

சிந்தனை (*Sindhanai*) as contemplative pedagogy:

*Embedding Measurement
in Collectivisation*

ABOUT சிந்தனை (SINDHANAI)

‘சிந்தனை (Sindhanai) as contemplative pedagogy: Embedding Measurement in Collectivisation’ is an analytical documentation of discussions with a group of community leaders who are struggling to evolve a collective of sanitation workers in three districts in Tamil Nadu. The voices of these leaders are supplemented by the knowledge and insights of a number of experienced leaders who we interacted with to further discuss the journeys and challenges of collectivisation. These leaders have been instrumental in supporting and nurturing community collectives such as Karnataka Vikalachetanara Samasthe, Karnataka Sex Workers Union, Neralu Beedi Workers Union, Muslim Mahila Okkutta, Humanity Foundation, Koraga Abhivruddhi Sabghagaka Okkutta, Koalisi Buruh Migran Berdaulat, International Migrants Alliance, Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants and Nari Chetna Foundation. Each of these collectives work in a number of contexts with a diverse range of identities, including persons with disabilities, sex workers, Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, gender and sexual minorities, Muslim women, *beedi* (hand-rolled cigarette) workers and migrant workers. Additionally, we also reviewed Praxis’ experiences in enhancing the participatory nature of grant-making processes for funders such as the Oak Foundation, Laudes Foundation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Porticus, Swallows and the National Alliance Group on De-notified and Nomadic Tribes (NAG-DNT). The detailed learnings and insights derived from these sources have been encapsulated into a separate Discussion Paper series.

This particular document is a condensed version intended for the federation-level leadership team (CAAF) of the collective of sanitation workers - an emerging federation focused on fostering a robust community-owned social movement. Nevertheless, the knowledge contained here will be valuable for any collectivisation process. Our aim is to distil this knowledge to make it accessible for grantmakers and evaluators, enabling them to enhance their understanding of measuring collectivisation and contribute to the development of measurement systems led by the Global South.

சிந்தனை (Sindhanai) as contemplative pedagogy:
Embedding Measurement in Collectivisation

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BACKGROUND

The last decade has seen collectivisation gain recognition as an important approach among grantmakers, who often see it as a strategy to enable sustainability and the scaling-up of social initiatives. There is an acknowledgment that community-led efforts play a critical role in the success of facilitating policy shifts. However, as more stakeholders turn to collectives to steer social change, there is a risk that this platform is treated as a 'silver bullet' without a thorough understanding of the ups and downs and power contestations inherent in collectives.

This handbook provides an exploration of challenges in evolving a self-diagnostic tool for social movements. We explore சதைன (Sindhanaï - critical reflection) as a contemplative pedagogy to understand collectivisation; and the need to measure the presence of சதைன (Sindhanaï) as the core for collectivisation. The aim is to evolve a nuanced understanding of collectivisation so as to help social movements as well as those who facilitate these movements.

In this handbook we present an analysis of the key insights described in the சிந்தனை (Sindhanaï) Discussion Papers. These papers explore the learnings derived from multiple meetings held with a set of 11 collectives across different locations and contexts, working with diverse identities. Numerous conversations were held to explore different aspects of collectivisation and delve deeper into the challenges collectives face in their journey toward social change. These insights and learnings, detailed in the discussion papers, focus on ways of exploring intersectionality within collectives, the need to understand the underlying systems and structures at play,

exploring the journeys collectives take and the various aspects of the interface of collectives with grantmakers: at the proposal stage as well as their strategies for the exit stage.

Discussion Papers:

- Community Metrics: Empowering Participatory Grantmaking
- Reimagining Grantmaking for Intersectional Movements
- Evolving Community-led Parameters for Measuring the Strength of Collectives
- Measuring Experiences of Indignity: Analysing Systemic Oppression and its Influence on Collective Action
- Unpacking the Theory of Change Paradigm: A Journey of Learning and Unlearning

We engaged with 11 collectives. Each of these collectives work in a number of contexts with a diverse range of identities, including persons with disabilities, sex workers, Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, gender and sexual minorities, Muslim women, *beedi* (hand-rolled cigarette) workers and migrant workers. Our discussions will continue with them to get more in-depth analysis. Meanwhile, this handbook is created based on applying these concepts and evolving the indicators for one such collectivisation experiment [Case Study: Collectivisation among Sanitation workers in Tamil Nadu, India].

SETTING THE CONTEXT

As more grantmakers support collectives, there is a growing need to understand the interface between collectives and grantmakers. While there may be a common understanding of the need to address social problems and issues, it is also important to acknowledge the power dynamics at play, as funds are essentially a form of currency that can influence power relationships in favour of grantmakers.

In our engagement with collectives, we have found that grantmakers often look at collectives through the lens of NGO grantees. NGOs, from the lens of grantmakers, are stable organisations with high passion for societal changes, but have very clear systems and processes – almost akin to any corporate entity. However, collectives, in most cases differ from NGOs in their set up – being more fluid in structure with a stronger focus on collective action.

A key challenge highlighted by collectives was the set of questions posed by grantmakers at the different stages of grantmaking, from proposal development to monitoring visits to exit stages. These questions could be categorized into three broad clusters:

Cluster 1: Diversity and Inclusion

- a) How diverse is your board?
- d) What is your second-line leadership? Why are there no women in the leadership?
- f) Where are the youth in your leadership?

Cluster 2: Membership and Engagement

- b) How wide is your membership?
- h) How is your board elected? How do you ensure that all members of your CBO have a say in the election?
- i) How do you enhance your volunteer base?

Cluster 3: Financial Management and Sustainability

- c) What is the membership fee? Do all pay fees regularly? How do you keep track of expenses from this fund?
- e) What is your sustainability plan? If we do not fund next year, would you be able to survive?
- g) Where is your budget? How are payments authorized?

While collectives do understand the importance of these questions and challenges, they might struggle to articulate their journey or see the bigger picture. In some cases collectives may not have felt the need to explain their journey to external parties. On the other hand, discussing and explaining these journeys to their own constituents does happen, and these discussions often occur informally through dialogues, conversations, squabbles, and arguments.

One recommendation from these collectives is to develop self-diagnostic tools that serve as valuable resources for social movements to articulate their journey – the past, present, and future. These tools should not be standardised but customised and created by the collectives themselves. The questions in these tools should belong to the collectives. Not everyone within the collective may agree with all answers and responses, but the aim is to facilitate and sustain the dialogue.

These diagnostic tools are essentially measurement tools, but they are not just for measurement; they are a means for the collective to engage in collective critical thinking (sindhanai) with other community members. The collective thinking process is the way through which leadership in the collective expands its membership of

rational thinkers. These are individuals who lead the movement not in a conventional 'leader' sense but through their perspectives and thoughts, which are often conveyed within the four walls of households to family members or in public spaces. The percolation of these thoughts leads to narrative shifts that nurture leaders with perspective. In a way, the measurement is embedded in collectivization. Measurement is not a parallel process, and it is not externally-led. This community-led measurement

helps collectives articulate their positions and challenges. These self-diagnostic tools are a means for collectives to self-reflect, engage in dialogue, and strengthen their ability to convey their unique journeys and perspectives.

This document uses a few common terms in the specific context of collectivisation, their definitions in this context have been elaborated upon below:

சிந்தனை (Sindhanai) [Tamil]

English translation: **Critical thinking**

The ability to think clearly and rationally about complex issues. It involves examining assumptions, evaluating evidence, and drawing sound conclusions. Critical thinking is essential for social movements to be able to understand the root causes of indignity and intersectionality, and to develop effective strategies for addressing them.

Collectivisation

Any effort to bring a group together based on a common goal, interest, identity or ideology to facilitate Collective action. Collectivisation often involves pooling resources, knowledge, and efforts towards a common purpose, with the aim of enhancing the collective's influence, impact, or well-being. It can include all such initiatives that are characterised by, (a) the presence of spontaneous collective action; (b) a shared understanding and experience of discrimination or deprivation; and (c) leadership emerging from within the group. It is often associated with efforts to address systemic issues or bring about positive changes within a society.

Social Movement Approach

A collective response to social issues or injustices, or systemic issues within the prevailing norms and structures, taken by any group. This approach is driven by a shared understanding of these problems, sustained by internal leadership emerging from within the affected communities, and marked by a mix of spontaneous and semi-planned actions. This approach empowers individuals and communities to come together, mobilize resources, and work toward positive social change in a flexible and dynamic manner. This approach can be adopted by collectives, organizations, or any network aiming for systemic change.

Logical Framework (log frame)

It is one of the most popular frameworks for designing programmes in the development sector. A conventional logical framework operates in a sequential manner, resembling a factory production line, where inputs are procured and used for activities, leading to outputs. Beneficiaries convert outputs into outcomes through their agency. These outcomes, as they extend over time, accumulate to create a broader impact. This approach relies on assumptions such as the availability of inputs, skill access for activity organization, beneficiary participation in converting outputs to outcomes, and the provision of a supportive environment by the state and society. Risks listed within the logical framework primarily pertain to stability, order, and avoiding setbacks

Theory of Change (ToC)

A Theory of Change is meant to uncover the relationship between the desired change a programme seeks to bring about and the means or approach employed to achieve it. Rather than getting bogged down in the details of specific activities and outputs, a Theory of Change encourages programme implementers to keep their attention firmly on the overarching change they aim to bring about. This approach, naturally, ensures that the programme remains flexible and adaptable in response to the dynamic nature of societal reactions and conditions. It also helps maintain a clear sense of purpose and direction throughout the programme's journey toward achieving its intended impact.

Projectisation

In the context of collectives, projectisation refers to the transformation of a collective or movement into a structured, time-bound project with defined goals, targets, and specific outcomes. This shift can sometimes raise concerns within the collective about losing their organic and spontaneous nature, unique identity, or the potential for genuine community-driven change.

Indignity

Indignity refers to an offensive, humiliating, or degrading treatment, action, or situation that violates a person's dignity, self-respect, or sense of worth. It involves treating someone in a manner that disregards their rights, humanity, or inherent value as a person. Indignity can manifest in various forms, such as verbal abuse, discrimination, exploitation, humiliation, or any act that diminishes an individual's sense of honor, integrity, or equality.

Intersectionality

A concept that recognises and examines the interconnected nature of various social categorisations, such as race, gender, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, and other forms of identity. It acknowledges that individuals often experience multiple and overlapping forms of discrimination, disadvantage, or privilege based on these intersecting social factors.

INTRODUCTION

As part of this learning assignment, a series of engagements were organised to explore and build an understanding of collectivisation efforts. We defined collectivisation as all such initiatives that are characterised by, one, the presence of spontaneous collective action; two, a shared understanding and experience of discrimination or deprivation; and three, leadership emerging from within the group. Based on discussions with a number of collectives, we evolved seven key concepts that unpack the different pathways used by the collectives. **We defined such collectives as those that may or may not be termed as movements, but they do use social movement as an approach to address issues by demanding systemic transformation.** Furthermore, these concepts reflect on tensions between such collectivisation and the facilitating grantmaking ecosystem. The seven concepts are detailed in the picture below (overleaf).

Our learning is that there are no formulas for creating and sustaining a collectivisation process, however, these concepts offer a method for participatory critical reflection to unearth and explore what the collectives are already doing. The first concept, critical reflection, is the cornerstone of any collective action. It emphasises the need for collective thinking and for fostering a growing community of reflective thinkers within the collective.

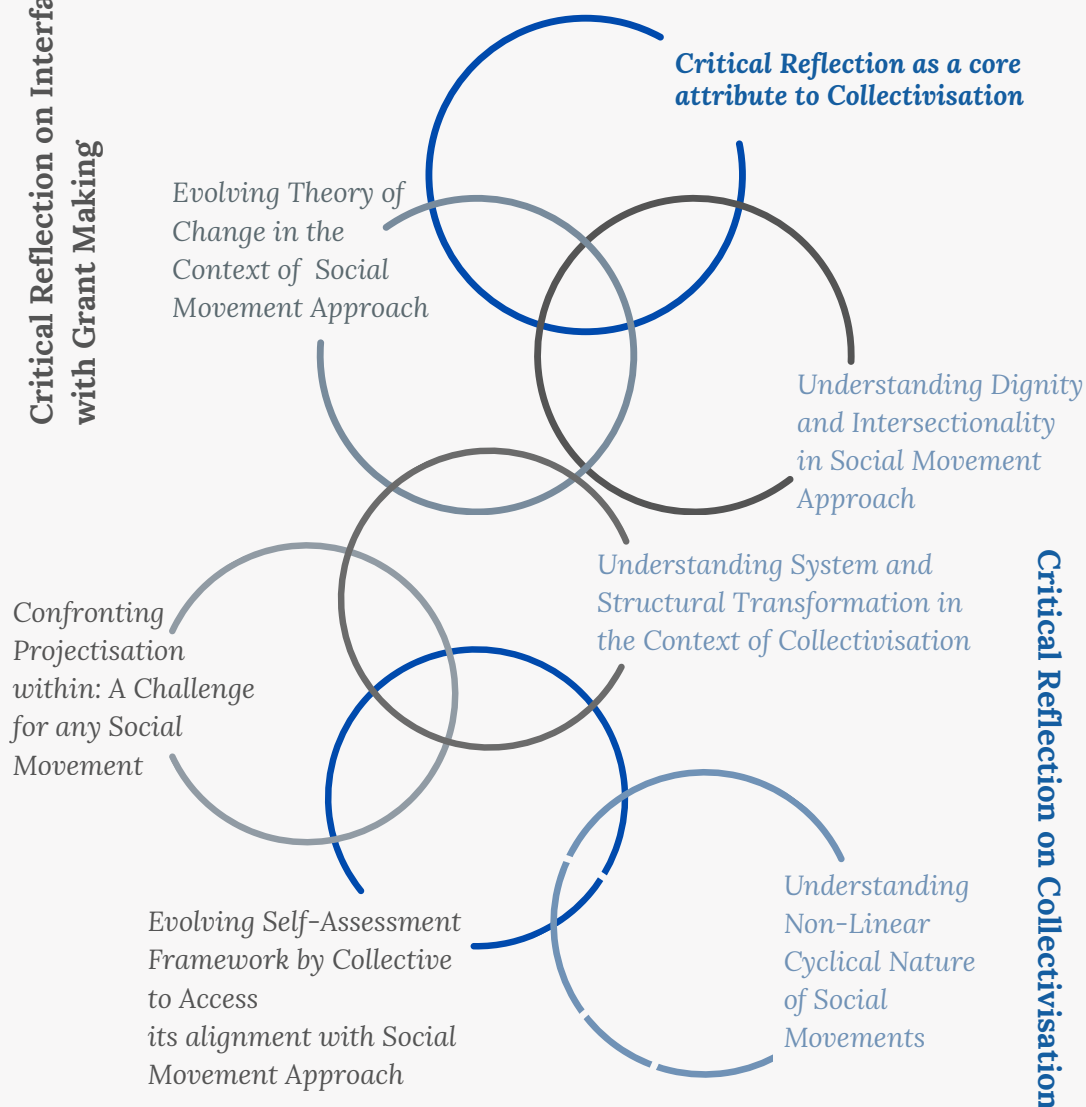
The second, third and fourth concepts relate to the struggles of social movements [Critical Reflection on Collectivisation] in understanding dignity and intersectionality; the need for systemic and structural transformation and; the non-

linear nature of social movements. They together, aim to provide methods of critical reflection that every collective can employ to comprehend its own trajectory. This process of introspection goes beyond gathering information. This helps collectives actively shape the movement's journey.

It cautions the collective of the formidable strength of the mainstream and helps them uncover the interconnectedness that exist among various forms of oppression. They provoke collectives to think about how it might strategically leverage one oppressive system to combat others.

The fifth, sixth and seventh concepts, assume particular significance for collectives seeking external support or grants [Critical Reflection on Interface with Grantmaking]. They necessitate an understanding of the intricacies of grant-making systems, such as log frames, Theory of Change (ToC) frameworks, and other conventional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks. Collectives are encouraged to develop their own adaptive approaches to these systems, empowering them to engage in conversations with grantmakers. The seventh concept is a stark reminder of projectisation, a risk every collective must be wary of. This helps collectives to proactively craft exit strategies, enabling them to remain responsive in all situations.

**Critical Reflection on Interface
with Grant Making**



**Seven Key Concepts for Understanding Collective Actions,
through a Social Movement Approach**

CASE STUDY: COLLECTIVISATION AMONG SANITATION WORKERS IN TAMIL NADU, INDIA

The analysis and observations in this handbook are insights that emerged while evolving the indicators for one collectivisation experiment of a group of Sanitation workers in Tamil Nadu, India.

Resilience, a group working to collectivise sanitation workers in Tamil Nadu, wants to expand their campaign to new districts within the state. To achieve this, they have implemented a community-led development approach in 60 hamlets across various districts. The model begins by identifying one community volunteer from each hamlet who is paid an honorarium. This volunteer facilitates the formation of a Community Awareness and Action Group (CAAG) that is to address most of the issues of sanitation workers. These CAAGs federate and form a Community Awareness and Action Federation (CAAF). Resilience secured funding from a grantmaker for this project.

Sanitation workers hail from a specific caste, the Arunthathiyar, and they typically reside in so-called 'colonies' on the outskirts of villages. Almost every family in these colonies has a history of, or are currently engaged in, sanitation work.

The foundation of CAAF's collectivisation efforts rests on three fundamental ideologies: championing the rights of sanitation workers, confronting the caste system, and resisting patriarchal norms.

This programme has the following components:

- Formation of a Community Action Group in each hamlet, comprising of individuals from the local community who come together to identify and address community issues, plan and implement development projects, and work towards the overall betterment of the community.
- Participation in Block Level and District Level Workshops: Throughout the project, members of the community are encouraged to participate in workshops organized at the block and district levels. These workshops provide a platform for knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and networking opportunities.
- Honorarium for Community Volunteers: Community volunteers who actively participate in the project activities and contribute their time and efforts receive an honorarium.

The programme at the outset, shared two key concerns:

- The collective may become dependent on external funding and the project may end once the funding ceases.
- The collective may get projectised and would drift away from its goal of delinking sanitation work from the caste system. The collective aims to encourage community members to transition away from sanitation work.

A series of consultations were organised with the programme team, the leadership team at the federation level (CAAF), as well as at the hamlet level (CAAG) to gain insight into the social movement approach that the collectivisation process has adopted.

1. BUILDING சிந்தனை – SINDHANAI (CRITICAL REFLECTION) AS CORE ATTRIBUTE FOR COLLECTIVISATION

சிந்தனை (Sindhanai)

Social movements often start with a shared ideology or a set of beliefs about a particular issue or injustice. "சிந்தனை" encourages individuals to think critically about societal problems, injustices, and inequalities. This critical thinking can lead to the development of a shared vision for change within a social movement.

For example, The Community Awareness and Action Federation (CAAF) is a collective of sanitation workers, who belong to a specific caste. In this caste-community, nearly every family has had, or currently has a member working as a sanitation worker. Given the complex caste-based history of sanitation workers and the challenges they face, CAAF's activities are not spontaneous but deliberate efforts made by the local volunteers to collectivise members through collective reflection processes using mapping tools around issues faced by the community. CAAF encourages community members to reflect on their social identity and build knowledge about power relations related to their identity vis-à-vis the rest. A participatory reflection process is done to build knowledge about the status of one's own identity.

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When a collective engages in deep thinking and reflection (சிந்தனை), they can better understand the root causes of social issues and the need for collective action. "சிந்தனை" encourages open-mindedness and the inclusion of diverse voices through thoughtful reflection. Through "சிந்தனை", collectives adjust their strategies and messages as needed to remain effective. Collectives promote this reflection process both within and outside the collective to help everyone understand, question, and challenge the status quo.

To reflect on their status vis-à-vis the social, economic, cultural, and political context of power relations, the collective was first asked to list out which characteristics were often seen as 'higher power' and those that were seen as 'lower power'.

Next, the collective identified their own identity vis-à-vis each category. They also proceeded to mark where in the power gradient their identity was situated.

The collective first listed out their own identity in relation to the socio, economic, cultural and political status

Name the Identity: Sanitation Workers

Mainstream Social Status	Arunthatiyar Caste (Dalit)
Gender Status	Sanitation work is gendered
Mainstream Economic Status	Identity disallowed in many occupations
Mainstream Cultural Status	Restricted in many mainstream ritual spaces
Mainstream Political Standing	Poorly represented in many decision making spaces

Following this, they listed ‘High Power’ and ‘Low Power’ in the mainstream, also mapping the collective identity within this mainstream. An example is provided in the table below, where the collective first listed out what they thought constituted high and low power, and then marked in blue the status of their community.

Identity Stands - Low Power to High Power

Stigmatised Existence	Restricted in Marriage and Dining	Recently Improved Status	Higher Social Standing
Occupation Gendered	Largely Women	Parity in Wages	Gender Neutral Terminology
Discrimination if Identity Visibilised	Access to Social Security Benefits	Newer Modern Profession	Rich, Propertied
Restrictions in Arts, Culture, Ritual Spaces	Recognised in a Commoditised Way	Recent Recognition	Mainstreamed
No Representation in Strong Political Spaces	Tokenistic Representation	Recent Political Say	Mainstreamed

These reflections help the collective understand and articulate its goal towards social transformation to its own members. However, they operate within the context of prevailing societal norms and structures, often referred to as the mainstream. **The change that these movements desire typically conflicts with, and is often resisted by the values and norms of mainstream society. This inherent conflict is precisely why social movements exist.** A social movement approach characterises the presence of collective response by a group towards certain social injustices, or systemic issues, that the group faces. Key ingredients of this approach include the presence of collective actions, shared understanding and experience of discrimination, leadership emerging from within, and spontaneity in actions.

CAAF's collectivisation is grounded in three core ideologies: advocating for the rights of sanitation workers, challenging the pervasive caste system, and combating patriarchal norms. Mobilising communities who align with the three interconnected ideologies of labour rights, challenging the caste system, and combating patriarchy is a challenging task. A collective process that adopts a social movement approach constantly transacts with the mainstream, and therefore inherently involves pushing boundaries of end goals beyond merely securing existing entitled rights to such goals that demand systemic and structural changes. They continuously aim to push their own ideologies (feminism, anti-caste, anti-capitalism) by challenging the established mainstream narratives. They are part of the rebel or alternative side of the mainstream.

A collective "சிந்தனை", involving deep contemplation and thoughtful reflection linking a history of marginalisation with current development catalyses formation of தானா சேர்ந்த கூட்டம்" or a People's

Movement. Embedded within this collectivization (people's movement) is the notion of a "Peopled Movement" (முயற்சிகள் மூலம் ஒன்றாகச் சேர்க்கப்பட்ட கூட்டம்), where people are brought together through efforts of a few thoughtful leaders with "சிந்தனை".

At the ground level, a few thoughtful local leaders cultivate more thinkers among local members through collective reflection processes. This process of collective critical thinking leading to collectivisation likely holds true for any collective that follows social movement approach.

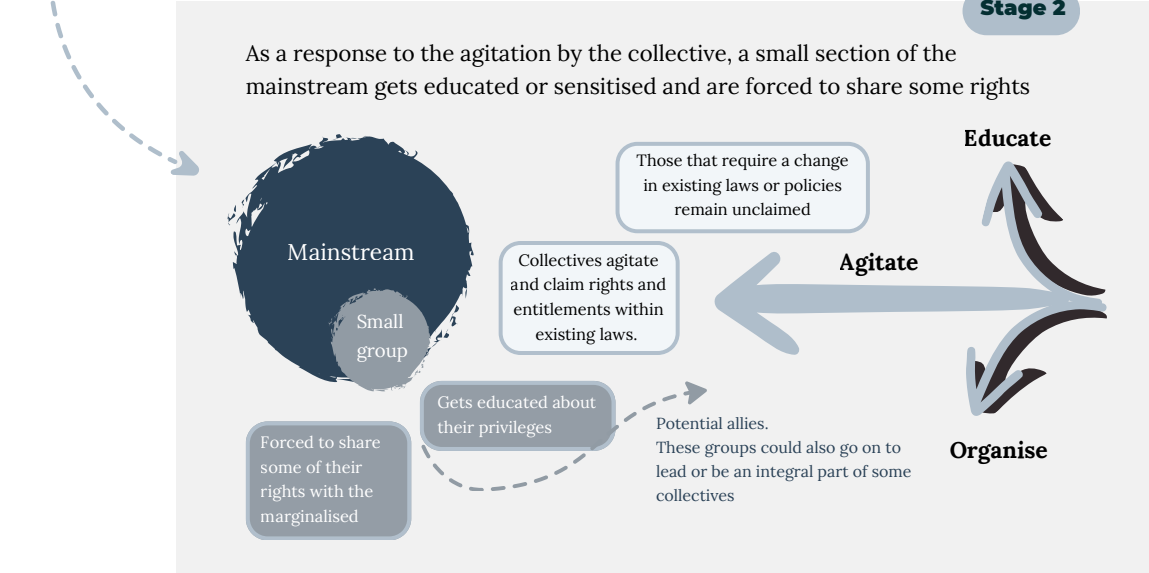
(a) "சிந்தனை" (Sindhanai), or critical thinking, is the key for these movements. It involves discussion, reflection, and the evolution of a shared ideology. In other words, the purpose of a social movement is to expand the number of thinkers, not followers, in the collective.

(b) This critical thinking-led collectivisation is a "Peopled Movement" (முயற்சிகள் மூலம் ஒன்றாகச் சேர்க்கப்பட்ட கூட்டம்), uniting community members under the guidance of thoughtful leaders with "சிந்தனை" who create awareness and trust. Collective critical thinking builds collectivisation; it does not happen naturally.

(c) Over time, this collective reflection can culminate in the formation of a "தானா சேர்ந்த கூட்டம்" or a People's Movement. This spontaneous convergence of like-minded individuals is rooted in trust and shared values and ideology.

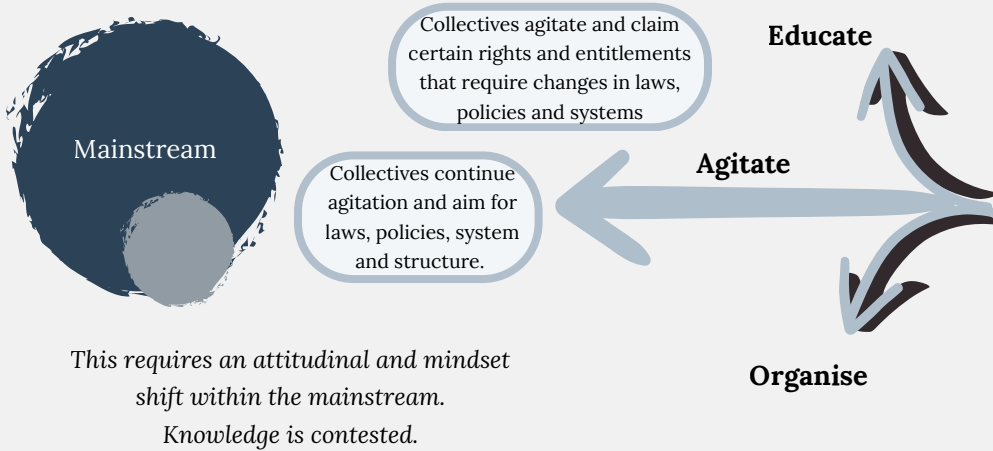
(d) "சிந்தனை" encourages open-mindedness and the inclusion of different voices through thoughtful reflection. Through "சிந்தனை", collectives adjust their strategies and messages as needed to remain effective.

Collectives often need to educate their own community as well as the wider society.

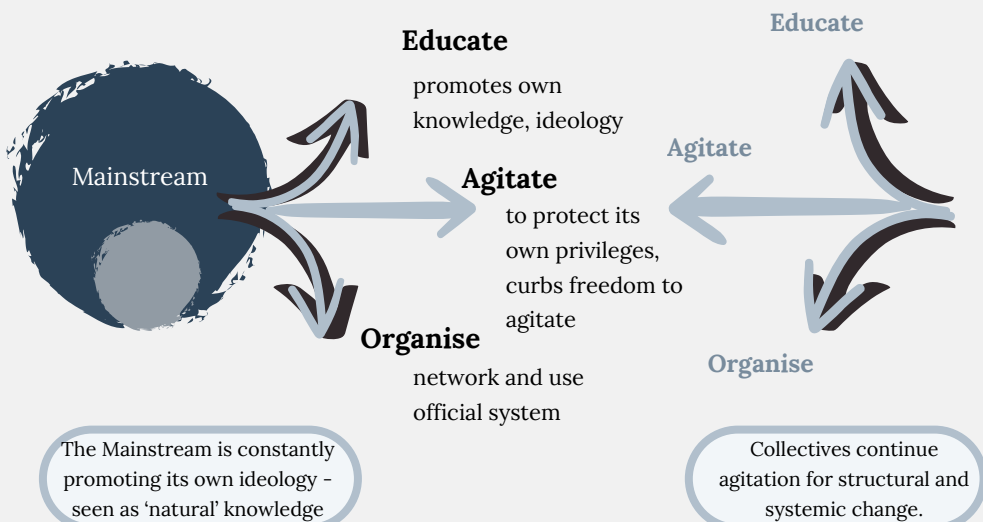


Stage 3

Over time, the movement agitates for structural and systemic change

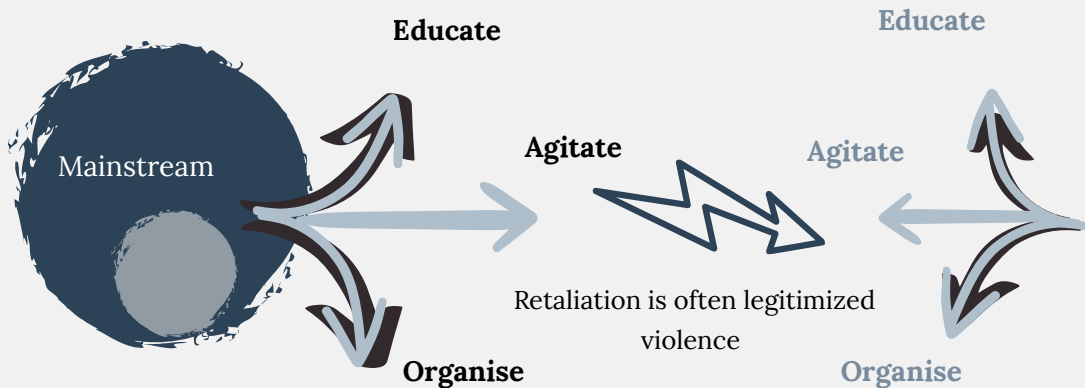


Stage 3+



Stage 4

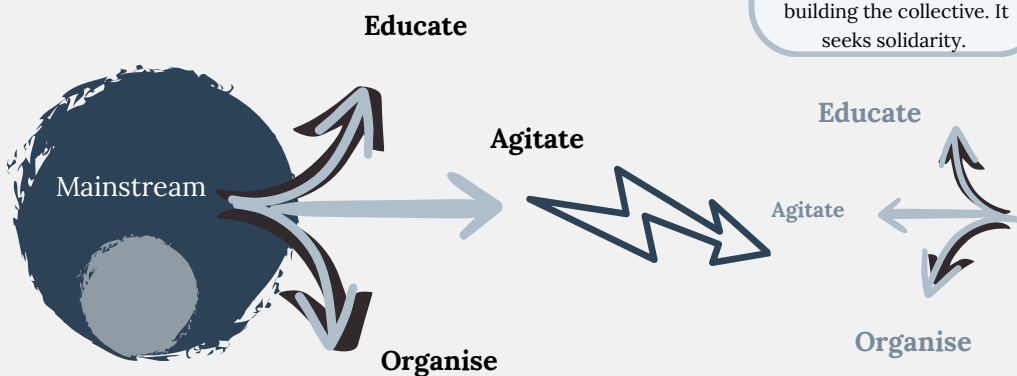
Fearing shift, the mainstream starts retaliating, protecting status quo



The mainstream continues its own way of educating, protecting and leveraging existing formal organisations.

Stage 5

Collective pauses, retreats tactically or subdued.



A dormant collective continues educating and building the collective. It seeks solidarity.

Retaliation is often legitimized violence

At a hamlet level, the trajectory of the community awareness and action group (CAAG) of sanitation workers provides an example of stages of the journey.

Stage 1: When the CAAG was formed in a hamlet, in the first few months, its work was inspired by the famous Ambedkarite philosophy of “Educate, Agitate and Organise”, which encapsulates the philosophy and approach to social and political change. In their reflection, the group broke down each component: CAAG educates both privileged sections and their own community members about the problems faced by sanitation workers and their link with systemic discrimination inherent in caste-based occupations. Agitation, exemplified by a deliberate 15-20 day work abstention, acts as a powerful educational tool for the dominant community. Collective efforts made by sanitation workers during the agitation helped them understand the gravity of the struggle and the need for organised efforts. Finally, the continuous process of organising involved collective decision-making, the creation of a collective vision, and sustained efforts to amplify community voices.

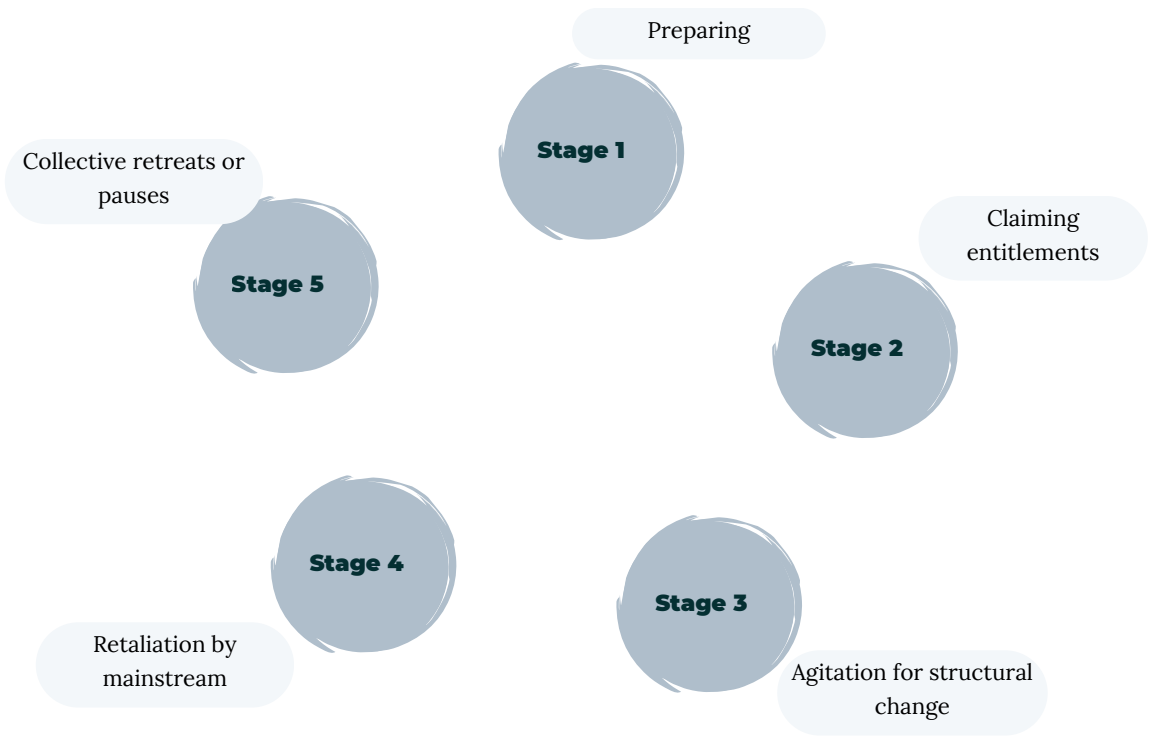
Stage 2: The community's efforts and agitation (abstaining from sanitation work for 15-20 days) resulted in the administration recognising six of the sanitation workers and sending them an official order to return to work. This official recognition would assist CAAG in claiming a number of entitlements for these workers

Stage 3: CAAG, however, regarded this as minimal success. Its aim was a systemic shift – recognising all sanitation workers and ensuring statutory wages as applicable for government employees. Their agitation resulted in garbage not being picked up and the streets not being cleaned. This affected the sanitation situation of the village as a whole. It is here that the mainstream starts using its own institutions, such as education (school, newspapers), agitation (formal police force), and organisation (administration, groups of dominant castes) to counter the respective actions of the collective.

Stage 4: The administration and the dominant community began issuing threats and efforts to divide the agitation. A set of conspiracies by the administration ensured that some sanitation workers returned to work, and the agitation ceased. The situation reverted to the status quo before the agitation. A social movement engages in critical thinking and reflection regarding potential retaliation or backlash from the mainstream. Such backlash can manifest in various forms, including formal and informal channels, actions by fringe groups, physical violence, and instances of indignity. Often, this backlash exhibits a pluralistic nature, with a few fringe groups resorting to violence while others remain silent witnesses to these acts of violence.

Stage 5: CAAG found itself in a state of shock due to these rapid developments. They entered a period of dormancy on this issue and realized the need for greater organization and cooperation among sanitation workers. A few sanitation workers stopped attending group meetings. Through further reflection, CAAG understood that the problem was that none of the community members had access to any document over the land they occupied. The fear of losing habitation made them dependent on the dominant section even for basic housing, forcing some to return to work and stop agitating. Acknowledging this, the CAAG returned to stage 1, this time focusing their struggle on housing rights.

This cyclical yet evolving nature is one way to understand the journey of collectivisation, which is far from linear. The collective learns, reflects, and takes up new issues. It is active at some points and tired at others. It is important to recognise that the collective is a living formation even when it is tired or dormant. The capacity to learn, reflect, and embrace new causes collectively is significant. The collectivisation process ensures that more individuals engage in சிந்தனை (critical reflection). This expansion of thinkers within the community is essential for any social movement-based collectivisation.



While this trajectory is not necessarily the same for all collectives, this understanding can help collectives embrace ups and downs during their journey. The use of 'stages' is purely for categorisation and is not meant to allocate the position of any movement in a linear trajectory. The framework may be used by collectives to uncover the following: -

(a) Non-linear and Evolving Nature of Movements: The journey of collectivisation is not linear; it consists of stages that may repeat or evolve over time. Collectives may experience setbacks and periods of dormancy but can return to earlier stages with renewed energy and new issues. Understanding this cyclical nature helps collectives persevere through challenges.

(b) Importance of Learning and Reflection: Reflection and critical thinking (சிந்தனை) are important in the collective process. They enable collectives to understand the root causes of issues, and adapt their strategies accordingly.

(c) Expanding Thinkers within the Community: A crucial outcome of the collectivisation process is the expansion of critical thinkers within the community. As more individuals engage in சிந்தனை (critical reflection), the collective benefits from diverse perspectives and a deeper understanding of societal issues. This expansion of thinkers is core to any social movement based on collectivization.



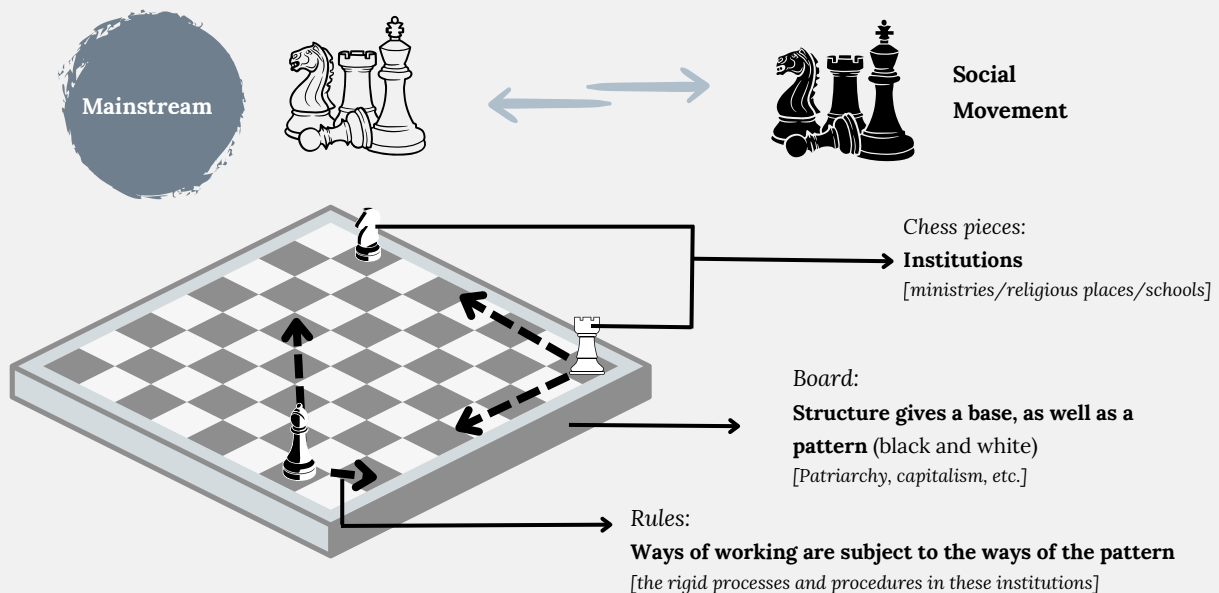
The journey of collectivisation is not linear; it consists of stages that may repeat or evolve over time. Understanding this cyclical nature helps collectives persevere through challenges.

3. UNDERSTANDING NUANCES OF STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE CONTEXT OF COLLECTIVISATION

In the description of the journey above, there are instances of successful progression from Stage 1 to Stage 2. However, when the agitation persists, and the collective demands new schemes, programmes, regulations, or laws, exclusively for the community it represents, there is a recurrent pattern—a rigid or status quo response from the administration or mainstream. While individual entitlements often get accommodated, collective demands tend to encounter resistance. Understanding this conflict between the collective and the mainstream often proves challenging.

One way to understand this contestation between the Collective and the mainstream is to understand it through an analogy of chess.

White has a jumpstart, like the mainstream, while black is like a collective. The coins represent institutions like ministries or departments or religious places or schools and each of the coins have rules to follow in terms of the way it moves. For example, there are rigid processes and procedures followed in these institutions and whoever knows the procedures well, wins. All coins rest on the board and move within the black and white coloured squares on the board. These squares and the board are like the structure, which influence the functioning of organisations and institutions.



The analogy of the chess game provides a framework to understand the interface between the mainstream, comprising government administration and the dominant caste (represented by White coins), and the collective of sanitation workers (represented by Black coins), such as CAAG. White enjoys a jumpstart advantage and takes the initiative from the beginning, having initial control over the game. In contrast, black must respond to white's moves.

The collective needs to have a continuous critical reflection or "Sindhanai" for effective interaction with the mainstream. To succeed, the collective must discuss and understand various "coins" or institutions, akin to chess pieces, including ministries, departments, religious places, and schools, each has distinct rules of working. This familiarity is essential to claim rights and entitlements.

In this journey, at a certain stage, there is a realisation that to achieve certain demands, the very rules need to change. For example, CAAG aspires for a new scenario where the community exits sanitation work. When sanitation workers protest or refuse to work, they face retaliation and societal threats, with the "Board" (the existing structure) safeguarding the "Coins" (institutions). Conversely, when the collective challenges the overarching "Board" (caste system), individual "Coins" (local administration) come to its defense. When CAAG challenges the dominant caste against caste-based abuse, the administration turns a blind eye. When the CAAG challenges the administration (which is largely inhabited by the dominant caste) the dominant caste joins the administration in its retaliation.

The CAAG upon introspection realises the cooperation between the "Board," representing the overarching structure,

and the "Coins," symbolizing institutions within society, as they mutually protect one another. The relationship among the White Coin-holder (mainstream), Coins (institutions), Rules (existing norms), and the Board (structure) is very strong, together challenging the Black Coin-holder (collective). And an even larger force backing all the moves, is the player behind the White-Coins.



When CAAG challenges the dominant caste against caste-based abuse, the administration turns a blind eye. When the CAAG challenges the administration (which is largely inhabited by the dominant caste) the dominant caste joins the administration in its retaliation.

The challenges of advocating for change lie in the entrenched system rooted in social norms and power dynamics. The CAAG realises the need to understand these dynamics and anticipate the "subsequent four or five moves" of the mainstream, akin to chess strategy, to succeed in advocating for the rights and entitlements of sanitation workers.

Any collective can adopt this analogy of the chess game and the dynamics between the mainstream (White) and the collective of sanitation workers (Black) to understand the need to respond strategically depending upon the nature of resistance from the mainstream. While they rebel against the Coins, they need to keep in mind the player behind the Coins, who controls the narrative. The following areas may be explored:

(a) Understanding Institutions: Collectives may evolve a deeper understanding of the institutions (Coins) and their respective rules within the societal structure (Board). Knowing how these institutions operate and interact is crucial for navigating complex issues and advocating for change effectively.

(b) Recognition of the Need for Systemic Change: At a certain stage, collectives may realize that achieving their goals requires changing the very rules and norms governing the system. This recognition is important to demand for systemic and structural changes.

(c) Awareness of Systems and Structure: Collectives need to become aware of the strong interplay between the overarching structure (Board), institutions (Coins), and the mainstream (White) in a systematic way. It also highlights the fact that while these Coins and the Board determine the extent of the moves, it is the player behind the Coin who strategises. The aim of the analogy is for the collective to have this larger picture in mind. The system and its components often work in unison to resist change. Understanding this resilience helps collectives strategise and adapt their approach.

(d) Strategic Thinking: The need to anticipate and strategise is essential for collectives to proactively shape their path and maximise their impact in pursuing rights and entitlements.

(e) Primary Focus: In this struggle, often the focus of the Collective shifts to Coins and not on the Coin holder. It is important for any collective to understand its target.



Collectives need to become aware of the strong interplay between the overarching structure (Board), institutions (Coins), and the mainstream (White) in a systematic way.

The need to anticipate and strategise is essential for collectives to proactively shape their path and maximise their impact in pursuing rights and entitlements.

4. UNDERSTANDING INDIGNITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY IN SOCIAL MOVEMENT APPROACH

In its journey towards social change, every collective embarks to deconstruct the essence of "social" within the framework of the social movement approach. Within this expansive domain of the 'social,' two challenges frequently confront collectives.

The first challenge revolves around comprehending and explaining the concept of indignity. Indignity is difficult to define and measure. It is often experienced as a feeling of disrespect, humiliation, or powerlessness. The indignity can be inflicted through direct acts of discrimination or through more subtle forms of cultural bias. It can also be experienced in the absence of any direct harm. For example, sanitation workers are constantly stereotyped or made to feel inferior because of the work they do, and due to the historical association of their caste with their occupation. Indignity can have a significant negative impact on people's mental and physical health, and it can make it difficult for them to participate fully in society.

The second challenge is related to understanding intersectionality and recognising the interconnectedness among various forms of oppression. For example, a woman sanitation worker may experience sexism from men and casteism from the dominant caste. She may also experience sexism in her own community and casteism from women of the dominant caste. Furthermore, she may also face indignity from the feudal mindset of her employer.

"சிந்தனை" (Sindhanai) or critical thinking is the ability to think clearly and rationally about complex issues. It involves examining assumptions, evaluating evidence, and drawing sound conclusions.

Critical thinking is essential for social movements to be able to understand the root causes of indignity and intersectionality, and to develop effective strategies for addressing them.

Understanding Indignity: In a workshop focused on community evaluation, participants listed all derogatory terms and offensive language that are prevalent in society. These discussions revealed that a significant proportion of these terms targeted women, sexual organs, caste identities, caste-linked occupations, disability, or mental health. Participants recognised that these "abuses or slurs" play a significant role in perpetuating narratives against marginalised groups and instill a sense of indignity in those subjected to them. These discussions yielded several key takeaways:

Abuses/Slurs/Cuss words are manifestations of various "isms" such as patriarchy, casteism, and racism.

The way communities engage with these abuses/slurs reflects the power dynamics between the mainstream and marginalised groups.

These issues need to be responded to through collective actions that focus on structural issues.



Indignity can have a significant negative impact on people's mental and physical health, and it can make it difficult for them to participate fully in society.

These insights are essential for social movements that are working to address indignity. By understanding the root causes of indignity, social movements can develop more effective strategies for challenging it.

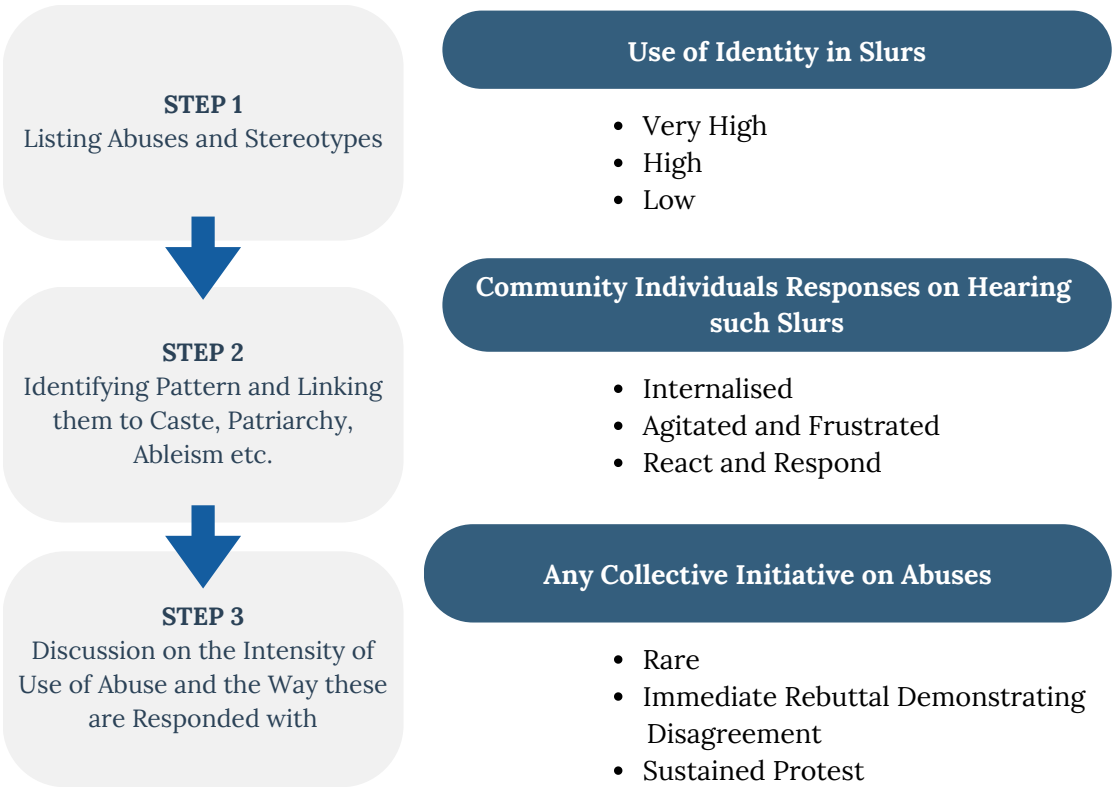
"சிந்தனை" (Sindhanai) or critical thinking is required to understand the othering that happens for the social identities that social movement members associate with. By collectively analysing abuses/slurs related to social identities, social movements can gain deeper insights into systemic exclusion and draw connections between various social systems that perpetuate exclusion.

For example, a social movement led by women could collectively analyse the ways in which

they are subjected to abuse based on their caste and gender. This analysis could reveal how casteism and patriarchy intersect to create unique and compounded experiences of indignity for Dalit women.

Social movements can also use participatory tools to measure indignity. These tools can help collectives understand and analyse experiences of indignity, encompassing the identification of affected groups, their locations, the types of abuses they face, the perpetrators of these abuses, and their responses. Additionally, these tools can assess whether these incidents and their patterns are linked to specific mainstream worldviews such as casteism, racism, patriarchy, or capitalism.

Participatory Tool: Understanding Dignity through the Lens of Derogatory Terms and Stereotypes



Collective Reflection: Why a Community is Othered? What are the Sources of Slurs? What is its link to Societal Culture? There is a Need to Demand for Structural Change.

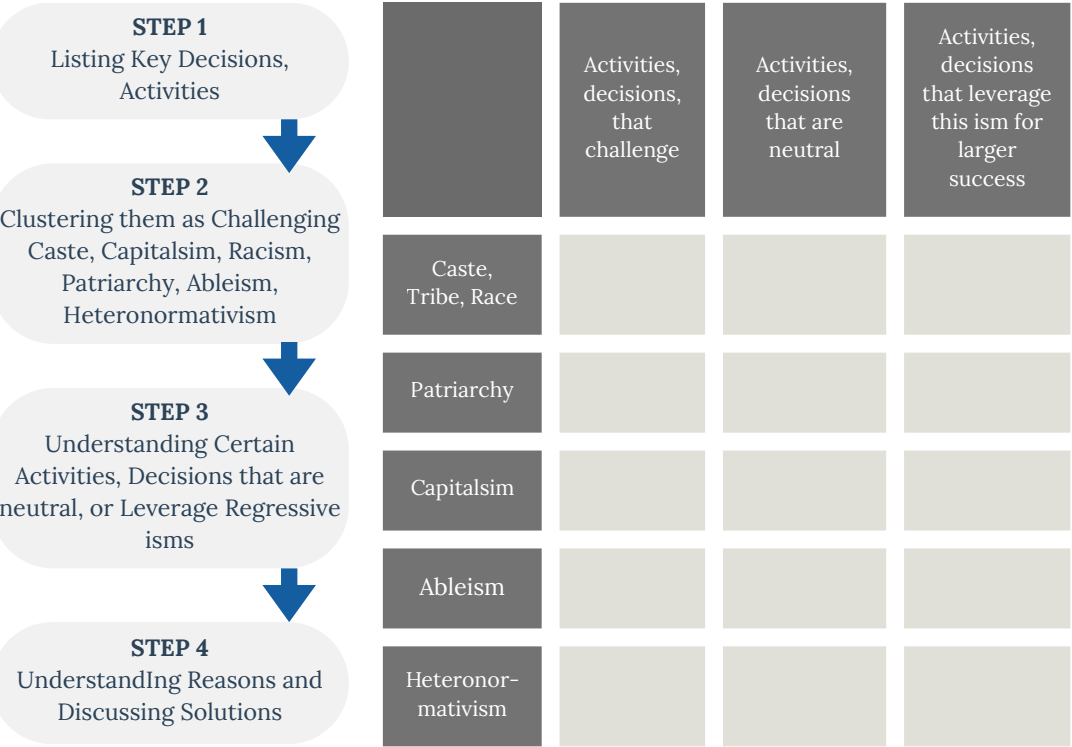
Understanding intersectionality: Collectives, despite having a broader vision of challenging all forms of hegemony, often find themselves prioritising the immediate concerns of specific identity groups they represent. It is possible that collectives can inadvertently adopt solutions that align with or perpetuate other existing power structures. For instance, women's movements might overlook the intersection of caste and gender, while labour unions may avoid addressing caste discrimination to protect their leadership base.

These challenges are often due to poor intersectional representation in leadership, and a lack of understanding of intersectionality,

causing collectives to sometimes be blind to other ideologies and leverage perpetuating systems.

"சிந்தனை" (Sindhana), or critical thinking on associating key decisions and activities of the collective with dominant ideologies would help social movements understand the inter-connected nature of the problem that is being addressed. For example, discussions within CAAF revolved around whether to address issues of patriarchy to avoid offending some members, promote the privatisation of the sanitation wing of the administration to delink sanitation from caste, or disregard issues of communal discord as irrelevant to the movement.

Participatory Tool: Understanding Intersectionality through Analysis of Decisions and Activities of the Collective



Discussions: Whether our decisions leverage other oppression systems? Whether we leverage privatization to address caste discrimination? Whether we promote caste-based occupations to address economic inequality? Whether we ignore issues like domestic violence to keep the collective of "men" together?

Hamlet groups engage in critical reflection sessions in their meetings to explore the relationships between different oppressive systems. By engaging in open, thoughtful discussions, collectives can gain a deeper understanding of how their decisions and activities intersect with various oppressive systems. This process helps collectives identify opportunities to align their efforts more effectively with their broader goal of challenging all forms of hegemony. It will also allow for the development of strategies that address the interplay between different systems of oppression and avoid inadvertently reinforcing regressive practices based on a different lens.

A participatory tool for the above critical reflection would include:

1. Listing Key Decisions and Activities: This should include both short-term actions and long-term strategies.
2. Clustering Actions by Oppressive Systems: Group these decisions and activities into clusters that represent the oppressive systems they relate to, such as casteism, capitalism, racism, patriarchy, ableism, and heteronormative perspectives.
3. Identifying Blind Spots: Within each cluster, assess which decisions and activities challenge the oppressive system, which are blind or neutral in relation to it, and which inadvertently leverage or perpetuate the oppressive system for larger success.
4. Understanding the Reasons: Analyse the reasons behind each decision or activity falling into these categories.

While discussions using the lens of intersectionality help recognise the presence of diverse oppressive systems,

the following three key points need to be considered:

- Intersectionality should be viewed as the starting point for understanding complex social issues. It involves recognising how different identities and power dynamics intersect and interact within specific contexts, rather than simply labeling cases as "intersectional."
- Intersectionality is not a mere sum of all oppressions. Many responses to one kind of oppression include leveraging 'positive' aspects of other oppressions.
- Intersectionality highlights that oppression is not a singular, isolated experience. Instead, it involves the intricate interplay of various forms of discrimination and power structures.



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5. EVOLVING A THEORY OF CHANGE IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT APPROACH

The logical framework, a widely used tool in development projects, typically follows a sequential and structured approach, likening projects to factory production lines. It entails *input* procurement, organising *activities*, and generating *outputs*, triggering *outcomes* through the agency of beneficiaries. However, this approach relies on certain *assumptions* like availability of inputs, access to skills, community participation, and a supportive environment, with risks primarily linked to stability and order. When development

projects get conceptualised as factory production lines, there necessitates a hierarchical organogram - a leadership team taking all key decisions about the project; a separate Monitoring and Evaluation team to assist it in understanding the progress; and a number of frontline teams who will be in charge of specific tasks and outputs assigned to them. Each frontline team often does not know or is not encouraged to think about the connection between their activities and the overall purpose of the project.

THE LINEAR MODEL OF A LOGFRAME



Further, each frontline team will often work independently - not knowing what others are doing. And yet another team is responsible for combining the outputs of each frontline team to create a final output. This factory-like model often reduces frontline teams to task-oriented "machines," mirroring the concept of alienation in Marxist theory. Civil society organisations with paid staff were able to embrace this projectised approach as they are able to mobilise funds to hire and manage project teams. They organise work into discrete projects with defined goals, timelines, and budgets. CSOs rapidly shifted from volunteering-centred programmes to what is now termed

professional social work. A logical framework derived within the principles of capitalism has facilitated concretisation of this new understanding of development work, where human involvement at the frontline level in development work, is to work on a dotted line drawn by someone else. Any development initiative aims for social transformation. The process of effecting change is just as significant as the change itself. Each individual involved in the process must be inherently connected to the transformation. In essence, alienation represents, probably, one of the most significant challenges faced by the development sector. The person or persons strategising the programme,

¹ **Log frame** is one of the most popular frameworks for designing programmes and projects in development sector. A conventional logical framework operates in a sequential manner, resembling a factory production line, where inputs are procured and used for activities, leading to outputs. Beneficiaries convert outputs into outcomes through their agency. These outcomes, as they extend over time, accumulate to create a broader impact. This approach relies on assumptions such as the availability of inputs, skill access for activity organization, beneficiary participation in converting outputs to outcomes, and the provision of a supportive environment by the state and society. Risks listed within the logical framework primarily pertain to stability, order, and avoiding setbacks

² Frontline teams may not even have role in shaping the activities according to changing context. There will be a bureaucratic process in making those changes. So, the frontline team members often get reduced to what we call 'machines'. This situation is similar to the idea of alienation as understood in the Marxism context, where the connection between work and its ultimate purpose weakens. (Marxist concept of alienation refers to the estrangement and disconnection experienced by workers in a capitalist system, where their labour becomes a commodity controlled by others. This condition arises from the separation of workers from the products of their labour, leading to a loss of autonomy and identity).

organising the activity; engaging with output; accepting, adopting and steering the change is crucial. A Theory of Change (ToC), in simple terms, is meant to uncover the relationship between the desired change a programme seeks to bring about and the means or approach employed to achieve it. ToC is not meant to provide a detailed description of specific activities and outputs. Instead, it emphasizes the central role of the envisioned change in a programme. A Theory of Change recognizes that initiating change is inherently political. As the process of change unfolds, different individuals and groups within society will react and respond in various ways. The Theory of Change paradigm likely originated to facilitate such a transformative process.

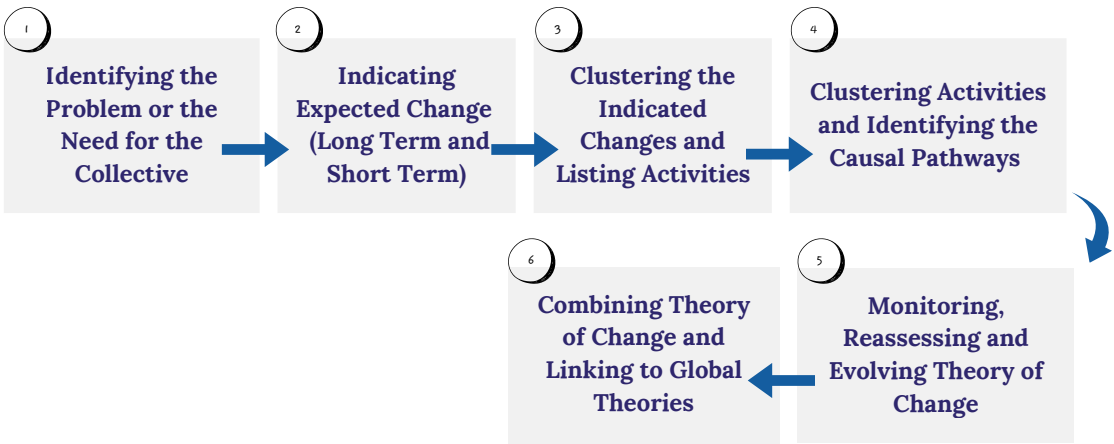
Over time, a convergence has occurred between the Theory of Change (ToC) and traditional log frames, resulting in many visual representations of ToC closely resembling log frames. This merging of formats is not an innocent development. Instead, it reflects a broader struggle for control over programmes involving various stakeholders—those providing funding, those responsible for programme design, those tasked with monitoring and evaluation, and those leading programme implementation on the ground. Although using tools like the Theory of Change (ToC) for programme planning might appear as an effective strategy, it

frequently results in the delineation of activities in a hierarchical manner, assigning specific tasks to different individuals and entities involved in the programme. A social movement, driven by a clear goal and means for achieving it, inherently embodies a theory of change. These movements operate in opposition to prevailing societal norms and structures, which constitute the mainstream. The change sought by the movement often clashes with and faces resistance from mainstream society. This also implies that the mainstream has its own perspective founded on a theory of change that contradicts that of the social movement. A collective process adopting a social movement approach consistently engages with the mainstream, pushing the boundaries of its end goals beyond securing existing entitled rights to demanding systemic and structural changes. It employs a range of means, including protests and civil disobedience, to achieve these broader goals. The⁴ potential for diverse responses from various stakeholders means that multiple teams within the social movement may need to adopt various actions on the ground, not all of which can be predicted from the outset. This highlights the need for adaptability and flexibility in the movement's approach. For these reasons, a projectised way of working is not always the best approach for such collectivisation initiatives.

³ Rather than getting bogged down in the details of specific activities and outputs, ToC encourages programme implementers to keep their attention firmly on the overarching change they aim to bring about. This approach, naturally, ensures that the programme remains flexible and adaptable in response to the dynamic nature of societal reactions and conditions. It also helps maintain a clear sense of purpose and direction throughout the programme's journey toward achieving its intended impact.

⁴ Proponents of the log-frame approach argue that logframe is adaptable to various situations, emphasising that a pre-defined process need not be inflexible. Further, they would argue that the risk and assumptions component of the logframe provides a space for any objective, no matter how ambitious or challenging. However, while the plan itself may not be rigid, the log frame ensures that the project brings such people on board who are more skillful in dotted line implementation rather than being a thinker. In the case of collectivisation initiatives, the goals and objectives often revolve around social and political change, which may not be easily measurable, and even explainable with precision. Additionally, collectivisation initiatives are often subject to external factors that are beyond their control. Collectives frequently push the boundaries of end goals and means of engagement, which could even include protests and demonstrations. This can make it difficult to predict the risks and assumptions associated with these initiatives. Goals and objectives of collectives, and consequently what they expect to achieve, often navigate into areas that are typically considered outliers (assumptions and risks) in a project log frame.

CRAFTING A THEORY OF CHANGE FOR A COLLECTIVE



EXPLORING HOW ASSUMPTIONS AND BIASES INFLUENCE DIFFERENT STEPS OF THE THEORY OF CHANGE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.

Step 1: Identifying the Problem and Key Focus Area	Step 2: Indicating the Expected Change	Step 3: Listing Activities and Interventions	Step 4: Clustering Activities Based on Causes and Ways of Addressing
If a grantmaker prioritizes economic growth and market-based solutions, the TOC may assume that economic interventions are the most effective means to address the identified problem.	If a grantmaker focuses on individual-level outcomes, the TOC may assume that behavior change and individual agency are the primary drivers of change, potentially overlooking broader systemic factors.	If an organization is risk-averse, it may avoid supporting activities involving protests or challenging cultural norms.	If the grantmaker assumes that market-based solutions are the most efficient, they may cluster activities around market-driven interventions while overlooking alternative approaches.

Organizations and grantmakers are often aware of these potential assumptions and biases throughout the TOC development process, but the very logical sequence of evolving logic and questions in the framework facilitates them into this pathway that is grantmaking driven.

CRAFTING A THEORY OF CHANGE FOR THE COLLECTIVE

1

Identifying the Problem or the Need for the Collective

Determining the primary focus area or problem that the programme aims to address.

2

Indicating Expected Change (Long Term and Short Term)

List the Key Change envisioned.
Write short term, intermediate, long- term change.
Explain whether a change triggers another change.

3

Clustering the Indicated Changes and Listing Activities

Cluster Changes related to each other; List all Activities that need to be organised for bringing each cluster of changes.

4

Clustering Activities and Identifying the Causal Pathways

What are the root causes these activities are addressing?
Which are systemic causes?
Draw causal pathway linking activities with addressing causes, leading to change.

5

Monitoring, Reassessing and Evolving Theory of Change

Counter the causal pathways, in terms of providing contexts where causal pathway will not work.
Link activities, cause, change, context- and evolve a theory of change.
What steps are needed to push the boundaries of ends, and of means?

6

Combining Theory of Change and Linking to Global Theories

Link the TOC with global successes and failures, as caution. Fine tune the TOC to state what has worked and what has not.

When the Theory of Change as a tool is adopted by a social movement based on propositions from the development sector ecosystem, and when it focuses on risks and stability (like the Log Frame), the social movement may get nudged to not directly challenge the mainstream, but work with it. Even worse, the process of formulating the Theory of Change could inadvertently create a self-reinforcing cycle, wherein the social movement ends up justifying its now-crafted theory, thereby operating within the constraints of the prevailing worldview. If this happens, it becomes an irony of its own name, the Theory of Change. The paradigm of the theory of change becomes, in fact, that of a theory of reinforcing the status quo!

A ToC tool may inadvertently adapt itself into an accountability framework, making the social movement answerable to a plan that aligns with the sensibilities and worldviews of top-level stakeholders, such as grant-makers. Therefore, a well-crafted Theory of Change should undergo diverse readings, incorporating perspectives through the lenses of gender, race, caste, and capitalism. It should articulate desired changes in distinct categories: those within the existing system, those necessitating changes in rules and laws, and those demanding systemic and structural transformations. Additionally, while considering the potential adversarial reactions of the mainstream, the ToC should explore whether there is a pushing of the boundaries regarding both ends and means. It is crucial to assess whether this pushing of boundaries is actively pursued or not. When a collective engages in thinking and reflection (சிந்தனை), they can better understand the needed strategies and messages to remain effective. A thorough and reasoned conversation is necessary whether any cautiousness arises due to grant-making requirements only.

In conclusion, during the development of a Theory of Change (ToC), it is essential to consciously evaluate whether the programme is influenced by mainstream ideologies, such as capitalism or patriarchy, and whether it aligns with the mainstream ToC. Many ToC processes often overlook this aspect, mistakenly assuming that the ToC is developed on a blank slate. Furthermore, a social movement positioned on the opposite or alternative side of the mainstream worldview cannot afford to neglect this critical consideration. Acknowledging and addressing the influence of prevailing ideologies ensures that the ToC remains grounded in the movement's core values and objectives.



The process of formulating the Theory of Change could inadvertently create a self-reinforcing cycle, wherein the social movement ends up justifying its now-crafted theory, thereby operating within the constraints of the prevailing worldview. If this happens, it becomes an irony of its own name, Theory of Change. The paradigm of the theory of change becomes, in fact, that of a theory of reinforcing the status quo!

6. CONFRONTING PROJECTISATION WITHIN: A CHALLENGE FOR ANY SOCIAL MOVEMENT

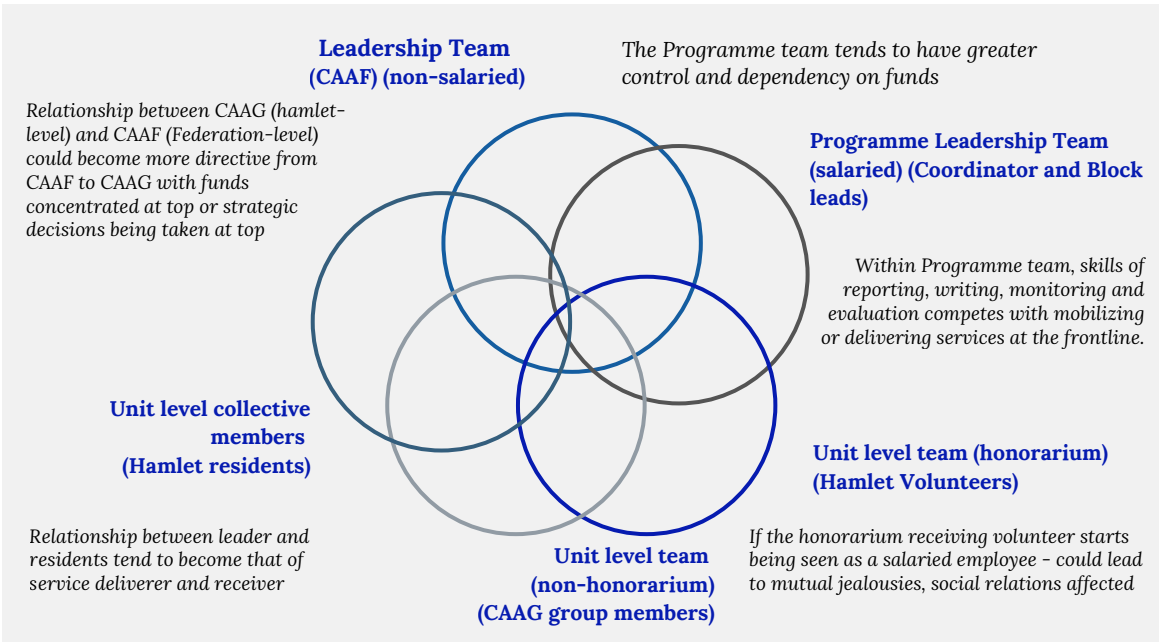
Embedded within any collectivisation (people's movement) is the notion of a "Peopled Movement" - முயற்சிகள் மூலம் ஒன்றாகச் சேர்க்கப்பட்ட கூட்டம், (where people are brought together through efforts of thoughtful leaders) with "சிந்தனை" (critical reflection) These leaders create awareness, structure the movement, nurture trust among community members, and revive the spirits of those who may have struggled in vain earlier. The notion of a peopled movement is often embedded within any people's movement, for at the ground level, the mobilisation of people happens through the efforts of local leaders.

These efforts by leadership often require resources. The funding as well as the programmes that get implemented through the use of funds often have the potential to influence the social movement towards a projectised way of functioning, especially if resources are raised from external sources. There are certain inherent risks in funded programmes.

Dependence, loss of autonomy, and a shift towards short-term objectives at the expense of long-term sustainability are all potential pitfalls.

For instance, within the sanitation workers' collectivisation process, programme funding has the potential to generate several tensions. These tensions may emerge among the federation's leadership team and the leaders at the hamlet level, as well as within the hamlet-level teams between those receiving honorariums and those who are not. Additionally, similar tensions may arise within the federation's leadership, involving individuals who receive salaries and those who do not. There can also be tensions between those with community mobilization skills and those proficient in reporting, documentation, and communication with funders. These complexities highlight the delicate balance that collectives must maintain when managing external funding while adhering to their core principles and objectives.

POTENTIAL TENSIONS (DUE TO FUNDS) WITHIN THE SANITATION WORKERS' COLLECTIVE



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The funding as well as the programmes that get implemented through the use of funds often have a potential to influence the social movement towards a projectised way of functioning, especially if resources are raised from external sources.

Critical thinking, or "சிந்தனை" (Sindhanai), is key to social movements. It is important to foster contemplation, reflection, and the development of a shared understanding, even regarding fears related to grantmaking. These fears are openly discussed within the collective. To facilitate this process, a participatory fund angiogram tool can be useful. Similar to a medical angiogram where dye is injected into the bloodstream to identify blockages and blood flow, understanding the flow of funds within the collective is significant. This tool helps recognise different forms of funds and diagnose where financial support is going and its impact. Even if funding has not been received, it is possible to organise predictive discussions to plan accordingly, as detailed in the provided picture, which also details potential new power holders arising from access to grant-makers. This approach helps collectives navigate the complexities of funding and maintain their focus on their social movement goals. The impact of grantmaking on collectives, particularly at the federation and hamlet levels, often raises concerns about potentially irreversible changes. Grants, which are typically for a specific period, have the potential to create new interest groups within the community, who may gain power and influence due to their access to funds or funded programmes.

For instance, among community members, those who regularly benefit from a programme, in terms of improved access to services and entitlements might become dependent on the project and find it challenging to sustain their progress without continued funding. Similarly, if grant funds are used to create assets that require ongoing maintenance, there may be a constant need for funding to ensure their sustainability.

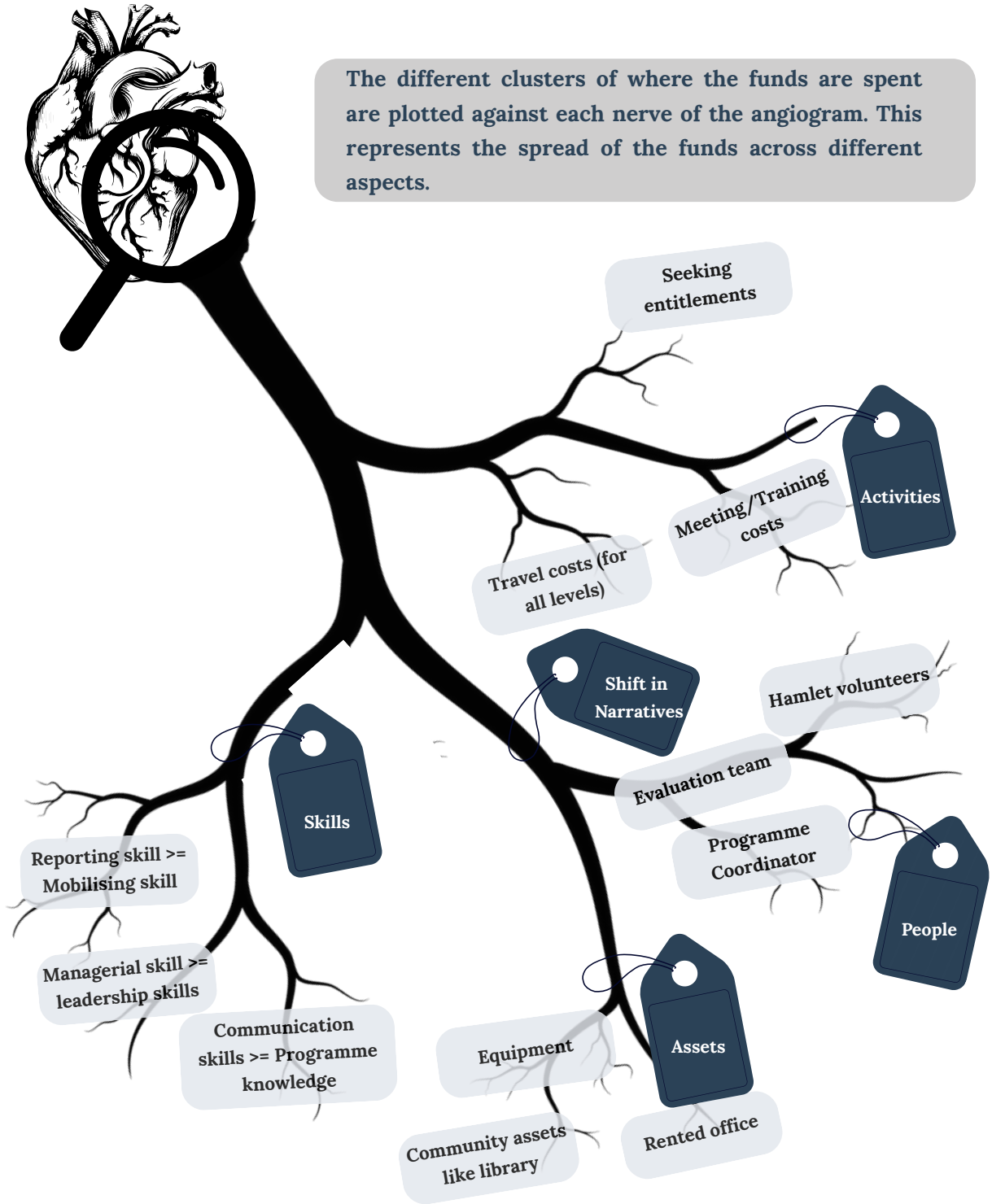
In the context of social movements, a similar phenomenon known as "projectisation" can happen, especially when movements receive external funding or support for specific projects or initiatives. Initially, a particular aspect of the movement's broader goals may gain prominence due to specific needs or opportunities. However, over time, this project component within the social movement can become more established and self-sustaining, often due to the availability of financial support. What originally served as a means to advance the movement's overarching objectives may gradually transform into an end in itself. This evolution occurs organically and gradually, making it challenging for movement members to question or challenge the dominant position of the project. Additionally, the project may create vested interests within the movement, further solidifying its influence and potentially diverting attention and resources away from the movement's core mission.

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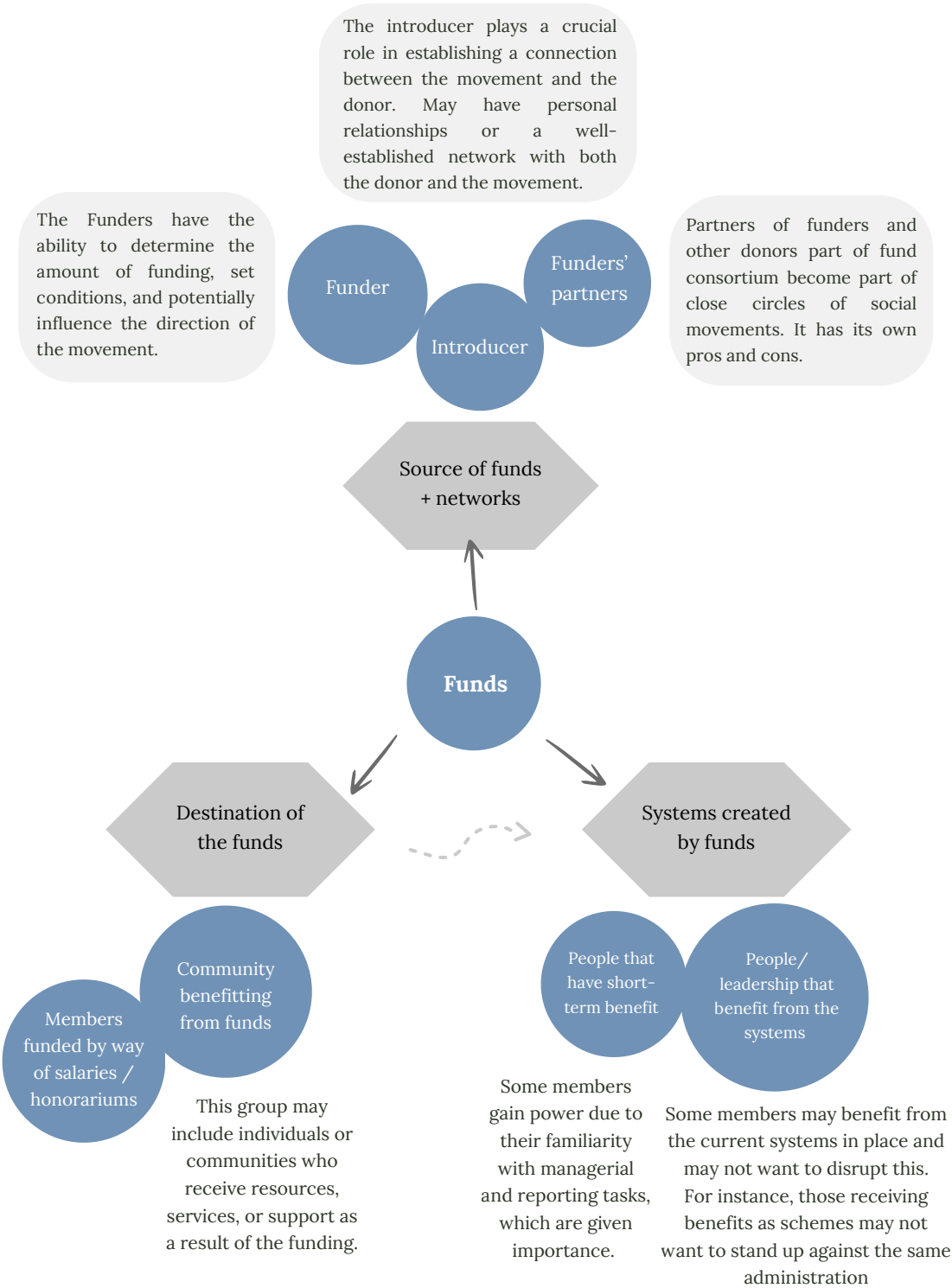
Understanding the flow of funds within the collective is significant. This tool helps recognise different forms of funds and diagnose where financial support is going and its impact

FUND ANGIOGRAM

The different clusters of where the funds are spent are plotted against each nerve of the angiogram. This represents the spread of the funds across different aspects.



Participatory Mapping of Powerholders around Funds



The following four signs indicate the process of projectisation within a collective that adopts a social movement approach:

- **Shift from People's Collective to Collective 'Serving' People:** The collective, originally founded on the principles of a social movement, may gradually transition from being a platform for collective action and empowerment to primarily functioning as a service provider to the people.
- **Shift from Addressing Systemic Issues to Ensuring Already Entitled Rights:** While the initial focus might have been on addressing deep-rooted issues such as caste and patriarchy, the collective's priorities shift towards securing specific rights for its members, such as minimum wage and social security, which are essential but may not address the core systemic challenges.
- **Shift from Engaging with the System to Claim Representation to Seeking Rights within the Non-Representative System:** Instead of actively engaging with the existing system to challenge and transform it, the collective begins to primarily seek rights and entitlements from the system, often through bureaucratic channels.
- **Shift from People-Pressure-Led Advocacy to Lobbying Based Advocacy:** The collective moves away from its grassroots origins and starts engaging primarily with bureaucrats and government officials through one or two appointed leaders, diminishing its broader people-centred approach.

Additionally, certain collectives also see the following shift happening within the collectivisation process:-

- **Shift from Diverse Local Leadership to a Leader-Centred Model:** The collective, which initially relied on diverse and expanding local leadership, adopts a more centralized leader-follower model, reducing the involvement and autonomy of local leaders and participants.

- From a Collective that gives primacy to people who work and share problems with people, it gives primacy to language and managerial skills.

In conclusion, any social movement seeking external funding should simultaneously develop an exit strategy to understand projectisation of the collectivisation process. External funding inherently comes with the possibility of termination and it is crucial to ensure that external funding does not compromise the core mission and agenda of the collectivization. Proactively planning an exit strategy right from the outset of a project component, in parallel with ongoing work, is non-negotiable for any movement.

The concurrent exit strategy is integral to a critical-thinking-led collectivisation that begins as a "Peopled Movement" (முயற்சிகள் மூலம் ஒன்றாகச் சேர்க்கப்பட்ட கூட்டம் - uniting community members under the guidance of thoughtful leaders) with "சிந்தனை" who create awareness and trust, including on potential projectisation of the collective, owing to external funds that are being used to strengthen the movement. This strategic planning helps a well-prepared exit in situations where external funding may impact the organization's mission or structure.



Proactively planning an exit strategy right from the outset of a project, in parallel with ongoing work, is non-negotiable for any movement.

7. EVOLVING A SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK TO ASSESS THE COLLECTIVE'S ALIGNMENT WITH THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT APPROACH

A collective needs to constantly reflect on the journey of சிந்தனை (Sindhanai - critical reflection) becoming a movement; understanding the stages and its non-linear nature; grasping the intricate relationship between the mainstream, local administration and the structure. To facilitate this, the collective needs to create its own self-assessment framework.

Example: CAAF, a federation of CAAGs in 30 hamlets, crafted their own framework based on information they collected during discussions on understanding the role of critical thinking, the various stages of movement while engaging with the mainstream, and also understanding systemic shifts. The group through consultations evolved the following five parameters:

(a) The Collective Belongs to the Community at the Margins: The collective is not of a dominant section of the society, but rather belongs to those that are on the 'rebel' or alternative side of the mainstream. In other words, the community is struggling for representation in policy making and implementation ; the community is often on the excluded side of socio-cultural spaces (characterised by notions of purity and pollution) and are subjected to negative treatment in narratives of abuses and stereotypes.

(b) It is a Living Collective: The group engages in a spectrum of activities - thinks, talks, strategises, responds, reacts, reads, writes, builds, befriends, engages and disengages with people. It experiences a range of emotions, from hope at some time to hopelessness at other times; anger to happiness; calmness to agitation at other

times. The collective would get tired, may take rest; even sleep. The collective would however be in that collective journey of சிந்தனை (critical reflection) becoming a movement; consistently engaging in "Educate-Organise-Agitate" in some form or other. Keeping these factors in mind, a collective needs to introspect to determine whether it is truly living or dead.

(c) The Collective is evolving its own ideology and politics: Through the stands it takes on a number of issues relevant on the ground. The சிந்தனை (critical thinking) - collective continually shapes its ideology and political stance by discussing various issues, especially identifying root causes, understanding the link between micro and macro contexts, and challenging mainstream ideologies. It doesn't view issues in isolation but comprehends the broader ecosystem surrounding each issue. It identifies allies for solidarity and engages tactically with others.

(d) The Collective is well-networked: The collective, through its principled stances taken during its activities, knows whom to seek support from and whom to avoid. It actively seeks and extends support to other networks when the need arises. It recognises the underlying causes of their deprivation and realizes that these issues cannot be adequately addressed at the local level, and make efforts to federate at a higher level.

(e) The Collective is self-reliant: A self-reliant group recognises members as resources. It utilises the resources within its own members. A self-reliant group maintains a balanced perspective regarding

external funds, neither becoming overly enthusiastic about them nor overly concerned with their absence. A self-reliant group does not actively seek to attract funders but rather seeks fellow travellers who share their mission and values.

A collective's self-assessment framework is important to evaluate its alignment with the Social Movement Approach. The self-assessment framework would describe certain parameters that are core to measuring important attributes of a strong collective. These parameters would include evaluating the development of evolving ideologies and political stances of the collective, or capacity in building networks; and being self-reliant.

What makes this self-assessment framework significant is the fact that the collective needs to own the framework, which could happen only if the framework has evolved collectively. The tool needs to be flexible to adapt and incorporate change over time, as the collective may evolve its understanding and benchmarks over time.

The self-assessment process goes beyond mere measurement; it is a continuous journey. A Living Collective creates a platform for collective self-reflection, facilitating discussions on ideology and stances taken or not taken. The platform so created serves as a means to gather information, plan strategies, build solidarity with other movements, and establish accountability frameworks, even for internal leadership.



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சிந்திக்கச் சொன்னவர் பெரியார்
தந்தை பெரியார் தந்தை பெரியார்
சொந்த புத்தியைக் கொண்டே
எதையும்
சிந்திக்கச் சொன்னவர் பெரியார்
தந்தை பெரியார் தந்தை பெரியார்
(சிந்திக்கச்)

முந்தைய காலத்தின்
முறைகளையே
முழுவதும் புரிந்து
கொள்வதற்கே
சிந்தையை நன்றாய்த்
தெளிவாக்கிச்
சீருடன் பகுத்து ஆராய்ந்து
(சிந்திக்கச்)

சாதிப் பிரிவினைகள் ஏன்
சாத்திர விதிமுறைகள் ஏன்
ஆதிக்க நடைமுறை ஏன்
அநீதித் தீண்டாமை ஏன்
பாதிக்கப் படுவோர் யார்
பலனடைந்து வாழ்வோர் யார்
ஏது மற்றிருப்போர் யார்
ஏமாற்றிப் பிழைப்பவர் யார்
மோதி உடைத்து முழுதாய் இங்கே
மாற்றம் காண முருகாய் எதையும்
(சிந்திக்கச்)

Think, contemplate, said Periyar,
our Thanthai Periyar!
Use your intellect (wisdom), speak, our Periyar.
Use only your own mind,
apply your mind, said Periyar, Thanthai Periyar.
Think, contemplate, said Periyar,
our Thanthai Periyar!

Use your intellect, said Periyar.
Apply your own, just your own, mind,
said Periyar.
Examine every issue, said Periyar,
our Thanthai Periyar!
Traditions of the past, customs, and practices,
Understand them properly.
Think, contemplate, and seek clarification
Analyze them scientifically.
(Think, contemplate, said Periyar,
our Thanthai Periyar!)

Ask...
Why caste-based discrimination?
Why scripture based laws?
Why oppressive behavior?
Why Injustice and Untouchability?

Ask...
Who is the oppressed class?
And who are the profiteers?
Which class has been deceived
And who lives by deceiving?
Break the unjust chains.
Be ready to see a beautiful change
Think, contemplate, said Periyar,
our Thanthai Periyar!

- Professor Perumal Murugan

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Sindhana