

# Inclusive Voluntary Service– “weltwärts alle inklusive!”



## Documentation of a Workshop for “weltwärts” Partner Organisations

**weltwärts**  
Der Freiwilligendienst des Bundesministeriums für  
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung

**ENGAGEMENT  
GLOBAL**  
Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen



**bezev.de**  
Behinderung und  
Entwicklungs-  
zusammenarbeit e.V.

## Content

I. Introduction.....	3
II. Program.....	5
III. Summary of Contents.....	8
Opening Words.....	8
International Volunteering – Active Citizenship – International Mobility.....	10
(International) Volunteering – Everyone Inclusive?! .....	12
Pilot Project for an Inclusive Voluntary Service .....	16
“weltwärts inclusive for everyone!” .....	16
Presentation of Participating Organisations.....	20
What is Inclusion all about?.....	21
Interviews with Volunteers with Disability .....	31
Profiles of Volunteers with Disability & Is my Volunteer Post Accessible for Volunteers with Disability?.....	32
Open Space.....	41
Inclusive Volunteering - Mission (Im)Possible? .....	43
Accra Rehabilitation Centre, Ghana Blind Union & Kwame Nkruma Mausoleum, Arts Museum .....	49
Reverse Program .....	55
Concrete Steps for Future Cooperation/ Networking.....	57
National Cultural Dance Ensemble.....	59

### Your contact persons:

Stéphanie Fritz (kontakt@bezev.de)

Rebecca Daniel (alleinklusive@bezev.de)

Behinderung und Entwicklungszusammenarbeit e.V. (bezev)

Wandastraße 9 // 45136 Essen // Tel: 0201-1788963// www.bezev.de



## **I. Introduction**

*How can we make the volunteer service weltwärts inclusive for everyone? Why do persons with a disability rarely go abroad with this German voluntary program? Which challenges do people with disability face when they want to do a volunteer service abroad? What kind of chances and opportunities does an inclusive volunteer service entail? Are there already any good practices or examples of inclusive volunteering? And what do those volunteers with a disability who have already gone abroad report? Within the workshop we discussed these and a lot more questions and topics with about 20 representatives of weltwärts partner organisations from eight different countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia).*

The first workshop day was opened with a speech by the Executive Secretary of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities, Mr. Max Vardon. It was then continued by clarification of basic framing topics of the workshop. We discussed questions like: What exactly is a volunteer service and what is the motivation for young adults to go abroad and volunteer? Is the volunteer program weltwärts already inclusive for every young adult – regardless of whether the person has a disability or not?

Following these clarifications *bezev* introduced its pilot project “weltwärts alle inklusive!” (engl. “worldwards everyone inclusive!”) in which context this workshop took place as one of the three partner workshops of the same kind (one in India for Asian partners, one in Mexico for Latin-American partners and this one in Ghana for African partners).

The first workshop day ended after a comprehensive presentation by each participant about the work of their own organisations. In the form of a market place everyone had the chance to present both information and products from their projects.

The second workshop day started with a presentation and intensive discussion about “inclusion” - the concept itself and its meaning in the participants’ countries. This built the ground for common understanding in further discussions and for the equal use of the term. Afterwards former volunteers with a disability got a voice in the workshop in the form of video messages. One deaf volunteer signed about her voluntary support in Ghana and another volunteer in a wheelchair presented his volunteering experience in Thailand. In order to discuss about inclusion not just as a vision but also to start letting it become reality, an intensive peer counselling phase started then. For that reason *bezev* presented four profiles of possible volunteers with a disability. Their profiles were the basis for group discussions and peer counselling. The question was: “Can a person with these abilities and needs volunteer in your organisation? Or project? If not, why? And if possible, how?” The results were presented at the workshop panel.

“Is our project a mission impossible?” we asked on the third day of our workshop. “Are the circumstances so discriminating that an inclusive volunteer service is not possible?” These were the main topics we talked about during a “fishbowl discussion”, a method that is similar to a role play.

In the afternoon we made an excursion to Several Disabled Peoples Organisations that share one compound of the Accra Rehabilitation Centre. We met representatives from the Ghana Blind Union and the Ghana Federation of the Disabled.

The last day of the workshop focussed on challenges regarding guidance and mentoring of volunteers. After presentations and intensive discussions about the theoretical models of “culture shock”, “comfort zone” and “group dynamic”, a focus was made concretely on additional challenges that might occur with volunteers with a disability. Which situations do they face abroad and what kind of pedagogical guidance might they need then?

On the last day we also talked about how to stay in contact and about further ways of networking.

Thanks to the great support of Voice Ghana this workshop was a great success. We want to express our gratitude for this! The very open and fruitful discussions among the participants and the comprehensive and diverse contents of the workshop are written down in this documentation. Thank you all that have participated. The workshop was very enriching for the success of our common vision “voluntary services – inclusive for everyone!”.

## II. Program

<b>8<sup>th</sup> February</b>	
Until 18.00	Arrival and Check-in
18.00	Welcome Greetings By the Coordinators from <i>bezev</i> By the Director of <i>Voice Ghana</i>
19.00	Getting Together with Dinner
<b>9<sup>th</sup> February</b>	
09.00	Breakfast
10.00	Opening of Conference By the Executive Secretary of the <i>National Council of Persons with Disabilities</i> By <i>bezev</i>
10.15	Introduction of the Program
10.30	Introduction and Motivational Input: International Volunteering – Active Citizenship – International Mobility
11.00	Workshop-Panel: (International) Volunteering – Everyone inclusive?!
12.00	Coffee Break
12.30	Presentation: Pilot Project for an Inclusive Voluntary Service “Weltwärts alle inklusive!”
13.30	Break with Lunch
15.00	Marketplace of Organisations
17.00	Summary and End of the Day
17.30	Leisure time
19.00	Getting Together with Dinner

<b>10<sup>th</sup> February</b>	
09.00	Breakfast
10.00	Review and Topics of the Day
10.15	Workshop-Panel: What is Inclusion all about?
11.30	Video Messages: Interviews with Volunteers with Disability
12.00	Coffee Break
12.30	“Peer Counseling” with Profiles of Volunteers Is my Volunteer Post accessible for Volunteers with Disability? (Mutual exchange about potentials and possible barriers.)
13.30	Break with Lunch
15.00	Continuation of “Peer Counseling”
16.30	Presentation of results of “Peer Counseling”: Possible Volunteer Posts
17.00	Summary and End of the Day
17.30	Leisure time
19.00	Getting Together with Dinner
<b>11<sup>th</sup> February</b>	
09.00	Breakfast
10.00	Review and Topics of the Day
10.15	“Fishbowl” Discussion: Inclusive Volunteering - Mission (Im)Possible?
13.00	Break with Lunch
13.45	Excursion Accra Rehabilitation Centre and meeting with the leadership of Ghana Federation of the Disabled, Ghana Blind Union, Ghana Society of the Physically Disabled, Ghana National Association of the Deaf

about 17.00	Sightseeing Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and Art Centre (Ghana Handicrafts)
19.00	Getting together with Dinner
<b>12<sup>th</sup> February</b>	
09.00	Breakfast
10.00	Review and Topics of the Day
10.15	Theory (presentation) and Practice (experiences): Challenges with Volunteers Pedagogical Guidance (Tutoring and Mentoring)
12.00	Coffee Break
12.30	Continuation Challenges and Pedagogical Guidance
13.30	Break with Lunch
15.00	Reverse Program – everyone inclusive?!
16.00	Further Ideas and Concrete Steps for Future Cooperation/ Networking
17.00	Summary, Feedback & Farewell
19.00	Getting together with Dinner & Cultural Program

### **III. Summary of Contents**

09.02./ 10:00/ Opening Words

#### **Max Vardon (National Council for Persons with Disability)**

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

it's good to be here with you and I trust you're all eagerly awaiting the start of what should be an interesting if not exciting Workshop. I was asked to say only a few words about the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD) and any related matters so I will try to be brief. The NCPD was born out of Ghana's Disability Act of 2006, which was the culmination of sustained pressure and advocacy efforts by the Disability Community to enact legislation to Protect the Rights and Promote the Interests of Persons With Disability.

Specifically it seeks Inclusion for the estimated 20% of the population with a disability. The NCPD is expected to do this by formulating National Policies on Disability and coordinating Action and the various Initiatives in the Disability space. Thus the Structure of the Governing Board (supported by a Secretariat of which I am the current head) acknowledges Government's current inability to provide adequately for the Disability Community and recognises the need for Public/Private Partnerships to do so, by providing a forum for Dialogue and Joint Action between Government (with 6 Board representatives from Ministries of Health, Education, Gender, Employment, Local Government and the Department of Social Welfare) and Civil Society Organisations (also with 6 Board representatives from the Disability Community – GFD, GBU/SightSavers, MenHSoc, ShareCare, Leprosarium & Employers' Association).

One of the key challenges that needs to be understood is that much of the Disability Challenge in fact involves not the 20%, but the 80% nominally without disability, whose beliefs, attitudes and decisions impact so adversely on the Disability Community. Nonetheless, the 20% also need support and encouragement, and I imagine most of us are probably here to help deliver some of that support.

In fact the NCPD just yesterday concluded a 5-day mission with the Starkey Hearing Foundation dubbed Gift of Hearing Mission Ghana 2014 in which over 2,000 beneficiaries were fitted with Hearing Aids to improve their prospects and quality of life. Working together side-by-side on this project were some 35 Volunteers each from the USA and from Ghana.



Though the nominal formal objective was to offer the Gift of Hearing, Founder Bill Austin recounted one of his most memorable missions being one to Palestine involving Israeli volunteers who were initially very anxious about going. In the course of the programme, with its unavoidable close proximity and physical contact, both sides were obliged to acknowledge their common humanity, and their views of each other altered significantly.

I was reminded of the experience of jumping into a swimming pool; in one way or another, both bodies are altered in volume or value. For this is a truism of life.

We are taught in School that  $1+1=2$ ; but this holds only if there is no interaction between the two elements. Life has taught me that  $1+1=3$ ; for inevitably there IS an interaction and some kind of exchange and New Birth when we engage one another, for we are all unique as are the paths we are destined to follow. A maxim of History teaches us that Rome was not built in a day, but omits to mention that nor was it built by one person; and the evolution of planetary life offers a role to all.

When Madiba Nelson Mandela passed away last year, one statement that resonated strongly with me among all the International Commentary and Tributes was a quotation from Marianne Williamson: "We are born to Make Manifest the Glory of God that is Within Us". This is our Special Gift to the world that we all have embedded in our Beings, whether we are Scientists making Discoveries to benefit mankind, or helpless babies evoking Vulnerability and invoking Care and Protectiveness from others.

Ultimately all that we CAN offer one another is our Time, Attention and Endeavour; sometimes known as PRESENCE when the endeavour is the quiet focus of Service with Humility.

For most of us, when we avail ourselves of the opportunity to be Of Service to our Fellow Man, we Feel Good. We feel good because we are Experiencing, Expressing and Making Manifest a bit more of the Glory of God that is Within Us. Let us all endeavour to render Quality Service.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your Time and Attention and wish you Joy, Success and Fulfilment in your Endeavours.

**International Volunteering – Active Citizenship – International Mobility**

*What are voluntary services all about? Why do young persons decide to work on a voluntary basis in their own country or abroad? What motivates young adults to participate in the developmental program weltwärts? And what do they and their project posts gain from this commitment? Those questions were covered in this morning session and voluntary services were discussed as an underlying concept of the whole workshop.*

Weltwärts is a volunteer service program. A volunteer service is a full time employment which is neither profit- nor training-oriented. It takes place outside school, mostly in non-profit ecological, social, cultural or sporting sectors. The volunteer does not earn a wage. The volunteer service is not a classical employment.

In Germany 35% of all young adults between the age of 14 and 29 (2009, Freiwilligensurvey/ Bertelsmann Stiftung) are engaged in sports clubs, student parliaments, environmental organisations, the church, homework tutoring for children with learning difficulties, municipal youth councils (in political committees) etc.

Concerning international volunteer services the following data is available: In 2013, more than 100.000 young adults were interested in a volunteer service abroad. The number of volunteers actually sent abroad increased within seven years from 5.937 in 2004 to 10.159 in 2010.

Those young adults work for more or less one year within different programs (e.g. weltwärts, work camps, ASA etc.). The regulation of these programs differs depending on whether they are based on public or on private law.

In 2013, wordwards as ministerial program sent almost 4.000 volunteers for at least 6 months to Africa, Asia, Latin America or Eastern Europe. Nearly twice as much as in 2008, at the beginning of the program. All sending organisations together receive around 10.000 applications/ year.



## **What motivates young German adults to become a volunteer abroad?**

I cite some sentences from the letters of application or from conversations:

“I want to engage in social pursuits. I want to do something good. I want to return something to society.”

„I want to paddle my own canoe, I want to test myself and develop my character and personality! “

“After school/ my studies I finally want to do something in practice!”

“In my future working area it is expected that I have spent a certain time abroad.”

### The main issues are:

- Social engagement (Attention: helper’s syndrom)
- Development of personality, search for identity
- Career planning

### In a pedagogic perspective and a political claim the following aspects play a role as well:

- International understanding, experiencing and learning solidarity
- Developing personal relations, friendships and even weddings
- In the context of globalization and injustice: recognizing and assessing political connections; searching, finding and living alternatives
- Questioning the world construction: racism, power relations, “North-South”
- Making up one’s own mind

Of course, there are also a lot more players in a voluntary service:

- Host projects and partner organisations and their background and needs and expectations
- Sending agencies and their background (church, peace or solidarity movement etc.)
- Direct target groups, e.g. deprived children and youth in Kenya, people with disabilities in Ghana (or elsewhere)

## 09.02./ 11.00/ Presentation and Workshop

### **(International) Volunteering – Everyone Inclusive?!**

(If you are interested in receiving the whole presentation, kindly let us know.)

*During this workshop we answered the following questions: Are (international) voluntary services inclusive? Or do they still exclude persons with disabilities? How is it for Germany and how for the participants' countries? The discussion also went beyond talking about inclusion only as a term for people with disability. It stressed that inclusion has to be used as a wide term covering all humans and all features that differ from the majority of society. Therefore, this workshop also touched the question whether persons with such backgrounds as migrational, homosexual etc. can participate equally. A special emphasis was put on the weltwärts program and its reverse component.*

In Germany there are some reports and studies about voluntary commitment, but very little data about the participation of persons with disabilities in voluntary services exists. Regarding international volunteering of persons with disabilities even less data exists.

The voluntary commitment of Germans is constantly increasing, but the commitment of persons with disabilities is merely statistically recorded. It highly depends on gender, family and education status, job profile and age: The number of unemployed people with a lower social and educational status as well as persons with a migratory background who are doing voluntary services is far lower than the average of those groups in German society.

Despite the increasing wishes to offer voluntary services for young people of both sexes, in different situations and with different educational qualifications, this aim could not be attained up to now.

Only few offers of voluntary services are focussed on a special target group. Thus, in 2009, 2% of the offers of voluntary services were explicitly addressed to people with disabilities. There are for example integrative offers in which people with and without disabilities can assist people with disabilities in Germany ("Mittelmang" program).

The weltwärts program is also criticized for its relatively homogenous group of volunteers: the majority are women (68%), especially persons with "Abitur" (A-Level) or another authorization for university (97%) and with a high social background.

However, the aim of the weltwärts program is "to be open for a range of young adults as wide as possible." A completion of compulsory basic secondary schooling combined with a professional training or another equivalent qualification are sufficient to participate in the weltwärts programs. Young adults with disabilities should equally have the possibility to participate. They should be considered as target group and addressed as such.

According to statistics, about 3% of all Germans between 19 and 45 years have a disability. But less than 1% of all weltwärts volunteers have had a disability up to now. This discrepancy in proportion between the average of persons with disabilities in the whole society and their participation in the weltwärts program shows, that their access to this international voluntary service is still significantly unequal.

## **What are the reasons for exclusion and the obstacles in the weltwärts program?**

### Legal Situation:

Costs for participation and care are not covered by the state as “official assistance” during a stay (of more than six weeks) in non- European countries. The social security code underlines that there is no legal right to these allocations. Regarding international voluntary services a lot of questions come up concerning financing of greater needs and necessary requirements due to disability. *Bezev* reckons that these questions have to be answered by the legislator, because according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities aid allocation systems have to ensure that all needs of persons with disabilities are covered regardless of their place of residence.

### Financial Difficulties:

Disabilities cause additional costs which are currently covered by volunteers with disabilities and their families. Due to intense political and lobbying work of *bezev*, a specific budget for extra costs within the weltwärts program exists since January 2014. Additional expenses for volunteers with disability can be reimbursed to the partner and sending organisation by the weltwärts secretary.

### Fully Accessible Information is Missing:

Persons with disabilities often don't know that they can do a voluntary service abroad and what is necessary to do so. This challenge has to be accepted mutually by sending organisations and advice centers. For the time being *bezev* is reaching 10 times more interested persons with disability than before through intensive public relations and providing accessible information within its pilot project.

### Strict Age Limit:

Due to health problems many persons with disabilities possibly need more time to finish school and university. But a weltwärts voluntary service is only open up to the age of 28. Apart from that, there are very few voluntary services for older people. But a lot of above 28-year-olds are already applying for a voluntary service with *bezev*.

### Length of the Assignment:

A weltwärts assignment for 12 months is sometimes too long for a person with a disability. Voluntary services for 6 months are generally also possible in the weltwärts program, but sending and partner organisations normally offer assignments for 12 months because of different reasons.

## Conclusion

Participation as a human right valid for all is a common project that can only be realized commonly by persons with disabilities, the social system and its workers, the government (especially the German Ministry BMZ as cost bearer) as well as sending and partner organisations. The overall conditions have to be adapted to the demands. For a long time, persons with disabilities have been considered as recipients of charitable benefits. But the number of persons with disabilities working as volunteers in different fields of engagement or having the wish do so is constantly increasing. The image of persons with disabilities is changing from aid recipients to helpers. It is necessary to promote this change in the image of people with disabilities – in the sense of an inclusive society.

## Group Work and Discussion

The guiding questions to be discussed were:

1. Are there possibilities for persons with disabilities to work as a volunteer in your country? If yes, which exactly?
2. Do people with disabilities work as a volunteer or employee in your organisation?

These questions were discussed in groups and the following results were presented:

1. Are there possibilities for persons with disabilities to work as a volunteer in your country?
  - Most of the participants saw possibilities for volunteers with disabilities, be it through church or governmental programs. Also south-south-exchange between different African countries was mentioned as a possibility for persons with and without disability.
  - Some participants could answer the question with a clear “Yes” because they have made good experiences with volunteers with disabilities.
  - Some didn't answer definitely, because they needed more information about different types of disabilities.
  - Some participants said the possibility to volunteer depends on the kind of disability the person has.
  - Some participants pointed out that motivation, desire to volunteer and the talents of a young person applying for a volunteer service count more than the disability.
  - The participants believe it is possible, because all countries have a national policy to include people with disability; only the implementation is not fulfilled yet. Especially society and its perception of persons with disabilities needs to change. Volunteers with disabilities contribute to this change of image.

## 2. Do people with disabilities work as a volunteer or employee in your organisation?

- Some of the participants had experiences with employing a person with a disability as a volunteer. Those included both international and local volunteers.
- Some of the participants had experiences with employing a person with a disability as a staff member.

## 3. Further Topics of the Discussions

- The strict age limit of weltwärts is a problem, especially for volunteers with disability and for so-called reverse volunteers, coming from abroad to Germany. The latter finish school earlier than pupils in Germany, while people with disability in Germany often come to the point of deciding to go for volunteer service abroad later than other young adults. Therefore the weltwärts program should on the one hand make it possible also for younger persons from abroad to participate and come to Germany right after graduating secondary school like German volunteers can do. On the other hand, weltwärts should also be ready for older volunteers with or without disability and consider not only the biological age, but also the emotional and social age of the volunteers.
- The role of a volunteer should be named clearly in future. The term “fully employed” in the description of volunteers’ tasks can lead to misunderstanding of their role in the host organisation. Some call them “supporters.”
- Voluntary services are not a real and long existing concept in the south. Therefore, there might be a lack of understanding existing in the participants’ countries regarding the meaning of thousands of volunteers from Germany entering the countries. This can lead – or rather has up to now led – to visa problems. The partners’ recommendation to the weltwärts program is to get into deeper contact with the German representatives in the host country like the German embassies.

09.02./ 12.30/ Presentation

## **Pilot Project for an Inclusive Voluntary Service**

### **“weltwärts inclusive for everyone!”**

(If you are interested in receiving the whole presentation, kindly let us know.)

*In order to enable more persons with disability to do a weltwärts voluntary service abroad, bezev started a pilot project in September 2011, which is called “weltwärts alle inclusive” (engl. worldwards for everyone). This workshop here was part of the pilot project, which was introduced in this session briefly.*

*bezev* is a registered sending organisation for the weltwärts program, and wants to enable persons with and without disabilities to take part in a voluntary service equally. Therefore *bezev* aims at exchange between partner projects of different German sending organisations and with different voluntary programs. Long-term goal is the development of a concept for an inclusive voluntary program.

All this is happening in cooperation between partner organisations or project posts and their German sending organisations.



Representatives of partner or hosting organisations are a basic key for the success of the project. They are the experts for possible project posts, for existing barriers and for finding solutions within the project. Only with their agreement it will be possible for volunteers with and without disabilities to take part in this project equally. That is why we hope that we sensitize, encourage and inspire one another at this workshop.

The role of *bezev* within this process is comprehensive. With the project “weltwärts alle inclusive” *bezev* wants to encourage young people with and without disabilities to take part in a voluntary program abroad. We search for possible project posts and identify which volunteers (with which disability and ability) would fit. Also *bezev* organizes the preparation for the commitment abroad and supports the volunteers pedagogically during their service. In addition, *bezev* is looking for solutions regarding greater needs and extra costs and work, for example if one volunteer needs personal assistance.

*bezev* neither wants to create special and separate working places for volunteers with disabilities nor wants to become a special sending organisation that is only sending volunteers with disability abroad. In fact, *bezev* wants to involve as many



German sending organisations and their partners abroad as possible in every step of the process. Project posts in all sectors of the weltwärts program should be opened for volunteers with disability, i.e. sports, agriculture, health, education etc.

The financial support of the project comes from a German foundation (Stiftung Wohlfahrtspflege NRW) and the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ/ weltwärts-program). It is taking place from September 2011 to December 2014. In the year 2013 an essential aim was to send out an inclusive group of 10 persons with disabilities and 15 without disabilities into projects of different sending organisations in all areas of work.

### **What has already been done within the pilot project?**

#### Four “Expert Conversations” with Sending Organisations:

Four workshops with interested German sending organisations were held from January to March 2012. The participants were open minded but also showed scepticism regarding the plan to make weltwärts inclusive. In general they showed willingness to talk to their partner organisations to find out if they were interested and open minded, too. So far, *bezev* has already started close cooperation with some of those sending organisations and their hosting organisations. Together we worked out profiles of possible working places, so that in the future also applicants with disability are able to find a fitting project post. The sending organisations also showed gratitude that *bezev* is able to focus on the topic „inclusion of volunteers with disability“, which is a task they often feel overtaxed by in their daily work. With its time and concentration on inclusion *bezev* is therefore able to support interested sending and partner organisations and share experiences and good practices with them that are helpful in the process.

#### Three Workshops und Various Conversations with Persons with Disabilities:

Since the beginning of 2012 *bezev* has actively addressed the target group, e.g. through important networks and media which people with disabilities use. We also started and deepened contacts to different Disabled Peoples Organisations, to universities and to schools where also people with disabilities study. To address the target group, we created short video clips, presentations and accessible information materials. We would like to show you some of them later on. What appeared to be one of the most important things, was to involve peers (in this case persons with disability who already did a voluntary service abroad).

During discussions with persons with disabilities it became obvious that a lot of them wish to go abroad but knowledge among them about the possibilities and conditions is missing. It was obvious that they have received little support from official sides in Germany so far in order to bring their stay abroad into realization.

### Applications of Volunteers with Disability:

In autumn 2013 the application phase took place and the number of persons with disability interested in doing a voluntary service increased more than 10 times in comparison to the previous years. This was a great success reached within the project. Conditions and criteria for the choice of the volunteers and for the following matching process (i.e. finding a suitable project post) did not differ from the requirements for volunteers without disability. *bezev* focuses always on the abilities the volunteers have, be it language skills, technical knowledge, soft skills like intercultural sensibility and openness, responsibility, endurance, independence or the ability to deal with conflicts; or be it even special skills volunteers with disability have, e.g. reading Braille or speaking sign language.

### One International Workshop in Essen (Germany) with all Involved Actors:

In June 2012 *bezev* held an international workshop in Germany. During three days an active and enriching exchange among sending organisations, partner organisations, politicians, people with disability and further interested persons took place. Partner organisations that participated in this workshop had surprisingly many experiences with volunteers with disabilities. They were very open to accept further of them. In collaboration with persons with disabilities, other participating organisations and politicians important elements for an overall concept were worked out. Participating Disabled Peoples' Organisations offered their legal assistance and if necessary their help to sue for financing of the additional needs of volunteers with disabilities.

### Exchange with Political Representatives:

Not only at this international workshop but also accompanying to the whole project so far, *bezev* has fostered exchange with politicians in Germany. There is an openness within different ministries to support the idea of inclusive volunteering also with financial and juridical support. But this is still a long process. The BMZ/ weltwärts program showed a willingness to finance additional needs for persons with disabilities within their voluntary service.

### Workshops with Partner Organisations in Asia, Africa and Latin-America:

Until spring 2013 different workshops with representatives of interested partner organisations took place. *bezev* had the chance to think about inclusion in voluntary services at six different workshops with many weltwärts partner organisations of Asian, Latin-American and African countries. *bezev* also organized two partner workshops of the same kind like the present one for Latin-American weltwärts partner organisations in October 2012 in Mexico and for Asian partners in February 2013 in India. Also on these workshops the huge openness and scope of experiences already existing amongst weltwärts partners became clearly visible.

### Preparation and Guidance of the Voluntary Service of an Inclusive Group:

Until summer 2013 *bezev* prepared the voluntary service of the inclusive group of 10 volunteers with, and 15 volunteers without disability. Solutions for the funding of

greater needs and higher costs within that process were found in most cases. One basic core of this project was then the exit of those young adults in the summer and their service abroad. Their farewell was celebrated together with the mayor of Essen and the General Secretary of the German Ministry BMZ with a “kick-off” event in June 2013. During their 6- to 24- month stay abroad that is in progress right now, *bezev* supports and accompanies the project posts and partner organisations they are placed in.

## **What will still follow?**

### Evaluation and Image Campaign:

In October 2014 a conference of evaluation and finalization of the pilot project will take place. This conference will be held in Germany and will inform the German society about the project’s process. An image campaign with great placards and videos from the returned volunteers with disability will be started for that reason, too. The volunteers with disability themselves, as role models, will be an integral part for multiplying the idea of inclusive volunteering among young adults with disability.

### Conceptualisation:

In order to ensure the sustainability of the project, all documentations and evaluations will be conceptualised. At the end of the pilot project *bezev* will publish a handbook and guiding manuals that can be used by all interested actors. The inclusive concept can also be helpful for other international voluntary programs.

### Workshops for Mentors and Tutors?

If wished and needed by the participating partner organisations, seminars for mentors and tutors can be organized and held by *bezev*. Because all participating actors in this project, especially the supervising and guiding persons within the projects should be prepared and sensitized in the best possible way. With these workshops they would be able to share their experiences, their sorrows and their ideas and good practices among each other.

## **Conclusion**

This all is and has been a long and intensive process. We think, that through this process a change of roles can happen within the society: people with disability will not any more only be seen as “the needy”, but also as active citizens who are equally like others committed politically to society and to global common goods. *bezev* would like to go this step together with the partner countries and projects. Therefore within this workshop it can be found out what the partners’ framework conditions and recommendations for action are. These aspects should be brought together with the individual needs of the volunteers with disability and their wishes for their voluntary service; aiming at a good match between needs and conditions of both.

09.02./ 15.00/ Market Place of Organisations  
Presentation of Participating Organisations



- AFS Kenya
- Astovot, Togo
- Buea School for the Deaf, Cameroon
- Catholic Diocese of Kumbo, Cameroon
- Catholic Diocese of Ndola, Zambia
- Centre d'Intégration scolaire et Professionnelle pour Aveugles et Malvoyants (CISPAM), Cameroon
- Children We Care Foundation, Ghana
- Grace Fellowship School-Kampala, Uganda
- Kampala School for Physically Handicapped, Uganda
- Lake Victoria Disability Centre, Tanzania
- Renaissance Education for Development (Red) House, Tanzania
- Reverend Father John Special School, Ghana
- Sparrow Schools Educational Trust
- Voice Ghana, Ghana
- Salvation Army School for the Deaf, Ghana

## 10.02./ 10.15/ Presentation and Workshop

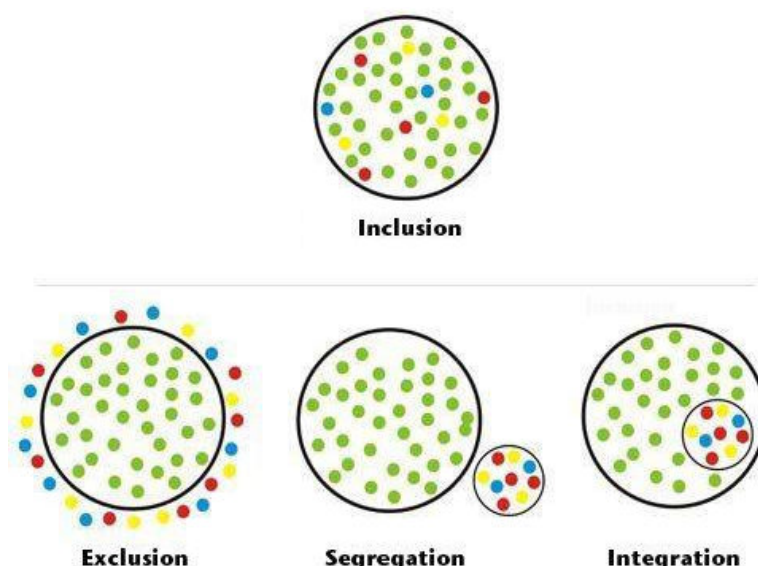
### What is Inclusion all about?

(If you are interested in receiving the whole presentation, kindly let us know.)

*Do we all mean the same when we are talking about inclusion? Is there an internationally common understanding of the term? What does inclusion mean in Germany and in the partner countries of the weltwärts program? In the following section we wanted to introduce the subject as it is seen in Germany and enable the group to create a common base for further discussions about inclusion on the workshop.*

In Germany the discussion about inclusion is accompanied by the terms integration that has existed for a longer time before and is still used in the field of disability. Depending on the area and target group we are talking about either integration or inclusion are terms used in service delivery and politics.

The call for inclusion has mainly replaced the discussion about integration of persons with disabilities in Germany. Today the debate is mainly about inclusion in school, in free time and at work. In the following section we would like to give a short impression about the development in Germany from exclusion via separation and integration towards inclusion of people with disability in all areas of human life and society.



### **What does Inclusion mean?**

Inclusion is considered as a human right and as a model, which incorporates a special view on society: Heterogeneity and diversity are seen as “normal”. Therefore features that differ from majority (e.g. disability) must not lead to exclusion. Inclusion addresses to all minorities that were until now excluded from society and therefore to all features that lead to discrimination in a specific society (e.g. gender, race, cast, sexual orientation, migrational background.). Inclusion is a vision of a just society that

gives each and everyone the same opportunities to participate in all areas of human life equally. It is based on an understanding of “normality”, that takes into account the fact that we are all different and that heterogeneity and diversity are normal in a society. Instead of focussing on people’s deficits, the strength and capability of every single person are in the centre of interest and considered as a resource for a society of diversity. Inclusion requires the whole society and its institutions to adapt to the “normal difference” of all people.

When we come to the inclusion of people with disability it is important to talk about the “UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” (UNCRPD), an important reference document in which the term inclusion has reached international validity.

### **What does the UN-CRPD say?**

This convention, concluded in 2006, came into force on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, 2008, with the ratification of 20 states. Up to now it has been ratified by about 110 states, among them Germany on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, 2009.

In the UN-Convention the signatory states ensure to implement human rights, enable self-determination and support participation of persons with disabilities in all areas of human life. Thus, the UN-Convention aims at the target to enable every single person to fully develop his/ her capabilities and self esteem. Rights of persons with disabilities are equal to those of other people, the right to freedom, independent life style and education. For example they have the right to participation in political and public life, to personal mobility and participation in international cooperation. These rights are, among many other rights, written down in the 50 articles of the UN-Convention and are therefore legally binding.

### **What has been done and what has to be done in the future?**

Can we already speak about an inclusive society in Germany? Are persons with disabilities already members of society with equal rights? Can they participate in all areas of human life? No matter whether we look at the world of work or the education system in Germany, it is obvious that we have a system of help for persons with disabilities that is extremely separating (broad).

Within this short time we can not give an insight into each area of life and it’s accessibility for people with disability. Therefore we concentrate at the education system that can be seen exemplary for the situation of people with disability in Germany.

In this context we come back to the chart we showed at the beginning of the presentation. In Germany, children with disability are for example educated in special schools. There are almost no common schools for children with and without disabilities. This is separation! This violation of human rights in the German educational system has already been criticized in 2007 by professor Vernor Munoz, the special correspondent for the implementation of the UN-Convention.

In order to explain to you the German resistance towards the concept of inclusion better, I want to present you a further fact: The term “inclusion” has been translated permanently in the wrong sense with the word “Integration” (engl. integration),

although the right translation would be “Inklusion” (engl. inclusion). But this has large consequences since the engagement to the internationally binding concept of “inclusion” does not seem to be assured any more. Instead of educating all children together right from the beginning (in the sense of inclusion), the German educational system is divided into several parts, leading to the separation of children with disabilities. Just for children with disabilities there are about 8 types of schools focussing on different special supports: Emotional and social development, hearing, seeing, learning, language skills, mental development, physical and motor development as well as severe disability. Parallel to this exists the regular educational system.

In order to promote „integration“, single special classes for children with disabilities are now established in regular schools. In some cases children with disabilities are also educated in regular classes with children without disabilities. In this case we talk about integration.

But one aspect is still missing: “keeping in mind” children with disabilities in regular schools “right from the beginning”. Only then we can talk about inclusion.

The example of the school system runs through all other sectors of human life. Especially at the job market people with disabilities are almost completely excluded.

### **How to implement inclusion?**

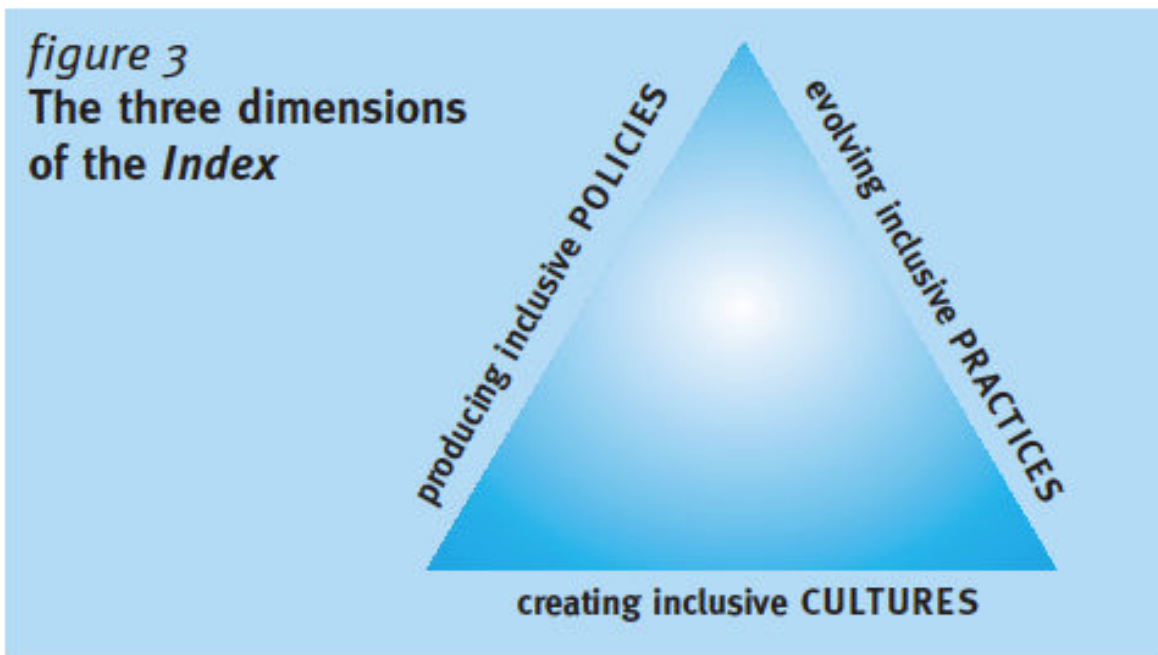
On the one hand we consider it Germany’s duty to hold on to universal concepts such as inclusion. On the other hand we consider it indispensable to exchange views about this term at an international level. With this in mind we are very keen to listen to our exchange.

As said before, the wrong translation has been criticized many times and also at international level, nevertheless, resistance is strong. And at this moment already, much criticism about inclusion and a slow intention of it’s implementation from different sides can be observed. Thus, it seems that the demand for common education and closure of special schools is considered as a possible cost-cutting measure by national politics. But inclusion does not require fewer resources but redistribution of existing resources and possibly more public financing at the beginning.

Moreover, the model of inclusion demands a shift of consciousness in all minds. This cannot be decreed by law or the engagement of few people. The current challenge is to get (with the help of the concept of inclusion) to a discourse about the question of how to deal with differences. Inclusion can only happen through common exchange and effort of politics, science and practice.

In order to implement inclusion of people with disability on district level or in the education system an instrument has been invented by Tony Booth and Mel Ainscow in 2002 - the “index for inclusion”. This index shows that inclusion has to happen within three different dimensions: An inclusive society and its institutions root in inclusive cultures, is rich of inclusive structures and has developed inclusive practices. Successful implementation of inclusion therefore requires measures on all three dimension.





(cf. Booth, Ainscow 2002: Index for inclusion)

Furthermore inclusion should be targeted in the form of a twin-track approach. Mainstreaming disability within all areas of society and all its institutions is and remains the most important aim. But on the other hand, specific approaches to inclusion of persons with disabilities in society can accompany the mainstreaming and lead to faster and further results. For example, the pilot project “worldwards for everyone” bears the chance to focus on volunteers with disability for a certain time with higher and specific resources, while the overall aim remains to foster inclusion within all German sending and their partner organisations.

### **What is Disability?**

Speaking about inclusion of people with disability, one should get clear what he/she means exactly when talking about “disability”. What exactly does the term refer to – especially in an international context?

There is no international binding definition of disability. Even in Germany a variety of definitions are used, e.g. within different laws or within the scientific community. One of the reasons is for sure, that what is considered as “disabled” or “normal” depends on the context in which the terms are used. The definition of disability therefore is not stable, but relative - highly depending on culture, history or even situation.

Nevertheless the UNCRPD offers a definition that the international community has agreed on and that at least the signatory states seem to support. According to the convention disability “results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” (UNCRPD, preamble)



In the center of interest therefore should be the cultural and individual understanding of “normality” that creates barriers on a physical, economical, social or informative level. Instead of focusing on the causes of a restriction or handicap, the concentration should shift to those barriers that make the handicap become a socially caused disability. According to the UN-Convention and its human- rights- based model of disability, the right to inclusion of all humans in all areas of life has to stand in the center of attention. So everything needed in order to fulfill that human right to equal participation of persons with disabilities needs to be provided and according barriers have to be prevented or removed. And, to go even further, the focus on the restriction or handicap has to be replaced by a look at the abilities that every person has. This resource oriented view requires an image change of “disability” in all our heads and is at the same time the source of successful inclusion of persons with different abilities in the society.

## **Summary**

Participation as a human right valid for all is a common project that can only be realized commonly by people with disabilities, assistance/ services for people with disabilities, government, community and civil society.

Inclusion cannot be attained overnight. But people with disabilities are less and little considered as persons in need receiving charitable benefits, but as clients or users of services they have a right to. It is necessary to promote this “image change” of people with disabilities from aid recipients to increasingly independent citizens with equal rights – in the sense of an inclusive society.

## **Discussion and Group Work**

The participants were divided into 5 groups of 4 people each, mixed by national origins. The guiding questions were:

- 1) Do you agree on the definition and concept of inclusion and disability shown in this presentation? If not: What do you see different?
- 2) Did your country sign/ ratify the UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities? If this is the case, did it cause positive changes?

After an intensive discussion phase within those groups, the results were shared within the plenary:

### **1) Do you agree on the definition and concept of inclusion and disability shown in this presentation? If not: What do you see different?**

For this question the results have been summed up as the understanding of the participants and groups was very similar.

The groups generally agreed with the definition of inclusion shown in the presentation. Inclusion was also seen as full participation within daily life situations or the society's areas, not just as physical presence. The broader view on all minorities within a society was supported strongly and further features like class, status, race or color were brought into discussion. It was emphasized that: Additional to inclusion

within institutions, a whole lot of other areas of society need to become inclusive, too. Inclusion has to start from life at home, in the family. It also has to happen at community level.

Cultural barriers like the belief system, informational barriers like a lack of information and social barriers like ignorance were named as causes for exclusion.

Segregation, especially at residential school systems, was presented as existing, e. g. in Ghana and Tanzania. According to the participants it might stay as long as it is the only form of specialized care. It's the governments' duty to change that.

As for integration, some countries have moved towards that policy. E. g. Ghana and Tanzania bring persons with disability into the mainstream system. A suggestion from the group is, to take others out of the regular system to the disability sector and use the facilities that are already there – an approach also discussed in Germany recently.

Regarding the term disability the following was presented from the groups.

There is a strong discussion within the community of people with disability in some countries about which term to use best for different kinds of disability.

- 1) Some said that the term “handicapped” should not be used at all.
- 2) In Kenya the term disability has not been used happily in the community of people with disability, but it is all that they get and at the moment it applies to all involved persons - no matter if they are physically challenged, visually impaired, hearing impaired, intellectually disabled etc.
- 3) The deaf community in Ghana prefers the term “deaf” to the formerly and still used terms “hearing impaired” or “dumb”.
- 4) Instead of the old term “persons with disability” now the new term “people living with disability” is used in Ghana. The aim is not to focus any more on the preoccupation of the person by society, but to keep in mind the abilities and chances the person has.
- 5) Within the blind community in Uganda the agreement at the moment is to use the term “blindness” instead of “visual impairment”.

It was emphasized within the whole group that the focus always needs to lie on the abilities of a person not on the dis-ability.



Instead of looking at the black spot, the disability that everyone sees immediately, one should start looking at the whole individual, the big white space of abilities everyone has. So as long as we still focus on the disability, which is just one single feature of a person, we fail to see the human being as a whole. Inclusion requires that adjustment, this change of mindset, to see the human being with all abilities. Therefore we should believe in the strength of this image change and from now on start “being this change”.

## **2) Did your country sign/ ratify the UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities? If this is the case, did it cause positive changes?**

All of the participating countries have signed, most have also ratified the UNCRPD: Cameroon signed on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008, Ghana ratified at the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2012, Kenya ratified on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2008, South Africa ratified on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007, Togo ratified on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011, Uganda ratified on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Tanzania ratified on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and Zambia ratified on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010. Since those ratifications, and also before already, change has been achieved in most of the participants’ countries. But according to the countries’ representatives, there is also still a lot to be done.

The following table does probably not show all aspects of inclusion within the participating countries, but different facets of how the status quo is seen by the participants:

### **Ghana**

#### Positive

- The UN- Convention has been ratified.
- The Persons with Disability Act (PWD act) has been created in 2006.
- The Council of Persons with Disability has been inaugurated in 2013 in order to broaden the mandate of the ministry to include promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.
- The minister for Chieftaincy and Culture/Traditional Affairs, Dr. Henry Seidu Daanaa, who has been designated in 2013, has a

#### Room for positive development

- The implementation of the UN- Convention is too slow.
- The PWD Act has been created, but it is yet to get a legislative instrument to really get support (e.g. through a fund) as an individual. And the act doesn’t consider the UN- convention in all respects.
- As regards to communication in sign language e. g., signing has become an integral part of news but not yet an official language by law (not officially instituted in TV or in parliament e. g.).
- Mobility of people with disability is still a major issue.
- Regarding access to buildings there has been set a moratorium of 10 years before an owner of a non-accessible building has to go to court.

- disability himself and is seen as a role model by the disabled peoples' community
- There are a lot of actions within the disability movement.
  - Today there is a stronger emphasis on technology to be used for people with disability.
  - It seems like it is still the case that persons without disability are acting for people with disability and there seems to be a lack of empowerment of the community of people with disability.

## Uganda

### Positive

- The UN- Convention has been ratified.
- The Special Education Act (1995) and the PWD Act (2006) have been created.
- There is parliamentary representation of people with disability at the national assembly.

### Room for positive development

- The implementation of the UN- Convention is too slow.
- The PWD Act has been created but it is yet to get a legislative instrument to really get support as an individual.
- The biggest issue at the moment is inclusion in the education sector and at grassroot level.

## Cameroon

### Positive

- The UN- Convention has been signed.

### Room for positive development

- The country needs to do more for people with disability.

## Zambia

### Positive

- The UN- Convention has been ratified.
- A PWD Act has been created in 2012.
- Regarding access to buildings, an owner - if it is an institution - of a non-accessible building has to go to court.

### Room for positive development

- There is still a lot to be done.
- In the public there are e.g. still no parking slots for people with disability.

## Tanzania

### Positive

- The UN-Convention has been ratified.
- A PWD Act has been created in 2010.

### Room for positive development

- The implementation of the UN-Convention is too slow. The UN-report about this process is nice and colorful, but not showing the situation of the persons themselves (e.g. at village level).
- Persons with disabilities are locked out of primary school level and therefore later locked out of every other rights. Therefore a stronger focus needs to be put on school enrollment of people with disability.

## Kenya

### Positive

- The UN-Convention has been ratified.
- A PWD Act has been created in 2003.
- A national council for persons with disability is advocating since 2010.
- people with disability work under employment free of taxation.
- There are special parking slots in the public.
- The school system is trying to implement integration, no longer segregation.
- Especially for high school there is no need to indicate if a student has a disability or not.

### Room for positive development

- Some persons with disability still have been refused from the registries and therefore had to go to the special school.
- Often at schools structures are applied when the child comes to the school and insists on going there. So people with disability should be encouraged to call for their right and go to regular school even if they are not welcomed at the beginning.
- Communities of people with disability still have to do a lot of lobbying in order to make the government implement their rights.

## South- Africa

### Positive

- The UN- Convention has been ratified.
- A ministry for (women, children and) persons with disability has been set up in 2009.
- There are already many schools that have the infrastructure for people with disability. Any new school building has to provide the infrastructure.
- There are parking slots in the public.
- As for the job situation new regulations have been launched. For unemployed with a disability there is a disability grant, like an old-age-pension, that is about 120\$/ month. This monthly grant from the state is enough to survive.
- As for the living situation, persons with and without disability normally live at home. Nevertheless some housing projects for people with disability might exist in urban areas.
- The public transport is for free for people with disability.
- Sign language has been legislated due to the efforts of the Disabled Peoples' Organisations.
- There is an active community of persons with disabilities fighting for it's rights in the sense of the phrase "nothing about us without us!"

### Room for positive development

- The implementation of the UN- Convention takes time.
- The new regulations regarding the job situation have brought new problems: Disability rates the highest number of points for employees, e.g. in comparison to employing people of color. But there are currently not enough projects of/ for people with disability that can supply the companies.

10.02./ 11.30/ Video Messages

**Interviews with Volunteers with Disability**

Marlene Bayer, weltwärts Voluntary Service in Ghana:

Online: <http://www.bezev.de/freiwilligendienst.html>



Kay Lieker, weltwärts Voluntary Service in Thailand:

Online: <http://www.bezev.de/freiwilligendienst/infos-fuer-freiwillige.html>



**Profiles of Volunteers with Disability & Is my Volunteer Post Accessible for Volunteers with Disability?**

To analyze if the volunteer posts in the participating organisations are accessible for a volunteer with a disability, *bezev* had prepared four profiles of volunteers with a disability in the following area: movement/ motorics, seeing, hearing, learning/ intellect. Three of the four described volunteers really had applied for a *weltwärts* volunteer service, one of them was made up. The profiles showed a regular CV and further details about the applying person like his or her occupational career, language skills, further experiences/ skills. In addition, the profiles indicated special skills due to the disability (e.g. sign language), greater or special needs, questions regarding mobility and work that cannot be done because of the impairment as well as further factors that need to be paid attention to due to the disability.

The participants were divided to four groups. In each group there were experts (persons with a disability him-/ herself and persons with experience with volunteers with disability). Three chosen moderators stayed continuously at one table, while each of the groups stayed for about 30 minutes at each table and the according profile. The participants first read the profiles of the volunteers and then analyzed their project posts with regard to the question if they could accept the volunteer. When someone had questions or a false idea about the ability, needs or the situation of a person with that kind of a disability, the peers and the whole group answered the questions or intervened. The experts/ peer counselors were a great help to correct our picture of what a person that is blind, deaf or physically disabled can do, what she/ he cannot do and what her/ his special need is. They extended/ widened the knowledge of the group. After the round tables were finished the following results were presented in the panel.

**A.) Visual Disability (here: blind person)**

**Possible Placement**

Some volunteer posts are not interested in the presented fictional blind person (Max Mustermann) because they need other than his skills, which are computer and web-design/programming, e.g. a school for children needs somebody who wants to teach and play with children.

Some participants were thinking that the easiest way for a blind volunteer would be to volunteer at a blind school or center or other surrounding that is already prepared for blind people.

Several participants would first consider blind associations and self-help groups to find out if their post is accessible for blind people and what barriers are around. Those experts may be helpful to find a mobility trainer/ guide for the first weeks of orientation of the blind volunteer.

Some participants asked if it wouldn't be possible that representatives/ volunteer coordinators from the sending organisation come to see themselves the volunteer posts - so that they get an impression of the working place and with this have a better image of at least infrastructural barriers.



## **Barriers**

The discussions came up around 3 main barriers: communication, mobility, environment.

### 1) Mobility:

#### a. Assistance:

A blind volunteer will need an assistant at the beginning of his/ her voluntary service (for about 1 month). Which kind of person can be such an assistant? It might be another volunteer or staff member or somebody out of the parish.

#### b. Guide Dog:

Most of the participants told that bringing a guide dog will be a problem. There are different perceptions of a dog (security dog versus pet) and there will be a lot of distraction for the dog (other wild dogs, humans chasing him, etc). The colleagues in the office where the volunteer works might need a training for accepting the dog as a guide. In one case a participant said that the visitors of the office will not enter the room if there is a dog inside. The question came up what kind of dog food the dog is used to. This might not exist in the hosting country and will the dog accept this? Dog food is very expensive – who will take over those costs. Another question was if the dog can cope with the weather. Altogether there is not much experience with guide dogs in the represented African countries.

#### c. Security:

The way from the place where the volunteer will work regularly and the place where he or she lives (e.g. in a host family) is in most cases not secure and accessible. Especially in towns with a lot of traffic it is a life security matter for the volunteer.

### 2) Communication

#### a. Computer and Programs:

The blind applicant needs a computer with voice. All participants asked if the volunteer will bring his/ her own software or if the hosting organisation needs to buy a new computer. One participant told that the software can be installed through a usb-stick and that this is very easy. If the volunteer needs a special keyboard or other braille equipment some participants said they can find such easily, others didn't. Also the question who will pay those expenses came up.

#### b. Noise at Workplace:

In the profile it was mentioned that the applicant cannot work in a noisy area. Some participants said that this would be a problem because in the work with youth and children, it is always very lively and noisy. A blind participant explained that it depends which kind of noise it is. If a school has breaks at a special time and during this time there is noise, the volunteer should be informed and told that this is regularly like this. It is the unexpected noise that a blind person has difficulties to cope with.

### 3) Social Environment

#### a. Knowledge about Needs:

The host families and the staff members need to be trained, to ensure that they know about the needs of the blind volunteer (and e.g. explain the role of the guide-dog). The issue was raised that this is a main barrier because the staff members of NGOs already have too much to do and will not be interested in having another situation to handle with „on top“.

#### b. Social Inclusion:

Most blind persons are separated from the society in nearly all the represented countries. The people around the project post and host family etc. will have a lot of barriers in their mind. This is something the volunteer should be able to cope with.

#### c. Practical Questions:

Can the applicant wash his/ her clothes on his/ her own? Answer: Yes if she/ he gets used to the washing and drying place. Can the applicant prepare his/ her own food? Answer: Yes if somebody explains and shows the different fruits and vegetables and how to clean and cut them etc.

### **B.) Hearing Disability (here deaf person)**

#### **Possible Placement**

Those participants who work in the field of deaf people can work with a deaf volunteer without any restriction. One participant with a sight impairment cannot see any possibility to cooperate with a deaf volunteer. Only a person with a medium ability to hear and speak could be a potential volunteer. Many other participants said that the deaf volunteer could do a normal volunteer service if the necessary helps are provided, e.g. a sign language interpreter. Some others could arrange a task which fits to the volunteer's talents/impairment and interests, e.g. office work, IT-work. Many of the participants had their focus on the volunteer's talents and interests instead of the restrictions. In their opinion, a motivated and talented volunteer can bring more progress in the project than her/ his impairment can slow down his performance.

#### **Barriers and Solutions: Communication, Mobility and Social Inclusion**

##### 1) Misunderstandings

Some participants see the barrier that a sufficient communication with a deaf person cannot be fulfilled in their organisations. In their cases nobody in the surrounding of the volunteer could understand and use sign language. This could make cooperation between a volunteer and his/her colleagues, clients and his other surrounding difficult. One participant sees the problem that many misunderstandings caused by an inadequate communication could appear. This would make the volunteer being isolated as well. This makes cooperation more difficult. Even an interpreter misinterpretation could appear.

## 2) Sign Language

Even if sign language is practised in their institutions, a few participants worry that a volunteer from abroad could struggle with the local sign language. A few participants would be willing to provide a sign language interpreter or other helps. But they wonder who would pay the costs for that. Two experts in sign language said that a person who speaks e.g. the German Sign Language can learn the international or American one very fast. Other participants could verify this by their own experiences. People with good lip reading skills also learn to use it in foreign languages quickly.

Some participants signaled that they would be ready to learn (basic) sign language. One participant said right away that he wants to start learning sign language now. More than a few can already use and understand it. A few have colleagues in their projects who know sign language, too.

## 3) Written Language

Written language as an alternative to sign language is not practicable in a sufficient way – neither for the person with hearing impairment nor for the others.

Written language can always help to communicate with someone who does not understand sign language.

## 4) Social Environment

To prevent that a volunteer with hearing impairment gets isolated, a connection to a deaf community can be arranged.

## **Summary**

After reading the applicant's profile many participants focused on her interests and resources instead of her disability. They noticed that she is quite versatile and well educated. This is the reason that made nine participants say that they could take her as a volunteer. Three participants answered that they would profit from a volunteer with hearing impairment. Two of them work in a project for hearing impaired persons, so the volunteer would have an easier access to the clients. One participant already worked with two volunteers with hearing impairment. Her experiences are very positive. She even said that a volunteer with a hearing impairment can do specific work better (in this area). Several participants see the exchange of different sign languages as a cultural enrichment.

In general, many participants think a deaf volunteer with a good motivation and qualities to share can bring profit to their organisation. Those who could make experiences with deaf volunteers would like to work with another one again.

Several participants are already able to communicate in sign language, others are open to learn it.

To sum up, ten participants can imagine to work with a deaf volunteer, one person cannot imagine and two cannot give a definite answer.

### **C.) Physical Disability (here: person in a wheelchair)**

#### **Possible Placement**

The first reaction of the participants was that very few of them are ready for volunteers with disabilities like the one in the case study yet. Only if the requirements of the volunteer are not too demanding the others could accept a volunteer with such physical disability.

#### **Barriers and Solutions**

##### 1) Funding of additional needs

Almost all participants in this group thought that it might get very expensive for most receiving organisation in African countries to host the volunteer of the profile who sits in a wheelchair. Depending on his expectations as to what can make his placement comfortable it might be possible nevertheless.

##### 2) Infrastructure and Accessibility

A complete understanding of what kind of infrastructure the volunteer is used to at home and what will he/she be expected abroad should be ensured. Prospective volunteers should be made to understand the physical environment in the receiving/hosting organisations, especially in Africa.

##### 3) Experiences with Inclusive Volunteerism

According to the participants there is the need to first pilot the inclusive volunteerism for persons with disabilities among some sister organisations in Africa before including volunteers from Germany.

##### 4) General Matching of Volunteer and Project Post

bezev and other sending organisations should first determine the skills-match of both prospective volunteers and receiving/hosting organisations through capacity assessment.

### **C.) Learning Difficulty/ Mental Disability (here: person with mental disability)**

#### **Possible Placement**

- Teach things that are not done at the project, but that the volunteer can do: swimming lessons, teach badminton, playing cards etc.
- Gardening/ farming
- Join workshops of persons with intellectual disability
- Join workshops in general (e. g. with beat or wood work)
- Teach at schools for persons with intellectual disability
- Support in the sector of early childhood education (puzzles, blocks, coloring...)

- Teach German language by dotting on things and saying the German word (or showing with the hand for blind persons) or using basic English words

### **Possible Barriers**

- Language: If the volunteer speaks only German language is the biggest barrier named by all participants.
- Age: A young adult with learning difficulties or mental disability might feel overwhelmed by the situation abroad. Travelling experience or at least some experience in life is important
- Hierarchy between volunteers with and without disability might appear if they work in the same project.
- Non fulfilled expectations if they are too high
- If medication is needed it has to be clear whether it can be bought in the country or has to be brought along
- Socialization difficult? Or only possible with other persons with intellectual disability?
- Cooperation with (overprotective) parents might be a challenge, too.

### **Solutions**

#### 1) Communication

- Clarify expectations from both sides from the beginning.
- Communicate from the start up very well (e.g. through skype, phone, photos, video message).
- Send annual reports or other reports, indicating the different aspects + departments of the possible volunteer posts of the PO to the SO: To get a comprehensive understanding of the expectations from the possible project posts/ working fields of the partner organization.
- Motivation + interest of volunteer need to be clear.

#### 2) Guidance/ Mentoring

- Have 1-2 close confidential persons (who are always available).
- Involve tandem volunteers (careful: hierarchy issue might come up).

#### 3) Language

- Provide a translator for the beginning.
- Staff in close contact should learn basic German.
- Work with pictures to overcome language barrier.

- Host family should have understanding and patience for that barrier.

#### 4) Tandem Volunteers

- Peer support of other volunteers.
- If Tandem volunteers: Brief the other volunteers (understanding).
- Tandem volunteers: other volunteers can work as close confidential person, translator.
- Tandem can also help with socialization.

#### 5) Further good practices

##### a) With regards to the specific profile:

- Put alarm for appointments on mobile (if reading time is not possible).
- Prepare money, to be paid e.g. for bus, food etc., in portions (if counting is not possible)

##### b) Requirements to volunteer:

- Age should fit to the target group
- Self confidence
- Communication skills (other than language)
- Should learn basic English

→ Focus on the likes/ interests/ abilities of the person: e.g. what is he/ she good at?

##### c) Living:

- Clarify how person lives at home and what he/ she can exactly do independently in daily life
- Accommodation with others preferred?

##### d) Placement:

Orientation phase at the beginning: Go around with volunteer and see in which area he/ she wants to work

### **Summary**

With regards to the question if such volunteer could be placed in the represented projects, the participants answered as follows: 10 yes – 2 uncertain – 1 no.

The biggest barrier emphasized was the possible lack of language skills (here English). Two more big issues discussed were the security of the volunteer (sexual, but also her/ his own confidence when being abroad in young age) and her/ his socialization. The projects saw many possibilities for volunteers with learning difficulty or mental disability to get involved.

## **E.) Improvement of the Profiles**

The groups also discussed about how to improve the profiles. They came up with the following suggestions.

Points to be assessed additionally to the already included ones should be:

- Religion
- Gender, sex
- Marital status
- Medication needed?
- Special skills: Which special skills does the volunteer have?
- Issues of food/diet
- Brief family background of the applicants

Points to be indicated more clearly than it has been done so far are:

- Occupational career: What does it mean exactly? What is the volunteer's profession? What are additional experiences? In this section, the question regarding occupational carrier/engagement on the application form should be reviewed to read "what profession(s) were you trained for?" or simply put "what is your profession"?
- Work experience: In a similar manner, years of work experience should replace years of engagement on the application form.
- Type of disability. Explain type, background and abilities. Here, the different types of disability should be listed for the applicants to select from. Participants also thought question 3 on the application form should be rephrased in a more inclusive manner such as: Kindly list what you can do effectively in spite of your disability, and please list what you cannot do effectively because of your disability.
- Greater needs: The treater needs should be classified through precise questions that make the persons with disability come out of her-/himself (e.g. assessment manuals by MIUSA). The participants also thought the question on special assistants required or needed by an applicant could be put in the following manner: Could you be able to move around on your own? Yes / No
  - If yes, what aids/devices do you use in support of your mobility?
  - If no, what support do you need?

General suggestions furthermore were:

- Short forms: Short forms of words used in the profiles need to be explained.
- Photos: Finally, participants thought photograph of applicants, depicting their disabilities should be made a key requirement as this will give a better picture of the prospective volunteer to the receiving/hosting organizations.

Participants were also with the view that the application form for recruiting volunteers including persons with disabilities should be divided into four (4) different sections as follows:

- Section “A” to cover the bio data of the applicants
- Section “B” to cover the educational background and work experience of the applicants
- Section “C” to cover the type(s) of disability of the applicants.
- Section “D” should cover two (2) reference persons of applicants including their detail particulars.



10.02./18.15/ Open Space

**Presentation on Cross Disability Self-Help-Group (SHG)**

(If you are interested in receiving more information about the topic, kindly let us know.)

**"You alone can do it-but you can't do it alone."**

*Two presentations were held within the open space time. One of them on spina bifida and hydrocephalus, the other one on disability self-help-groups.*

*The following presentation was held by Mr. Francis Asong, director of Voice Ghana. It summed up the experiences of Voice Ghana regarding self-help-group development and showed according training experiences (resource kit).*

**1. What is SHG?**

People coming together to support themselves.

**2. Why Disability SHG?**

Replace charity model, where Persons With Disabilities (PWDs) look up to someone to support them. Simple principle - Teach PWDs to fish rather than fishing for them

**3. What do they do?**

In 2005 VOICE GHANA introduces formation of cross disability Self-Help Group (SHG) as innovative model into the disability fraternity in Ghana as a way of empowering PWDs at the grassroots level to be advocates of their own human rights and needs.

It is a community development model; purely result oriented and is quite different from other SHGs as it is made up of PWDs who support each other to take collective actions voluntarily. We currently have 62 of such SHGs in 20 districts in the Volta Region as well as 3 parents SHGs.

The SHGs are empowered by VOICE GHANA with practical advice and information on grassroots movement, self-advocacy and lobbying, awareness raising, self-help and income generating activities.

This enables the SHGs to build collective voice in their respective localities to hold local government officials, private enterprises and Traditional Authorities accountable for what their rights are, and seek equal representation and participation in the mainstream community life.

The SHGs also engage in income generating activities such as:

- Farming – cassava, ginger, pepper/chilly, yam, groundnuts
- Small scale poultry and animal rearing – goats, fowls, pigs etc.

Possible projects: Corn mill, small scale block molding for sale, animal fattening (especially fattening of sheep for sale on occasions).

#### **4. Are the SHGs sustainable?**

The SHGs are managing their own affairs, contributing their own dues, and implementing their own IGA with little support from VOICE GHANA. They also developed links with other CBOs, DSW and started running their own self-advocacy programmes.

#### **5. Is there any impact?**

Several members of our 65 SHGs including parent SHGs are actively engaging in local decision making processes. The SHGs have also started advocating for themselves and some are able to establish their small income generating businesses.

#### **6. Can the approach be replicated in other parts in Ghana and Africa?**

Yes, the Self-help Group model can easily be formed by interested CSOs in other parts of Ghana/Africa. We have a SHG formations/training kit that has useful tips for the setting up of the SHGs. We also have a pool of outstanding and hardworking SHGs, which interested CSOs, can learn from in replicating this approach.

We have a SHG training manual to share with others through email.

#### **7. Questions and answers**

If you decide to start a group or make changes in an established one, do it your way.  
Just choose the ideas that suit you and your circumstances.

## 11.02./ 10.15/ „Fishbowl“ Discussion

### **Inclusive Volunteering - Mission (Im)Possible?**

Fishbowl is a method that is used to reflect and discuss a topic.

There is a circle of 6 seats in the centre, where following representatives sit:

- Representative of a partner organisation (pro)
- Representative of a partner organisation (contra)
- Representative of a sending organisation (pro)
- Representative of a sending organisation (contra)
- Volunteer
- Free seat for a “switcher”/”jumper” (at the beginning for the moderator)

Around this inner circle the audience is seated. The watchers can join the inner circle if they also want to add something to the discussion. They replace one representative in the respective role. In order to do this the watcher knocks on the representative's chair, which means that the representative has to move out of the inner circle and become a part of the audience. Now the former watcher sits down on his/her chair and in the incircle and becomes a representative. The person in the incircle can also leave her/ his chair if she/ he can't think of further arguments.

If you are interested in receiving the role description cards, kindly let us know. To keep this documentation compact, we do not include them here.

### **A.) Results of the Discussion**

In the following we mainly show citations from the participants that represented roles.

#### **Sending Organisation (pro)**

- Everyone is a member of the society and should have the opportunity to build up a better world.
- Everybody can contribute something because everybody has individual talents.
- Not only people with disability have restrictions. Nobody can do everything!
- People with disability should get the chance to do voluntary work because they have the motivation to show their talents and to bring a change.
- A better cooperation of sending and receiving organisations can make it possible. A good preparation before a volunteer goes abroad can identify and reduce barriers.

### Sending Organisation (contra)

- The volunteer should bring a maximum output. People with restrictions contribute less.
- Inclusion for everybody is an illusion. A volunteer with disability causes more work for the sending organisation.
- Even volunteers without disabilities have to struggle with many circumstances abroad. A volunteer with disability would have even more to struggle with. It could be a huge burden.
- Many structures in the hosting country cannot be changed, e.g. barriers in public transportation, bumpy roads, superstition and image of people with disability, etc.
- Why do people with disability not volunteer in their own country? There are less barriers and they are familiar to them. There they would be more productive than in a foreign environment.
- Some volunteers with disability cause more costs. Who pays?

### Receiving Organisation (pro)

- People with disabilities are capable in many areas! They are willing and able to contribute!
- If a disability is a reason not to accept an applicant it would be discrimination!
- Some parts of the infrastructure abroad could be optimized for a volunteer with disability to grant accessibility.
- An important aspect of voluntary service is learning from one another. Intercultural relationships/friendships should be developed. There is an opportunity to exchange experiences concerning living with a disability in Germany and abroad.
- Volunteers with disability can be a good example in the hosting country where a disability might be a stigma. Their image as dependent and unable people could change worldwide.
- Volunteers with a certain disability can be experts for their kind of disability. A receiving organisation working in the same field of disability can benefit a lot of their knowledge.

### Receiving Organisation (contra)

- Volunteers would face different problems in many hosting countries. In Ghana, for example, disabilities are a taboo issue. This environment and a disability are hardly combinable.
- Volunteers with disability are less productive. So volunteers without constrictions are preferred.
- There are different factors which make an inclusive voluntary service difficult, e.g. (tropical) diseases, bad roads.

- Many people with disability in Africa suffer and nobody seems to take care of them. Shouldn't they be supported first?
- The positive attitude of a volunteer with disability could be not enough.
- The receiving organisations already have many challenges and much to organize. A volunteer with a disability is an additional challenge and needs more organisation.
- The local government does not support voluntary services for people with disability. How is funding possible?
- For various kinds of disabilities there are barriers such as: guiding dogs are not practicable in Africa; Sign language can be different abroad; free movement for people with physical handicap can be restricted in the local infrastructure; people with mental disabilities would face even more doubts about their abilities.

#### Mentor (pro)

- It is time to demystify the image of people with disabilities!
- Barriers should be carried away. The infrastructure must be adapted to special needs.
- Voluntary service is a learning experience and an exchange. The issue "disability" and concerned people must be included!
- If you change barriers and optimize facilities for volunteers with disabilities there would be a long term bonus for others. These changes would make them profit as well.

#### Mentor (contra)

- Only few developments in infrastructures/accommodation for people with disabilities have been done. It's not enough yet to host volunteers with disabilities.
- Some applicants with disabilities don't have the skills which are needed. Choosing them would be a waste of time.
- The voluntary program requires time and resources. More of it is taken by volunteers with disabilities.
- Voluntary work should benefit, not restrain.

#### Volunteer with Physical Disability and Blind Volunteer (pro)

- Reason for volunteering: this world is about giving to others time, skills, knowledge
- Important is what you can give/ give back to society
- The world is a global village. Everybody should be able to experience the world instead of staying at home.

- People with a disability have qualities despite their disability. They have a lot to give.
- The applicants should be aware of their abilities to avoid prejudgements.
- The stigma must be changed: People with disabilities are not sick!
- Some of very advanced/world-shaking people had disabilities, e.g. Helen Keller, Frank Roosevelt.
- Segregation should be left behind. Stereotypes and negative perception can be overcome by sending volunteers with a disability.
- People with disabilities want to prove that they can bring something to society in another environment, too. There they can be good examples. People in the surrounding could see that responsibility for this issue must be taken

## **B.) Reflection about the Fishbowl Discussion**

For most of the participants it was easy to get into the opposite role but hard to stay in it very long.

### **1) Understand Opposite Positions**

Taking over the opposite position helped many of them to understand how others feel, e.g. when those are sceptical about the idea to receive or send volunteers with disabilities.

For the partner organization, positive regarding inclusive volunteering, it was great to see the sending organization, negative about the topic, change **its** mind slightly after discussion with the open minded partners and volunteers with disability. A partner organization negative regarding the topic said that, even if it will not participate in the inclusive volunteering directly, after the discussion it is thankful for the debate and cooperation and especially for the efforts made by sending and hosting organizations to make the weltwärts program inclusive.

### **2) Draw Comprehensive Picture of Dis- /advantages**

The fishbowl discussion also helped to draw a more comprehensive picture of the chances and challenges connected with inclusive volunteering. According to some participants the method allowed them to speak openly about concerns and express fears that they might not say otherwise. Being aware of possible challenges supports a good preparation which also requires a good assessment of the project's environment and of the volunteer's personal needs.

So the sending organization positive about receiving volunteers with disabilities also emphasized the need to get prepared well for the inclusive volunteering and to find a good and suitable volunteer for the possible tasks. The sending organization negative regarding the topic could also agree with this conclusion and only stressed again at the end that, if they would open for the inclusive volunteering, the benefit of the volunteer to the project post should be ensured.

#### 4) Possibility to Widen Expectations

While most role representatives slightly changed or broadened their opinion about inclusive volunteering, one remained in the given position that it is not possible to have volunteers with disability. That example can show that within the process of inclusive volunteering not all involved actors will be ready to change and open their mind. Within the discussion it also seemed that sometimes a very strong position remains due to lack of knowledge or prejudices. So one of the mentors said: „Let's not make Africa a tourist destination for persons without clear skills and gender.“

The fishbowl discussion made some participants understand that it will be very important to find both, open minded volunteers and project posts. They will equally have to be ready to lower their expectations, to be flexible regarding challenges or possibly required adaptations and to accept that not everything will be perfect.

To sum up the importance of the fishbowl method within this workshop we would like to stress again that those positions were not the real opinions of the participants. But as they were acting certain roles, opinions, that are certainly existing in the heads of some actors of the weltwärts program, became visible and issue of discussion and reflection. Through this method positions that are usually not discussed, as they are „delicate“ or not socially-accepted, were mentioned and discussed openly, which is the first step to address them in order to find a solution for certain legitimate concerns.

11.02.14/ 13.45/ Excursion & Sightseeing

**Accra Rehabilitation Centre, Ghana Blind Union & Kwame Nkruma Mausoleum, Arts Museum**





## 12.02./ 10.15/ Presentations and Discussion

### **Challenges with Volunteers & Pedagogical Guidance (In Theory)**

(If you are interested in receiving the whole presentations of the three following topics, kindly let us know.)

*What happens when people leave their home countries and the culture they know? How do they feel? What happens when people are in a different environment and situation? When volunteers stay abroad for a while, it is important to know what phases they go through. With this knowledge, we can guide the volunteer pedagogically. At this last day of the workshop we focused on those topics referring to pedagogical guidance. Firstly Bezev introduced two concepts that explain what people face when they are abroad. Afterwards a participant added information regarding group dynamics*

#### **A.) Comfort Zones**

##### 1) Presentation

Most of the time persons live in their comfort zones. That means living in a(n) context/ environment that we know very well. We feel secure when we know how and why things work. Within their own comfort zones people don't have to take any risks.

Some coaches believe that personal development only takes place outside of the comfort zones. The reason why people leave their comfort zones is sadness or happiness. Most often they leave their comfort zones because they are upset.

Leaving the comfort zones can stress people. Some people even feel stressed when they travel. But not everyone gets stressed in the same way. In theory there are two types of stress. EU-Stress and Dis-Stress.

EU-stress: comes from "euphoric". It is positive stress. This kind of stress is motivating. It gives a person the energy to move forward and to act. The person feels like it can handle the challenges. And that gives the person energy.

Dis-Stress comes from "destructive stress". The person does not want to take responsibility for own made decisions and accuses other people for the situation he or she is in. When this kind of stress continues, the person starts choosing new strategies. It can lead to alcohol, drug abuse or excessive computer consume.

So how to widen your comfort zone successfully?

The person needs to make own decisions and take responsibility for own actions. The attitude or approach should be: "I decide what I say and what I do. The situation does not decide for me".

With this approach people widen their own comfort zones. They learn more instruments for daily life and struggle.

At the beginning when a person is in a new situation, he or she needs the courage, not to be perfect. This takes time to experiment and practice. The person should not expect too much of her/himself and others should not either. In the first phase people or volunteers need time to get adjusted to a new situation or environment. In this phase consultation with a coach can be very helpful.

## 2) Discussion

Challenges for volunteers to their comfort zone can e.g. be:

- Accepting the different concept of time
- Hiding own habits or needs like smoking or practicing a different religion
- Coping with unfulfilled expectations regarding the project task
- Adapting to food, weather, living situation etc.

Too much excitement about the situation abroad in general or certain situations in specific can cause unnecessary accidents. The personal comfort zone should be broadened then so that the volunteer starts feeling more relaxed within those situations.

Additional to the required adaptation to food, weather, living situation and so on, a lack of work or boring, repeating tasks might cause stress to the volunteer, too. Therefore as for the work, the project task should match the interests and abilities of the volunteer. Contraries between how the volunteer would usually do certain things and his or her actual task in the project should be found out in advance or clarified openly in process. In some projects, finding a good post is possible through letting new volunteers have a look at different projects before they decide on a work place and specific task they feel comfortable with.

Also regarding hosting, it is necessary to find a living situation that fits the personal needs of the volunteer.

## **B.) Culture Shock**

### 1) Presentation

Culture shock can be described as consisting of at least one of four distinct phases: Honeymoon, Negotiation, Adjustment, and Mastery.

**Honeymoon Phase:** in this phase the new environment seems very interesting and exciting. For example the food tastes really good, the people are friendly, the nature and architecture is very nice. Like the honeymoon this phase can eventually end after a while.

**Negotiation Phase:** This is the face were the differences in the new environment and culture are not seen as exciting any more, they become frightening. After a while the person misses her/ his friends and family. The language barrier might become annoying. The person might get sick and also the body needs to adjust to the new environment. One symptom can also be that the person feels lonely.

**Adjustment Phase:** After a couple of months the person develops problem solving skills, gets used to the new culture and begins to understand her/ his environment.

**Mastery Phase:** In this phase the person feels completely comfortable in the host culture. That does not mean that they get assimilated completely. They can even keep their own culture. But they are also able to feel comfortable in the host country.

## 2) Discussion

In the „orientation“ phase a good guidance is necessary. This will help not to let the „hell on earth“ phase be too deep. Because this is the time when volunteers usually break up their voluntary service, what should be prevented through good pedagogical guidance.

Not every volunteer follows the culture shock line. E.g. some fall very deep and then rise very high steadily. Or others stay up at the honey moon phase throughout their whole service. It is part of the sending and receiving organizations' role to aim at a stable situation of the volunteer.

### **C.) Group Dynamics**

In any group certain dynamics come up and groups tend to develop in a certain unique way. The concept of group dynamics that describes this development was introduced in this session by one of the participants. The stages of a group dynamic are:

- 1) Forming Stage (first adaptation)
- 2) Storming Stage (issues coming up, ideas compete, e.g. critical topics)
- 3) Norming Stage (agreement on certain rules, e.g. respect regarding likes of volunteer and of values and culture of the host country)
- 4) Performing Stage (knowledge, understanding, acceptance)
- 5) Deforming Stage (preparation for return)

### **E.) Further Resulting Need for Good Pedagogical Guidance**

It is a challenge to equally prepare the volunteers as specifically as possible for the expected situation abroad, yet avoid manifesting prejudices within the preparation while doing this. If understanding of certain things abroad is not possible for a volunteer, he or she should be asked at least, to accept the situation, as it is, as much as possible. So good guidance might include to connect volunteers with each other. This can happen in the preparation phase, e.g. through involving former volunteers within preparation seminars and let them tell more about what can be expected by the new volunteer. It can also happen through bringing together volunteers that work in the same country or even organisation. Both can have positive and negative results, depending on the volunteers.

Existing rules within the organization, host family, country etc. must be very clear to the volunteer right from the beginning. In some organizations a code of conduct exists and is explained to the volunteer. Others write down their rules in the form of an agreement which the volunteer signs. Some organizations rather have advisements than rules for the volunteers. Other organizations don't do any of these things as they don't want to put too many obligations on the volunteer or don't have such strict rules. The group decided that it's up to the project to decide on an appropriate policy – as long as the safety of the volunteer is not in danger and the insurance provided by Germany is covering his or her actions.

## 12.02./ 11.00/ Working Groups

### **Challenges with Volunteers & Pedagogical Guidance (In Practice)**

*In practice sending and host organisations gained a lot of experience with guiding and working with volunteers. In the past years all faced different challenges with different volunteers. After the theory and panel discussion based input about different concepts, this session aimed at deeper exchange on challenges in praxis.*

#### **5 Cases: Challenges with Volunteers**

In order to discuss those issues, five working groups were formed. Each of the groups got one of the cases described below, in which a typical problem within the volunteer service is described. The following questions were discussed by each group with regard to it's case:

1. What is the issue/problem? How to address the issue?
2. What skill is required to solve the issue? What are the immediate and long term risks? What was the lack of awareness/preparation, before the case came up?
3. Is this a typical problem within the voluntary service?
4. Which problems could come up with volunteers with disabilities?

#### Case 1:

You have two female volunteers in your organisation for two months. You observe that there are fights among the volunteers sometimes. They request different tasks and do not laugh together or enjoy sitting together in the evening in front of the office.

One of the volunteers is not looking healthy; she seems to have lost much weight. Early morning she is sometimes not getting up and coming to work- when you ask her, she says: "I am not feeling well". You request her to go to the doctor, but she says: "I take my western medicine!" At the end of the month there will be the mid-term workshop of the volunteers! You are afraid, that this volunteer will fall ill and will not be able to participate.

#### Case 2:

For 5 months you have two female volunteers in your organisation. Their attitude is sometimes strange to you. They hang out their underwear in the sun, so everybody can see it. In their free day they walk around the city, have a coffee in Coffee day and go for shopping. They do not tell you in advance. They are supposed to be back in their apartment at 6 in the evening, but sometimes they are late.

In morning they talk to you: "Sheetha, we met a guy yesterday in Coffee Day! His English is very good. He is such a nice person. He has promised to give us an insight in the university education. He has invited us for food to Park Place Restaurant next Sunday evening. 8 o' clock to discuss the details. Can we go to meet him?" You do not know the person.

### Case 3:

You are a male mentor in the first year. You have two female volunteers in your organisation. Your relationship is good, but they call you every time of the day by mobile, whenever there is a question. Conversation is mainly with one of the volunteers, a smart blond girl called Lea. She always tells you: "You are like my brother at home! I miss him so much!" When both of you are sitting on a bike to go to the nearby project area, she embraces you and puts her head on your shoulder.

You have a hidden relationship to a young teacher, whom you want to marry. Nobody knows about it.

### Case 4:

Your organisation has volunteers for the first time. You have got boys as requested. They do not require your support very much. In the morning they are in the office to correct some reports in English and create some flyers for public relation work. They reach their daily village tuitions by local transportation and teach students some English. They are free on Sundays, so every weekend they explore another nearby area. They do not let you know in advance, where they will go.

On Sunday evening they call you: "We are at Mammalapuram! It is so nice here. It was so costly to come here, so we would like to stay another day. We will miss the office work and the tuitions, but we will stay longer in the office on Tuesday and Wednesday, so it is nearly the same working time!

### Case 5:

You are very experienced in 5 years weltwärts. This year you have requested male volunteers with good documentation skills in making good photos and work with Photoshop. You do want them to make a 10 page documentation on your NGO micro finance and self help groups.

You have taken them to field visits, so they have made a lot of shots. You have given them all the documents and spent a lot of time to explain the idea of SHG and micro finance to them. After four weeks, you ask them to show the actual status of the documentation. You feel, what they have done is too many pictures and less information. You give them your opinion. After one week, there is a CD on your table with the final documentation. You are not happy with the result; it is still not covering your needs.

You tell the volunteers: "As a new task you start some lessons for two staff members to teach them how to use photoshop". After one week you ask the volunteers, how the lessons are going on. "We are sorry , Sir. We have put an information regarding the training on the pin board, but nobody had come for the training!"

*If you are interested in receiving the results of the discussion about the cases kindly let us know. As they were not connected specifically to volunteers with disabilities these results are not included at this place. We want to thank especially Mrs Renate Tietz from "Karl-Kübel-Stiftung" for the provision with these cases!*

## **Possible problems with volunteers with disabilities**

The following points were results from the working groups regarding question four: "Which problems could come up with volunteers with disabilities?" In general the group agreed that any kind of problems coming up with volunteers without disability could also come up with volunteers with disability, Possible specific problems of or with volunteers with disabilities and proper preparation could be the following:

### 1. Taking sexual advantage of volunteer with disability

Some in the group said that in some places it might happen that local people take advantage of the vulnerable situation of a volunteer with any kind of disability, but especially if he/ she is mentally disabled. The concern was discussed, that persons with disability might even be raped.

One solution could be to prepare the volunteer for that situation, e.g. by offering courses in self-defence as part of preparation seminars. There always has to be a confidential person that speaks German (in case of volunteers that do not know English very well). In any kind of such problem the volunteer needs a contact person in which he/ she trusts and that can be approached in such a case. There could also be preparation by explaining about how to react appropriately when men want to get into closer contact.

### 2. Stigmatisation/ discrimination at workplace

If the boss of the host project can not cope with the person with disability, this can result in bad relationship and discrimination at the working place. If e.g. the boss is hearing and he receives a deaf volunteer, it might be difficult for them to interact with each other. In the opposite case, i.e. if a hearing volunteer and a deaf boss come together it's possible that the boss would maybe not like to work with a volunteer who doesn't sign.

The staff need knowledge about the disability. This requires proper preparation.

And it might be necessary to put more effort into communication and building up a good relationship and understanding between the volunteer and his/ her surrounding.

### 3. Taking advantage of own disability/ needs

It is possible that volunteers with special needs might try to take advantage of their disability and look for a special bonus. There was the experience of one group member with a volunteer with allergies, that seemed to use the allergy as an excuse for not being able to work very often.

A solution would be to try to be really close to the volunteer in order to find out the truth. Also the mentor has to be firm with the disability and resulting restrictions. Therefore, on one hand this is an issue of being prepared for the disability, on the other hand it's also a matter of confidence. All in all the group agreed that there needs to be a good communication about special needs right from the beginning. Some saw a possible solution in tandem volunteers, some in the involvement of parents. This was discussed controversially.

## 12.01./ 12.30/ Workshop

### **Reverse Program**

*A topic that the group was interested at, but that did not get enough space within the open space time, was the reverse component within the weltwärts program. The topic therefore was discussed in a separate session.*

#### **Status quo**

The German ministry's plan is to start with financing 100 volunteers from the weltwärts partner countries within a three years pilot phase starting 2014. All German sending organizations were able to apply for receiving volunteers from their partner organizations abroad. They or their cooperating partners in Germany can host the received volunteers for the duration of 6-24 months. After that pilot phase the reverse component will be evaluated and depending on the results be continued in the same or in an adapted way.

#### **To be done by African organizations**

The concept of volunteering is not a southern concept, which means that there are no agencies like in Germany, only dealing with voluntary services or already being very used to sending volunteers.

In order to start thinking this reverse program professionally, the group pointed out that a lot of time and effort has to be put into the organization of the reverse program by the African organizations that want to send volunteers to Germany.

#### **To be considered by the German ministry/ weltwärts program**

The age limit of the weltwärts program is not appropriate for young persons in African countries. They usually finish secondary school 2 years earlier than in Germany and start going to university, doing occupational training or building a family earlier than German young people. The partners therefore suggest to lower the earliest possible age for participation in the reverse program.

The German state might fear that the African volunteers will want to stay in Germany once they have been to the country. A lot of participants got upset about that fear and emphasized that not for the majority in Africa Germany is "heaven on earth", but that this perception seems to be a prejudice from the North.

The "Länderansprechpersonen", consultation persons that have been employed by the weltwärts program in 10 hosting countries so far, should get involved in the communication between the host country's institutions and the German ministry and its organizations. The relationship between the German ministry, the German embassies and institutions in the host country should be strengthened as well in order to gain understanding for the concept of volunteering and through this also help to make visa processes easier.

### **Contribution of African governments**

The question was discussed what the contribution from the participants' countries' governments could be. Even though they should play a role, most participants emphasized that it should not be waited for the African governments, but be started implementing the program now.

The governments should be involved in the whole idea of mutual and equal volunteering between their country and Germany, as this could also help with visa issues in some countries.

### **Reasons for Participating in the Reverse Program**

The group acknowledged that the reverse program will offer the same chances for young adults from Africa as weltwärts is doing so far for German volunteers. It also discussed a lot about aims and reasons for sending young adults to Germany. Some said that there should be clear motives and objectives for sending a young person abroad. The service should equally have a positive impact on the host project and the volunteer and home country.

### **Preparation of the volunteers**

Those African organizations, that want to send young adults, should prepare them well and, in order to do so, learn from existing good practices of German Sending Organizations. The volunteers should be prepared for the German language and culture.

The involvement of former volunteers to Germany or the involvement of volunteers from Germany could be very helpful within the preparation phase.

In order to finance their stay abroad volunteers should do fundraising projects. A possible contribution by the African governments was mentioned but declared as unrealistic at the moment.

### **Open questions**

- Will the reverse program be implemented in an inclusive way, too?
- Who will cover the required money (25% of all expenses) for the reverse volunteer?



12.02./ 15.00/ Workshop

## **Concrete Steps for Future Cooperation/ Networking**

### **1) Networking within “weltwärts”**

#### Participants´ Network

All participants have started networking amongst each other, which may hopefully continue! Ideas were:

All participants are encouraged to give feedback and add missing aspects, that have been missed in the discussion or forgotten in this documentation.

Every participant is welcome to share any manual, strategies and their experiences with all participants.

*bezev* will start a drop box account for the participants of the conference only. There will be shared photos, the documentation, helpful documents and many more that is helpful in the process.

#### International Network

All partner organisations should inform their German sending organisation that they are interested in volunteers with disability. Then this sending organisation can have them in mind in case there is an applicant with disability.

In case *bezev* has applicants that might fit to one of the participant´s projects, we will contact the corresponding sending organisation.

### **2) General Networking (not weltwärts)**

#### Local Network

Find and connect with Disabled Peoples Organisations in your own country/ region.

#### South – South Network

[www.sayxchange.org](http://www.sayxchange.org)

There is a south-south-exchange program offered by the Southern African Trust, a NGO based in Johannesburg. This NGO funds projects across the continent - mostly connected to development issues. There is a new program „SAYXCHANGE“ at the moment as a reaction to Xenophobia. It offers exchange between Mosambique and South Africa or South Africa and Ghana. It is a fully funded program.

#### ASA program

Online: [www.asa-programm.de/en](http://www.asa-programm.de/en)

This is a German governmental funded voluntary service program for short term volunteers (3-6 months) from Germany going abroad (into countries of the global south) and from abroad coming to Germany.

### Mobility International USA (MIUSA)

Online: <http://www.miusa.org/>

MIUSA offers voluntary services and several other mobility exchanges for persons with disabilities between the USA and countries all over the world.

### ENSA program

Online: <http://ensa-programm.com/english/>

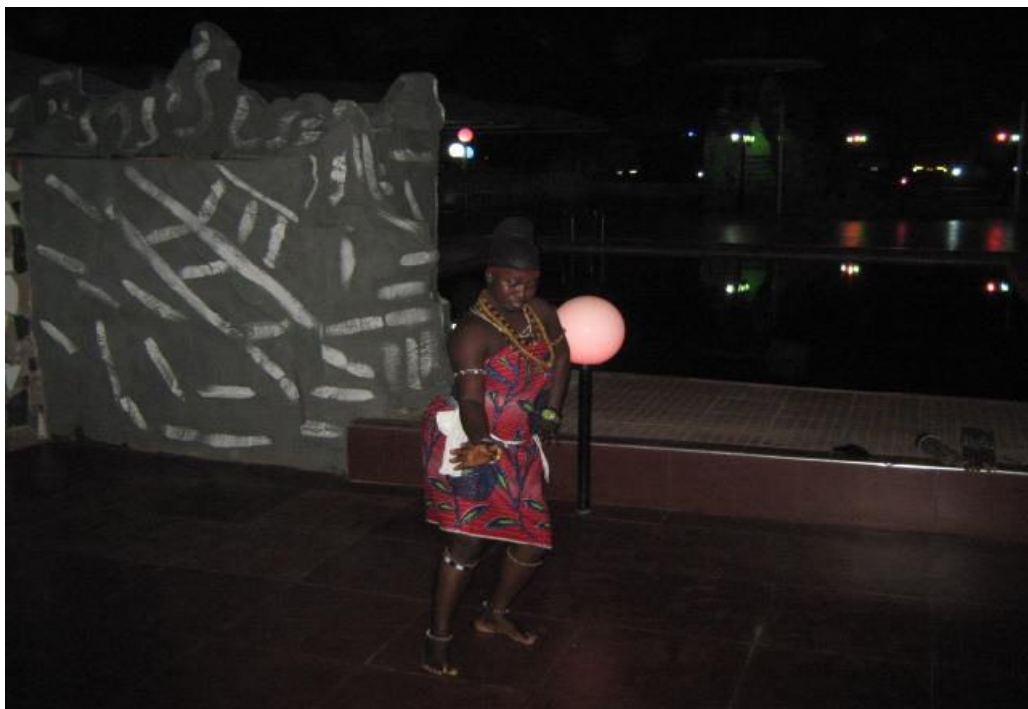
The ENSA Program supports school-exchange-projects between schools in Germany and partners in developing countries or countries in transition. ENSA promotes educational exchange between Germany and states in Africa, Asia, Latin America and South Eastern Europe committed to developmental issues.

### KITE program

Online: [www.kite.muni.cz/en/](http://www.kite.muni.cz/en/)

The KITE program offers a full- bright scholarship for persons from the so-called ACP countries to do a master, phd, doctorate or staff exchange at European universities. It especially aims at including the participation of students with disabilities.

12.02./ 19.00/ Cultural Program  
**National Cultural Dance Ensemble**



**We would like to thank all the participants. We had a very fruitful workshop in Accra/ Ghana. The results of the workshop are going to help us in making weltwärts inclusive for everyone!**



The workshop was financed by the program weltwärts of the Federal Ministry Development and Economical Cooperation Germany.

