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### **Final Impression, July 2017**

It is quite difficult to give an insight into life as a volunteer in Setrawa because it is so different from what I have experienced in European countries. Even though, I will give you an overview as follows:

I had two classes at Sambhali, the Butterfly Class and the Peacock Class. The Butterfly teenage girls are easy to handle and to have fun with. Their levels of English differ a lot since some have never attended school and others dream of going to college. Language sections are important, but even more to practice speaking English. We all enjoyed topic related lessons (our families, weather, the globe). An Indian teacher was always present to help if there were communication problems. Unfortunately, the girls cannot attend very regularly because they have to work a lot at home. Nevertheless, I was invited many times to their homes which was very interesting for me to understand more and more how they live with their families as well as a good English training for them. In this situation, they were eager to tell me so many things and to ask many questions. I made good friends with some. I was shocked when three of my students, all around sixteen, were married off to other villages one day.

In my Peacock Class, the children were smaller and came directly after school. This means, the lessons needed to be more playful. Sometimes we needed to do some sports before they could focus or we did often games in the end on the current topic. I found out that it is important that the children learn more than only English, such as learn to understand how the world works they live in, how to make things out of different materials themselves, handle different social situations. It is challenging to prepare many-sided lessons with the limited materials in Setrawa. But most important is that they like to come and that they can make many good experiences.

At first, I liked that we had a lot of freedom about the work in the centre. We could try out many lesson methods, workshop ideas and so on. But after a while, I felt little lost with the task because it was unclear what to do or to achieve and we did not have supervision. After some time, we had to remind parts of the local staff again fulfill simply their work requirements which I found very annoying.

Living in a host family was a quite intense experience. It meant to also live together closely with the bigger family and the neighbors. I enjoyed spending time with them all, but at some point I missed to be for myself as well. It was great to be part of their

individual, familial and cultural life for one year. I did everyday life as well as any special occasion with them together. They explained so many things to me that were like puzzle pieces joining together in the end.

You should know that it is a simple life which means less comfort: to wash dishes and clothes by hand, to sleep on a harder bed, to always sit on the floor, to be without electricity or running water at times, to live in an open house which gets sandy, animals can get in and so on... To me, it also meant to live all day with Indian people. This is an extreme shift of cultural social interaction which would have been easier if I had someone from my culture to share my experiences with on place. But I managed this way which made me experience Setrawa's people to the fullest.

I am so glad for this experience and everything I could learn from it. I thank the Red Cross for sending me, Sambhali Trust to work for them and my host family which did so much for me.