

Report

by Fifi and Michal

Academy for Working Children

Danwapur Gurgaon (partner Nokia and Here India Solutions Private Limited)

Project and living conditions

Our project is situated in the suburb Gurgaon, one of the most expensive cities in India, thanks to its industries and enormous shopping malls. Nevertheless the Academy is located in a remote area near several slums in Surat Nagar, an area quite far from all the crowd and the noise of the city, and area full of moors -with green or black stinky water, in which the pigs, are taking their baths freely und undisturbed- and buildings which seem to be either on the way to be finished or to be demolished.



around the area where we are living...all the „ streets“ covered in dust, sand and filthy water

We live 30m from Main Centre, in a guest house where there are living 6 other teachers from the project and because we are working together, we have almost the same schedule, with the exception of their early mornings habits(mornings which start at 5 am with loud television). The guest house looks as typical house in the poor area. We are here with one more family which lives on the first floor. Eight of us have rooms upstairs only Alina has a room at the first floor. Upstairs we

have four rooms, dining room, kitchen and one toilet with shower. The two of us are together in one room. There is a little disadvantage to be upstairs because now when the weather gets hot, the rooms are as hot as ovens while in the first floor it is colder. Water is very salty and as we found out no company accepted to filter it. It is impossible to drink it and after shower every part of the body is itching. So for drinking and cooking we have to bring always water from the Main Centre where we have filtered water. Nevertheless, the living conditions are far better than whatever we expected, but we can observe everyday that goes by how all our concepts (such as clean, sharing, privacy, respect) are completely different than the Indian ones... Altogether, it is enjoyable and amusing to bump everyday in some of this society's customs and habits, a society way too lost in the past and far too comfortable in its own misery.



our living-room



the office

The Academy is another kind of school which is trying to identify the children who are not going to school- rather they are picking bottles, or selling chai (tea), pulling carts with garbage, even begging, dirty with no decent clothes, forced by conditions of their families to bring money and food in their homes., reduced to only surviving from to day to day. Most of their families are immigrants from different states of India with no documents or ID, which cuts all the chances to a governmental education, but also to a governmental economical support which they could receive(food and day to day products). At any time, the academy enrolls children from around and is trying to make them ready to go to governmental schools.

AWC Dhanwapur has a Main Centre in which are trained children in 4th to 7th grades and four Satellites quite close to the Main Centre (with the exception of the Fourth) where are trained children from 1st to 3rd grades (children between 6 and 10 years old, most of them being actually in a kindergarten level). Two days ago, in our Project Council Meeting we counted that at the moment there are 72 children in the Main Centre, and around 190 in the Satellites, which is a lower number than the goal of the Academy- 300 in total. In the last year the Academy managed to send to Governmental Schools around 40 children. Nevertheless,

we found out that the students are not admitted in the Main Stream, because of the lack of identification documents. The Academy is struggling now to convince the parents to make at least a birth certificate for these children and also to persuade the authorities to accept them in the governmental schools, considering one of their Education Articles, which gives the right to education to everybody with no matter of ID or age or poverty level. Besides this problem, the Academy is struggling now with more changes. One of them is the Partner- Nokia has been bought by Microsoft and lost its capital. In the past they were sponsoring the academy with 3.5 million Rupees per year. Now they found another partner which will share the expenses with Nokia- Here India Solutions Private Limited. The change in the sponsorship is affecting the Academy on economical and administrative level, they will have the Main Centre and Satellites divided on the economical side and on the reports figures.

There are 12 teachers working in the project plus the headmaster and headmaster assistant, who also hold classes from time to time. In every Satellite there are two teachers, one from the DRH Schools and one local teacher (usually a lady).

From the beginning we decided that our work will cover all the Satellites and all the teachers, therefore we divided ourselves as following: Alina took the Main Centre and we took the Satellites.

Impressions and work by Fifi



Since I got out of the airport in Delhi I couldn't stop from wondering who and how could he write „The Book of Love“ in such a filthy, stinky, dusty land?! And how could be the love and protection of 330million Gods be felt in such a cradle of garbage?!. I was walking in the first month to the Satellites and back thinking about this at every sight of a woman washing her hair in the middle of the road where children are playing in the water from her bath and pigs are bathing few meters away in a black swamp which gathered all the other small rivers of waste from all the houses around. Maybe all those pigs and cows that wonder through the moors and between the houses undisturbed and untouched are some of those 330 million Gods walking around their people and eating their food, bathing in their filth. From everywhere, the odour of misery rises and follows like a ghost. I am amazed everyday by this country. There are beautiful, open minded people who are so comfortable living in this garbage hole!!!!

The project

The project is wonderful and the concept of the Academies is great , but requires a lot of work and a lot of help.

In the first month I was working in 1st and 2nd Satellites trying to work together with the teachers and help them improve their methods of teaching. Every Satellite has 2 teachers- one

local lady who works half of day and one teacher from HPPI. Their level of English is very low and the local teachers are even worse, I could never talk to the local teachers and understand them. As well, they have no pedagogical training, and they are stuck in old methods of teaching. They lack imagination and creativity-I've never seen them using the educational materials they have or creating their own materials. They never prepare their lessons beforehand; they just come in the classroom, take a book and teach something from it. My goal was to improve this and help them make lesson plans and more interactive lessons. But in the first month the teachers were missing in turns leaving the other taking care of almost 50 children. I couldn't do anything else but teaching alone 3rd grade while the other teacher was teaching 1st and 2nd grades in the adjacent room or the other way around. I managed only once with to prepare a lesson plan with a teacher and the next day we tried to teach together, one full day of English activities and songs and small competitions with the third grade. It was the best and the most fulfilling teaching day I had in the entire month.



Conditions in the Satellites:





The 1st and 2nd Satellites are situated very close to the Main Centre in some rented buildings surrounded by many others. The 1st Satellite has even common playground with another house. And usually the people from the house are taking bath or washing clothes in the same place the children are having lunch break and are running around. The ground is dusty and usually after 30 minutes of playing all the dust is coming also inside the classroom and the electricity blackouts happen every day for longer or shorter periods of time, but when they happen, the air in the classrooms becomes unbreathable. In the first Satellite there are small plastic chairs and desks where the children can sit, but in the Second there are no chairs and the children sit in lines on the ground on a dusty carpet. They have small barrels with water for the children, barrels which the older children are bringing in the Satellite every morning from some place nearby.

One Satellite has around 50 children with ages from 6 to 10, children who bring with them



their small brothers or sisters who are not doing anything else but disturbing all the others with noise and crying. Some of them are dirty and stinky, with broken clothes, but this doesn't stop them from fighting with each other continuously. I have never seen so aggressive, noisy children. I was observing when

the teachers are teaching in one corner starts a fight and the teacher screams the corner stops, but another part of the classroom starts to make noise and this circle is never-ending. While I was teaching the small children I was trying different methods of making them quiet, either sending them in the other classroom while we were doing some interesting activity, so they were missing the fun and they were coming back apologizing, either making them write something they didn't like. But these methods work only for few minutes, because when one kid stops from fighting and shouting, others start.

Daily program

At the beginning I tried to divide the week so could be in both satellites and I was spending 3 days in one satellite and three days in the other. From Monday to Friday they have normal lessons. The classes start at 9 am with a morning prayer and nails checks, which takes around 45 minutes. Afterwards the students are divided in 2- 3rd grade to be taught by one teacher and 1st and 2nd by the other(when there are two teachers there).



From 11 to 11:30 the students have a lunch break which some of the children use for going home to eat and some for playing in the playground. I was trying to play with them different games and to learn their

games. They divide themselves in groups and each group plays something different, they are playing badminton, football, they have jumping ropes for smaller ones and some board game with marbles.

From 11:30 to 1 pm they have two more classes. Usually they have four subjects: math, English, general knowledge and Hindi, each subject last 45 minutes and on Saturday Common Meeting and activities which are requested by the children (for example going to the park). In the common meeting they have fixed points they are talking about, nevertheless the children are too small to comprehend the idea of rules, of coming in time to school, or the meaning of being a good comrade (considering that they fight with each other continuously).



From 1.30 to 2.30 the teachers have lunch break. But the day is not over here. At 3pm there start the tuition classes for those who are interested. In the Satellites they last one hour. Afterwards the teacher is going to the slum or to the houses around to find the students that were missing that day and to find out the reasons why. Going in the slum, we were finding the student

picking bottles, or doing chores around the tent where his family was living and the teacher was trying to speak with the parents and persuade them to let the child to the school next day.

The way they live is impressive- in small tents for an entire family, washing dishes in the dust outside...all over around there are the piles of bottles and other garbage they pick up on the

streets to be sold, thousands of flies everywhere and an odour that melts your knees.





In one afternoon we went for a Slum Development Meeting with the teachers. They tried together all the families from one of the slums and explain to them about the Academy and our work with the children and tried to convince them to enrol their children as well.



In the last month after the Meeting we had in the Head Quarter, we worked on a very challenging project- Step up Teaching Guide for the teachers. We would like to help the teachers improve their methods of teaching English with songs and a lot of activities and as well we want to teach them to make their own teaching materials. For this we will keep a workshop next month.

Observations and Work by Michal



Arrival NHQ India

It was 3rd of March when we had flight from Thailand to India and the difference between these two countries is seriously huge. About Thailand I can say that streets are quite new and clean but India is something. When Matus came with taxi for us to the airport and took us to the Humana People to People NHQ I was more than shocked. I thought that after China nothing can surprise me anymore. It looked at least for me that China is a much more developed country than India, safer and cleaner even if they both are in the top of overpopulated countries.. Dust is everywhere you look and garbage is everywhere you look. Cows, pigs and other animals are grazing in the huge fields of garbage and the roads, houses and other constructions look as some war went through the city. In NHQ we had accommodation for the next three days. In the basement they have dorms in case bigger amount of visitors come to NHQ. Pashupati and Elmer gave us information about how it is with the projects.

Arrival in the project

After three days in NHQ we went to our projects. Dana, Alina, Iosif, Alin, Mark, Vlad, Smaranda and I and Somvir –a guy which should take us to the projects. We took tuc-tuc, a car for all nine persons plus driver. Sounds crazy when you imagine that tuc-tuc is such a small car and we had also with us our big luggage. We dropped people which had to go to Jaipur in the bus station and continued to our projects.

Our Project

We have here one main centre where teachers teach students which are between 4th and 7th grade and four satellites where students are between 1st and 3rd grade. When the students from satellites finish 3rd grade they can decide if they want to continue in main centre or continue in some other school. First month I was visiting satellites 3 and 4 and Dana was visiting satellites 1 and 2. First three satellites are around 300m from main centre and fourth satellite is around 4km far from main centre.

Teachers and organization in the project

The way the teachers prepare themselves for the lessons comes with a question mark. Maybe they work 8 hours per day but their performance in the lessons and in preparation is very low. In reality there is no preparation for lessons. They just come to the satellite and start to teach something. Even if they have schedule for each subject, the situation is that the teacher was teaching after exam still numbers till ten and most of the students didn't know what is the difference between numbers- for example 6 and 3. I guess that after exams they should already know this. Efficiency of teaching in the satellites is very low. Probably teachers are not checked by any other person who should make reviews and push the teachers to work. In comparison with teachers in Europe where they take their work also home, such as correcting tests and making plans. Also the relation between teachers and headmaster is felt like friends but not like between superior and subordinate person. It looks that after work, the teacher comes to the office sits and starts to make jokes, laugh and do nothing for the next day.

Teachers in the main centre do better than teachers in the satellites. But it is because of the older students where the communication is easier. Nevertheless, I discovered- in one tuition class of math while I was teaching them dividing -that a student in the 5th grade doesn't know a simple subtraction(11-6). So I asked the assistant what was the cause and the problem is that no student can fail the exams. So even if they don't learn enough the pass the exams, they move to the next grade. I think this is bad attitude, because like this the students don't have any motivation.

Program in the first month

On the beginning we had to get used with the place, visit our satellites and how the things are working here. We also tried to work in each satellite to know how is it with the children and know something about how teachers keep the lessons. Afterwards we got as a task to prepare some activities for children; activities as crafts, playing games to practice English, sports or prepare some theatre. But when we prepared it, everything just fell because some of the teachers had problems or exams and could not come to the school. So the program we made was for nothing.

Our first meeting in HQ

When we went to the first meeting in the NHQ we found out that they are planning to implement a new teaching system.- the “step up ”. I will explain it later. We had first some arguments about the step up and how they want to implement it. Still we don’t agree with this system but they put us in the meeting in front of the thing which is done. I would like to know who came with this system, what is his profession and his experiences in teaching small children who have problems with organization. I am not saying that I am expert but before implementing it, there should have been at least a trial period to see how it works with this kind of children.

Even though we don’t think that the system is going to work we challenged ourselves in preparing the English material for the teachers. We started to work on it and after three weeks just sitting closed in the house and putting ideas together, writing methods and creating materials for teaching, we are almost about to finish it.

Step up (point of step up, creating step up materials and apply of step up

“Step up” is a new method of teaching in the Academies; method which change the traditional methods of teaching into something more interactive for the students, where they can get involved and help each other more. Step up contains four subjects Math, Hindi, General Knowledge and English. Every subject has 10 steps. Every subject has in each step tasks for what the student has to know. If the student finishes a task , he goes to the next one. When the student will finish all the tasks in the step he can move to the next step. You can see step up book in the picture

ACADEMY FOR WORKING CHILDREN

Name: Dora
Class: LKG

Step 1

Mathematics	Date	Signature	General Knowledge	Date	Signature
1) can count from 1 to 50			1) I know how to wash my hands properly		
2) can write until 50			2) I can jump 20 times		
3) can add numbers until 10			3) I can make an airplane with a piece of paper		
4) know the symbol +			4) I know all the continents		
5) know the symbol =			5) I know 5 domestic animals		
6) can count backwards from 10			6) I know what we use them for		
7) can play 1 math game with numbers until 50			7) I know in which State I live in		
8) can find missing numbers until 50			8) I know the names of 5 flowers		
9) can count objects and write the number			9) I know the names of 5 trees		
10) can write the total number of these objects			10) I know the name of the national bird		

Hindi	Date	Signature	English	Date	Signature
1) know the difference between consonants/vowels			1) I know how to greet a person		
2) can write Hindi vowels			2) I know: good morning, good afternoon and good evening		
3) can read Hindi vowels			3) I know how to say my name		
4) can write Hindi consonants (3 groups)			4) I can write my name with English letters <u>ST&P</u>		
5) can read Hindi consonants (3 groups)			5) I know how to ask someone his name		
6) can look at the letters and recognize them (2)			6) I know how to say how I feel		
7) can play 1 letters game			7) I know how to ask someone how he feels		
8) can pick up objects and present it			<u>I know the alphabet from A to Z</u>		
9) can pronounce the letter when I see it					

(A-F)

Step 1 complete	Date	Signature
-----------------	------	-----------



Watching TV in the night.



Palying cricket in the fourth satelite.



Beauty of the slum



Ready to play



One of the teacher playing along



Playground full of garbage



Cricket!!!!



Is very normal that children are running over fields full of garbage without any shoes. Also this area is full of new constructions.





After playing cricket little students are thirsty. Every satellite has to manage drinking water for students.



Lady which cooks for us and our kitchen.



I was trying play cricket but after few min around me was lot of curious people which did not speak almost English



One of the best student from third satellite.



Little student Parvin.



Students from third satellite. Is impossible to put them together and keep them for at least 30 sec in one place. I had to be very fast to take this picture.

P



Participation book from slum meeting. Some of them don't know write so they have to put their fingerprints.



arents meeting. Not all parents came. They don't care so much about education of their children. They love their hard job.

Greetings

We send many hot hugs (boiled at 45 degrees in the hot sun) to all the people in Hornsjo, maybe this will melt all your snow!! We miss winter!!!!

Fifi and Michal