

Karuna's **Thought for Food** workshop evaluation, May 2015

(Based on participant feed-back and **my own thoughts in bold**):

Positives:

- overall workshop design, flow and content: conveyed interconnections, wide spectrum, big picture as well as details, 'from soil to plate'.
- facilitators' backgrounds and attitudes: genuine, inclusive and accessible
- informative, not prescriptive
- diversity of participant group
- appropriateness of location: nature, **Sambhaavnaa as alternative policy institute**
- good food!
- accommodated vegan and special diets
- low price, high value
- books that Karuna brought along
- field-trip: not as 'proof' of what had been discussed, but 'fresh experience'
- inspiring and confidence-building
- provided clear ideas of what people can do right away
- good sessions: especially mentioned meal cooking experiences, Sumi's session on healing, Karuna's on 'what the world eats' and refined foods, Vinish's SFG and environment, Prakash's on 'local context', and Himanshu ji's on development model and experiences in Bastar (the last session of the workshop, later many commented that they saw connections to rest of workshop and his powerful presentation led to a real 'shift' in thinking), skype session with Devinder Sharma
- **multiple facilitators and kitchen volunteers (essential), a cooperative effort!**
- good selection of films

Scope for improvement/ideas for future:

Logistics:

- punctuality, and clarity on policy of starting on time or waiting for all to assemble
- field-trip not so far away, farm visits locally instead
- field visit briefing in more detail
- more local ingredients, whole grains, fruits, salad at dinner

Content:

- cooking sessions: recipes provided in advance so participants can follow steps as being prepared
- quick sessions on cooking ideas: e.g. breakfast suggestions, snacks etc.
- films: more Indian context, explain rationale for choosing before screening
- **local research projects**, farm/rural livelihood visits
- theory sessions on cooking: break-up and spread out; more visual and interactive (show grains, equipment etc.)
- more on 'food sovereignty' movement, 'good food for all'
- **more on understanding food regulation institutions, role of consumer bodies, lobbies etc.**
- discuss beverages like tea and coffee; time to eat; chewing etc.; sleeping after eating...
- mention treatment of animals in food system
- discuss packaging and impact
- more about facilitators, personal journeys
- present material as case-studies, stories
- **think of more potential skype discussions: e.g. with Vipin Gupta (gut microflora etc., inflammation, nutrition); if we can think of anyone relevant and articulate in farmers' movements, consumer rights movement on food safety etc., organic food movement, slow food movement or other possibilities...**

- clearly indicate that while some content will be in English, most will be in Hindi and thus knowing Hindi essential to full participation in workshop

Suggestions to keep in mind: (my thoughts entirely)

for Karuna:

- work on presentation-style: how to be more engaging, visual
- share more personal stories
- assess material that had planned to cover but didn't get covered
- punctuality in sessions
- take more responsibility in cooking

for Sumi

- work on presentation of material on cooking: more visual, engaging
- prepare menu and recipes in advance, at least for some key items
- punctuality in sessions

for Sambhaavnaa:

- improve registration process so can get 30 participants; early announcement of workshop and quick responses to registrations to allow for travel arrangements
- budget: price the workshop higher to account for cost of special ingredients, budget for facilitator honorariums
- plan local activities in more detail and further in advance: field trip/farm visits, research project, sourcing local foods in advance, organizing campus-based activities like garden work, tea-picking, local gharaat visit etc. Can involve volunteers!