

KATJA'S FEEDBACK - I

My first week as a volunteer at the Dhaka Project passed by so quickly, at the same time it feels like I have been in Dhaka so much longer than one week. I came from Berlin, Germany to see applied what I have studied for so many years in theory, reading smart people's books and articles and sitting in fancy UN meetings: the role of education in the context of peace and development work. However, it is quite different to meet the "beneficiaries", the children of the Dhaka Project, in person.



During my first week, they have taught me so many things that will never be in books. I know now that smiling is the best of all international languages, I know now that space and quiet can be luxurious goods, you can make their day with 5 minutes of your undivided attention, sharing a song, holding their hand, and still feel you haven't given nearly enough.

4 weeks in the Dhaka Project are only long enough to take a good first look. I have made a personal to-do-list and will adjust it to what comes along: I will help classes 5 and 6 with replies to letters from German students that I brought with me, I will teach a girls' class, an art class and give English lessons to teachers. Moreover, we will implement the idea of a parent-child-contract, where children and parents will have an opportunity to express their needs and, in turn, accept each others rights as well. Last but not least, the biggest item on my list is to help organize a teacher's day, a day where teachers have time to reflect on their work and will learn about and develop ideas in small working groups.

I will surely write more in the forthcoming weeks, and I know already that my stay here will easily be worth as much as all smart books and meetings I have read and attended so far.

“Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one’s courage”

Anais Nin. Katja Hummel.