The story of Baandhani at Kamgar Putala goes back to the floods in 1997. The settlement is located along the River Mutha at Shivaji Nagar. The community suffers some flooding every year, but 1997 was the worst yet: one third of the settlement went under water that year. After the floods had subsided, a massive survey of all the slums along the River Mutha was carried out by collectives of Pune slumdwellers together with a federation from Mumbai (see *By The Water* for the full report).

At Kamgar Putala, the women got together after the surveys; the ‘97 floods kick-started a new process of community building. The women started daily savings schemes and holding community meetings. The collective grew.

In 1998, Kamgar Putala Baandhani played a key role in the River Workshop, at the Dattawadi project site. The PMC had set in motion a river improvement project, covering a whole range of aspects, with a whole crew of experts to advise. But the riverside slums, and the thousands of women and men living in them, weren’t included.

The River Workshop aimed to put this right. Women from several slums spoke about the hazards they face living along the river and
stressed that they would have to be centrally involved in any potential resettlement schemes.

Meanwhile the women set about improving their existing local environment. They started using vermiculture to decompose their wet waste and produce manure to sell.

A previous Additional Commissioner visited twice to check on their progress, and showed a lot of interest in the work of the collective. It also turned out that the municipality was planning to widen the Sangam Bridge, which runs alongside Kamgar Putala. When this proposal and the 1997 floodline are draw on to a map of the settlement, only 25% of the settlement is not directly affected, although their facilities are, as well as the homes of their friends and family. This means that any resettlement scheme would have to include everyone.

The collective started up housing savings, and the people are now ready to make downpayments for housing loans, if and when resettlement becomes a reality. The women are negotiating hard with the PMC. They have held meetings with a previous Municipal Commissioner, and an Additional Commissioner, to explain the difficulties they face in their current location, and their willingness and capability to work on their own resettlement scheme.

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SLUM INFORMATION

SURVEY NUMBER: 806
WARD NUMBER: 101
RATION WARD: K

Nearest amenities:
- hospital: Sassoon
- school: 10 minutes
- bus stop: 10 minutes
- police station: Shivaji Nagar
- telephone: in slum
- market: in slum/Shivaji Nagar

7 TOILET BLOCKS
person to toilet ratio:
- male 52:1
- female 52:1

38 WATER STAND POSTS
person to tap ratio: 13:1

NB: 40% of households have individual water taps

paving, gutters, street lights

ABOVE: A previous Additional Commissioner visited the vermiculture project
BELOW: the community held a meeting to discuss the possibility of resettlement
LEFT: the settlement is located right along the river.
RIGHT: the settlement is located right along the river.