

Organization & Cognition (RR, Student from India)

Individual Reflection

This collaboration gave our team a lot insight into the Indonesian culture. Our partners from Bandung, Indonesia were Wilma and Tirayu. They helped us in all possible ways to get done successfully with this assignment.

Our group was very diverse with students from Netherlands, Germany, America, Indonesia and India. We initially had a lot of trouble finding the right medium of communication but in the end it worked out well. Coming from a western culture, the group in the beginning were clueless on how to approach and interact with the Indonesian girls. They did not want to come forth as rude but the girls were open enough to talk freely about what they felt were wrong in their country.

At first, they were not sure how to help us and had trouble understanding our goal but when we started asking specific questions they were able to help us in much better way. We needed a lot of problem analysing and brain storming to first understand what we needed and then use the expertise of Indonesian girls appropriately. For example, we all knew they had enough resources, capacity and all intervention in place but we were stuck on understanding what the problem was. I thought “why were they still a developing country?” and Franziska wondered “why isn’t any of the existing training program working?”. When we put forth such specific questions they gave us good insights and we all benefited from it.

I heard a lot of other groups complain that their Indonesian team had trouble understanding but I think they were not patient enough and clear enough on what they wanted from them. I think it is unfair to blame them when we are not able to use our resources smart and not taking into account the language gap and culture gap.

This was a very new experience for me. Not that I got an insight into Indonesian culture and problems they faced. It is somewhat similar to the Indian context but I got to know how westerners feel and think when it comes to Eastern context.

We all worked really well together and I was able to share some easterner insight to bridge the culture gap. We all had put in equal effort and support each other well. We knew our strengths and helped each other when it was needed. It brought us all close together. We were able to benefit from the help provided by Wilma and Tirayu but we were not sure on how to help them in return. We did not know what they should take out of this assignment. As it was voluntary for them and they had other important commitments they were struggling to manage in the beginning. Thankfully everything worked out well in the end.