

Project Sammaan

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NEWSLETTER : DECEMBER 2013 - JANUARY 2014

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Sammaan is an urban sanitation initiative dedicated to redesigning and improving facilities for slum communities across India. The initiative is being piloted in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack with the aim to replicate it in other cities, if successful.

The objective is to rethink the current models of sanitation facilities and design a new programmatic infrastructure and physical structure that instills a sense of dignity while addressing issues affecting sanitation practices in India and encouraging community members to stop defecating in the open.

Over 100 of the re imagined facilities will be built and a dedicated research team will analyze the qualitative and quantitative impact they have on the communities in which they're built. The results of this intensive research will be shared in an open-sourced toolkit that will allow for replication in cities across India and beyond.

Project Sammaan was born out of the research conducted for the Potty Project, an in-depth design research study focused on all aspects of the current sanitation models employed in urban slum communities throughout India.

FEATURE: *Tendering Update*

The tender process has been long, tedious, and frustrating, but has also provided incredible insights into working with the government in implementing a project as unique and with such a scale as Sammaan, and the end is in sight. Much has been written about the tender in both this monthly newsletter and the project blog, but it is certainly a milestone worthy of such attention.

The feelings of elation shared by many partners following the tender release of the Public Toilets in Bhubaneswar were short-lived as the focus shifted to the Community Toilets, particularly the sites in Cuttack. Unlike the process that brought about the PT tender release in Bhubaneswar and is being followed for the Community Toilets there, in which the facilities are split into separate batches with total costs below the 3 crore threshold that permits the city municipalities to provide technical sanction and, therefore, release the tender, the total tender package of 32 facilities for nearly 8 crore needs to be released in Cuttack.

This necessitates the technical sanction coming from the Public Health Department engineers, and in many ways involves starting from the beginning with the review process. Additional documentation has been required for review as a new set of eyes is now reviewing the project and, in turn, a great deal of time needed to be spent by the team to produce the required documents and to bring the PH team up to speed.



This additional level of scrutiny and the time associated with it, which is already exacerbated by the various innovations previously unseen in sanitation initiatives in both cities (e.g., menstrual waste incinerators, advanced waste management systems), has meant that progress with the facilities has been slower than those in Bhubaneswar. That said, and as the CMC reassured us, this is protocol that needs adherence to. Thankfully, the communication between the government and non-government partners has been free-flowing and numerous meetings between the teams in the past few months have expedited matters and assured all parties were moving forward on the same page.

With the project's precedent being set with the release of the Public Toilet tenders, the review process for the Community Toilets has been expedited at the BMC. The team is finalizing the last of the paperwork requested by the BMC Engineers and the tender release for the 60 Community Toilets is expected in the first weeks of January. There were two packages of Public Toilets that only received a single bidder. The BMC has forwarded the issue on to the central government for review and to decide whether to award the contract or reissue the tender for those packages. The team is expecting resolution on this matter in the coming weeks.



Similar to the meetings at the CMC, the non-government teams have spent a good deal of time working with the government counterparts to address issues clearly and quickly to help keep the project within its timelines. This level of engagement has fostered a greater sense of partnership between the team members and has helped keep Project Sammaan on the forefront of everyone's minds.

The entire tender process has provided incredible learnings for the Sammaan team and will be a primary feature of the project's toolkit. Navigating the complex process has required the efforts of several project team members and has provided invaluable opportunities to see the project through different perspectives.

As this experience is new to most members of the Sammaan team, it is something in which individual partners, as well as the project as a whole, would have benefited greatly from having access to the learnings of other, similar initiatives.

Knowing that the toolkit component of Sammaan will provide just that knowledge to future projects is gratifying, and helps to assuage the consternation felt while working through the tender process.



BLOG HIGHLIGHT:

“LESSONS FROM SAMMAAN” BY SIVA COTIPALLI



I spent the past 20 months with Sammaan both as a full-time project manager and a part-time consultant, and have just disengaged from the initiative.

This time has helped me to understand the challenges in implementing large-scale innovations in government organisations while getting the firsthand experience of looking at the state of sanitation facilities in Indian slums.

Some of the “Key Lessons” that I’ve learned during this experience:

a) Lots of patience required working with the government: Government organisations, especially Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), in India are understaffed and overloaded with work, and there is no clear delegation of powers between the state governments and the ULBs. Many of the ULBs are not empowered and, therefore, are unprepared to implement large-scale innovation projects like Sammaan. Also, key decision makers of ULBs, such as commissioners, get transferred quite frequently. In the past 20 months, I worked with 6 different commissioners at the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC), and bring each of them on pace with the project objectives. This requires not only lots of patience, but also extra resources to be budgeted while implementing innovative projects like Sammaan.



b) Clear delineation of roles and responsibilities:

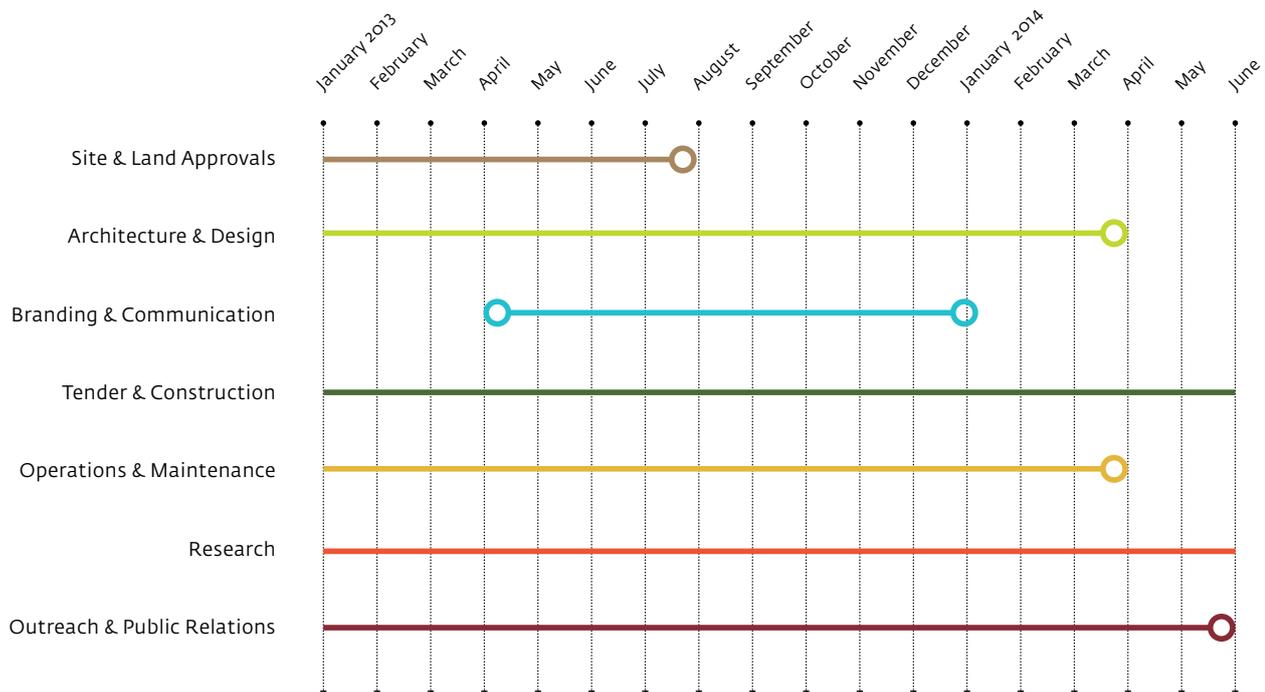
Sammaan is a long-term project with diverse partners working together. At any one time, we had 6 - 8 partners working together on a particular stream. Also, these partners come from varied backgrounds, such as design, architecture, project implementation, slum development, and government relations. From a project management point of view, this implies that the roles and responsibilities of the partners need to be clearly conveyed and documented. Also, constant communication channels need to be built amongst the partners. This helps partners to debate and discuss the open issues. I, as a protocol, fixed a call on Tuesday of every week at 10AM to accommodate an all-partner meeting. This time is used to discuss the activities they have achieved over the last week, plan for the next week, and discuss any challenges being faced in accomplishing their tasks.



c) Freeze important details at the beginning of the project: When working with the government, it is important to freeze the complete budget of the project, government contribution of funds, detailed government scope of work, approvals required from the various government departments, and other related matters at the beginning of the project. This needs to be documented and signed by the ULB and the state government at the very start of the project. The clearer the MoU and the scope of the project, the smoother will be the its implementation.

d) Voice of the end-user is very important: When working in a large scale project like Sammaan and with multiple government agencies, it is easy to lose sight of the end beneficiary who will use these toilets. Thus it is important to constantly get the voice of the slum dwellers regularly to ensure that the project is in line with their expectations.

TIME LINE



MILESTONE OVERVIEW

To date

- Public Toilet tender release in Bhubaneswar
- Public toilet O&M processes and guidelines completed by J-PAL
- Submission and approval of Batch 2 and Batch 3 tender documents
- Finalizing the Bhubaneswar sites that are to receive DEWATS

Upcoming

- Technical sanction and tender release for Community Toilets in both cities
- Final Sammaan facility identity and logo complete
- Pricing model and O&M framework finalized
- Pre-construction dialogues with communities in Cuttack to commence
- Contracts for the Bhubaneswar Public Toilets to be awarded

January calendar of events

- Floating of CT tender in Bhubaneswar
- Technical sanction release and floating of the tender in Cuttack
- Ground-breaking for construction of the Public Toilets in Bhubaneswar
- Detailing out the management frameworks for the O&M intervention
- Finalization of the Sammaan facility identity

WORKSTREAMS

A. Liaising & Capacity Building

The months of November–December were among the best months in terms of progress for the project. The public toilet tender notice was published in the leading dailies, definitely one of the major milestones achieved for the project. The tenders were opened and potential documents are currently under technical scrutiny.

The project got a response from one bidder each for Package I and II and three bidders for package III. The Officials of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) along with the officials of Government are deciding on the way forward for the single bid tenders.

While the major issue for these months has been Public toilet tender, CTRAN facilitated several meetings with the engineering section of the BMC in order to collect their inputs on the technical documents relevant to the release of the Community Toilet tender and accordingly proceed for the technical sanction. Meetings were fixed with the Mr. Mallick, Executive Engineer- Division I, to get the technical inputs and the formats in which the documents should be submitted.

In Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC), reviewing of the technical documents is on. The files have been forwarded to the Engineer in Chief for the technical sanction owing to the total cost of the package. Certain compliances have been sought for which the project team has been working. With the administrative sanction in place, technical sanction is just the only step left before the release of the Community tender in Cuttack.

With assigning of officials for various posts under process, one of the priority activities for CTRAN will be to introduce the project to the new officials and update them on the status. City Engineer, BMC has been promoted to the level of Chief Engineer and is expected that the new City Engineer will be deputed in the month of January, 2014. CTRAN would also enable capacity building exercises for the new officials with discussions, distribution of newsletter, discussions to make the officials understand the files and documentation.

Activities in January include:

- Following up and facilitating floating of CT tender in Bhubaneswar
- Facilitating the technical sanction and the process of floating the tender in Cuttack

B. Research/Operations & Maintenance

The last month, J-PAL has continued to work on detailing out the various software interventions including the habit formation and pricing experiments. We developed a basic pricing model to automatically arrive at the optimum prices up on feeding in site-specific data. The baseline survey instrument has been finalized.

Activities in January include:

- Further refining of the pricing model by building in various sensitivity analyses
- Detailing out the management frameworks for the O&M intervention: the roles of the toilet management committee in community management, selection criteria for private bidding, cash management, repairs, etc
- Working on beginning baseline data collection activities, contingent upon the technical sanction for the community toilet tenders

C. Tender & Construction

The month of December for Arkitechno was extremely busy and spent interfacing with the project's government partners to deliver necessary documentation and provide assistance in review of such in order to expedite the tender process in both Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

These activities included delivering Takeoff sheets and drawings in 3 sets to CMC, holding several in-person meetings to discuss several issues with BMC and CMC, a joint meeting with the CMC Commissioner and Executive Engineer to provide a progress update, attending a pre-bid meeting for public toilets in Bhubaneswar, delivering an Index Map, Lead Statement and Analysis, and PPR to the CMC, and submitting 60 booklets to BMC (and later 6 consolidated booklets) for its community toilets.

Additionally, the Arkitechno team met with the Executive Engineer at BMC and agreed to move forward with 6 packages at 2012 SOR for the Community Toilets there, while also meeting with the Executive Engineer at CMC to discuss technical approval of Cuttack's 32 Sammaan toilet facilities.

All throughout the month, several observations on the working drawings were conveyed to Anagram. At present corrections are being done for the BoQs for the Bhubaneswar community toilets..

Activities in January include:

- Facilitating the release of all tenders by month's end
- Assisting the review of working drawings with Anagram

WORKSTREAMS

D. Architecture & Design

Anagram has been working through the past two months to coordinate with Co-Design for signage detailing, by giving them required details for the completion of the working drawings. Work has been happening on the detailing of toilets for WD2 and WD3, including following up with plumbing, structural, sewage consultants to meet the technical sanction requirements and then correlating the plumbing, structural and sewage details to form a perfect set for execution.

Activities in January include:

- Delivering WD2 & WD3 for all 92 Community Toilet sites
- Following up with plumbing, structural, sewage consultants to meet technical sanction requirements

E. Branding & Communications

After a lull in the identity design development workstream over the last two months, December saw significant progress made on the identity. Codesign shared an updated branding presentation, which incorporated feedback received from previous discussions, as well as improvements and explorations that had been developed internally.

Identity Design

The focus of the current iteration of the identity development exercise is to create an identity that strikes an adequate balance between the desirable core values of the toilet facilities and the relatively complex, abstract ideal of 'Sammaan' (dignity). The core brand values that had initially been developed for the toilet facilities had been created to be simple, engaging, and meaningful to the core audience. The design direction being developed therefore focused on conveying attributes such as happiness and well-being, aspiration, and the promise of a better life.

However, the name 'Sammaan' which will now be the customer-facing brand under which the toilet facilities will be operated, requires a more nuanced approach, since dignity as a concept is abstract and might not be easily relatable to the target audience.

Striking the right balance between these desirable core values and the Sammaan name is the renewed focus of the identity exercise. Progress in this direction has been excellent so far, we hope to finalise a design for the facilities in the coming weeks.

Signage

The design direction for the area and instructional

toilet facility signage that had been previously selected is currently being revisited to accommodate certain signages which require a significant amount of information to be conveyed.

We are currently developing an icon-based approach to these signs (as opposed to a purely textual one), with a bathing-instruction sign as an exemplar of the design direction. Once an approach has been finalised, we will extend it to the other signs.

Construction Drawings

The 'Good-for-Construction' drawings are detailed instructions for the preparation and placing of the finished signages within the toilet facility. Codesign is preparing these drawings in consultation with Anagram Architects and private contractors. This workstream is nearly complete, with the only delay being an internal dependency based on the finalisation of the identity design, which impacts the placement and positioning of certain signages. The Construction drawing workstream will be closed as soon as possible after the identity design is finalised.

Activities in January include:

- Finalizing the Sammaan facility identity
- Completing work on facility signage

F. Outreach & Public Relations

December's outreach activities were limited to updating the blog and social media channels and parsing the Yale interviews for the upcoming workstream video series, while also creating branded collateral to distribute to partners, especially those at the BMC and CMC.

Looking forward, the months of January and February will be extremely busy as the team finalizes the collateral for the BMGF "Reinvent the Toilet Fair" and releases the first of the workstream videos. There is also a good deal of filming in the field that will take place in support of the Yale University case study.

Activities in January include:

- Filming b-roll footage of J-PAL field visits for the Research video
- Development of collateral for the BMGF "Reinvent the Toilet Fair" in March
- Updating blog and social media channels



The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) is a network of 70 affiliated professors around the world who are united by their use of Randomized Evaluations (REs) to answer questions critical to poverty alleviation. J-PAL's mission is to reduce poverty by ensuring that policy is based on scientific evidence.

J-PAL is the primary grantee and the project's principal investigators and are designing and conducting the monitoring and evaluation for the facilities:

- » Business model development
- » Operations and Maintenance modelling
- » Project evaluation

A multi-disciplinary innovation consultancy that places user-centered design principles at the core of every innovation effort. The studio has successfully delivered on several new services, products, brands and developmental strategies, creating both measurable social and business impact.

Quicksand is responsible for project management as well as anchoring the hardware design process for the project:

- » User-experience research and corresponding hardware design
- » Design, branding and communication project management
- » Project toolkit and website development



The municipal corporations of the pilot cities Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. These entities are tasked with providing services in sectors such as Health & Sanitation, Slum Development, Urban Planning, and Waste Management to improve the quality of life of their respective citizenries.

The local municipal corporations are key partners in the project and aid in the facilitation of its various components:

- » Provide funding for construction and infrastructure
- » Site selection assistance
- » Identify contractors for construction
- » Ensure regular water, electricity, and sewerage facilities for the toilets
- » Manage sewerage and waste treatment systems
- » Oversee functioning of facilities through a PMO until capacity-building with the BMC is complete
- » Provision of temporary sanitation facilities
- » Ensuring long-term sustainability of the project

The Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR) is an Indian organization committed to working and partnering with marginal communities. It has expertise in conducting research, process documentation, capacity building and strengthening advocacy by leveraging media and networking to shape and impact policy issues related to urban poor.

CFAR is actively involved in facilitating community interactions in the field:

- » Social mapping of each slum
- » Community engagement and dialogue during design and construction phases
- » Facility management training for community members



CTRAN Consulting Manages large, complex development projects, providing the right mix of program management and technical assistance.

They are the one-point contact for interfacing with various government agencies:

- » Establish a Project Management Office within the two municipal corporations to ensure continued, and future, use and grievance redressal of the facilities
- » Facilitate meetings with government representatives
- » Assist in land approval process
- » Set up and operate the help line that ensures proper functioning of the facilities



Arkitechno Consultants (India) Pvt. Ltd is a multi-disciplinary firm of consultant engineers offering a full array of consultancy services ranging from concept to implementation. This includes: environmental & social planning, feasibility studies, design review & construction supervision, operations & maintenance and project management consultancy for infrastructure projects, and many others.

They are the main project managers for on-field activities:

- » Tendering
- » Facility construction management

CODESIGN



A brand and communication design studio whose expertise lies in bridging the gap between product and service offerings and what end-users really care about, with communication that is meaningful and relevant.

Codesign is the communication and brand consultant for Project Sammaan.

- » Ensure facility related branding and communication is contextually relevant and encourages behaviour change and adoption
- » Develop the facility identity and corresponding collateral that promotes larger goals of sanitation and health for better life
- » Creating facility signage that is functional and facilitates access and experience

An award-winning consultancy internationally recognized as amongst the top emerging practices in the world with a commitment towards delivering innovative, context specific designs that encourage sustainable lifestyles. Anagram Architects is a full spectrum spatial design consultancy firm that offers expertise in urbanism, architecture, interior design, and research.

They are leading the architectural design of the 119 facilities:

- » Provide site-specific architectural designs
- » Consult on waste management issues
- » Oversee facility construction

CONCLUSION



At the risk of sounding redundant, January is the most critical month to date for Project Sammaan, at least for the Hardware side of the initiative. December saw the release of the Public Toilet tender in Bhubaneswar and this month the Community Toilet tenders for both Bhubaneswar and Cuttack have to be released if the project is going to maintain the momentum that ended 2013 into the new year.

Along with the partners at the BMC and CMC, the Arkitechno, Anagram, CTRAN and Quicksand teams will have an extremely busy month in order to accomplish the vital goal of having all tenders floated. A detailed calendar of actions was created and shared and these teams feel confident in meeting the milestones contained therein.

Though obvious, it still needs to be said, and reinforced, that breaking ground as early as possible in 2014 will only help continue to speed the project along and fulfill the ultimate goal of providing a valuable, functional resource to the communities in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack that need them the most. All energies and efforts need to be aligned along this objective so that Sammaan is a success.

