

Clean Koraput Project-Newsletter 5/5

Achievements and Challenges

We began the project with the immediate goal of making people aware of the need to live in a clean and healthy environment and to build up a movement to make Koraput a clean city. I believe we are heading straight towards the goal even if it is not achieved fully. Two and a half months is a very short period of time to achieve such a big goal, but we certainly have initiated



a movement. Along with cleaning up around **75000 litres of rubbish** from the streets of Koraput, reaching around **5600 students** in schools and colleges, and **distributing dustbins to around 1000 families** we certainly have stirred up a new zeal in people to change the habits of generations of littering and burning waste. Also through social media and news media (including national news channels), our message has reached almost the whole state of Odisha and even other states.

Regarding challenges, there are some. Unlike our expectation, we got less fulltime local volunteers to work with us. Apart from that, we sometimes met some ungrateful and even rude people while cleaning and distributing dustbins, who stressed us out. However, 95% of the people were very supportive and encouraging.

The accommodation, lack of privacy and local food were a challenge for the team. But everyone adapted so well, without which our work would not be efficient.



The Impact

The main impact we made was among the school and college students which can be counted as 70% of our project's success. The message, "Be the change that you want to see in the world" set the kids' hearts in motion to make Koraput a beautiful place. Apart from that, the youth and even kids of different localities who came up to help got so motivated to put effort in cleaning, which was really amazing!

Last but not least, the women of Koraput have given the most appreciation and as our team is comprised mostly of ladies, we refuted the Indian thinking of "women can't do much".



Lessons Learned

- It is challenging to execute a new cleaning plan, because the root of the problem is the caste division of society, primarily in the Hindu culture. People say, "it is the job of lower caste."
- Age old littering habits of people will take time to change. Regular awareness is crucial.
- Local people's involvement in the cause initiates a movement.
- Clarity of identity and purpose is necessary. Or else even good work can bring political conflict.
- Focusing on the poorest localities is more important than covering all areas of the city.
- Patience is required to work with the people who have lived in a mess for a long time.

Future Plans, Following up

The first phase of the project has come to an end, but the work will carry on. The follow up work is necessary. The initial concern is to revisit all the places where we have worked, observe people and interact with them. Natalie and me (Kamal) will guide the follow up work till March 2020 with Duzu, Dinesh and Saurav (my younger sister, my brother and my cousin; see picture). Later Duzu, Dinesh and Saurav will continue the awareness work and mobilize local people to make Koraput clean.



One of the immediate goals is to build a youth club to leverage the key workforce, the motivated youth of Koraput, who came forward to work for this noble cause. From each area of Koraput, we want to raise one or more leaders who will mobilize the youth of that area. With a bigger crowd a lot could be accomplished. For now, there is a small group of around 12 people to begin with. In Lulla (my village) we are likely to get some land from the government soon, which will be used as a temporary dump yard, as there are no municipality tractors going to pick up garbage. However, we will request the Koraput administration authority to send a tractor there once a month, which is enough for the small village. We have distributed dustbins to almost every house in Lulla and taught them how to use it.

A long-term vision would be to build a

recycling factory in or close to Koraput to make the system smooth and efficient, which will be pretty big of an effort.

Team Memories

We have had a lot of memories with our team during the last two weeks. Some memorable ones are the visit to the Bonda tribe people (the most secluded tribal community in India) and the Duduma waterfall which was breathtakingly beautiful. But the most memorable time was our time in the team and with my family. Me and Natalie are going to miss them a lot.

The team departed on 15th December back to Switzerland. Goodbyes are always difficult. However, this team will hopefully come together again, for bigger ventures!



Words of Thanks

Before finishing, we want to say a big **thank you** to all the people from Switzerland and India who have supported us in every possible way.



Für alle Interessierten: Wir veröffentlichen täglich einen kurzen Blog und wöchentlich ein zweiminütiges Video.

Blog: www.clean-koraput-project.com/blog

Video: www.clean-koraput-project.com

Es lassen grüssen – Delia, Manuel, Kamal, Natalie, Martina, Debi, Thierry, Duzu, Saurav und Dinesh