

A personal impression of the DAAD project „Social Work with Refugees“

My name is Lena and as a 25-year-old master student (Counseling, M.A.) from the Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences I took part in the first run of the DAAD Project “Social Work with Refugees” that took place during the last 7 months. Cooperating with Al Balqa Applied University from Jordan, An-Najah University from Palestine and Magdeburg-Stendal University of Applied Sciences, the participation in this project offered me the chance to develop personally, to become more culturally sensitive in my personal and professional action, to practice scientific research and make new friends. It was a long process from finding our research topic (“*Different Notions of the Integration of Refugees*”), organising interviews and workshops, conducting and evaluating our quantitative survey, taking part in the summer school in Magdeburg and preparing our presentation to finally present our research results at the German Jordanian University in Madaba, Jordan.

Not only the active participation in such a research project, but also the topic “social work with refugees” was fundamentally new for me. One of the most inspiring experiences was the interviews I did with refugees from different countries about their needs for integration into the local society. These talks made me realise how important it is to give a voice to marginalised groups, to empower them and to fight against discrimination. Moreover, the intercultural encounter with our partners from Jordan and Palestine was very valuable for me. Our social interaction taught me so much more about believe and religion, about differences and similarities between German and Palestinian, Jordanian or Arab societies and their culture as well as about the practice of social work with refugees in other countries. I learned how to discuss in a more cultural sensitive manner, how to better accept different ways of life and different perceptions of freedom. Also, I think I became braver and started to believe more in myself and my skills. And finally, I fell in love with Arab food even more! All in all, I am just grateful for this project experience as it made me develop further professionally and personally.



Abbildung 1 Sunset in the desert Wadi Rum (photo taken by: Stanley Findeisen)



Abbildung 2: Farah (Al Balqa University of Applied Sciences), Ashwaq (An Najah University), Lena and Swetlana (Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences) in Wadi Rum (photo taken by: Stanley Findeisen)