

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

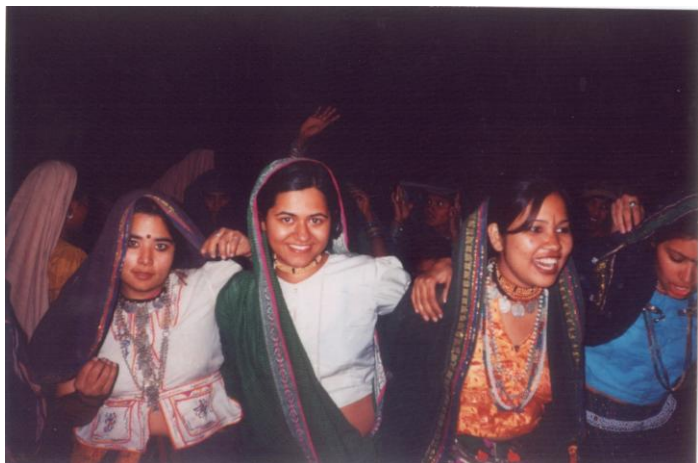
This camp was fun. It was difficult to differentiate whether we had come to have fun or know more about an issue. We never felt hassled while taking on our agenda. I have learnt a lot from the camp and also left behind a lot of things like fear and loneliness. Now I don't face problem talking to unknown people. Also, now I feel that I can be happy even if my family is not near me – *Mayuri from Deshbandhu College, who went to Anjani Sain in Oct. 2007*

The very life in villages, noticing their life, which did not even always involve the basic essentials and the contrast, lived by ME – An Urban Know All Brat, was a new learning in itself. - *Namrata Pant (college student from Kamla Nehru College)*

I think that the whole process of the camp was a mixture of happiness, disappointment, sadness, adventure and learning. Learning is the most important part of the camp because we never wrote or read to learn something but we played games to trust each other, develop our confidence, and help others. My major learning during this camp is that everything that glitters is not gold (Tehri). Every step of the process was a different kind of flavor and learning. – *Uzma from Jamia University, who went to Anjani Sain in Oct. 2007*
The kids, and us.....



Volunteers dressed as traditional village women



The trip to NBA has moved me a lot. The people, the river, the valley has a lot to tell. Going with Sylvie di to villages to brief the villagers of the dharas and also briefing them of the submergence of the villages, fields opened my eyes of the consequences that will happen when the gates are opened. I mean just putting ourselves in to their shoes one could feel what they will go through or some of them who have went through it. The mere compensations being given to the villagers by the NHPC and the state govt are not enough. – *Anshul Uniyal*

Waking up to the crowing of a cock at the break of dawn was something that I had only read about in books before this trip! - *Alisha Ojha (College student from Miranda house)*

I used to be a shy and reserved person but Pravah made me address a meeting of 200 villagers during the exposure... this has given me a lot of confidence and I have become a stronger person – *Chandini Tyagi*

I enrolled for the Group Exposure because I wanted to do something constructive during my vacations and more importantly there was a great curiosity to know myself, and to see myself as part of the group. I have discovered a lot about myself and the team, the things which I had in me and those which I overcame. Working in a team has taught me a lot. – *Fahad from Deshbandhu College, went to GVM in July 2007*

Life is much more than studying books, going to college, going to movies, shopping—that I realized in this trip. I saw life more closely—gained immense knowledge about our society and people.” – *Jyotishree, on Anandwan*

My experience with 'World Social Forum' was an exciting one though it was my first experience of going in a group and being part of such a big event. Travelling in local trains, visiting Juhu beach, Elephanta caves, and most important time spent together during the World Social Forum was never a remote experience as it was the group that made such a success for me. – *Beena Sarkar, at the World Social Forum*



Interaction with the villagers



Shramdaan at a village

I have become more open and frank to new people. Those issues which I pondered upon on my own are now more vocal and verbal. I shared, I discussed, I fought for my ideas and it gave me satisfaction and happiness. During this whole exposure, I have learnt a lot from people around me. I have learnt that doing simple, constructive and creative things leads to fruitful results. Ramji Lalji, who led the GVM team, the various groups that women had formed have completely broken the stereotype I had about the villagers in general. – Taha (GVNM, July 2007)

Anandwan was not just a place but seems as if heaven has been established to bless our earth. A place where flowers welcome you, a place where trees delighted you, a place where nature sings, a place where winds enchant the remedy of life, a place where people greet you, a place where unspoken words say much beyond. – Neha

I have learnt a lot of new things from this camp. Village life was a new experience to me, from which I have learnt a lot. From washing utensils to emptying my bowels in the open, I have done everything... When the problems of the villagers stared me in the face, then I got to know about the inadequacies of the government schemes. Also, the andolan volunteers inspired me a lot. – Alok Singh, IIT Delhi, Narmada Bachao Andolan

It was my first experience in the village and I realised that there is difference in what I saw with my eyes and what we are served to see through media and other sources. The problem of the people are same for decades, but the point is that we still are in thinking stage and I think it was a very bad situation. – Fiza (GVNM)

A village, on the banks of the Narmada

