

MASUM Internship
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For the past four weeks, we have interned with MASUM in the Pune office. Throughout our time here, we learned a lot about the organization itself, the programs it facilitates, and even had the opportunity to take field visits to see some of this work in action. At the start of the internship, we were given different resources to read, including many of MASUM's own publications in order to learn about what MASUM does and how it began almost 30 years ago. We read some annual reports explaining the progress MASUM had seen in a given year, as well as publications on more specific topics such as health. This provided us with some background which was helpful when approaching our projects.

After learning about MASUM, we were given several projects. First, we were to create an interactive powerpoint presentation of MASUM's brochure. We created it on a new platform called Emaze, which allows for creative and interactive presentations. Emaze provides a number of different template options, so this should be a useful tool for future MASUM projects; in fact, we used Emaze again for a second presentation later on. The brochurepowerpoint included a brief summary of MASUM's history, goals, values, and ongoing programs and other work. We made sure not to include too much detail so as not to make the presentation too dense or hard to get through, and tried to make it as attractive and eye-catching as possible. Once we completed that, we each began our own individual projects: creating an Emazepresentation of MASUM's timeline, summarizing its progress since its creation in 1987, and recreating MASUM's website on a web platform called Weebly in order to give it a more modern appearance and feel. These projects were more comprehensive, so they took us until the end of our time here. Working on these projects taught us a lot about MASUM's work and how many aspects of daily life its

efforts touch. Before coming to MASUM, we knew the NGO focused heavily on human rights and gender equality, but we didn't realize it offered help to children and youth, and had programs promoting women's health, political participation, economic development and more. We were very impressed by the wide range of MASUM's activities.

Gaining knowledge of MASUM's work also provided context for our field visits. Both trips out of the office were to a neighboring town called Saswad. During our first visit, we conducted interviews (with the help of Anandita, our fearless supervisor and translator extraordinaire) of four staff members working with the youth program, Yogesh, Preshant, Suwarna, and Shital, as well as the team leader of the youth program, Vishali. We composed the questions beforehand, and through the interview were able to get an insider's view of what the youth program does, challenges it has faced and continues to face, and the successes it has seen since it began. Vishali shared one particularly inspiring success story with us: in one instance, youth gathered together to complain about an ongoing and neglected power outage, and managed to convince local government leaders to fix it by staging a sit-in at their office. They also told us about the discussions they facilitate with youth participants, which touch on key issues like intercaste and interreligious discrimination in order to create a more equal, accepting society in the future.

Our second trip to Saswad was in celebration of Friendship Day. MASUM ran a program in honor of the day, and facilitated group discussions about friendship while tying in values like discrimination and gender equality. At the end, a handful of the youth summarized their groups' discussions for everyone, spurring more debate on what friendship is, how to be a good friend, and what types of people can or should be friends. Witnessing Friendship Day enabled us to see

MASUM's youth program in action, and showed us how MASUM teaches values like equality, human rights, secularism, and many others in its programming.

Our internship at MASUM gave us a better understanding of how nonprofits function, both in the type of work that they do and the day-to-day logistical challenges they face. We knew coming into this experience that gender inequality was a prevalent issue in India, but through MASUM's programs we found out just how much these women—and their communities—can benefit from receiving proper support in areas like economic growth and political participation. Through our reading, projects, and observations, we saw how much thought and effort is put into the development and success of every workshop, event, and program that MASUM conducts. We were very excited to be a part of MASUM's work. Seeing it in person has helped us see how all the people they touch have potential for a brighter future.