Trip report
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During the trip, we observed some of the differences between life in the urban and rural of the country. It was very important to see the different ways in which people live, depending on the area of the country they live in, the way they behave and relate to others, the social differences between persons who live in extreme poverty and middle class people from the rural area of the country.

In spite of the lack of resources, people make the best out of the opportunities presented to them, like Julio Cesar from TPS (Health Technology) who in spite of having very few opportunities in life, keeps moving forward and is a very ingenious person at his work and he has bettered himself through his empirical knowledge. Another example of overcoming, were the workers at Hope Heaven and Transiciones who in spite of all having some physical handicap, are moving forward and are dedicated to work in construction and repair of mobility equipment to help others who are handicapped like them.
In the visit to Transitions, it was very impressive to see how they manage to develop spare parts they don’t have; they use alternative materials to replace some of the spares they need to repair the equipment that comes incomplete in most of cases.

The Transicitions clinic and workshop will be considered as the most important contact for the execution of the project, since they will be responsible for manufacturing the prototype and end product. For this reason the resources, tools, processes and products they count with were observed during the visit, in order to facilitate the decision making in the product’s design process and in order to make the best out of what is available.

Some of the challenges are mostly faced in the economical aspect, since some of the people do not count with the necessary resources to pay for the equipment nor to acquire one in good state, and in some cases they need to be put on the waiting list until someone makes a donation to Transitions. Another of their limitations is the purchase of raw material because in some cases, transportation turns out to be too expensive, which, implies a major production cost in the case of wheelchairs.
Before the trip, the perception I had of the people from the rural area—specifically of people living in extreme poverty—was that they were distrustful and wary of strangers. In some of the cases I thought they would refuse to answer our questions or give us support. My surprise was that most of the people we visited were very friendly and collaborating, and in some cases as in Pasajquim—where people lived in extreme poverty—what shocked me most were the dirty water samples and the elevated prices of the grocery stores, due to limited access to the distribution of goods.

Another important point during the visits was the way of life of the people from the rural area. It is an important factor in our design, because first we assumed that the product, for example, the water filter was going to be accepted but when introduced to the communities, it wasn’t so. It is important to get the users involved during the process, in order to obtain feedback and to facilitate the acceptance of the product in the other communities. In the case of mobility devices it will be necessary to make some tests previous to the end product.
As a personal contribution for future trips: I think it would be very important to pay a visit to the urban area of the country to have clearer knowledge of the ways of life in urban and rural areas, and thus achieve a better comparison of both. I think that very important visits to local industries were lacking to also be able to take into consideration the raw materials and manufacturing resources available for the different projects.

At a personal level, this trip meant a lot to me because as an industrial designer and as a person I am interested in getting to know and share with the user in order to have a better understanding of his or her needs and to be able to fulfill them in the best way with a quality product. The interaction with the user, the manufacturing manager and other persons involved in the subject are of great importance to be able to consider information that is, in some cases, key to the success of the project.
What I liked and enjoyed most of the trip was our visit to Hope Heaven, where we had the opportunity to collaborate with the setting up of a wheelchair for a 4-year-old boy with paralysis. For me it was very important to participate in this at a personal as in an academic level, for it was a very enriching experience. Each of the experiences we had was important and positive, as was getting to know our team partner, in order to reach a better communication.