SVAYAMKRISHI PROJECT
Self-reliant and self-sustainable villages in India
After a successful three-day workshop with our young changemakers in June, 2019, we invited them for another workshop in December, 2019. In the previous workshop, the changemakers developed models of holistic and sustainable villages.

The goal of the December workshop was to help them think creatively when developing such models and overcome hurdles that they might face along their journey and finally, to help them effectively share their stories.
Workshop Lessons to Takeaway

Day 1

Rameez Alam, Change Manager, Venture & Fellowship, Ashoka

Rameez joined us to take the changemakers on a journey of introspection and goal setting. The changemakers reflected on their progress so far and identified the milestones they want to achieve. The activity-based sessions also introduced the changemakers to their own learning styles and how to maximise each learning opportunity.

Dr. Shruti Nair, Director, Youth Years, Ashoka

Our changemakers were taken for a session on the martial art of Jujitsu. The high-powered session fostered fun, camaraderie, and respect amongst our changemakers. Shruti helped them understand how the principles of this ancient art form can be used in our daily lives to create large-scale impact and mobilise our efforts to influence institutions.
**Workshop Lessons to Takeaway**

**Day 2**

Ashoka Fellow, Dr. Prasanta Tripathy, engaged with our changemakers to encourage them to create peer groups wherein peers are able to solve each other's problems - a key aspect of building a self-sufficient and sustainable community. Through his work, he introduced the changemakers to various methods of conducting research, capturing their efforts, and the possibility of creating large-scale geographical impact.

Ayush Bhatwal, Co-Founder of Third Wave Coffee Roasters

Ayush's talk on his journey as an entrepreneur served as a model of resilience and perseverance. He emphasized on the importance of community building and showed the changemakers how sometimes, our community can serve as the motivating factor to continue our efforts.
Day 2

Abhinav Agarwal, Founder of Anahad, Ashoka Fellow

Ashoka Fellow, Abhinav’s musical session portrayed the power of songwriting and bringing change through music and poetry. The interactive session encouraged the changemakers to recognise the infinite creative ways that can be used while problem-solving. Novel approaches to fundraising and prototyping were also introduced.

Shubhendu Sharma, Founder of Afforestt, INK, TED, and Ashoka Fellow

To inspire other young people to adopt changemaking skills and highlight the importance of growing up as changemakers, it is essential for changemakers to effectively communicate and share their stories. Ashoka Fellow and experienced TED fellow, Shubhendu taught the changemakers the art of public speaking. How to build convincing narratives and engage the audience were among the many topics discussed during the session.
- After speaking with multiple organizations, we have identified Connecting Dreams Foundation to assist and guide the changemakers. Connecting Dreams is an Ashoka partner and a rural development organization. They will help the changemakers and their teams on how to develop their ideas and on technical aspects as well.

- They have helped us identify four more changemakers, bringing our total to 10 changemakers.

- The identified changemakers have gained clarity on the issues they want to work on and have begun working on the same.

- Some of these issues include child rights, tribal rights, education, gender inequality, sanitation, and child trafficking.

- In addition to providing the above-mentioned support, Connecting Dreams will assist us in identifying more of such changemakers by reaching out within their own network.
With the new knowledge and connections that these rural young changemakers have gained from this experience, they are on their way to becoming equipped to face the challenges of strengthening their villages, making their livelihoods and communities more self-reliant and sustainable.

- As a next step, they will be undergoing an ‘Ideation to Action’ workshop. This workshop will take place at the Gandhi Smriti in New Delhi in February, 2020. The Gandhi Smriti is a museum dedicated to the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi.

- Following this workshop, field visits to the changemakers respective villages to reinforce and catalyse the project work will be conducted. During these visits, workshops at the village level will be organized as well.

- Ashoka will also be working one on one with these identified young changemakers. For guiding and advising these changemakers, we will be connecting them to the Advisory Panel members and other social entrepreneurs in our network.