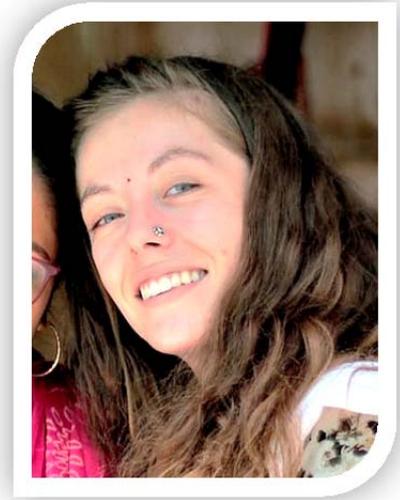


Name: Carla Stassi
Country: France
Volunteering period: Dec. 2018 – August 2019



Final Impression, August 2019

My name is Carla, I come from France and I join Sambhali through a french programme called «Service Civique» by Eurasianet.

I just finish High School, I did not know in which studies get involve and I always loved Asia sooo much, that it came naturally to me to go there for learn better about myself and what i want to do in the future.

I found Eurasianet, which is a french association that send young people in Asia to do their «Service Civique» (which is a voluntary commitment to serve the public interest).

When I read about the NGO Sambhali Trust, their work and the mission they propose for the volunteers, I liked it right away.

I was not especially delighted to come back to India because of the food and other restrictions, but for my third time in the country, i really fell in love with it.

To begin with, I arrived on the 19th December in a beautiful blue city that I had never visited before, with another «Service Civique» girl from Eurasianet, we was greeted in a superb guesthouse located in a very quiet area, by adorable people. We met Govind, the founder and manager of Sambhali Trust, Mukta, his wife, and Monica, the woman in charge of the reception. All immediatly put us at ease, we settled down in our room, and Govind inform us about what will be our mission during the 9 next months.

Because of (or thanks to) the winter holidays, we had one week free to acclimatize to our new environment, buy sim card, indian clothes, and all the basics needed for the next 9 months.

We also visited 4 of the 7 centers based in Jodhpur that receive everyday around thirty women and kids to english, maths and sewing lessons.

After this week, I started my mission in Ladhli center, I taught english to women in the morning and kids in the afternoon, but unfortunately I did not know how to find my place among women and children, I was not comfortable in this center, so after 1 month i moved in another center.

In JEC center, it was immediatly different, the teachers was directly very kind with me, always attentive, doing their best to make me feel good.

Moreover, I was lucky to be in this center during 1 month with one of my best encounters in India, an amazing and very invested french volunteer of 27 years old, and she trully help me to improve myself and guide me in this new work.

I stayed 7 months in JEC center and this is undoubtedly one of the best experience in all my life, I created links and really deep connection with some women and kids, I lived incredible moments full of joy and exchanges... I maybe taught them english during 7 months but they taught me so much more, they literally made grow inside of me a kind of love that I never suspected it existed before.

I will never forget all the emotions that these people made me live, and always remember their love, and this wonderful feeling I had everyday when I went out of the center, the feeling of pure happiness, the feeling of being fulfilled with a love, and the satisfaction of give them all this happiness in return. Whether with the teachers, the women, and the kids, I wish to meet them again cause I will all my life be grateful for making me grow and becoming a better person; cause at the end I think this kind of meetings and exchanges is the only way to know yourself better, improve your unselfish love, and find a pure form of happiness.

Beside to my work in JEC center, I also had a wonderful experience with the life in India.

To start with the communal life within Durag Niwas guesthouse (the guesthouse related to Sambhali Trust), I only have lovely memories, either with the staff that is full of kind and caring people, Goving with who I shared so many nice moments and good parties, or the amazing volunteers I met all along... It's really a beautiful life, everyday filled with rich exchange, implausible situations, and blissful moments.

During 9 months, I also had the opportunity to travel around, I went to Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Pushkar and Udaipur in Rajasthan, and Rishikesh in Uttarakhand.

That enabled me to understand better the country, have a vision more global of India, of the people, and their way to live... And everywhere I went in India, I always

met wonderful people, always caring about you, happy to show you their family, work or life.

And about that, the typical indian life is an incredible spectacle that I will never get tired of; whether it is the colorful women dresses, the cows everywhere, the temples, the messy circulation, the overflowing markets, the rickshaws, and all those people living their so particular life; children playing in 40cm of rain water, street-food shops, old men pushing his vegetable cart, dances and musics all the way around the street for every events, giant ice cube transported on motorbike...

Indian life is a very unique way of life, and there are still problems in the Indian system like the place of the women, ecological management, arranged marriage, out-of-school children and out-of-work people, but you can despite all feel a very very particular magic, that i could not describe with words, and that I think we use to lost in Occidental countries.

To conclude, I think everyone should live experience like this one because it matter to know different cultures and ways of seeing the world to know yourself better and how to have a beneficial impact all around you.

I want to say a big thank you to all the staff Bunty, Mukta, Monica, Durgesh, Lalit and more.. for every single days being the most adorable with me.

I would also like to thank Sanno and Salma for being my Indian moms, all my women for all these exchanges and shares, and all my kids for all these crazy laughs. My thanks go also to Ladu for driving me every day to my center there and back (at always approximate times)).

I will also thank Ayush for always being present to annoy me, protect me, share with me, and like me in the best way a little brother can do.

And last but not least, I would like to present all my gratitude to Govind, for always having been the best boss, without who nothing would have been possible.