

IPHU - Day Report 18th of November 2007 (Day 6)

Morning Activities

In the morning the group had a guided tour of the GK campus led by Reza from GK. First we visited the primary school, where the first five years of schooling are free for both sexes. Then we visited the hospital where we were shown the microbiology lab, pathology lab, vaccination services, antenatal check-up unit, neonatal care station, alternative medicine unit, and gynaecology and obstetrics unit. There are also teaching courses in the hospital, and we were shown the physiotherapy department where they treat and educate paramedics and students at the same time. Next we visited the women's vocational training centre, where clothes and furniture are made and sold. Many of our group left here with bags of gifts for their friends and family; mostly from the clothing outlet rather than the carpentry showroom. After this we visited the research laboratory, a public limited company operating under the GK Trust, researching and developing drugs. Then we visited the GK university where we spoke French with the Head of the department of Basic and Social Sciences. Finally we visited GK Pharmaceuticals where the chemicals and bulk of antibiotics prepared in the research lab are turned into pills and syrups in a very impressive mass production unit.

Afternoon activities

Session about Trade and Health by David Legge and by Miguel San Sebastian

David Legge's presentation talked about the formation and development of the IMF, WB and GATT. These institutions were able to exert a lot of pressure on the economies of developing countries to adopt structures adjustments programmes in the context of the 1970's debt crisis. In 1995 the creation of WTO provided an institutionalized structure, which could be used to enforce liberalization and privatization. At this time the range of industries discussed in trade talks expanded to include services and intellectual property rights. David explained the various mechanisms within the WTO, which developed countries, could use to impose their agenda on developing countries, such as the "Most favoured nation clause, National treatment clause, and Dispute settlement mechanism". Miguel's presentation explained in more detail how particular multi-lateral agreements such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services have implications for the future of health care provision. He explain the modes of trade in order to make us understand how much is included in GATS and also how complicated it is. He explains how liberalization can lead to further privatization and damage to the public health service provision by denying the basic principles of cross-subsidy and risk pooling. Miguel ended his presentation with recommendations basically that countries should be much less ready to commit to agreements on the health sector and the framework for negotiation should be

reformed to include consultation with civil society and reduce lock-in of future health policy.

Late afternoon activities

Project Discussion Groups