



I can truly say, without a doubt, that my experience as a Borlaug-Ruan International Intern at MSSRF dramatically changed my life. I came into the internship not knowing exactly what I wanted to do in life and I came out having found my purpose. My research focused on “Measuring the Impact of Village Milk Collection Centers on Women's Socioeconomic Development.” While at the field site in Kannivadi, I vividly remember one of the women I interviewed saying, "Anything is possible. The collection center is more than just a job, it is my livelihood. Without it, I would not have gained. I have been empowered." This moment sparked a shift in my aspirations; it was here, sitting on the floor of a home in rural India where I realized exactly what I wanted to do with my life and what kind of change I wanted to cultivate.

My expectations of what India would be like, what hunger and poverty looked like, were shattered. I met some of the most resilient, hard-working people in the world. When faced with adversity, they found ways within their means to overcome.



My internship taught me that no matter how different two people may seem, when you dig deeper you will learn that we are actually very similar. We may look different, have different jobs, and speak different languages, but we all share the same needs, the same feelings, and the same basic problems. This is what unites us. Hunger and malnutrition are issues that can affect you no matter where you are: from the streets of a city in the United States to the villages of rural India. No single culture or country is immune to the devastation hunger can bring. While it is important to think globally and tackle issues that are common worldwide, we must act locally, and by that, I mean develop solutions unique to each situation. Different stages of development, cultures, and amount of change people are able and willing to accept must all be taken into consideration. There is no one-size-fits-all resolution to malnutrition and hunger.

It's a hard reality to face, knowing that you cannot change the world in only 8 weeks during your Borlaug-Ruan Internship, but if you can change one person's world, make an impact on one person's life, that is progress. Here is a quote which I believe best exhibits this notion:

“People who really want to make a difference in the world usually do it, in one way or another. And I’ve noticed something about people who make a difference in the world: They hold the unshakable conviction that individuals are extremely important, that every life matters. They get excited over one smile. They are willing to feed one stomach, educate one mind, and treat one wound. They aren’t determined to revolutionize the world all at once; they’re satisfied with small changes. Over time, though, the small changes add up. Sometimes they even transform cities and nations, and yes, the world.”

-Beth Clark