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**Country: Germany**

**Volunteering period: August 2017 – July 2018**



### **Final Impression, July 2018**

I worked and lived in Setrawa for one year. Setrawa is a small village with 3,000 to 4,000 citizens. The village is placed between Jodhpur and Jaisalmer in the desert Thar. For India the village is very small, but it is not as small as it sounds. The most things of the daily life you can buy there and also some “western” things like noodles.

Where did I live?

In Setrawa I lived in a host family. All in all, I lived together with my parents, two sisters, three brothers and one uncle. One of my sisters is teaching at Sambhali. Because of this she speaks very good English. My other siblings speak English, too. The younger ones speak a little less English but it is no problem to communicate with them. My parents don't speak English, although my father speaks some words in English but he understands more. My mother is the best. She was always smiling at me. And her smiling said: “I know that you don't speak my language and I don't speak your language, too. But I smile at you. This you will understand.” Moreover, she always took care of me. When I was ill, she looked so often in my room and for me. And she always looked that I had enough to eat. Although she doesn't speak English, it is no problem to communicate with her. I always talked with her with gesture and facial expressions. I tell you one more story about the loveliness of my mother. I was the first longterm-volunteer in her house. Before my family took volunteers in, my sister had to ask the family. Then my mother said to my sister: I don't have a problem to cook food for one person more but I will never say chapati, it is roti. Now she asked me everytime: Chapati? And I said: Yes, one roti, please. It was changing during the year. She used the English word and I used the Hindi word. Not only my mother is really lovely. My whole family is lovely and they treated me like a family member and not like a guest. And I feel like a real family member. Because of this, I am always talking about my family and not about my host family. My family holds four goats and one cow. They are also a part of the family.

How is it to find new friends in Setrawa?

To find friends is not as difficult as it seems. In the Centre are a lot of girls who are in the age between 17 and 25. The most of these girls speak a little bit English and they are interested to improve their English by talking to the volunteers. I only talked with them and after a while they became my friends. Another way to find new friends is

about the host family. My siblings had friends who visit them and then we started to talk. And a friendship developed between us. Sometimes at the beginning it happened that me-unknown people invited me to their house for a Chai. They know that volunteers are coming from Sambhali and they want to talk with you. Moreover, the family and your friends will introduce you to other family members (like uncle, aunt, cousins, etc.).

What did I work?

In Setrawa is one Centre from Sambhali. At this Centre I worked all the time. The main part of my work was to teach children in English and Math. During the day, I taught in two classes. One class in the morning and one class in the afternoon. The first class was the Butterfly-Class. This class was visited by girls who didn't go to school. They are in the school-age but the parents didn't send them. Here I taught together with a local teacher. The lesson started with general hygiene like teeth brushing and hand, feet and face washing. After the girls learned Hindi and basic things for school. Basic things are, for example, how to use a pencil and how to draw. I always taught with games and made the lessons funny and interesting for them. To teach in the Butterfly-Class was a challenge sometimes. The girls are cute but they are strenuous. At home no one take care of these children. So they didn't know how to follow rules and how concentrate on a task. They were always doing what they wanted. But at the end I am proud of them. Now they are going to school and they have fun there. When I started the class, the students needed nearly 5 months to learn the numbers from 1 to 10 in Hindi. Now they start to speak in English with me. Before they were very shy. Some girls said nothing. But now they are talking a lot.

My second class was in the afternoon. In this class I taught the most time alone. It was working, because my students were up to 10 years and they all speak good English. Here, I taught Math next to English. In English, I practised reading and understanding with them. During the lessons we talked a lot about their life styles. Often, they explained me cultural topics. For instances, what is celebrated on different festivals or some other facts about India. It is crazy to hear what all the girls are organizing every day. The most girls have to help with house work. For example, they stand up early in the morning for making breakfast. After they went to school until the afternoon. During the noon break, some girls has to go home to care of their siblings. After school they went to Sambhali and in the evening they have to take care of their siblings or to do housework again. Between the house work they learn for school.

During the holidays there were some different classes. For example, there was one Computer-Class. In this class older girls learned how to deal with a laptop. They learned how to type or how to look for information on the Internet.

Next to the teaching, I did some bureaucratic work.

What do you have to bring to India? What not?

It doesn't matter if you live in Jodhpur or in Setrawa, you can buy here everything. You don't have to bring 3 bottles of shampoo to India. It is possible to buy "western" brands and all. Next to your personal stuffs, it is good to bring your favourite sweets or food with you. It is possible to buy sweets like chocolate or chips. But chocolate is expensive and sweets like jelly bears are very hard to find here. If you bring any food or sweets to Setrawa, take care that the food is vegetarian and there are also no eggs inside. In the most family it is forbidden to eat meat or eggs. Moreover, you don't need so many shirts for Setrawa. The most time you will wear Kurta and Salwar or Leggings (traditional Indian clothes). It is enough if you bring shirts for one week. It is also not necessary to bring a lot of medicines with you. It is enough to have something against cold. You don't need any Malaria medicines. The most medicines you can also buy in India in a pharmacy or the doctor will give you. My experiences showed me that it is good to have something from your family and friends if you stay longer away from home. Good is to have any small book with small texts or pictures from them. Or anything else what you connect with your family. Here in India it is good to wear slippers. It is also possible to buy ones here, but they are only like Flipflops. And one important thing is to bring an empty bottle which you can fill more times. Depending on your time in India, it is good to bring a rain jacket (during the monsoon) or some warm clothes (during the winter).

Why you should go to Setrawa?

Setrawa is a special place. At the first moment it looks like a small village but it is really great to live there. The people are open-hearted and they want that you feel comfortable in Setrawa. At the same time, you live in a host family. Here it is possible to live the culture of them, not only see the culture. For example, the family celebrates Diwali and you will celebrate it together with your family. It is possible to get a part of the family and to find a second family and home. It is not only a visit of a place, it is to feel the place and to love it. In Setrawa, I learned so many things about myself and I had time to think about my dreams and wishes for the future. Moreover, the people in Setrawa shows that it is not necessary to have everything. It is possible to live with less. And they are happy. It is no problem to live without fluent water in the house. If you need water, you will go out to the water reservoir in the garden and bring the water inside. It is not necessary to have all the time an AC. At night the family sleeps on the rooftop and they adjust their working rhythm to the temperatures. Setrawa is a very good place to find a new home and to think about yourself.