women's Health Programme
6	Adesola	Mobolabiji	
7	Ailbhe	Smyth	School of Social Justice UCD
8	Alice	Marry	Comhlámh
9	Ana	Lopes	Cando Community Partnership
10	Anca	Lebu	Cairde
11	Anne	Brennan	Integration Ireland
12	Anne	Brownson	
13	Awa Sanyang	Kennan	Dudlin Multicultural Resource Centre
14	Beauty	Agboonlahor	
15	Binta	Obola	
16	Caroline	Odogwu	
17	Catherine	Butler	
18	Catherine	Naji	Dominican Justice Office
19	Catherine	Mahoro	
20	Celia	Petter	Irish School of Ecumenics
21	Charles	Nyando	TCD
22	Christine	Fizzari	
23	Christine		
24	Ciara	O'Dwyer	
25	Collette	O'Regan	Partners T&T
26	Coral George	Umo	
27	Cynthia	Ejika	
28	David	Joyce	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
29	Declan	Jones	Focus Ireland
30	Delan	Jones	Focus Ireland
31	Derek	O'Halloran	Comhlamh
32	Diane	Grammer	IOM
33	Dier	Tong	Africa Centre
34	Dier	Tong	Africa Centre
35	Dolapo	Olapede	
36	Dolapo	Ogunlaye	
37	Elizabeth	O'Hegarty	Price Water Coopers
38	Esther	Osinuga	
39	Esther	Oyedele	
40	Evelyn	Okoro	
41	F. Mohammed	Ali	
42	Faroq		
43	Fatima	Dielo	
44	Felicia Bosede	Owofuma	
45	Fidele	Mutwarasibo	
46	Fiona	McGaughey	NCCRI
47	Florence	Hegarty	

48	Folashade	Makun	
49	Frances	Francis	
50	Frank	Sammon	Jesuit Community
51	Garrett	Byrne	
52	Genevive	Nwaorisa	
53	Gyslaine	Byavu	Global Ladies
54	Gyslale	Byaru	
55	Henry Nakelet	Opolot	
56	Idrees	Mahmud	Darfu Solidarity Ireland
57	Ifeoma	Okaro	MICF
58	Isilola	Venn	
59	Issa		NCP
60	Jacque	Lobe	
61	Jean-Pierre	Eyanga	Integration Ireland
62	Jennifer	Wallace	NCCRI
63	Jipe	Emmanuel	
64	John	Moyo	Africa Centre
65	Joseph	Mguni	
66	Joseph	Mguni	
67	Joseph	Ntutenezeza	Burundi Drumming Project
68	Juliana	Madunwe	
69	Jummy	Balugon	
70	Kathleen	Connolly	Dept. of Justice Gender Unit
71	Katy	Radford	Irish School of Ecumenics
72	Kemade	Mobayo	
73	L. G	Kilgallen	Irish Anti- Apartheid Movement
74	Letu	Nyabokoto	Children of Soweto
75	Leyla	Shafir	Global Ladies
76	Leyla	Shafir	
77	Lillian	Ricketts Hasan	
78	Lynda	Onuwaha	
79	Majella	Dennehy	
80	Mayokum	Odunaya	
81	Mbemba	Jabbi	Africa Centre
82	Mojisola	Adelegan	
83	Mubarak	Habib	Africa Centre
84	Naomi	Nakpoding	
85	Niall	Crowley	Equality Authority Ireland
86	Nnene Debra	Nnoma	
87	Nobuhle	Nduka	AkiDwa
88	Nomleth	Nyabokoto	Children of Soweto
89	Okoboi Joseph	Innocent	
90	Olaniyan	Adeyunwke	
91	Olubukola	Kilani	
92	Pamela	Chriseri	AkiDwa
93	Pereka	Nyirenda	
94	Philip	Makinley	Africa Centre
95	Philip	Watt	NCCRI
96	Pins	Ojo	
97	Princes	Eza	
98	Prisca	Okoye	

99	Robert A.	Samson	Catholic Youth Care
100	Ruth Breen	Gomez	Comm. After School Project
101	Sabine	Okole	
102	Salome	Olagon	
103	Salome	Mbugua	AkiDwa
104	Siobhan	Madden	Langford
105	Siobhan	O'Hegarty	IOM
106	Solange	Mantho	
107	Soney	Ituen	
108	Sr. Anne	Itotia	
109	Susan	Migunda	
110	Teresia	Njuguna	
112	Tinna	Akinola	AkiDwa
113	Toure	Elhadia	
114	Valentine	Kago	
115	Yasin	Degais	
116	Yemi	Ojo	