

Muskaan Site Visit

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I have reached Bhopal on 2nd March 2017 and met with Brijesh at Muskaan Office in Tulsi Nagar. There i also met Madhu, whom i know from previous visits and Farida who is documenting Muskaans work and taking care of social media. Brijesh gave a brief updates on all the activities Muskaan is doing. Apart from the education related projects, recently they have taken up a case of child sexual abuse in one of the hostels. The child comes from one of the bastis where Muskaan is working. Along with several child rights organisations, muskaan is pursuing the case to get justice for the child and also bring awareness in the community so that such incidents do not occur again.

Later we went to construction site of the muskaan center. It was good to see that the construction work is progressing well. Ground floor rooms are done and in first floor the ceiling for couple of rooms is pending. Once the ceilings are done, the plastering, water and electricity work will be done. Brijesh mentioned that children are excited about the center and they are happy that they are going to get their own place very soon. Several children visit the site regularly to see the progress and help wherever they can.



Classroom with storage space for books etc.



Tiles collected from local market.



Computer room



Muskaan center status as of March 2017

From the center, we visited Barkhedi Khurd baalwaadi. Nisha ji is the teacher there and it is open for 4 hrs every day. On that day, children were busy with drawings and paper cuttings for the upcoming children's festival. All of them were very excited about the festival. On the way back from Barkhedi Khurd, we met 3 boys, who used to go to Muskaan campus but they are dropped out for various reasons. They greeted Brijesh and we talked briefly. Brijesh asked them to join the campus and they said they would do.



Children working on drawings for the festival



Boy finished drawing



Girl with her drawings of days of a week



Boys who were dropped out of campus

Later we returned to the Muskaan office at Mata Mandhir, there we met up with Shivani and rest of the muskaan team. Everybody is waiting for the center to be completed. So far several people including local individuals and organisations donated whatever they can. Some of the children also collected small amounts from their earnings and from their parents to support the work. Shivani and Muskaan team are hoping to have enough funds in this last stage of construction work.

Conclusion:

I visit Muskaan almost every year and i am quite impressed with the dedication of the entire team to genuinly help the marginalised communities. Children and their parents fully trust the muskaan team and they all feel that they are part of the muskaan family. We at Asha should support such organisations whatever the way we can to make sure they have all the needed resources to help those communities.