Over the course of four weeks I interned with an NGO in India called CURE, which stands for Center for Urban and Regional Excellence. I split half my time in Agra working on the “City wide slum upgrading plan” and the other half in Delhi visiting the slum relocation site and working in the head office under Dr Khosla the founder of CURE. The duration of the internship was from June 20 and ending July 15. Although I only worked for 4 weeks I spent two months in India in total.

CURE, a Non-Governmental Organization, was created to work within poor and low-income communities to improve access to basic services and needs promoting development. CURE works alongside local governments helping set up programs which are needed to aid development in certain areas around urban communities, mostly located within the slums. CURE organizes and empowers low income communities, especially women and young people in urban areas, themes such as; water and food supply for the urban poor, sanitation, sustainable urban livelihood, community based tourism, health and nutrition, and urban education. The project I will be working with is the Citywide Slum Upgrading Plan (CSUP) which was established in the heritage city of Agra. Agra which is better known for the Taj Mahal, is a popular tourist destination. Due to it being a cultural attraction as a World Heritage site, Agra’s economy has potential to grow. However, its growing slum population combined with unplanned development efforts and poor sanitary conditions have hindered these prospects. CSUP aims to
improve the environmental conditions in these impoverished communities and improves the overall image of the city.

My responsibilities as an intern were to work closely with the field workers, going into the slums and shadowing what they did each day. Because I was not there for long, we went into 10 of the 276 slums and did an evaluation of the areas and looked at what was needed to better the area and infrastructure, everything from the schools, housing structures, drainage system, water lines and sewer system. We talked with the local slum dwellers and spoke with teachers, doctors, men, women, children, and shop keepers. We went into these communities to gain knowledge and learn how CURE works with the people in the slums to better their communities and better their livelihood. The four weeks interning with CURE was such an important experience, I feel I learned a great deal. This is such an important area for me and learning about an NGO from a hands on experience was such an amazing learning experience.