Active Coexistence for High School Students

A Report

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New Delhi
Acknowledgments

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Shreya Jani
Introduction

The FAEA-WISCOMP Workshop, titled *Active Coexistence*, brought together 32 high-school students from Delhi¹, Manipur² and Kashmir³ for a dialogue-cum-training. It was organized as part of the *Hum Kadam* initiative, which seeks to constructively channelize the potential and zeal of the youth to build trust across the divisions of conflict and to foster active coexistence.

The primary purpose of this workshop was to provide a safe and non-judgmental space in which students could explore the meaning and scope of Active Coexistence.

**Active Coexistence** is different from the adage ‘unity in diversity’. It means creating a community where people live and work together. It involves social interaction – the more you interact with people, the more you develop the capacity to coexist. It requires actively accepting diversity and difference. It involves the breaking down of barriers, the outward expression of positive and negative emotional freedom and the fostering of a collaborative and empowering sense of community. Thus, it moves away from an emphasis on the 3-D approach to diversity in schools which refers to dance, dress, and dining. Active Coexistence move towards creation of spaces for dialogue, breaking down stereotypes and overcoming discrimination based on religious, regional, ethnic and socio-economic differences. Through this two day workshop, the students worked towards understanding the nature of prejudice, bias, stereotyping and discrimination, how it manifests itself in their life and what they can do as agents of change to overcome it. Students from Eight schools (two each from Kashmir and Delhi and four from Manipur) participated in the workshop.

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¹ Vidya and Child School (School caters to the economically weaker sections) and Heritage School Vasant Valley (an English medium school of Delhi)
² 4 schools from Manipur: Lalpuihlai Foundation School, Soikholal Ideal High School, Happy Heart School and Gilgal English High School.
³ Students of Saadi School and Dolphin International School, Pulwama, Kashmir
FAEA-WISCOMP use the methodology of sustained face-to-face dialogue, combined with training in conflict transformation to change negative stereotypes, build trust and long-term relationships, and contribute towards building a culture of coexistence and non-violence. This is based on the theoretical assumption that when young people—from across conflict divides—‘walk in the shoes of the other’, they are able to empathize with perspectives different from their own and build trust. The workshop employed this methodology. It used elicitive and experiential pedagogy including creative and non-conventional methods, such as one-on-one dialogues, role plays, theater, quiz and heritage walks to develop the capacity of the young participants to reflect on their beliefs about and attitude and behaviour towards ‘the other’.
The workshop opened with an introduction by Seema Kakran, Deputy Director, WISCOMP on the work of WISCOMP and FAEA in the field of education for peace. She also highlighted the need for such workshops and laid down the goals of the workshop for the young people.

A series of ice-breaker activities were conducted by session facilitators Megha Rawat and Kh Samuel Poumai to help participants get to know one another.

In the first activity students were asked to introduce themselves using their names and one adjective that described them.

For the second activity Poumai asked the students to write four statements on the four strips of paper given to them. Out of these four statements, two had to be on what according to them were characteristics or true statements about people from the other two states in the workshop (one for each state, for example a participant from Delhi was asked to write what he/she thought of Manipuri or Kashmiri people) the other two statements were on what they thought the participants from other states thought of people from their state. For example a participant from Delhi wrote two statements about what Kashmiri and Manipuri people think about people of Delhi. These statements were then collected by the facilitators to be used at the end of the workshop to see if the notions of ‘the other’ had changed in anyway after participation in the workshop activities and discussions.

The statements written by the participants were anonymous and were used by the facilitators to reconfigure the agenda for the next day as well as act as an assessment tool for the kind of issues that need to be addressed, given the diversity in the group. This activity helped the facilitators understand the self-perception of the participants and also how they perceived ‘the other’ in the room. The barriers to trust and
friendship were also identified by this activity. The statements also acted as indicators of change as a consequence of the workshop. During assessment one could see that the process of the workshop helped many students overcome some of the negative perceptions that they had harbored about the perceived “other”.

The following table lists the responses of the participants:

**Kashmir**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we feel others think of us</th>
<th>Others’ impression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delhi walah think we are most/very similar to some extent.</td>
<td>They are cute, helpful, intelligent, good, fun loving, physically smart, friendly. (7 statements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipuris think that we are haughty- or too talkative.</td>
<td>I hope they are frank and good guys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most people from Delhi treat Kashmiris like we are a part of some other country</td>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other states feel that I am simple and decent. I am very polite in nature.</td>
<td>Kashmiris are generous to others and may live in peaceful conditions. There, it may be different tribes but they are becoming into single one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other states feel that I am beautiful and well maintained</td>
<td>Bad people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kashmiris are conflict torn people. They think that Kashmiris are conflicted.</td>
<td>The people are very peaceful and sweet and are very polite of other cities and some people are very violent and they are not very peaceful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They think we are the sons of beauty but the truth is we are living in a beautiful decorated prison.</td>
<td>I think students of Kashmir are religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are very intelligent but are not using our brain in good things. They think we are cheaters.</td>
<td>Students of Kashmir are very ritualistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paradise on earth famous for its shawl

Mostly Muslims and mostly into terrorism

Pious and dedicated to their culture and rituals.

Beautiful innocent eyes filled with fear & insecurities

We are friendly

We are non friendly

We are Muslims, it does not mean we favor Pakistan

We are terrorists (2 statements)

**Delhi**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What others think of us</th>
<th>Others’ impression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We aren’t devoted people and do whatever we sin like with whole-heartiness, we also discriminate others</td>
<td>Creative, helpful, inspiring and friendly. (4 statements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are friendly</td>
<td>Good character, talented and are genius.Smart, developed in studies and living in style. (5 statements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are people who prefer night lives; that we are people who are immensely into fun and carelessness.</td>
<td>Interactive, smart, cool and some are not so good though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We care only about money.</td>
<td>Very confident people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We don’t care about other people of the country.</td>
<td>Happy People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are casual in our approach towards people.</td>
<td>Talkative and extroverts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are very modern in our perspective towards life. | Some may live in well to do families; they are kind and think of people from other states.
---|---
We are bad guys | Like their own city
We have stereotypical notions about people from other states and we are out going | Strong determination and hardworking (2 statements)
We carry preconceived notions in our mind which are discriminatory in nature. | Good and large hearted (2 statements)
Casual and relaxed attitudes towards life | Delhiites are rude
Not cooperative and helpful at all; they don’t treat you nicely | Arrogant

## Delhi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What others think of us</th>
<th>Others’ impression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have a feeling that they might think we are not brilliant and have low quality of thinking.</td>
<td>Manipur is a good state and I think Manipur people are helpful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope they think that we are very helpful and smart.</td>
<td>They interact less with people. They talk in English or other languages, differently which we don’t understand. (2 statements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They think we are funny people</td>
<td>They are dedicated and hardworking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They may wonder about the way we speak or behave as we are from a different state and habitat.</td>
<td>Calm people (2 statements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We live in small area.</td>
<td>Manipuris are less talkative but unfortunately are introverted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always serious.</td>
<td>They very intelligent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The third activity in this session was playing musical chairs modeled on an activity from Robert Fulghum’s *Maybe (Maybe Not): Second Thoughts from a Secret Life* (1993:117-21) where he mentions an icebreaker in his high school philosophy class, in which he was presented two versions of the musical chairs. The first version is the traditional (Four chairs, more players and the last one sitting wins), but the second version has a changed rule that demonstrates the value of cooperation. In this version players are asked to accommodate people so that no one is left standing even when there is one chair left. As Fulghum (1993) notes: “The experience is always the same. It’s a
problem of sharing diminishing resources. This really isn’t kid stuff. And the questions raised by musical chairs are always the same: Is it always to be a winners-losers world, or can we keep everyone in the game? Do we still have what it takes to find a better way?” (p.121).

For the musical chairs, the participants were divided into two groups of 16. When playing the traditional musical chairs, while one or more chairs at a time were eliminated after some hesitation, students got involved with the game. As the traditional version of the game progressed, things got rough and students jostled to win the game. Finally, there were two winners, one from each group.

In the second half, Rawat announced the change in rules and explained that each team had to make sure that they seated as many of their team members as they could; and they could do so in any manner possible. When the rules were changed one noticed that even though there were enough seats to sit on, students preferred to sit in each other’s laps and by the time there was only one chair left, each group came up with a strategy to accommodate all its members.

During the debrief Rawat asked the participants what they felt about the two forms of musical chairs and most of the participants preferred playing the second round of musical chairs as they felt it was better and more fun to win as a team than as individuals.

This activity was used to introduce to the participants the difference between conflict and violence and introduce them to the idea of negative and positive peace. Using the two rounds of musical chairs, the participants discussed how in the first round they got competitive with each other over the remaining chairs, in the second they collaborated to help each other out irrespective of how many chairs were taken away from the game.

The facilitator introduced the chair as a limited resource over which the participants had a conflict and the two rounds of Musical chairs thus became two ways of handling a conflict over scarce resources: one with violence (highlighted through the competitive attitude and
physically nudging or pushing each other to get to the chairs) and one without any violence (highlighted through cooperation and strategizing to accommodate all participants including sensitivity to gender differences).

This was followed by an introductory presentation for the participants on the three different kinds of violence that exist namely, Direct Violence, Indirect Violence and Structural Violence. Examples of each type of violence were elicited from the participants. This led to a short discussion on structural violence and the culture of jokes. After differentiating between conflict and violence and defining the three types of violence, the facilitator then introduced the concepts of negative and positive peace as two aspects of peace each addressing the different kinds of violence one finds in society.
I am not a Stereotype

Informed by the primary goal, active coexistence and building trust high-school students from diverse backgrounds, the session titled *I am not a stereotype* focused on ‘recognizing how we end up profiling people based on their looks, symbols and other cultural assumptions. In addition to understanding the basic vocabulary of multicultural education, and concepts such as prejudice, stereotypes, bias and discrimination, this session aimed at developing critical thinking in the participants so that they become more aware when they may be discriminating based on a stereotype or bias. It also wished to stimulate a discussion on what one can do when faced with stereotyping and biased behavior.

The students were divided into 8 groups with 4 members in each, ensuring that the group had at least one person from the different states in the group and at least one member of the opposite sex in the group. These groups were predetermined by facilitators. Each group was given one photograph and the following four questions had to be answered after looking at the photograph:

- Which place do you think this person belongs to?
- What religion do you think this person follows?
- What profession do you think this person has?
- What do you think he/she does in his/her free time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Photo</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Some facts about the person in photo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP ONE</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>Black Clothes (Loízos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Beard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loves to do in his/her free time</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP TWO</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>South Indian, Iyer Family, Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Gajra, Bindi, Saree (Adila)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Profession</td>
<td>Anchor, Lecturer</td>
<td>Microphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Three</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Primary Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Four</td>
<td>Can’t tell</td>
<td>Humanity</td>
<td>Actress, model, official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Five</td>
<td>Not specific but in Town</td>
<td>Any religion</td>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Six</td>
<td>Urban Area</td>
<td>Any religion</td>
<td>College Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Seven</td>
<td>Commoner, Metropolitan international destination</td>
<td>Non specific</td>
<td>Sportsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After the activity on profiling, the debrief included revealing some facts about the person in the photo and subsequently identifying the stereotype that the group had used in articulating their response. After each photograph had been discussed, an introduction to where stereotypes come from and how they are perpetuated was provided to the participants. This was followed by a discussion on the need for breaking stereotypes.
Introducing Stereotypes and Active Coexistence

Through a discussion with the students Kh. Samuel Poumai drew out a list of indicators of a stereotype is.

**Stereotype**

- Commonly held and overly simplified perceptions, generalizations, and judgments about all members of a particular group.
- Consensual beliefs about the characteristic of a group
- May be true to some extent but not for all

The group then went on to examine why, as human beings, one stereotypes. The responses were then categorized by the facilitator as follows:-

**Social Categorizing Process**

- To make our daily life easier
- Utility and functionality
- Easier decision making
- In favour/ not in favour (in group/ out of group)
- Identify friends and threats.
- Understanding and Prediction

**Social Learning**

- Learn from parents, peers, media, others
- To make ourselves feel better
- Stereotyping is a shortcut

Examining through this process what happens when one is stereotyping, the group discussed the following:-
• Generalization or simplification process that helps people categorize and understand their world, but at the same time it often leads to error.
• How it affects information processing, interpretation and attention
• Its role in understanding when no other information is available

This led the group to examine the reasons which lead people to stereotype and the categories that one uses to stereotype people. These according to the participants were:-

• Class
• Economic status
• Ethnicity
• Religion
• Culture
• Region
• Gender
• Political
• Environment

The participants then discussed the effects of stereotyping and came to the conclusion that stereotypes escalate conflicts between two people or groups and build anger and hatred (violence-fight). They also lead to biases, prejudices (attitude/act, verbal/non-verbal) and discrimination (unfair treatment-behavior).

After this discussion the facilitator elucidated the meaning of coexistence and the group came up with its definition of coexistence. They identified the following as elements of coexistence:-

• To live and exist together in mutual tolerance
• Recognize and live with difference
• Relationship where one party is not trying to destroy the other
• Interact with a commitment to tolerate
• Mutual respect
• Agreement to resolve conflict without using violence

Megha Rawat then shared the difference between active and passive coexistence with the group as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive Coexistence</th>
<th>Active Coexistence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tolerate differences</td>
<td>Embrace differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unequal power</td>
<td>Recognition and respect for diversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less intergroup contact</td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less equality</td>
<td>Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unjust</td>
<td>Equal access to resources and opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential of violent outcome when in conflict</td>
<td>Sustainable Peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the session students walked to the Lodhi Gardens for a picnic-lunch. At the Gardens Shruti Sharma involved them in team building games to initiate inter mixing of the participants with their peers from other states. The lunch menu was selected to reinforce workshop theme. It constituted of Matka Peer Biryani. The students were given the following information on Matka Peer Biryani:

Situated just off the Mathura Road near Pragiti Maidan on a small hillock is the Dargah of Baba Matka Pir. Baba Matka Pir is the more popular name of the Qalandari Sufi Saint Hazrat Sheikh Abu Bakr Tusi Haideri Qalandari Rahmatullah who lies buried here. On your arrival at the dargah you are welcomed with the sight of earthen pots hanging from a keeker tree and nearby shops selling earthen pots- matka, roasted grams – dal and jaggery – gur, the usual offering to the revered one. Clad in clean, white kurta-pyjamas, white beard flowing down to his chest, 90-year-old Baboo Shahi is a familiar sight to regulars at his Matka Peer Biryani shop — a ramshackle open shed, really,
with degchis (pots) of various sizes simmering on coal fires, giving off mouth-watering smells. He says: “My ancestor was a chef in Emperor Shah Jahan’s kitchen. Our family goes back even earlier. One of my ancestors was a bawarchi (cook) for Qutubuddin Aibak and he was so happy that he gave him 1,000 gaj (yards) in Mehrauli and some silver coins to build a mosque —Pankhewala Mosque — which for a long time was the mosque for all bawarchis.”

The students were then divided into two groups to take a heritage walk to the Humayun’s Tomb and the Gandhi Smriti, Tees January Marg. Each group took turns to visit the two sites.
Heritage Walk
Learning Active Coexistence from Delhi’s Syncretic Traditions – Humayun’s Tomb

The heritage walk was facilitated by Sadia Dehlvi. The walk started from the Tomb of Isah Khan, an Afghan noble in the court of Sher Shah Suri and his son Islam Shah Suri, of the Sur dynasty, who fought the Mughal Empire. At the edge of the complex, across from the tomb, lies a mosque with noticeable mehrabs. It is known as Isa Khan’s Mosque, and was built along with the Tomb. Dehlvi explained the relevance of the place where the mosque was built and its proximity to Sufi Saint Nizamuddin Aulia’s Dargah. After walking around this area, the students walked to the main building of the complex. It was soon discovered that the students from Vidya and Child had previously visited the monument. The students from Vidya and Child thus offered to become guides for their friends and the students were divided into groups of 5 and asked to explore the Tomb together for the next half an hour.

The students explored the main tomb of Humayun and also the tomb known as *Nai Ka Maqbara* or the Tomb of the Barber. They were informed that the tomb was made for the barber as in the olden times only the barber could hold a blade to the king’s neck and thus was considered to be a close confidante and friend of the king.

After a walk around the complex the group sat in the garden for a discussion with the facilitator. Dehlvi shared her insights on the syncretic traditions of Delhi and the importance of recognizing that every human being had multiple identities. She explained to the students that she feels very offended when people ask her whether she is an Indian first or a Muslim first? She said: “Such questions are wrong as...”
no one is made of one identity; for example I am a mother, a wife, an Indian, a Muslim, a Sufi, an author, a traveler, etc; you may be a Buddhist, a son/daughter, an Indian, a global citizen with responsibility towards the planet with increasing climate change and so forth; in the end we must contribute in our own way towards humanity as God has given this gift of life for this purpose.”

Building on this conversation about identities, Dehlvi ventured into explaining the syncretic past of the city of Delhi. She explained how the city has a very absorbing nature as people from all states come here for various reasons: professional reasons, for education etc. This has been true of Delhi for centuries as it has been the capital and the seat of power for several Indian kingdoms. Delhi has not only been absorbing of this diversity but has also taken the color of the people who came here. Pointing to the domes of Humayun’s Tomb, she explained how the balconies have chhatris (umbrellas), a feature that was adopted from Hindu Rajput architecture. The architecture is reflective of the pluralistic ethos.

Traditionally, according to Dehlvi, Delhi has had a Ganga-Jamuni Tahzeeb (Syncretic culture), with people from different religions celebrating different festivals together. She remarked that politicians had tried to divide people on the basis of religion but to her people had rejected these divisive ideas through the ballot. Talking about religious polarization, Dehlvi elucidated the example of her son, studying in the Fine Arts College in Delhi University, who came home disturbed recently as a classmate called him the son of an invader as he was a Muslim. He still had not come to terms with this and was in shock, she shared. She then went on to encourage the youth to remember that they were all Gandhians at heart and that it was the responsibility of this generation to question any attacks on the pluralistic traditions of the country. As young students, they needed to have the right information and values and challenge false notions of radical elements in the society.

She then went on to give a brief history of Sufism in the city, explaining how it was instrumental in developing pluralist ethos of Delhi. She
explained that Sufism is the classical understanding of Islam. There are some people who challenge this notion and say it is something new. Dehlvi argued that those who made such assertions were radical elements who had usurped the message of Islam to fulfill their vested interest. She observed that people who converted to Islam in India did not do so out of fear but to rid themselves of discrimination or in acceptance of the message of love for all, peace and humanity given by the Sufi Saints.

Talking about Sufism in Delhi, she sketched the history of Chishti Sufism, linking it to Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia’s Dargah (Mausoleum). She highlighted how this living monument is still used by his followers to pray. She also emphasized that the followers of the Aulia are of different religions but are welcomed to pray at his Mausoleum.

Walking the students down the lineage of Hazrat Nizamuddin, Dehlvi eloquently spoke about the coming of the Chishti order to India through Ajmer’s Mohinuddin Chishti, followed by Khwaja Qutab of Qutab Minar fame. She also mentioned Baba Fareed of Pak Pathan Lahore whose 134 hymns are part of the Sikh sacred book, the Guru Granth Sahib and finally described the arrival of Nizamuddin Aulia of Delhi.

Talking about the syncretic practices visible in Sufi traditions, she informed the participants that the Sufi music was adopted from the Hindu tradition of singing *bhajans* and *kirtan* (singing of hymns collectively). She went on to talk about the poet Amir Khusrow, who is sometimes credited with inventing the musical instruments *sitar* and *tabla* and the classical musical compositions called *Tarana* and *Bahar*. The entire *Khayal Gayaki* goes back to Amir Khusrow; before that classical music was in the form of Dhrupad. Hindustani classical music transformed with the genius of Amir Khusrow and the Persian influence that he brought to the music. Thus, Delhi came to the forefront of this pluralistic tradition with its culture intermingling to create something unique. She talked about how the festival of spring *Basant Panchmi*, which is a Hindu festival, was also celebrated in the Dargah of Nizamuddin Aulia because of Hazarat Amir Khusrow. Even now,
700 years later, this festival is celebrated in the Dargah highlighting the composite culture of Delhi.

Talking about the genius of Khusrow she also highlighted how he was the first poet of Urdu and Hindi. Delhvi then went on to elucidate the history of the two languages Urdu and Hindi. She explained that 700 years ago Urdu was known as Rekhta and Hindi was known as Khadi Boli. Urdu language developed in Delhi and was influenced by Turkish, Khari Boli, Afghani, Central Asian languages and Persian. The word Urdu is a Turkish word which means battalion and thus some people believe that the language originated in the army camps of Delhi because of the interactions between soldiers from diverse geographical regions. Urdu is not related to Islam. Maulana Azad thus wanted to call it Hindustani, keeping both the Arabic and Devnagari scripts, and adopted as the national language of India. This didn’t happen and subsequently because of this and other issues he resigned from the Indian government. After the Partition of the Subcontinent, since Pakistan adopted Urdu as its State language, attempts were made to kill the language. But it was important to remember that the birth place of Urdu was Delhi. Now there is a rise in interest for this language and an attempt is being made to revive it, she concluded.

**Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti**

The heritage Walk to Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti was designed with the objective of linking peace building work to social transformation through non-violence, drawing inspiration from the freedom movement and the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. The purpose of the session was to also highlight how Gandhi, worked to secure a pluralistic and secular vision of the country. The session was conducted by Jaya Iyer a theatre person and trainer working in the field of youth empowerment.

The session started with Iyer asking the participants to introduce themselves and share one word that they associated with Mahatma Gandhi. The participants used words like leader, politeness, friendly,
peacemaker, charkha, generosity, man of principles non-violence, social work, Bapu, Father of the Nation, etc. Iyer initiated the walk with a description of the significance of the Museum and its location- Birla House. She said,

“On the 30 January 1948 Gandhi ji was killed and around 18 days before that, Gandhi ji went on his last fast. He was coming from Bengal and was going to Pakistan with a mission, as he felt that people who want to leave their houses could leave but nobody should leave their house because of fear. He had a vision that he would take people who had come to Punjab from Pakistan side of Punjab and bring back people from the other side who had left out of fear to India. He was on this long March from Bengal to do so, and he came to Delhi. When he arrived in Delhi, he saw the city was burning and there was a lot of communal violence. When he came here he said this was not the kind of Delhi he wanted. As the entire nation looks at Delhi and it is the heart of Hindustan and if something happens here it gets mirrored everywhere. He said this should be a place of peace. He requested that all mosques and dargahs, specially Qutubuddin Khakhee’s Dargah in Mehruali which was taken over by refugees, should be handed back to their keepers. He made an announcement that he will go on fast till everybody in this city feels that the city belongs to them and is a city of peace. He was 78 years old then and not well when he said this. The entire world was watching. All the religious leaders of Delhi from temples, gurudwaras, and mosques including political parties with religious leanings came together and issued a statement that they will establish peace; this happened on 19th January and he broke his fast. On 20th January a bomb was thrown at him but he escaped. Everyone said Bapu you need security. To this Gandhi ji responded that he is going to pray to God and if he takes security and goes to pray to him that means that he does not believe in him so he has decided to go to God as vulnerable as he is. Then he laughed and said maybe in some years from now the person who threw a bomb at me will be worshiped as an avatar of god, and on 30th January he walked down this path that we are walking on and the very same group which hurled the bomb came back and assassinated him, and the irony is that today
there is a demand to make a temple for Godse, the man who assassinated Gandhi ji.”

The students walked down the path that Mahatma Gandhi took on the last day of his life with a new friend and talked to each other about other non-violent leaders in today’s day and age. Iyer then had a discussion with the group about why it was important to talk about the motives behind the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. Highlighting the point Iyer said that sometimes the strongest resistance to an individual’s new ideas comes from within his/her community and not from those considered as outsiders. It was important to keep this in mind as one made a resolve to bring about change in attitudes.

The group then went for a guided tour of the museum. The group saw the exhibits which ennumerated events and stories that influenced and inspired Gandhi. The syncretic nature of Indian society was also discussed as Iyer narrated the life influences of Gandhi and shared that Gandhi’s mother was part of a religious group called the Pranamis. Pranamis are people who take the holy Quran to the Hindu temple. They believe themselves to be both Hindu and Muslim. At this point she made a distinction between secular traditions and syncretic traditions of India. She went on to highlight that if the participants traced their roots they would find that they were more syncretic in the past than they are today. As an example Iyer cited the poetry of Lal Ded of Kashmir who used the words Allah and Shiva interchangeably in her poems. She argued that Indians were more fluid with their identities and they were not as rigid as they are today. This fluidity made a person like Gandhi unable to comprehend why people from different religions should live separately.

She highlighted that lived pluralism and diversity were traits of the Indian Sub-continent. Iyer informed the group that 2015 marks 100 years of Gandhi’s civil disobedience work in South Africa and return to India. She pointed out that non-violent movements for social change take a long time to bear fruits. Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 and in 1995 South Africa had its first democratic election. On his
return to India Gandhi travelled for two years to get insights into the struggles of the people of India.

Though one associates Gandhi only with the freedom movement of India, Iyer drew the attention of the students to the fact that in the last 10-12 years of his life Gandhi worked on village reconstruction in Vardha. This part of his work is often neglected in our collective memory. He worked on *sarvodaya, gram swaraj* (Village reconstruction) through Khadi and Kheti (Farming), food, health, sanitation, animal rearing, gender equality, temple access to untouchables, etc. Iyer explained to the students that it was important to recall the last 15 years of his work on ecology, economics and village reconstruction as it had deep relevance in our lives today. As the students went around looking at the photographs of Gandhi’s work they also read out his quotes under each photograph. As the students discovered Gandhi’s vision for India, Iyer explained, “*Unless the villages are self-sufficient true freedom will not come, as the cities can act like the new imperial powers towards the villages. There is something that environmentalists are talking about today through the concept of food miles and carbon footprints; these are examples showing we are sustaining the same mentality as the imperialist.*”

Iyer then shared with the group that Gandhi had a mantra to challenge this notion. He believed that food should come from within 5 miles and housing from within 25 miles. She said that Gandhi wanted to start this idea from the villages and extend it to the cities. Lastly, Iyer highlighted how non-violence in action was not limited to building bridges across religious divides but was also essential in our daily practices. It should extend to the food we eat, the house we live in. Active coexistence looks at all these notions linked to our lives; it has to be **holistic non-violence**, caring about how every action of individual impacts people and ecology.

The day ended with students sharing a word to describe what they learnt from the session. Some of the reflections of the students were:-

- Peace
• Unity
• We should not forget our history
• We should speak up against injustices
• Harmony
• Humanity
• Courage
• Determination
• Strength
• Change
Nation Building: Understanding the Challenges

The second day began with the students from Kashmir and Manipur singing a song for the participants from Delhi accompanied on the guitar by Thangboi, the teacher facilitator from Manipur.

This was followed by a feedback session. Questions were written on chart paper and posted on the wall. The students were given post it’s to respond to the questions. Following are the student responses:

**What was the best part about yesterday?**

- *The best part about yesterday was that I made many new friends and learnt to adjust with others.*
- *The stereotype activity was really interesting and fun and also the trip.*
- *Studying and looking about our national father (Mahatma Gandhi) and Humayun’s tomb*
- *The interesting thing about this workshop is mingling of all religions, caste, region etc. It is good, this I observed that we all are very friendly with each other.*
- *We made some new friends with Manipur, came to know what Delhi people think about other states.*
- *I learnt to build a conversation between people of different states and realized they aren’t different at all*
- *It’s about the stereotyping, how and what we have to learn in our life. That activity was so fantastic and also we roamed about many places and we learnt many things about them.*

**What new things did you find out about friends from other states?**

- *From my friends of Kashmir, not all of them are violent but some of them are sweet.*
- *Manipur students are friendly and good people*
• Actually I thought Delhites not being too friendly but they were quite good and Manipuris too were nice.

• The things which I learnt from others were that no matter from which states we are or which culture we follow, humanity is the greatest.

• Manipur people have different languages and tribes

• Delhi people are positive

• Kashmir is called Jannat and Kashmir people wearing long cloth.

• I found that new friends from Manipur had a very big heart, they are always ready to help anyone.

• We interacted with people from Manipur and Delhi and learn about their culture. I had never talked to any northeastern person, so I learnt about them, their views and it's same about Delhites.

What are you eager to talk about?

• I want to learn more about the culture of Manipur

• More about active coexistence

• Mujhe Kashmir ki barey main aur kuch janna hain. (I want to know more about Kashmir)

• I want to talk about Kashmir students because they don’t want to talk to us.

• Want to talk about love, peace and cultures to reunite our country

• I’m eager to talk about our cultures, schools info and so much more

• More about each state. This includes their state staple food, what is the state famous for, what kind of people they are.

• I’m eager to learn about the lifestyle and living of the people there, the atmosphere and thinking of the localities

• What I want to learn is that to inspire more to our mind and to share about everything

• I suggest extending the workshop because I think two days aren’t sufficient.

• More about stereotype and peace
This feedback demonstrated that some of the preconceived notions that the groups had about each other, like Delhi people are not interested in other states and are arrogant, that Manipuri students are shy and non-interactive and that Kashmiri students are conservative got dispelled. It also pointed out that there was much curiosity about each other’s states and realities.

The purpose of this session was to prepare the participants for the day’s activities and open up the right side of the brain to allow the rest of the day to flow with logic and imagination in tandem. Shruti Sharma, a theatre person who works with corporate and non-corporate organization using theatre as tool of self-reflection, facilitated the session.

Sharma started the day by playing a game titled ‘Kangaroo’ as it was felt that the group had not yet familiarized themselves which each other’s names. The students were paired up and stood in a circle, with one member of the pair as mother kangaroo and the other member as baby kangaroo. The students who were baby kangaroos had to call each other’s name and try to run away from the mother kangaroo to play with their friends. This activity was well received by the participants and became a means to learn each other’s names.

This was followed by the game ‘Commit’, a game played while walking around the room, asking participants to stop and close their eyes immediately, and then asking them various questions like, where in the room is the ceiling, floor, door, red bag, the projector and moving to more complex things like a particular individual in the room. The game sought to make the students aware of the space and of each other so that their senses were heightened.

Next, the participants were divided into three groups; each group had to make a few still images of objects and scenes using their body in different positions and postures. From becoming a washing machine to a gate, the students worked as a team to build images.

The activities in this section made the students comfortable with each other and ready for the group work of nation building that followed.
The purpose of the Nation building exercise was to provide space to the students from different states to collectively envision the kind of nation they wanted to live in and reflect on the challenges they encountered with regard to their commitment to active coexistence. This activity was facilitated by Shreya Jani, a peace educator and the Managing Trustee of STEP Trust.

The students were divided into 3 groups and each group was assigned to be part of an imaginary nation. 3 internal media people were designated for each group, 1 international media person and one Human Rights Watch person were also appointed.

The following instructions were given to each nation and the media group:

i. The media group will be reporting once every 30 mins.

ii. One head of state will speak at the nation announcement ceremony from each of the nation state.

iii. Each group has to construct their own nation based on what they believe to be the best practices and the ethics they would like their citizens to uphold, along with the infrastructure and foreign policy. Things to be included in building a Nation were:

   a) History
   b) Culture – language, dance, food, songs, stories, clothing
   c) Religion – at least two per nation
   d) The freedom given to the media

The topographical information of each nation was then distributed to them as follows:

**Nation A**

- Largest piece of land
- Land locked country with northern tip having shared border with Nation B and C
• Mountains shared with Nation B
• Largest population
• 2 major rivers originating from Nation B going into country C
• Area under forests, 30%

**Nation B**

• Shared mountains with Nation A with other smaller ranges across the country, which are rich in minerals.
• Second largest population.
• Two major rivers going into Nation A and two more into Nation C going into the ocean.
• Northern tip shared borders with Nation A and C and ocean on one side.
• Smallest piece of land
• Area under forests 40%

**Nation C**

• Smallest population
• Second largest piece of land
• Northern tip shared borders with Nation A and B and ocean on one side.
• Three rivers originating in the country and two coming from nation A starting in Nation B, second into Nation B. Network of 15 small rivers
• Least populated amongst all nations
• Area under forests 60%

The students were given 1 hour to discuss the details of their nations and the international media, local media and human rights group made notes of the process of nation building. After the discussion they nominated their heads of states to come and introduce their nations to the world at the international conference set up for them.
Nation C introduced its nation first and named it Meditatia, headed by its president Mudasir Faiyaz (Kashmiri Participant). This is what he shared about his nation:

General Guiding Principles: Meditatia is a land of love and peace; in this nation everyone is treated as an equal. There are no bonded labors and everyone has the freedom of speech. The foreign policy of this nation was to cooperate with all countries and resolve conflicts peacefully. It had a unique grain called Chawla, which is very nutritious and only grown in this country, which it would like to trade with other countries. This grain is also the staple diet of the people of this nation.

History: According to its history the country was divided into 3 tribes: Kola, Elira and Prem; they had 3 languages that were Kokus, Anna and Kru. Kola was the dominating and powerful tribe, suppressing other tribes. From this country there was a man by the name of Honee who went abroad to seek education and he converted to Buddhism. On his return he united all the tribes with the message of peace and love and declared a new common language called Boelish. In this new united country inter-tribe marriages were allowed, people were equal before law and resources were shared. 4th of Feb was declared the National Day and the national anthem was created and sung on this day. The National Anthem is:

   Bo Mu Su
   (Peace love equality)
   Hu Ku Du
   (Live treat and enjoy)

The floor was then opened to media and human rights group to ask questions.

The international media asked whether the country was secular? Also if an atheist in the country would have equal rights? To which the President responded that their country was not secular but all citizens had the right to freedom of religion. No religion could dominate: if someone tried to dominate they were prevented by law. There were some more questions vis a vis women’s rights and other policies of
the nation. Then Human Rights activist flagged that it was observed that minority voices were not taken into account while building the nation. To this the President diplomatically answered that if people looked quiet during the process it should not be seen as an indicator of non-participation, it was only because they were thinking.

Nation A introduced its nation next and called themselves Hinter Land - Driti (Delhi Participant), as the Prime Minister, introducing her country as Hinter Land, said: “A country is said to be in harmony only when there is peace and unity amongst all.” Throwing light on the history and culture of Hinter Land she said: “We believe that God resides in all and represents affection and peace.” Hinter Land is a secular nation and ensures that they dedicate 2 months of each calendar year to each of the major religions of their country; for example January and February are dedicated to Hinduism, the next two to Sikhism, followed by Jainism, then Islam, Christianity and Buddhism. Through this practice the citizens get to know about other people’s cultural, religious practices, communities and also their views of each other’s community as well as what they think of the other. Hinter Land according to them is a developed nation with good technology. The Prime Minister also reiterated the commitment to gender equality by stating that she herself was a woman in an important position of governance in the country and was very approachable to her people who could come and discuss any problems with her. The country according to her was committed to equality for all. In her country she urged the citizen to work hand in hand with government to ensure harmony and peace for all.

The media asked her what was the national language of the country, to which she responded it was Hindi. She also assured the media that the country was working very hard to ensure equal property rights for women and building many institutions for education, from schools to colleges.

The Human Rights worker asked the Prime Minister what were the measures to ensure women’s security in her country, to which she responded that there were women driven auto rickshaws and taxis in
the country to ensure safe transport for the women in her country and that schools had special classes to teach young people about gender equality in her country.

Nation B introduced its nation as Peace Land with its president as Manju Raut (Delhi Participant). The president of Peace Land spoke about her country and said that her nation was committed to harmony in society so that all could prosper and lead a better life. To ensure this, the country gave the following rights- Right against poverty, right for protection against terrorism and natural disaster in the constitution of the nation. Peace Land was committed to the values of living in unity and respect for all religions, ensuring food, proper management of natural disasters and the environment. Talking about its commitment to environment she said that the nation currently had hydropower plants which fulfilled 3% of the country’s energy requirement and they were trying to increase this further. Cars were used in the country only on odd numbered dates and on even numbered dates people were encouraged to walk and use cycles. Gender education was given in school to break gender stereotyping for both men and women. Furthermore the country was committed to its local handicrafts and people were encouraged to learn these skills. Their economy was based on local crafts.

Media group questioned the president on the country’s gender education and learnt that the country saw that even men were victims of gender stereotyping and the country was working to break these stereotypes too.

The Human Rights group talked about the need for the country to accommodate minority voices to which the president agreed.

It was interesting to see that each of the groups focused on contemporary issues, ranging from gender equality, women’s security, environmental degradation to human rights and terrorism. This served the purpose of the workshop well as it gave the students an opportunity to discuss some of these issues within their group and also deliberate on solutions for these problems.
After the introduction of the nations the participants were given newspapers, glue sticks, birthday streamers and scotch tape to build a physical representation of their nation. They all walked to Lodhi Gardens where they outlined the map of all three nations along with marking the river systems. Meditatia started building wind mills for energy, collected leaves and spread them to demarcate forests and also built a navy. Hinter Land built beautifully crafted paper trees to demarcate its forests, houses for its population and built schools and a cultural center; Peace Land made trees, low cost housing and schools. As the nations were being prepared the international media and local media made news bulletin to update each nation on the activities of the other nations. 1 hour into the nation building process the first crisis was introduced to the nations by the international media. The crisis was that a Tsunami was to hit Meditatia shortly and all nations had to send their representatives to the Council of Nations meeting to address the upcoming crisis.

In the Council of Nations meeting representatives from all the three nations agreed to extend unconditional support, from technology to refugee status to the citizens of Meditatia. Even when coaxed by the facilitator to reconsider the cost to their own nations for the help to the affected nation, the representatives of the other nations remained adamant on helping the tsunami affected nation with no strings attached.

Then the simulation activity introduced the discovery of oil in the international waters shared by the three nations and some of the nations started getting a little more competitive with each other. At this point the third crisis was introduced. Some participants from the three different nations were pulled out while the nations were busy constructing to make a demand for freedom of an area that would have direct control of the oil and was on the northern tips of the nations where the shared boundaries were. At this point conflicts between the groups became more intense and a break was announced. During the break groups were instructed to try and influence participants from the group which was seeking freedom and between each other to find a reasonable solution to the problem. It was declared that a fish bowl
meeting of the Council of Nations would be held after the break to discuss the solutions suggested by each nation and to resolve the crisis.

During the fish bowl meeting the nations took the following stance through discussions and negotiations:-

1) Separatist Nation was willing to negotiate with all nations except Meditatia because they believed that the past record of Meditatia in being kind to its minorities was poor. They agreed to take technological support from other nations and share the profits of the oil with them; however they remained firm in wanting a separate state.

2) Meditatia relinquished all claims on the separate state but offered help for nation building with no conditionalities to the separatist nation. This however was rejected by the separatist nation.

3) Hinter Land offered technological support but wanted to hold a referendum in the separatist territory asking the people to vote on whether they wanted to be free or remain a part of Hinter Land. This referendum was rejected by the separatist nation.

4) Peace Land offered support in lieu of keeping its territory, a demand rejected by the separatist nation.

The meeting ended with the separatist nation wanting to declare independence and have no support from other nations.

During the debriefing session three major points were discussed by the participants:

1) Even when the rules of the game were made by the countries themselves why did all the nations only look after their national agenda and not work towards finding a peaceful solution except Meditatia which gave up all its claims. Talking about this the facilitator highlighted how the way to peace required a lot of courage and sometimes a need to give up individual aspirations in order to understand with compassion the problems from the perspective of others. However, when negotiating a peaceful solution, it was also
important to understand the importance of each demand from the perspective of the other.

2) Talking about secularism and how all three nations came up with their own notion of secularism it was highlighted that active coexistence meant a constant dialogue between diversities and the need to understand the intentions of each group to best make an action meaningful to as many parties as possible. Here the group also discussed India’s context and the notion of having a single national language and what it meant to each group whose language was not given a legal status. The question then posed to the group was when do you hold your identity, what makes us rigid in holding our identities and at what cost?

3) The group discussed the challenges to active coexistence and their commitment to keeping the dialogue on diversity alive and gathering more information to understand diversity and how one can work with each other through peaceful means. The group agreed that conflict is natural when such diversity comes into play but the will of the communities to have an honest dialogue should be strong enough to seek solutions towards active coexistence.

With a view to nudge the participants to reflect on how little we know of people living in other parts of the country, a quiz assessed their awareness levels in the penultimate session. In the first round none of the teams were able to give the right answer to the questions based on other states.

In the second round the Delhi students were asked a question based on their own city and they could not answer the question. However the Kashmiri students were able to answer the question - what is the full form of DMRC.

In the end Kashmiri participants were able to answer 2 questions, Manipur and Delhi both answered one question correctly. All the students were very happy and felt they learnt a lot from the quiz and wished the quiz was longer. Given below are the questions from the quiz:
WHAT ARE THE THREE MAIN LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR? (M)
- Kashmiri
- Dogri
- Ladakhi

WHAT IS THE DACHIGAM NATIONAL PARK FAMOUS FOR? (D)
- Kashmir Stag
- (Hangul)

LOTUS TEMPLE A TEMPLE OF WHICH FAITH? (M)
The Bahá'í Faith
(Persian: بانیت Bahá'íyyat, Arabic: الBahá'í zwarte)
(1) is a monotheistic
religion which
emphasizes the
spiritual unity of all
humankind

WHAT IS THE STATE BIRD OF DELHI? (D)
- Common House Sparrow

WHAT IS RAJ GHAT (K)?
- Gandhi Ji's Memorial

WHICH FLOWER IS FOUND ONLY IN MANIPUR AD NO WHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD? (D)
- Shirl (Silkie) Lily
- (Lilium Mackliniae)

WHAT IS THE WINTER CAPITAL OF J&K? (M)
- Civil Secretariat, Jammu

NAME THE TREE THAT IS INTEGRAL TO KASHMIRI CULTURE? (D)
Called Shoomor in the Kashmiri language, the Chinar tree is an integral part of Kashmiri culture. Almost every village in the valley has a Chinar tree.
1. What is the name of the largest fresh water lake in Manipur? (K)  
   - Loktak Lake

2. Which are the three UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Delhi? (K)  
   - Red Fort
   - Humayun's Tomb
   - Qutub Minar

3. What is the full form of DMRC? (K)  
   - Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Limited

4. What is the state bird of Manipur? (M)  
   - The Nongsin or Mrs. Hume's Bar Pheasant (Syrmaticus humiae) is the state bird of Manipur. In local language/dialect, it is called Nongsin, Leiting-ko, Noihihi-ko, (Manipur), Thairhokhhe (Tangkhul), and Liekakhia (Kanglei).
Participant Feedback

The workshop closed with an evaluation and feedback session in which the participants shared their learnings and provided inputs to FAEA-WISCOMP on changes that could be made and recommendations for future interactions.

The workshop included the participation of 32 high school students from Kashmir, Manipur and Delhi. The diversity of the group (in terms of the representation of different religions, ethnicities, and sects) was a core strength of the workshop. In their observations, many participants also commented on this—particularly with respect to how this diversity in the profiles and backgrounds of the participants enriched the workshop experience.

Learnings and takeaways

In the post-workshop questionnaire, participants made the following statements in response to a question about their learning from the interaction (or what they saw as the accomplishments of the workshop):

Kashmiri participants: I learnt….

• Interaction is a learning experience.
• Made friends with students from Manipur and Delhi; they are very nice and friendly.
• Understood the complexity of a diverse country and got a sense of how to deal with them.
• How to take part in discussions and interact with people unknown to me.
• I will contribute as much as possible to promote peace and coexistence.
• I learnt values like mutual cooperation, coexistence, understanding, speaking up against the evils and lot more.
• I would have a positive attitude towards people of other states.

Delhi participants: I learnt….

• Widened my thought and views about society, it enabled me to introspect that all of us living in different geographical areas but are united by heart.
• In my family if anyone talks stereotypically then I would stop them.
• I would not judge people on any grounds or half information provided.
• Understand the nature of prejudice, bias, stereotype and discrimination.
• A clear view that humanity exists, and should see life differently and not be judgmental.
• Changed a lot of stereotypical notions in my mind and me understand things about my country.
• This workshop helps understand the diversity of India.
• Trust other people and also help me blend in.
• I learnt to adjust to diversity I faced and work together with diversity.

Manipur participants: I learnt…..

• Learnt about people from different places and about unity amongst the different states.
• Problem solving and responding to conflict together with my friends from Kashmir and Delhi.
• To ask questions.
• Interact with people who are strangers in my school, family and community or anywhere else.
• Making new friends.
Students from different places, schools, religions or culture got to know each other through this workshop and integrating for a better future.

When faced with a conflict I will seek peaceful solution.

Participants reported diverse learnings from the workshop. The majority of these were rooted in shifts in perceptions of those considered to be ‘the other’ as well as improvements in individual participant’s self-esteem and faith in their own capabilities to effect change.

Interestingly, an important takeaway (for participants from both Delhi and Kashmir) was one that they did not articulate as a pre-workshop expectation. This was with respect to the positive impact of the workshop on their self-image and the construction of an identity that was affirming and which did not draw strength from an ‘us versus them’ worldview. Participants thus talked about how the workshop had increased their ‘self-esteem’, taught them how to ‘speak in public with confidence’, and helped them to shed inhibitions and share their true feelings without fear. An overwhelming majority talked about how they felt more confident about themselves.

In addition to the above responses, participants shared a diverse range of learning (in the feedback forms and closing session). These are shared below:

- The workshop changed a lot of my stereotypical notions and made me understand very knowledgeable things about my country. I gained from here to deal with people of various kind. (a participant from Delhi)

- The workshop enabled us to understand that conflict has both positive and negative facets. The different religions and practices in a diverse India can work peacefully without violence to find solutions to the problems. We understood the meaning of active coexistence in a vivid

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4 In order to maintain authenticity of the ideas shared by the participants, no grammatical corrections have been made.
India. Interaction with others helped me be confident and make friends. Also overcome some stereotypes. (a participant from Delhi)

- I got know people from different places. I learnt to have unity amongst different states and surely will share with others back home how people interacted with me. I like them because they have given me a good opportunity to attend such unique workshop. (a participant from Manipur)

- I felt so comfortable and good when I worked with my friends from Kashmir and Delhi. When there is a conflict between others and me I will solve the problem with peaceful way. Sometimes we lose our minds but I will try and use the peaceful ways that we learnt here to make others happy. (a participant from Manipur)

- Students from different places, schools, religions and culture got to know each other throughout this workshop and integrating for a better further generation. (a participant from Manipur)

- According to me every second was quite interesting but the most I enjoyed to explore the life of mixed cultures and visit to new places as a group. (a participant from Kashmir)

- I learnt some values like mutual cooperation, coexistence, understanding others and speaking up against social evils a lot more. (a participant from Kashmir)

Interestingly, the methodology for interaction that was used for conducting the sessions received extremely positive feedback. In fact, the use of interactive and creative methodologies helped the facilitators and the participants to get the most out of the topics that were discussed. Not only did it enable participants to learn about one another at a deeper level, it created an enabling context where all students were able to speak without inhibitions.

- It was not boring, staying at only one place. The small picnic and games were very good and we learnt a lot in this workshop. I loved it. (Kashmir)
• What I liked the best about the workshop was that we learnt new things, we were given space to ask questions and respond to each other. We worked together to solve problems. (Manipur)

• I liked the most about the workshop the learning by doing method. (Kashmir)

• The thing I liked the most about this workshop is the activities and mostly outdoor activities. (Manipur)

• This workshop helped me to believe and trust other people and also helped me to blend in with them. (Delhi)

• I enjoyed myself in this workshop a lot and learnt a lot from interacting with other participants. It was the first time I met people from different states and this is a blessing. (Delhi)

Participants found the workshop organization to be impeccable. Reflecting the views of his co-participants a participant from Delhi said: ‘This workshop helped us understand the diversity of India to a great extent. It made us interact and make new friends from different states. It increased my capacity to make new friends and believe in humanity more than any kind of religion, culture, sect etc. According to me this was an ideal platform to make interaction with people and learn how to adjust with everyone, so there is nothing as such which I would like to change in it.”

In response to the question about constraints and recommendations for future interactions, majority of participants found each session/theme to be unique, well-planned, interactive, and valuable. However, the participants felt that if the workshop duration extended to at least four days organizers would be able to include culture-oriented activities wherein through presentations and performances, students could develop a more nuanced understanding of life on ‘the other side’.
Workshop Program

February 13, 2015  (Friday)

Venue: Lecture Hall, India International Center

Session 1
Workshop Introduction & Ice Breakers
Facilitator: Megha Rawat & Kh Samuel Poumai
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Tea Break & Group Work
11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Session 2
I Am Not A Stereotype
Resource Person: Megha Rawat & Kh Samuel Poumai
Time: 11:15 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lunch
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Picnic in Lodhi Garden & Theatre Games
Facilitator: Shruti Sharma

Session 3: Active Coexistence Learning from Delhi & the Legacy of Freedom Movement
Group A: Humayun’s Tomb
Resource Person: Sadia Dehelvi
Group B: Gandhi Smriti & Darshan Samiti, Tees January Marg
Resource Person: Jaimala Iyer
Time: 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Session 4: Active Coexistence Learning from Delhi & the Legacy of Freedom Movement
Group A: Gandhi Smriti & Darshan Samiti, Tees January Marg
Resource Person: Jaimala Iyer
Group B: Humayun’s Tomb
Resource Person: Sadia Dehelvi
Time: 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
February 14, 2015 (Saturday)

Magnolia Hall, India Habitat Center

Session 5
Feedback & Trust Building Through Theatre
Resource Person: Shruti Sharma
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Break
11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Session 5
Nation Building Game
Resource Person: Shreya Jani & Kh Samuel Poumai
Time: 11:15 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Venue: Lodhi Garden

Lunch
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Session 5 (continued)
Nation Building Game (Debriefing)
Resource Person: Shreya Jani, Megha Rawat & Kh Samuel Poumai
Time: 2:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

Tea Break
3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Session 6
Quiz: Active Coexistence
Resource Person: Shreya Jani & Shruti Sharma
4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Session 7
Feedback & Way forward
4:45 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.
Profiles of the facilitators

Jaimala Iyer has over two and a half decades of experience in the world of art, social development and ecological integrity through theater, education, social action, organizational development, self-work and spirituality. She has worked extensively with NGOs, government supported autonomous institutions, universities, community groups and individuals. Ms. Iyer has helped create over 500 street plays and several stage plays; developed programs for youth and adolescents; facilitated a wide range of trainings and workshops, and curated several public festivals and events. She is a Bharatanatyam dancer and Kalari Payattu practitioner, heritage guide, and trekker who paints and writes occasionally. She trained under Ebrahim Alkazi in theatre direction and was awarded UNESCO Aschberg bursary to study the Theater of the Oppressed with Augusto Boal. Currently, she is a guest faculty in three colleges and is associated with Music Therapy Trust, India. She is also leading a campaign on food justice in Delhi with Oxfam and developing a life skills curriculum for shelter homes. She is an alumna of WISCOMP Scholar of Peace Fellowship.

Kh. Samuel Poumai Graduated from Delhi University and completed Certificate Program in “Conflict Transformation across Cultures” from SIT Graduate Institute, Vermont USA. Samuel has over 4 years of experience as program co-ordinator, three years’ experience in facilitation and mobilisation in non-government organisation promoting Peace Education among youth, children and teachers to build inclusive communities.

Megha Rawat is a freelance content writer for K-5 Social Studies and a trainer for students and teachers in Peace Education and Media Literacy. She has worked with Standing Together to Enable Peace (STEP) Trust, conducting Peace Education in Juvenile Homes for boys in New Delhi. She has also done workshops for school and college students on Media literacy and Peace Education. At STEP, she was in charge of the Kashmir project for youth which was launched in September 2012 with their annual peace festival, Jashn E Aman. She has been a trainer and facilitator at 3 residential youth camps so far. She views young people as agents of change and
teachers as force multiplier’s who have the responsibility of harnessing the critical thinking and decision making skills and potential of the youth. Ms. Rawat has completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Conflict Transformation and Peace Building from Lady Shri Ram College and holds an MA in Sociology from IGNOU.

**Sadia Dehlvi** is a media person, a minority rights activist, writer and a columnist with the daily newspaper, *The Hindustan Times*, and frequently published in Frontline Urdu, Hindi and English newspapers and magazines. She is also the author of the book the *Sufi Courtyard* and has produced and scripted a number of documentaries and television programs, including *Amma and Family* (1995), starring Zohra Sehgal, a veteran stage actor.

**Shreya Jani** is the Managing Trustee of Standing Together to Enable Peace (STEP) Trust, one of the few organizations actively working towards educating and training for building a culture of peace and the primary force behind Delhi’s Annual Peace Festival. Ms. Jani is a curriculum developer, campaigner, trainer, and researcher for various NGOs, government institutions, and private schools across India. Her specialization is in the areas of ecology, education, and human rights. She holds a Masters’ degree in Peace Education from the UN-mandated University of Peace (San Jose, Costa Rica) and a Bachelor’s degree in Political Science, as well as a Diploma in Peacebuilding from Lady Shri Ram College. She also holds a Bachelor’s degree in Education from the Central Institute of Education, University of Delhi.

**Shruti Sharma** is a graduate of Lady Shri Ram College and theatre person and is the founder of T for Theatre Co. She has produced and directed two short plays Shoonya Batta Sannata and Kaali Ghadi written by Rahul Rai. She has previously also worked with Yellow Cat Arts Company, Theatre Garage Project and Push and Pull Theatre. She uses theatre for development techniques in these sessions directed at school children and adults.
List of the participants

Delhi

Vriti Monga - Heritage School
Jaanvi Makhija - Heritage School
Nitya Gupta - Heritage School
Tanushree Ganguli - Heritage School
Tejasvi Arora - Heritage School
Talim - Vidya and Child
Jahid Ansari - Vidya and Child
Md Sahil Sheikh - Vidya and Child
Archana Raut - Vidya and Child
Kanchan Saini - Vidya and Child
Manju Kumari - Vidya and Child
Abhshek Kumar - Vidya and Child

Manipur

Rouzam - Lalpuithluaii Foundation School
Rebecca Vungkhanlun - Lalpuithluaii Foundation School
Grace Hatneihoi - Soikholal Ideal High School
Jenny Chongneijem - Soikholal Ideal High School
Tracy Lawmnapar - Happy Heart School
Felecia Kimneipheng - Happy Heart School
Gracy Dangmei - Gilgal English High School
Dihaengpou Gnome - Gilgal English High School

**Kashmir**

Adil Bashir - Saadi School
Rakshanda Khursheed - Saadi School
Simran Feroz - Saadi School
Afnan Nabi - Saadi School
Bazila Tanveer - Saadi School
Rayees Hamid - Saadi School
Afeefa Farooq Fazli - Dolphin International School
Mudasir Fayaz - Dolphin International School
Ayan Irshad Bhat - Dolphin International School
Bosana Altaf - Dolphin International School
Zahid Zubair Bhat - Dolphin International School
Babra Ejaz - Dolphin International School

**Teacher Representatives**

Farooq Fazli - Dolphin International School, Pulwamah
Rouf Bhatt - Saidi School, Pulwamah
Devomitra Roy - Heritage School
Pradeep Saini - Vidya and Child
Thangboi - Manipur Schools
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