

## **Summary of accomplished activities of Vienna educational visit by Dr Ababu Teshome and Dr. Berhanu Dendena from October 22. - October 31. 2018**

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It is known that my colleague Dr. Berhanu Dendana and Mr. Ababu travelled to Vienna Austria for an educational exchange visit within the INEDIS project organized by Vienna University Department of Education. I would like to extend my appreciation to the Vienna INEDIS project team and initiation taken by Professor Gottfried and Mr. Simon in organizing the educational visit which enables us to the scale up the good experience in the area of promotion of Inclusion in Education for Persons with Disabilities. I hope we are expected to share and transform the knowledge we gained to academic staff, researchers and Associations of People with Disabilities and at large to the community at grass-root level who are working to promote inclusion in education in Ethiopia.

Therefore, it is meaningful to address the progress of our journey to Vienna.

### **October 22 2018:**

- Administrative issues related to our stay in 10 days are entertained.
- Experience sharing with BIZEPS (Beratungsstelle für Menschen mit Behinderungen und deren Angehörige, Councelling and Peer-support Association of Persons with Disabilities) in Vienna took place for 3 hours in the afternoon. Intensive discussion was held on how the twp parties work together for common goal and interest. (see also [www.bizeps.or.at/weitgereister-besuch-im-bizeps-buero/](http://www.bizeps.or.at/weitgereister-besuch-im-bizeps-buero/))



Image: Group picture of Simon Reisenbauer, Dr. Ababu Teshome, Magdalena Scharl and Dr. Berhanu Dendena at BIZEPS

#### **October 23 2018:**

- In the morning session, the six months half yearly accomplished report, the status of CBID curriculum launching and its progress and challenges, the status and preliminary activities of PHD in education program by IEBS in Dilla University and appointment of additional staff members with contractual agreement (project assistant officer for Dr. Ababu and counselor for inclusive resource center) were discussed and intervention strategies to tackle the challenges are addressed.
- In the afternoon session, we have conducted 2 hours discussion with chairman of the Monitoring Section on the implementation of Convention on the Rights of Peoples with Disabilities; its opportunities, challenges and best experience Ethiopia and Austria learn one from other;
- Panel discussion was held on Appear in practice in the evening session for 3 hours. Dilla University's motive to be partner of the INEDIS project, its progress, achievements, the opportunities and challenges of inclusive education development in Ethiopia and Austria with specific to Dilla and Vienna Universities were the focus areas of panel discussion. (see also <https://appear.at/en/news/article/2018/10/recap-and-photo-gallery-of-appear-in-practice-10-the-art-of-achieving-inclusive-education/>)

#### **October 24 2018:**

- Wednesday morning, a visit was organized to the primary and secondary at Bundes-Blindenerziehungsinstitut (Institute for the Blind). Mr. Erich Schmid who is visually impaired and entitled with multiple professions which includes teacher educator, music composer and who has specific skill in echolalizations and school leadership was assigned to orient us in the school environment and let us visualize full picture about the school setting. 2 hours discussion took place on how Dilla University and the Institute for the Blind will establish partnership with specific to

extend community service to the local community in Gedio zone and on how the 2 parties stand for mutual benefit in identifying short and long term needs and interests.



Image: Tactile adaptations of popular board games produced at the Bundes-Blindenerziehungsinstitut (Institute for the Blind)

- In the afternoon session, we were invited to give a lecture to first year degree students on the journey of inclusive education: its historical development, rationale why Ethiopia as South part of the world has chosen to attain inclusive education as policy, its opportunities, challenges and intervention strategies for further realization of Inclusive Education were addressed. The event was found to be informative to address the reality of Inclusive Education in Ethiopia and reflect on questions raised by students and other invited guests.
- In the evening session, an experience sharing event was organized with female blind teacher educator and chair-person of Association of Lecturers with Disabilities in higher education Claudia Rauch. We have discussed on the situation of students with disabilities in Vienna and Dilla University. Both of us have presented best experiences, opportunities and challenges and discussed on our future collaboration with specific to establishing the resource center in Dilla University. The discussion was concluded that Dilla University has to come up with project proposal on identifying short and long term project needs and interests.

#### **October 25 2018:**

- Thursday, the morning session was celebrated by discussion on INEDIS research and curriculum need assessment compiled report and preliminary activities and selection of reputable journals for dissemination and publication. An agreement is reached between Prof. Gottfried and us to prepare the reports in the right format and edited by language editor. Then the 2 documents will be published by looking for reputable journals by the coming one month.
- Before lunch a visit to the literature service at the University Library was organized to exchange on options to make available reading materials and books to students with visual impairments.

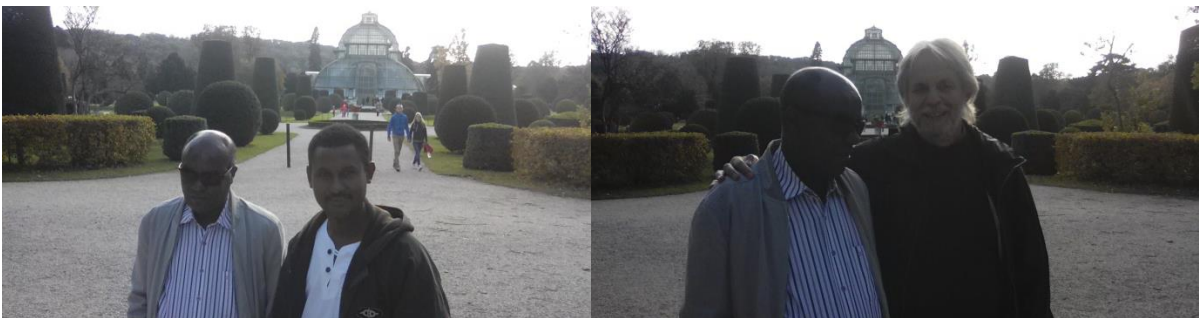


Image: Visit to library service for students with visual impairment. Dr. Ababu examining scanning equipment.

- In the afternoon session, we were invited as international guest lecturers to deliver 3 hours lecture to first year degree teachers education students. We presented the special development of inclusive education in Ethiopia and reflect on questions raised by students and other invited guests.

**October 26 2018:**

- It was the Austrian National Day. A visit to historical sites and churches and palaces was arranged in the afternoon with the support Prof. Gottfried. We enjoyed very much with the visit. The professor was very much concerned for people with visual impairment in describing orally the beautifully designed their old fascinating architectural buildings monuments, very complex transportation system which includes sub-ways, tram train and buses accommodation for visitors easily to travel from one district to other district.



Images: visit to Schönbrunn Castle, left: Dr. Ababu and Dr. Berhanug; right: Dr. Ababu and Prof. Gottfried.

I am so surprised with the application of universal design principle which is one of the core principles of Convention of the Rights of Peoples With Disabilities with specific to inclusionary of the hotel accommodation, transportation system, universities library, research and training centers. They are all friendly to people with sensory impairments mainly for mobility and communication.

### **October 29 2018:**

- In the morning session, a lecture was given by Dr. Ababu on the journey of inclusive education in Ethiopia to undergraduate students in the class facilitated by Mr. Simon. In course of delivering the course, there were comments and questions raised by students which positively provoked Dr. Ababu and Dr. Berhanu to provide challenges, opportunities and intervention mechanisms to realize inclusion and promote the close partnership of Austria and Ethiopia to realize inclusion in education for persons with disabilities which is one component of the INEDIS project.



Image: Dr. Ababu and Dr. Berhanu teaching at the Department of Education

- From 11:30-12:30 Dr. Berhanu Dendana was invited to present his PhD study and the findings to post-graduate MA students of Prof. Gottfried.
- In the afternoon session: Ababu Teshome, Berhanu Dendana with Simon went to the APPEAR office to talk with APPEAR project officer Mrs. Nikoleta. The weather was fine and sunny. The appear office is about twenty minutes distance walk from our hotel. While we were in the office, people were doing their own business. It was very quite, calm and people were moving from one office to another office with very good etiquette gently. The reason why we were in APPEAR office was to provide short briefing on CBID course, its progress, opportunities, challenges and intervention mechanisms undertaken to start the training on time. We found the discussion very fruitful and constructive and gained momentum on how we should sustain the program even after the phase out of the project.

### **October 30 2018:**

- Tuesday morning from 9-11 am, we have got an opportunity to discuss with INEDIS core team members on Erasmus PhD scholarship. An agreement is reached that Dilla University and IEBS to work aggressively to launch the PhD curriculum for the benefit of young PhD researchers staff exchange between Vienna and Dilla staff members. With regard to the new project idea and expression of interest on the part of Dilla University to work with Vienna University, both parties have shown promising interest and expressed our readiness to work on the project for the benefit of people with disabilities and achieve inclusion which is one of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

### **Conclusion:**

To sum up, our 10 days stay in Vienna was very good momentum for us: firstly, in terms of sharing Ethiopian experience and challenges moving from early practice of inclusion to current inclusion with inclusive thinking orientation from the North to South in which Ethiopia is part of the latter world. Secondly, we have also drawn lesson that Ethiopia is remaining behind in addressing barrier free learning and working ground which fits to all. In the context of Vienna, the system from federal to local level has been least restrictive or enabling environment mainly with the fascinating ICT library, toilets, laboratory research centers, walk sides, pavements, transport system, hotel accommodation and other shopping facilities. Thirdly, We have also confirmed that punctuality is the soul of business for Vienna staff members. Teachers in the staff have one agenda that is to talk about academic and research excellence.