

**Report from a sabbatical period 15 August through 15 December 2012 for  
The Association of Folk Hoejskoles in Denmark- FFD**



Workshop in Kyoto

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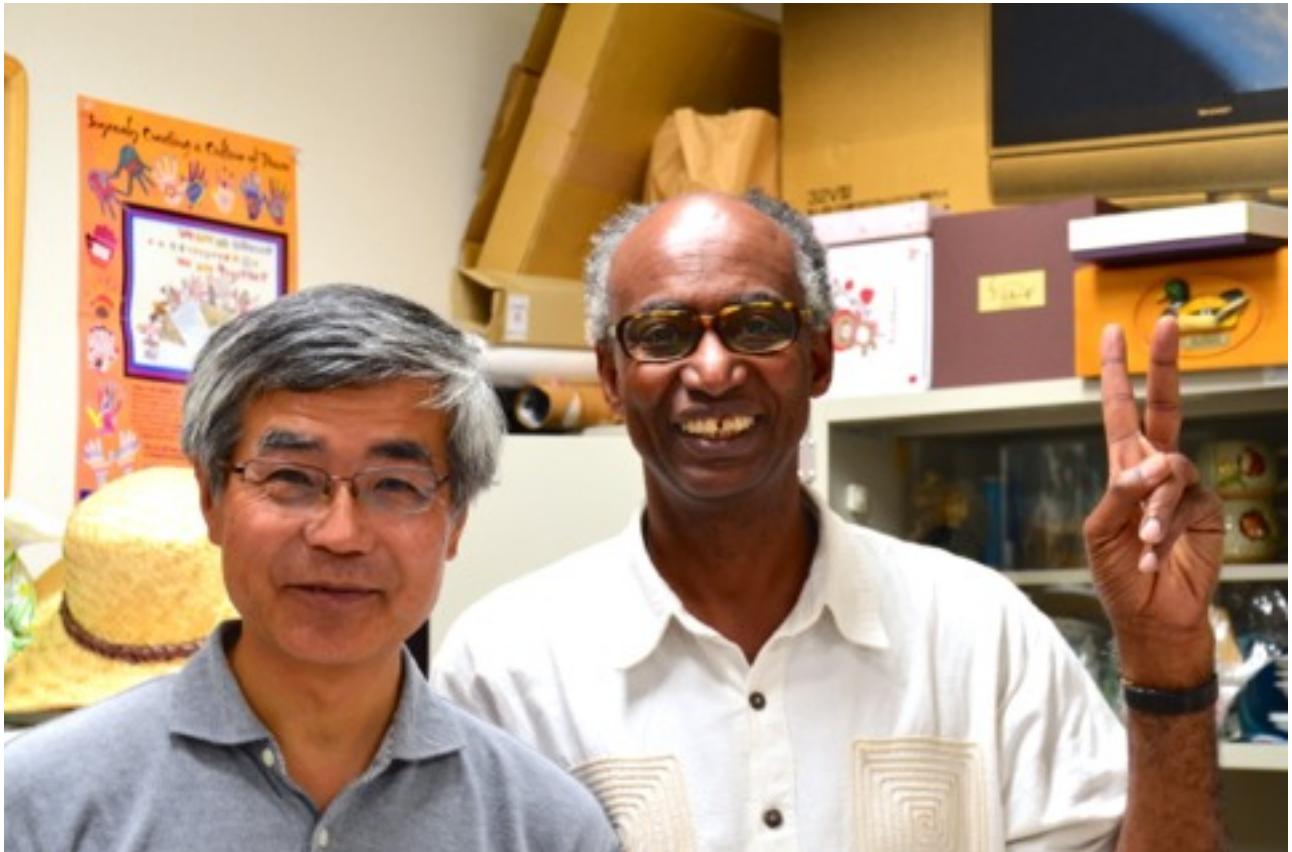
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- Danish Folk Hoejskole in Zanzibar for making the time to meet and exchange experiences and perspectives on the idea and challenges of having a folk hoejskole abroad.

## **Introduction**

This report has been written in English for the purpose of sharing it also with the international partners who have been involved in my further education.



With Professor Kodera of Kyoto Tachibana, university

The aim of the sabbatical leave was to further develop my teaching competences, expand and strengthen my global network as a teacher of Crossing Borders Global Studies at Krogerup Højskole. The global studies study programme focuses on the institutional, philosophical, climate/environmental, media, conflict and active citizenship dimensions of globalisation. The programme is designed for socially-minded and globally oriented youth from around the world to gain relevant knowledge, skills and tools to take active part in the development process of their societies.

With the above context in mind, I decided to focus my further education on the BRICS countries, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. I am happy that it was possible to visit and study all the BRICS except Russia. However, instead of Russia, I spent ten days in Japan, 1 week in Tanzania and Ghana, respectively. Japan, Tanzania and Ghana are more relevant for my professional areas of interest. I have a big network of højskole alumni and networks in all the 3 countries.

Another element of plan that was not met has been attending lectures at the university of Copenhagen and DIIS. With the opportunity to travel to and witness the current development process in the BRICS, I chose to learn from the field rather than on the benches.

## **The structure of the report**

The report comprises

1. the learning and networking outcome of my sabbatical leave against the objectives I set out to achieve through further education
2. the narrative report containing acknowledgements, introduction, presentation and description of my educational activities in the countries and institutions I visited, focusing on the workshops I conducted and lectures I gave as well as the people I met and interviewed plus the prelevant places I visited.
3. the module/lecture/workshop outlines which I developed and applied during the study period.

## **The learning and networking outcome**

First of all, it is important to bear in mind that my sabbatical leave has just ended a few days ago and that learning outcome of educational activities tend to grow and bear fruits gradually. This makes any attempt in measuring such a non-formal learning outcome difficult. Having said that, I am pleased to report the following results as a direct ouctome of my sabbatical leave, a leave that I consider to have achieved its objectives far beyond my widest expectations. Here we go.

1. for sure the most important learning outcome of the sabbatical leave is the personal and institutional contacts I have made, the partnerships I have built and the first hand experience I have gained in the BRICS and other countries of my further education. As a result I have informally agreed with Navdanya and Centre for Environemntal Excellence (CEE) in India, Centre for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (CLAPV) at the political science university in Beijing, Future Centre in Tokyo, the Hoejskole project in Tokyo, the Federal University of Rio Grande Do Sul in Porto Alegre, Brazil and the folk hoejskole project in Porto Alegre to explore exchange and collaboration opportunities for mutual benefits. After visiting, staying and conducting workshops and giving lectures at these institution we agreed to continue exchanging of ideas, teachers and students. Crossing Borders has already started developing a project titled Youth for Cliamte Action in partnership with CEE in India and CLAPV in China. Dialogue to strengthen relationships with these institution is going on via email exchange and skype meetings.



Workshop in Kyoto

2. The next most important leaning outcome is that, thanks to the visit to the BRICS, I was able both to restore, build on and strengthen my old folk *hoejskole* networks in China, Japan, South Africa and Brazil. In all the four countries, I met and discussed with *hoejskole* alumni and hear about how they have been using their *hoejskole* experience back home. Without exception all the former students I have met, told me that the *hoejskole* experience made a positive and lasting, positive change in their lives, especially how they see other people, cultures and the world around them. For example Hao Yu from Beijing, told me that after returning to China, he started his own English language studio using drama, roleplays and simulations to teach children English. He said that what makes his studio different from the many other private schools is that his method is based on the *hoejskole* participatory, dialogue and democracy educational where the students and their interests are at the centre. According to what I heard from these former *hoejskole* students,

what makes the hoejskole special is the method, flexibility and absence of exams and grading pressures.



Yossi and Shenko, former hoejskole students and my fantastic Urayasu host family

3. Being parts of two folk hoejskole projects, one in Japan and the other in Brazil. The Japanese folk hoesjkole project is being developed by Lo Anne and Stan Olsen together with a group of former hoejskole students in Japan. The Olsen couple has American - Japanese with Scandinavian roots. They got the idea of building a folk hoejskole after their daughter had been to a hoejskole in Norway. The Brazilian hoesjkole is being developed by former hoesjkole students from Porto Alegre, Anna Maria Barros and Daraci, both are journalist and civil society activists.



Workshop at Professors club, Porto Alegre

4. I have developed and tested four lecture and workshop concepts during my sabbatical leave. The first concept is titled Climate Challenges as Solutions for the current cross-cutting global problems of negative climate change and global warming, addiction to fossil fuels, unemployment, conflicts over deminising resources etc. The concept builds on the idea through savings and innovation the climate challenges can be turned into objectives by investing in green technologies, using and developing renewable energy to weane the world from fossil fuel addiction. This is possible as both the knowledge and the technology are available. Clean, abundant and enewable resources are accessible to most people. What is lacking is the leadership and political will and courage to quit the old habits. The workshop outline that I used in China, Japan and Brazil is enclosed in this report for all to use, adapt, comment on and critique. The second concept I developed and applied in Japan and Brazil is titled Active Global Citizenship. It is based on the idea that for a true globalisation, we need education for active global citizenship in order to expand our narrow natioanlistic imagined community beyond our borders so that our education system can educate global citizens with the knowledge, understanding, skills and confidence to live and work with anyone from any culture anywhere in the world, just like we can work in any regions in our often tiny national states. The outline is enclosed here for free use, commenting and critiquing. The third concept I developed is a lecture on the bacground, key actors and global implications of the Arab Spring. This lecture concept was used in a 2 hour lecture at the Koyoto Tachibana university of education in Japan. The concept outline is attached with this report again for public use and feedback. The fourth lecture concept, I developed and applied in Japan and Brazil was on the folk hoejskole as a space for active global citizenship and intercultural learning. In Japan I had a three hour lecture and workshop for NGO leaders and former hoejskole students. The lecture was organised by two former students of Krogerup

Hoejskole, Satoshi and Aum. The lecture took place at the Future Centre for youth skills development and empowerment in Tokyo. The same concept was used at two lectures I gave at the federal Unisity f Rio Grande Do Sul in Porto Alegre's department of languages and at the federal university of education in down town Porto Alegre.



A rainy moment with former hoejskole students and teachers, Alex and Jerry, Caxias, Brazil

5. In addition to the above learning and networking outcomes, I have collected loads of learning and teaching materials, ideas, video clips and photos about the countries I visited. I intend to edit and compile these first hand materials into teaching modules both to use in teaching and sharing with interested colleagues. Furthermore, I intend to build on the new and renewed connections for further collaboration, exchange and sharing of good practices.

### **The narrative report cover the period from 15 August to 15 December 2012**

Thanks to my global folk hoejskole network, I was able to designed a very compact programme starting in India from 20 August to 9 September. My visit to India started in Denli where I spent 5 days exploring some of the key cultural and historical sites that are relevant to my study visit. Apart from walking around, taking photos, filming and talking to people, I visited the Ghandia memorial park, the Red Fort, the old city with Jami Masjid, Sigh and Hindu Temples. I bought and read two novels on the current development in India. The first book titled the White Tiger, written from the perspectives of poor Indian and the other titled the Holy Cow, written from the perspective of a foreign journalist. In the white tiger the author asserts that there are only two castes left in India: the

Big Belly and Thin Belly. The big belly caste represents less than 1% of the population while rest belongs to the thin belly caste. The author adds that there are only two destinies left in India: to eat or be eaten. The author of the holy cow describes the challenges and attractions of India for foreigners.

### **India: 20 August - 9 Sept 2012**

When I landed in Delhi in the early morning and stepped out of the airport on 21 August I was both shocked and amazed by the contrasting and contradicting realities of India. The charm, desperation, massive economic growth, the filth, entrepreneurial drive, misery, riches, the noise, the colours and dust coexist in disharmony. This was the same impressions I met in the other four different states I visited around the country. After Delhi, the next stop was Agra, the home of the world's most beautiful building Taj Mahal in Uttarapradesh in the north east. Here, I spent three days admiring, taking photos and filming Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, the slum of Rajiv Places and the many maghul monuments.



Back to Delhi for a day rest, I jumped on a 7 hour bus ride to Dehra Dun in the himalayan state of Uttarkand in the north. Here I found a peaceful, organic farm or the Earth University of Navdanya some 12 km out of the Dehra Dun city. Navdanya is an experimental organic farm which is part of a environmental movement for seed sovereignty, farmer's self reliance and earth democracy that was initiated by the famous India scientist and activist Dr. Vandana Shiva in 1987. The farm has a seed bank containing more than 1700 different varieties of seeds, including 600 types of rice. They collect and exchange seeds with local farmers and run experiential farming and give global courses on sustainability and Ghandian philosophy. There rooms and organic kitchen for up to 50 course

participants. The farm is a coke, pepsi, meat and alcohol free zone. I spent one week here living, working, attending yoga and meditation sessions and discussing with some of the 30 international volunteers and local staff. I used the opportunity to conduct a 2 hour workshop about the folk hoejskole for the local staff and volunteers. I was given guided tour by one of the scientific programme director and interview 3 of the senior staff and two volunteers, an Italian and Japanese. I wrote several Facebook blog posts and took a day tour in and around Dehra Dun, visiting Hindu and Buhddist temples, and other important cultural sites of interest. From Navdanya, I took a train back to Delhi to interview Dr. Vandana Shive. Unfortunately, our appointment was cancelled because Dr. Shiva had to rush to South Africa. My stay on this unique farm was one of the top highlights of my visit to India.



Joining the farmer work at Navdanya, Uttarkand

From Delhi, I flew with Spice Jet to Amhedabad in Gujarat state in the east of India. The purpose of my visit to Ahmedabad was to meet, share experiences and good practice with colleagues at the Centre for Environmental Excellence (CEE). The centre is one of the most important education and advocacy civil society in India with branches across the country and abroad. They raise awareness, develop and disseminate educational materials and pressure public and private institutions for a more sustainable management of resources. I spent two days with the centre. The first day was dedicated to meeting representatives of the different departments with whom I discussed environmental education, awareness raising, advocacy and explored areas of possible collaboration and exchange. We also shared information materials and decided to develop a project with Crossing Borders focusing on youth for climate action. I also did interview the head of the education

department and took loads of photoes.



Meeting with programme officers at Centre for Environmental Excellence, Ahmedabad

The second day, I started by paying a visit to Ghandi's Ashram on the outskirts of Ahmedabad, filming and taking photos and making interview with the curator of the Ashram. Truly, inspiring.

After the morning visit to Ghandi's Ashram, two of the programme directors, brought a car in which we drove 130 km away to a special project run by the CEE in collaboration with the state university of Gujarat. The project is social entrepreneur scheme based on the Ghandian philosophy of self reliance. The programme is used to select a special group of students and give them scholarships to complete a masters degree. After earning masters, each student is supposed to choose a village or a rural community to set up a project and live with the community for at least five years. The person we visited was running an organic farm with some bafullos and a milk cooperatives for the local women.



Field visit to milk cooperative based on the Ghandian Gram Selpi self reliance, in Gujarat

After, Ahmedabad, I flew to the pink city of Jaipur in Rajasthan in the west of India. With its pink and water palaces and amber fort, Jaipur is one of the most charming regions to visit in India. The traffic was relatively orderly and streets cleaner than what I had seen before. I spent two days here exploring the unique cultural and historical sites of Jaipur, including Hawa Mahal, Yantar Mantar observatory, amber fort and water palace. I also visited the art museum and clothe factory.



### **China: 10-17 September**

After three weeks in the most unequal and colourful member of the BRICS, I flew to Beijing to explore the big brother of the BRICS. I was met at the airport by one of a former folk hoejskole student Hao Yu. Hao drove me to my hotel near the Forbidden City in the heart of Beijing and shared with his perspectives on the massive economic growth and its social and environmental consequences.



Lunch with Hao Yu

My activities in Beijing started with a lecture I gave at the Beijing university of political science. The title of lecture was climate challenges as a solution to global problems. The participants were Masters students of law and political science. After the lecture, I had meeting with professor Wang the founding chair person of the Centre for Legal Assistance to Pollution Victims (CLAPV). Our meeting focused on sharing ideas and exchanging good practice as well as exploring collaboration possibilities. The result was to develop a project on youth for climate action together with CEE in India. After the meeting, CLAV appointed one of their masters student to guide me in and around Beijing. Mengxing gave me a fantastic guided tour of Tiananman Square, the Forbidden City, Meng tombes, old Beijing and Badalin part of the great wall. After that I went on my own to visit the Temple of Heaven and Da Ju Buhbuddist temple outside Beijing. However, one of the highlights of my Beijing visit was the interview and discussions I had with Hao Yu, former hoejskole student.



Lecture at CLAPV

### Japan: 17-28 Sept

When I arrived to Japan, I was met by another former hoejskole student, Nami Urano, who is now working in an environmental NGO in Tokyo. The following day Nami joined me at Keimei Gakuen International school where she was the interpreter of the 6 sessions I had with high school students and lower grade pupils. It was marathon day starting with 2 hour workshop on active global citizenship, followed with peace building and storytelling sessions in a series of combined classes from 60 to 120 kids. Just on that day of 18 September, I had about 350 kids, the following day started with a storytelling workshop for some 60 kinder garten kids.



With Mr. Hirano, chairman of Keimei Gakuen, international coordinator, Mrs. Mari Sekine on the left and former hoejskole student Nami Urano.

After that I gave a session on peace dialogue to a group of 20 teachers and parents at the school. Later in the afternoon of that same day, I gave a lecture on peace building to a group 20 representatives of Japan, Asia, Africa and Latin America Association. The lecture generated a lively discussion especially when I told the participants about an idea I had when I visited Hiroshima in 2010. The ideas was to bring young people from Israel and Palestine to learn about the price of war and the fruits of peace in Japan. The following activities comprised a three hour workshop at the Future Centre in Tokyo for 50 representatives of civil society and environmental representatives. As indicated above, this workshop was organised by two former hoejskole students and the focus was on the non-formal education of the hoejskole.

After Tokyo, I went to Kyoto for two afternoon workshops at a community centre in the heart of Kyoto. Each workshop last between 3 and 4 hours. The participants included former hoejskole students, civil society representatives and parents. The workshops were organised by a fomer hoejskole student Haruka Oseki and the interpreter was also a former hoejskole student Maya Bondo. The last activity in Kypto was a two hour lecture I gave to some 120 students at the Kyoto Tachibana university. The lecture was organised by professor Kodera, who is a father of a former Japanese hoejskole student, who is now maried and living in Denmark. The lecture was about the background, players and implications of the Arab Spring. The lecture outline is enclosed here.



Former hoejskole student, Amu introducing my workshop in Tokyo

After Japan, I went back to Denmark for one week during which I gave a lecture to the Crossing Borders Global Studies at Krogerup Hoejskole. The next leg of my study tour took me to Tanzania, South Africa and Brazil. I was lucky that my wife Runa Midtvaage was able to join me on this special study exploration.

### Tanzania: 6-14 October

In mainland Tanzania, I had the chance to stay with Danish friends working in World Bank development project. We exchange ideas and perspectives on the rapid development process in Tanzania as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, with all the bi-products of rise in crimes and inequality. In addition to the commercial capital Dar es Salaam, I visited the Mikumi National Park some 350 km south.



The old daus are still sailing around the spice island of Zanzibar

I also spent 3 days in Zanzibar, during which I went on a had spice tour and a visit to the Danish folk hoejskole in Zanzibar. I was given a guide tour by Jan Iversen, the principal. Jan is running a regular hoejskole with an average of 70 Danish, Norwegian and Swedish students per term. What makes the Zanzibar hoejskole different from other hoejskoles is that it is based abroad and with no state support plus the majority of the staff are local people. Jan shared with me his idea of running a hoejskole abroad with all the possibilities and challenges that go with it. As an experienced social entrepreneur, Jan combines the hoejskole with a hotel and safari adventure.



Jan Iversen, principal of Zanzibar Hoejskole sharing about the opportunities and challenges of running a hoejskole abroad

### **South Africa 5-18 October and 29 October - 1 November**

After near 10 years of absence, it was truly inspiring to visit and see how things have evolved in the rainbow nation since I was there last time in 2003. My visit started in the gold city of Johannesburg. Here, I paid study visits to the Apartheid museum, Seweto including the Mandela House, Wandie's restaurant, Africa museum and the cultural centre of New Town (former Sophia Town). During these visits I met and talked with various young artists in the Bus Factory cultural centre and spent half a day exploring the history of black music exhibition in the Africa museum.



One of the highlights of the Joburg and Pretoria visits was meeting and catching up with former hoejskole students. I was invited to a special dinner at Fundi and Mike Serame's in Pretoria. Both Fundi and Mike hold senior positions, in the private and public sectors, respectively. After dinner and late discussion, they drove me back to my guest house in Melville, Joburg. Mike and Fundi told me about some of the over 60 former hoejskole students in South Africa. One is a deputy minister of trade, another is a senior member of the South African mission to the UN while others hold senior posts in different sectors in South Africa.



With Mike and Fundi Serame, their daughter and my wife Runa Midtvaage

The next day, I met another former hoejskole student, Sipho Mbele who is now a director at the Haugtings Primier's office in Joburg. Sipho shared with me the current progress and challenges facing South Africa, the junior member of the BRICS whose is steady post-Apartheid economic growth has not benefit the vast majority of the population. As a result, South Africa is faced with growing and violent social and political crises. After, Joburg, I flew to Brazil for one week. After Brazil, I came back to Joburg, I jumped on the Sozolosha Primier train on a 26 hour across the 1800 km ride between Joburg and Cape Town. In Cape Town, I visited the Kirstenbosch botanical garden, Table Mountain and the various parts of the city. My plan was to meet one of the former hoejskole student, Zandible and also pay a visit to Robben Island. The meeting with Zandile was canceled due some unexpected sitaution while the visit to Robben Island was cancelled due to strong storm that prevented boats from sailing to the island.

### **Brazil: 18-28 October**

On arrival to Porto Alegre airport, I was welcomed by Ana Maria Barros and Daraci both journalists and hoejskole people. I stayed in their house, parts of which with are dedicated to the hoejskole project. After matte tea breakfast, I was taken on a guided tour of the hoejskole section of the house.



Morning mate (Brazilian green tea) with Ana Maria Barros

The following day was spent on a workshop for 28 civil society environmental activists. The workshop was based on the climate challenges as solution concept mentioned above. The next activity was a lecture at the federal university's department of languages. The lecture here was on the Danish education system both formal and non-formal. The following day, I had my final lecture at the federal university's department of education on down town campus. Both lectures started with a brief introduction, followed by group exercise to compare the Danish and Brazilian education systems with the aim of looking into mutual learning.

The remaining part of my activities in Brazil consisted of cultural city tour of Porto Alegre and ecotour tour of Caxias some 150 km north of Porto Alegre.

After Porto Alegre, I spent day exploring the mega metropolis of São Paulo before flying back to Johannesburg.

Again, one of the highlights of my visit was meeting former high school students Ana Maria, Daraci, Alex, Tatiana, Jerry, Ricardo and Daniel. Thanks to these fantastic high school friends, like in Japan, I did not need to stay in a hotel during my stay in Brazil.



2 former hoejskole students, Silviand Jerry, environmetal journalist and film director, respectively, Porto Alegre,

#### Ghana: 5-10 December 2012

My visit to Ghana was in connection with Crossing Borders Yes Ghana project, Voices of Youth 2012. The aim of the project was to advocate that youth issues were put in the centre of the political agenda in conjunction with the presidential and parliamentary elections of 7 December 2012 in Ghana. In this connection, I observed several polling centres between Accra and Ho and participated in the youth forum for peaceful elections. The event was organised at the Ho Polytenic relai centre in eastern Ghana by our partner Yes Ghana. On the second day of the elections, I conducted a workshop on peacebuilding to the 150 youth participating in the forum. The second part of the workshop dealt with the presentation and dessimilation of the youth manifesto that was produced by the youth involved in the project. It was inspiring to observe a group of youth who were well prepared and determined to make sure that the elections took place under a free and peaceful conditions.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to state that the personal and professional benefits of the sabbatical leave are so wide ranging that it is impossible to compress the experience in a report. Yet, I can say that I have improved my knowledge, skills and understanding of the global issues that I deal with in my teaching in Crossing Borders Global Studies at Krogerup Hoejskole. I have strengthened and expanded my global network. I have reconnected with old hoejskole friends and made new ones. I have seen many former hoejskole students and heard their stories of the wonderful, life improving impacts of their hoejskole experiences. Many dream about coming back as hoejskole teachers, some have hoejskole project ideas for their communities. Others are working in civil society organisations dealing with global issues of peace, environment and education. I look forward to start spring term 2013 inspired, better informed and energised to help Krogerup hoejskole and its sister schools contribute to making the world a better place for all.

Once again, sincerely thanks to Krogerup Hoejskole and FFD for this unique opportunity and million thanks to all the fantastic friends and institutions that made my sabbatical leave a success.



Garba Diallo  
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