

Visit to SADRAG Ugta Suraj on 2nd of March 2020

Together with Rishabh Lal, a SADRAG employee, I drove to Noida on Monday morning to meet Dr. Mala Bandhari (founder of SADRAG) in her office. After a warm welcome by all present staff members, Mala informed me about the current situation of the Learning Centers Nagla and Hoshiyarpur from Ugta Suraj program. Both centers are supported by noon.ch.

The **Ugta Suraj program** enables children who do not attend school for family or formal reasons to attend classes at the Learning Centre for one year. There are many reasons for not attending school: the children have to work, look after their siblings or they lack the necessary documents to be accepted at school. Migrant children, also inner Indian, often have a different mother tongue or they are already too old to attend a class with much younger children according to their skills. During this school year the children learn basic skills in literacy, mathematics and general education, so that they can then follow up in public school.



After a short coffee break in the office, Mala, Manju Manak (Senior Program Officer) and I drove to visit the two learning centres.



Hoshiyarpur Center is located in Sector 51 of Noida and has one small room and a small courtyard. The center has no electricity, no running water and there are no sanitary facilities. Since not all children can be taught in the room, the lessons are divided into age groups and take place outside in the yard. During the hot summer months, teaching is almost impossible without electricity for the fan and a sun roof. We support that the LCs go to districts that are precarious, because we think that the children should go to school there as well. Only when the problems become too big, SADRAG withdraws.

The children were very happy about our visit and performed practiced dances, read small texts and proudly presented me with self-made presents.

Photo by Eveline in Hoshiyarpur during her visit on 2nd of March 2020

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The **Nagla Center** is in Phase II in Noida and is in much better condition, it consists of two spacious rooms and a great outdoor public space (playground). The rooms are equipped with school furniture (tables, chairs, blackboards ...), electricity for light, fans and refrigerator, drinking water and toilets are available.

The children are taught in 2 age groups. Here too, a few girls practiced a dance interlude and performed it with loud music. Afterwards we played a hopscotch together which was accompanied by happy children's laughter.

Photo by Eveline in Nagla during her visit on 2nd of March 2020



The school lessons take place in both LCs daily from 10.00 - 12.30 and from 13.30 - 16.00. The morning classes consist of reading, writing and maths. The afternoon classes focus on musical activities, handicrafts, drawing lessons, theatre and time to play. These activities are partly supported by volunteers who offer exciting workshops.

Mala's open and cordial manner in dealing with the children touched me very much and showed me how important constant reference persons and their visits are for the children and teachers in the centers.

*Photo
Hoshiyarpur
with Mala (left)
and Eveline*



Eveline Ryser, May 2020