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# VEDITUM INDIA FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT 2022 - 2023





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## PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Date of publishing of report - 24th July 2023

Cover image by Poorva Goel (Moving Upstream: Sindh Fellowship)

Report design created by Mehuli Das (Summer 2023 intern), guided by Siddharth Agarwal

People currently at Veditum:

- Kumar Anirvan (Researcher & Coordinator, India Sand Watch)
- Pawan Kumar Agarwal (Accounts & Book Keeping)
- Priyans Murarka (Volunteer - 1+ day per week)
- Siddharth Agarwal (Founder Director)

To checkout the activity report from FY2021-2022, head to this link: [www.veditum.org/VIF-AR-2122](http://www.veditum.org/VIF-AR-2122)

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Dear reader,

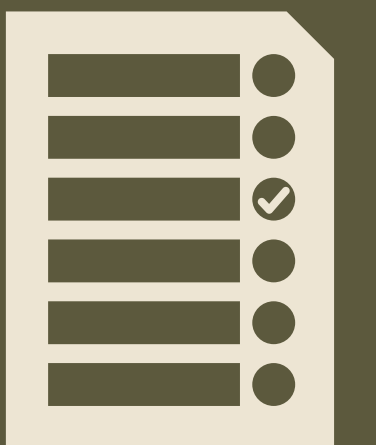
Thank you for your interest in our work at Veditum.

Slowly, yet steadily, we're moving in the direction of the impact that we'd like to make with our work. Through this document, I'm happy to briefly share with you some of the things we have been able to achieve in the past year (April 2022 - March 2023) and hoping that we can do more in the days ahead.

We hope to continue doing meaningful work with your interest and support.

Siddharth Agarwal  
Founder, Veditum India Foundation  
[asid@veditum.org](mailto:asid@veditum.org)

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# ACCOUNTS & ADMINISTRATION



# INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Our 12A & 80G certifications enables our donors (Indian Citizens only) to get a 50% deduction on the donated amount to us. We also got the CSR-1 certificate, which further enables Veditum to accept donations and support via the CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility route within India.

In the Financial Year 2022-2023, we tried expanding the individual donor base for Veditum and were able to increase the number of individual donors for Veditum by about 50%. This is important for us as our work expands, allowing us to have some amount of fiscal freedom for exploring new ideas.

We invite you to become a recurring donor to Veditum, committing a certain amount annually towards our work.

# INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

We're super excited to have Rainmatter Foundation (by Zerodha) supporting our new initiative - India Sand Watch. This is Veditum's first institutional grant, and we are now trying to build upon it further.

If you have any leads towards institutional support, please do let us know.



**VEDITUM INDIA FOUNDATION  
FUNDRAISER - FEBRUARY 2023**

**TARGET: INR 1,50,000**

**This is a matching fundraiser.  
Your contribution will be matched,  
making double the impact!**

**Visit this link to learn more & donate:  
<http://veditum.org/MatchingCampaign2023>**

**or scan this code:**



*Campaign ends - 28th Feb 2023*

Campaign Poster

ACCOUNTS & ADMINISTRATION

## **MATCHING FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN**

We successfully ran a matching fundraising campaign for Veditum in February 2023.

Some of our donors agreed to match the amount being donated by newer donors.

This enabled us to raise a total of INR 3,00,000 through this month, and gave us a much required boost with resources and outreach.

We hope to run a similar campaign this year. Would you like to become a matching donor for this year's campaign?



# MOVING UPSTREAM





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MOVING UPSTREAM

## MOVING UPSTREAM

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This is the logo / identity we've adopted for the Moving Upstream project.

It has been created by Kabini Amin, an artist who walked along River Betwa for two weeks as part of our Moving Upstream: Betwa fellowship

We've also created new social media accounts for Moving Upstream. Follow at the links below:

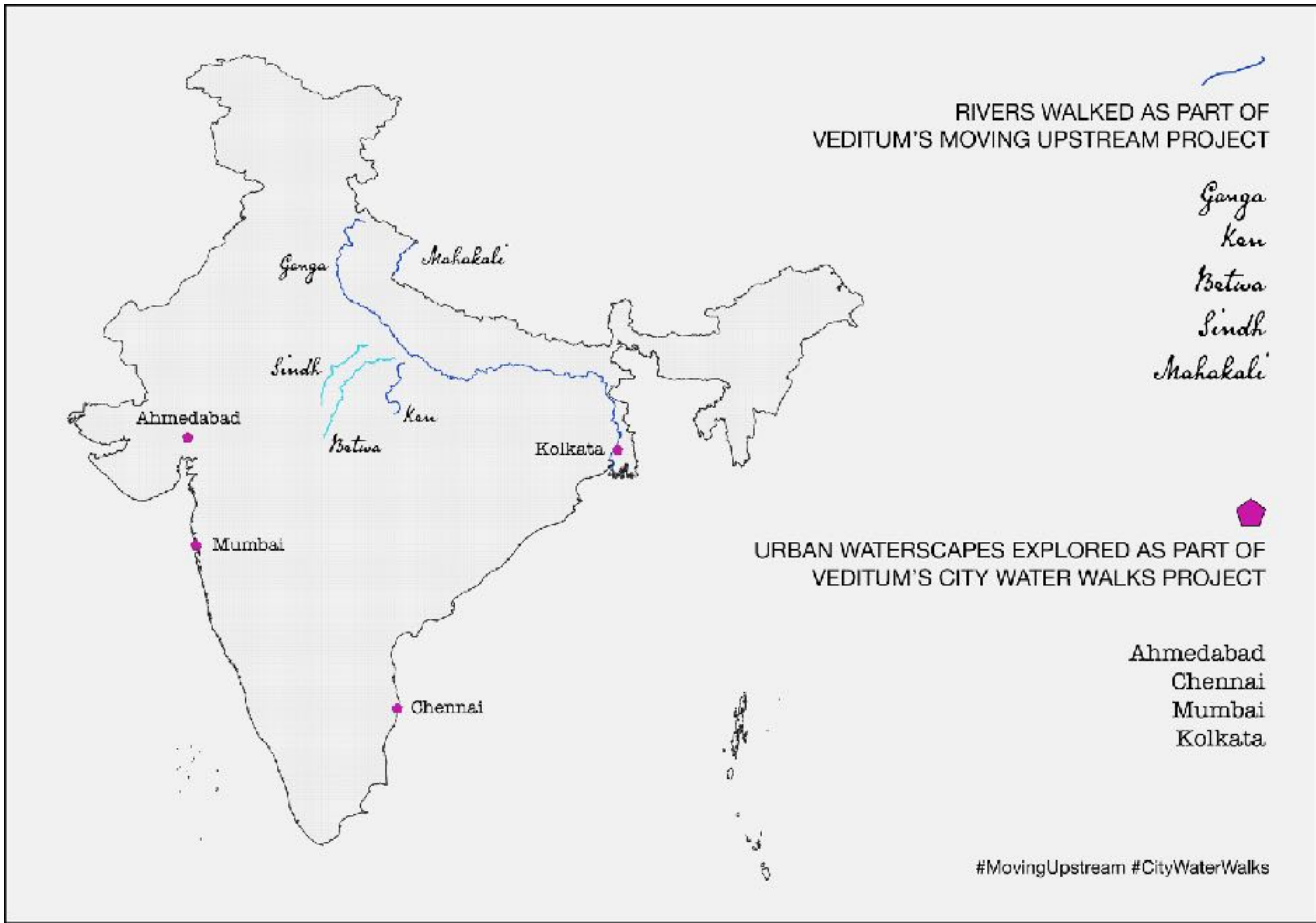
<http://facebook.com/movingupstream/>

<http://instagram.com/movingupstream/>

[http://twitter.com/moving\\_upstream](http://twitter.com/moving_upstream)







MOVING UPSTREAM

# MOVING UPSTREAM

Map showing the rivers walked as part of our Moving Upstream project and fellowship program.

Rivers Ganga, River Ken, and now River Mahakali are part of our Moving Upstream program.

Rivers Betwa and Sindh have been walked as part of our Moving Upstream Fellowship program that we co-host with the Out of Eden Walk.

The fellowship program is a subset of the project.



# MOVING UPSTREAM FELLOWSHIP

Co-hosted with the Out of Eden Walk

OUT OF EDEN WALK







Photo by Aoun Hasan - Moving Upstream: Sindh Fellowship

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MOVING UPSTREAM

## MOVING UPSTREAM FELLOWSHIP

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This year, the remaining pair of Aoun Naqvi & Vaishnavi Suresh, completed their walk along River Sindh on the Moving Upstream fellowship.

Publishing work has continued through the year for all fellows from the Moving Upstream: Sindh fellowship, as well as the earlier Moving Upstream: Betwa fellowship.

These have been published on Veditum's website, various popular publications, and also shared through different mediums and platforms. Details in the following slides.



# PUBLISHED STORIES FROM THE SINDH FELLOWSHIP

- **'Our village was under water for three days' | Aishani Goswami & Rahul Singh | People's Archive of Rural India**  
<https://ruralindiaonline.org/en/articles/our-village-was-under-water-for-three-days/>
- **Role of dams: 2021 Flood Management in MP's Sindh River | Aishani Goswami & Rahul Singh | SANDRP**  
<https://sandrp.in/2023/05/13/role-of-dams-2021-flood-management-in-mps-sindh-river/>
- **Gleaning stories from River Sindh | Poorva Goel | Veditum**  
<https://veditum.org/2022/09/16/gleaning-stories-from-river-sindh/>
- **Finding gondra amid the floods | Poorva Goel | Mongabay India**  
<https://india.mongabay.com/2023/04/finding-gondra-amid-the-floods/#>
- **Walking with the river | Bageshwer Singh & Pooja Chand | Sanctuary Asia**  
<https://www.sanctuarynaturefoundation.org/article/walking-with-the-river>
- **Legally enforceable humane rehabilitation, not compensation needed | Bageshwer Singh & Pooja Chand | SANDRP**  
<https://sandrp.in/2022/10/04/legally-enforceable-humane-rehabilitation-not-compensation-needed-madikheda-dam-in-madhya-pradesh/>
- **Walking with river Sindh beyond its path | Aoun Hasan | Veditum**  
<https://veditum.org/2023/03/01/walking-with-river-sindh-beyond-its-path/>

# OTHER FEATURES & EVENTS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

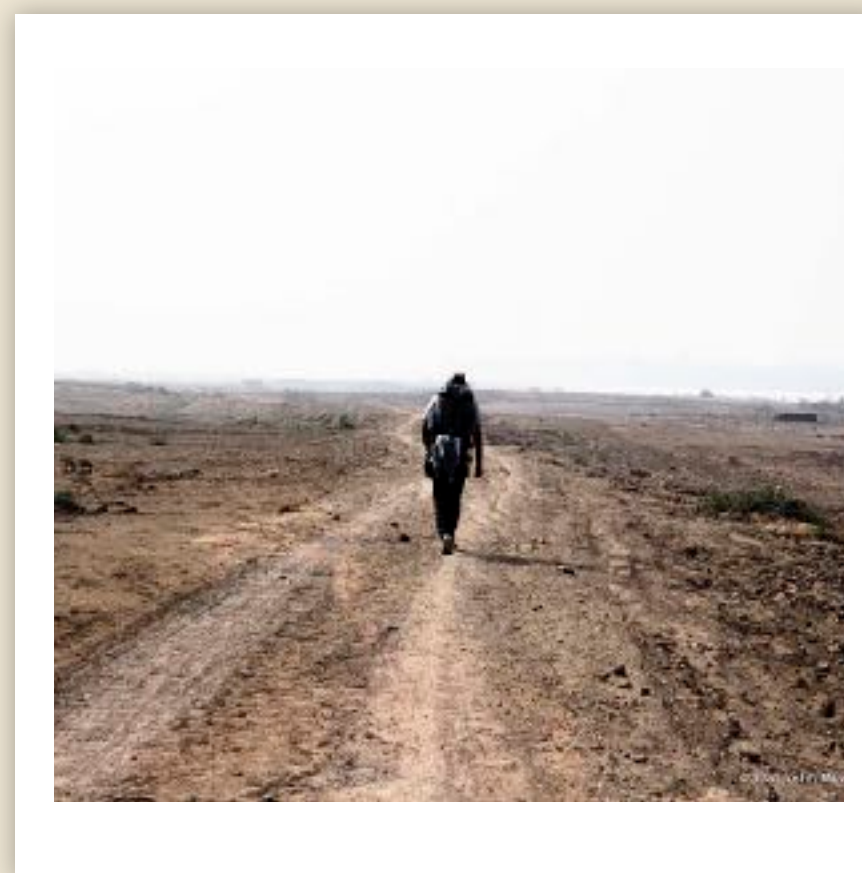


We hosted an online storytelling session where our Moving Upstream Sindh fellows shared stories and learnings from the field.

You can watch a recording of the session [here](#).

An extract from the book 'Along the Betwa' by Moving Upstream Betwa fellows Radhika Singh & Shail Joshi has now been added to the Living Waters Museum website / archive.

See it linked [here](#)

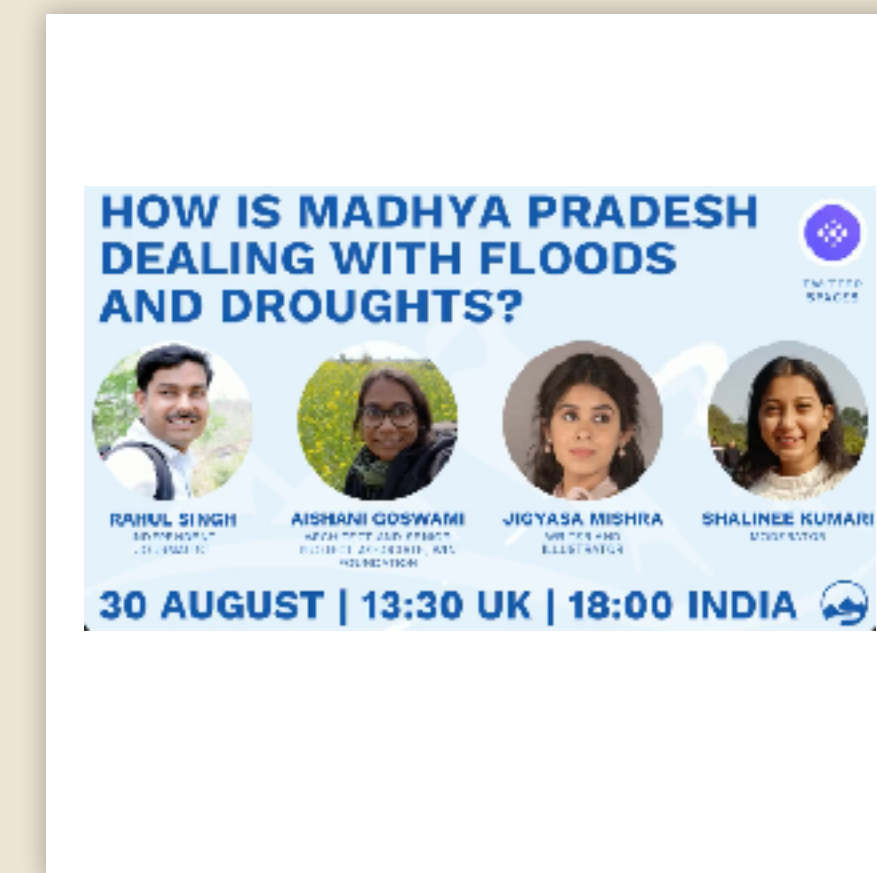


Fellows Bageshwer Singh & Rahul Singh were invited to speak at an event organised by the group 'Wednesdays for Water'.

They presented their experiences from the walk [at the event](#).

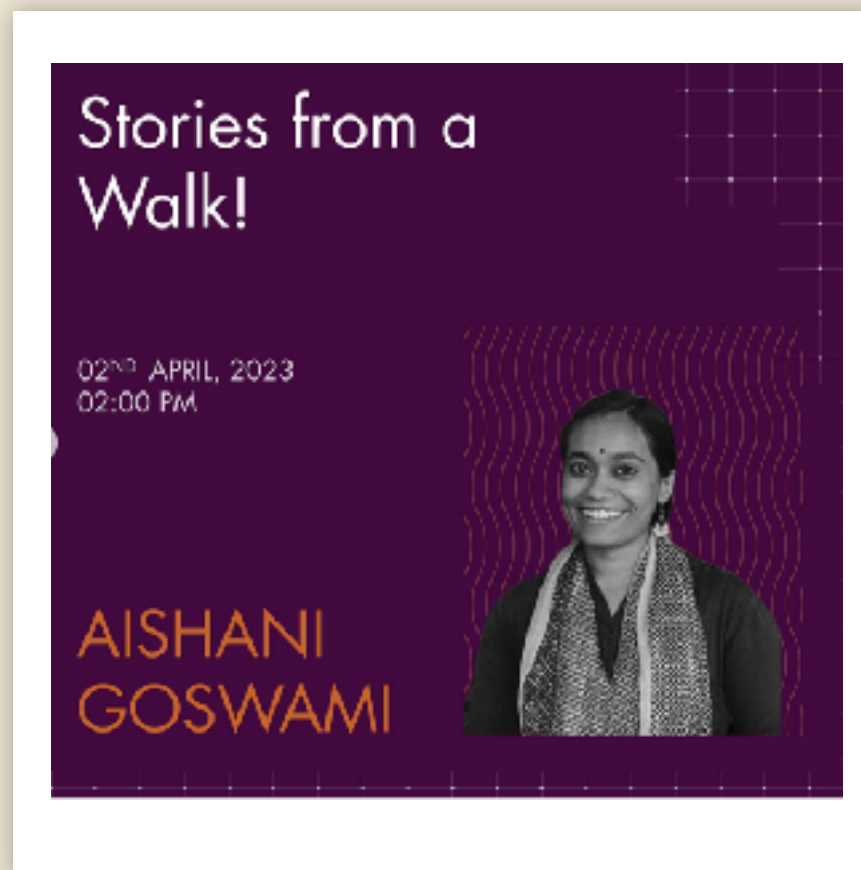
Fellows Aishani Goswami & Rahul Singh were invited to a Twitter Spaces discussion hosted by TheThirdPole.

The discussion focused on the challenge of floods & droughts in Madhya Pradesh.





# OTHER FEATURES & EVENTS FROM THE FELLOWSHIP



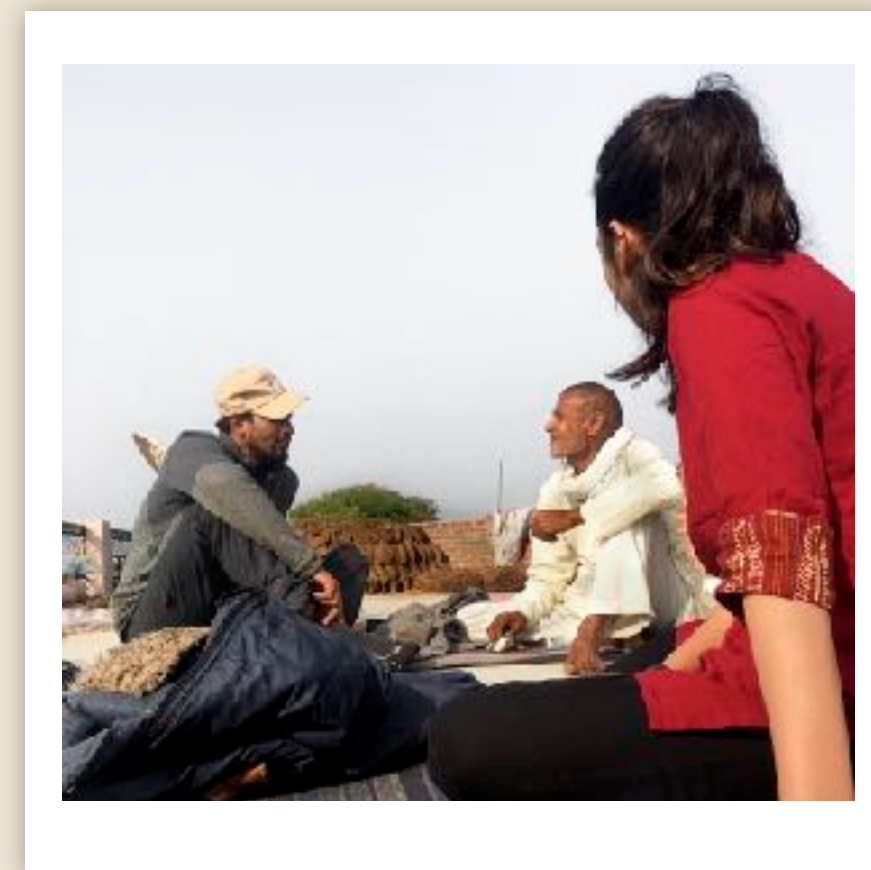
Fellow Aishani Goswami was invited to participate in a colloquium organised by the Feminist Collective in Architecture.

She presented her work as 'Stories from a walk - Explorations in gender and space: academic perspectives'.

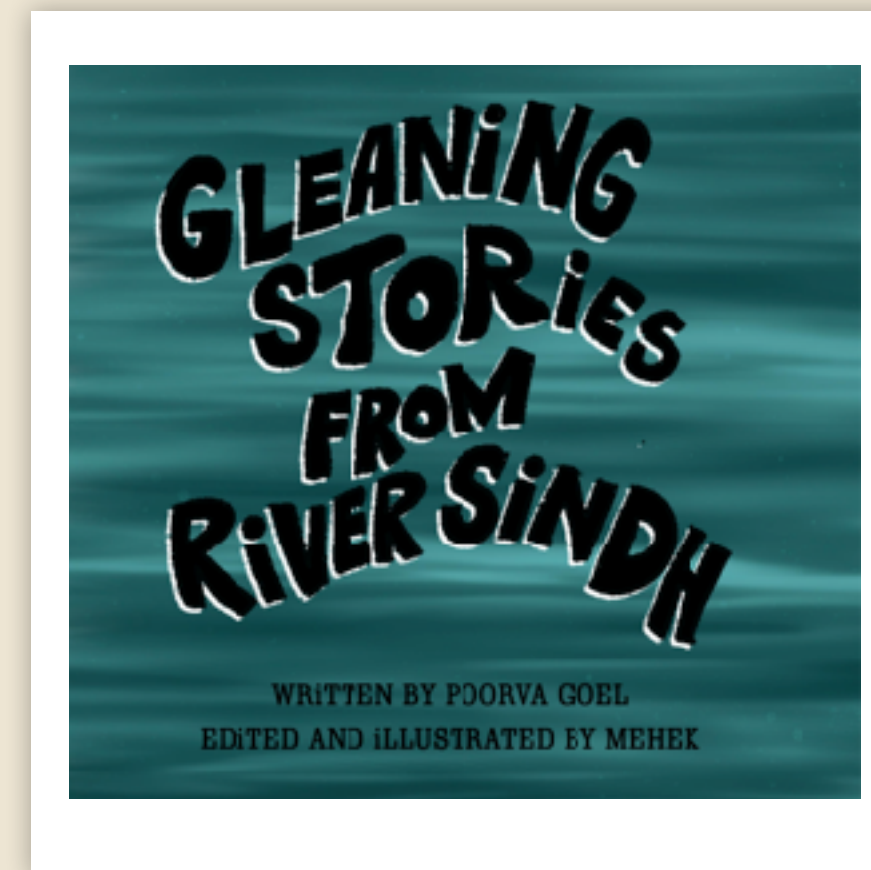


In an interesting update received via social media, it came to our attention that the work of one of our fellows - Poorva Goel - had been given to students at the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art Design and Technology, to be used as an inspiration for an assignment.

PhotoSouthAsia reviewed the book 'Along the Betwa' by Moving Upstream Betwa fellows Radhika Singh & Shail Joshi.



Read it [here](#).



Checkout the amazing work created by these students base on Poorva's article:

1. [Illustrated by Afeef Khan](#)
2. [Illustrated by Mehek](#)

# MOVING UPSTREAM GANGA







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MOVING UPSTREAM: GANGA

## MOVING UPSTREAM: GANGA

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As part of this project, Siddharth walked 3000km along the River Ganga in the years 2016-2017

We've produced a series of outputs from this project, which includes the documentary **'Moving Upstream: Ganga'**.

The documentary continues to be shown at various festivals and institutions across the world, and at community screenings. The following page lists out some of these festivals and screenings.

Help us organise screening in your institution / community space. Write to [asid@veditum.org](mailto:asid@veditum.org)



## MOVING UPSTREAM: GANGA

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From the 'Sunlight doesn't need a Pipeline' Festival, UK

### MOVING UPSTREAM: GANGA

## FESTIVAL SELECTIONS

- Trails Film Festival, Greece - 2022
- Sunlight Doesn't Need a Pipeline festival, UK, October 2022
- Quotes of the Earth Festival by Toxics Link, India International Centre, New Delhi - December 2022
- Goa Environmental Film Festival, G20 Event, Goa, June 2023

## SCREENINGS

- St. John's College, New Mexico, USA, May 2022
- India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, 5th June 2022
- Shoonya Space, Bengaluru, 30th October 2022
- Rivers of Life Festival, Azim Premji University, November 2022
- ATREE Campus, November 2022



From the screening at Shoonya Space, Bengaluru, Oct 2022



# INDIA SAND WATCH







*India Sand Watch is set to go public in August 2023*

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INDIA SAND WATCH

## INDIA SAND WATCH

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At Veditum, we've been learning through our walks along rivers and through collaborative work about challenges faced by our rivers.

This year we initiated a long imagined project - India Sand Watch, in partnership with Ooloi Labs and supported by Rainmatter Foundation.

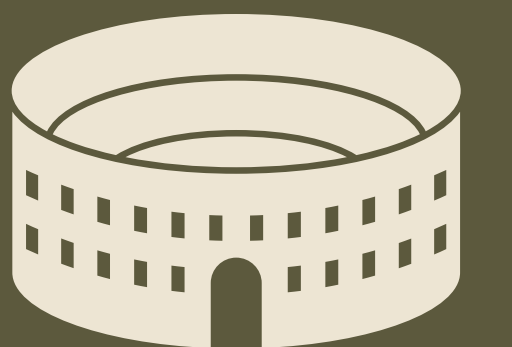
This is part of Veditum's environmental accountability efforts, and we will be going live with this project in the month of August 2023.

While this is a single page update here, a large amount of our total effort in the year has gone towards this project. We can't wait to share more!

*If this interests you, write to [sandwatch@veditum.org](mailto:sandwatch@veditum.org)*



# EVENTS & PUBLIC SPEAKING





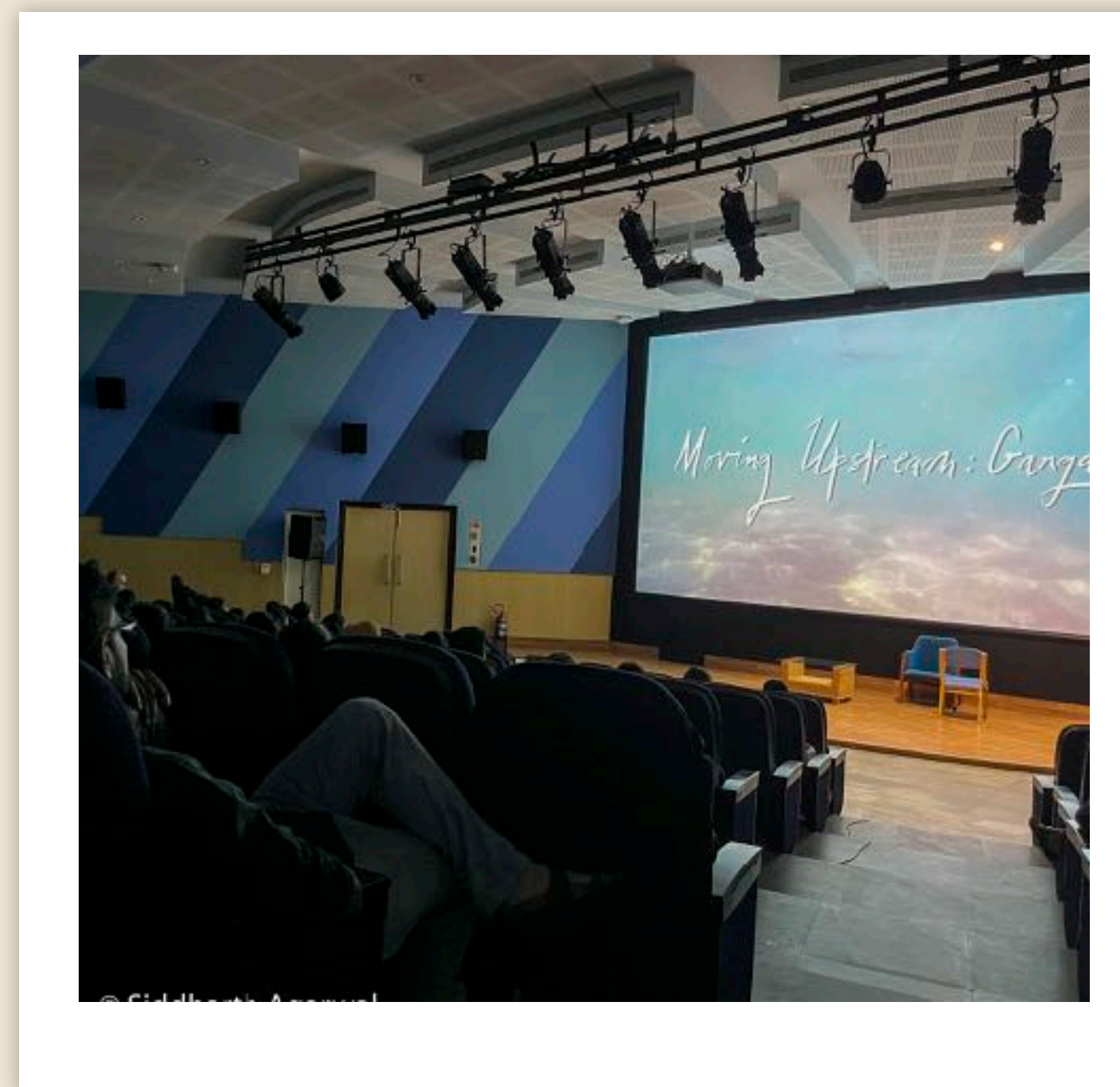




# RIVERS OF LIFE, AZIM PREMJI UNIVERSITY

The climate change centre at Azim Premji University initiated a program called - Rivers of Life - where they hosted interns from across India in researching & documenting India's rivers. The outputs from their work, along with the work of organisations & individuals from across India was shown at a 2 week event on the university campus in November.

We presented our work through exhibition panels, films and zines. See some snippets below.





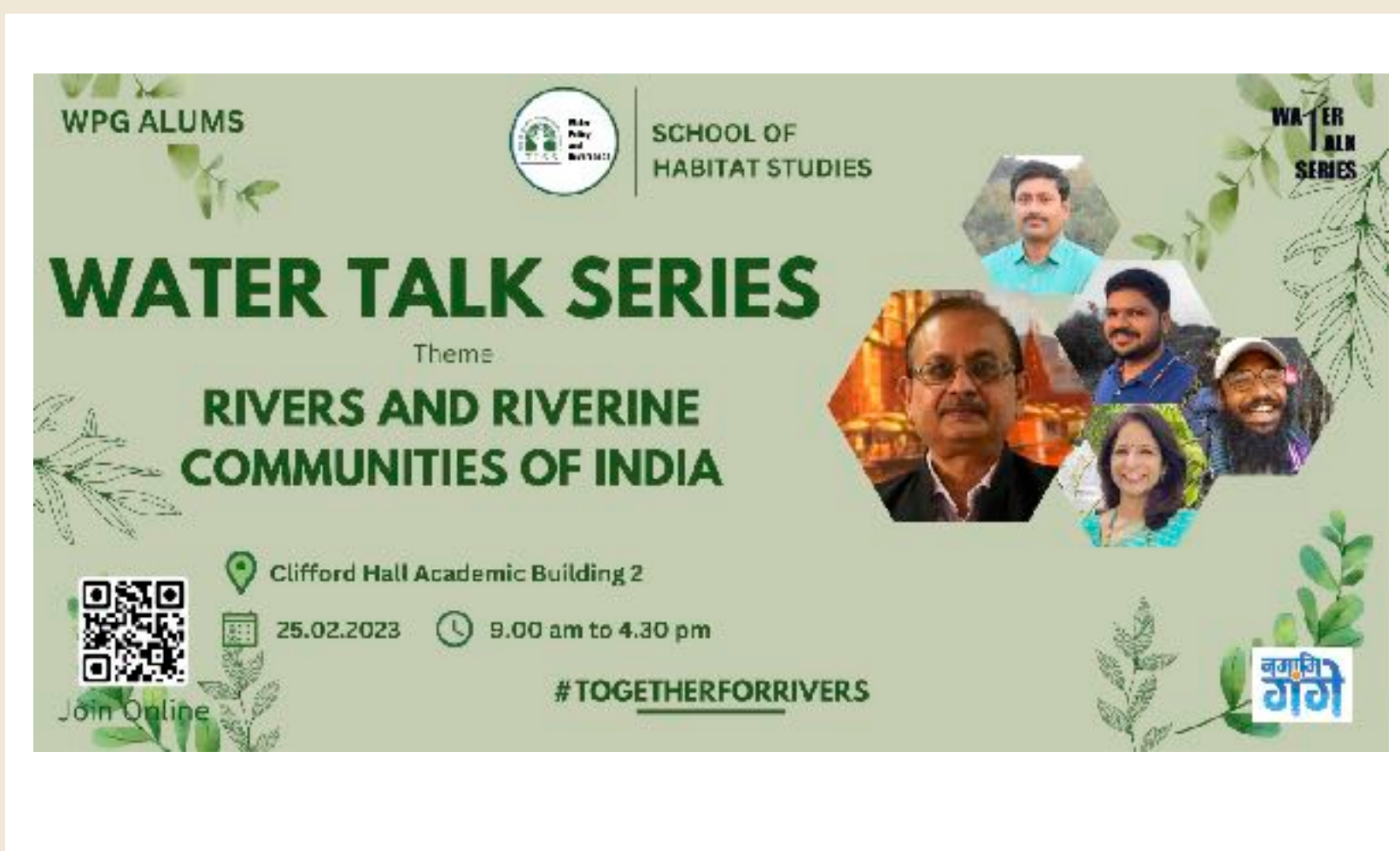


## EVENTS & PUBLIC SPEAKING

# UN WATER WEEK

During the UN Water Week, several side events were organised. This one was titled - Overcoming obstacles for reflexive research practice in water governance.

Siddharth was invited to speak as one of the panelists. Radhika Singh, one of our past fellows from the Moving Upstream: Betwa fellowship was a curator / co-organiser of the event.



# WPG, TISS MUMBAI

The Centre for Water Policy & Governance at the School of Habitat Studies, TISS Mumbai, had their annual event - Water Talk Series - themed as 'Rivers and riverine communities of India' for 2023.

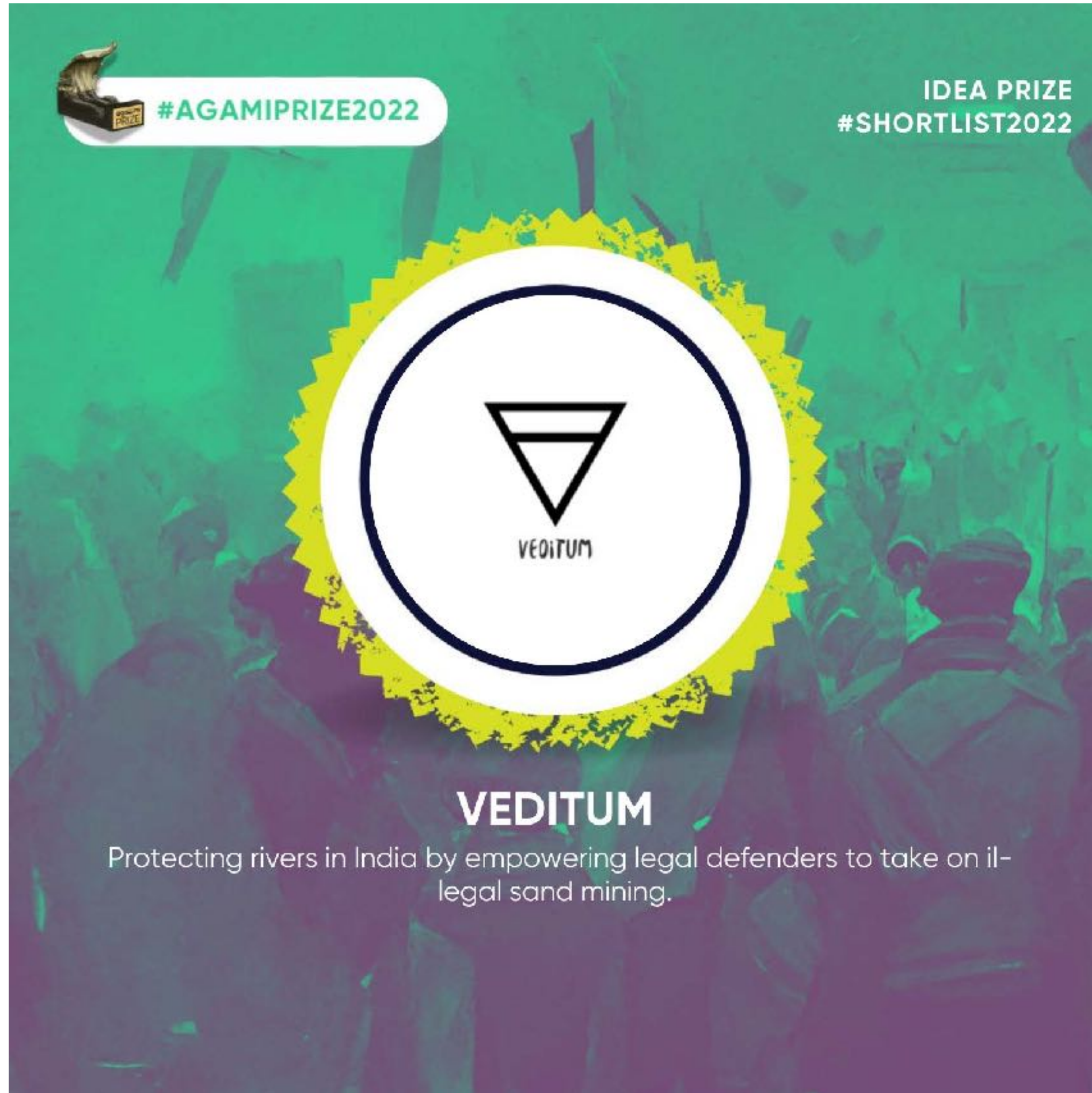
Siddharth was invited as one of the speakers, where his talk was titled 'Securing the future of Indian Rivers'.



# RECOGNITION OF OUR WORK







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## RECOGNITION

# AGAMI PRIZE SHORTLIST

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In late August, our 'India Sand Watch' project was shortlisted for the Agami Prize 2022, in the idea prize category. About the prize, from Agami:

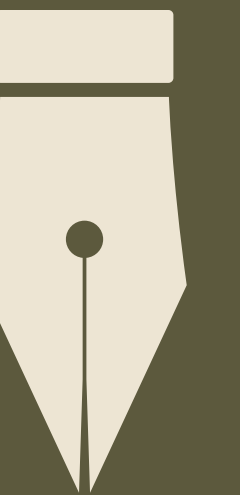
"The Idea Prize will be awarded to two early-stage initiatives that could innovatively transform our systems of law and justice. These initiatives are testing and/or building proof of concept for their ideas."

While we did not make it to the final winners list, we're thrilled to receive this recognition.

You can checkout all winners and shortlisted initiatives at this link: [Agami Prize 2022](#)



# INTERVIEWS & FEATURES







Recording the podcast with Kalki Kochlein. Photo: Archana Nathan

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INTERVIEWS AND FEATURES

## RIVER WALKER - BBC PODCAST WITH KALKI

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Siddharth was invited to the MyIndianLife podcast by the BBC World Service, which is hosted by actor and artist Kalki Kochlein. The podcast intends to share the life of young Indians today.

The episode featuring Siddharth is titled '**River Walker**' and is episode 9 of Season 2 of the podcast. You can listen to it here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0dr5j0d>

We're glad to have this kind of a platform to share stories and issues of rivers & communities.







# PUBLICATIONS & COLLABORATIONS







First page of the published article - Down To Earth Magazine, 16-30 April 2023

## PUBLICATIONS & COLLABORATIONS

# MINED TO DESTRUCTION - DOWN TO EARTH MAGAZINE

Earlier in 2023, we started sharing our work on the India Sand Watch project with our partners, while exploring collaborations.

Our team collaborated with Pulaha Roy, a data journalist from Down To Earth magazine, to tell a story about sand mining in India.

Using signals emerging from the data already added to the India Sand Watch platform, a 5 page print spread highlighted the issue in states across the country. This article was then translated into Hindi as well.

Click on the titles below to access these articles:  
[Mined to Destruction \(English Version\)](#)  
[Mined to Destruction \(Hindi Version\)](#)



# River Walks, Mutual Aid and Open Futures

*Siddharth Agarwal*

An alternative equitable future can exist only after we acknowledge the deeply colonial and divided nature of thinking that society currently dwells in and act to create an open, interoperable, and accountable system.



scan to read



Poster about the article created for social media

## PUBLICATIONS & COLLABORATIONS

# RIVER WALKS, MUTUAL AID AND OPEN FUTURES

We've been taking opportunities to share the ideas and philosophies that guide our work, through various mediums and formats.

One such opportunity came up when Siddharth received an invitation to write for Branch Magazine. This article was published as part of a special issue - The Open Climate Edition.

Given how our work sits at the intersection of technology, justice, and ideas of slowing down, the article explores what an alternative equitable future could be.

Read the article at this link: <https://branch.climateaction.tech/issues/issue-4/river-walks/>





## PUBLICATIONS & COLLABORATIONS

# INDIA RIVERS WEEK 2022

## WITH INDIA RIVERS FORUM

India Rivers Week, the annual event by India Rivers Forum was held in the month of November 2022 on the theme - **'Rivers as waterways in India: Bane or Boon?'**.

This year's event was co-organised with Pune based Manthan Adhyayan Kendra.

The event saw 5 sets of discussions - starting from traditional waterways usage, to plans, impacts and governance around the current and proposed design of waterways, and finally an envisioning for what a sustainable design for inland waterways could look like.

You can see all discussions and updates at this link: <https://indiariversforum.org/indiariversweek2022/>

Veditum India Foundation is a consortium member at the India Rivers Forum, and Siddharth is the convener.





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PUBLICATIONS & COLLABORATIONS

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR RIVERS**

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**WITH RAINMATTER FOUNDATION**

14th of March is celebrated as the 'International Day of Action for Rivers'. For this occasion, we collaborated with Rainmatter Foundation to create a video that asked a very simple yet important question: 'What is a river?'

In so much of the work we do, we often forget to build the most basic arguments. What is a river? Just any expanse of water? What all does it include? What challenges does it face? What happens when we lose it?

Through this video we raise some of these questions, and answer the question: What action can we take today?

Watch the full video here: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CpwnsTAATs4/>





A barber shop in Harsidhi, East Champaran - Ghumakkadi Project, Buddhijeev Studios

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## PUBLICATIONS & COLLABORATIONS

# UPDATES FROM PARTNERS & COLLABORATORS

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### BUDDHIJEEV STUDIOS

We love the slow nature of our work (though it can be sometimes frustrating) and the slow 'impact' that it creates.

Shridhar Sudhir from Buddhijeev Studios had joined Siddharth for about 500kms on the walk along the Ganga and about 250kms on the walk along River Ken, both as part of our Moving Upstream project.

The practice of walking in the way we designed it, left a mark on Shridhar. This past year, he initiated an effort at his own studio, and called it Ghumakkadi. This was to be an experiment in slow travel - walking through rural Bihar.

We invite you to checkout the visuals and stories that have emerged out of this exercise on Buddhijeev's blog.

Read stories at this link: <https://buddhijeev.substack.com/>



# HIRING AT VEDITUM







Hiring Poster

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## HIRING

# FOR INDIA SAND WATCH

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We hired for a full time position at Veditum

The response towards this job position was tremendous, and we received applications from all parts of India, and from different socio-economic-cultural backgrounds and identities.

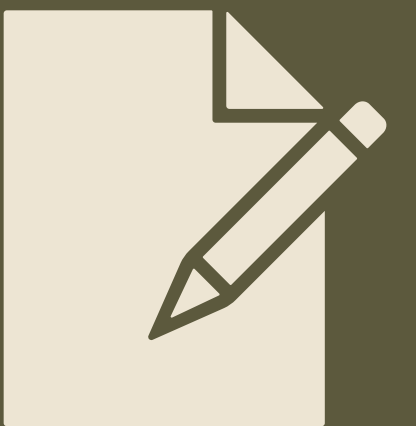
We also received several compliments on being upfront and transparent with details about the job, especially the salary, and we intend to continue this practice in the coming times.

We finally hired Kumar Anirvan, who is working on the India Sand Watch project.

We'll be hiring again in the next few months, keep an eye out on our social media!



# INTERNSHIPS AT VEDITUM





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## INTERNSHIPS

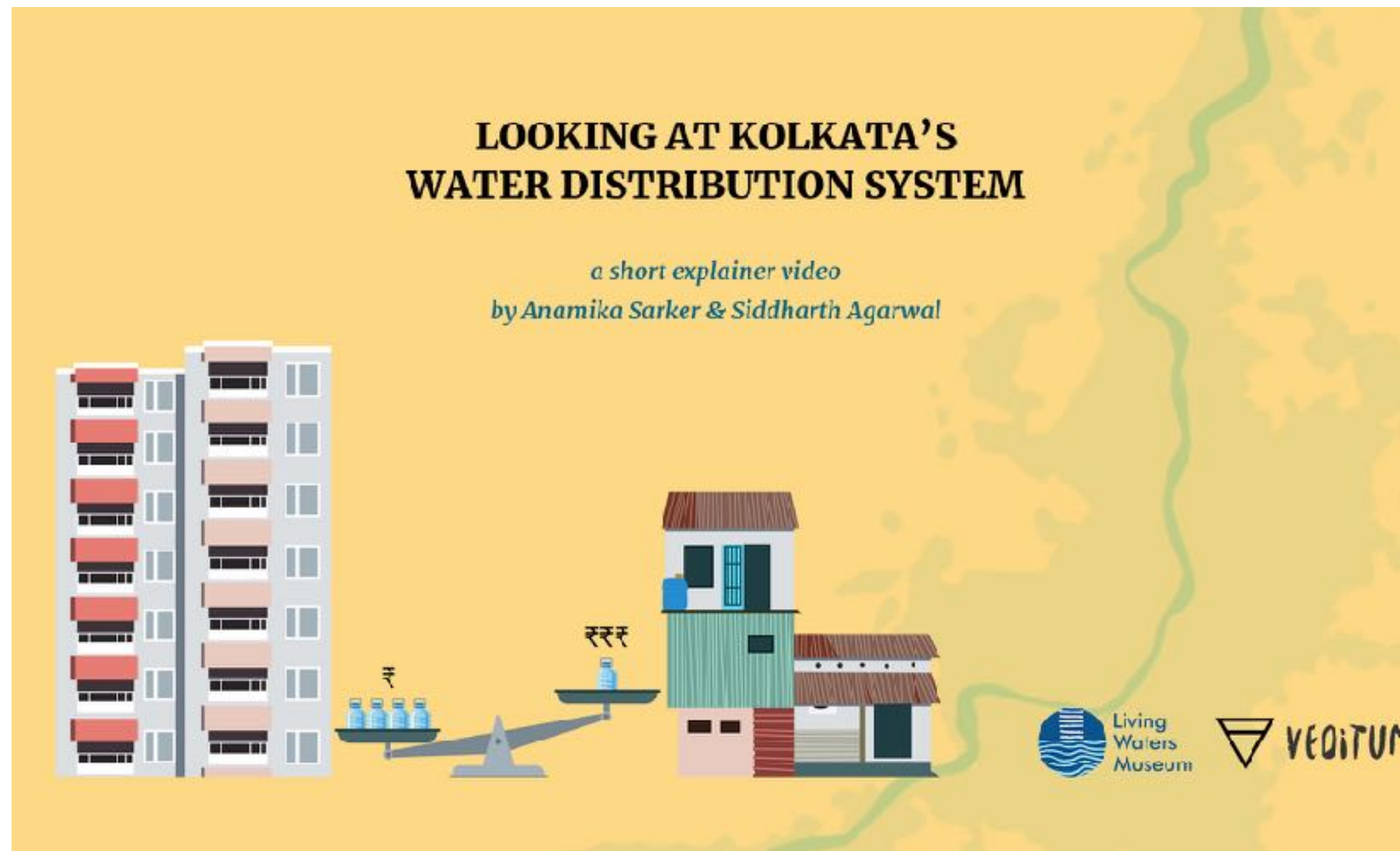
# LOOKING AT KOLKATA'S WATER DISTRIBUTION

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In the previous year, Anamika Sarker interned with us and produced a video - 'Where does Kolkata get its water from'. We created this as part of our City Water Walks project focused on Kolkata.

This year, Anamika worked with us in producing the second video for this series - Looking at Kolkata's Water Distribution System.

We partnered with the Living Waters Museum (LWM) to produce this, and the video will go live later in 2023 as part of LWM's Kolkata Waters exhibition.



Thumbnail for the final video. This will be released later in 2023 as part of Living Waters Museum's Kolkata Waters exhibition.





Taking auto routes around town. Photo: Taha Mama

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## INTERNSHIPS

# MAPPING KOLKATA'S AUTO NETWORK

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This year was an interesting and long pending foray for us into the space of public transportation.

With our intern Taha Mama, an architecture student, who joined us for a month, we initiated an exercise to map all of Kolkata's auto routes, write about them and make the data available in the public domain.

We're hoping that the visualisation and availability of this data will show the extent of Kolkata's shared auto network & push for more focus on public transportation in the city.

This project is Work in Progress. The data and writing will be made available this year!





Poster announcing the call for interns.

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## INTERNSHIPS

# INDIA SAND WATCH

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You've already read about the India Sand Watch project in earlier slides. If not, [click here](#).

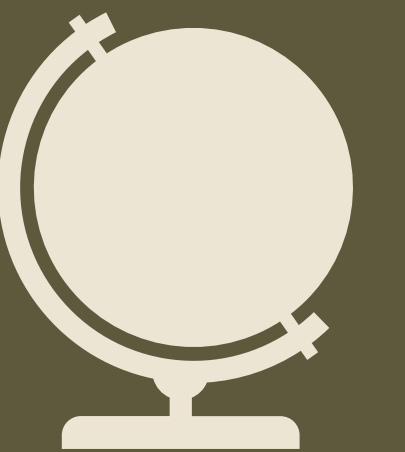
As part of our efforts to engage students in this work, we put out a call for student interns in the months of May-July 2023. We received over 100 incredible applications for 2 internship positions.

Given the high quality of applications & interest shown by applicants, we selected 5 interns - Kangkana Pal, Krishanu Kashyap, Mehuli Das, Shresth Meharia & Supriya Tyagi.

We will soon be publishing their work reports.



**OUR WORK IS  
SUPPORTED BY**







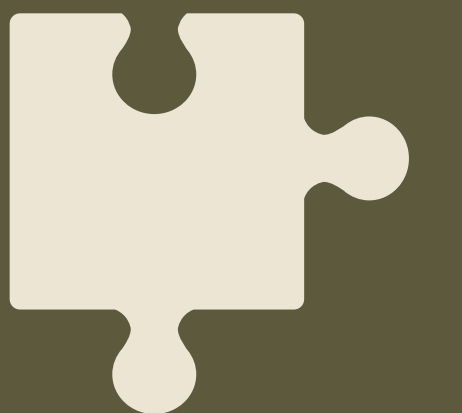
OP JAIN FOUNDATION



This is apart from the numerous individual donors who continue to be our strength



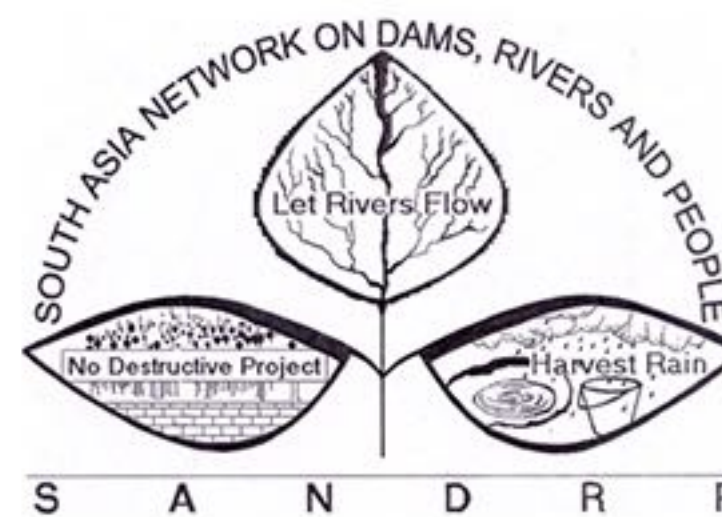
# PARTNER ORGANISATIONS







OUT OF EDEN WALK



*a non-exhaustive list that continues to grow*



# OUR APPEAL





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I hope you enjoyed reading through the report, learnt a thing or two, and also felt happy at what your contributions have enabled us to do.

While we have managed to receive institutional support for a couple of new projects, we hope that you will continue your financial support towards Veditum's work. Individual donations have built the bedrock of stability on which we're continuing our work.

Indian citizens can make a tax deductible donation (under Section 80G) to Veditum via this link: <https://rzp.io/l/VIF-AR-22-23> or reach out if you'd like to use UPI / NEFT for a direct transfer.

In case you have any leads for institutional support, or any questions for us, please reach out to me at [asid@veditum.org](mailto:asid@veditum.org). I look forward to hearing from you.

Siddharth Agarwal



**THANK YOU FOR  
WALKING ALONG WITH US**

[www.veditum.org](http://www.veditum.org)

[www.movingupstream.in](http://www.movingupstream.in)

[www.sandwatch.in](http://www.sandwatch.in)

