We discover ‘Real Gems’

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On the fourth day we followed lives of a few of the participants to find out more about them and their families. [caption id="attachment_928" align="aligncenter" width="461" caption="Cricket beside river Saal at Paliur"]

[![Cricket beside river Saal at Paliur](attachment_928)]

At Paliur we went down the steep village path through corn fields and jumped a stream by Saal river to get to a pitch that looked well used with worm out grass at either end. It was surrounded by large rocks where one could leisurely sit and cheer from. What started with Abdul Razzak trying to round up some more players, a ball and a bat, ended up with about a dozen kids all playing so enthusiastically. We too joined for an occasional swing. Bhaskar also took the opportunity to teach the workshop participants some more about photography. Tom was thrilled to watch the fun and recorded it all. In the afternoon we drove past Saaho through exquisite country, rugged road winding like a serpent up the hill in search of Guddo Devi’s village which we were told was Saloh. The air had changed and became cool and crisp. The aerial view of Saaho from Saloh was perfect. We could see the Kendra, temple, Rattan Singh’s house and the whole village organisation. As we reached Saloh a pair of vultures
soared with us. At about 6000 feet we were greeted by two kids sitting and studying at a traditional loom. One of the boys turned out to be Guddo Devi's cousin Rakesh. He said his didi 'sister' has gone to fetch fuelwood for the household. Her family was so delighted to see all of us reach this high just to see Guddo Devi. Bhaskar got to work and started to go through her pictures and was really impressed by one of pictures where she made her cousin pose inside a small almirah where she could barely fit. Bhaskar was astonished to find that a girl living in remote village like Saloh has such an understanding of photography and took such an unusual shot. He could have expected such a shot from a metro kid but never from a girl like Guddo Devi. When we were just coming down to get to our car guddo told us that she has got first prize for singing in the Minjar Fair. And she was also joined by her cousin Guddi and by Beena. All three of them sang a Chambyali song for us Which sounded something like "your face is glowing...who are you going to see .....you are again and again going to fetch water.....who has you gone to see..." This trip to Saloh gave us deep insights into the lives of these kids who lead such a tough life and go beyond their limits to make everything possible. Guddo Devi and her friends walk 2 hours everyday to attend the workshops and has excellent singing skill. This workshops is not just about photography but about discovery of such "gems" in the hinterlands and providing them opportunities to discover their hidden potential.

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