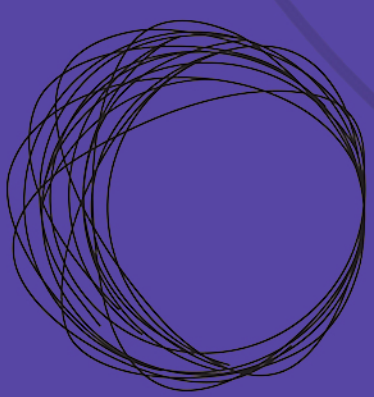
Annual Report

2016-17



Critical Action
Centre In Movement

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ABOUT CACIM

CACIM (the India Institute for Critical Action- Centre in Movement) is an initiative towards cultivating and nurturing a culture of critical reflexivity and action in individual and public work. The work of CACIM aims to build and maintain real and virtual spaces for fundamental research and critical reflection, exploration, action and creation in the field of movement.

CACIM grew out of an experimental informal association named Critical Action (CA) that existed during 2001-05 between scholar-activists in different parts of the world; and of several years prior to that, of research into and direct involvement in the history and dynamics of social and political movement, by several CA members.

CACIM was formally established in 2005 as a transnational, intercultural, and interdisciplinary organisation.

Mission

Our mission is to stimulate multiple learning centres across disciplines and cultures, and support and encourage all those involved in different ways with movements- activists, researchers and teachers, professionals, artists and composers, and thinkers, both mature and young, and both from the civil and in civil worlds. CACIM's work is about promoting criticality in socio-political action and movement. It sees critical thinking and reflection, and critical engagement, and though this critical action, as contributing to broader and more effective transformational social power.

CACIM works to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of movements, and of activists in movements and of their supporters, through helping them develop a deeper than usual analysis of broader political, social, and economic structures and dynamics that underline the problems.

A related goal is to help movements to build mutually supportive alliances instead of operating alone on single issues.

Areas of focus

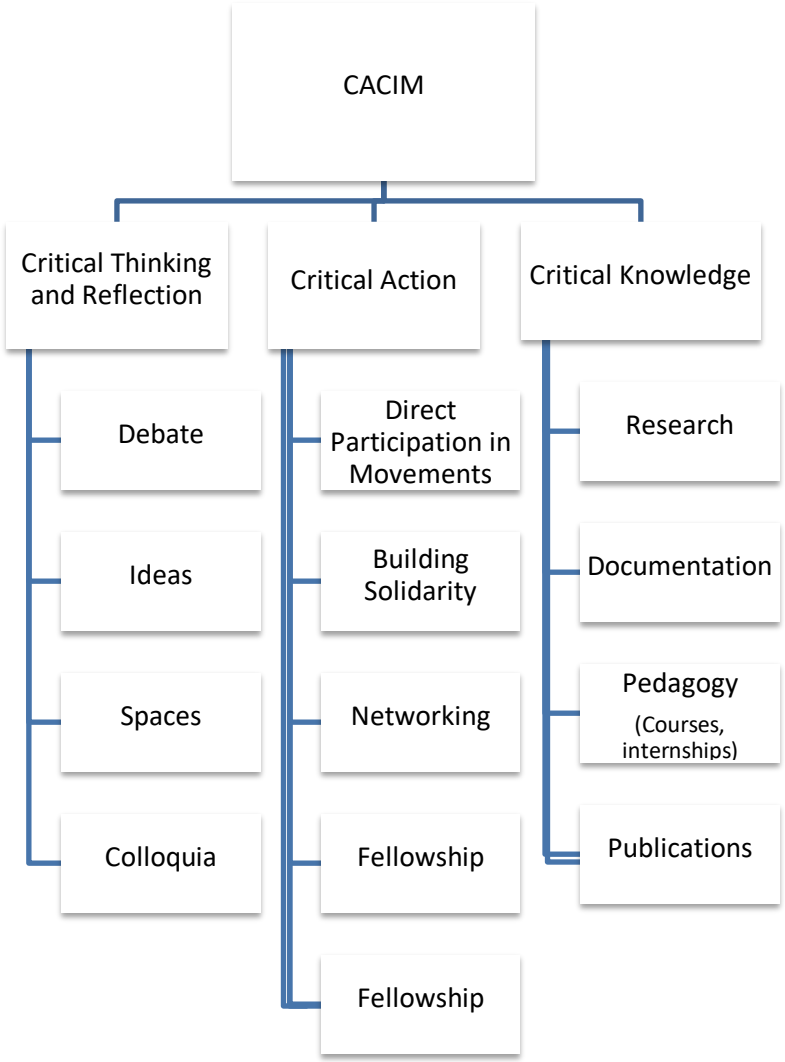
The current focus is on the following areas:

- **Strategies and Cultures of Movement**: movement dynamics, social transformation processes and the role of alliances and networks
- **Rights, Resources and Accountability**: community rights over natural resources, access to rights, accountability of state and non-state actors
- **Marginalities, Democracy and Power** : emerging identities, intersectionalities and its relations with the society and state
- **Development, Urbanisation, Equity** : the unfolding development and urban processes, practices and the question of equity in an ever increasing unequal world

Tools

To cultivate and nurture a culture of critical engagement, action and reflection is the broader objective of CACIM; for which it uses different tools.

CACIM does its work through direct participation in movements as well as through workshops, seminars, and other meetings; through networking; through publications directed to (and in the languages of) both the leaders and the members of relevant socio-political movements; through the use of listservs, websites, and other new media; through educational initiatives such as courses; and in the course of all of this, learning from other experiences and movements. It attempts to be critically reflective in all its own work and processes, as well as all times, promote critical thought, engagement, and action within and among the CACIM community.



PROJECTS

This year CACIM worked on the following projects:

Reaching the Real India (RRI): This project has been developed for the young people to provide them with an opportunity to connect and contribute to the socio-political processes of India directly. It gives them a chance to spend some time with one of the people's movements/community organisations so that they can observe and understand India and its issues through a different lens. This initiative aims at filling the gap between the academic community and the mass organisations that work on human rights, equality and sustainable development.

Centre for Financial Accountability (CFA): CACIM began a new project, Centre for Financial Accountability from January 2017. CFA aims to strengthen and improve accountability of financial institutions who lend money to development projects, through research, and training Communities/ civil society to understand and access accountability mechanisms. The current project aims to make development finance institutions accountable to communities and civil society.

Dams and Conservation: This project supports the people issues by visiting the Dam Project affected areas and participating in Public Hearing on environmental impact assessment.

Urban Resource Centre (URC) for Domestic Migrant Workers: This project functions as an open and democratic space for domestic workers. It orients and builds the capacities of domestic workers by harnessing their skills. Through training to domestic workers on their rights, this project also empowers them to confront their vulnerabilities emanating out of harassment or physical abuse by their employers.

Kosi Jeevanshala: This project focuses on setting up learning centres in order to impart formal/informal education to those who cannot afford it and are affected due to the construction of embankments on the river Kosi. It is an enterprise started with an aim to fill in the opportunity gap as well as achievement gap in education for impecunious families residing within or near the Kosi embankments.

Environmental Protection: This project extends solidarity and support, in research and action, to people and organisations asserting their rights over their natural resources and agitating against the corporatisation of these resources for destructive development in Himachal Pradesh.

Community Awareness on Housing Rights: This project engages and observers the lives and problems of slum communities in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The project focuses on a number of related issues ranging from public awareness activities/campaign in slums especially for housing rights to labour rights, waste management, sanitation solutions and so on. It also assists communities in gathering information and ensuring government's transparency on housing issues.

Gender Rights Project: The project's vision is to help organisations, groups and individuals to be sensitive and recognize issues of queer people and thereby address them in their work discourse and to create an environment, which is inclusive safe and affirmative.

Besides these projects, CACIM also supports movements and facilitate alliance and networking processes across the country. It also provides aid to researching and studying dynamics of the World Social Movement / Movement of Movements.

NETWORKING

Importance of a well-established and strong network is colossal. It gives us a platform to share opinions, experiences, information, and knowledge which helps us in envision newer elements of socio-political, economic, and cultural organisation and development. But having a network is not enough; a true working network needs maintenance.

This year to maintain and expand our network, we have made changes in our existing listserv and website.

Listserv

During 2017, we transformed a major earlier listserv named **WSFDiscuss** (World Social Forum Discuss) into a new listserv named **WSMDiscuss** (World Social Movement Discuss).

CACIM established the original listserv WSFDiscuss in 2005 as a complement to the World Social Forum, as a parallel, non-official, virtual 'open space' for free and open discussion of the WSF events of and related movements, and as a part of our broader project of critical engagement with the WSF (see *http://www.cacim.net/twiki/tiki-index.php?page=WSF*). The feedback we got over those years was that the listserve played a very useful role in opening up critical discussion about and within the World Social Forum and in encouraging a culture of critical reflexivity within the Forum. All the posts on WSFDiscuss are available at *http://openspaceforum.net/pipermail/worldsocialforum-discuss_openspaceforum.net/*.

We made this change to a new list because of two important developments during more recent years, and specifically 2010-2016. On the one hand, world movements exploded during 2011 – with the occurrence of the occupation of Tahrir Square in Egypt, the Occupy movement, in North America, the indignados in Spain, the protests in Gezi Park in Turkey, and many others – and it became clear to us at CACIM that while the WSF was and remained a very significant process in world movement, even just to continue to understand the WSF we needed to constantly engage with new, emerging world movement. On the other hand, we also started experiencing severe technical problems with the WSFDiscuss list.

The list continues to be active, with new members constantly joining. All the posts on the new WSMDiscuss are available at *https://lists.openspaceforum.net/pipermail/wsm-discuss/*.

Website

Based on discussions from back in 2011 within a CACIM Website Working Group, and with designer **Adityan M**-leading the design, we came up with a completely new website design for CACIM, and this, in turn, was translated into a draft website by designer **Leah Snyder** in 2016.

In early 2017 however, and at the advice of CACIM extended community member **T B Dinesh**, he and his team at his software company Servelots completely revamped the design for us, keeping in mind the enormous changes that have taken place over recent years both in terms of website software and hardware – especially the proliferation of handheld instruments – and also of how people use websites and social media.

The new CACIM website design now awaits being populated by CACIM members.

RESEARCH

CACIM always supports and facilitate research which can create knowledge that can address the real-world problems and can be applied to find solutions to such situations. Through these researches, CACIM members critically engage to get an in-depth knowledge whose outcomes can in turn promote critical thinking and reflection in the whole community.

Research and Publication on Asian Development Bank

Under CFA project, our work on International Finance Institutions started with an analysis of Asian Development Bank in India. CFA compiled the investments of Asian Development Bank in the country sector wise and region wise. An e-book was edited with articles from researchers and activists working on specific issues. The publication and analysis helped various organisations to understand various dimensions of how international finance operates and how they influence policies. Programs were held across the country in more than 100 places which included debates, seminars and meetings.

Research on Rickshaw Pullers

This year CACIM facilitated a study on the people who are engaged with non-motorized vehicles especially cycle rickshaw by identifying the issues and drawbacks related with this particular group of the population, so that their overall standard of living can be uplifted. The purpose of the research was to protect and safeguard the rights of the people who are engaged in the occupation of the cycle rickshaw. Through the implementation of the project, we conducted interviews with a large number of people and we collected primary data, and by analysing the data we were able to draw a scenario of present cycle rickshaw occupation in Delhi. The study was conducted with keeping the following objectives in mind:

1. To understand the socio-economic condition, travel characteristics, barriers, challenges and the regulatory structure of cycle rickshaw in Delhi.
2. To develop a policy structure for the cycle rickshaw puller is the ultimate goal of the study.

So in a nutshell, the research was for the upliftment of the population group who are engaged with the occupation of cycle rickshaw by developing a policy structure and at the same time advocacy for the implementation of the policy.

Beneficiaries of the Project

Through the implementation of this project, the cycle rickshaw pullers are benefitted in followed manner.

1. **Increase the level of awareness:** Through the process of project implementation, the awareness level regarding the particular issues of cycle rickshaw occupation is developed among the rickshaw pullers. The level of understanding is developed among the rickshaw puller and at the same time change take place in their thinking pattern. Because prior to the implementation of the project they were not optimistic in regards to mitigation of the problems related to them and they were not hopeful to the upliftment of their living standard.

2. **Empowered:** After the implementation of the project, rickshaw pullers are empowered to deal with their problem facing in day to day life. Because through the process of project implementation rickshaw pullers are become organised to deal with their problem.
3. **Capacity Build up:** Through the process of project implementation, meeting and discussion took place regarding the issues and problems and at the same time we tried to identify the individuals who can lead the issues and we provide training to build up their capacity.
4. **Socio-economic upliftment:** After the implementation of the project a major change took place among the rickshaw pullers. Due to ignorance and illiteracy majority of the rickshaw pullers are not aware of the various existing social security schemes which deprive them of the various Govt. facilities. During the project implementation period they are became aware of the various policies and programs and as a result of this, they enrolled their name in various social security schemes.

Majority of the rickshaw pullers consume intoxicant substance likely alcohol, Beedi, Cigarette, Tobacco, Ghutka by knowing or unknowingly their ill effects. The rickshaw pullers who take intoxicant substance they are unable to bear their family expenditure and as a result family disturbance takes place. We conduct discussions and counselling session with them to get relief from their habit of taking intoxicant and as a result of this few of them are able to continue intoxicant free life.

Outcomes of the Project

a. **Significant change:** The most significant change which took place due to the project implementation is that the rickshaw pullers were become organised and empowered about their rights and issues. They are able to build up organised effort to deal with their problems and at the same time they can they raise their voice regarding the day to day problems faced by them. By the implementation of the project, the cycle rickshaw pullers are become empowered, organised, confident and self-dependent to deal with their issues and concerns.
b. **Environmental impact:** The project is basically deal with the promotion of cycle rickshaw as a mode of public transport. Non-motorized transport especially cycle rickshaw provides several benefits to users and rest of the society by improving public fitness and health, reduce traffic congestion, reduce the risk of accident, energy consumption and pollution emission. The promotion of cycle rickshaw plays a vital role to mitigate the challenges of climate change. By implementation of the project, people have become aware of the benefits of cycle rickshaw in relation to individual and environment.
c. **Organisational strength:** By the implementation of the project the organisation is able to understand the features, barriers, drawbacks and regulatory structure of cycle rickshaw in Delhi which will be helpful to draw policy and programmes on the cycle rickshaw in a broad perspective.
d. **Community involvement:** This project is accomplished with the help of involvement of rickshaw pullers community. Because without their involvement the project can't be completed. The involvement of rickshaw pullers community helps them to aware about their rights and issues and they are become organised and empowered to deal with their issues.
e. **Additional changes:** Through the implementation of this project, the thinking pattern cycle rickshaw pullers community is changed in relation to their profession. Before the project implementation rickshaw pullers community was not organised to deal with any

issue or problems but nowadays the community is empowered to produce organised effort to deal with their ease. Rickshaw pullers community having the quality of leadership but they were not in a position to express it, but this project helps to identify the leadership quality among rickshaw puller at the same time their capacity is build up through meetings and discussions.

Research on Infrastructure, Changing Cities and Land Legislations:

As a part of RRI, a dossier on Industrial Corridor, Smart Cities proposals, and Land legislations changing in various states of India was completed. It was then communicated in various community meetings and social platforms.

Various articles and short notes were produced during the process which was published in magazines and books.

It is then very important to take up the research to next level and develop a deeper understanding of various issues countered during the research. It was understood that it encapsulates various issues that need to be discussed deeper separately. Like, creation of waterways as an economical ways of transport while disturbing the natural course of Rivers in India, Water privatisation at large restricting community accesses to the water bodies, creation of different types of cities which makes space for certain communities and structurally discriminate with others, Opaque land acquisition processes depriving communities of continuing their livelihood, keeping aside the central legislation for land acquisition which is having provisions for public consent and social and environmental impact assessment, changing and diluting land acquisition legislations at state level throughout the country in the name of ease of doing business.

It is worth noting that through extensive research on these lines, CACIM was able to develop a capacity to carry these research ideas ahead with greater understanding. CACIM was also able to engage with many researchers and create a space where we can work collectively and engage with a wide spectrum of ideas.

Other Research topics

Sand Mining:

Sand Mining is becoming a major ecological problem in Narmada Valley and Madhya Pradesh. Extensive research through secondary as well as primary data collection was initiated.

Big Dams and Water Privatisation:

A series of consultation was organised with researchers, activists, academicians to gather their experiences and approach towards the ecological crisis and developmental issues on the ground due to the creation of big dams. With more and more dams on major rivers, the water capacity has gone down horribly in many streams and thus a serious cause for concern. With these issues, a lot of developmental projects are coming up aligned with integrated water management which is silently pushing private control over resources in many ways. It is thus in our interest to look deeper into the linkages and community relations with water bodies to arrive at critical understanding about the upcoming issues if any.

WORKSHOPS

Workshops are one of the tools used by CACIM for critical engagement of the community to promote critical thinking and reflection as it is an effective approach to disseminate information and produce changes in practice. It not only provides its participants with an opportunity to learn something new but connects them with other participants as well. The workshop brings like-minded people on the same platform which promotes learning, communicating, listening and experiencing new bonding.

This year CACIM organised several workshops under following projects:

Housing rights

A number of community drives were undertaken for filling application forms for water connection in their slums this year. Workshops were held to create awareness about different welfare schemes for labourers. Most important of all was a national workshop on a national law to ensure and protect housing rights was also held in Mumbai, which saw representatives from nine important states of India who shared and exchanged housing policies and existing conditions of urban poor in their respective cities.

Different sections within the slum communities benefitted from the activities that we carried out in the course of the project:

- A group of seven women were given employment in the water purification plant that supplies water in a particular slum community. This was done in collaboration with an NGO which provides for water solutions in slums. This women group provides safe drinking water to their slum community as well as earns some money with the sale of water thereby adding to the income of their family and become financially independent.
- Similar women groups are being organized to replicate this model in different slum communities.
- Another group of women were trained for making incense sticks so as to make their own enterprise and earn some income.
- Tens of slum communities were mobilized to fill the application form for water connection. Out these communities, one major community comprising a population of around 50,000 people has started getting water supply from the municipal corporation and others will soon be getting that after continuous follow up.
- Domestic helpers and construction workers are also trying to get the available benefits of various government schemes.

Gender Rights

Archiving – Our Lives Our Tales

Through this initiative, a series of talks were given by people who have lived queer lives and fought battles for the queer movement, as a way of preserving and passing along oral histories that might otherwise be lost with them.

Queer Organizing in the 90s and 00s

In November 2015, an event called Queer Organizing in the 90s and 00s was held. The focus was on narrating how LBT*(FAB) people became a part of the feminist movement and fought to occupy feminist spaces. Further, the narrations in this event also corroborated with

accounts of speakers at the November 2015 and realised that the LGBT movement was far more intersectional. As a follow up to that talk, Pramada Menon, Vani Subramanian, and Purwa Bhardwaj were invited as speakers to share their experiences of working with queer collectives and spaces in the early 90s and 00s as people from the community and as allies. Around 25 people attended this event.

Fundamentalism and Our Lives

A talk on Fundamentalism and Our Lives was held in January 2016. This talk was to explore how fundamentalism impacts our lives in many visible ways – from controlling what one speaks to what one eats, for instance. Fundamentalist groups enforce strict gender and sexual norms and any transgression of these set norms is met with severe punishment. Clamping of rights is particularly severe for women since they are often considered the custodians of norms and honour of the family and their community. It privileges one monolithic identity and creates exacerbates binaries within caste, class, religion, tribes, gender, and sexuality.

Sessions on counselling, interpersonal dynamics, gender & sexuality

Gunjan Sharma, a trained counsellor and gender sexuality trainer collaborated as a consultant to conduct regular training sessions with the group on interpersonal dynamics, team building, counselling, gender and sexuality in November and December 2016. A total of 6 sessions were organised. Various activities were carried out during these sessions to enhance the counselling skills of participants and build confidence in addressing issues of gender rights.

CFA Project

Capacity building workshop on energy and finance

CACIM organized a capacity building workshop to build perspective on the political economy of energy and finance and to provide information and knowledge support to grass root activists. About 60 people attended the workshop.

SEMINARS

CACIM organised a number of seminars under following projects:

CFA Project

Understanding Financial Technology, Cashless India and Forced digitalisation

CACIM organised a seminar on Understanding Financial Technology, Cashless India and Force digitalisation on January 24, 2017 at YWCA Delhi. This seminar was to understand the growing financial technology and their impacts on the society. This was an important effort as the nation is discussing more cashless transactions after demonetisation and it was essential not just to understand the technology but also the public policy choices along with it. The seminar was well attended and was one of that kind to see the technologies through and social and economic lens.

Public Financial Management & Budgeting: An Overview

CFA organised a talk by Dr D.P. Mathur, former deputy CAG who presented an overview of Public finance and how budgeting process happens within the system along with checks and

balances and oversight of the process by the Parliament of India. The talk was attended by members of CSOs from Delhi. The talk was also broadcasted live and more than 300 people attended the lecture online at various points in time.

Gender Rights

CACIM has been conducting seminars and training sessions with students from schools, colleges, and personnel of development sector organizations. Placing gender and sexuality at the centre, the sessions engage participants with a set of thematic areas such patriarchy, socialization, stereotypes, normativity, and violations of norms, performativity, hierarchy, media, marriage, caste, and nation. Discrimination faced by people marginalized on the basis of their gender identity from family, school, friends, and workspace was also be explored.

1. A half-day seminar on gender with B.El.Ed students of Lady Shri Ram College for women (January 2016).
2. A half-day seminars on gender and sexuality with students of Maitreyi College, Aditi Mahavidyalaya College, Ambedkar University, Zakir Hussain College (evening), CIC-DU (Cluster Innovation Centre) (January to March 2016).
3. A 3-day workshop with students from Delhi University, Ambedkar University, and Indian Institute of Technology (Delhi) with thematic areas as patriarchy, socialization, stereotypes, normativity and violations of norms, performativity, hierarchy, media, marriage, caste, and nation (March 2016).
4. Lecture on religion, gender, and sexuality in India for students of Operation Groundswell (http://operationgroundswell.com/) (May and July 2016).
5. A half-day session with field staff of Centre for Social Justice, Ahmedabad on gender and sexuality in Delhi (June 2016).
6. Sessions on sexual harassment with the 2016-19 batch of students from Acharya Narendra Dev College (July 2016).
7. Sessions on sexual harassment and bullying with the students of standard 9th and 11th of Sarvodaya School, Delhi (July 2016).
8. Session on peer counselling for LGBT people at the Youth Summit organized by Harmless Hugs, a group in Delhi (July 2016).
9. Session on gender with students of Shivaji College, Delhi University (October 2016)
10. Sessions on sexual harassment and bullying with students of Standard 12th of Delhi Tamil Education Association Schools (October 2016).
11. Series of sessions on gender, sexuality, and the law with high school students of Tagore International School (TIS) (August to November 2016).
12. A half-day session with Standard 12th students of Basava International School, Dwarka (November 2016).
13. Sessions on gender with Breakthrough India student interns (July, October, and December 2016).
14. 2-Day training on gender, sexuality, and law for interns (summer and winter programme) of PUCL in Jaipur (July 2016).

PUBLIC MEETINGS

CFA

Meeting on New Development Bank

A convention was organised alongside the Second Annual Meeting of the New Development Bank, one of the new international financial institutions established by BRICS Countries. The meeting brought together various organisations working on clean energy, social and environmental safeguards to look at the various trends in development finance, mechanisms to monitor trade and finance in BRICS countries, and various stakes involved with the emergence of NDB. The meeting was addressed by former director of Indian Exim bank, senior journalists, international policy analysts, civil society leaders etc.

Meetings in Uttarakhand regarding dams and its impact

Many dams are being constructed on the tributaries of the Ganges in Uttarakhand and many still have a status of proposed projects on the rivers.

In this regard, the Srinagar dam project area was visited and we had meetings with the people on the issue of the shortage of clean drinking water post construction of the dam. Building communication with government officials and community leaders became crucial. Regular community meetings were also held in Bowala-Nandprayag and Nandprayag-Langaas where dams have not been built yet.

Problems of the displaced people from the Tehri Dam were identified. Regular meetings to help them be aware of their rehabilitative rights were conducted. In this context, there were several meetings with project officers regularly and participated in discussions surrounding the formation of an inclusive rehabilitation policy.

Collaborative efforts with peoples' groups in Uttarakhand were consistently carried out to effectively raise the issue of 12% of the free of cost electricity and 1% of the local development funds were promised to the state, with the officials.

Ecological life of the river is associated with the people. Wherever the incidence of putting debris of dams into the river was seen, the officials were consulted to prevent it and to protect the river from impurities, which brought success to the communities.

INTERNSHIP/ FELLOWSHIP

RRI Internship Programmes

In the year 2016-17, five students from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Guwahati did an internship with us during their winter break. They were sent to various movement spaces to understand issues at the ground. Some of them were engaged with the research team to understand the issues at policy level.

We feel that it is important to create spaces and opportunities for young minds to interact closely with movements to develop deeper and critical understanding about developmental process and socio-cultural issues. It has become very important

looking at the current onslaught on public education in India which leaves a very constricted space during their studies for young minds to explore and enrich their experiences.

COURSES

CFA

As part of widening the conversations on finance and to bring the importance of monitoring finances in to forefront, CACIM has been planning a couple of workshops with students of social work, journalism, etc. on Development Finance so that they could add financial monitoring as tool and strategies accordingly in their interventions. Short courses are being planned in a number of colleges on development finance and accountability of financial institutions.

PUBLICATIONS

Books are a vast storehouse of new information for readers on one hand and on the other hand for authors, they are perfect mediums to encapsulate their ideas, views and opinion into words. Documentation of any kind besides preserving and transferring knowledge also helps in its development and maintenance.

With growing internet penetration we realised a need to provide our published works electronically to share it with a larger number of people.

'The Movements of Movements' (A two-volume book)

During this year, OpenWord, CACIM's publications unit, and in collaboration with PM Press in the US, brought out the **hard copy and ebook versions** of the first of two volumes edited by CACIM Advisor Jai Sen, **The Movements of Movements, Part 1 : What Makes Us Move ?,** as the fourth book in OpenWord's *Challenging Empires* series. The second volume, **The Movements of Movements, Part 2: Rethinking Our Dance**, is due out in 2018.

To bring out this volume, Jai Sen was helped by friends and colleagues from around the world, including **Adityan M**, the conceptualiser and designer of a concept for the covers of the *Challenging Empires* series; **Christina Sanchez**, for generating the Wordle diagrams that we have used in our books for the first time; **Giulio Maffini**, for nudging us into the use of diagrams to unpack and open up the meanings of the sometimes dense content of such books; **Jim Coflin**, for extensive technical help in the preparation of the manuscript; **Lee Cormie**, for companionship in thinking through the books; **Madhuresh**, for his contributions to the conceptualisation of this book and its predecessors; **Nishant**, former colleague at OpenWord; and **Yih Lerh Huang**, for infusing fresh energy and professionalism into our work at OpenWord. Our thanks to all of them!

An Advance Pre-final Movement (Online Edition)

In addition, and with the enormous help of **T B Dinesh and his colleagues at Servelots**, and of **Jim Coflin**, for help in creating the raw material that we posted, during the year we also created and posted an **'Advance Pre-final Movement Edition'** online, for free and open

viewing – by activists, students, etc - of all the pre-final material for both the volumes, on CACIM's website, at www.cacim.net : Some fifty extraordinary essays, and other related material including a compiled comprehensive bibliography for each volume. Our thanks to Jim and to Dinesh and his colleagues!

'Mukat Behene Do'

'Mukat Behene Do' a book written by Vimal Bhai in response to 'Baand Samardhan ke tark' (Logics for Dam Support) and to bring out the realities related to dams was and published by on. The whole book challenges the very concept of construction of dams in the name of development. It also highlights the true meaning of rivers and victory in the struggles against the dam construction.

The book has been a collective effort by several people to make it a success. In the book, **Medha Patkar**, who has brought out the realities of dams of Narmada valley on a global platform, has challenged the notion of dam construction for the sake of development. **Alok Agarwal** talks about the struggles of the Maheshwar dam which is under construction on the Narmada, foreign investments involved in it and strategies to deal with it. A letter by **Himanshu Thakkar** has also been included which unmasks the truth about the claims made by South Asia Network on Dams, Rivers and People (SANDRP). Articles by **Saumya Dutta** and **Rahul Pandey** on the need of energy (electricity) and alternatives energy sources raise the question on the actual requirement of dams in the country.

Special thanks to **'Manthan'**; they provided us with an abridged account of the report on the condition of Indian dams by World Dam Committee which is included in the book as it is and also to **Bipin Chaturvedi** who helped in the translation of major parts of the book in Hindi.

Urja Samvad

Urja Samvaad is a bi-monthly Hindi newsletter for local communities with critical news related to the energy sector, land acquisition, displacement and impacts on affected communities. Since January 2017, CFA project has published two editions of this newsletter.

Material on Gender Rights issues

We have been in the process of preparing easy to access materials on gender rights issues. We have brought out two such documents. One addresses myths and facts on the LGBTIQ community. The second is about the various terminologies used in the community. These two materials have been translated into Hindi.

DIRECT PARTICIPATION

Housing rights

Through this project, we were able to initiate a campaign to demand a law to ensure and protect 'right to housing'. Due to lack of enough resources, we were only limited to fire-fighting during the eviction of any slum community.

The most important outcome of this campaign was forming an understanding among the slum communities about their housing rights and formulation of demand for a separate law to

protect 'right to housing'. As a result, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing has included this demand as an important recommendation in her report which she prepared after her mission to India last year.

The present central government has brought in a new housing policy (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Housing For all) by replacing the older one (Rajiv Awas Yojana) which was formulated by the previous government. CACIM's housing rights project had contributed to the formulation of Rajiv Awas Yojana which had provided for land titles, provisions for self-development etc.

The project has done an important analysis of existing central housing policy which was well covered by a reputed media organization. We are also in process of publishing this analysis as well as the status of the implementation of the housing policy in the form of a short booklet.

We have also raised certain critical issues before the Maharashtra State Human Rights Commission related to housing rights and basic amenities in Mumbai slums. The matter is still going on and so far it has helped in a lot of ways. A major community where there was no water since 20 years has got water by our intervention through the Commission. A major decision is yet to come on housing rights issue.

Gender Rights

Early this year, there was an immediate need to have a small office space for gender rights project and our community members. Consequently, a small office space in Delhi Dakshinpuri also provided a safe haven for queer people, and regular discussions on gender, sexuality, trust, law and team building were held here.

Environmental Conservation

Himachal Pradesh being a mountain state, 2/3rd of its area is under the direct ownership of the Forest Department and the local communities are dependent on these lands for the livelihood. Due to the state government stand that the rights of forest dwellers have been already settled in pre-colonial period, civil society groups started building regular dialogue with State Government to insure the rights of forest dwelling communities. Concerted efforts under the Himachal Van Adhikar Manch saw some success in both tribal and non-tribal regions. The key activities in the last two years starting June 2016 have involved:

1. **Regular dialogue and building communication with the government** - A state-level forum was formed where different groups working on rights of forest dwelling communities came together.
2. **Raising Awareness:** Using articles and audio-visual media to raise awareness about the rights of forest dwelling communities. We have generated two videos and broadcasted through the social media and cable channels. And also documented success stories.
3. **Providing training and support** - This kind of support we are providing to different groups in Sirmour, Chamba, Lahaul and Spiti, Kinnaur.
4. **Implementation on the ground**- In Kangra district we supported communities to file 54 community claims and more than 100 individual cases. Support is also being extended to communities in Lahaul and Spiti
5. **Identifying groups in Uttarakhand**- we are focusing on Pithoragarh district in the area impacted by the Pancheshwar Dam

6. **Media communication and action against evictions from forest lands:** Based on a High Court order of 2015, the forest department has been evicting 'encroachers' from forest lands, while actually many of these may be eligible for community rights.

   Before 2016 not a single community claim had been given to government officials. In 2016 after the formation of the state forum, 7 community and 52 individuals' claims were recognized and titles distributed in Chamba district of Himachal. After this, 74 families got titles in Lahaul and Spiti district.

In addition to this, the forum has supported the alliance building amongst migratory communities of Kangra, Chamba, Kullu and Mandi so that these communities titles over their grazing pastures and the routes used by them.

A continuous dialogue with the state government has been established to work through the memorandum and other submissions. In this regard, the state government have also begun to conduct various training programmes on the rights of the forest dwelling communities.

RRI

Housing Rights Struggles in Delhi:

We engaged with the community Kathputli Colony at Shadipur, Delhi as the arrival of Public-Private Partnership and In-situ redevelopment model without much needed public consent and participation caused unrest in the first pilot project of Delhi. We investigated the history of negligence from the implementing agencies and private builders. A number of community drives were undertaken for bringing people together and understanding their concerns. Regular meetings with people of different communities, building community leadership and providing awareness to them about housing rights were the main activities under this project.

Key achievements:

The cut-off date for eligibility was extended which included around 1000 families into the eligibility list in one community alone.

- Able to bring the issues in national media and bring people's attention on injustice meted out to the people living in slums.
- Empowered people to challenge illegal actions in court.
- Empowered people to speak up with the officials and communicate their demands clearly.
- Able to communicate with State Govt. and take up responsibilities for the citizens of the state.

Through the project, CACIM attempted to engage with communities facing illegal evictions in housing projects, and help people ask the government to provide for housing at their place of livelihoods or protect the existing housing of those who cannot afford formal housing in the prevalent expensive housing market.

As of now, the project has managed to raise issues prevalent in the existing central housing policy and state policy. We are in process of consulting communities at a wider scale and make them understand the Govt. policies in detail so as to empower them to voice their

opinion if any. We also aim to analyse the issues and demands of communities to work out a better policy to ensure their housing as well as livelihood concerns.

Kosi Jeevanshala

Kosi jeevanshala is a CACIM initiative that started in early 2016 in the villages of Supaul district, Bihar. Jeevanshala, which literally translates to the school of life, is an enterprise started with an aim to fill in the opportunity gap as well as achievement gap in education for impecunious families residing within or near the Kosi embankments.

Kosi Jeevanshalas have been set up in order to provide formal/informal education to those who cannot afford it and are affected due to the construction of embankments on the river Kosi. This model of schools has been adopted from the one that was started by Narmada Bachao Andolan in Narmada Valley for tribal children.

Objectives

Following are the objectives which serve as the foundation stone for all present and future jeevanshalas:

- To connect the kids, who have been suffering in the name of development, back to education.
- To educate the adult population among the communities about government policies and make them aware of their rights.
- To serve as a medium within the community to build trust which can create an environment for people to come together for their rights and can fight for it.
- To eventually make government education system better.

Two jeevanshalas have been set up in the Kosi region; one in Mushari and another in Khokhnaha village. There are around 200 children who are attending the school on regular basis altogether. Initially, the classes were conducted under bamboo trees but now with everyone's contribution, we built a hut so that the kids can have a roof over them while studying. We have made a committee of women to take care of the children in jeevanshala.

Kids are being taught in regional dialect. Keeping in mind the environment they have been bought up we try to educate them about the importance of cleanliness, drinking water, diseases and their cures etc. All the kids irrespective of their age attend the same class but later we are planning to segregate them into different classes according to their age. We are planning to open two more jeevanshalas by next year.

URC

Some of the worker taken by Urban Resource Centre for Migrant Domestic Workers in last year:

- The Centre provides an open and democratic space for domestic workers for dialogue and sharing of ideas, knowledge and experience
- We worked towards building the capacities of domestic workers by harnessing their skills required for enhancing their bargaining capacity.
- We conducted trainings sessions for domestic workers on their rights and empowered them to confront the vulnerability emanating out of harassment or physical abuse by their employers.

- We also advocated with Central and State Governments for proper wages, safe and secure working conditions for domestic workers.
- We organised dialogue with fraternal organizations and advocated with the Central Government for formulating National Domestic Workers Policy.
- We organized domestic workers by launching membership campaign and issued identity cards.
- Our centre serves as a short stay home for domestic workers.
- We facilitated legal aid and medical assistance to domestic workers during their distress period.
- We also interacted with the media for breaking the biased and preconceived notions about domestic workers.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Gender Rights

Capacity building within team

Our team has been a part of 3 capacity building initiatives; the project team has also been trying diverse methods and medium to share life stories of queer citizens and has been exploring the possibility of a digital storytelling workshop.

RRI

International Relations and Natural Resource linkages

In October, we participated in People's BRICS and tried finding linkages of natural resource grab in different countries.