



Community Engagement and Assessment in Mumbai, India

Gabbi Wassilak

University of Michigan School of Social Work



Mumbai, India

Mumbai Population: 22 million
Estimated Slum Population: 41.3%

The city of Mumbai, previously known as Bombay, was built on a series of seven islands, joined together in 1784. Mumbai's history and current culture is heavily influenced by its Islamic, Portuguese, and British colonial history.

Education in Mumbai, and India as a whole, is split into public and private education with immense learning and resource gaps between the two.

Nongovernmental Organizations often take on the work of education due to these gaps. Many families cannot afford to send their children to private schools, so programs such as VIDYA Mumbai provide educational services for these families.

VIDYA Mumbai - Women, Youth, and Children

Beyond School

An after-school program focusing on English, Math, and Science curriculum

Digital Literacy and Empowerment

Providing digital classes to improve the literacy and job ready skills of youth

Margam

A women's empowerment program providing skills training in tailoring, basic literacy, and entrepreneurship

School Partnership (Spoken English + Digital Literacy)

VIDYA teachers work at underserved schools who have no spoken English or digital literacy classes. Includes Bhavishya-yaan that only teaches English

Youth Program

Helping students to complete their education and gain employability skills.

Need Assessments and Program Logic Models

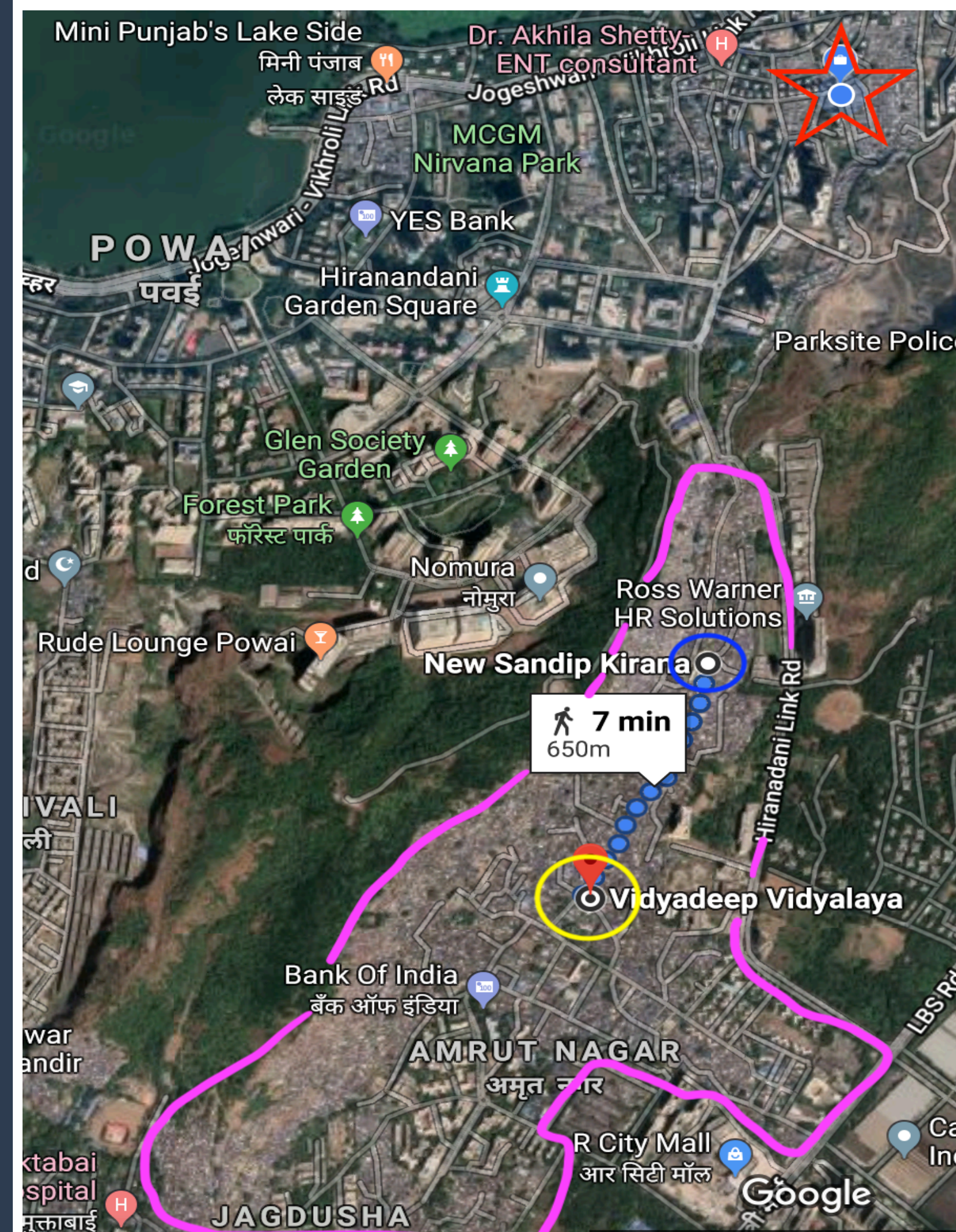
Margam Need Assessment

DEP Need Assessment

Need Assessment Guidebook

Logic Model Workshop

Building Program Logic Models



Outcomes

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- Developed and implemented need assessment plans for VIDYA Mumbai's Margam and DEP programs
- Authored and submitted two funding proposals for new Margam and DEP centers based on need assessment findings
- Created a need assessment guidebook for all of VIDYA Mumbai staff to encourage sustainability
- Crafted a logic model workshop for all program heads followed up by 12 individual meetings to complete models and explore indicators
- Analyzed the 2019 India Education Policy and compiled analyses of VIDYA Mumbai staff to send to VIDYA headquarters in Delhi



Skills Utilized and Developed

- Community Engagement Strategies
- Need Assessment Planning and Processes
- Multiple Project Management
- Cross-Cultural Capacity Building
- Group Facilitation

Connections and Lessons Learned

Classroom and Professional Connections

The courses that prepared me for global work were the ones that taught concrete skills. These courses include: **SW 685** Methods in Evaluation, **SW 670** Analytic Methods for Policy Practice, and **SW 647** Social Welfare Policies and Services. Outside of courses, my field prior to departure prepared me. My professional connections made in Mumbai have and will serve as support in my future career.

Lessons Learned

- Evaluation practices were formalized and made mainstream through Eurocentric practices. The methods that are employed in academic or rigorous evaluations often do not fit the needs, capacity, or context of the community.
- Saying "no" does not mean I am necessarily losing an opportunity, it can mean that I have more time and energy to spend on opportunities in front of me.
- Project management is a difficult and complex task. It is important to figure out what can be delegated to the team so that the management and direction of the project is owned by the team.

Advice

Instead of making concrete project goals before you go, understand the skills you have and the work you would enjoy doing. Be open to what the organization needs, but don't be afraid to ask for what you need.

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