# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2023-24

INDIA INSTITUTE FOR CRITICAL ACTION -
CENTRE IN MOVEMENT (CACIM)

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# CACIM or the India Institute for Critical Action - Centre in Movement

CACIM (the India Institute for Critical Action - Centre in Movement) was founded in 2005 to promote a culture of critical reflexivity, thought and action in public life and activity. Our programmes are part of the larger effort to create spaces where dialogue can happen among people on the margins, academia and social groups. Through critical action, our attempts are to contribute broadly and more effectively for transformational social power.

CACIM grew out of an experimental informal association named Critical Action (CA) that existed during 2001-05 between scholars and organisers 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. Having started with a primary focus on the project of democratisation and active citizenship, we gradually expanded into the areas of environment, urbanisation, marginalities, active citizenship, and financial accountability.

## Mission

CACIM strives to strengthen the capacities and effectiveness of social organisations and their members and of their supporters, through helping them develop a deeper than usual analysis of broader political, social, and economic structures and dynamics that underlie various problems. Our mission is to stimulate multiple learning centres across disciplines and cultures, and support and encourage all those involved in different ways with social organisations – organisers, researchers, teachers, professionals, artists, composers, and thinkers, both mature and young, and to promote criticality in socio-political processes and actions. A related goal is to help social organisations to build mutually supportive alliances instead of operating alone on single issues.

## Focus of our work:

CACIM has envisioned and planned its key areas of engagements across:

1. Strategies and Cultures of Movement: movement dynamics, social transformation processes and the role of alliances and networks
2. Rights, Resources and Accountability: community rights over natural resources, access to rights, accountability of state and non-state actors
3. Marginalities, Democracy and Power

## Key Processes

CACIM attempts to be critically reflective in all its work and processes, as well as all times, promote critical thought, engagement, and action, also learning from other initiatives and processes. Our core activities are:

- Research and documentation resulting in publications in different languages
- Building awareness and strengthening capacities through organising workshops, seminars, and other meetings
- Networking and outreach collaborations with the community groups and organisations across the country
- Educational initiatives and courses for young people inside and outside the colleges and universities
- Disseminate and promote all publications through the use of list serves, websites, and other new media

# Introduction

In 2023, India assumed the presidency of the G20—a powerful coalition of the world's largest and most influential economies, comprising 19 countries and the European Union. Originally established in response to the Asian Financial Crisis, the G20 today plays a critical role in shaping global economic, financial, and climate policies. India's leadership of the forum placed it at the centre of global conversations on sustainable development, financial stability, and climate resilience. While this presented a significant opportunity to shape global agendas, it also raised expectations around India's own commitments to inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and equitable energy transitions.

However, despite occupying such a prominent position on the world stage, domestic developments told a more complex story. The country continued to rely on increasing capital expenditure as a primary tool for driving growth. This approach led to a surge in infrastructure projects nationwide, many of which were promoted under the banner of development. Yet, the voices and rights of the workers and communities that implement these projects on the ground—particularly sewage workers, waste pickers, and other urban and rural marginalised groups—remained largely unacknowledged.

In this context, social and environmental safeguards assumed renewed importance. While there were efforts to adopt Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) practices—largely to appeal to private capital—the broader trend was toward the dilution of environmental protection policies. Regulatory mechanisms such as mandatory environmental impact assessments were increasingly bypassed, especially in strategic projects like airport terminal expansions, highway corridors, and thermal power developments.

Meanwhile, we continued our ongoing work with climate-impacted communities to help them articulate their own visions of a just energy transition. Many community members voiced concerns that the government was not meeting the pledges it had made at international climate summits regarding low-carbon development. The push for economic growth was often accompanied by weakened safeguards and limited public engagement, particularly among those who would be most affected by environmental degradation or displacement.

As many of these communities observed, a just transition cannot be reduced to a checklist of technical indicators or economic targets—it must be rooted in inclusive policymaking that centres people's rights, needs, and lived experiences.

At the organisational level, our response to these challenges has remained focused on producing knowledge-based resources and creating platforms for critical dialogue. We have published extensively on climate change, the role of finance in driving development, and the urgent need for transparency and accountability in infrastructure planning. In collaboration with civil society organisations, especially from the Global South, we have worked to bring community voices into national and global conversations on climate justice and urban governance.

Our ongoing engagement with natural resource-dependent communities, as well as urban marginalised populations, continued alongside these newer initiatives. Drawing from years of grassroots experience, we remained committed to building participatory, rights-based alternatives that challenge top-down models of development and ensure that those most impacted by policy decisions are also those helping to shape them.

# Community Organisation and Action towards Access to Justice and Good Governance

## Rights and Welfare of Sewer Workers

The CACIM team's project in Delhi NCR focused on amplifying the voices of sanitation workers, especially sewer workers and waste pickers, who are among the most marginalised in our rapidly urbanising society; this work built on two programme themes CACIM has pursued over the past five years that address marginalities amid growing urbanisation. The Indian government's Smart Cities Mission, intended to promote core infrastructure, a good quality of life, a clean and sustainable environment, and smart technological solutions, was seen by us as only part of the story, since those who actually implement much of the necessary sanitation and waste management work—sewage and municipal workers, largely Dalit and Other Backward Caste persons—remain invisible, neglected, informal, unprotected, and subject to multiple hazards. Covering the vast and densely populated area of Delhi NCR, which has nearly ninety-six million people, our project engaged with both sewer workers and waste pickers.

We observed that sewer workers were entirely contract-based without formal employment, with no job security, no social security provisions, subject to harassment by contractors, suffering irregular work schedules, very low wages, absence of fixed working hours or regular holidays, working in extremely hazardous and toxic environments with no safety measures, and facing intense social stigma. Meanwhile, waste pickers suffered from similar informality and contractual precariousness; they lacked secure livelihood, shelter, healthcare or hygiene facilities; women waste pickers in particular faced the dearth of basic facilities such as toilets and rest rooms; many lacked integration in formal waste management systems and suffered repeated harassment from state authorities, police included; continuous migration, lack of social honour, and lack of access for their children to education compounded their marginalisation.

In response, we concentrated on capacity building and leadership enhancement to empower these communities, and we held leadership camps and capacity-building workshops in which increasing numbers of sewer workers and waste pickers collectivised, discovered their own voices, and began to assert their rights. Because of these efforts many workers began to take initiative—presenting their concerns to government authorities, demanding minimum wages, and seeking mandated benefits such as provident fund and ESI cards. Women waste pickers, doubly marginalised both by gender and caste/community, emerged as community leaders and organised their peers to address concerns around hygiene, education, healthcare, livelihood, and safety. Their voices began to reach wider platforms, including media outlets, strengthening both visibility and pressure for change.

Simultaneously, we pursued better implementation of relevant policies and access to government schemes. We convened meetings with administrative bodies: one meeting was with a Member (Administration) of the Delhi Jal Board to raise the issue of non-payment of minimum wages by private contractors employing contractual sewer workers, and another meeting was organized with the Chairman of the Delhi Commission for Safai Karamchari, where the severity of exploitation of sewer workers was recognised as urgent, and where workers were enabled to file complaints regarding denial of minimum wages. We submitted memoranda to both these offices, pressing for policy action. This helped in making government policies and schemes more tangible for sewer workers.

We also worked to increase awareness among the general public, students, academics, media, and other worker groups about the nature of sanitation work, its hazards, and its crucial role in sustaining cities. We conducted press conferences that brought together academics, media persons, students, and activists in order to place the voices of community members, unionists, and experts onto public record. These events generated news articles in multiple languages, covering issues from worker safety for sewer workers to environmental concerns arising from privatization of waste management. In fact, international coverage in German among other languages also helped broaden awareness.

The capacity-building workshops and leadership camps directly translated into actionable gains: sewer workers approached Junior Engineers and the Delhi Commission for Safai Karamchari to demand minimum wages; waste pickers, with support from our project team, confronted harassment by police authorities claiming their right to keep their carts and rickshaws; in many cases this translated into restored dignity as workers negotiated for better conditions. Consultation meetings with administrative bodies exposed loopholes in policy and law and steered us to submit further demands and call for public hearings. A symposium held on policy implementation for waste pickers connected activists and researchers, foregrounded labor and human rights issues, and emphasized the need for full utilization of existing bylaws, which was helpful in spreading awareness and building the foundation for stronger policy interventions.

We also undertook unplanned but necessary additional actions because they surfaced from listening to the community: for instance, organising a leadership training workshop for waste pickers beyond what had originally been planned because it was deemed essential for ensuring that outputs were accessible and useful to the target population; additionally, we raised crowd-funded money to help an injured sewer worker named Sher Singh, who had multiple health issues after an accident while working, and provided him and his family with medical aid. A campaign titled “Sunday for Sewer Workers” was initiated, not formally funded but organically developed by our team, in which we conducted interviews of sewer workers every Sunday to share their experiences through social media, thereby building public awareness. We also assisted external media agencies, journalists, documentarians, and researchers in covering the lives of sewer workers and waste pickers so that the stories could reach wider audiences and solidarity could be extended by external actors.

All of these project activities moved forward during the reporting period and furthered the objectives we had set, though we also recognized that in many cases concrete policy intervention by government authorities is still awaited so that the benefits can be fully realised by the target communities; nonetheless, increased collectivisation, successful claims, enhanced visibility, and heightened awareness among broader publics were clear outcomes of the work.

## Recovering Education for Girls of Marginalized Communities from the Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, marginalised communities across Delhi and other Indian cities experienced profound disruptions to their livelihoods, healthcare, and access to education. Among the worst affected were girls from working-class families, whose education and well-being were often deprioritised amidst the crisis. The loss of jobs, crowded living conditions, and increased domestic responsibilities meant that many girls were pulled out of school, with little opportunity or support to continue learning. This breakdown not only impacted their academic progress but also their emotional and social development.

Responding to this urgent situation, CACIM extended support to local initiatives aimed at educational recovery and psychosocial well-being for adolescent girls. Drawing on its long-standing engagement with urban poor communities, CACIM played a key role in strengthening community-based responses, supporting the creation of safe and inclusive learning spaces, and facilitating dialogue between families, educators, and young learners themselves. A critical outcome of this collaborative process was the establishment of the Savitribai Phule Community Centre, a space envisioned and shaped by the girls and their communities as a response to the educational vacuum created by the pandemic.

With CACIM's support, the centre emerged not as a substitute for formal schooling, but as a flexible, participatory environment where girls could study collectively, access resources, and begin to reimagine their interrupted educational journeys. Many of the girls who came to the centre spoke of overcrowded homes, the lack of quiet or private space, and the burden of household work—all of which made studying nearly impossible. The centre addressed this gap by offering a dedicated space for self-study, supported by women educators, and remained open throughout the day to accommodate different schedules. In parallel, a small Book Bank was set up to assist students from Classes 9 to 12—who are not covered under the Delhi government's textbook distribution schemes—with essential study materials.

While the centre provided an anchor, the wider initiative—driven by community participation and sustained by CACIM's engagement—also focused on restoring girls' sense of agency, confidence, and belonging. Informal learning was accompanied by collective activities: reading stories and poetry, sharing lived experiences, engaging in play, and rebuilding peer support networks. These processes created a sense of normalcy and solidarity in a time marked by uncertainty and isolation. More than a singular intervention, this effort reflected a broader commitment to rights-based recovery, where the most affected are placed at the centre of rebuilding processes. As the centre continues to evolve with the needs and aspirations of its participants, CACIM remains committed to supporting such decentralised, community-driven models of educational justice.

## Welfare of Natural Resource based Communities

In the forested region of Mandla, Madhya Pradesh, many forest-dwelling communities — including tribal and non-tribal groups — have historically depended on forest land for their livelihood. Despite long-standing occupation and cultivation, many individuals lacked formal legal recognition of their land and forest rights. CACIM, through its engagement in the region, has worked to strengthen the awareness, capacity, and legal standing of these communities, particularly focusing on forest rights, land acquisition policies, and social entitlements.

During the reporting period, CACIM undertook a range of activities aimed at education, awareness building, and legal empowerment of forest-dependent communities. These include:

**Verification and Processing of Forest Rights Claims**

- Claims for individual forest rights by Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs) across seven villages had been pending at the government level for a prolonged period. These were scrutinized and verified by government officials with support from CACIM's facilitation efforts.
- The verification process was completed for 78 tribal and 92 non-tribal individuals, marking a critical step toward legal recognition of their forest rights.

**Promotion of Organic Farming**

- A total of 61 farmers were supported and encouraged to adopt organic farming practices, particularly for wheat and pulses, enhancing sustainable agriculture and improving food security.

**Facilitating Access to Social Security Schemes**

- Through targeted assistance and documentation support, 117 individuals who were previously excluded due to issues with Aadhaar and other documents were successfully enrolled in the Social Security Pension Scheme.

**Ensuring Food Security**

- 42 families were included in the public distribution system (PDS) by enabling their names in the ration eligibility list, ensuring access to subsidized food grains.

**Legal Literacy on Land and Forest Governance**

- CACIM organized informational sessions across 31 villages to raise awareness about:
  - Madhya Pradesh PESA Rules, 2022
  - Madhya Pradesh Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Rules, 2015
- These sessions were particularly significant for villages affected by proposed dam projects and related agricultural land acquisition. Based on the legal knowledge shared, multiple Gram Sabhas (village assemblies) were mobilized to deliberate on acquisition and compensation issues.

Few achievements of our work this past year have been:

**Legal Recognition of Longstanding Land Occupation**

- 257 men and 50 women who have cultivated revenue land for over four decades submitted applications with supporting evidence to the District Collector of Mandla, seeking legal ownership.
- The total land area covered by these claims is approximately 251 hectares, reflecting a substantial step toward formal recognition of land tenure.

**Community and Village-Level Rights Secured**

- As a result of the above efforts:
  - Community forest rights have been granted in 12 villages.
  - Two forest villages have been officially converted into revenue villages, enabling greater access to services and legal rights.

CACIM's engagement in Mandla has significantly contributed to strengthening the legal and developmental rights of forest-dwelling communities. Through focused efforts on legal literacy, facilitation of documentation, and community organizing, CACIM has supported both individual and collective claims to land and forest resources. The work has not only improved access to basic entitlements like pensions and food grains but also built long-term capacities to assert rights under legal frameworks such as the Forest Rights Act, PESA, and land acquisition laws.

# Knowledge and Resource Sharing towards Empowerment of Youth, Students, Communities, Civil Society Organisations

Through its wide-ranging projects, CACIM has actively pursued the creation of briefing materials and knowledge resources aimed at deepening the understanding and engagement of students, activists, civil society groups, researchers, and local communities on complex and interconnected issues such as urban agriculture, riverfront developments in cities, and the global and national financial architecture underpinning economic and developmental paradigms.

The team combined both field-based and desk research approaches to generate content exploring multiple facets of these themes. This work was disseminated in the form of briefing notes, analytical reports, primers, and articles. Wherever feasible, field visits were undertaken to strengthen on-ground relationships and to build deeper, more context-sensitive engagement with affected communities.

In addition, CACIM organised a series of webinars and digital discussions to facilitate dialogue and knowledge exchange across sectors and geographies. The organisation also extended technical and research-based support to various grassroots movements and community-led initiatives, offering solidarity and expertise to bolster their ongoing struggles for rights, recognition, and justice.

## Strengthen civil society platforms on financial accountability for monitoring and demanding accountability in national and international institutions and investments.

### India's G20 Presidency and Public Engagement

In 2023, India hosted the G20 leadership summit. The Centre for Financial Accountability (CFA) project of CACIM played an active role throughout the year in educating the public and civil society organisations on the G20's politics, policies, and global relevance. Efforts began with knowledge dissemination through key publications such as Reading the Rhetoric: G20, Its Politics & What the 2023 Presidency Means for India. This volume traced the evolution of the G20, outlining its structure, mechanisms, and implications for India's presidency.

A comic book titled Gang of 20 used satire and art to engage wider audiences and was translated into multiple Indian languages including Marathi, Hindi, Bengali, and English. CFA also launched a research fellowship, resulting in the publication of India & G20: Legacy & Prospects for Multilateralism amidst a Polycrisis, which featured a foreword by Prabhat Patnaik and an afterword by Patrick Bond.

In response to the mass forced evictions associated with G20 events, CFA collaborated with civil society organisations to organise a public hearing. More than 250,000 people were displaced in New Delhi, prompting sharp condemnation from the hearing's jury. A detailed report was released and a formal complaint submitted to the UN Special Rapporteur on Housing.

CFA facilitated public awareness meetings in Kochi, Kolkata, Chennai, and Goa to deepen understanding of G20 politics. Thirteen thematic working groups comprising over 80 individuals developed sectoral papers and held detailed discussions in preparation for civil society dialogues.

The WE20 People's Summit, held as a counter-narrative to the official G20 platform, brought together over 700 participants from 18 states and was organised by around 70 groups. The summit, emphasizing dissent and democracy, faced unofficial intimidation from authorities, yet successfully culminated with a joint declaration demanding an equitable and just global order.

Several key publications on the G20 were released, including:

- India & G20: Legacy & Prospects for Multilateralism amidst a Polycrisis
- Reading the Rhetoric: G20, Its Politics & What the 2023 Presidency Means for India
- The Forced Evictions Across India and G20 Events
- Gang of 20 – A Comic Book (multiple languages)
- A Brief History of G20
- Chronicles of a Missed Opportunity Foretold: India and the G20 Presidency
- Unpacking G20
- Why the G20 Declaration is Far From the Triumph It's Being Hailed to Be
- Energy Profile of G20 Countries and various video explainers

**Annual Review of International Financial Institutions:** Annual Review of International Financial Institutions, a special publication offering analysis on topics such as reforms in Bretton Woods institutions, climate justice, agricultural IP rights, international taxation, and geopolitical shifts including India's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative was published. This review aims to inform and engage a broad audience through accessible yet insightful writing.

**Adequate environmental and social safeguard policies in financial institutions and investments:** CFA's national finance initiatives focus on four core areas: promoting social and environmental safeguards in finance, monitoring the Indian economy, advocating for just taxation, and scrutinising national financial institutions, particularly public banking.

A Hindi handbook titled Need for Environmental and Social Safeguards for Financial Institutions was released, explaining the ecological and social risks associated with finance. The campaign responded critically to the Reserve Bank of India's climate report and highlighted the need for enforceable safeguards in the banking sector.

Two major consultations were held: one in Mumbai (July 7, 2023) and another in Delhi (December 1, 2023), both focusing on developing a model safeguard policy. Field visits and advocacy were conducted in states impacted by projects like Teesta Stage III and the Great Nicobar Development Plan, underlining the need for transparency and accountability.

**State of Finance in India Report 2022–23:** In collaboration with the Economic Research Foundation and Focus on the Global South, CFA released the State of Finance in India Report. This edition emphasized climate finance, examining India's position in global finance structures and tensions between market-based solutions and just transitions. The report also included a sectoral analysis of India's economy.

**Conference on Finance 2023:** Held on November 29–30 in New Delhi, this year's conference focused on "Measuring Inequality". The conference explored post-COVID recovery models, banking policy, gig economy challenges, and structural exclusion, especially impacting Muslims. The State of India's Finance Report 2023 was released at the event, which saw participation from over 150 individuals, including scholars, activists, and students.

**Tax the Top** was a multifaceted initiative that brought together social media outreach, public festivals, and policy advocacy to promote the idea of wealth and inheritance taxation in India. The effort featured interactive booths, distribution of pamphlets in regional languages, and a series of published articles in the Deccan Herald, which were later compiled into a booklet titled Tipping the Scales. This work was also prominently featured at public gatherings, including the Social Harmony and People's Rights Festival in Kanyakumari and Ajmer.

A panel discussion on measuring inequality was also co-organised at the golden jubilee conference of the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning at JNU, featuring leading economists and CFA representatives.

CACIM continued its critical work by tracking and analysing major developments and investments in large-scale public and private projects, releasing monthly updates that offered timely insights into evolving trends. A significant area of focus was the examination of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), especially in the context of the National Infrastructure Pipeline and its far-reaching implications.

A detailed study of the Chennai–Bangalore Industrial Corridor brought attention to serious concerns around land acquisition processes and the resulting environmental impact. Likewise, a review of ongoing port and coastal development projects shed light on the ecological and social disruptions caused by accelerated expansion along India's coastlines.

To deepen dialogue on these pressing issues, a regional consultation was held on July 29–30 in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, bringing together organisations from across multiple states. This platform enabled critical conversations around how rapid infrastructural growth is affecting protected ecosystems, displacing communities, and threatening local livelihoods.

**Just transition by integrating ESF and human rights into renewable energy investment:** The organisation's study on Community Perspectives on Just Transition gathered insights from communities impacted by thermal power plant closures A capacity-building workshop on thermal power and the energy landscape was held in Nagpur, involving 40 participants from communities affected by coal and nuclear projects in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The Energy Finance Conference 2023 was hosted at IIT-Madras in collaboration with the Indo-German Centre for Sustainability and Climate Trends, focusing on decarbonising India's energy sector.

The Coal vs Renewables Investment Report 2023 found a clear preference among lenders for renewable projects. All project finance lending in 2022 was directed towards renewable energy, though solar lending saw a sharp decline of 64% compared to the previous year.

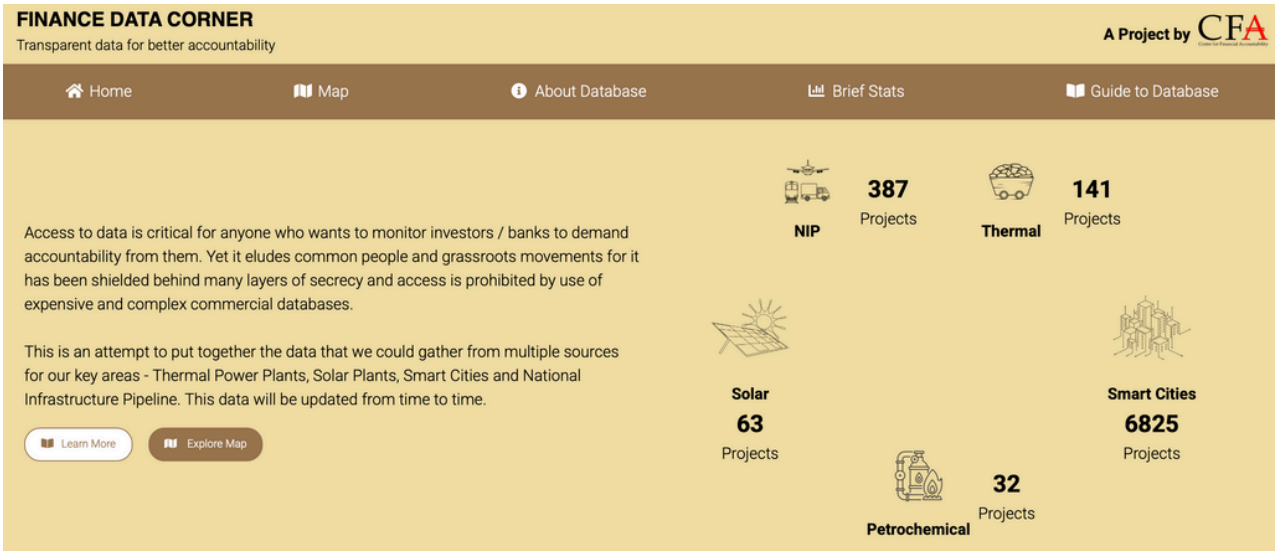
Oil, Gas, and Petrochemicals: CACIM's CFA team conducted research into the lifecycle of plastics and petrochemical industries. Projects examined industry impacts in Gujarat, West Bengal, and the North East, along with a dedicated health impact study. A petrochemical investment database has been created and will soon be made publicly accessible.

The team also actively participated in negotiations for the Global Plastics Treaty under UNEP, advocating for rights-based and lifecycle approaches. A post-INC3 webinar informed civil society groups of developments in the treaty process.
Awareness campaigns around Waste-to-Energy (WTE) projects were also undertaken, highlighting health and environmental risks and engaging with affected communities across various locations.

**Data and Research Tools:** CFA's data team launched the Finance Data Corner, a publicly accessible portal providing data on thermal and solar projects, smart cities, and infrastructure. The team also contributed to report writing, database creation (including a petrochemical database), and is currently working on developing online finance courses in regional languages.

**Capacity Building:** Capacity building remained a critical function at CFA, supporting public education on finance, inequality, and development. Several primers on just taxation, energy transition, and G20 politics were created and disseminated across platforms and workshops.

**Media and Communication:** CACIM continued to demystify finance through digital newsletters such as Finance Matters, The Money Trail, and Hamara Paisa Hamara Hisab. Media work also included videos, podcast episodes, and special coverage of COP28. Social media reach extended across platforms, with a notable 129,000 views for climate-focused episodes.




**Smitu Kothari Fellowship:** The annual Smitu Kothari Fellowship supported seven researchers working on topics like banking fraud, digital surveillance, biometric systems, financial inequality, and labour conditions. This program supports emerging scholars in producing impactful work on finance and economy-related issues.

CACIM's work in 2023–24 demonstrated a strong commitment to financial justice, public education, and policy advocacy. From national finance to global engagement, CACIM's multidimensional approach continues to challenge dominant financial narratives while amplifying people's voices in the economy

## Creating Resources for Communities and Social Processes

During the last year, CACIM deepened its engagement with issues of urban agriculture, participatory governance, ecological urbanism, and community-led sustainability through a wide range of activities and research initiatives. These efforts were part of its broader aim to reimagine Indian cities as inclusive, democratic, and ecologically resilient spaces. With a focus on bridging grassroots experiences and policy frameworks, CACIM worked across multiple sites and sectors, combining knowledge production with community engagement and public outreach. The team's work spanned drafting and advocacy, educational interventions, field research, and multimedia storytelling — all aimed at strengthening participatory approaches to urban transformation.

One of the key areas of work was the promotion of urban agriculture. CACIM advanced its advocacy by sharing the draft Urban Agriculture Policy with government representatives to build institutional awareness and momentum around its adoption. Community meetings were organised alongside this process, focusing on educating urban residents about the relevance of the policy in ensuring food sovereignty, ecological sustainability, and equitable access to resources in Indian cities. In support of these advocacy efforts, the team undertook research on state-led urban farming schemes across various Indian cities, culminating in the publication of a comprehensive report. This study now serves as the foundation for a citizen-led national urban agriculture policy draft planned for the upcoming year. Complementing this, a book featuring best practices in urban agriculture was published, compiling select articles and stories from CACIM's ongoing newsletter series to showcase grassroots innovations and systemic insights from across the country.

CACIM also continued its collaboration with schools and communities to embed ecological literacy in everyday life. Teachers were trained to integrate urban agriculture into their pedagogy using a toolkit developed in-house, while school gardeners and students were trained to set up and maintain kitchen gardens, thereby linking sustainability to hands-on learning. Beyond schools, kitchen gardening capacity-building sessions were held with urban communities to support food resilience and community well-being.

The organisation's work also extended to the realm of visual storytelling, where three short documentary films were conceptualised and produced. These films focused respectively on the Gotakhors of Delhi, traditional divers with intimate knowledge of urban water bodies; on nursery associations and maalis, who play an unrecognised but crucial role in the city's ecological care; and on participatory processes that reimagine the future of urban spaces through democratic planning. These narratives aimed to amplify voices that remain at the margins of mainstream urban discourse.

Water justice and urban riverfronts continued to be an important strand of CACIM's work through its Nagar Nadi initiative. Field meetings were conducted in multiple cities to engage with local partners and support community-led movements with the help of research findings from earlier phases. A detailed study of the Sahibi River in Delhi was also undertaken, followed by an awareness meeting with civil society groups to discuss the ecological, social, and cultural importance of the river. At the same time, public discourse was fostered through the continuation of the "Another City is Possible" series, which included ten hybrid dialogues and ten corresponding podcast episodes featuring diverse voices exploring ideas of urban equity and ecological justice. CACIM also conducted an exploratory study on the implementation of the 74th Constitutional Amendment across Indian cities, followed by a public meeting to unpack the findings and discuss the state of urban decentralisation. This was accompanied by the publication of a new book on Ecological Urbanism, highlighting the intersections of planning, justice, and environmental thinking in urban contexts. Throughout the year, the organisation sustained its commitment to communication and documentation by continuing its quarterly newsletter and launching a digital photo library and knowledge archive through its website. Active social media outreach across Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook helped expand CACIM's digital presence and deepen engagement with wider audiences.

In essence, the period reflected a significant expansion and consolidation of CACIM's work in envisioning and enabling democratic urban futures. Its activities cut across research, field engagement, publication, multimedia storytelling, and policy dialogue, always with a strong commitment to centering community knowledge and promoting systems of care, justice, and sustainability in the urban landscape.

WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?
THE TOP 1% IN INDIA HAS ALMOST 60% OF THE PRIVATE INDIVIDUAL WEALTH.
2% WEALTH TAX & 50% INHERITANCE TAX ON THE TOP 1% CAN RAISE NEARLY 17 LAKH CRORE.
#TaxTheTop
TAX THE RICH!
Spend the money on public welfare!
EQUALITY!
JUSTICE!
1% मालदार पे मलाई टैक्स

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. In principle we expect to work in many fields, but our focus at the moment is on activism, research, and publication in relation to social and political movement. We primarily work by building and maintaining real and virtual spaces for fundamental research and critical reflection, exploration, action, and creation in the field of movement : Books, seminars, workshops, websites, listserves, and newsbulletins and action alerts. Initiated in India in 2005, CACIM is transnational, intercultural, and interdisciplinary in vision and culture.

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