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Country: Germany

Volunteering period: Sept. 2018 – April 2019



Final Impression, May 2019

Hello,

if I need to describe my 8 months in Jodhpur with Sambhali Trust, the word would be: 'Extraordinary'. Many people ask me why. I tell them, if you are there, you will know! But I will try my best to explain it here:

On the 27th of September I reached the beautiful country, also my birth country, India. When I reached Jodhpur, the staff from the Durag Niwas Guesthouse was there to pick me up and to bring me to my new home for the next 8 months.

My first week in Jodhpur I had to settle down and to visit the city. After this week I went to one of the projects. I worked in the morning with the women and girls and in the afternoon with kids. My first impression was 'wow', because I never saw people so enthusiastic with learning English and Maths. It was really nice to see that. The centre I was working in was Fatima Empowerment Centre and I had three groups (beginners, medium and advanced) to teach and with the kids I just had two groups (beginners and medium) to teach. My working period started at 10.00 a.m. and ended at 16.00 p.m.

The women and girls I taught the ABC and how to make simple conversation like: 'How are you? What is your name? Where are you from?' After we finished this, I started to read with them just small sentences and then we always had longer stories to read. And my final goal was that they write their own small story about themselves. They really liked it! With the kids I made some English games and kids songs to sing. And that's how they learn about the body parts and the numbers from one to ten. We sang with them everyday songs like: If you're happy and you know it. Or head, shoulders, knees and toes.

Then it was already Christmas time! Even though the Indians don't celebrate Christmas, the staff members and the family Rathore, decorated the house with a really small palm tree (our Christmas tree) and we all gave everyone presents and it was just nice. So on the 22nd of December, the holidays of the Trust started. And I decided to fly back home for Christmas and celebrate it with my family in Germany. But after one week, I was already back in Jodhpur.

In the new next year I asked for working half a day in the centre and to work half a day in the office. My Supervisor Govind Singh Rathore told me then to change in a centre that is just open in the morning and closed in the afternoon. So I changed from the Fatima centre to the Shakti Empowerment Centre. I just had women and girls to teach in English and sometimes also Maths. Those women and girls were so eager to learn and to try out new things. I stayed with those women for the next 4 and a half months.

In the office I did administration work. That means I searched new sponsors and tried to make Sambhali Trust more visible in Germany. I contacted over 200 newspapers, TV-shows, influencers and bloggers to write or show what Sambhali Trust is doing. Then I tried to find new partners, who would send us new volunteers. I found one organization and filled out the contracts and translated the German document into English and the other way around.

To do all this, was a really big and unforgettable experience. I am so glad that I had the opportunity to work with the women, girls, kids, staff members of the Trust and Govind Singh Rathore.

All the people that I met in Jodhpur and I worked with, I will never forget and I will always try to stay in touch with them. I didn't just make friends, I made best friends and a family! Thank you so much for that. I will come back so to visit everyone.

Thank you, Govind!

