



Left: The buildings in SECMOL's campus in Phey, Ladakh, have been built on the principles of passive solar architecture and do not require any additional heating even in peak winter. Use of solar energy enables the campus to be off the grid.



Right: The SECMOL Skills University runs courses for local youth in renewable energy and Rammed Earth Building.

The failings of modern mainstream education are many, including engendering a culture of conformity and ultra-competition, and being increasingly absorbed by corporate values.

The **Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL)** is a departure from that ethos, providing instead a space that nurtures individual choice and creativity, innovates technology that is locally useful, develops educational material that is locally relevant, and is diversified enough to value both intellectual and physical work. SECMOL's work began in the 1980s and was a result of Ladakhi students failing within the local government's education system. Its alumni now include, among others, an all-female travel company and an award-winning filmmaker.



SECMOL students at a musical workshop.

In Andhra Pradesh, Deccan Development Society's **Pachasaale** (the green school), focuses as a part of its curriculum on hands-on skill development such as carpentry, tailoring, book binding, permaculture and pottery, in addition to the more conventional teaching of language, science and mathematics.



Pachasaale students learning through both books and hands-on skill development.



Left: A Jeevanshaala campus in Bhitada, Madhya Pradesh.



Right: Students playing with a puppet in a Jeevanshaala in Manibeli, Maharashtra.

In Narmada valley, the Narmada Bachao Andolan's **Jeevanshaalas** were born from the struggle of local communities against forced displacement. Through an education based on the knowledge and dignity of tribal life, the schools help children to both relate to their culture and be aware of the larger political system that they are part of.