Higher Education Innovation and Research Applications (HEIRA),
Centre for Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore

The Pathways to Higher Education Programme (supported by the Ford Foundation)

Student Workshops – Maharashtra, Karnataka & Kerala (In collaboration with the Centre for Internet & Society, Bangalore) July- October 2011

Re-imagining the role of students in learning: The idea of Social Justice in Higher Education in India

Education systems, even at their most radical, are structured around defined roles of pedagogues and students. Within the undergraduate teaching space, the students are necessarily the unlearned, who, within the classroom environment are 'taught' by the teacher, lessons to help them negotiate with the world around them. These lessons are often rooted in disciplinary skills and knowledge that is procured from prescribed curricula and canonised processes of research. It is always presumed that knowledge resides somewhere 'out there', and that the classroom is the space where this knowledge must be presented to the student. Even when we conceive of the student as a researcher, the quest is in capturing knowledge and information that resides in other communities and people; it is rare to bank on the students' own life experiences, daily interactions and the crucial mechanics of everyday life as important resources for extrapolating knowledge. While effective pedagogues do encourage students to bring in their perspective or experience into the learning process, it remains more as a lens or a method rather than the object of inquiry itself.

The Ford Pathways to Higher Education programme is an attempt at radical pedagogy that sought to re-think the role of the student in learning processes, around the axis of Social Justice. Working with socially and politically disadvantaged students who are often perceived as the beneficiaries of social justice policies, laws and schemes, the programme aims at building critical acumen and infrastructure for these students to imagine themselves as agents of change. Within the workshop, the facilitator-participant relationships are structured to encourage students to tell personal stories, rely on their everyday experiences, and learn to look at their individual contexts and histories as sources of knowledge that can become the basis for action that leads to social justice. Instead of working with pre-defined ideas of social justice concepts and categories, the workshops help the participants define what this notion of social justice means to them and the ways in which the participants can start effecting change around discrimination and diversity, in their immediate environments within the college.

The 3 day workshops accept story telling as the trope for peer-2-peer learning and use these stories as the evidence and the impetus for designing campus activities that the students would perform over a period of 6-8 months in their own colleges and communities. Because a lot of these concepts of learning are drawn from digital structures and processes like P2P exchange, wisdom of crowds, crowd sourcing, digital story-telling, User Generated Content based collaborative learning, etc. we also introduced students to digital and online technologies and platforms that might help them to recognise their own potentials for producing change. The workshops have given us some insights into how students learn outside of classrooms and how they can be involved in participatory ways to affect the ground realities of larger policies which do not always translate well into everyday practices.

This is the structure of the workshops:

I. Maharashtra – July 2011

(St. Xavier's College, Mumbai – July 14 -16,2011; SIES College, Mumbai – July 19 -21, 2011)

People attended: Tejaswini Niranjana (Mumbai)   Nishant Shah (Mumbai), Milind Wakankar (Mumbai & Ahmednagar), Chetan Chauhan,

<u>**Day 1**</u>

The first session was to introduce the participants to story telling. Why do we tell stories? Why are stories important? What does telling of a story achieve? Where do we find these stories from?

The participants were given a clear catalyst to structure their stories, enabling them to see themselves as story tellers. The focus was in hearing everybody's stories, getting them to question what lies behind telling of a story and building a safe space where different stories can be heard.

In the second session, we continued with the story-telling motif, but this time the stories were more focused around questions of change. We introduced them to ideas of change without defining what it is that we think they should be changing. There was a discussion around different kinds of changes – changes which are about infrastructure and changes which are about the personal, and encouraged them to think of both kinds of changes. We used videos that showed Mumbai in different forms as catalysts to talk about these kind of changes.

St. Xavier's college

We started the workshop immediately after the bomb blasts in Mumbai and given the immediacy of the event, we structured our stories around this phenomenon. The participants were asked to first begin with narrative accounts of where they were, what they were doing, who they got in touch with and what did they do, once they heard of the blasts. Following this, they were given more questions to build upon it – These were questions around security, safety and crises. They shared stories, in small groups about when they feel threatened apart from such acts of terrorism. The participants shared these stories in groups of 2, each one telling the story to the other. They formed 3 such groups. Eventually, they were introduced to emailing and were asked to account each others' stories and email it to the whole group.

The change was first articulated as difference. When they saw the videos from popular Bollywood movies, their first dialogues were about how they are different from their everyday experience of Mumbai. The differences were mapped in two ways – one was at the level of the city, where they talked about how the 'reel' city is different from the 'real' city. These led to questions of change in terms of infrastructure – comparing Mumbai with a hypothetical USA (none of the participants had ever been to the USA but imagined it as the epitome of development, hygiene, safety and security) to talk about questions of safety, corruption and terrorism. These discussions coincided with larger development discourse that we find in media and education. However, the second discussion centred around differences in people. In one particular video from the movie Jaane Tu Ya Jaane Na, they talked about the people who were shown inhabiting, both the city and the college (the video was shot at Xavier's). This started a discussion around who these people are, what are the kinds of people who can occupy such a lifestyle, and why would some people not be able to afford the same. The teams discussed this together and came up with the conclusion that these differences are where the first notions of change arise from.

SIES college

We started the workshop on a different note. We asked them to create a narrative of their travel from home to college. They were asked to recount 5 interesting things that they notice on the way to college, 4 kinds of people, 3 events that they have experienced and think worth sharing, 2 things they would wish to change and 1 place that they have always wanted to visit and why. They broke up into groups of 4 and shared these stories with each other in order to get a better sense of what they think is important in their immediate environments and how they would engage with things they want to change. The groups were then introduced to emailing and sharing these stories across the whole group.

In the second session, we continued with the story-telling motif, but this time the stories were more focused around questions of change. We introduced them to ideas of change without defining what it is that we think they should be changing. There was a discussion around different kinds of changes – changes which are about infrastructure and changes which are about the personal, and encouraged them to think of both kinds of changes. We used videos that showed Mumbai in different forms as catalysts to talk about these kind of changes.

The tone of discussions following the videos was different: the participants concentrated immediately on the 'bad aspects' of the city which need to be changed and what we should be doing to change it. For many participants, the status quo of the city was something they had taken for granted and the thought that they could actually change something was new and daunting. They talked more about national issues rather than specific issues of the city. Their conversations were couched around expected social justice questions of corruption, donations, paid education, hygiene, communalism etc. In order to shift the terms of the debates, we introduced to them the idea of change-makers and asked them to think of more personal experiences that could lead to processes of change. They blogged about these ideas and also mapped significant changes in their own lives which they think have made them the way they are.

Day 2

On the Second day, we continued with the idea of story telling but at a more complex level. We introduced to them the idea of story-telling for change. To participants at both colleges, we showed a couple of videos from around the world where people have told stories to change and also told stories of change. Using the videos as an example, we asked the participants to now think of themselves as change makers and see what are the ways in which understand change.

At both St. Xavier's college and SIES, the discussions around making change began on a more expected note of changing time-tables, changing college rules, changing teachers etc. We made an intervention and asked them to think more about changes within rather than changes that are merely about laws and rules. The students found it easier to talk about execution of laws and rules rather than problems and challenges that they faced in their everyday lives. We had a discussion with them about what does a human change (as opposed to infrastructural change) mean and how we can begin with the individual and the personal rather than just thinking about a change outside of us. We discussed the politics of the standard development rhetoric where we always imagine that things that need to be changed are outside of us and that we can be the saviours who can go and produce that change. Instead, we encouraged them to focus on what they would want to change in their own lives and what they would do about it.

St. Xavier's College

At St. Xavier's college, they started talking about incidents where they felt 'left out' and realised that a lot of their problems were around being 'left out' in everyday life both in college and in the outside world. The participants divided into two groups to discuss what was at the root cause of being 'left out' and how they would try to articulate that problem. One group identified money as the axis around which groups were created in the college. They did not want to focus on money in terms of costs of education because their college provides scholarships, benefit funds, subsidiaries etc. to cope up with those costs. However, they suggested that there is a cost of belonging to the college and its peer groups that nobody talks about. As examples, they discussed how, for instance, in order to have a friend circle, they have to eat and hang out at the canteens. Nobody brings lunch boxes to college because they are looked at as 'uncool' and thus the options are either to starve yourself or put pressure on family to find enough money to spend at the canteen on an everyday basis. Similarly, other peer pressure zones which required access to funds in order to be popular, to have fun, to be a part of the group were technology gadgets, being connected to the internet, buying expensive presents, wearing trendy clothes, going out to eat and party etc. These are the costs that never get mentioned and nobody talks about it in college because it feels 'cheap' to be talking about it.

The second group decided that the axis of discrimination that they are constantly faced with, especially in a 'yuppie' college like Xavier's is language. In an English medium instruction college, most of them felt out of place because their fluency in English is not great. They talked about how there were groups of people who laughed at those who don't speak correct English, teachers who refuse to recognise the linguistic problems and do not make an effort to share knowledge in other languages, and how they remain on the fringes of different activities in the college because they don't have the confidence to actually present themselves in public. So they identified three specific things that would help students overcome the language barrier – peer 2 peer teaching of languages through a language exchange lab; collaborative learning by starting of 'Word of the day' series in public spaces in the classrooms, and English language speaking clubs where students find safe spaces to practice their spoken English.

Based on this, the participants produced a 'block script' that crystalised their stories and formulated the ideas around class-based discrimination. This block script was to be the base for their proposed activities for which they were going to make video proposals. The use of video was not to bring out polished documentaries but more to ease the participants into crystalising their ideas and forming a narrative rationale for the activities they want to do in order to produce change. The block scripts helped them to think of a context, a rationale, concrete examples to support their hypotheses, and a detailed list of events they think would be useful to bring about the change that they desire. The block scripts were made with the facilitators and the teams continued talking beyond the workshop to prepare for the shooting on the next day.

SIES College

At SIES college, the students found it difficult to articulate problems which they faced. They too, found it easier to talk about things that affect 'other' people and how they could change it. A certain 'social service' attitude which thinks of one's self as a saviour who is more privileged than others and hence can attempt to 'cure' their evils was a part of these discussions of change. In order to shake the debates a little, we asked them to tell stories of three different textures. First we asked them to think of a leader or a change-maker who has made a significant change in their communities. Instead of defining their communities for them, we left it to them to define their own parameters of belonging. Second we asked

them to think of a change that has happened in their own families because of the interventions made by somebody else. Third, we asked them to reflect on a change in their own person that was a result of somebody else's actions. These stories started shifting the discussions towards more personal journeys and trajectories of change.

Based on these stories, they were then asked to sit together in small groups and try to build a consensus around what are the kinds of changes they would want to produce. The students eventually came up with four different sets of problems that they thought they would want to address. The patterns we saw at Xavier's repeated themselves here again. One of the groups identified that there is a lot of 'attitude' that is shown by different people in the college based on money, looks and power. This 'attitude' also forms the central structure around which groups form. They shared personal stories where the way they dress, the way they look, the habits that they have or the things they carry with them are often the objects of mockery or jeering from other people in the college. The group eventually pinned this down as a class problem and wanted to start an awareness campaign around these issues. They also felt that the objective of this is not to demonise some people but to make them aware that they have sometimes such behaviour patterns which they learn from our social structures and are not even aware of what they are doing or how this could be hurtful to somebody else.

Another group identified language as an issue, where in a socially diverse population at SIES, language becomes a fault-line. Apart from the problems in class where the teacher-student interaction gets heavily influenced by language, the participants also thought that language serves as a divisive line between those who find their place in college and those who don't. Language was also tied in with questions of academic performance and extra-curricular participation. They decided to work towards a language exchange programme accompanied by training sessions by experts on strengthening language skills. They also came proposed an idea of students sending written questions about their problems with the curricula, in a language that they are comfortable with and the messages to be translated in English so that they can reach the teacher who can then either address them in class or in personal tutorials.

The third axis that came up in discussions was about the learning and knowledge sharing processes. The students feel that the competitive nature of education often means that peer to peer learning is impossible. Instead of sharing knowledge and starting discussions, most students prefer to remain secretive about their learning. This gets further amplified by the fact that only those who can 'shine' in the class are able to get the extra attention and help from the teachers in a large class. Moreover, only certain kinds of knowledge are given value despite the fact that there is more to learning than textbooks and classrooms. They are planning to do activities around student mentorships, knowledge sharing banks, and to build online spaces for interaction and learning.

The students blogged about these ideas, made charts and created block-scripts.

Day 3

The third day for both the colleges was a day of consolidation. Based on their discussions and identification of problems, the participants shot videos with their own groups, in order to form a narrative proposal. They also presented these proposals to an audience of their peers and faculty members who are going to be involved in the activities for the rest of the academic year. They were introduced to the structure of a project proposal so that they can bring coherence and build a work plan and budget for their activities. The students in their own groups are now going to create proposals for their activities and submit to them for perusal in a month's time. Based on these proposals, funds will be allocated to them and they will be documenting the process as they go along.

Ahmednagar College, Ahmednagar (July 23 – 25, 2011)

Local Facilitator – Shrikant Botre

Day 1 began with an introduction of the team and the participants, as well as a brief introduction to the theme of the workshop. There was a total of 22 students, and all were boys. This was problematic, as a mixed group would have been beneficial and changed the dynamics of the group. This workshop was different from Mumbai in many aspects given the location and linguistic diversity. The students belonged to diverse backgrounds, and most of them came from nearby villages and were agricultural labourers or worked part time and attended college.

Language was also a key issue here, as most students spoke only in Marathi. The inputs of the local facilitator thus became extremely crucial here. The next session was the ice-breaker, which was based on the idea of storytelling as with the other two colleges. Students were given the same cues as the previous colleges, and asked to come up with narratives about each other. The next session was on e-mail, where students learnt how to create an email id, send an email and a file attachment. However as many students had not used e-mail previously, or in some cases even a computer earlier, this session took a considerable amount of time, and not many could complete their tasks for the session. One interesting point to note was that all of them had mobile phones but most of them didn't know how to use a computer.

In the post-lunch session the facilitators continued with the story-telling motif, but this time the stories were focused around questions of change. There was a discussion around different kinds of changes – changes, which are about infrastructure, and changes which are about the personal, and students were encouraged to think of both kinds of changes. After lunch, the next session titled "Birds of a feather", (BOF) commenced with videos; one of college life in Mumbai and a clip of Ahmednagar town, which were quite relevant to the question of identity and the city they live in. Students were then asked to discuss the similarities and differences between the videos and their own lives, if any and the kind of changes they would like to bring about in the college and city. This time stories were more focused on the idea of change without defining it for the students. Students discussed stories of change, which were largely administrative and political in nature, but they expressed their will to make an effort to change things around them. They mostly spoke about roads, bus services, and hygiene of the city and other such civic issues. They then moved to preparing charts where they sketched what they had discussed earlier. These discussions created some room for exchanging views and articulating their ideas of change, which was crucial for the second day. Day one ended with preparation for the presentations.

Day 2 began with the presentations, and this was followed by a 'lightning' talk where students spoke on the problem they had discussed on day one in the Birds of a feather session and the presentations. The students were still very inhibited, possibly due to the linguistic issues, but also because this was a very new and unfamiliar experience for them. Individual sessions with the facilitator helped the students to some extent and created a somewhat comfortable space for representing their views. The next session was divided into two separate sessions due to the unavailability of an adequate number of computers; students were therefore divided into two groups. One group started with the technology session, while the other was in a group discussion with the local facilitator on the idea of change. The discussion with facilitator took place in Marathi, and was largely on the ideas of difference, integration and social and personal change. On the other hand, the e-mail session took some time, as most of the students were not used to the keyboard and email interface. Students who picked up emailing then started teaching the

other students as well. This accelerated the pace of the session, and the students were introduced to Google translator and Wikipedia as well.

The post-lunch session began with the spectrogram exercise, conducted as a debate. However, unlike a regular debate, in this activity the participants could agree, disagree or stay in the middle of the spectrum. Students were given the freedom to change their stand with each new argument presented for or against the topic; so they could literally switch sides at each point of the debate as new questions arose. This session was mainly introduced to help some of the passive students to speak up and articulate the issues they face. The topic was 'caste system/discrimination in the city'. This turned out to be a good exercise as students spoke about many of their personal experiences. Differences in opinion resulted in a heated debate on caste related issues, which then had to be moderated by the facilitator. After this, the facilitators moved on to collaborative story telling. The session started with two videos being screened, followed by questions defining change which the facilitators explained to the students. These were: **1.Identify different kinds of change 2. Changes from within / Changes from outside 3. Scope of changes**. Students were then divided into three groups and asked to discuss these questions and come up with stories of change. This session was intense as students shared many personal stories of change from their native villages, to stories about individual family members. These sessions were closely monitored by facilitators as well. The day ended with some discussion about the projects student would take up and a brief about the activities of the third day.

Day 3 was crucial, as the students had to work on their project proposals. The first session was largely spent on brainstorming over ideas as they had some clarity from the discussions they had in the past two days. This session required a lot of mentoring by facilitators, who had to engage with both the groups intensely as they raised a lot of questions about projects. This session took a good amount of time, but before lunch both the groups came up with an outline of the project. Group 1 wanted to work with the issue of caste discrimination, and address the issue through several methods including campaigns and activities on campus. Group 2 wanted to work with issue of rural education, and looked at the possibility of field visits to nearby villages and other forms of outreach. The facilitators then helped them to formulate their ideas further.

After lunch, the students worked on their proposals and a tentative plan of action. These they then presented to the faculty members and students from the previous year. Teachers provided some positive feedback on their proposals. These will now be consolidated and submitted to HEIRA for approval and funding.

II. Kerala, August 2011

People attended: Milind Wakankar, Chetan Chauhan, Sneha PP

Local Facilitator: Aryakrishnan Ramakrishnan

The student workshops in Kerala were held between August 8 – 19, 2011 at three undergraduate colleges in Aluva, Thodupuzha and Kozhikode. While the larger structure of the workshops was broadly retained as used in Mumbai (see Section I on the Maharashtra workshops), several aspects of the design had to be modified to suit the needs of the colleges in Kerala, keeping in mind regional and linguistic specificities. An important point to note is that unlike the other states, Kerala does not have a separate pre-university system, as a result of which students are exposed to university or college for the first time only in the first year of undergraduate education. As the students were just out of school, their exposure to and understanding of campus life, their general awareness of socio-political events in Kerala and approach to the same was different from the students in the other states. This was also a contributing factor in modifying the activities in the workshop to a certain extent.

 A detailed account of each of the three workshops is given below:

Union Christian College, Aluva (August 8 – 10, 2011)

Day 1 of the workshop commenced with an introduction to the Pathways programme and the theme of the workshop, and an ice-breaker session where the students and the facilitators introduced themselves. There were a total of 26 students on the first day; and the majority was female. A small number, mostly boys, were familiar with the use of computers and internet. Although language did not seem to be an issue in this college, each session was adequately translated by the local facilitator to avoid confusion and to ensure that students were comfortable using the language of their choice. In keeping with the central motif/technique of story-telling, the first session was on creating narratives about themselves and their immediate environment. Students were divided into groups of two, and were required to write down short stories about each other. The same cues as in Maharashtra were used here too: 5 interesting things that they notice on the way to college, 4 kinds of people, 3 events that they have experienced and think worth sharing, 2 things they would wish to change and 1 place that they have always wanted to visit and why. The groups were then introduced to emailing and sharing these stories across the whole group.

In the second session, students were divided into two groups again and asked to discuss their hopes, myths and expectations from the workshop. This session, though not part of the original design, proved to be immensely useful in gauging the expectations of students from an interaction like this, which is also in a way reflective of their hopes from college and what they would think of as the scope of formal education broadly. Students presented a summary of their group discussion, and as expected the focus lay on learning computers, specifically internet applications and social media, improving communication skills and personality development. The idea of change, although more at the level of personal transformation and social mobility, did surface and was picked up by the facilitators to introduce ideas of social change. It was also clarified that the workshop would not focus on technology itself, but look at it as a means to an end; in short as a tool which would aid them in the changes they wanted to effect in their lives.

Due to some unforeseen technical glitches, the session on e-mailing took much longer than expected. Also, many of the students had to be taught how to create e-mail ids and use them, which took up most of the time on the first day.

The focus of the second day was more on social rather than individual change, and students were encouraged to think about the changes they would like to see around them, beginning with the college campus. They were shown a video from a popular Malayalam film, depicting urban youth and campus life, and asked to comment on similarities or differences from their own lives if any, and changes envisaged. Students pointed out that in real life the college campus is far different and mostly fraught with various issues, ranging from administrative problems to serious issues like ragging, drug abuse and violent

student politics. Students also came up with methods to tackle these problems; and were conscious of the fact that they could become effective change makers if given the space and freedom for the same. The next session was a debate on the topic 'Internet and mobile phone technologies exploit women and children today'. Though intended primarily to get some of the more passive students involved in the discussions, the exercise proved very useful as students not only became more vocal and brought up a range of issues connected to the topic but also demonstrated their skills at argumentation and showed a responsiveness to thinking more critically about issues such as gender discrimination, child abuse and cyber-crime, as well as time-worn debates on the modernity/culture divide. Post-lunch the students re-grouped to discuss again the idea of change, but this time in a more focussed manner, with an attempt to look at specific problems and methods to address the same. The facilitators also spoke about the methods of mobilisation, campaigning and awareness as means to address issues and aid the process of change, and encouraged students to adopt these while strategising about the issues they wanted to address.

By the end of the day the two groups had identified the areas that they wanted to work on:

Group 1 identified the lack of an open space for discussion and creative expression as an issue they could try to address. While the campus at large is a hospitable place, participants pointed out that many students did not have a space where they could discuss issues that affect them on campus- whether it is discrimination, linguistic barriers, lack of confidence, student politics or other factors that prevent them from effecting a change in their lives. Group 2 felt that that one of the major problems faced by students is the lack of adequate and appropriate opportunities for employment on graduation. They therefore came up with the idea of establishing a career guidance/placement cell that would facilitate the process of campus placement at the end of the year, and provide other services such as career counselling, classes on communication skills and personality development etc.

A crucial issue with the problems identified by both these groups was that the students were thinking of immediate solutions to the problem they had identified, without an examination of the larger issues involved. Students were largely working with a problem-solving approach rather than reflecting on larger abstract concerns, and facilitators were required to come in here to encourage students to think more critically around problems they had identified.

Day 3 was spent largely in discussions with the two groups to help them firstly to arrive at a more clear idea of the problems they wanted to address, and then the strategies to do so. The facilitators stepped in to speak to students on how to effectively mobilise students on campus for a cause, through persuasion and not propaganda. They emphasised on the need to look at technology as a tool, as a means to the end, and not an end in itself, so that the larger objectives of social change and diversity are clear. Students worked with the ideas of mobilisation, campaigning and awareness again, but this time more elaborately to chart out the methodologies they would use.

Group 1 decided to make their idea of an 'open space a little more specific in terms of the issues they would address, so that there would be clarity in terms of the methodology which would help the campaign-building and creating awareness. So they will look at issues like discrimination, difference and alienation on campus, and the likely factors that lead to these problems. Group 2, instead of working on a change in the institutional structure like a placement cell, which would have been outside the ambit of the programme as well, decided to look at the issue of unemployment itself, and the factors that perpetuate this, like the lack of opportunities to good formal education, and quality of access to higher education by students from marginalised sections of society.

Students were given a proposal template to work with which helped them to organise their ideas in some tentative form. The groups then presented their proposals to their friends and teachers, who responded positively to their ideas with their feedback. The teachers also had suggestions such as working with the existing placement cell and bringing out a monthly newsletter which would further support the activities of these two groups, and give them more visibility on campus. These proposals will now be consolidated and sent for perusal in a month, and following approval funds will be sanctioned for their implementation.

Newman College, Thodupuzha (August 13 -15, 2011)

Day 1 saw a relatively low turnout with only 17 students, but it was a good ratio of boys and girls. Compared to the earlier college, the knowledge of computers and internet was fair, though it was again mostly the boys who showed more familiarity with the use of technology. After the introduction and the ice-breaker session, students were divided into teams of two and asked to discuss and write down their friends' stories. The same cues were used as in the earlier college. Students were given the freedom to move outside of the classroom space and work, and they came up with narratives about their friends. Language came up as an important point to note here as most students were clearly more comfortable with Malayalam. This posed a few issues during the e-mailing session, which were however resolved as facilitators worked closely with the students and encouraged them to type with transliteration tools available on e-mail.

The hopes and expectations session again brought forth some of the standard expectations about computer and internet knowledge, improving language and communication and skills, personality development and employment opportunities, which were addressed by the facilitators. The ideas of individual and social change were also broached, but it was immediately apparent that all were not comfortable with such concepts, perhaps due to a lack of previous exposure to any kind of activism or ideas of change, and the unfamiliar language and context. There was also some reluctance on the part of many students to engage with the rest of the group. One reason could be the complexity of the notion of social justice itself that the workshop is attempting to convey, albeit couched in the language of change. There is a need to simplify it as far as possible, avoiding even the use of words like justice and diversity in the introduction as it seems daunting, and more importantly leads to students externalising the issue, thereby preventing their whole hearted participation. Another reason for the tepid response from students could possibly be the general ambience of the college itself, which is rather disciplined and controlled owing to some recent political unrest. As a result students were a little inhibited and restrained.

This was articulated more clearly in the next session (Birds of a feather/Let's Talk Change), when in their presentations, among the many issues they saw in college, students also mentioned the lack of freedom to voice their concerns, and limited agency to address these problems themselves. The usual changes in institutional structure, college administration and teaching practices were also sought by students. Many of the changes envisaged were also far-fetched and unrealistic, and were largely articulated as extraneous to the concerns and outside of the agency the students themselves. Getting students to engage with the larger discussions therefore proved to be a difficult task for the facilitators, although the exercise was useful in making the groups as a whole a little more open to interaction. Another crucial issue was the pronounced gender divide in the working of the groups, with the boys largely dominating the processes, including the presentations at the end of the session. As understood from the local facilitator, this could be attributed not just to prescribed gender roles in society at a larger level, but also to the specific cultural context of this place, where gender discrimination is prevalent and women generally do not have much access to public spaces. The Thodupuzha district comprises of largely rich upper-middle class people from the Christian community, mostly with a lot of land and inherited property. Many students, though belonging to minority communities, actually come from affluent families, and do not seem to face any pressing issues at college. Thus there was certain initial lack of interest seen in the students, and a reluctance to be whole-heartedly involved in the activities. This however greatly improved over the next two days once the students became more comfortable with the ambience of the workshop.

Day 2 began with the facilitators picking up on the broad ideas of social change discussed the previous day, and taking them further by discussing real-life examples of change-makers. The next session was on campaign-building, wherein students were asked to reflect on a real-life social issue, and build a campaign around it. The issue chosen was the infamous Coca-Cola bottling plant controversy in Plachimada in Kerala, and the issue of ground water depletion and contamination. Students were divided into two groups, and asked to think about the probable consequences of this problem, and the methods they would use to address it. Students came up with several innovative strategies, which also included aspects of mobilisation, campaigning and awareness. This session, though not part of the original design, was extremely useful in actually demonstrating the nature of campaigns, and methods of mobilisation and creating awareness, by picking up from the ideas generated by students themselves. Students showed

good progress with the session, and it was easier for them to move into thinking about the project ideas that they wanted to work on in their campus as well.

The post-lunch session was spent in group discussions again to identify possible thematic areas for the college projects. As with the earlier college, students again had some difficulty in identifying areas of social change that were also relevant to their own college life; the problems and solutions were mostly externalised. Any attempt to encourage them to think about changes in the immediate college environment were again met with direct solutions involving administrative and institutional changes. By the end of the day however the two groups had a rough idea of the areas that they wanted to work on, which were as follows:

Group 1 wanted to work on documenting indigenous knowledge practices, which includes practices and local histories of certain communities native to the area. The group would research and document the practices of certain performing communities, many of which actually form a minority and would include marginalised castes, and look at methods of reviving such practices which are slowly disappearing from the public sphere.

Group 2 felt that a major issue on campus was the wastage of resources, be it food, water, paper or electricity. They therefore wanted to build a campaign around the idea of a sustainable lifestyle, by looking at methods of conservation and creating awareness about using renewable resources.

A point to note with both the projects identified by the groups was the manner in which the idea of social justice/diversity was being understood and explored. While the first group was working with the idea of indigenous knowledge mainly with a notion of preservation of dying art forms, there is also the idea that a lot of the local histories documented would be outside of the mainstream, which would be interesting to examine. The second project is definitely more in the realm of social work/service, but the ideas came out of a notion of unequal distribution of resources, as a result of which many people do not have access to the resources that others do. The motive is therefore to address the problem of difference and lack of access to basic resources.

Day 3 was spent in consolidating these ideas and taking them further by looking at how the social justice question can be more effectively addressed in these projects. The facilitators also worked with the student groups to evolve strategies for campaign-building, mobilisation and awareness creation. Students suggested methods of using technology innovatively as part of their campaigns, in the form of audio and video and social networking tools. They then presented their project ideas to an audience of teachers and the Pathways students from the previous year, who provided good feedback and several practical suggestions on how to go about their projects. Students were given the proposal template early that day, so that helped put the project ideas together better. The students will submit these proposals within a month, for approval and funding.

Farook College, Kozhikode (August 17 – 19, 2011)

The workshop at Farook College was conducted on a rather tight schedule, as the timings had to be revised because most of the students were fasting for Ramzan. As it was unadvisable to keep the students in the workshop for a long period of time, the duration of the workshop was reduced and some of the sessions were modified. In spite of these logistical constraints, student turnout was very good from the first day itself, and the loss in time was adequately compensated for by the enthusiasm of the students. There were a total of 23 students on the first day, with a good male to female ratio. Another important point to note was that most students were comfortable using computers and the internet, even in the case of the female students, when compared to the other two colleges. Language was also not a major issue, as many students preferred to speak in English; the institution also encourages this in class as well as extra-curricular activities. This was more apparent in the first session of the day, where students had to write about their friends and e-mail the stories to the facilitators and the rest of the group.

Most students wrote well in English using the cues given (same as earlier), but some amount of help was required with e-mail. There were around 5-6 students who were more comfortable communicating in Malayalam.

The next session on hopes and expectations brought to the fore some very interesting questions from the students, and also the fact that they are very socially and politically aware. In the first session, apart from the expected questions about computer usage, academic and employment assistance, personality development and soft skills, students were also curious about the larger Pathways programme, the funder, the areas and nature of work involved, and the implications it would have for them. They were also interested in the ideas of social change and equality and more importantly were keen to know the kind of change expected from them as college students.

This helped the facilitators to move onto the next session easily, where they discussed the idea of change more elaborately, beginning with the notion of personal transformation and moving onto examples of change-makers who have also managed to initiate large scale social movements of change. Students were extremely responsive in this session, and brought up their own examples of social change as they understood it, and were eager to discuss current events that were they felt are relevant to ideas of justice, equality and diversity. This included reservations in educational institutions and employment, Anna Hazare's anti-corruption campaign and the recent widespread agitations and political unrest in the Middle East and Europe. The drawbacks of social action were also discussed, and the need for social responsibility as a part of change was emphasised.

The afternoon session was spent in group discussions on the changes that the students envisaged on their campus. Apart from a video from a popular Malayalam film depicting campus life, the students were also shown a short film about personal strife and triumph through individual effort. The students were then asked to discuss the issues they saw on their own campus, and probable methods of change. Most of the initial problems identified and solutions were again pitched at the level of the administration and faculty, so the facilitators encouraged students to think about themselves as agents of change, and what they could do to resolve these problems. Students then worked on their charts, which were to be presented the next day.

Day 2 of the workshop began with presentations by students on the issues identified on campus and the methods of change. The groups identified several issues such as student politics, discrimination among students based on class, ethnicity and gender, lack of spaces for creative expression etc. They also put forth some of their suggestions on how these could be addressed, both at the level of the administration as well as through their own efforts. A positive point to note was that the students also brought up larger questions about equality, empowerment, rights and political freedom. These were expressed as the ideal goals of change; the methods or strategies to achieve these were of course unclear at this point.

The next session, called spectrogram was conducted in the form of an interesting debate between the students on a current controversial topic. The topic was the proposed ban on cinematic or free-style dance in colleges and schools in Kerala, on the contention that it is obscene. The objective was to encourage them to develop their arguments from different stand-points. This activity was extremely useful as students brought up several important questions about popular culture, hegemony of the West in representation of culture, moral policing, implications for women in the culture/modernity debate, the impact of globalisation and what is understood as modernity today, questions of ethics and morality etc. An important point to note was that the students were very discerning of the opinions put forth, and eager to substantiate all their points through argumentation.

The next session was on campaign-building, and students were given the same topic as the earlier college, the Coca –Cola issue in Plachimada, and asked to create a campaign around it. The students were again divided into groups, and they came up with several methods of creating awareness about this issue in the local community and mobilising people around it. Technology featured prominently in the methods that the students came up with; the use of English in their campaigns was also prominent. There is a strong emphasis on the use of the language on the part of the institution as well, and there seems to be a general practice of discussion and debate on campus, which is noticeable in the careful attention given to the manner of the presentations made by the students.

In the post-lunch session the facilitators again spoke about change, and how students can also be effective change-makers in their immediate community. However, once the students were divided into groups and asked to identify possible thematic areas that they could work on for their campus projects, they either identified problems that were extraneous to their immediate environment, or looked at specific issues like acquisition of skills, increased academic resources and employment opportunities. Like with the other two colleges, students again adopted a problem-solving approach to address the issues most relevant to them, without reflecting on the larger abstract concerns. This slowed the progress of the workshop a little, and given the time constraint as well, it was difficult for students to narrow down their ideas to one topic or theme for the campus projects by the end of the day.

On **Day 3**, the first half of the day was spent largely in trying to get the groups to identify issues or broad thematic areas that they could work on. The facilitators also worked intensively with the students, and tried to elicit from the students themselves the topics that would be most relevant to them for the campus projects.

Group 1 wanted to work on a campaign for a reformation of civic spaces, to address issues such as littering, pollution, waste disposal etc. The larger idea was that of social responsibility, and the students discussed methods of creating public awareness campaigns about these issues, which included the use of social media and other forms of interaction and networking of students. Group 2 identified the broad theme of human rights as a topic for their campus project. The attempt would be to explore the concept through specific instances, and look at how to address issues within this field through innovative campaigns. The relevance of these projects to the larger thematic of social justice and diversity, in the specific context of higher education was a matter of concern here. However it was felt that the projects could be developed further to examine larger issues of citizenship, democracy and rights, which could also give rise to other questions that students may take up later.

The students then presented their proposed projects to teachers and their peers, who offered very positive feedback and suggestions on how to make the projects more effective and feasible. The students will now work on their proposals with the help of teachers and submit these for approval and funding from HEIRA.

III. Karnataka – September – October 2011

People attended: Tejaswini Niranjana (Kumta) Nishant Shah (Mangalore), Chetan Chauhan, Sneha PP (Mysore and Kumta)

Local Facilitator: Tanveer Hasan

St. Aloysius College, Mangalore (August 28-30,2011)

Day 1 began with an introduction to the workshop and the concept of the social justice in education. The group was an interesting mix of students from different communities and caste/class backgrounds, and had a balanced gender ratio. However, it was very apparent from the beginning that the students were lacking in enthusiasm; a probable reason being that the workshop was on a weekend, and many students were there under compulsion, as a result of which most of them seemed be uninterested. It therefore took the facilitators some time to get the students actively engaged in the workshop and to get them talking; the situation however improved over the next two days. The sessions commenced with the general introductions, followed by the routine ice breaking session designed to share experiences as stories or some form of personal narratives. Students were divided into three teams and were given a few cues - 5 interesting things that they notice on the way to college, 4 kinds of people, 3 interesting things happened while coming to college, 2 things they would wish to change and 1 place that they have always wanted to visit and why. Students were informed to keep the stories safe, as these would have to be shared with rest of the group during the emailing session.

The second session was on hopes & expectations, which set forth the larger agenda of the workshop. Students were divided into three teams, and given 20 minutes to discuss and present their expectations from the workshop. This was largely based on what they had heard from their teachers and senior students, but the objective was also to gain an understanding about the expectations of students of this age from such an interaction. As was the case with the other colleges, most of the students were expecting the workshop to be a technology and communication training. Many wanted to learn Adobe Photoshop and computer hardware; some also demanded personality development. The facilitators clarified these doubts and explained that the workshop is not about technology and personality development, but personal and social change. The technology used would be a means to achieve change, and not an end in itself.

The second half of the day focused on the idea of change and introduction to the idea of social justice, which seemed a little serious and profound for the students to engage with. The approach in this session was therefore changed to focus on the participant's idea of change; in other words, on the changes they wanted to see around them. The facilitators also made brief presentations on individual and social change. The students were then shown videos based on college and city life, as a cue for the discussions during the next session titled "Let's Talk Change" (Birds of feather) where participants were divided into three teams and asked to discuss the differences between the videos and their own campus and city, and the changes they would want to see in these spaces. This exercise took some time again as students were not familiar with or comfortable with such group exercises and seemed to have some difficulty in articulating their thoughts and working in teams. The facilitator's presence therefore was important in encouraging discussion. The day ended with some pending work on the charts and instructions on the presentations and schedule of the next day.

Day 2 began with preparation of the charts, which was followed by presentations. This created an atmosphere for discussion which led to students talking; they raised questions on each other's ideas and put forth suggestions on what could have been done better. This activity was extremely useful as students gradually started talking about their ideas of change. One of them even raised a concern about differential treatment to students from poor financial backgrounds, and the need to change such practices on campus. The second day therefore saw a tremendous change as most of the students began talking, and the facilitators made sure there was some fun activity as well to the keep enthusiasm levels high.

The second session was the spectrogram exercise, which the facilitators initially were not sure about given the tepid response on the first day. However it worked really well as there was instant polarization

on the debate topic,' which is the best city, Bangalore or Mangalore'? The students were extremely vocal about their opinions; the facilitator also played an important role in keeping the discussion going. Students touched upon various aspects on both cities, and also specifically raised their concerns about religious polarization in Mangalore city. In the next session, the students were introduced to Facebook. Most of them already had profiles except five students, who were then helped by their friends to create profiles. During this time, they also created a Google group for the future discussions and reporting; two of the students also took charge as administrators of the group. This exercise was a good example of peer-to-peer learning and it helped in picking up things fast.

Post-lunch the students were shown videos of successful campaigns for change, and the facilitators explained that change need not always be serious, it can be fun. This session then lead to another activity on building a campaign, where students were divided into two groups and asked to build a campaign around illegal mining. They were given 45 minutes to finish the campaign plan, which was followed by presentations on the action plan and finally a good discussion, where both the groups and facilitators commented on each other's campaigns. By the end of session, the facilitators also figured out final teams for the projects. Towards the end of the day participants were introduced to the idea of projects and writing a proposal.

Day 3 was devoted to idea development and the discussions related to it. This turned out to be the most difficult session, as both of the groups were again unable to articulate their ideas of change, specifically in the form of projects. The facilitators worked with each group and guided them towards a tentative plan. The initial ideas were more oriented towards social service and problem solving, and therefore it took some time and continuous mentoring by facilitators before students could arrive at a tentative proposal. This worked and students identified the issues they wanted to work on. One group wanted to work with the idea of discrimination on campus, on account of class/caste and gender, while the other group chose to work on issues related to linguistic barriers. Both worked on tentative proposals, which they then presented in front of their teachers and peers. This was followed by a feedback session, where both teachers and senior students offered a lot of suggestions on how to develop these project ideas. These proposals will be revised and submitted within a month for approval and funding.

Vidhya Vardhaka First Grade College, Mysore (Sept 3 – 5, 2011)

Day 1 started with a general introduction to the workshop and the larger themes of social justice and change. There were a total of 24 students; of which only two were girls. The poor gender ratio was clearly a problem, as the boys easily dominated most of the activities, and this influenced the way the workshop went over the next two days as well. Both the girls, while extremely proactive and involved, also dropped out by the last day, as a result of which a lot of effort and time went into maintaining discipline and keeping the students interested. It is therefore imperative that the colleges be sent strong guidelines to keep a balanced gender ratio in the workshops, as it leads to better participation and helps in channelizing the students' energy effectively.

After the formal introduction, the ice-breaker session was conducted, where the students were divided into groups and asked to share stories about each other based on cues. Language was a concern here as most students spoke in Kannada; translation for each session therefore became necessary. Like in Mangalore, it seemed like students lacked interest in the workshop; many students also seemed to be there under compulsion. The next session on hopes and expectations was better, as the students showed more enthusiasm when called upon to present a summary of their discussions. As expected, most of the students felt that the workshop was on technology, communication skills, English language skills and personality development. In fact there was much curiosity about the technology component of the workshop; the facilitators then clarified that this would only be a part of the workshop, and emphasised the larger themes of personal and social change.

Due to a shortage of computers with internet connectivity the session on e-mail had to be shifted to the next day. The facilitators then moved onto the next session which was on introduction to the idea of change, and how one can address it. Students were shown videos from a popular Kannada film, depicting

college life, and another clip on life in Mumbai city. They were then divided into two teams and given forty minutes to discuss firstly the differences they saw in the videos and in their own lives, and secondly the changes they wanted to bring in their immediate environment (college) and the city how they would execute these ideas of change. The session was slightly modified, and students were given a choice to work on either a presentation or a skit. Somewhere it was clear students were not briefed about the workshop as none of them raised any questions during the discussions. When asked about the possible changes they could think of in their immediate surroundings, most of them said they require no change as they were happy in college. On speaking to them further it became clear that the student composition was rather homogenous, and most students belonged to a single caste, which although is counted among the marginalised castes, actually has a lot of political clout and is relatively affluent. The college itself is patronised by this particular community, and so for most students, the college is already a 'safe space' as such, and encompasses mostly everything that they could aspire for and achieve. Therefore most students in the group belonged to well-settled families and did not face any pressing issues at college, given that it is a familiar and comfortable space. As a result they did not feel the need to change anything as well. Even the lack of fluency in English was not a major concern for the students themselves, as Kannada is spoken by the majority. This made the workshop a challenge for the facilitators, because it was difficult to get the students genuinely concerned about the ideas of change and justice. Also, as most of the students were from the same community and even the same class (Commerce Department) this homogenous group already had its polarizations as most students knew each other, which made it difficult for them to work as a team. There were several issues with interpersonal and group dynamics, resulting in poor teamwork, which also consumed a lot of time. Day 1 therefore ended with planning the skit and presentations.

Day 2 began with the performances and presentations by students based on the previous day's Let's talk session. Like with most other colleges, students highlighted issues such as donations, lack of parity among all students from different sections of society, ragging and eve-teasing. The issues identified with the city were mostly problems of law enforcement such as poor public hygiene, pick-pocketing and eve-teasing. A crucial point to note was the very problematic representation of women, especially where issues such as ragging and eve-teasing were concerned; students seemed to think that women invited these troubles through improper dressing etc, a notion probably ingrained from popular culture. This was followed by a group discussion which generated more responses from students. Class differences seemed to be a bone of contention; many students spoke of discrimination based on financial background. The kind of change envisaged was also discussed extensively; whether this is external or if it should begin with the individual and so on. The performances and discussions generated some momentum and created a space for students to speak and represent their views in front of the others. Further to this the facilitators also narrated stories of change (Chipko movement and Alice Pyne) to illustrate the nature of change envisaged.

The second session was on campaign planning which started with the examples of innovative campaigns from around the world. Students were then given a topic, child labour, and asked to build a campaign around this issue. This session worked to a certain extent as most of them were aware of the things that goes into campaign building and worked well to present their campaign plans. Strategies included increased educational opportunities, need for stringent government measures to check this practice, compulsory education, more welfare schemes such as midday meals, transport and better employment opportunities. This was followed by a discussion, which had to be closely regulated by the facilitators as students were extremely critical of each other's campaigns. The next session was on idea development for the student projects. This time the facilitators avoided using direct examples as they tend to occupy the imagination and thinking of students during the workshop and most of the time the projects are influenced by these examples. Though most of the students understood the objective, none of them were able to translate into ideas their own experiences; it was also difficult for them to differentiate between social work and the idea of change that the facilitators were talking about. The facilitators therefore had to spend some amount of time discussing this with the students.

Post-lunch, the sessions began with a facilitator's presentation on campaign building, with some examples from real campaigns like the Endosulfan issue in Kerala and local examples such as a citizens campaign opposing a proposed thermal power project in Chamrapura near Mysore. This was followed by

a technology session, which was done group wise due to limited number computers with internet connectivity. However this session went well as there was a lot of curiosity among students to learn technology. Here students were introduced to email and Facebook. Meanwhile the other group continued their discussions on the project, with the help of the facilitator. The second day ended with some brief discussion about the nature of projects, proposals, and kind of support that will be provided to students.

Day 3 started with some confusion among students about projects as most still felt that they face no major issues on the campus and therefore did not want anything be changed. Facilitators needed to sit again with each group and make them talk as team co-ordination was also lacking in both the groups. After this session with the facilitators, they started brainstorming on ideas and before lunch, both the groups came up with some project ideas to work with.

Group 1 wanted to work with the idea of a book-club, to help students who do not have access to adequate academic and other resources. The book club would house mainly academic resources as well as other literature, magazines and journals. The club would also function as a space for discussions, and host reading sessions, lectures and talks. Group 2 came up with the idea of using a sports/cultural club to speak about issues of discrimination. They felt that many students, while extremely talented in some sport or other extra-curricular activity, did not have the space or access to resources that would help them hone their skills. In many cases they would be discriminated against because of their financial background. They therefore felt that a cultural/sports club would provide a space for such students to showcase their talent. The next two sessions were spent on refining these ideas and preparing for the final presentations. Students then worked on their tentative proposals as well. These they presented to their teacher and the Pathways students from the previous year, who gave their feedback on the proposed projects. These proposals will be revised and submitted for approval and funding.

Dr. A.V Baliga College of Arts and Science, Kumta (Sept 29 – Oct 1, 2011)

This was one of the most challenging workshops of the nine conducted so far, apart from Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. A primary factor is the location, given that Kumta is a small town, so the students do not have much exposure or access to a lot a lot of things, whether technology, language or diverse cultural influences or spaces, unlike the more urban colleges in the programme. This presented a lot of challenges to the facilitators.

Day 1 started with the introduction and the ice-breaker session. There were a total of 24 students; all chosen by a very meticulous procedure of selection keeping in mind the state reservation categories. However, a point to note was that even though the college had made an effort to ensure a good caste, class and gender representation, it turned out that most students belonged to the same class, and so were from the same discipline. Most of the participants came from nearby villages, and largely belonged to the local fishing community, or were children of agricultural labourers. Language was a key concern, as most students, in spite of understanding English adequately well, were not fluent and so chose to speak only in Kannada. Translation therefore became very important. It was also noticeable that students were extremely soft-spoken and inhibited to some extent, so some amount of effort was required to encourage them to speak in the initial sessions. The same model of storytelling was used similar to the other workshops but with some modifications given the nature of the group. This time students were free to tell the story they wanted, instead of following cues. The facilitators provided a few examples, and students were divided into six teams and given time to discuss and share stories. This started a discussion and helped students to know more about each other which was the first step towards team building. The stories were then shared with the larger group. The second session was on hopes and expectations,

which was conducted to give more clarity about the agenda of the workshop. Again, most of them were keen on personality development and technology, as well as employment related topics like communication skills, fluency in English, interview skills, and training for specific jobs. Presentations were followed by a discussion where facilitators told them about the design and ambit of the workshop, and what they will be doing over the next three days. Students were then introduced to email. This session took a longer time than expected, due to the unavailability of the computers with internet connectivity and also as most of them were completely unfamiliar with email, or indeed basic internet applications such as Google search. Some students had difficulty with the email interface and typing as well; so they had to be tutored individually.

The post–lunch session began with the students being shown videos based on college and city life. Students were then divided into three teams asked to discuss their ideas of the changes which they felt are required in the college and the city. This session seemed to be particularly difficult for the students, as they were not able to identify any social issues to address on the campus or in the city, other than ones related to infrastructure or administration. Most conversations revolved around bad public transport, need for better traffic management and safety, better public hygiene and waste disposal and other such civic issues. Students also worked at their own pace, and not until the next day did they really warm up to the ideas of change being put forth by the facilitators. Their presentations for this session were also as a result shifted to the next day, to give them more time for discussion.

Day 2 began with the presentations, where the three teams presented their ideas of change on campus and in the city. These were not very different from the discussions on the previous day, but it did generate a good discussion which helped the more passive students to begin talking as well. The facilitators then moved on to the campaign building session, where student were shown videos of popular campaigns, and local examples were also discussed. The students were then given an issue - that of the fishing community which is facing a loss of livelihood due to illegal fishing by private trawlers, and asked to think of ways to address this problem through a campaign. Students were again divided into groups for discussion. Here again the students seemed to face some difficulty in putting their ideas together, mainly because the idea of a campaign was very new to them, and they seemed daunted by its prospects. The scale of the changes being envisaged also seemed to intimidate them to some extent. The facilitators therefore had to sit in the discussions with the students and help them out. The workshop progressed a little slowly at this point; the students really took some time to get used the idea of change that the facilitators spoke about. Given that most students were from similar class backgrounds, like in Mysore, here too the students did not seem to face any pressing issues that they wanted to address. All the issues and changes they wanted to bring about were therefore external, and not necessarily emanating from personal experiences. Also, another point to note was that the students, while curious to learn about various aspects of campaigning, and the technology components like E-mail and Facebook, did not see the relevance of these things to their own lives. This could be due to their lack of exposure to technology or any social media, as well as any strong social activism, given the location of the town.

The post-lunch session began with the campaign presentations which was followed by a discussion on larger issues connected to rural livelihood, environment and conservation. At this point the students really opened up, and came up with some good feedback on each other's presentations. The last session of the day was introduction to Facebook. As almost all students were unaware of Facebook and its uses, this session took a long time as well, and went on till the end of the day.

Day 3 was mostly devoted to developing ideas for the projects that students would undertake over the next six to eight months. Here again the facilitators had to work with the students intensively as the ideas of a project, proposals and so on were again completely new to them. After the discussions however, the students managed to come up with ideas that they could work on. The first group wanted to work on documenting the life and practices of a native tribe named the 'Haalakki'. Apart from speaking to people from this tribe, the students would also do some ethnographic and archival work to document the practices of this tribe, and the changes that they have seen in the last decade or so. The second group wanted to work on the town of Kumta itself, to look at its rich cultural past, and document the changes that the town has seen in the last two decades or so. This would again involve some amount of archival and other ethnographic work. In term of outputs, both groups would look to produce a collection of

narratives and/or photographs around these topics by the end of the project. These ideas were then presented to the faculty members and Pathways students from the previous year by the students at the end of the day. The senior students were especially helpful and offered to mentor and help the students in their activities this year. In fact one of the senior students was a Haalakki girl, and she offered to help the students with their project. Also, given the strong theatre tradition of the college, the possibility of developing a play on these topics was discussed, which again the senior students offered to help out with. The students shall now work on consolidating their ideas further, and will submit revised proposals within a month for approval and funding.

Observations/Points to Note

1. Given the short duration of the workshop and the fact that these are first year students, it may not be advisable to introduce the theme of the workshop as social justice or diversity directly; the complexity of these terms is daunting for the students and may prevent their full engagement in the activities. Couching these ideas in the language of social action and change, introducing first the ideas of difference, discrimination and then ideas of belonging, integration and so on would be more favourable. This was approach was adopted by the facilitators for the last few workshops, and found to be suitable.

2. The technology component of the workshop was a challenge in several places, because the students are at different levels in terms of their knowledge of the internet and in some cases even basic computer usage. Both knowledge and access is varied in all colleges. As a result some of the students need to be individually tutored to help them complete some of the activities which also hampers the pace of the workshop. It would therefore be useful if the technological component is either reduced to a minimum, or if a part of the workshop or some time outside of it is devoted exclusively to this before the workshop begins so that students can be coached in the basics.

3. The online community-building will again depend on the level of interest shown by the students and their engagement with the tools introduced to them. In some places, like in Kumta, even websites like Facebook are not very popular. Therefore a sustained engagement with such social media would depend on the relevance they have for the students themselves. There is a need for some incentive to encourage this kind of sustained engagement, which ideally should not be restricted just to the student projects. Also, as far as possible the online interaction would have be in the local languages as well and not restricted to English.

4. The method of eliciting project ideas from students themselves is a favourable one; there have been several learnings from the workshops in terms of the students' awareness and understanding about issues etc. However, the concept of 'projects' itself is very new to most of them, so one would have to rely on the faculty mentors and the senior students for their feasibility and effective implementation. There also needs to be a sustained engagement with the institutions from our end through the local facilitators as well to see the projects through the proposal to the implementation stage.