*TALES OF A FOREIGN STUDENT IN BANGLADESH*

*(by Gabriele Zanetti)*

I have left Italy on the 22nd of July, 2015 to start my 4 months internship in Jessore Bangladesh, hosted by Banchte Shekha (BS from now on) organization and sent here by the italian IDEA Onlus.

After a two days travel by plane I landed in Jessore on friday 24th, completely exhausted but happy to begin my new adventure. I have to admit that I was a little bit concerned about this new and unfamiliar environment. I left my country with a lot of prejudices because of the economic and social situation of Bangladesh. Well I have been here for a week and I can tell that those wrong prejudices have already disappeared. Yes it is true, this country is poor, really poor but it is also developing very quickly and it displays a lot of potential.

In the first period I have travelled throughout all the different villages included in the BS projects, I have admired the amazing and savage nature this country offers but, mostly, I have spoken with a lot of people characterized by a huge variety of experiences and backgrounds.

Concerning BS I can say nothing but good comments: I have met Angela Gomes who has opened BS gates for me like a mother. I feel blessed to share my time with such a kind, humble and gentle person. She loves everyone here like sons and daughters and her commitment is really remarkable. This place is full of polite and friendly people ready to fulfill my needs and desires and, for this reason, I can not stop thanking them.

People…I think this is the focal point. Everywhere I have been I found helpful and generous people both from the poorest village and the “big city” Jessore: everyone I met was ready to offer me a chair, food (biscuits and “cha” usually) and a smile.

Moreover I can witness the effectiveness of BS projects: I have had the opportunity to take part in some lessons of the tuition programme in every village: I noticed that students were improving the english language and, in general, the level of preparation. I have also shared some time with teachers and they all look happy of what they are doing, of their students and, despite being young, they show strong commitment as well as passion.

Of course this is the first impression I got and, of course, I still need to discover more and deeper the culture, the people and also BS and its projects but I can honestly say that I have been positively surprised by this “overwhelming” country.

In conclusion I am really happy about my choice: this is a country with a lot of potential and possibilities. It is undeniable that results will probably come in the long run but the change has started and BS is for sure an agent of it.

See you soon for new and different stories!

*A foreign student in Bangladesh*

p.s.

A special thank to my personal, tireless, motorcycle driver who helps me everyday!