



Project Sammaan

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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: THE STATE OF SAMMAAN

It has been over two years since Project Sammaan began. A great deal has been accomplished in that time, and the learnings gleaned from the experience have been invaluable, both to the partner organizations working directly on the initiative and the project's toolkit which will help direct the efforts of other individuals and organizations working in the sector and seeking to replicate Sammaan.

The last several weeks and months have included a great deal of reflection on Project Sammaan, largely owing to the Yale University School of Management case study on the initiative but also due to changing roles within the teams and adding new personnel to work on various components of the project. Inevitably, these periods of retrospection have led to discoveries on both the successes and failures experienced thus far.

It is no mystery to those working on Sammaan that we have experienced several, and oftentimes, severe delays since work first commenced. Ground realities that were unforeseen (e.g., addressing sewerage challenges) during the project's ideation phase have caused the initial timeline to be revisited more than a few times. The delays impacted the working relationships amongst some of the partners, led to the disengagement of several parties, and the associated frustrations led to a general sense of malaise. Additionally, the very viability of the project was coming into question as teams working on it began questioning the financial impact of continued engagement. Much worse than all of this was the simple fact that we were unable to provide the resources that the host communities so desperately need. In short, the team was in need of a few "wins", some good news to bolster spirits and to get the project back on track.



While reviewing the interviews filmed for the case study, and in speaking to the project partners individually, it was abundantly clear that the status quo was not working and our approach needed to be reconfigured. This led to replacing the project manager and ensuring that the new person spent a majority of their time in Bhubaneswar to ensure the teams located there received adequate support and that the teams located elsewhere had a

better window into daily activities "on the ground". This also allows the government partners to have one point of contact to interface with on Sammaan. There has been a marked increase in interactions between the non-government partners and the Municipal Corporations, and this has allowed for faster, more open dialogue.

Further to this, new communications protocols and scheduling approaches have been adopted. Activities are now assigned on a daily basis with responsible parties clearly defined. This has aided in speeding up many processes while also providing the teams with greater transparency regarding the work that is being done, and the interdependencies that abound within Sammaan's workstreams. It also has helped improve communication amongst team members as the clear delineation of activities allows everyone to know who is working on what, which helps create a bridge between interdependent activities.

This latest course correction was critical both in its timing and its implementation. There are far too many parties with vested interests in Sammaan to allow it to proceed in a manner where partners felt isolated from each other, that their voices were not being heard, and that their work was being needlessly delayed due to others. There needed to be a greater sense of "team" particularly in how the non-government partners viewed their counterparts at the Municipal Corporations. We are collectively beholden to a rigid timeline and stringent budget and the sense of urgency inherent in both needed to be felt by all. Ultimately, this is an infrastructure project unlike any other; we are not building roads or bridges, but life-saving facilities capable of improving the health and welfare of tens of thousands of people. The team needed to be reminded of that and recommit to the initiative with this end goal in mind.

These changes have only been in place for the past few months, but with them the project has progressed steadily: the Public Toilet tenders were released in Bhubaneswar, the Community Toilet tender was released in Cuttack, and the tenders for Bhubaneswar's Community Toilets will be released in early March. Awarding contracts for these tenders will mark the end of a long, challenging, but enlightening process. This will pave the way for numerous other activities to commence and move the project ever closer to providing the first of these facilities to the citizens of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.



BLOG HIGHLIGHT: “MANAGING SAMMAAN” BY KEVIN SHANE



When I was initially approached with the opportunity to take on the project management responsibilities, my primary concern was simply getting up to speed as quickly as possible with the technical aspects of the project. My background is in communications, and I still head up managing such on Sammaan, so my exposure to engineering, architecture, waste management, and the like has been severely limited, if not completely nonexistent in my professional life. That said, and this is one of the true bright spots of having a multi-stakeholder engagement, we have field experts heading up the work on these streams, limiting my role to managing their efforts in respect to the broader project timelines.

It is in this timeline management that the greatest learnings, and frustrations, have occurred, at least for me personally. This is my first foray in living and working in India, having spent most of my career to this point in various capacities throughout the United States. As such, I've had to adapt a bit to the Indian context while also applying some of the professional approaches that served me well in America.

One of the primary hurdles that we've had to overcome as a team has been adhering to project timelines. As has been written about at length in this blog, the project has faced considerable, and unexpected, challenges along the way, most notably those surrounding sewerage and waste management. These issues had the ripple effect of impeding progress on other workstreams, which was frustrating for partners and led to the team facing some difficult questions regarding how best to move forward.

My previous professional experiences had one unifying quality to them: a clear understanding of what needed to be done, when, and by whom. In taking over the project manager responsibilities, it became immediately clear that this level of transparency was somewhat lacking.

This is understandable to a certain degree given the number of stakeholders, their corresponding workstreams, and the length of time that this project will take to complete. That said, it was apparent that the team needed to operate with a better understanding of the interdependencies that exist between most activities; we could ill afford to continue with project partners operating in a vacuum, unaware of the implications that delays in one activity had on others, and the project as a whole.

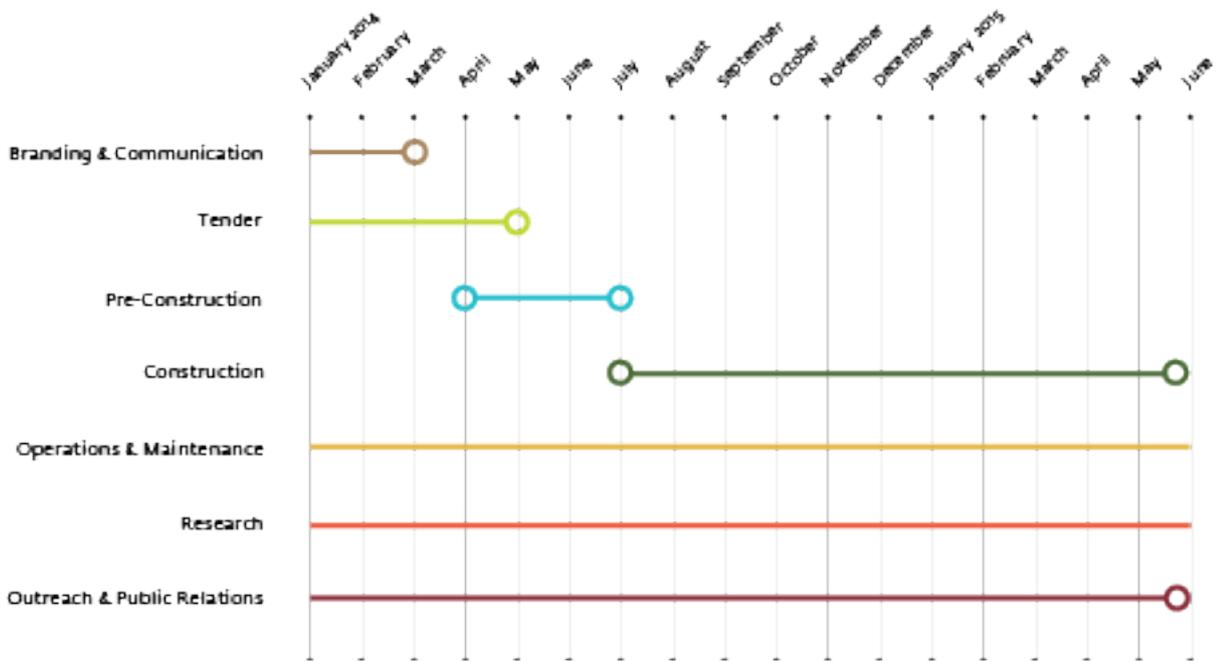
To address this, the team decided that what was most needed was two-fold:

- To have a project manager spending most of their time in Bhubaneswar working closely with the field partners and local municipal corporations while also representing the interests of the stakeholders based in Delhi, and beyond
- To develop a better approach to managing, and communicating, the project's timelines that would provide greater transparency and accountability while also ensuring all partners understood the impact their work had on the project as a whole.

Accomplishing the first point has led to me spending upwards of three weeks a month based in Bhubaneswar and the rest of the time in Delhi, Bangalore, or wherever is most needed for the good of the project. Achieving the second point has required a great deal of micromanaging at the onset, but doing so has begun to bear fruit despite the growing pains experienced along the way. My experience in America's corporate culture has led to a far more confrontational approach than is typical here, leading to some uncomfortable exchanges. That said, and to the team's credit, everyone collectively acknowledged that the status quo was ineffective and change was needed; people have been responsive to my approach, which I've learned to temper a bit with more "carrot" and less "stick".

Various project partners have commented that they feel a greater sense of team spirit now that there is a bridge between those working in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack and those working further afield. This increased sense of camaraderie has seen progress made more quickly than what we experienced before and, subsequently, has improved the overall mood amongst the partners. It's been very meaningful to me to be a part of this transition, especially since the increased pace in which the project progresses means the communities that need these facilities the most will receive them that much sooner.

TIME LINE



MILESTONE OVERVIEW

To date

- Public Toilet tender release in Bhubaneswar
- Community Toilet tender release in Cuttack

Upcoming

- Technical sanction and tender release for Community Toilets in both cities
- Contracts for the Cuttack Community Toilets to be awarded
- Pre-construction dialogues with communities in Cuttack to commence
- Contracts for the Bhubaneswar Public Toilets to be awarded

March calendar of events

- Floating of CT tender in Bhubaneswar
- Re-release of PT tenders in Bhubaneswar
- Site surveys in Cuttack complete
- Detailing out the management frameworks for the O&M intervention
- Finalization of the Sammaan facility identity

WORKSTREAMS

A. Liaising & Capacity Building

In the month of February, CTRAN worked with the CMC team in facilitating the release of CT tenders, while also furnishing the site location and details of the community facilities and providing the letter regarding site clearances of existing facilities to the Commissioner. Activities at the BMC in the month were focused around following up on the PT tenders and facilitating the re-tendering of these facilities.

Activities in March include:

- Following up and facilitating floating of CT tender in Bhubaneswar
- Facilitating issue of work orders for Cuttack's CTs



B. Research/Operations & Maintenance

Following the finalization of the pricing model for the toilets, we have carried out various sensitivity analyses on the results.

We have created drafts of various sections of the O&M Management Framework and are in the process of validating and refining them with on-ground inputs. Additionally, we have created a first draft of the tendering document for private management.

On the O&M front, we will continue working on finalizing the Management Framework and the tendering criteria and the clustering of sites for private bidding. We will work on detailing out the implementation of the various pricing and habit formation experiments.

Finally, once the construction tendering has been successful and the bids received, we will begin baseline data collection activities in Cuttack.

Activities in March include:

- Finalizing the Management Framework and the tendering criteria and the clustering of sites for private bidding for O&M
- Detailing out the implementation of pricing and habit formation experiments
- Begin baseline data collection activities in Cuttack

C. Tender & Construction

At the CMC, we gave further clarification, collected survey quotes, gave work order for 10 sites after issue of NIT and corrigendum thereafter. The reports are processed and recommendation on Soil Bearing Capacity (SBC) and footing designs were sent to Anagram to help direct their work. Unfortunately no bidders turned up on pre-bid meeting and the team is waiting for the tender period to end to see what, if any, bids were received. Additionally, we are working with a land surveyor to gather additional information for the Cuttack sites. Lastly, we have reviewed the design of two standard footings and SBC reports and commented to the teams accordingly.

At the BMC, we worked on the correction of six packages and submitted for Administrative Approval and Tender processing. Pursuant to a conversation with Executive Engineer Mr. Mallick, this should be the final round of changes to the documentation that is required. The files are now with Junior Engineer Mr. Sahoo and are pending his review.

Activities in March include:

- Facilitating the release of the CT tenders in Bhubaneswar
- Working with the BMC on addressing any issues regarding the re-release of the PT tenders
- Assisting the review of working drawings with Anagram



WORKSTREAMS

D. Architecture & Design

The months of January and February were exceptionally busy for Anagram as a lot of work with several partners was happening simultaneously: Drawings needed to be provided to Codesign to allow their work to continue; Structural drawings of a single typology were revised as per the Soil Bearing Capacity data collected in Cuttack; A meeting was held with Quicksand to discuss the differences between working and tender drawings, the coding system of drawings, and design details generally; Survey reports for the Cuttack sites needed to be reviewed and approved; and, Working Drawings 3 were worked on.

Activities in March include:

- Revising all the plumbing and structural drawings
- Revising WD1 as per the changes happen in plumbing/ structural drawings

E. Branding & Communications

Codesign spent the last few months working on ready-for-construction drawings for the toilet facility signages, including detailed markups for all community and public toilet typologies, as well as the details for the variety of ways in which boards are mounted to the various surfaces within the facilities.

This activity involved not only the mapping of required mounting instructions (that is, the varying ways in which mounting would be carried out on the multiple different heights and surfaces), but also the specific way in which this information would be coded and communicated to the various contractors and vendors who would be carrying out the work.

As mentioned in previous newsletter updates, we have concluded the identity design exercise, with a final logo being narrowed down for the Sammaan toilet facilities. The only step remaining before finalisation of this identity is to conduct user-testing with the selected logo and colour options, to ensure that the desired brand values are being efficiently communicated through this design. We hope to conduct this testing in the coming weeks and have a final logo design before the next newsletter update.

The third work stream currently under development at Codesign is the creation of illustrations for the instructional signages. In previous newsletters, we shared the family of characters that have been developed for use in the facility. These characters have been refined and are currently being posed for use in the variety of situations

and in the act of performing multiple actions such as clothes washing, washing hands, etc. which are required by the signage for the facility.

Activities in March include:

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

F. Outreach & Public Relations

The past few months have been dedicated to developing the project's toolkit, preparing for the "Reinvent the Toilet Fair" hosted by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Delhi this March, and finishing up the final interviews and filming supporting footage for the Yale University School of Management case study on the project. Beyond this, frequent updates to the blog and social media channels were made and press releases issued to announce tender releases.

The Quicksand team of Shreya, Babitha and Kevin spent an intense week in Bangalore detailing out the toolkit. The team also met with practitioners developing their own sanitation-related toolkits to discuss best practices and share ideas. This work was also discussed with the Yale team to help further their work on the case study. At week's end, an initial framework for the hardware side of the project emerged, and work to hone this will continue in the coming months with the intention of having a draft ready by the end of June.

Members from the Quicksand and J-PAL teams will be presenting Project Sammaan at the "Reinvent the Toilet Fair" in Delhi this March. The Quicksand team worked with the Gates Foundation to finalize the visual aesthetic of the project's space and developed printed collateral on the project for dissemination at the fair. The booth will feature the Sammaan facility model with projection mapping calling out salient features, and imagery from the project and its host communities will adorn the space.

The final interviews for the Yale University case study were filmed, along with supporting b-roll footage of Sammaan practitioner's offices, the municipal corporations, and the host cities and communities. This footage was sent to the Yale team and they are now working on the draft version of the case study.

Activities in March include:

- Filming b-roll footage in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack for Yale University case study
- Participating in the BMGF "Reinvent the Toilet Fair" in Delhi



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

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

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

CONCLUSION



The end of the year-long tendering process is in sight. This is the bottleneck that's preventing a host of other project activities from commencing, most notably the engagement activities that will prepare the host communities for the facility construction. Once the contracts are awarded, ground-breaking will occur and the years of work on Sammaan will go from being an abstract concept to a brick-and-mortar reality.

It has been a long, challenging process getting to this point, but one that is not without merits. Individually the teams have learned a great deal while working on such a unique endeavor, and collectively this knowledge will feed into the toolkit and ensure that it is a vital instrument in assisting others working in the sanitation sector with their work. The end goal of providing a sustainable resource that people want to use, and one that will improve and even save countless lives, makes any means worthwhile. That said, it's a relief knowing that the construction of the Sammaan facilities is now imminent and that these communities will benefit from them in the very near future.

