

FINDINGS FROM WARD 57 PUBLIC MEETING

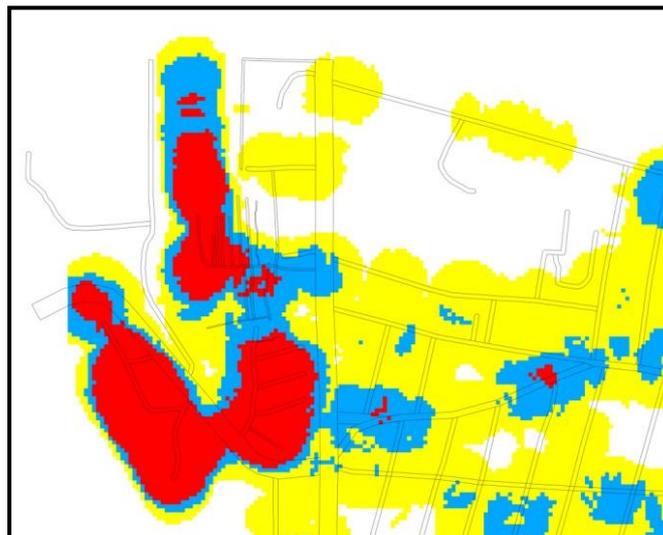
This note presents the results of interactions between residents and councillor of Ward 57 in May 2013.

Transparent Chennai's Ward Accountability Experiment aims to create information that helps people understand local problems at the ward level, prioritise interventions and hold local elected representatives accountable. Transparent Chennai, in partnership with residents, has created data on surface garbage, public toilets and water points in 4 wards across the city between November 2011 and December 2012. We present this research in public meetings to the ward councillor and the residents of the ward, and work with them to prioritise interventions to address their problems.

During one such meeting in Ward 57, residents of Kalyanapuram and Thani Thotti Theru voiced some of the problems they were facing with solid waste management, public toilets and basic municipal services. Some of the residents' complaints have been summarised below:

1 Solid waste management

- a) **Solid waste is not cleared** in their area and that every street is covered in garbage.
- b) The **frequency** with which garbage is collected from dumpsters has reduced.
- c) **Conservancy workers** are no longer involved in cleaning the streets.
- d) There are **only two dumpsters in the area**. They are always overflowing with garbage.
- e) Garbage has accumulated on the roads and near the Cooum and has become a **breeding ground for mosquitoes**.
- f) Garbage is not cleared from the children's playground



1: Garbage and Debris Density Map (Kalyanapuram area)

This issue brief was written by Vinaya Padmanabhan as part of Transparent Chennai's research on electoral accountability. If you would like to know more please write to Satyarupa.Shekhar@ifmr.ac.in

Our survey of garbage and debris revealed low income communities like the Kalyanapuram TNSCB tenements, Kalyanapuram slum and a part of Woodwharf slum lie along major dumpsites in the ward. As a result, residents of these slums suffer an acute problem that cannot be addressed simply by regular garbage collection. Special efforts need to be taken to clear these dump sites in order to improve conditions in that part of the ward

2 Public toilets

- a) The toilets in the area are **not accessible**.
 - i. **The toilets are not open for 24 hours.** They are usually open only from 05:00 hours to 22:00 hours. Women complained about how they are unable to use the toilets at night.
 - ii. **The toilets did not have any private space.** The buildings adjacent to the toilet are quite high and the toilets do not have adequate roofing. Women are therefore reluctant to use these toilets, for lack of privacy.
 - iii. There is a **lack of adequate lighting** in the toilets.
- b) The **source that provides drinking water and water for the toilets is the same.**
- c) There are **no special toilets for children.** Children have to use the adult section of the toilets or go to the streets.
- d) In spite of the fact that all toilets are supposed to be free, people, even children, are charged for usage of the toilet.
- e) The common **washing space does not have sufficient drainage.** The drainage pipes get blocked frequently and the effluent from washing usually overflows onto the street. A simple grill cover can be provided to prevent refuse entering the drain.
- f) The public toilets in Thanni Thotti Theru are dilapidated and unusable. Water supply in the toilets is infrequent.

3 Basic municipal services

- a) Many **drainage pipes are broken.** This results in sewage overflows, especially during the monsoon. During the last monsoon, rain water mixed with sewage flooded the residents' homes.
- b) Replacing **hand pumps that are used to draw drinking water by taps** would reduce the burden of drawing water, especially on women and children.
- c) The water points are **leaky and result in considerable wastage of water.**



2: Functioning and Non-Functioning Water Points (Kalyanapuram area)

Our survey revealed that there was a lack of functioning water points in low income areas like Kalyanapuram

4 Grievances

- a) The residents demanded that a faster and easier system for registering complaints be put in place.
- b) They require their **complaints to be addressed promptly**, especially when the motors of water pumps fail.
- c) The residents' complaints to the Corporation of Chennai concerning drainage infrastructure and sewage overflows **have not been addressed**

5 Miscellaneous

- a) The **roads are in disrepair**. Residents complained that after the roads are dug up for storm water drains and drainage pipes, they are never re-laid.
- b) The poor state of the roads is exacerbated during the monsoon.
- c) There are **too few street lights** in the area.
- d) Many **electrical wires are exposed** and this is dangerous for residents, especially children.
- e) The residents demanded an area with be demarcated for cremation with a compound wall erected around this area.

METHODOLOGY

The WAE involves using paper mapping techniques and administering surveys to locate and evaluate infrastructure like pavements and public toilets and services like the availability of water and solid waste management. These survey tools are designed to be as simple as possible and usually administered by residents from the ward, volunteers, interns and researchers at Transparent Chennai.

WARD PROFILE AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Ward 57 is located in the northern part of Chennai and is known for its old Royapuram railway station. The ward has historically housed communities from various ethnic groups.

The public meeting was held at the Ambedkar community hall in Kalyanapuram and served as a platform for us to present our survey findings to the residents. The people who attended the meeting were mainly residents of Kalyanapuram. A small group of people from Thanni Thotti Theru also attended the last part of the meeting.

One of the outcomes of the meeting was that the ward councillor promised to address some of the problems within the next one month. The councillor and residents also committed to attend a meeting on the twentieth day of every month to discuss problems, progress, and possible solutions.

REFERENCES

Report on Ward 57