



**STOP
THE
HATE**



THE LGBTQ PRIDE GUARDIAN

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

AUGUST — OCTOBER 2015

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Dear Supporters, Colleagues, Well wishers and Friends,

Pride Equality International (PEI) is thrilled to share our first newsletter. We hope you will take a moment to go through the pages of the newsletter, which highlights our first Photo Voice Project organized in Spain and France with advocacy sessions. PEI remains committed to building a strong movement led by African Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Queer and Intersex young people and we look forward to a continued engagement with a growing community of supporters.



We welcome contributions and suggestions from African Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) people for future editions, the editor can be contacted on Cell Phone Numbers: +34 603734427 / +34 634152506 or Email: info@prideequality.org

Warm Regards,

George Reginald Freeman
Founder and Executive Director

Pride Equality International Organizational Profile

Pride Equality International (PEI) is a non-governmental, non-profitable and non-religious organization that advocates for the promotion and protection of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex human rights. PEI was established 2007 in Freetown, Sierra Leone and 2014 in Barcelona, Spain and Conakry, Guinea. PEI is devoted to creating a vibrant and proactive network of LGBTQI asylum seekers and refugees in Europe and ending violence and all forms of discrimination against African LGBTQI people in Europe and across Africa. PEI promotes, protects and provides services on human rights and access to sexual reproductive health for people regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, race, belief, sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe and Africa. The organization has its headquarter in Spain with representatives in France, Belgium, Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Senegal.

Vision Statement

PEI visualizes a society that respects and promotes fundamental human rights, ensuring that every person has equal rights regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity

Mission Statement

Our mission is to stamp out discrimination, stereotypes, homophobia, transphobia, patriarchal system and raise awareness in order to achieve equal rights for all people.

Organizational Values

- Equality and diversity
- Active youth participation
- Individual freedom and liberties
- Dialogue between stakeholders
- Integrity, Accountability and transparency



Photo Voice Project Workshop in France and Spain

The photo voice workshop was held at **Axel Hotel Barcelona**, Calle Aribau 33, 08011 Barcelona, Spain on Tuesday 29th and Wednesday 30th September 2015. The workshop in France was held at the **Espace Multi-Services de Montargis**, 26 Rue de la Pontonnerie, 45200, Montargis, Region de Centre France on Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th October 2015. We had 10 participants for the Spain workshop and 15 participants for the France workshop. The sessions started at 10:00am and finished at 4:00pm each day in both countries.

Day one of the training commenced with introduction and opening remarks by lead facilitator George Reginald Freeman who introduced Pride Equality International and discussed what the workshop would cover. Bernard talked about the training and encouraged participants to share their knowledge with the rest of their colleagues after the workshop. We also did an introduction game called people bingo wherein, participants and facilitators had to ask each other the questions on the sheet to find a person for each answer, and the first person to complete shouts BINGO.

Participants were asked to list their hopes, fear and expectations for the training and wrote down and posted it on the wall. We also developed ground rules to established safe space during the training exercises. Participants also did a pre-assessment at the start of the workshop wherein all of the participants stated that they have never been in a photo voice workshop. The second session was the confidentiality and trust presentation followed by a trust game called "butterflies and leaves".

Game: butterfly and the leaf – the leaf has to lead the butterfly around the room without them bumping into anything (they have their eyes closed and fingers on the leaf's hand).

At the end of the exercise participants felt vulnerable, trusting and nervous when they were butterfly. Participants who were leaf told us they felt total responsibility, in control, conscious of their duties.

During the activity conversation café participants gave their feedbacks with how relevant the activities was on trust exercise and discussed what trust meant for them.

After tea break session we went on the Image and Identity exercise where participants were given several images in order for them to identify what that image meant to them as a group and then developed a story to support their arguments.



Antonio facilitated the session introduction to camera, where participants were taught how to take quality photos of themselves and gave sample of photography projects he had done before. At the end of the session participants were shown a sample of photo voice and how they can use that as a tool to create their own photos.

After lunch we had the writing workshop where participants were taught how to write their own story and sample of testimonies were also presented as a sketch for them to develop their own individual stories. After the exercise participants started their individual writing sessions.

This activity was followed by the feedback on the writing sessions. There was also a question and answer session.

The workshop climaxed with an evaluation session wherein participants evaluated the workshop with their suggestions and comments.

"PEI Photo voice workshop was an interactive and educative session that gave me the opportunity to share my testimony as I face discrimination based on the color of my skin. I felt so comfortable to share my experience as I felt belonging to a community with PEI" a lesbian in the closet

Photo Voice Project Workshop in France and Spain

On the second day of the workshop participants started with a brief recap. That was followed by a review of the previous workshops lessons. It involved a comprehensive assessment on what participants had learnt previously. It was facilitated by Bernard Wilson. At the end of the assessment participants were allowed to make comments and the answers to the questions were discussed as a team. Further questions were asked and discussed.



After this activity we had the identity and name exercise where participants had to develop their own story with photos to accompany their stories. The facilitators helped participants to edit their stories and develop their final

draft.

After lunch participants presented their final draft and recorded their stories followed by a photography exercise outside the workshop hall. Consent forms were signed by participants wherein some participants declined to share their stories and be photographed. The session ended with post assessment discussion and evaluation forms where filled out by the participants. Day two's session ended with an evaluation, presentation of certificates to participants for the training. The day ended proper with a vote of thanks by one of the participants and a group photo.



Advocacy Sessions in Spain

Pride Equality Director, George Reginald Freeman published an article on the 2nd September 2015 on El Periódico which is a famous newspaper in Spain to advocate for better services and opportunities for LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees in Spain. Please read newspaper weblink in Spanish: <http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/barcelona/ser-refugiado-ser-pobre-4473196>



On the same day, I was invited to a talk show on the TV8 to talk about my story and also advocate for the rights of LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees in Spain. Please watch the TV interview on the weblink: <http://www.8tv.cat/8aldia/videos/el-drama-dels-refugiats-en-primera-persona/>

Pride Equality International presented a paper on the situation of African LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees with key recommendations to the Spanish government at the Seminar on Applications for asylum on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity organized by UNHCR in partnership with Council of Europe on the 20th October 2015 at the General Council of Spanish Legal Professional.





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This newsletter is published with funding support from:

