



OT 24 Hour Virtual Exchange

October 29/30/31

[Depending on where you are]

Exploring Balance



Francene Rodríguez Díaz is a registered occupational therapist, trained at the National University of Colombia. Francene has a background in social policy, local governance, community participation, democratic process and community based rehabilitation. She has worked in both public and private sectors, with a special interest in community development, particularly with people with disabilities (PWD). Francene has participated and coordinated projects focused on security and restoration of the rights of PWD, according to the national and district disability policy and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She has focused primarily on social processes including labor, education, health, and political empowerment that encourage active citizenship and facilitate social mobilization. Francene currently holds two positions in Bogota, Colombia. The first is with at a Bogota hospital, with aims of promoting the community inclusion and quality of life of PWD and their families. The second is a research position with the Social Action Institute (SERES), at the University of Rosario in Bogota, Colombia. SERES is dedicated to research and social action activities that promote local development with vulnerable populations in Bogota. Francene is collaborating with SERES on a phenomenological study that aims to better understand the social representations of disability in a vulnerable, less-resourced community in northern Bogota.

SHIFTING THE BALANCE OF POWER THROUGH HEALTH LITERACY IN COLOMBIA

This presentation will describe a study being conducted by the Social Action Institute (SERES), at the University of Rosario (Bogota, Colombia). This study aims to identify and analyse the perceptions and social attitudes of disability in vulnerable communities, specifically, the northern Bogota community of El Codito. Historically, the construct of disability has exhibited a paradigm shift from structures of discrimination towards the introduction of social models that view disability as an interaction between an individual and their particular context.

Our study has begun to explore the construct of disability in El Codito using qualitative and quantitative methods. Preliminary results indicate that perceptions of segregation and stigmatization are present in the community, even with the entry of laws and international/national policy aimed at the inclusion of people with disabilities. While there has been progress towards inclusion in cultural components, including symbolic perception, there remain challenges in developing disability inclusive communities. Transformation of social perceptions requires continued research and generation of remedial actions in vulnerable communities.