THE *MIRATHO* RESEARCH PROJECT 2016-2021:

A student voice charter for an inclusive university

At a workshop held in Bloemfontein in March 2019, the 19 students who had participated in the photovoice project worked together to draft a charter for an inclusive university drawing on their own stories.

The Charter is a set of feasible demands for universities to address, with some being especially important in pandemic times.

The Charter presents five key points for how a university can be made more inclusive through changes in

- *Outreach and access: Forge good relationships with schools in rural areas, that is take the university to the schools and districts. Develop a range of creative information and inductive programs. University induction programs should include food and accommodation for those who require.*

- *Student welfare: Establish a food programme (e.g. reasonably priced cafeterias on all university campuses where low income students can afford to eat nutritious meals twice a day). Set up a wellness centre, and ensure students feel comfortable in accessing the services, especially around mental health. Supply reliable and accessible information and assistance in applying for financial aid. Provide safe, reliable transport for off-campus students.*

- *Inclusive teaching: Good, clear lecturing by exfor lecturers in using teaching ICT platforms effectively. Using English for all lecturing, combined with inclusive language use in classes (e.g. small group discussions). Include students who register late through podcasts, handouts, catchup tutorials, etc.*

- *Access to ICT: Provide alternative digital platforms for more effective and inclusive communication between lecturers and students. Offer free and timely workshops on computer competence and on using the internet effectively for research and study purposes. Enable reasonable access to computers for learning for all students. Provide internet services for off-campus students - e.g. make deals with internet providers for cheaper data provision.*

- *Teaching spaces: Address overcrowded lecture halls because they hinder the process*

2019, photo by Melissa Lucas