

# DRITHI NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 - Nov 2023 to Feb 2024

**Developing Research and action capacity in India To counter Harm Industries (DRITHI)** is a new research initiative led by Dr. Upendra Bhojani at the [Institute of Public Health, Bengaluru](#) between 2023-2028 supported by the DBT/Wellcome Trust India Alliance Senior (Clinical and Public Health) fellowship awarded to him. Upendra and his team have been at the forefront of research and public policy engagements around tobacco control in India for the last 16 years. His research work spans areas of chronic conditions, tobacco control, health and public policy, the political economy of health and health inequity.

Now, with DRITHI, the team is expanding the work on tobacco to a comparative analysis of other psychoactive substances including alcohol, opium and cannabis. Our other objective is to critically examine the ongoing efforts at theorising commerce-health intersection (Commercial Determinants of Health) and generate public discourse on their applicability to India as well as how Indian thoughts/norms inform such theories.

**In this endeavour we are supported by eminent scholars as our mentors and collaborators:**

## Mentors:

### Prof. Atul Ambekar

(All India Institute of Medical Sciences,  
New Delhi - India)

### Prof. Fran Baum

(University of Adelaide, Australia)

### Prof. Anna Gilmore

(University of Bath, United Kingdom)

## Collaborators:

### Dr. C J Kuncheria

(Jawaharlal Nehru University, India)

### Mr. Pranay Lal

(Independent Scholar, India)

## UPDATES:

- DRITHI officially began on November 1, 2023. Research Manager, Research Officers, Post-doctoral Fellow and Technical officers were recruited to the team.



Upendra Bhojani was invited to the 64th ITM colloquium at Kathmandu, Nepal to discuss environmental impacts of tobacco throughout its lifecycle and how this signifies a wicked public policy problem requiring high-level inter-sectoral coordination. He put up an art exhibit titled 'Tobacco & Society' comprising six pencil-on-paper drawings with curated text locating tobacco within sociocultural and historical contexts. [Explore the digital exhibit here](#)



Research Manager (DRITHI), Mr. Achyutha N G was invited as a resource person for training on tobacco control law (COTPA) in Shimoga by the district health department.



Technical Officer (DRITHI), Mr. Jeevan Shetty attended Visualizing science workshop at the Regional centre for Biotechnology, Faridabad, Delhi. It's a joint project of India Alliance and Nature India.

- Upendra Bhojani appointed as Adjunct Faculty at the Department of Commerce at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education. He will teach Commercial Determinants of Health as part of the MSC (Economics) & will engage with students and faculty for academic and research activities.
- Upendra Bhojani presented at the workshop with the theme "Tobacco Taxes: A Tool for Health and Economic Gains" jointly by the Institute of Social and Economic Change (Bengaluru) in collaboration with the Movement for Alternatives and Youth Awareness.
- Upendra Bhojani participated as a reviewer for the compendium on Public Health and Indian Constitution being developed by the National Law School of India University (Bengaluru). He, along with Dr Pragati Hebbar of the IPH Bengaluru, gave inputs in the national workshop on strengthening tobacco control laws at the NLSIU.

**BRSR COMMUNE 2.0**  
Navigating #JustTransition Through Disclosures

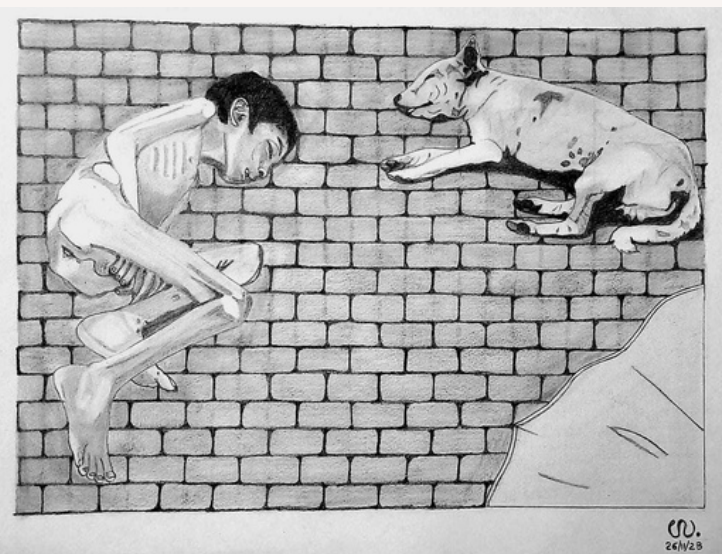
The Commune will explore:

- Grievance Redressal
- Environment
- Gender
- Responsible Finance
- Collective Bargaining
- Child Rights
- OHS
- Diversity
- Caste
- BRSR Lite
- Responsible Procurement
- JUST TRANSITION**
- MSMEs & transition
- Value Chain
- BRSR
- Human Rights
- Public Health
- Access to Remedy
- Environment
- BRSR Core
- Intersectionality
- Disclosures
- Climate Change

30-31 January, 2024 | Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Upendra presented on Commercial Determinants of Health and Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting in the session titled "BRSR disclosures in the context of Public Health" as part of "BRSR Commune 2.0", "Just Transition through the lens of BRSR."

### ART CORNER:



A dead boy and a dog on Calcutta street during Bengal famine of 1943. About 30 lakh people and several animals died due to starvation and related diseases in Bengal region.