

ASA Seminar

The first ASA Seminar took place at a castle in Witzenhausen, which is a small village and located in the middle of Germany, from the 23rd to 28th of April 2014. About 60 participants from Germany and from different African countries were brought together for the first time. This Seminar, called "Africa group", was especially for participants who will all complete their projects in African countries and for the African participants that are already in Germany.

During the six seminar days there were plenty of opportunities to get to know each other, exchange information about the different projects and we got encouraged to discuss on political and non-political topics. All days of the seminar and were organized by former ASA participants who all do this voluntarily.

After the arrival on the first evening on the 23rd of April was an introduction on the former ASA participants and contact persons for the seminar. Besides an interactive reception, the daily schedule for the following days were introduced.

The ASA Seminar would usually start at 9 a.m. with a plenary session in which all participants will participate. Each day started with a different topic. For example, one day was held by former participants to introduce to us the meaning of global learning. Another day started with a session from an external lecturer who was talking about the "Critical view on development" and we got to work in workshops in smaller groups afterwards regarding this topic. On Saturday there was a full day Anti-racism Workshop, which was very intense for many participants. The next day, on Sunday, there was an excursion on the issue of Ecotopia by visiting a transition town.

There were also sessions divided into tutorial groups up to about 10 people. We have the smallest tutorial group which includes us four (Afua, Manuela, Sandra and Franziska) and two other girls from a South-North project. During these tutorial groups with our tutor Tilman, we got some time to get to know each other, to reflect and discuss on the topics from the morning plenary sessions and also to start working as a group on our project, the eLearning platform. Each of us was introducing our project to the rest of the group by answering nine questions regarding our own reasons to work on the project and which individual skills we can contribute to the group and whether we had any concerns at that moment. We tried to use the time wisely starting to talk about our expectations and thinking about our tasks for the upcoming weeks.

Besides focusing on the own projects, there were organizational sessions to get more information about ASA itself and their different programs and to get an idea of their structure. Every day during lunch break someone responsible from ASA was available to answer individual questions or just to get in contact with the participants.

Over all, there was plenty of opportunities given to all participants to create and use time individually and the Sunday morning session was especially designed for everyone to offer workshops on any topic – the so called "open space". After a short farewell tutorial and plenary session, all participants departed. Our next stop will be Berlin, which will be our new home for the next three months. Especially Afua and Sandra are very excited, not knowing what to expect in the upcoming weeks from Berlin. But Manuela and I, Franziska, are also moving to there in the next few days and we are excited to enjoy the spring and summer time in Berlin!