

What's next?

Report – NYCI regional networking events for One World Week

In the 2009 annual implementation plan for Intercultural Youth Work (Section Practice Development), the National Youth Council of Ireland is committed to organising regional and national events to promote interculturalism in youth work. One such initiative has been to organize regional networking meetings around the country to promote contact and cooperation between youth work organizations and to introduce participants to One World Week as a project to work on together.

'What's next?' was planned as a direct result of the intercultural outreach work carried out by NYCI. The 'What's doing' intercultural project showcase held around 21 March 2009 highlighted examples of best practice in intercultural youth work in Cork, Dublin and Galway. Participants who attended mentioned a number of barriers to intercultural youth work, and one of the main obstacles was meeting and getting to know minority ethnic communities in the local area. 'What's next?' aimed to give youth work organisations the opportunity to outreach to young people, parents and other members of minority ethnic communities, and establish links with volunteers and

organisations from these communities. It also gave members of minority ethnic groups a chance to ask questions related to youth work and their programmes locally. Both sides were introduced NYCI's development education pack for 'One World Week' which ran 14-21 November 2009, and whose theme was "Just Us or Justice?"



Participants in group work, Monaghan 'What's next?'

The events

During October 2009, three joint events were hosted by the Intercultural Outreach Worker and the Development Education team of NYCI to bring youth services and minority ethnic organizations together in the South East (Waterford, 3 October); the West (Galway, 13 October) and North-East (Monaghan, 20 October). The events were organized with the support of Integrating Ireland, a national network

of minority-ethnic led organizations, and a total of 92 participants attended the three events.

The events were organized as two-hour workshops which began with an introduction to youth work and the local services offering youth work opportunities in the local area. The main part of the event focused on understanding development education and One World Week as a tool to explore global justice issues with young people from all ethnic backgrounds in Ireland. The third section was on best

Groups present their findings, Waterford 'What's next?'



practice in designing an intercultural youth work project, including issues of networking, involving adult from minority-ethnic communities and promoting interculturalism in all aspects of youth work.

The cost

Funding for the 'What's Doing?' events was provided by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the One Foundation and Irish Aid.

The follow-up

1. NYCI organized a full two-hour One World Week training session in all three locations following the 'What's next?' networking meeting. These meetings were open to those who had attended 'What's next?' and other interested youth services, and were generally well attended.
2. Although gauging impact of the networking can be difficult, a number of new partnerships for the One World Week projects were set up, including:
 - Gort No Name Club, Gort Community School and the Brazilian community in Gort, Co. Galway
 - Youth Work Ireland Monaghan and St Patrick's Direct Provision Centre, Monaghan Town, Co. Monaghan
3. A number of minority ethnic communities and youth work services were introduced to One World Week for the first time, and did independent projects, as a direct result of the 'What's next' events:

- Irish Baluba Community, Waterford – attended the NYCI OWW Central Event at the Irish Aid Centre, Dublin
- AFRO Renaissance, Galway
- Brazilian Association, Roscommon
- Congolese Anti-Poverty Network, Dublin
- Africa Caribbean Forum, Cavan
- Pakistani Women’s Group, Roscommon
- Westside Project, Youth Work Ireland Galway engaged with Polish and Slovakian young people.

Many One World Week participants are committed to continuing their involvement in 2010, and saw options of collaborating with local youth work services in a longer time-frame and were keen to be kept informed on other NYCI initiatives and projects.

4. In follow-up with others who attended the events, some spoke of the fact that this had broken down barriers between youth services and minority ethnic communities. One participant stated; *“The networking events have also strengthened our links with others who were present. When we see them at other events, they come and chat or vice versa which would not have happened as much in the past and we are discussing a number of possible follow-on actions.”*

5. Finally NYCI is developing the possibility of promoting interaction and cooperation between youth work organisations and minority ethnic communities around the country in other ways, for instance through a seminar on youth work in the US in Dublin on 17 November, and a seminar given by UCC on their research into the experience of migrant children in Ireland, in Cork on 4 December.