

Location: bhogpur
village, dehra dun
district, india

Countries



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Location: Bhogpur village, Dehra Dun district, India Introduction: The CAS project pned two days in Bhogpur village. As a group of 32 students, we decided to combine creativity, action and service into one positive approach to work in the village in the short time we were there. Day 1 Total number of hours: 4 hours Total distance trekked: 4 km After lunch, our group decided that it was important for us to find out the problems of people in the area and to attempt to address them in whatever ways possible.

To do this, it had been suggested that the group divided itself into pairs of two and went door to door in the village, interacting with the villagers.

Although I believed that the idea was, on the whole, a positive one I was still apprehensive about the approach. Nevertheless, forcing myself to throw out any negativity, I decided to participate wholeheartedly in the interaction with the people of the village. Initially, my friend Shivaan and I had a hesitant start. I was extremely self-conscious and felt downright idiotic expecting unknown villagers to pour out their problems to strangers.

But as we kept trekking through the village, I realized that the distance was merely in the head. The villagers ranged from old women to middle aged families and young adults. Some were very hesitant in talking to us but soon started interacting openly. Others were extremely vocal throughout. Shivaan and I noticed an underlying set of problems that pervaded the entire village. These included a water problem, an economic divide, gender issues, etc. I mulled over all these problems in vain.

What was the solution that I could provide in a day, in a flourish to people who were far removed from who I was or where I lived? In the evening, my

perception underwent a change. We decided to put up a program that would encompass two plays, a dance routine and a panel discussion. I was part of both the plays and enjoyed outlining the storylines and acting and directing at the same time. As we practiced, I thought about the initial negative attitude that I had had regarding the solutions we could provide to the villagers about the issues that they faced.

Day 2 Total number of hours: 4 hours Total distance trekked: 2 km This was the day of the performance. Before an early breakfast, we moved to rehearse and have a run through of the entire performance one final time. Although there were occasional glitches, I managed to keep calm and be confident. We then trekked to the village area. After literally tugging villagers out of their homes to create an audience for our performance, we started. All four items were great successes.

The smiles on the faces of the children and the curt nods between the adults said it all. Although it would have been far too optimistic to believe that we could make a huge difference in merely a day, I am sure that we did make a difference. We did ensure that the villagers realized what their problems were and also offered rudimentary, individualized solutions. With a smile on my own face, I realized that the entire effort resulted in success – we had, in some way or the other, managed to positively affect the villagers' lives.