

In the thick of it – Geberit apprentices in India



Varanasi in the northeast of India was the scene of Geberit's 2014 social project. At the end of October, eight apprentices, a technical manager and a supervisor traveled to the city with 1.2 million inhabitants for two weeks in order to renovate the sanitary facilities in the Kiran Village, a center for around 300 disabled children and young people.

The Kiran Village was founded in 1990 by a Swiss nun who recognized the enormous need for a facility for physically disabled children in the region. Today, some 60 children live in the Kiran Village, and around 300 travel to the village each day to attend the school there or complete an apprenticeship. The majority of the children and young people suffer from polio and need walking aids, which are manufactured in the village's own orthopedic workshop.

The Geberit team lived and worked in the Kiran Village for two weeks, which enabled them to experience everyday life in the village at first hand. By the end of the visit, the sanitary facilities had been renovated, with toilets for disabled persons now making the life of the villagers a whole lot easier.

"I cannot explain how India is. You have to experience it for yourself," explains Florian Pohl, apprentice industrial tool mechanic at Geberit in Jona (CH) – an enthusiastic participant in Geberit's 2014 social project and a further ambassador for a social commitment that Geberit has been proudly supporting for years.



India up close. During their assignment, the Geberit apprentices gained experiences that they will remember for the rest of their lives.



Worldwide social projects with Geberit apprentices

- India 2014: Kiran Village, Varanasi
- Romania 2013: Hospice Casa Sperantei, Bucharest
- South Africa 2012: Fontein School, Port Elizabeth
- Serbia 2011: Schools in Kraljevo
- India 2010: Pentakatha School, Puri
- Solomon Islands 2009: Island Guadalcanal
- Ecuador 2008: Colegio Pomasqui, Quito



Anna Muzzetto, apprentice Mechatronics Engineer, Geberit Langenfeld (DE)

“Despite the different personalities involved, the work on the construction site was an example of teamwork at its very best. Our team was highly motivated and dedicated, and we maintained high spirits throughout.”



Norbert Peuckmann (right), Technical Manager for the project in India and Sales Consultant at Geberit Pfullendorf (DE), and Parsuram Sahu, Geberit Delhi (IN)

“If anyone had asked me before the project what we wanted to achieve, I would have given a specific number of toilet facilities. Looking back today at what we have actually achieved, I can now see that we managed to bring people together and bring them joy.”



Andre Jaschinski, apprentice Mechatronics Engineer, Geberit Pfullendorf (DE)

“Despite their disabilities and difficult living conditions, the faces of the children in the Kiran Village were a picture of happiness virtually the entire time.”



Maria Friedrich, apprentice Industrial Clerk, Geberit Lichtenstein (DE)

“We walked to the Ganges with the children from the Kiran Village. Countless candles adorned the bank of the holy river in celebration of the festival of lights. It was an incredibly beautiful and magical moment.”