

Students' voices...

Most of us know that women and people with disabilities are discriminated in the whole world. The seminar ("Supportive Structures for Women with Disabilities in so Called Developing Countries") was structured as a block course with discussions, literature reviews and presentations a total runtime of 23,5 hours held in 5 blocked sessions. It gave us the chance to deepen our knowledge about women with disabilities in developing countries which have to withstand a triple disadvantage. These women mostly belong to poor families, are having a disability and are living in a community with gender based discrimination.

We heard about topics like gender, violence on women with disabilities, NGOs, access to health-care and policies - and afterwards we got the chance to discuss about it and all of our questions got answered.

We got many insights from different national and international guest speakers who discussed the situation in different countries. For us it was one of the most interesting parts when Yirgashewa Bekele Abdi, Tewodros Getachew from Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) and the disability officers from the University of Vienna and the University of Manchester shared experiences, major problems, and challenges of females with disabilities.

This was very good to raise the awareness of everyone towards the rights of women with disabilities and there is so much to learn about these topics. More people should get the possibility to extend their understanding in a course like ours to eliminate prejudices and learn how to handle disability issues in developing countries. There is no better way to get in touch with topics as to learn it from people who are coming directly from the concerned countries.

The only improvement proposal for the hopefully planned next seminar would be to also give women with disabilities the chance to express themselves as experts in matters that affect them personally.

All in all it could be said that we highly benefited from the experiences from the experts and we would visit a seminar like this anytime again.

Thank you!

Julia Zane and Rene Maier
Participants