from ideas to transformative change

youth and social innovation

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A report on the

INDIA YOUTH FUND

YOUNG SOCIAL INNOVATORS CONCLAVE

An initiative of **UN⊕HABITAT** | Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation

The Young Social Innovator's Conclave is an important first step for the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation. Youth involvement in Social Innovation is an emerging area of intervention in the development space and the Conclave was an opportunity to harness the same. The report brings out the versatility and dynamism of youth engagement as experienced in the conclave.

With nearly half of the world population under the age of 25 years and almost 85% living in low income countries, it's imperative that they shape the development discourse. However, youth face a range of challenges which deter them from participating to their fullest. Education, Healthcare and even Social development are seriously compromised for youth. Only 40% of our adolescents are in school. There is no parity even within that small number and the gap gets glaringly larger with gender, economic status and in rural settings. These high drop-out rates lead to poor education outcomes, and a large population with no employable skills. Health indicators in the age of 15-24 years show that 56% of women and 25% of men are anemic. Even socially, today, 19% of women aged 15-17 are already married. More than one in three married female youth (37%) have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional violence by their husband. Large proportions of our youth—especially young women— still lack employability skills, job training and employment opportunities. It is our choice as a nation if we want our youth to be society's problems, or become part of the solution by being truly productive, important asset for the economic, political, and social development of our communities.

At the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation, we recognize the important role that the youth play in shaping the future of our nation. The question is how the power of our youth can be harnessed to become effective change agents and catalysts for tomorrow's India. We believe that the solution lies in valuing our youth, by respecting their rights and recognizing their contributions.

Evidence shows that youth involvement in the design and administration of programs and policies increases effectiveness and leads to success where programs designed by adults for youth have failed. Young women and men have got the creativity, the potential and the capacity to make change happen – for themselves, for their societies, and for the rest of the world, they drive social innovation and change, participate fully in the development of their societies, eradicate poverty and inequality, and foster a culture of peace. Social innovation is emerging to foster cross-sectoral collaborations, community entrepreneurship, and civil society partnerships as the seeds of change. New methods are evolving of engaging people in the development of innovations designed to serve people and the planet. Innovation aims to use the power of market institutions to scale up. Even social services like eye care, sanitation, lighting, and water purification have been converted into sustainable social enterprises.

We, at the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation, thought it apt to bring together the power of youth with the power of social innovation to create an opportunity to learn, share and collaborate to bring about youth led social change. We believe that India has the potential to move steadfastly in the growth path without compromising on the quality of life of its key stakeholders- the youth. We want to play the role of that catalyst for change which focuses on developing the next generation leaders who can solve the India's most challenging problems in areas such as education, the environment, poverty, healthcare, and social justice.

The projects and ideas presented in this publication are just some of the exciting social innovations currently happening in India. The conclave had innovators from diverse backgrounds and professions, who were united in their quest of innovative ways to tackle some of our most pressing social challenges. India has a huge amount of talent, creativity and entrepreneurship. The report aims to document the potential for social innovation and provide a critical reflection on these emerging ideas and practices.

I hope that you find report thought-provoking and inspiring.

Padmini Somani
Director
Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation

Throughout modern history, urbanization has been a major driver of development and poverty reduction. However, there is a growing consensus that the form and functionality of cities and towns have to change as societies and their demography change. Globally, more people live in urban than in rural areas, with 54 per cent of the world's population residing there in 2014. By 2050, 66 per cent of the world's population is projected to be urban. Parallel to the movement towards urbanization is the increase in the number of youth globally where, in absolute numbers, there are more people under the age of 25 today than ever, totaling nearly 3 billion or half of the total global population. These youth live, by and large, in cities and towns; the cities of the developing world account for over 90% of the world's urban growth and youth account for a large percentage of those inhabitants. It is estimated that as many as 60% of all urban dwellers will be under the age of 18 by 2030. In India we see the same trends as shown in the State of the Urban Youth India report UN-Habitat published together with IRIS Knowledge Foundation in 2013.

These two trends combined with technology advances, globalization and lack of attention to youth centered development have among other context specific factors contributed to an increased level of youth unrest, spanning from the Middle East and North Africa, to Latin-America and Europe. The increased presence of youth demonstrating in the streets and public squares can be regarded as manifestations of the multilayered challenges facing youth in urban settings, including lack of inclusion in governance, meager economic prospects, the battle for access to public space and land, and inadequate security and safety. To change the future we need to focus more on youth participation in processes where sustainable urbanization is discussed and decided upon. Issues such as connectivity, density, public space utilization and planning are all topics where youth involvement from the very beginning to implementation will create more ownership and sustainable urbanization. These are important topics in the upcoming Habitat III process towards 2016.

At the policy level, the past decade has witnessed a change of approach to the issue of youth, locally, nationally and internationally. The understanding has moved from regarding youth as a vulnerable client group to one in which youth are valued as an asset and a resource that have the commensurate right to participate and be meaningfully engaged in decision-making and development. The current approach considers the value of youth's contributions not solely as an investment in future adulthood, but rather as well as a means to improved living standards and quality of life for youth and their communities, through ensuring youth voices are heard in economic and policy development and decision making at all levels. This is something we saw clearly in the first Conclave in Mumbai.

Youth have the right to be included in all areas that affect their life. It is important to encourage the actors in the international development community to stop regarding youth as a problem, and start looking at youth as strategic partners for solving many of the economic, environmental, political and social challenges that the world faces today. UN-Habitat is a proud partner of Narotam Sehksaria Foundation in the India Youth Fund that works towards this goal in India. Democratic youth organizations want to take responsibility and be part of the solution to the challenges facing our common future. Our wish is that this report from the India Youth Conclave can inspire civil society, countries and the UN and multilateral agencies to integrate these principles in their work in India and in the region.

The principles laid out in this report should be the subject for fierce discussion and not only acceptance. We want to see more engagement, more participation and more inclusion of youth organizations in every political process in India that impact the situation of young people today and tomorrow. We invite all of you to give input and discuss the content in this report. The support given by the UN-Secretary General's Envoy on Youth, Mr. Ahmed Alhendawi, speaks volumes of the direction that India is taking to tackle the needs of the growing population of young people.

The great success of this conference is owed to the numerous partners that contributed their time and resources to this event. A debt of gratitude goes to the host of the conference, Sir J.J. College of Architecture, which is one of the leading architecture institutes in India, and most importantly to NSF for taking the lead on this important event and ensuring its success. We look forward to the next Young Social Innovators Conclave, which will no doubt build on this year's success and the impact will be even more resounding.

Dr. Oyebanji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka
Senior Director and Chief Advisor to the Executive Director
UN Habitat

contents

there is no doubt that

what young people strive *for*

is the chance

of a decent and productive *job*

from which to build a better future...

take away that hope

and you are left

with a disillusioned *youth*

trapped in a cycle

of working poverty

representing a

vast waste *of economic* potential...

ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth

introduction

Estimates paint a picture of a world that is increasingly urbane and youthful. By 2030, it is suggested that over a third of the world's population will consist of young people living in cities. Nearly 90% of these are expected to be residents of the Global South. Leading the pack is India, where the urban youth currently constitutes 20% of the total population, and a staggering 47% of the total urban population. Increased migration flows, led by young people looking for better economic opportunities in cities, are further quickening the pace of what some describe as a demographic explosion.

In a context of rapid urbanisation, pervasive globalization and resurgent trade, one could interpret this explosion as a source of limitless opportunity, and co-align skilled populations with expanding economies. This, however, is not the case. India's (or for that matter, the world's) cities have been struggling to adequately absorb the influx of job-seeking young men and women. Denied opportunities, youth find themselves invariably pushed towards informal settlements and unregulated livelihoods, often at the cost of access to even the most basic human rights. Urban youth consequently face a number of challenges – from exclusion and marginalisation, to increased vulnerability to climate change.

Demonstrated through the rise of events like the Arab Spring, their many adversities have increasingly propelled urban youth to the forefront of socio-political conflict, dispelling long-held myths about their disinterest in politics and development. Cairo's Tahrir Square, Istanbul's Gezi Park, Hong Kong's Causeway Bay, Sao Paulo's Paulista Avenue and Delhi's Ramlila Maidan emerged as potent public spaces where urban youth have collected in large numbers to voice their demands for positive change and transformative social action in the policy environment that surrounds them.

While divergent in their specifics, such youth-led agitations share many common themes and are tied by a shared disillusionment with institutions and authorities. It cannot be denied that the urban youth face a degree of political alienation as youth-oriented policies remain, at best, tokenistic. Globally, most socio-cultural contexts and policy environments continue to view the urban youth as beneficiaries instead of change-makers themselves, thus blocking youth's access to actual decision making and participation in governance. Society and institutions, thus, fail to deliver in a manner that is both effective and efficient.

Herein, livelihoods emerge as an important area of concern. Youth currently constitutes a fourth of the formal workforce, but account for over half of unemployment figures. Inability to find gainful employment invariably forces the rise of informal and illicit trades, apart from creating a sense of despondency and social exclusion. Intrinsically linked with access to a livelihood is access to pertinent education. A global push towards increased literacy continues to co-exist with increasing unemployment, highlighting the mismatch between knowledge imparted and market skills required.

Economically disadvantaged urban youth typically claim space in informal settlements and slums, in turn facing a host of habitat related challenges. Foremost among these is the lack of efficient planning practices, which continue to compound the settlements' access to basic civic utilities and remain vague on their conflict with rising land values and urban development. In many cities, such settlements invariably find themselves at the frontline of vulnerability and are the first to be affected by environmental disasters and climate change risks. Further, these settlements' access to quality healthcare and hygienic living conditions remains extremely limited. The pervasive exclusion also extends into the realm of sports, arts and culture, where the disadvantaged youth find little or no place at present.

Intensifying the seriousness of all the issues talked of above is the nature of gender imbalances and biases. Patriarchy and dominant socio-cultural schools of thought have traditionally disadvantaged women in many important spheres of life. Despite rapid societal changes, young women continue to face bigger hurdles than their male counterparts in accessing education, jobs, decision making or even sanitary living conditions.

Urban youth and social innovation

This social, cultural and economic context, though worrying, has also proved to be fertile ground for an ever increasing number of social innovations, often led by urban youth who take it on themselves to find a way out of the many adversities they face.

Through the medium of these innovations, urban youth have been able to amalgamate varied ideas and leverage available resources to craft novel strategies that initiate a process of positive change and transformation, both within and beyond their communities. The typical life cycle of a social innovation starts with voluntary action and progresses through a phase of experimentation. Once a degree of sustainability is achieved, social innovations tend to scale-up across horizontal networks and vertical hierarchies, and eventually feed institutional and systemic changes.

Theoretical discussions on social innovations remain relatively recent, but practical applications have a long and rich history. In India, Gandhi's pioneering experiments with setting up local craft guilds in an effort to create alternative, sustainable and non-exploitative livelihoods have come a long way and grown into pan-Indian organisations with thousands of members and ample state and institutional support.

The years since have seen an even greater profusion of social innovations, now cutting across a larger number of sectoral boundaries, particularly in the urban arena. They are increasingly finding place in a changing institutional climate, which is working towards creating an attractive and supportive environment for changemakers by increasing budgetary allocations and formulating new funding mechanisms, policy environments and regulatory frameworks. There thus exists an ever expanding room for manoeuvre through which social innovations can actually effect sustainable development that not only benefits the urban youth, but makes them part of the change.

The Young Social Innovators Conclave

INDIA YOUTH FUND
YOUNG SOCIAL INNOVATORS CONCLAVE
An initiative of UN⊕HABITAT | Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation

The plethora of social innovations among the urban youth of India finds common ground at the Young Social Innovators Conclave. India's largest innovation exchange, the conclave brings together young innovators, technologists, academicians and field exports to share and disseminate the experiences and challenges they have faced in the sphere of urban development. The endeavour has two main objectives – to create a platform for young innovators to brainstorm and leverage resources that create social value and measure social impact; and to provide an opportunity for youth to learn problem solving and equip themselves to be change-makers of the future, to build teams and networks of like-minded individuals working across institutions and disciplines.

The first edition of the conclave was held at the historic University of Mumbai's Sir JJ College of Architecture on the 10th and 11th of October, 2014, and was attended by nearly 60 experts and field leaders, 50 social innovators and an audience of nearly 300 people. Through a series of interactive panel discussions, the conclave explored varied themes of social innovation in nine fields - gender equality and empowerment, health, livelihoods, urban planning, governance, environment and climate change, art and culture, education, and sports.

Each discussion showcased the work of promising young social innovators, driving positive social change among people and communities in need, through approaches such as community-led advocacy and capacity building, entrepreneurial and market-based skill development, and technology driven interventions. Their innovations were reviewed by a panel of eminent and experienced subject experts, bringing unique perspectives rooted in years of academic and practical application. The interactive format supported lively and engaging discussions, and worked towards maximizing the takeaway for all attendees.

The panel discussions were anchored by special innaugural and closing plenaries, and were accompanied by a series of intensive and hands-on workshops on emergent social innovation trends such as crowd-funding and social media technology, conducted by field leaders. UN-Habitat also hosted a special session to discuss a post-2015 development agenda.

The conclave also presented informative exhibitions, installations and engaging cultural performances, all produced and designed by attendee social innovators.

The India Youth Fund

The Young Social Innovators Conclave is an extension of the India Youth Fund, an initiative jointly founded by the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation and UN-Habitat, and a part of the latter's Global Youth Fund. The fund aims to promote and assist deserving youth-led organisations working towards sustainable urban development by providing financial as well as pastoral support. The annual budget of the fund is up to Rs. 8,00,000 per grantee, in addition to expert-led training in subjects such as project and financial management.

The grantees of the fund contribute towards creating opportunities for the urban youth in key focus areas. Previous grantees have implemented projects as diverse as rooftop farming in urban slums and mainstreaming of marginalized transgender communities, in cities as far-flung as Dimapur, Nagaland.

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in 2050

60%

of all urban dwellers

will be under the age of 18.

are we prepared

to give them

the cities

and the lives

they expect

from us?

Dr. Oyebanji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka

The Young Social Innovators Conclave opened with a special plenary session, hosted by Mr. Anshul Tewari, Founder and Editor-in-Chief at Youth Ki Awaaz. The session had as speakers Ms. Padmini Somani, Director of Salaam Bombay Foundation and Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation; and Mr. Rajiv Mishra, Principal of University of Mumbai's Sir JJ College of Architecture; Mr. Ujjwal Uke, Principal Secretary of the Women and Child Development Department in the Government of Maharashtra; Padmashri Dr. Pramod Kale, co-founder of India's space programme and Director of ICIT at University of Pune's VLSI Design & Research Centre; and Dr. Oyebanji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, Senior Director and Chief Advisor to the Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

In his opening address, Mr. Mishra invited all attendees, innovators and panellists to discuss ideas, and asserted the importance of innovation and its seminal quality within broader development discourse. Ms. Somani furthered Mr. Mishra's thoughts and argued for greater investment and multi-sectoral attention on youth development, in order to comprehensively tap and encourage the limitless potential for creativity and social mobility inherent among urban youth. Such focus, Ms. Somani argued, was essential considering the pressing challenges India's urban youth continue to face on a daily basis, such as the lack of proper access to education and healthcare.

Mr Uke, Dr. Kale and Dr. Oyebanji all developed on the context set by Mr. Mishra and Ms. Somani, and argued that social innovation was integral to the process of development. They sought to delineate innovation, invention and 'jugaad', and argued that an innovation, unlike the others, was a sustainable strategy. Sustainable innovations, they furthered, were collaborative by nature, working with support from people-led and institution-led quarters alike. In this regard, Mr. Uke, Dr. Kale and Dr. Oyebanji extended their support for attending innovators and invited them to co-formulate strategies with which to achieve lasting positive social change.

Mr. Uke broadened the context of the conclave to include the issue of rapid urbanization, and hoped that social innovations would in some way help negate crises surrounding housing and civic entitlements while redistributing greater opportunities for rural youth. Dr. Kale expanded the scope of sustainable and collaborative innovations by urging innovators to underpin their strategies with technological tools such as social media and online exchange platforms. He also asserted the need inclusivity and accessibility in innovation and development.

Dr. Oyebanji linked the theme of the conclave to the United Nation's targets for urban development and urged all attendees to work towards ensuring adequate representation of youth in all stages of change and development. A closing statement was delivered in a special video message from Mr. Ahmed Alhendawi, the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth. Mr. Alhendawi urged everyone to duly consider the wealth of opportunity that India's large and youthful population represents. He called for substantive and collaborative investment in innovation, and subsequently development and closed by extending the support of United Nations for endeavours towards positive social change.

India Youth Fund Awards

The highlight of the Innaugural Programme was the India Youth Fund Awards ceremony, felicitating organisations and their outlined project proposals selected as grantees for the 2014-15 cycle of the India Youth Fund programme. The awards were given by the members of the plenary panel to the respective project coordinators. These organisations, and their winning project proposals, were:

- Fresh and Local, an organisation based in Goa. Fresh and Local proposes to implement a unique 'nomadic garden', centred on a horticultural space growing from the back of a modified pick-up truck. The nomadic garden, accompanied with educational materials and skill-building workshops will visit slum communities in Mumbai where access to open, green space and knowledge of farming and horticulture are severely limited. The entire project is designed to interest and involve urban youth, and motivate them to explore alternative livelihood options in the sphere of urban agriculture.

- Integrated People's Service Society, an organisation based in Kallapuram, Tamil Nadu. The Society will be working towards the successful implementation of a community-level health intervention that aims to lower levels of nutritional anaemia among young girls, particularly those residing in informal settlements. The intervention aims to not only reduce the alarmingly high incidence of the disease, but also to inculcate a culture of healthy living by reaching out to resident communities through tools such as focussed discussions, awareness campaigns and skill-building workshops.

- People for Parity, an organisation based in Gurgaon, Haryana. People for Parity will be working towards realizing 'Pratiti', a multi-faceted programme that aims to address gender-based violence. Pratiti's components include outreach and sensitization efforts that will work with youth of both genders and respond to seminal issues that lead to gender-based violence; and the institutionalised implementation of 'Pukar', a responsive mobile technology that will allow girls in distress to reach out to law and order forces.

- Science for Society, an organisation based in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Science for Society will be implementing the 'CareMother' programme and aim to prevent avoidable deaths due to complicated pregnancies among women living in informal settlements in Mumbai. The programme is centred on the innovative CareMother technological kit which will be provided, with training, to community-based healthcare workers. The kit involves field-based and online systems through which pregnant women can be enumerated and their health status be regularly monitoired by established doctors in large hospitals.

- Sun Shine Health and Social Welfare Society, an organisation based in Delhi. They will be working towards realizing a medical and health awareness programme targeted at youth living in informal communities in Delhi. By reconfiguring complex medical information into easy-to-understand and informative formats such as street plays, the organisation hopes to increase awareness about good health practices. The programme will also include associated activities such as health camps and counselling.

innovations
must be
sustainaible,
collaborative
and
participatory

Padmashri Dr. Pramod Kale

7

Cultural norms and preferences have always dictated differential roles and responsibilities for men, women, boys and girls. Over time, many such differences have evolved into deep-rooted gender imbalances that severely disadvantage and discriminate against women and girls, in nearly all spheres of life. Gender inequity, thus, has emerged as one of the most significant obstacles to human development. The need of the hour, thus, is to not only promote gender equality, but also empowerment of women and girls, to enable them to be better included in processes of social and economic development, while handing them more autonomy.

The issue of gender equality and empowerment was discussed in great detail at a dedicated panel chaired by Dr. Nayreen Daruwalla, Program Director at the Society for Nutrition, Education, and Health Action, and attended by Dr. Manisha Gupte, the Founder and Trustee of Mahila Sarvageen Utkarsh Mandal (MASUM); Dr. Shilpa Phadke, Sociologist from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences; Dr. Chayanika Shah, Researcher and Activist at LABIA; Ms. Sumithra Prasad, Social Activist; and Ms. Jasmeen Patheja, the Founder of Blank Noise.

Dr. Daruwalla began the discussion by recalling the eight Millenium Development Goals, one of which is greater gender equality and women's empowerment. Identifying this inclusion as a sign of historical persistence, Dr. Daruwalla argued that women continue to be disadvantaged and seen societally as liabilities. She illustrated this stand through the use of several indices, such as the disparity between employment for males and females, the difference between the average ages for marriage among boys and girls, and the fact that a third of all women feel physically constrained upon leaving their homes. She called for a 'equality' that would allow women the same treatment and opportunities, such as decision making, employment and occupation, and a violence-free life. This, she believed, was integral to an empowerment process wherein women would be able to live their own lives and make their own decisions. To achieve equality and empowerment, Dr. Daruwalla believed, social innovation was absolutely essential.

In this context, she invited several innovators to showcase their unique and sensitive approaches to many varied nuances of gender inequity in India. These included:

• *Young Urban Women Programme, aimed at recognizing, redistributing and reducing the amount of unpaid care work done by young urban women, thereby increasing time and space for education and empowerment.*

• *Helping Faceless, a cloud-based mobile app that uses face recognition and analytics technologies in a format compatible with national databases on missing children, to help combat child trafficking.*

• *Youth for Social Change, a youth-led platform that advocates women's rights to public spaces through the medium of sport, currently scaling up previous successes in enabling slum-dwelling girls to access playing fields.*

- *Healthera, aimed at improving women's health in slums and informal settlements by equipping self-help groups with low-cost machines that manufacture quality sanitary napkins.*

- *Young Slum Women Champions, a programme that supports the formation of savings groups among women in slums and informal communities, thereby empowering them with soft skills and facilitating greater community cohesion.*

- *Pratiti, a project for which the People for Parity foundation was selected as one of the grantees for the India Youth Fund. Using a three-pronged advocacy approach that involved sensitization, training and mobile-based technology, Pratiti is aimed at tackling gender based violence, initially in Gurgaon, Haryana.*

After hearing the innovators, Dr. Daruwalla invited the panellists to respond with their comments and observations. The first, Dr. Manisha Gupte, expressed a sense of ambiguity towards use of technology in addressing gender issues, and sought to explain her views by placing the presented innovations in a broader socio-political context. Dr. Gupte asserted that technology-driven innovations currently fail to ensure that it can be accessed in fair and equitable manner by all people, particularly the marginalised and those who have limited economic capacities. Further, she asked innovators to carefully consider the kind of opportunities, both good and bad, their proposed innovations were creating for various actor groups in society. Lastly, she felt that the focus of the innovations was somewhat misplaced as they stressed more on protection of individual women rather than women's rights. She offered that innovations should work on addressing deeper societal questions, in addition to the short term solutions they already offered.

Dr. Shilpa Phadke also spoke on the conflict between protection of women and protection of rights and placed the same in a context of social conflicts and hostilities. She offered that debates generated after episodes of gender-based violence maintained only semblance of consensus, and were actually underpinned by a multitude of disparate and sometimes regressive views. She argued that while public and media discourse unequivocally demanded physical safety for women, it did so in a broader framework of arguments that questioned the mobility of women and sought to project a 'benevolent' patriarchal society that gave such privileges to women in the first place. Further, debates remained partial to upper and middle class women, who enjoyed basic media right such as right to confidentiality, unlike poor and marginalized women. She believed that such views stemmed from a dominant societal undercurrent which was unable to concede decision making abilities to women, or view their choices as competent ones. Consequently, women are made to face undue restrictions under the broader argument of 'safety'.

Dr. Chayanika Shah asked the innovators to consider their innovations from the perspective of women users in all their diversity, and assess what the actual reach of their innovations was on parameters such as class and ethnicity. Further, she asked innovators to understand how their innovations affect societal notions on gender roles – whether they confirm with publicly expressed opinions, or actually attempt to address deep-running questions. She placed such views in everyday contexts, such as the male-held perception that women are caregivers and non-working, that early marriages are acceptable, and that gender based violence at home is not an offence. Such an understanding, she maintained, was necessary to deliver a truly effective innovation.

Ms. Sumithra Prasad drew the panel's attention to the mindsets that underpin regressive attitudes towards gender issues, and sustain debates that pin 'good' women against 'bad' women. Like Dr. Shah, Ms. Prasad maintained that social innovations needed to address underlying questions and not just provide symptomatic responses.

Ms. Jasmeen Patheja responded by offering that mindsets and innovations alike were creating a culture of panic, fear and defence, mainstreaming ideas such as self-defence classes, pink campaigns and pepper spray guns. Like her fellow panellists, she too called for a more holistic understanding of gender roles and asked innovators to work towards promoting change and not panic. To illustrate her point, Ms. Patheja presented a short vide on the Action Heroes Workshop, an immersive exercise held in a Bangalore neighbourhood which sought to promote the notion of public spaces being co-owned across gender, thus positioning gender equality as a collective, and not just a feminist-led objective. In conclusion, Ms. Patheja called for 'unlearning' of inherently held biases that allow gender issues to persist.

In her closing comments, Dr. Daruwalla lauded the innovators for their efforts, and asked them to consider the the varied nuances of their innovations in a holistic manner.

should we protect our **women?** *or should we protect their* **rights?**

Dr. Shilpa Phadke

With ever increasing levels of pollution, communities across the world are bearing the brunt of environmental damage and climate change. The last few decades alone have seen an unprecedented rise in industrial pollution, heightened rates of freshwater loss, and increased temperatures. The effects are even more magnified, and Human involvement in sustaining environmental damage and climate change, thus, is increasingly apparent, and needs to be addressed immediately. While such views have been mainstreamed in socio-political discourse, they remain, as yet, unable to spawn lasting positive changes. Pollution indices continue to scale newer heights, putting at risk entire communities and societies, particularly those that were poor and marginalised.

These broad themes were discussed during a panel chaired by Ms. Surekha Ghogale, CEO of Aga Khan Planning and Building Services, India; and attended by Dr. Leo Saldanha, an environmental activist and coordinator of the Environment Support Group; Mr. Kuldeep Dantewadia, co-founder of Reap Benefit, a social enterprise; and Dr. Sudhakar Yedla, Professor at the Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research.

Ms. Ghogale began the panel discussion by asking attendees to consider how innovations that address environmental concerns can transcend from being solely ecological in their footprint, to more holistic interventions that lead to betterment of societies. She called on them to demonstrate how youth can drive change that addresses not only the sources of environmental damage and climate change, but also the ones it impacts. She also asked panellists to assess innovations on their ability to negotiate with and inspire reconfiguration of policy frameworks and social mindsets. Ms. Ghogale then invited a selection of innovators to present their innovations for discussion and dissemination. These included:

- *DIRT Upcycle, an independently-led initiative which has developed a unique composter that recycles dry waste from residential societies into compost for plants; and a system of creative re-utilization of plastic waste as attractive public-space and home-based installations.*

- *Mobilio Organic, an intervention that promotes waste segregation at source, and compliments it with a recycler run on renewable energy that converts dry waste into usable compost.*

- *Hivette, a housing solution for informal settlements that utilizes low-cost and eco-friendly materials to craft a simple dwelling module that can be easily multiplied in scale and assembled with ease.*

- *The Nomadic Garden, a project for which Goa-based Fresh and Local was identified as a grantee of the 2014-15 cycle of the India Youth Fund. The Nomadic Garden consists of a green space growing at the back of a truck that can be easily driven into informal settlements. The garden is the centrepiece of ecologically-driven workshops that promote urban agriculture, thus delivering both, open green space and knowledge of environmental sensitivity to communities which previously had access to neither.*

Ms. Ghogale invited the panellists to react to the presentations, beginning with Dr. Saldanha, who appreciated the innovators' efforts and asked them to reflect on the political context that environmental issues are positioned in. Speaking from his own experiences in Bangalore, Dr. Saldanha offered that environmental impacts are class-differentiated, often impacting the poor and marginalized much more than the upper and middle classes. Thus, even nominally 'clean' and 'non-littering' households are invariably contributing to an ever-increasing waste management problem that adversely affects peri-urban communities with limited resources. He asserted that waste disposal needs to be considered as an individual and collective responsibility and cannot be transferred to less-advantaged communities as an issue for them to deal with independently.

Mr. Dantewadia responded by offering insights from his own experiences in establishing and running Reap Benefit, a social enterprise centred on delivering simple eco-friendly interventions such as water-free urinals. He offered that it was essential to work with communities and investing time in understanding their specific needs, desires and compulsions, in order to craft sustained innovations. He further stressed the need for establishing feedback loops through which communities would be able to not only adopt but better social innovations.

Dr. Yedla sought to position environmental challenges and innovations in the context of economic theory. An understanding of even basic environmental economics, he argued, was another essential ingredient for successful and sustainable social innovations. Further, such an understanding must be dynamic and cognizant of changing socio-political environments, particularly the dominant political economy of the day which invariably preferred some environmental concerns over the other. He thus called for evolving and non-static innovations that were aware of and responded to the macro-economic context they were crafted in.

In her closing remarks, Ms. Ghogale recapitulated the multitude of thoughts expressed during the panel's course, and identified an overarching need to expand the context within which environmental issues are nominally positioned. She suggested that innovators work towards expanding the horizons of their specific innovations to include political, societal and economic perspectives, in order to truly incorporate the element of sustainability.

Ms. Ghogale then invited the audience to field questions to innovators and panellists alike. The interactive session saw attending innovators exploring possibilities for collaboration, as well as sharing experiential knowledge on the applicability of the social innovations in real life contexts.

the environment is both:

an **individual**

and

a **collective**

responsibility...

Dr. Leo Saldanha

Livelihoods transcend the generic securing of basic necessities to include capabilities, assets and activities through which people make a living, and the various societal and economic distinctions that influence their choices. Also influential are the varied kinds of capital that people or communities possess, viz. natural capital, physical capital, financial capital, human capital and social capital. Social innovations would need to focus on the interplay between these various influences to help provide people expand their choices of livelihood strategies. Further, with rapid changes in the socio-economic context, it has become imperative for social innovations to straddle the voluntary sector while making inroads into state and market institutions. Many have thus taken a business-like approach to make livelihood promotion efforts more sustainable, giving rise to the 'social entrepreneurship' model. Finally, livelihood strategies, in keeping with their diverse range of influences, would need to be redistributive while being cognizant of the socio-cultural diversities that people face.

The livelihoods panel worked with this broad outlook to collectively discuss key contemporary themes and trends, and reflect on the nature of social development with respect to livelihoods. The panel was chaired by Prof. Mahesh Kamble, Assistant Professor at Tata Institute of Social Sciences; and attended by Dr. Sharit Bhowmik, Professor at Tata Institute of Social Sciences; Mr. P Pradeep, Partner and Executive Director at Aavishkar Venture Capital; Dr. Neelam Maheshwari, Director of Grants at Deshpande Foundation; and Ms. Pearl Tiwari, Vice President at Ambuja Cement Foundation.

Prof. Kamble introduced the panel by re-coursing Indian cultural history, wherein occupations where intrinsically linked with castes and social standing. He juxtaposed this notion of conformity with the idea of social innovation, which had the potential of motivating people to break away from regressive conventions and charting their own trajectories of growth. He then invited a selection of social innovators to showcase their work for the panel and audience's reflections. These innovators were:

- Serve Happiness, a non-profit organisation that is creating a web-based platform which connects potential or existing volunteers to NGOs, and helps them interact in real time through means such as motivation and inspiration trips. Serve Happiness also works actively with CSRs to build a strengthened ecosystem for the non-profit sector.

- Sankalp – Umang – Udaan, a project that works towards establishing self-help groups among youth and children in informal settlements, with the aim of equipping them with the financial and organisational capabilities to realize aspirations such as accessing primary education and sports facilities.

- The Mahir Foundation, an organisation that works with under-educated and underprivileged women and provides them with vocational training options and market linkages. They adopt a mobile and flexible model

of operations with low fixed costs, and retain emphasis on crafting vocational pathways that have real time market demand.

- *Thozhamai, a resource centre for agencies active in the sphere of human rights, particularly those that work with children, youth, women, the disabled, Dalits and other vulnerable sections of society. It provides support in the fields of advocacy and media advocacy, skill based trainings that adopt rights-based approaches, developing published and audio-visual resource materials, and research assistance.*

Dr. Kamble invited the panellists to reflect on the work that was presented, beginning with Dr. Bhowmik, who appreciated the efforts of all the innovators, and stressed on the need to explore newer territories to build development strategies on. He recollected a range of innovative examples, such as FabIndia and CheapestATM, both of which have successfully experimented with completely new market-based models of sustainability.

Mr. P Pradeep spoke from the point of view of his position within an organisation that invests in innovators, and helps turn them into entrepreneurs. He stressed the need for industry to both identify and work with traditions and the capabilities of people, as it was key to the scaling-up of any innovation, particularly one that works with the notion of livelihoods.

Dr. Maheshwari spoke from the point of view of her position in a non-profit organisation that actively works with livelihood strategies. Speaking from lengthy experience, she stressed that a social innovation also needs to be clear, and communicable in an easy-to-understand and concise manner, particularly to the beneficiaries. She asserted that clarity of thought was key to the firm grounding and subsequent sustainability of the innovation.

Ms. Tiwari began her feedback by drawing a comparison between white collar and blue collar jobs, emphasizing on the differential levels of respect that society accords both. She opined that social innovations must also incorporate strategies through which societal mainstreaming of different vocations can be better achieved. By convincing people that every vocation is important and deserves respect and dignity, a wider range of growth trajectories could be made available to people who need them the most.

Hereafter, Prof. Kamble offered his concluding thoughts by suggesting that social innovations would benefit by working with benchmarks against which the level of their positive impact on vulnerable sections of society could be better gauged. He asked the innovators to reflect on the key points mentioned by each of the panellists, and continue working towards strategies that were as comprehensive as they were innovative.

to scale up, livelihood strategies must identify and work with traditions and capabilities of people

Mr. P Pradeep

Despite rapid strides in medical technology and service delivery, widening economic gaps have made high quality healthcare out of reach for significant swathes of the country's population, particularly the poor and the disadvantaged. The situation is further aggravated by a public healthcare system that struggles with inadequate resources. As a result, susceptibility to even avoidable diseases remains extremely high. Simultaneously, a number of socially mandated practices continue to spawn their own sets of complicated health problems, such as poor sexual health due to early marriages and stigmatization of sex education, increased risk of disease due to poor hygiene practices, and widespread use of tobacco, even among children. Poor health standards continue to persist, consequently affecting the self-esteem, confidence and overall mental health of youth as well. Social innovators, thus, faced dual challenges of devising high quality health strategies, and remaining equitable in their accessibility to all sections of society.

The panel discussion on health worked with this premise, and featured Dr. Armida Fernandez, Founder Trustee of the Society for Nutrition, Education and Health Awareness, as panel chair. She was accompanied by Dr. Siddharth Agarwal, Executive Director at the Urban Health Resource Centre; Mr. Ravi Duggal, Country Coordinator at International Budget Partnership; and Dr. K Viswanath, Professor of Health Communication at Harvard School of Public Health.

Dr. Fernandez began the discussion by highlighting the gaps that exist in accessibility to healthcare, and stressed on the need for innovations to work towards eradicating the same. Referring to her own experiences in public hospitals, where personnel had devised innovative strategies to provide quality healthcare within their limited means, she asserted that common sense and intense motivation were key to any successful social innovation. Thereafter, she invited the panellists to reflect on the work of the innovators presenting at the conclave. The innovators were:

- *Medical Alert System and the Medical ID App*, two technology based innovations aimed at quickening response to emergency medical situations.

- *PostMed*, an indigenously designed ventilator and incubator kit which is low-cost, portable and can be posted by mail to any location. It aims to better primary diagnostic standards in rural areas and consequently reduce avoidable deaths.

- *Freemium Health*, an online health platform which allows the poor to compare between and access quality healthcare service providers, at lower rates.

- *iCall Psychosocial Helpline*, an innovation that addresses mental health by offering a free counselling service to those in emotional distress via phone and e-mail.

- *United Association for Public Health and Education*, an organisation that aims to lower the levels of oral cancer among people, by devising a training and capacity building program for healthcare personnel.

- *Digital Media to Stop Malnutrition, an innovation that relies on the use of new digital media formats to help spread awareness about malnutrition in the slums of Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh.*

- *Students Helping Others Understand Tobacco (SHOUT), an initiative of Salaam Bombay Foundation. It works with 14-25 year olds and intends to educate them about the dangers of tobacco usage, thereby motivating them to become agents of change within their respective social circles.*

- *Individual Medical Independence, an innovation that seeks to develop and incorporate existing infrastructural systems in order to provide a viable biomedical tool to individuals, thus reducing the layers of protocol and providing greater health information.*

- *Science for Society, an organisation that has developed CareMother, a comprehensive web-enabled kit for community health workers that contains a low-cost and mobile diagnostic tool for detecting, recording and following-up of high-risk pregnancies. This innovation has been identified as a Grantee for the 2014-15 cycle of the India Youth Fund.*

- *Sun Shine Health and Welfare Society, a Delhi based organisation that aims to increase levels of health awareness through innovative community outreach programs. They have been recognised as a Grantee for the 2014-15 cycle of the India Youth Fund.*

- *Integrated People's Service Society, an organisation from Tamil Nadu, that has designed a community-based project aimed at lowering the levels of nutritional anaemia among girls living in informal settlements. They have been recognised as a Grantee for the 2014-15 cycle of the India Youth Fund.*

Dr. Siddharth Agarwal, in his reflection, linked health issues being faced by the urban youth to the nature of urbanisation in the country. An overwhelming majority of the urban poor were possibly contributing heavily to the country's economy, but were forced to live in abysmal conditions, devoid of any public services or utilities. He offered that social innovations would benefit from incorporating socio-physical strategies such as spatial mapping, formation of women's committees, skill building, and greater interaction between different stakeholders. He argued that the policy framework had developed and could now accommodate greater room for manoeuvre, and concluded by urging innovators to turn words and concepts into concrete actions.

Mr. Duggal urged innovators to consider the positioning of health in their strategies. He argued that the innovators' focus seemed to be on offering health as a commodity, rather than a basic human right, and called on them to act on societal challenges and to work towards a model of healthcare that was equitable and offered universal access. Reflecting on the historical evolution of the universal access model, he observed that richer nations were able to maintain better

funded healthcare systems for populations that could, by and large, afford healthcare. Developing nations like India, conversely, neither had the resources to maintain such a model, nor a population that could afford to pay for quality healthcare. He offered that despite limited resources, the state could negotiate with the existing pool of resources and take innovative steps towards better healthcare access, such as compulsory public service for all medical graduates, efficient allocations, increased taxes on harmful products like tobacco and profit-driven enterprises, and introduction of universal insurance. He also drew attention the Thai model, which used a mixture of insurance and taxes to extend coverage to the entire population, and implemented the same by making public service mandatory for all medical practitioners. He believed that such strategies were appropriate for the Indian context, and were fruitful steps towards solving the health issues the nation faced.

Dr. Viswanath appreciated the efforts of the innovators, but felt that the strategies did not fully reflect the challenges of the day. He suggested that innovators retain clarity of both, the problem and problem-solving. He offered six basic strategies that could better inform healthcare innovations – participatory and community-based approaches; multi-sectoral collaborations that span the public, private and non-profit sectors at all levels of the socio-economic hierarchy; multi-scalar focus on the individual, the social group and the entire community; better translation of knowledge that could help inform public policies; and capacity building of all stakeholders.

Dr. Fernandez offered a concluding summary and reasserted the key points offered by all the panellists. She expressed appreciation for the efforts extended by the innovators and urged them to retain motivation that could help make their innovations much more impactful.

health is not a
commodity,
it is a
human right

Mr. Ravi Duggal

Years of statist planning and west-inspired urban development have, till date, failed to address human development deficiencies that ferment in the fabric of our cities. Rising informality, inadequate service delivery, socio-economic segregation and ecological imbalances are only a few of the worrying issues faced by Indian cities, while their growth continues unabated. Furthermore, economic resurgence and rapid globalization have brought Indian cities and their growth back into the limelight. As public discussion about the future of our cities grows, the time is ripe to re-imagine what urban planning can mean. There is now space for the inclusion of agendas and efforts that promote the notion of just, inclusive, safe and accessible cities, built with participatory and collaborative approaches.

With this premise, the conclave attempted to gather together social innovations and innovators who could collectively disseminate and contribute to the growing body of discourse that may soon influence Indian urbanism. The panel discussion on the theme was chaired by Mr. Pankaj Joshi, Executive Director at Urban Design Research Institute; and attended by Mr. Rohan Shivkumar, Deputy Director at Kamla Raheja Vidyanidhi Institute of Architecture and Environmental Studies; Dr. Ashwin Mahesh, Founder at Mapunity; and Mr. Aravind Unni, Architect at Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action.

Mr. Joshi began the discussion by giving a brief overview of the planning process in India and the significant issues it needed to address. Reflecting on his experiences, he offered that planning institutions and practitioners were unequipped, and even unmotivated, to fully comprehend urban phenomena such as growing informality and ecological imbalances, and were yet to come up with significantly successful strategies that addressed them. He traced this problem to pedagogy, which imbued planning with a sense of elitism and an unfortunate cultural neutrality that reduced people to statistics and did not take into account the differences in diversities and adversities they faced. He felt that the post-Industrial urban landscapes needed a planning process that was cognizant and accepting of notions such as accessibility, inclusivity and equity, and argued that growing awareness levels and advocacy campaigns had made the current context an ideal one for impactful discursive debates. Mr. Joshi then asked the panellists to reflect on both, the conceptual premise of the panel theme, and the work of the innovators showcased at the conclave. These innovators were:

- *Water Crisis at Kusumpur Pahari, a student led project that aimed to address issues pertaining to accessibility to water in a slum area of Delhi. By using community based enumeration exercises, and subsequent demand and supply analyses, the students were able to design and implement a water distribution system that minimized waste and increased access through the settlement.*

- *Aqueous Communes, an architect-led proposal that had articulated a dwelling format for the poor in the flood-prone areas of Northeastern Uttar Pradesh. These dwellings had been designed keeping in mind the socio-cultural practices of the would-be residents, along with responsiveness to the physical and spatial context.*

- *Urban Voids, an independently led research that documented the nature of a city's unutilized and 'leftover' spaces created by infrastructure development and urban expansion. The research was used to inform design proposals that were aimed at reclaiming such spaces for public usage.*

- *Urbanisation of Waste, another independent research on Bengaluru's waste management process and hierarchy. By analysing the observations of this research through relevant theoretical frameworks, both macro- and micro-scale interventions were designed to help make urban waste management more efficient.*

- *Housing for Urban Migrants, a hands-on and design-based solution that aims to provide affordable housing to slum dwellers in the most vulnerable communities, with the larger aim of regulating the process of slum-formation.*

In his feedback, Mr. Joshi impressed upon the innovators to focus the need to think about strategies pertaining to the scalability of the innovations, the cost-implications of innovations, and the innovation's comparative performance when viewed against existing systems and solutions. He also asked innovators to analyze their strategies in a reflexive manner and position their innovation in broader and more diverse contexts. He concluded by offering that such critical reflections were essential in realizing the conceptions behind the innovations.

Mr. Shivkumar remarked that while the academic and theoretical positioning of some of the innovations allowed them to explore unique ideas, they remained disconnected from ground realities. In this regard, he urged innovators to pay greater attention to means and methodologies through which their innovations could actually be realized, and also argued for more philosophical reflections, particularly on the notion of a 'better city'.

Dr. Mahesh encouraged the innovators to continue with their efforts, but also asked them to consider the lessons learnt not just from their own positioning, but multiple perspectives. This understanding, he argued, was essential in making their innovations better and more applicable to real-life contexts. He also urged the innovators to adopt an anticipative stance while designing their stances, to enable their innovations to be 'future-proof'. Finally, Dr. Mahesh recommended that innovations should be considered in broader contexts and networks, and asked the innovators to use this understanding to identify pathways for scalability and relationships-building.

Mr. Unni echoed the views of the other panellists, and added that innovators delineate between 'jugaad' or stop-gap arrangements and true innovations that were both sustainable and scalable. He also asked innovators to inform their work with process-based explanations and analytical statistics.

Thereafter, Mr. Joshi concluded the discussion by reviewing the varied thoughts expressed and offering further encouragement to the innovators.

planning
needs to be
anticipative,
not
reactive

Dr. Ashwin Mahesh
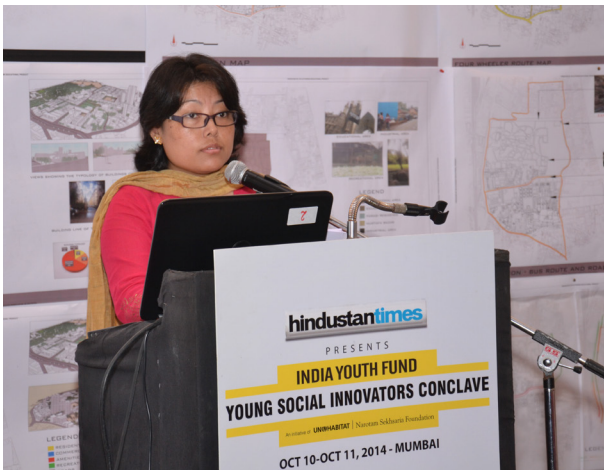
Education is widely acknowledged as a vital cog in the global developmental framework. In an education system as large as ours, the main challenge remains catering to a vast population with relatively limited resources. This challenge, however, coexists with some very fertile ground for innovation thanks to contextual conditions such as technological advances, increasingly discursive pedagogy, inclusive and participatory strategic actions, and economic growth. Promoting creativity and incentivizing innovations through our educational system, thus, seems to be the first step towards broadening and deepening the impact of innovations on our society and economy.

The panel discussion on 'Innovative Education' at the conclave was chaired by Dr. Nandini Manjrekar, Associate Professor and Chairperson – Centre for Education at Tata Institute of Social Sciences; and attended by Ms. Simantini Dhuru, Director at Avehi Abacus; Ms. Devika Chadha, Vice-President at Salaam Bombay Foundation; Dr. Amina Charania, Program Officer at Sir Dorabji Tata Trust; Ms. Reshma Agarwal, Education Specialist at UNICEF; and Ms. Jaya Abraham, Founder of Vision Rescue.

In her keynote address, Dr. Manjrekar warned of the increasing commodification of education. She asserted that education was inextricably linked to the tenets of democracy, sensitivity and progressiveness, and should be seen as a right and not a privilege. She observed that despite growing demand for education as such, the state and its policies had been unable to provide an adequate and satisfactory response. Consequently, education had shifted from being a state-led sector to an individual-led one, leading to tension and even friction between a rights-based framework and a choice-based one. The simultaneous commercialization of education, meanwhile, had deepened the divide between the rich and the poor, and the upper castes and the lower ones. She asserted that the state's intervention was necessary, and instead of pulling out from the sector, step in and work towards ensuring universal access to education.

Dr. Manjrekar invited the panellists to reflect on the various innovations showcased at the conclave. These innovations were:

- Flux, an innovation that addresses the educational needs of slum-based children by creating a platform for experiential learning. The program is mentored by a team of volunteers, organisers and experts, and works towards encouraging peer-to-peer knowledge transfer and helps children become community-embedded change makers.

- LeapForWord, a classroom based program that focuses on imparting English language instruction to children from underprivileged communities. The model is a payment-based one, wherein entrepreneurial teachers are invited to teach English speaking and writing skills to poor children for a nominal fee.

- Mentor Me India is a unique mentoring programme that supports pastoral relationships between mobilized and well equipped 'role models', and children from

underprivileged communities who have neither exposure nor access to the kind of opportunities available in the world.

• *Girls Learning Centre, a community based educational model which aims to provide a well-equipped and high-quality space for learning, exclusively for girls and young women living in slums and informal settlements.*

In her feedback, Ms. Dhuru, spoke from her experiences at Avehi Abacus, an organisation involved in content development for schools. She asked innovators to refrain from taking overtly simplistic views on teaching and training, as even the tools and language employed is intricately linked to the development of an individual's thought process, problem-solving skills and decision making abilities. She also asked the innovators to work towards addressing systemic issues along with ground-based ones. While endorsing a common and universal schooling system, Ms. Dhuru also deliberated on philosophical questions that she deemed essential for innovators to consider. She asked innovators to consider what should be taught, and the identities of those taught and those teaching. She asserted that by demystifying education into simple problems and simple solutions, important process-embedded problems were left unadressed.

Ms. Chadha congratulated the innovators on their efforts, and observed that individual views and perceptions were influence by, but not always cognizant of community views and perception. She asked innovators to be aware of such differences and asked them to be ready for a process of un-learning and learning-anew while experimenting with their strategies. She also emphasized the need for innovators to be aware about the power of shaping dreams through their innovations, and asked them to be both, realistic and considerate. Referring to the work of the Salaam Bombay Foundation, Ms. Chadha observed that in Mumbai's case, adverse socio-economic conditions had forced poor families to prioritize livelihoods over education. In such a scenario, she advocated the use of a life-skills model of education which equipped children with knowledge of good health practices, decision-making, leadership, cooperation, communication, critical analysis and problem solving. She asserted that such a model had shown slow but steady impact, and had help build communities which were mobilized towards positive and transformative change.

Dr. Charania deliberated on the advancements in technology, and how it affects policy-making and agenda setting. She asked all to pose seminal questions about the speed and extent of changes in the education framework that can be linked to changes in technology. Further, she offered her observations on the increasing use of softwares and other computer-based technologies in educational institutions, and remarked that there is no mechanism or motivation to check the authenticity and the nature of the content, nor its utility. She advised all to consider such innovations with a healthy scepticism that allows them to judge the true value of technology in education.

Ms. Agarwal, presented her views from the institutional perspective and spoke of the challenges and gaps that face education. Identifying the Right to Education Act of 2009 as a landmark legislation, she identified within it several strands of concern, such as its focus on primary education alone. Further, she spoke of structural inadequacies, such as poor pupil-teacher ratios, particularly in urban areas; the lack of any significant policy to help out-of-school children; and the lack of a tracking mechanism for migrating children. She concluded by encouraging innovators and civil society activists to strengthen their efforts, and appealed to the state to expand its outreach.

Ms. Abraham drew from her experiences at Vision Rescue, a non-profit organisation that works with children rescued from difficult situations like trafficking. Her organisation extends support such as vocational training, day-care, mobile classrooms, and mobile healthcare, to communities whose children are particularly disadvantaged, such as sex-workers and slum-dwellers. She highlighted the need to make an innovation convenient for the beneficiary.

Thereafter, Ms. Manjrekar closed the discussion with a review of the points raised by the panellists and a brief interactive session where the audience could ask specific questions to the panellists and innovators.

education exists in a framework that is rights-based, not choice-based

Dr. Nandini Manjrekar

Strong emotional linkages exist between art and culture, and social innovation, as both are rooted in the realms of sociology, interpersonal relations and modes of expression. Despite negligible theoretical focus on this theme, many arts practitioners remain convinced of the existence of social purpose in their work. Some argue that artists are not bound by the methodological conventions of scientific inquiries, and are thus able to lineate their thoughts along different and possibly more innovative pathways. Further, art and culture has the ability to provoke thoughts and debates, and have been instrumental in creating discourse on many societal challenges.

The conclave explored this premise in a panel chaired by Mr. Mustansir Dalvi, Professor of Architecture at University of Mumbai's Sir JJ College of Architecture; and attended by Mr. Abhay Sardesai, Editor at ArtIndia magazine; Ms. Rekha Nigam, eminent screenwriter; Mr. Jayachandran Palazhy, Founder and Art Director at Attakalari Centre for Movement Arts; and Ms. Priscilla Li-Ying, member of the Youth & Livelihoods unit at UN-Habitat.

True to the thematic premise, the panel deviated from the usual format and allowed presenting innovators to receive one-on-one feedback from the panellists, rather than a collective reflection. These innovators were:

• Dance Dialogues, an organisation founded by passionate dancers. It advocates the development of dedicated infrastructure that allows dance forms to be practiced and discursive debates regarding the same to be held. The initiative also includes outreach programs such as interactive sessions and careers advice.

Mr. Palazhy remained appreciative of the innovation and highlighted the innovation's potential for increasing knowledge sharing.

Ms. Nigam asked the innovators to explore the possibility of introducing structured instructional programs in schools as it would help bring arts seen as 'high culture' to the masses.

Mr. Sardesai focused on the need to cultivate a communicative matrix for art and culture which allows purists and experimentalists alike to observe and respond to the events that surround them, and thus make art more accessible to all sections of society.

Ms. Ying asked the innovators to explore the role of public space in promoting the arts, and how the same can be used as a tool for women's empowerment. She observed that out-of-the-box utilization of public spaces for art and culture exhibitions and performances sends out singular messages to the broader community and helps stimulate debate.

Mr. Dalvi advised the innovators to use social media to expand their presence, and also recommended to engage in critical reflection and inter-disciplinarian learning.

- *National Streets for Performing Arts, a Mumbai based organisation that promotes the concept of busking. It works with a network of musicians and creates a facilitative framework through which they can perform at public spaces through the city of Mumbai, such as at railway stations and public gardens, and also be given some renumeration. Their artist network covers a wide range of musicians, and by mixing popular genres with lesser known ones, they are able to provide somewhat obscure musical forms with a ready platform.*

  Mr. Palazhy remarked that the concept was an exciting one and helped change conventionally held perceptions of artists and viewers. He advised the innovators to engage further with local communities, and to create space for greater experimentation through which the avant garde becomes less elitist.

  Ms. Nigam appreciated the motivations behind the innovation and suggested that community festivals be leveraged to help widen the outreach that the programme currently enjoys.

  Mr. Sardesai linked the innovation to an expanding global 'street culture', and recommended that the organisation expand further in the range of genres it currently supported.

  Ms. Ying appreciated the innovation's utilization of public space and remarked that efforts such as these help create a sense of belonging and identity, while spurring communities to reclaim spaces.

  Mr. Dalvi appreciated the efforts of the innovators and asked them to devise means through which the lack of patronage can be negated.

- *Art Against Tobacco, an initiative of Salaam Bombay Foundation. The programme works with poor and young children in the city of Mumbai, and uses visual arts as a channel to promote greater social causes, particularly reduction in the use of tobacco.*

  Ms. Ying highlighted the importance of focusing on young children as they make for effective agents in otherwise closed communities, and appreciated the free choice given to them in the programme's structure. She also advised the team to focus on other social problems such as delinquency and juvenile crime.

  Mr. Sardesai highlighted the fact that engagement with the arts is a means through which the individual's mind can be diverted away from potentially harmful activities.

Mr. Dalvi closed the session by thanking the innovators for their efforts and reinforcing the endless possibilities that art and culture provided for the positive and transformative development of youth and communities, the world over.

art need not be just avant garde it can be leveraged to empower, to motivate, to inspire, to reclaim...

Ms. Priscilla Li Ying

Urban governance in India faces multiple challenges. The constitution attempted to negotiate this by laying down an elaborate governance structure that envisaged a balance between mixed and socialist economic models, by creating autonomous institutions of power and a hierarchy of decision making. In a context of increasing urbanisation, these constitutional measures remain inadequate and have resulted in a range of serious anomalies – from excessive politicisation of governance to lack of transparency and institutionalisation of corruption. Cities, which are laden with aspirations for the future, struggle with complicated bureaucratic structures that leave little room for efficient delivery of civic entitlements. As such, India's urban centres remain rife with problems such as poverty, inequality, obsolete infrastructure and corruption. However, structural shifts resembling global trends are slowly finding favour, particularly a move towards building governance platforms that hinge on collaboration between multiple stakeholders, thus emphasizing a push towards greater inclusiveness and transparency. Such transformative changes still remain nascent, but hold great promise for the future of our cities. Social Innovations are an excellent tool to showcase these changes, through small interventions that build a case for better practice.

The panel, 'Urban Governance: At the Crossroads' worked with this premise. It was chaired by Dr. Amita Bhide, Chairperson of the Centre for Urban Planning, Policy and Governance at Tata Institute of Social Sciences; and attended by Dr. Mandira Kala, Head of Research at PRS Legislative; Mr. Arjun Venkatraman, Founder of the Mojolab Foundation; Mr. Anshul Tewari, Founder and Editor-in-Chief at Youth Ki Awaaz; Mr. Eric Luguya, Programme Officer for the Urban Youth Fund at UN-Habitat; and Ms. Priyanka Dahiya, Programme Director at iProBono.

In her keynote address, Dr. Bhide defined 'governance' as an overarching framework through which people's public lives are articulated. Such articulation is complex in Indian cities, where globalization and modernization co-exist with localized traditions. Urban governance in India thus stands at the crossroads of one of two pathways. One reflects increasingly global aspirations, and implies that Indian urban governance mirror internationally accepted norms and conventions. Herein lies a vocabulary that emphasizes values such as transparency, accountability, participation, collaboration and dialogue.

The second pathway reflects the realities of a poor and often self-contradictory nation with a corrupt institutional machinery. This narrative is often associated with a governance dialogue that promotes the notions of political democratization, increased representativeness and institutionalisation of justice. Dr. Bhide opined that social innovators should position their ideas in between these two pathways. She then asked the other panellists to offer their reflections on the work of the innovators showcased at the conclave.

These innovators were:

- *Healthizen, a mobile app sanctioned by the state government of Karnataka. It allows users to upload geo-tagged images of 'issues' such as litter and faulty services to a public database. The database sends out automated notifications to public officials responsible for the flagged concern, thereby promoting a culture of accountability.*

- *iConnect India, a field-, phone- and web-based platform that reaches out to the poor and underprivileged, and offers them detailed information on various welfare schemes initiated by the government, thus promoting better utilization of available state funds.*

- *Mobile Vaani, a mobile-based social media application for the semi-literate and illiterate. It uses a simple call-back function through which callers can register comments and issues, thereby creating dialogue that includes a broader cross section of society.*

- *Nazariya, a multimedia platform that curates informative content on relevant social issues specifically for youth. It aims to involve them further in governance issues and dialogues, and also features a training program for budding youth reporters.*

In her feedback, Dr. Kala remained appreciative of the innovators' efforts. She asked them to reflect deeply on the kind of issues they were addressing, and the ways in which they were addressing them. She observed that many innovations were successful in creating momentum around an issue, but lacked strategies that could translate citizen engagement into concrete outputs. In this regard, she contended that sustainability was an important area of focus for social innovations, and offered observations from her experiences at PRS Legislative. She suggested that engaging youth with political and governance institutions ensured both, engagement and outputs, even if in a gradual manner. She stressed that it was important for citizens to first understand the layers of governance that exist in the country and then use that knowledge to build informed relationships with elected representatives and hold them accountable over pertinent issues.

Ms. Dahiya spoke on the need to involve non-state and civil society actors in dialogues on governance. She asserted that it was a step in ensuring truly collaborative governance. She also reflected on her role experience as a lawyer, and said that many such dialogues suffer from lack of legal literacy among the various stakeholders. Civil society, in particular, struggles with negotiating legislations and legal provisions and doesn't always have the means to engage with courts.

Mr. Venkatraman observed that many innovators focuse on using technology as a basis for their innovations. He recommended that they carefully consider the expenses incurred in adopting novel technology platforms against existing ones and opined that technology costs in such initiatives should be kept to a minimum. To support his statement, he compared several initiatives with high startup costs to existing low-cost tools available in the public domain, highlighting how the latter

maintained functionality while providing better outreach. Mr. Venkatraman also spoke of 'hyper locality', his belief that innovations should start by focussing on small, manageable contexts, and using their successes there to scale up.

Mr. Tewari reflected on the role of momentum in social innovations that addressed governance issues. Speaking from his varied experiences at Youth Ki Awaaz, he offered that the use of social media was a valuable tool to build powerful engagement with issues. He contended that users of social media did not reflect the vast numbers of the poor and underprivileged, but offered that these social media users were far more politically mobile, and once sensitized, could sustain powerful and impactful campaigns that would ultimately grab mainstream media and government attention.

Mr. Luguya spoke from his position within a UN-Agency, and suggested several means through which innovators could reach out to governments by way of internationalized pressure groups. He offered UN's several youth initiatives as a channel that could be used to tap youth issues, including those that related to governance. Speaking from his experience of similar strategies implemented in Kenya, Mr. Luguya reflected that grassroots campaigns that were tapped by such initiatives were able to collaboratively articulate statements and field them to international and inter-governmental panel, thus allowing them to build momentum at a previously unachievable scale.

In her closing remarks, Dr. Bhide reviewed the key points stressed during the session, and observed that many innovations remained rooted in the non-state sphere and tried to extract attributes such as transparency and accountability from existing machinery. She argued that innovations should also focus on a contributory strategy, and voiced a call for transformation of political culture within the country.

governance straddles

global aspirations

and crushing

local realities

Dr. Amita Bhide

While not conventionally viewed through the same lens, sports can offer an interesting avenue through which to channelize youth development. It is a vertical which encourages a healthy lifestyle; provides fertile ground for soft-skills such as team-building and leadership; and connects with an overwhelming majority of youth. It has the potential of offering endless inspiration to even the most desperate sections of society, and is replete with success stories where true merit has not only transformed the lives of individuals, but of entire communities. Further, socio-cultural distinctions and biases are quick to fall in the sporting arena, and in the last few decades, sporting icons have featured women from conservative families, refugees who have escaped the horrors of civil wars, the differently-abled, those of alternative sexual preferences, and those from races that are discriminated against. Sports has given them all a chance to shine and a stage through which they can channelize voices for social upliftment. Many sportstars have returned to their communities and are trying to help them through innovative programmes that aim to identify and nurture talent, particularly among children and the youth.

The conclave featured a panel to discuss the possibilities of sports as a vehicle for youth development. This panel was led by Dr. Meena Gopal, Associate Professor at Tata Institute of Social Sciences; and attended by Mr. Mir Ranjan Negi, Olympian and former member of the Indian Hockey team; Ms. Dana Podmolikova, member of the Youth Advisory Board at UN-Habitat; and Mr. Praful Uchil, Co-founder of Striders.

Dr. Gopal began by highlighting the instrumentality of sports in self-expression. Once dominated by men, Dr. Gopal argued that sports had opened out to and accepted female heroes, and had helped many formerly underprivileged people access greater opportunities. She asserted that sports needs to be identified for its potential for social upliftment, and is an area where both, public and private sector, can collaborate to bring fruitful results.

The panellists offered their feedback on the work of the following innovators:

- Vision 64, a unique chess set designed specifically for the visually challenged, and intended to motivate them to take up the sport more seriously. The set is low on cost and of competent build quality, and has been linked to a social outreach network which allows them to connect with girls and young children.

- Sports Against Tobacco, an initiative of Salaam Bombay Foundation. The programme targets school students in municipal schools in Mumbai, and motivates them to take up healthier lifestyles by providing profession training in hockey and cricket.

- Familia de Ouro, an initiative that promotes the Latin American martial art, Capoeira, among students of Mumbai's municipal schools. Capoeira mixes endurance with a visual quality, thus helping build confidence among children; and is performed in teams, thus encouraging bonding between individuals.

- *Playstation 2.0, an initiative begun by a group of young school students who have devised a simple and mobile recreational space that can be set up in inaccessible informal communities. The space is equipped with sporting goods and trainers, and allows the underprivileged access to high-quality sporting experience.*

In his feedback, Mr. Uchil, reflected on his experiences as trainer for marathons, athletics and physical fitness; and his role in founding and running Striders, a fitness training enterprise that works with aspiring marathoners. He asserted the need to be passionate and committed to the cause of sports and health, and how that motivates individuals to give their best to everything they do. He advised innovators to face challenges through small and simple steps, as these accumulate to make big differences. He also spoke of the need to create dialog regarding sport, as it was an effective tool in sports promotion.He observed that current discussion on sports remains event-based and has an undeniable bias towards certain sports. Expanded dialog was thus essential to not only make sport a more consistent part of people's lives, but also a diverse part with various sporting types & players.

Ms. Podmolikova observed that engagement was key to sport-led development. She noted that sports is often viewed as inextricably linked to competition, which deters many from taking it up seriously. She highlighted that sports are diverse and adoptable, and can be applied to any and every kind of individual. It was thus, essential to reframe sports as an inclusive lifestyle choice, and not as a competitive event. She also asserted that public policy must be focused towards addressing the economic, physical and cultural challenges that obstruct people from practicing any sport - such as helping the poor access quality sporting facilities, or enabling women from conservative communities to practice sport in a safe environment. She stressed the universality of sport, and encouraged everyone to consider it as a serious tool for societal engagement.

Mr. Negi echoed similar views, and reflected on his work with Salaam Bombay Foundation, and his role as a motivator to aspiring sportspersons. He highlighted the need for innovations to inspire people to take up sports, and also asserted that sports need collective contribution and focus to create a fruitful and positive impact on societies. Reflecting on his past experiences as a member of the Indian hockey team, Mr. Negi observed that sports taught people to fight against and rise above all odds. He offered that sports, unlike conventional development strategies, was able to instill in people a sense of purpose and provide them inspiration to tackle all barriers that lay between them and success. In sections of society where hopelessness remained rampant, sports offered an excellent route for betterment.

The panel ended with a review and brief interactive session where the panellists answered specific questions fielded by the audience.

sports is instrumental to **self expression.** *it knows* **no biases** *and has endlesss possibilities for* **transformative** *change*

Dr. Meena Gopal

25

The current UN development agenda has, till date, been centred on the Millenium Development Goals, a set of eight globally agreed goals in the areas of poverty alleviation, education, gender equality and empowerment, child and maternal health, environmental sustainability, reducing HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases, and building a global partnership for development. Established at the Millenium Summit of the UN in 2000, the overall target date for these goals is 2015. The goals have been extremely influential in global policy-making, be it in governmental or institutional contexts. It comes as no surprise, thus, that there is a lot of anticipation regarding the setting of a new set of developmental goals for the years following 2015. Recent years have seen a growing body of often reflexive debate and a UN-led discursive campaign that aim to address the same, with many echoing the need for greater focus on urbanisation and urban issues, and others still stressing the need to further existing developmental goals.

The Conclave featured a special panel discussion, hosted by UN-Habitat, took an immersive look at the growing body of discussion that surrounds the post-2015 development agenda.

The panel was chaired by Mr. Ravi Karkara, Global Advisor Youth - UN-Habitat; and attended by Mr. Anshul Tewari, Founder and Editor-in-chief at Youth Ki Awaaz; Ms. Lysa John, Ex-Director Outreach at the High Level Panel Chair, and Campaigns & Advocacy Strategy Director at Save the Children; Mr. Akash Shah, Global Youth Advocate for My World and World We Want campaigns; Mr. Amitabh Behar, Executive Director at the National Foundation of India; and Mr. Saket Mani, Team Member at UN-Habitat Youth.

Mr. Karkara, after introducing the panel, spoke about the role of youth and UN-Habitat in taking the Post-2015 agenda forward. He stressed that youth are the key drivers of change in any society, and it was essential that they engage and be engaged with dialogues and processes surrounding development. He remarked that institutions too were slowly realizing that youth views are integral to policy-making, and offered that the time was ripe for youth to assert their voices.

Mr. Tewari offered the observation that youth today had little knowledge of the global development agenda, and have also been overlooked in the discursive process that accompanies it. This lack of engagement encouraged him to start Youth Ki Awaaz as a channel that would help articulate youth voices and opinions regarding global development and deepen their involvement in the agenda-setting process. He also added that communication gaps could only be addressed through a more participatory and collaborative outreach process that went beyond internet-based information and involved channels of communication such as live discussion, television and radio broadcasts, and awareness campaigns by community-based organisations. He highlighted the power of such tools and methodologies by offering several examples where impact can be traced to the effective utilisation of outreach mechanisms by well-intentioned youths.

Ms. John spoke of her experiences in the High Level Panel on the Post-2015 Agenda that met UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-

Moon, to discuss a future-forward developmental framework. She highlighted that the panel recommended incorporation of five paradigm shifts – complete inclusivity; emphasis on sustainable development; transformative economics; building effective, transparent, and accountable institutions; and forging global partnerships and cooperation. These shifts, she offered, were key influencers in policy-making, and asked all to pay closer attention to the implications they hold on their lives and communities. Reflecting on her former role as a campaigner and advocate for civil society organisations on the High Level Panel, she asserted that institional will was not always matched with institutional capacities, and far greater collective responsibility was essential in ensuring that people's voices are heard while planning the post-2015 agenda.

Before introducing Mr. Shah, Mr. Karkara drew the audience's attention to the My World website. The portal uniquely showcases the varied youth aspirations and opinions for the future of development.

Mr. Shah, deeply embedded in the My World campaign, shared his experiences in reaching out to 52 schools, 52000 students and over 1.5 million people globally. He reflected positively on the momentum the campaign had gained and the recognition it had received, highlighting the role it has played in asserting youth opinions at a global stage. He urged all those present to play an active role in similar movements, such as UN's 'I am a City Changer' campaign, and the Prime Minister's 'Swachchh Bharat Abhiyan'. The rationale he offered was that of collective might - when more individuals add to a common movement, then it gathers momentum that becomes difficult to ignore.

Mr. Behar drew the audience's attention to the fact that there exist various critiques of the current set of Millenium Development Goals, and there is rising concern on actions following the post-2015 discussions initiated by UN. He offered that the agenda and discussions were led by the Global North, and observed that this leadership lacked focus on setting of truly transformative goals. The Global South, he ventured, needed greater focus on livelihood rights, a demand that could only accrue weight by building collective pressure through a global campaign. He thus called for greater collaborative action and offered that youth, who are less exposed to socio-cultural distinctions, are excellent channels for collective engagement in this direction.

Mr. Mani spoke of the process of setting priorities within the Millenium Development Goals, and how this observation was helping him inform his work on preparing an individually led report that aims to articulate the needs and desires of Indian youth. He emphasized that advocacy must also be localized, and called for active participation from all sections of society.

Mr. Karkara concluded by summarizing the key views expressed by the panellists and by expressing his desire for a post-2015 agenda that would prove to be truly and positively impactful.

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Ms. Lysa John

The conclave closed with a special plenary. The session was chaired by Mr. Rajiv Mishra, Principal of University of Mumbai's Sir JJ College of Architecture; and featured Dr. Nachiket Mor, Board Chair at Care India and Board Member at Reserve Bank of India; Ms. Padmini Somani, Director at Salaam Bombay Foundation and Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation; and Mr. Eric Luguya, Program Officer for the Urban Youth Fund at UN-Habitat as speakers.

Mr. Mishra appreciated the diversity of social innovations showcased at the conclave and identified the conclave as a platform on which to discuss and take forward ideas into the realm of execution and implementation. In this regard, he voiced a call for a greater number of such conclaves.

Dr. Mor reflected on his lengthy experience in the corporate realm and drew parallels between business ventures and social innovations. He observed that the most successful models were those which had clarity of vision and were able to offer users value. He asserted that success itself was a long-term goal, often accompanied by missteps. He encouraged innovators to remain motivated despite setbacks, and offered that sustainable innovations were those that addressed problems in a gradual manner, rather than engineer temporary solutions. Further, he asked innovators to demonstrate themselves through small successes which could be leveraged for better relationships and greater outreach.

Mr. Luguya began by saying that innovations should not only focus on creating a perceived profit, but also work towards introducing the element of sustainability in the lives of people they work with. He concluded by asking innovators to continue working towards newer ideas, and asked them to take forward the skills and knowledge gained during the conclave.

Ms. Somani expressed her satisfaction with the success of the conclave and asserted that the conclave demonstrated that the best investment in the future was and investment in youth. She observed that the conclave offered opportunities for capacity building, and also for networking. She encouraged all to leverage these opportunities to devise newer, more successful strategies that involve multi-sectoral expertise. She also informed the audience about the India Youth Fund initiative of Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation and UN-Habitat, and invited innovators to apply for the same.

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best investment

in the future

is an investment

in the youth

Ms. Padmini Somani

The Conclave featured three interactive workshops, exploring different thematic areas of social innovations. These were:

• 'Using Digital and Technology Platforms for Social Change', a workshop conducted by Dr. Viswanath, Professor of Health Communications at the Harvard School of Public Health. The workshop illustrated ways in which social organisations could work with the various tools of engagement offered through social media platforms. By using illustrative data, Dr. Viswanath explained common strategies employed to expand outreach on such platforms, and also offered his insights into how such outreach could be gauged and analysed. He held several interactive exercises with the audience, and helped them realize the potential of social media as a tool with which political momentum could be created.

• A workshop on crowdfunding, conducted by the founders of Wishberry, India's first and largest crowdfunding platform. Crowdfunding is a relatively new term that describes a web-based fundraising campaign. Wishberry used a mixture of talks and hands-on exercises to illustrate how crowdfunding could be used as a means with which to achieve the financial resources needed to sustain a social innovation, and also help build a network of like-minded people devoted to a particular cause.

• A workshop on 'Ecological Footprints', conducted by Dr. Jyotsna Bapat, an academician with extensive experience in environmental sociology. The workshop explored the theme of ideation, and explored ways in which the attendees could reinforce their ideas for project work related to ecology and environmental well-being, social communication, 'closing the circle' and many other ideas. It employed a transformative learning process, derived from Dr. Bapat's tested methodology of ontological enquiry.

Interspersed through the Conclave were themed exhbitions, musical performances and street plays organised and performed by Mumbai-based youth groups such as Tapori Bandra and Urban Health Resource Centre. These activities offered an alternative and refreshing means of relaying important socio-cultural advices in an easy-to-understand and enjoyable format.

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small successes

Dr. Nachiket Mor

conclusion

Over the last two centuries, India has been the hub of innumerable social innovations. New institutions and methodologies now mark growing confidence and offer increasingly credible evidence. Social innovators are changing the way governments work, the way civil society achieves impact, and the actions of businesses. This process has in some ways helped transform the lives of communities.

Social innovations today include the inception and spread of not-for-profit organizations and movements which draw from earlier models of guilds but radically reshape them to suit the new needs of the communities.

The Young Social Innovators Conclave featured several such innovations from diverse fields such as health, education, livelihoods, governance, design, social entrepreneurship, technology, public policy, cities and urban development, social movements and community development.

The Conclave provided a platform that brought together like-minded organizations and institutions from all of these fields to share ideas and experiences with the aim of streamlining our common ability to treat, and even solve, some of the pressing social challenges of our times.

As such, the Conclave proved to be an effective tool for engagement, and helped further collectively- as well as individually-held views on social innovations and resultant transformative progress.

Some of the key observations regarding social innovations presented at the Conclave were:

Mainstreaming of Radical Ideas

Use of mobile phones for health education, GIS mapping for waste management, temporary housing for people on the move and many such interesting ideas which were once ridiculed as utopian or even far-fetched were discussed with ease and acceptability.

Diversity of Innovations

Social innovations were found to be manifested in all shapes and sizes, with differing processes of change. Some of resulted from initiatives by individuals with bright sparks; others were more rooted in social processes such as feminism and environmentalism. Most of the innovations presented had progressed through a series of stages - from the generation of ideas through prototyping and piloting, to scaling up and learning.

Multitude of Stakeholders

Social innovations driven by a range of actors based in the- non-profit sector, academic institutions, students groups, social movements were shared at the conclave. Most of the successful innovators have learned to operate across the boundaries between these sectors and innovations were found to thrive best when there are effective alliances between small organisations and entrepreneurs which can grow ideas to scale.

Importance of Cross-sectoral Linkages

A vital role was played by the 'connectors' in any innovation system – particularly in the cases of all the social innovations that were presented. Apart from the innovators, several people contributed towards the shaping of innovations, such as the entrepreneurs and institutions that linked people, ideas, money and power. Such linkages helped contribute as much to lasting change as thinkers, creators, designers, activists and community groups.

Towards Holistic Economic Development

By servicing the otherwise underserved through innovative ideas, technology and financing mechanisms, social innovations have contributed immensely towards the economic empowerment of the communities. This is because some of the barriers to lasting growth (such as climate change, or ageing populations) can only be overcome with the help of social innovation, and partly because of rising demands for types of economic growth that enhance rather than damage human relationships and well-being. The key growth sectors of the 21st century economy look set to be healthcare and education, accounting between them for around 20-30% of GDP, and even more in some countries. These are all mixed economies, strongly shaped by public policy, and requiring models of innovation very different to those that worked well for industrial production.

Failure of Unaided Ideas

Many promising ideas struggled to achieve fruition due to several reasons, such as lack of appropriate stakeholders, finances, marketing opportunities, and technological glitches. An idea alone, thus, was not good enough.

Delineating Social Innovations

There were challenges in indentifying social innovations, and distinguishing the same from generic social development strategies or technological inventions without any societal applicability.

Lack of Conclusive Data and Research

Finally, very little is known about social innovations as compared to the vast amount of research and publication that is seen in case of scientific and technological innovations. The sector lacks systemic evidential documentation, such as credible reviews, organized data sets, impact evaluations, and proof of concepts. Apart from a handful of academic institutions and grant-making organizations, social innovations are not considered as a serious academic discipline. Some small literature on social innovations is also pertinent – but inadequate for understanding how these ideas can be applied across different sectors, geographies and social milieus. Lack of systemic documentation also encumbers the institutions and organizations interested in the field, including innovators themselves, philanthropists, foundations and governments. If countered with adequate strategies, social innovations will be able to set themselves on a far more sustainable path to success.

Social innovation is India has not developed into an independent discipline. Its identity is often mistaken as philanthropy or social entrepreneurship. Learnings from the field shows that it is challenging for innovations to retain the social development perspective yet be entrepreneurial in nature. In the two day discussion, several subject experts and practitioners mentioned that in order to transition into an independent discipline, social innovations need to take the following steps:

Organizational Structures
Most social innovations tend to emerge from graduate school projects or from informal group of students who have the desire and technical knowledge to start innovative projects. Most of them face of challenge in transitioning from idea to execution or from pilot to full-fledged projects. That is primarily because, they tend to be individual or group centric are also important. Lack of a stable organizational structure acts as the biggest hindrance for them. Dedicated teams, financial stability and strategic program management are essential for any idea to take flight.

Financial stability
Bright ideas may appear to emerge from thin air, if they do not attract people or institutions that trust the idea and are willing to invest in the innovation. Entire gamut of activities from idea stage to execution, testing the proof of concept, research and development, plans for scale up, need financial backing. There can not be one source of funding for social innovations. Innovations need to be geared towards generating resources from multiple sources such as funding agencies, individual philanthropy, private equity, government others. Efficient management of the resources and establishing a prudent and transparent accounting process is integral for the project as it enables future funders to trust the model.

Certain sections of the Government and philanthropy should earmark funds for supporting high risk 'blue skies' R&D in priority areas, which goal to generate new ideas that tested, observed, adapted and improved, without the necessary compulsion of outcomes. Public agencies, foundations and individual philanthropists can provide core funding for intermediary bodies like innovation hubs and laboratories that can then provide a mix of development and financial support. Some public institutions and private funding can be channelized towards developing sophisticated metrics to assess investment prospects and results achieved in a way compatible with innovation, such as rapid learning and evolution of end goals during prototyping and start-up.

Research and Documentation
Since most of the social innovations were either in the pilot stage or in the early stages of implementation, documenting the science of the concept and the process of implementation is inextricably linked to the innovation itself. The learnings from the implementation when documented properly, enhances the process of replication and scaling up of the project. The other significant thing is to demonstrate the success of the project by evaluating the same.

Multiple Stakeholders Network
It was observed that most social innovations have several components at work. The commonly observed once were technology, community engagement, finances, government liaison etc. Given differences in the nature of expertise that is required for each of the components, it is very challenging for the key innovators have all of these. Hence it is important that while planning an innovation and executing the same, a multi-stakeholder network has to be forged. Policy makers, technocrats, finance specialists and development personnel working in synergy with each other, is the right step ahead. Then each of the partners can contribute to the success of the innovation based on their strength.

Conducive Political Environment
For any social innovation to thrive, a favorable political environment is crucial. The Government can make this possible by multiple means. Having policies and programs which favour innovations, allocation of resources for piloting and up scaling innovations, key departments like Department of science and technology, Health, Education, Social Justice can have dedicated cells to provide technical advice to the social innovators. More developed markets can be facilitated for social solutions wherein the funding is based on outcomes. Governments can plan to have incentive based model which will reward innovative ideas through a competitive process. This will promote competitive spirits and new ideas.

Contextualisation and Decentralisation
Most social innovations are unique to the context they are developed in. Hence there is a need to have decentralized platforms which allow the communities have the freedom to inform the project with their knowledge and shape their own solutions. To envisage for a homogenous platform which applies uniformly to all, may not be the most amenable situation for innovations.

For an Organisation which is committed to social change it is very encouraging to see that the field of social innovation is now beginning to gather momentum, with significant investment fromgovernments, foundations and business. Over the next few years, it is possible that the ability tosupport, manage and grow innovations of this kind will become a core competence within governments,businesses, NGOs and foundations.

The field has grown due to the combination of factors-commitment, experience and out of box thinking. But it lacks the systematic and sophisticatedinfrastructures of support available to other fields – in particular access to appropriate finance andfunding. The report sets out a vision for our interventions in the area of social innovation. It highlights howthese various infrastructural gaps will need to be overcome in order for the field to develop to maturityand puts forward recommendations for how we can achieve this.

For the Foundation Social Innovation is a powerful approach to transforming the lives of people who are on the edges of the society. By initiating the dialogue on social innovation for development, the Foundation desires to play the role of the catalyst for impact—mobilizing public and private resources to find and grow community solutions with evidence of strong results.

The Foundation will work towards uniting public and private resources to evaluate and support innovations that have evidence of results in low-income communities in our four priority areas: livelihoods and economic empowerment, youth development, enhanced health educational opportunities and transparency and accountability.

By fostering private and public collaborations that identify, evaluate, and expand promising nonprofits, the Foundation aims to increase access to effective programs that enable people and communities in need to overcome their most pressing challenges in the areas of economic opportunity, youth development, and health. Building on the Foundation's commitment to innovative, cross-sector approaches, the Young Social Innovators conclave will a step in the direction of creating a network of like-minded individuals and organizations who believe in the role of innovations in social transformation.

annexures

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Vision Rescue

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UNICEF

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Founder & Director
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Jasmeen Patheja
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Blank Noise

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2013

Design Research Publication Cell
Mumbai, Maharashtra

Jeeva Karunya Trust
Erode, Tamil Nadu

Light Innovative Organisation for Rights
Chennai, Tamil Nadu

ProRural
Dimapur, Nagaland

South Asian Forum for Environment
Kolkata, West Bengal

The YP Foundation
Delhi

Youth Movement for Active Citizenship
Mumbai, Maharashtra

2014

Fresh and Local
Goa

Integrated People's Service Society
Kalappuram, Tamil Nadu

People for Parity
Gurgaon, Haryana

Science for Society
Mumbai, Maharashtra

Sun Shine Health and Social Welfare Society
Delhi

Aqueous Communes

Dance Dialogues

Digital Media to Stop Malnutrition

DIRT Upcycle

Familia de Ouro

Freemium Health

Fresh and Local

Flux

Girls Learning Centre

Healthera

Healthizen

Helping Faceless

Hivette 2.0

Housing for Urban Migrants

iCall Psychosocial Helpline

iConnect India

Individual Medical Independence

Integrated People's Service Society

LeapForWord

Medical Alert System

Mentor Me India

Mobile Vaani

Mobilio Organic

National Streets for Performing Arts

Nazariya

People for Parity

Playstation 2.0

Postmed

Salaam Bombay Foundation

Sankalp - Umang - Udaan

Science for Society

Serve Happiness

Sun Shine Health and Welfare Society

The Mahir Foundation

Thozhamai

United Association for Public Health and Education

Urban Voids

Urbanisation of Waste

Vision 64

Water Crisis at Kusumpur Pahari

Young Urban Women Programme

Young Slum Women Champions

Youth for Social Change

presenting innovators

Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation

UN⊕HABITAT

The Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation enables non-profit organisations and social entrepreneurs to make a positive, lasting and sustainable impact on society. Inspired by the vision of a vibrant India, the Foundation supports civil society initiatives in sectors like health, education, livelihoods, governance and civic issues, art and culture and youth. Besides supporting socially and economically challenged communities, it also strives to promote excellence through its education scholarships and institution building.

Established in 2002, with an endowment from the philanthropist Mr. Narotam Sekhsaria, the Foundation supports socially committed individuals and organisations to effect the change they want to see. Since its inception, the Foundation has striven towards supporting actions that accelerate that change. Key accelerators are catalysing joint ownership and action among leaders representing a cross-section of society; developing human capital with an unrelenting focus on leadership; shifting mindsets and behaviours to enhance skills; deploying new technology and translating innovation; investing in inclusion; engaging the private sector for social development; and empowering the youth with leadership skills to participate in development.

In its commitment towards enduring change, the Foundation also collaborates with enterprising individuals and innovative organisations on projects that align with its priorities. As a step towards moving away from the narrow perspective of improving the delivery of goods and services in the social sector, it promotes symbiotic relationships between the public and private sectors to achieve desirable outcomes. It believes that the only way to ensure lasting change is to have an institutional framework that fosters economic and social development. Since the government's role in establishing policy frameworks is crucial, the Foundation liaises with the State to enable it to deliver better results in education, healthcare and economic empowerment.

The Foundation works with organisations in different verticals, such as health, education, livelihoods, governance and civic issues, art and culture, and youth.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) regards young people as development partners and as a major force for a better world and believes that their empowerment through effective and meaningful participation in decision-making is crucial. UN-Habitat stresses the role of young people in the alleviation of poverty and inequality. The HABITAT Agenda commits governments and UN-Habitat to working in partnership with youth and empower them to participate in decision-making in order to improve urban livelihoods and develop sustainable human settlements.

UN-Habitat & Youth

Urbanisation is the engine that propels the world towards prosperity in the 21st century if done in a well-planned way and youth are the engineers. Young people are one of society's most essential and dynamic human resources. There are more people under the age of 25 today than ever, totalling nearly three billion or almost half of the total global population; 1.3 billion of that total are between the age of 12 and 24. These youth live, by and large, in cities and towns; the cities of the developing world account for over 90% of the world's urban growth and youth account for a large percentage of those inhabitants. It is estimated that as many as 60% of all urban dwellers will be under the age of 18 by 2030.

Youth & Development

Youth-led development involves young people actively creating a better future for themselves and their communities. These initiatives are designed and implemented by young people themselves. The projects often take place at the grassroots level and are largely carried out by youth volunteers. Initiatives address a broad range of community needs such as employment, access to affordable housing and secure land tenure, safer cities and participation in decision making.

Youth-led development gives young people valuable skills such as project management and teamwork, thus boosting their ability to acquire jobs and participate actively in society. UN-Habitat is actively supporting youth-led development through the Urban Youth Fund and the India Youth Fund together with the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation.

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Mouthpiece for the Youth

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