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**PROJECT SAMMAAN is  
an initiative dedicated  
to redesigning and  
improving community  
sanitation facilities  
in urban slums across  
India, with pilot projects  
in Bhubaneswar  
and Cuttack.**

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**Project Sammaan was born out of research Quicksand undertook as part of the Potty Project, an in-depth design research study focused on understanding three things:**

1

End-user experience at community toilet facilities within urban slums.

2

End-user perceptions, attitudes, and mental models around sanitation and hygiene.

3

“Supply side” of community sanitation in slums including pricing, operations & maintenance, caretaking, & business models.

*The study found various patterns of behavior that define the end-user experience in urban sanitation, and embody the characteristics of the shortcomings inherent in this context.*

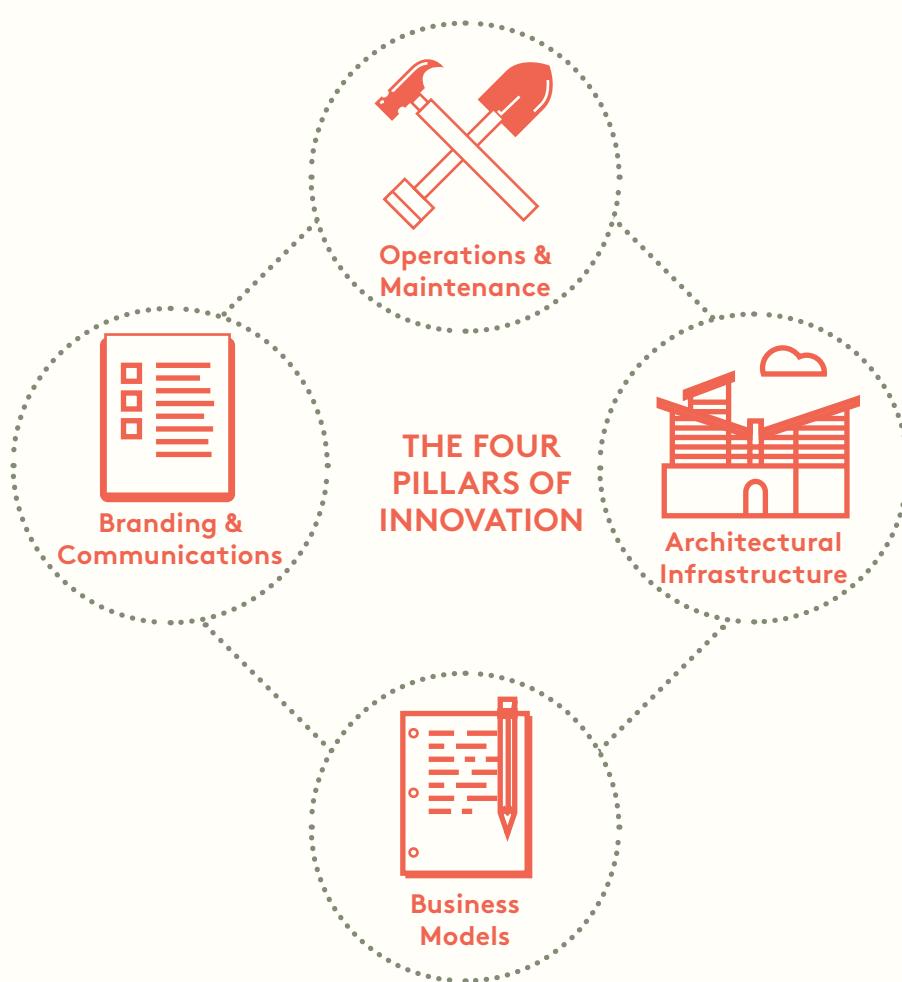
Sanitation in India

India has the dubious distinction of having the largest population of open defecators in the world, with a staggering 626 million citizens lacking access to toilets.

Poor sanitation services lead to an increase in preventable diseases and lost labour that amounts to a loss of over 6.4% of India's GDP, nearly USD 54 Billion annually (WSP, "Economic Impact of Inadequate Sanitation in India").

**Potty Project research led to insights around opportunities to improve sanitation facilities & service delivery & consequently, end-user perceptions and behaviours around sanitary practices.**

These opportunities were cased in four “pillars of innovation”.



# Sammaan is a unique innovation that brings together a diverse group of organizations, designers, government bodies, researchers, architects, urban experts, community engagement activities, and an interface manager.

This amalgamation of seemingly disparate entities provides a robust and exhaustive approach that ensures community members' needs are designed for, the facilities are both functional and valued, and the effectiveness of the engagement is thoroughly evaluated.

## Partnering with Urban Local Bodies

The involvement of government representatives is particularly important. The partnership between public and private entities is rare, and the BMC and CMC should be considered precedent setters in this innovation. The support and participation of the municipal corporations streamlines many processes, validates the project to the citizenry that the project caters to, and ensures that the facilities will be valued for years to come.

## Community Engagement Activities

Community engagement activities thus far have shown that there is not only demand for the facilities from the communities, but also a willingness to work with the project team in sharing insights on everything from preferred design elements in the facilities to sanitation practices and how they could be augmented with these facilities. Continued engagement along these lines is planned and will guide the team as the project nears construction.

# Innovation initiative with a Municipal Corporation bodies, empirical

## Waste management

## Management specialists,

## ment team.

C-TRAN

The project team divided the sanitation challenge into its two parts: **designing + building facilities** that people would like to use — **Infrastructure or Hardware** and **implementing new business models** to ensure appropriate services, pricing and maintenance — **Institutions, or Software**.

Facility-level Interventions consist of two layers: Base Layer amenities include gender-segregated toilets, clothes-washing areas, disabled access toilets, and a menstrual waste incinerator; the Enhanced Layer includes these plus private bathing stations and a retail outlet.

Re-imagining sanitation facility Hardware requires the inputs from numerous experts to ensure the new model is a functional utility that people want to use.

*This team is coordinated by Quicksand Design Studio.*

The software interventions focus on toilet management models (with both privately managed and community managed models), capacity building in the local municipal corporations, and demand generation and behavioral change activities within the communities.

*Led by the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL).*

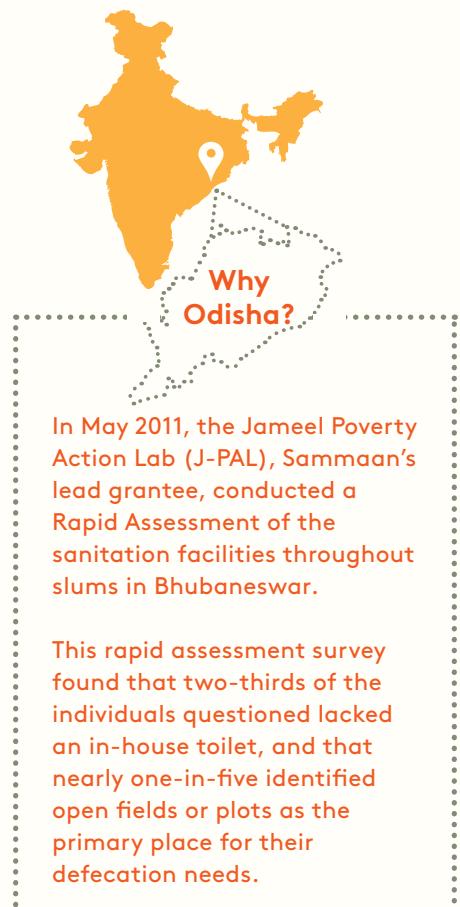
# Project Sammaan works closely with the government to achieve the project objectives, in an attempt to tie in the project's innovation efforts with the government's existing plans for urban slum improvement.

Most city governments in India are seriously looking into slum improvement through various programs ranging from the Rajiv Awas Yojana to preparing City Sanitation Plans under the National Urban Sanitation Policy announced by the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India.

The project seeks to innovate within the framework and constraints of the government's urban policy and planning processes. While this poses several challenges for the project's innovation mandates, it also ensures that the facilities that are built are more sustainable and do not become only 'models' of innovation, but truly usable spaces that enhance the quality of life of its beneficiaries.

By working through government-issued tenders that go through a detailed process of scrutiny and approval by government engineering departments, Project Sammaan also seeks to build a model that enables adapting these innovations in other cities, within pre-existing systems and policies of urban sanitation improvement.

The budgets for the toilet facilities are primarily from government funds already set aside to build toilet facilities, with supplementary financial support from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, thus also making it a more sustainable financial model for scale. A primary objective of the project is to also develop a toolkit that enables stakeholders in other cities to replicate the project's innovations in their own context.



In May 2011, the Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), Sammaan's lead grantee, conducted a Rapid Assessment of the sanitation facilities throughout slums in Bhubaneswar.

This rapid assessment survey found that two-thirds of the individuals questioned lacked an in-house toilet, and that nearly one-in-five identified open fields or plots as the primary place for their defecation needs.

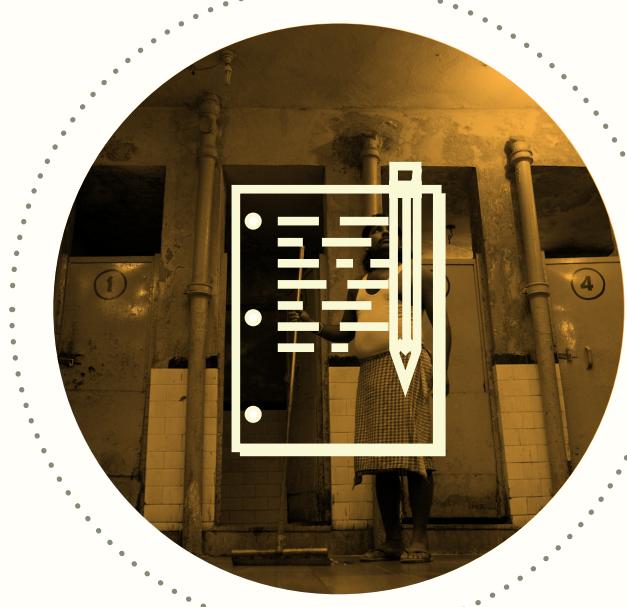
# Project Sammaan completely rethinks current approaches to India's urban slum sanitation context.

## Hardware

The primary purpose of Project Sammaan is to provide functional, appealing and sustainable shared toilet facilities for the communities that the 100+ facilities will cater to.

Through the provision of these facilities, the project seeks to reduce the number of people who have no option but to defecate in the open, by providing them a viable alternative that reduces the health hazards, both to those practising OD as well as the larger community.

Specific aspects within the facilities like provision of adequate water, along with waste disposal mechanisms including menstrual waste incinerators are also aimed at enabling and maintaining a clean and hygienic environment within the toilet facilities.



## Software

Project Sammaan also seeks to create viable and sustainable operating systems and business models for the toilet facilities thus ensuring that the toilets remain in a functional and hygienic state over the long term as well.

The reason why most toilets fall into a state of disrepair and filth, is because there is often no viable business model for the operators and simultaneously the user fee structure does not take into account challenges of the users.

By creating more robust business models, Project Sammaan seeks to make the operations of these toilet facilities viable in the long-term for both private entities as well as community management groups.

## Communication Design

In addition to building functioning and well-maintained toilet facilities, a critical aspect of Project Sammaan is to build awareness of the health hazards of OD and educate communities about right defecation and hygiene practices.

Through a detailed communication strategy that involves engaging with individuals within the target households, the project seeks to change perceptions and encourage new behaviors.

In addition to this, a professional branding effort at the toilet facilities will remove the perception of toilets as "zones of filth" and create pride and ownership amongst the communities.



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