

Sowmya Balachandran

B. Arch, M.Tech Urban & Regional Planning, PhD Regional Planning (*ongoing*)

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Sowmya is an architect and urban planner with over 15 years of professional experience. She is currently pursuing a PhD program at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, in the state of Illinois, USA. She plans to conduct her dissertation on the role of public policy in housing and upward socio-economic mobility. Sowmya co-founded of Alchemy Urban Systems Private Limited, with her partner Mr. B.R. Balachandran in 2007. Prior to Alchemy she worked for a couple of years with Environmental Planning Collaborative (EPC), Ahmedabad.

Sowmya has led teams of professionals in undertaking a wide variety of urban development projects including statutory plans for cities, City Development Plans (CDPs) and City Sanitation Plans (CSPs), infrastructure development strategies, service-level benchmarking in slums, plans involving land use and transport integration, masterplans for townships, post disaster reconstruction planning and policy advisory. In recent times, she has also undertaken program evaluation assignments for non-profits. She has worked in several urban and rural areas across India.

From 2009 to 2013, Sowmya was also involved in DBS Affordable Home Strategy Ltd. a developer company set up in Ahmedabad with the express purpose of demonstrating a market driven solution for creating affordable housing in India. She conceptualized and set up 'Griha Pravesh', a social enterprise focused on facilitating home ownership for the Base-of-Pyramid customers. Griha Pravesh also serves as a demand aggregator for affordable housing developers. Under her leadership, Griha Pravesh received more than USD 200,000 as seed funding from various agencies including the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation. Today Griha Pravesh has over 2000 families as members and has facilitated home purchase for many of them.

Sowmya has undertaken short teaching assignments from time to time. She has participated as a course facilitator for online courses on post disaster reconstruction sponsored by the World Bank Institute. She has also worked as visiting faculty in the BMS College of Engineering and Technology, guiding students of Masters of Architecture program through their graduate dissertations.

In the last few years Sowmya has assisted her partner in some pioneering efforts on public policy for urbanization of industrial corridors in India and affordable housing. More recently she has been involved in conceptualization of decentralized sanitation solutions for projects in Latin America. These projects envisage how human settlements ought to be planned in micro-water sheds for efficient management of water and wastes in resource constrained environments.

DATE OF BIRTH

July 24th 1979

EDUCATION

Ph.D Regional Planning (*ongoing*), University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, IL, USA

Master of Technology (Urban & Regional Planning), School of Planning, CEPT University, Ahmedabad, August 2005

Bachelors of Architecture, Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara, July 2001

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS

Certificates on courses conducted by the World Bank Institute:

1. Integrated Urban Transportation Planning
2. Sustainable Urban Land Use Planning

LANGUAGES PROFICIENCY

	Speak	Read	Write
English	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Hindi	Good	Good	Good
Gujarati	Good	-	-
Tamil	Excellent	Good	Good

MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

Registered Architect, Council of Architecture

MEMBERSHIP OF HONOR SOCIETIES Phi Kappa Phi
COUNTRIES OF WORK EXPERIENCE India, Mexico, Cuba, Mauritius

EMPLOYMENT RECORD

1. Period of employment	June 2012 onwards
Employer	Independent Urban Planning Consultant
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2. Period of employment	August 2007 onwards
Employer	Alchemy Urban Systems Pvt. Ltd. Bangalore
Position held	Director & Co-founder
Description of duties	Strategic planning, business development, management of all ongoing projects.
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3. Period of employment	June 2009 to November 2012
Employer	DBS Affordable Home Strategy Ltd.
Position held	Director
Description of duties	Market assessment and product mix strategies Public relations with other associated businesses Setting up of social enterprise for housing facilitation
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4. Period of employment	December 2006 to July 2007
Employer	Independent Planning Consultant
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5. Period of employment	August 2005 till November 2006
Employer	Environmental Planning Collaborative, Ahmedabad
Position held	Associate Planner
Description of duties	Responsible for overall project management, interacting with community groups, stakeholders, govt. officials, preparing project reports, presentations, time management in planning process.
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6. Period of employment	April 2004 to July 2004
Employer	CEPT Research and Development Unit (CRDU), Ahmedabad
Position held	Research Assistant
Description of duties	Responsible interacting with community groups, stakeholders, govt. officials, preparing project reports. Specialized in projects relating to community participation and planning in Statutory Planning Processes.
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7. Period of employment	July 2001 to Jan 2003
Employer	Kumar, Arvind & Varuna Architects, Chennai
Position held	Architect
Description of duties	Design, preparation of construction drawings, client interaction, site supervision, etc. on a wide range of architecture & interior projects

WORK EXPERIENCE

SANITATION

- 1. Position held** Project Manager

Project **Integrated Sanitation Planning in Taxco and Havana**

Client Latin America office of Bremen Overseas Research and Development Agency, Germany (BORDA)

Scope Watershed-based Integrated Planning for Sanitation and Basic Needs Services (Municipality Of Taxco, Guerrero, Mexico) & Integrated Scheme for Localized Sanitation Solutions for the Watershed of the Bay of Havana, Cuba

Period January to December 2016

Role Structuring data collection and map preparation
Development of reports and presentations for stakeholder and community consultations
Preparation of schematic plans and development of concepts
Outlining of policy implications
Preparation of cost estimates and capital investment plans
- 2. Position held** Project Coordinator for Raipur CSP

Project **City Sanitation Plan for Shimla, Varanasi and Raipur**

Client Indo-German Environment Programme-ASEM
Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Scope Preparation of comprehensive city sanitation plans for Raipur including planning & project identification, formulation of CTF, preparation of awareness agenda and assessment of need for training & capacity building

Period January 2010 to December 2011

Role [Lead Consultant – Consortium for DEWATS Dissemination Society]
Preparation of situational assessment of sanitation in the city, formulating the structure and framework for operationalizing the city sanitation task force, preparation of framework for training needs assessment and awareness generation requirements, client interaction and project structuring
- 3. Position held** Project Coordinator

Project **Master Plan for Decentralized Basic Needs Services in Kolhapur**

Client Kolhapur Municipal Corporation

Scope To analyze the sanitation situation in Kolhapur and propose strategies to integrate decentralized solutions for waste water and solid waste management into the mainstream systems of the city

Period July 2008 to April 2009

Role [Lead Consultant – Consortium for DEWATS Dissemination Society]
To carry out GIS based analyses
To prepare strategies for integration of decentralized approaches with mainstream systems

AFFORDABLE HOUSING/ URBAN POVERTY/SLUMS

4. **Position held** Consultant
- Project** **Establishment of Hybrid Value Chain Enterprises in 15 cities in India**
- Client** Indian Housing Federation, An initiative of Ashoka Foundation
- Scope** Establishment of Demand Aggregators for aggregating low income customers and facilitating access to legal housing
- Period** March 2016 to August 2016
- Role** Identification of project cities, establishing local partnerships, evaluating human resources, training, development of standard operating procedures, supervising survey of interested low income customers
5. **Position held** Urban Researcher
- Project** **Madhya Pradesh Programme Technical Assistance for Affordable Housing Policy and Land Pooling**
- Client** Department for International Development (DFID), UK Government*
(The involvement in this project was restricted to providing assistance to the Urban Development Consultant)
- Scope** Review of existing Affordable Housing Policy and preparation of white paper for reform and changes to the policy document.
Review of existing land pooling efforts and comparisons with advantages of Town Planning Schemes of Gujarat
Review and identification of relevant sections of existing MP legislation including the MP Town & Country Planning Act 1973, Rules 2012, MP Land Development Act 2012, MP Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Development Board Act 1972 and
Preparation of 'Options for Intervention' in order to stream line and integrate preparation of affordable housing and utilization of land pooling for the same in the state of Madhya Pradesh
- Period** December 2014 to February 2015
6. **Position held** Strategy Consultant for Griha Pravesh Project, SAATH Charitable Trust
- Project** **Setting up of 'Griha Pravesh' – Housing Facilitation Centres for facilitating home ownership for BOP customers**
- Client** SAATH Charitable Trust, Griha Pravesh
- Scope** Technical Advisory and partnership in implementing housing facilitation units in Ahmedabad
- Period** January 2011 to May 2012
- Role** Preparation of business plans and strategy documents
Soliciting funds, Setting up teams and defining standard operating procedures
Staff training
7. **Position held** Urban Development Consultant
- Project** **Evaluation of the Trash to Treasure project funded by Caterpillar Foundation**
- Client** CHF International India
- Scope** Evaluation of the projects, partnerships, assets and institutions carried out

under the funding, examining the extent of impact achieved and assessing the future sustainability of these initiatives

- Period** January 2013 to March 2013
- 8. Position held** Urban Development Consultant
- Project** **Preparation of Standard Operating Procedures for setting up of decentralized waste management centres in Bangalore**
- Client** CHF International India
- Scope** Technical advisory, documentation of experiences and strategic inputs for first-time operators setting up decentralized waste management centres
- Period** June 2012 to November 2012
- Role** Case studies of existing centres
Stakeholder consultations
Preparation of strategy document and standard operating procedures
- 9. Position held** Team Leader
- Project** **Preparation of a GIS Database and Strategies for Slums in Bangalore City**
- Client** CHF India
- Scope** Preparation of a GIS database of slums with their basic profiles, strategies on resolution of key issues with respect to tenure, access to infrastructure, etc.
- Period** February 2010 to June 2011
- Role** Led the project team in capturing field data, organizing surveys, writing strategy papers and preparation of a slum atlas for the city of Bangalore
- 10. Position held** Project Consultant
- Project** **'Pro-poor Urban Development in Bangalore' funded by the 'Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation'**
- Client** CHF International India
- Scope** To conceptualize projects for the urban poor, which are co-terminus with the priorities of the local body in consultation with local NGOs.
- Period** June 2007 to July 2007
- Role** Preparation of project proposals, scope of work and budgeting

LAND USE PLANNING/ MASTER PLANNING/ LAND USE TRANSPORT INTEGRATION/CITY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- 11. Position held** Team Leader
- Project** **Anand Nadiad Twin City Development Plan**
- Client** Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board
- Scope** Preparation of a Twin city development plan to be published for public objections & suggestions
- Period** June 2010 to August 2012
- Role** [Lead Consultant – Voyants Infrastructure Ltd.]

Structuring project, work allocation and time planning, Preparation of Base Map, Strategy formulation for the twin city development, presentation to the client and stakeholders

- 12. Position held** Urban Development Specialist
- Project** **Concept Master for Urban and Knowledge Industry Development at Highlands, Mauritius**
- Client** State Land Development Company Ltd., Mauritius
- Scope** To prepare a Concept Master Plan and Design Guidelines
- Period** August 2008 to September 2008
- Role** [Lead Consultant – CRISIL Risk and Infrastructure Solutions Ltd.]
- To review land use allocation, space requirement estimates and development norms
- To prepare Concept Master Plan and Design Guidelines
- 13. Position held** Land Development & Policy Specialist
- Project** **Project Management Consultancy for Implementation of Gujarat Integrated Township Policy**
- Client** Gujarat Urban Development Company Ltd.
- Scope** To undertake a series of activities to operationalize the Township Policy
- Period** October 2007 to September 2009
- Role** [Lead Consultant – Crisil Risk and Infrastructure Solutions Ltd.]
- To assist in preparing Town planning norms for Townships
- To assist in preparing a strategy for Master Planning and land management in areas where the Township Policy will be made applicable
- To assist in preparing Master Plans in 'Applicable Areas'
- 14. Position held** Urban Planner
- Project** **Interim Development Plan and Corridor Development Strategy for the Khandagiri Khurda Corridor, Bhubaneswar**
- Client** Bhubaneswar Development Authority through the Orissa Project Development Company Ltd.
- Scope** To prepare the Interim Development Plan and Corridor Development Strategy
- Period** October 2007 to March 2008
- Role** [Lead Consultant – ILFS IDC]
- Analyzing existing land use and development patterns
- Preparing a comprehensive land use and transportation plan satisfying the statutory requirements as per the Orissa Development Authorities Act.
- Recommending land management strategies for the development of the corridor
- 15. Position held** Land Management Specialist
- Project** **Detailed Project Report for Bus Rapid Transit System, Pimpri Chinchwad**
- Client** Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation

Scope	To prepare proposals for integration of land use and transportation
Period	October 2007 to March 2008
Role	[Lead Consultant – Crisil Risk and Infrastructure Solutions Ltd.] To analyze existing land use and density patterns To prepare a comprehensive mobility plan, integrating land use patterns with all modes of transportation To identify BRT corridors and propose land use changes along the corridor To prepare conceptual designs for the identified BRT corridors
16. Position held	Urban Development Specialist
Project	'Funding Review' of Kolkata Urban Services for the Poor (KUSP)
Client	DFID, Government of UK
Scope	To review the preparation of draft development plans as part of the KUSP program in 40 urban local bodies in the Kolkata Metropolitan Region
Period	February 2007 to April 2007
Role	[Lead Consultant – Crisil Risk and Infrastructure Solutions Ltd.] Evaluating the process and products in preparation of Draft Development Plan in 8 out of 40 Urban Local Bodies.
17. Position held	Urban Planner
Project	Advisory Services for preparation of City Development Plans
Client	Indo-USAID FIRE(D) Project
Scope	The USAID FIRE D III selected two pilot projects viz; Pune and Bhubaneswar to demonstrate model processes in the preparation of City Development Plans. Environmental Planning Collaborative has been appointed to supervise the preparation of CDPs.
Period	October 2005 to May 2006
Role	Facilitate the preparation of the CDPs with technical and methodological inputs as required, Review reports submitted by the consultants, Undertake process documentation of the CDP preparation in all 3 cities and draw lessons, Assist in preparing guidelines for future use by cities in the preparation of CDPs Responsible for all aspects of project management, coordination with the client, government officials, officials of other participating agencies, and expert consultants, preparation and compilation of project reports, documents and other deliverables.
18. Position held	Urban Planner
Project	Advisory Services for preparation of Local Area Plans in Delhi
Client	Indo-USAID FIRE(D) Project
Scope	To supervise the preparation of five pilot Local Area Plans in Municipal Corporation of Delhi and prepare detailed guidelines.
Period	May 2005 to May 2006
Role	Facilitate the preparation of the Local Area Plans with technical and methodological inputs as required, Review reports submitted by the consultants, Undertake process documentation of the LAP preparation in all five locations and draw lessons, Assist in preparing detailed guidelines for

future use by MCD in the preparation of LAPs

19. Position held	Urban Planner
Project	Business Plan for a Real Estate project to fund the MRTS in Ahmedabad
Client	Gujarat Urban Development Company
Scope	To conceptualize a new town development that would drive new economy investments as well as generate finance for a mass transit project
Period	August 2005 to January 2006
Role	Responsible for all aspects of project management, coordination with the client, government officials, officials of other participating agencies, and expert consultants, preparation and compilation of project reports and other deliverables and team personnel management.

REGIONAL PLANNING

20. Position held	Independent Researcher
Project	Land Management and Urban Planning Challenges for Industrial and Agro-processing Parks: An Assessment in the Context of Economic Corridors
Client	Asian Development Bank
Scope	(i) Design a tentative structure of the land management framework that creates a set of matrices correlating land management requirements and mechanisms taking into account the spatial configuration of land (ii) Describing pros and cons of land management mechanisms (iii) Providing some case studies from across India (iv) Assessment of the states in the east coast economic corridor (v) Likely scenarios of land management requirement (vi) Preliminary approaches for urban planning and land management
Period	February 2014 – April 2014
Role	Assisting the consultant in research and preparation of briefs on the following topics: (i) Case studies – Dholera SIR, Magarpatta, Sanand, Delhi-Agra corridor (ii) Land Acquisition & Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act 2014 (iii) State wise study of industrial clusters and urban development along the east coast corridor (iv) State wise study of institutions and land management mechanisms along the east coast corridor

21. Position held	Project Coordinator
Project	Vision 2035 and Revision of Sectoral Master Plans for Kolkata Metropolitan Area
Client	Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority (KMDA)
Scope	Preparation of Vision 2035 & Sectoral Master plans for <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparation of Base Map• Traffic & Transportation• Environment & Wetlands

- Heritage Management
- Land Management Strategies

Period December 2009 (ongoing)

Role [Lead Consultant – Bengal Urban Infrastructure Development Ltd.]
Preparation of GIS base map, studies for heritage management, spatial strategy formulation, formulation of land management strategies, presentation to the client, informal stakeholder consultations, structuring of final deliverables, etc.

22. Position held Project Coordinator

Project **Regional Development Strategies for World Heritage Site - Ellora**

Client Archaeological Survey of India

Scope Preparation of regional development strategies of about 500 sq km area around the Ellora caves as part of 'Site Management Plan'

Period April 2009 to September 2011

Role [Lead Consultant – Cultural Resources Conservation Initiative India]
Regional level assessments of infrastructure and tourism development potential of other sites of cultural, heritage and religious significance
Strategize measures for safe guarding water and environment
Prepare a framework for regulating development in the region

DISASTER MANAGEMENT/DRR/POST DISASTER RECONSTRUCTION

23. Position held Project Coordinator

Project **Planning for the Reconstruction of the Kosi Flood Affected Areas in Bihar**

Client UNDP

Scope Preparation of Regional, District and Settlement Plans to facilitate reconstruction of housing and infrastructure in the Kosi flood affected areas

Period June 2009 to June 2011

Role [Lead Consultant – Owner Driven Reconstruction Collaborative]
Regional studies on flood vulnerability
District plan for reconstruction and development of Madhepura district
Settlement plans for 3 panchayats in Murligunj block of Madhepura district

24. Position held Project Manager

Project **Impact Assessment of Oxfam International Tsunami Disaster Risk Reduction and Participatory Action Research Program (OITDRRPAR)**

Client OXFAM America

Scope Evaluation of the effectiveness of the OITDRRPAR program, with focus on the effectiveness of Participatory Action Research as a tool to be used during aid responses after a disaster.

Period October 2008 – February 2009

Role Preparation of Evaluation Structure and Format
Discussions with a variety of stakeholders who carried forth the evidence based research

Coordination with a local team to examine different pilots

Compilation of findings and preparation of a scheme for cross-sectoral integration of PAR in OXFAMs DRR programs.

- 25. Position held** Project Consultant
- Project** **Good Urban Governance in South Asia**
- Client** United States Agency for International Development USAID (sub-contractor to The Communities Group International, USA)
- Scope** To demonstrate a good urban governance practice in a Tsunami affected town called Colachel in Tamil Nadu, India.
- Period** December 2006 to June 2007
- Role** Preparation of a Strategic Development Plan for the town through participatory approaches, that include
- Facilitating the Municipality in articulating a development vision
- Benchmarking Municipal Service Delivery and its internal management, with special attention to Transparency, Predictability, Accountability, Rule of Law and Participation in the post-disaster recovery and disaster mitigation process
- Facilitate the Municipality in identifying broad strategies and formulating a shelf of well-defined post-Tsunami recovery projects
- 26. Position held** Principal Researcher
- Project** **Local response study of the International Community's funding in the post tsunami situation**
- Client** Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Thailand
- Scope** Undertake a local response based study of 30 settlements along the coast of Tamil Nadu to track fund flows in Tamil Nadu after the Tsunami
- Period** September 2005 to November 2005
- Role** Develop an Interview Protocol, Set up an interactive e-mail communication network, Establish information base on funding and donors – International, National, Local Government, Community, INGOs, local NGOs and private sector, Identify communities to be interviewed based on variety of response and conditions and support levels received or not received, Compile, collate and assess collected information into a country team report, Prepare draft study report.

TEACHING/ ACADEMICS

- 27. Course** City Sanitation Planning
- Client** CDD Society
- Type of Participants** Multi-disciplinary – NGOs, Govt. officials, professionals, etc
- Period** February 2011
- Course components** Full day class on Overview of components, methodology, structure and content of city sanitation planning
- 28. Course** Master of Architecture
- Client** BMS College of Engineering Bangalore
- Type of Participants** Students of M.Arch

Period January 2011 till June 2011
Course components Visiting Faculty for guiding final semester research theses


29. Position held Course Facilitator
Project Web based Course on Natural Disaster Risk Management (Sustainable Cities)
Client World Bank
Type of Participants Multi-disciplinary
Period March 2006 to August 2006
Course components Responsible for conducting the course, evaluating assignments, etc.

RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Co-authored a paper on 'Making Urban Land and Housing Affordable for the Poor – A Case study of Bangalore' (Presented as poster in the World Bank organized 'Urban Research Symposium 2007')
2. Co-authored a paper on ' City Sanitation Planning and integration of Decentralized Sanitations Systems – Challenges and Potential' at the International Water Association's conference in Indonesia 2009)

CERTIFICATE:

I the undersigned certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this bio-data correctly describes me, my qualification and my experience.



(Sowmya Balachandran)

Date October 23, 2017