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Building **Inclusive** Urban Communities

CASE STUDY
PARTICIPATORY LOCAL AREA SWM PLANNING IN THE BOMBAY HOTEL AREA

Avni Rastogi – 2018

Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

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ABSTRACT

In the early 2000s, all major urban development schemes and programmes, introduced by the central government, required the states to pass a public participation law and undertake extensive public consultation to prepare city plans. However, this was not seen in practice for many reasons, primary among them being the lack of official capacity and will.

Later and current city planning schemes—for example, the Smart Cities Mission—have turned 'public participation' into tokenism, requiring citizens to access government websites to voice their concerns. Experience from different circumstances has shown that participatory planning processes that are successful in being truly inclusive are notoriously difficult and context-specific. This case study, therefore, seeks to answer the following questions:
What does it mean to 'do' participatory planning? What are the considerations while designing such a process? What are the minimum requirements for successful citizen engagement?

Where does one place the process of participatory planning in the larger legal-regulatory framework and political landscape?

What lessons can one draw from such an exercise for policy advocacy?
A pilot participatory planning process for preparing a solid waste management (SWM) plan was undertaken in August 2017 in the Bombay Hotel area of Ahmedabad by the Centre for Urban Equity (CUE), CEPT University, in partnership with the Centre for Development (CfD) and Janvikas (JV). The pilot involved engaging residents of the area in participatory data collection and mapping, presenting the collected data to the community, and conducting planning workshops for the locals to arrive at a community plan for SWM. While the pilot achieved its objective of creating an SWM plan, its lessons for a public policy on participatory planning lie in the processes followed and the challenges faced. The case study concludes that participatory planning can be institutionalised with integrity so long as, inter alia, it allows for decentralised planning, involves local networks and hires locals, and provides for sensitisation and capacity building of those implementing the policy. ◆

" What are the minimum requirements for successful citizen engagement?"

ABBREVIATIONS

AMC	Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation
AMRUT	Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CDP	City Development Plan
CfD	Centre for Development
CPL	Community Participation Law
CUE	Centre for Urban Equity
DP	Development Plan
DPR	Detailed Project Report
GTPUDA	Gujarat Town Planning and Urban Development Act, 1976
ICTs	Information and Communications Technologies
JNNURM	Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission
JV	Janvikas
LAP	Local Area Plan
MHUPA	Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation
MoUD	Ministry of Urban Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PMAY	Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana
RAY	Rajiv Awas Yojana
RWAs	Resident Welfare Associations
SCM	Smart Cities Mission
SEWS	Socially and Economically Weaker Sections
SLIPs	Service-level Improvement Plans
SWM	Solid Waste Management
TPSs	Town Planning Schemes
ULBs	Urban Local Bodies

CONTENTS

PART 1
INTRODUCTION

Ahmedabad City and Informal Settlements

Ahmedabad, the seventh-largest city in India, is the largest city in the state of Gujarat, and has an estimated population of over 7.79 million (World Population Review 2017). As in other cities, the process of urbanisation and the state's inability to keep up with it has led to the proliferation of different kinds of informal settlements with poor access to basic services and vulnerable tenure security.[1]

Urban Planning Paradigm and its Problematic Dealing of the Informal

As elsewhere in India, the urban development and planning paradigm has been unable to effectively respond to this increase in informal settlements in Ahmedabad too. In the city, urban planning is governed by the Gujarat Town Planning and Urban Development Act (GTPUDA), 1976, through town planning schemes (TPSs). Theoretically, the Act provides tools of land pooling and readjustment to urban local bodies (ULBs) for organising and allocating land for infrastructure, utilities, and for public housing for the socially and economically weaker sections (SEWS). In practice, SEWS lands remain unused, encroached upon by others, or used to resettle families involuntarily displaced by development projects (Desai 2016).

The TPS procedure is long, bureaucratic, centralised, and largely non-participatory. State government sanctions are required at draft, preliminary, and final scheme stages. Only land owners are considered as relevant stakeholders, and participation is limited to receiving objections to published plans from land owners. How objections are dealt with is left to the discretion of the planning authority, with the only recourse to an unhappy owner being appeal.

As a result of the long-winded and centralised process, it typically takes a decade from the survey to the implementation stage. This has been the case more so in urban peripheries. The vacuum created by this delay has been filled by urban commercial subdivisions, led by builders and developers, resulting in haphazard development. Since this development caters to low-income groups, the developers play fast and loose with building permissions and regulations and, for reasons mentioned above, all land transactions are informal. Residents in these areas are denied basic services and public amenities by the state. When TPS implementation begins a decade or so after conducting the survey for preparing the TPS, residents of lands earmarked for infrastructure face demolition with no compensation or rehabilitation due to the informal nature of the land transactions and the hostile attitude of the state towards this informality. Residents often contest implementation of the TPS and sometimes even succeed in stalling it. However, while they avoid evictions temporarily, social infrastructure remains underdeveloped (Mahadevia et al. 2016a).

Thus, the state planning authority deals with informal settlements largely by ignoring them or demolishing them. Therefore, almost all informal, unplanned settlements lack basic infrastructure such as water and sewerage connections, roads, and streetlights. Only in very rare cases does the state redevelop an informal settlement to upgrade its infrastructure and services.

1 In Ahmedabad, this was driven primarily by the closure of the textile mills in the 1980s and 1990s, which led to the increasing informalisation of labour and the failure of the state to provide affordable housing for the city's workforce; informal subdivision of land in response to the Urban Land Ceiling Act; and, the sale of peripheral farmlands without any change of land use. All of these were informal transactions, the purchasers being the urban poor who were willing to take this risk, despite the informality of the transactions, only because of their affordability (Desai 2016).

Need for a more Participatory Alternative

This planning process is often non-reflective of existing realities and has proved inadequate in addressing the problems faced by the residents of informal settlements. For more equitable planning outcomes, there is a need to challenge this top-down, expert-led practice of urban planning. Can this be done by expanding the spaces for citizen participation in a city's development? The city government has been unable or unwilling to respond to the 'informal city' of the low-income labour class without violence and inequity. There are some groups and concerns, such as those of the working classes, which are presently either completely invisible in the mainstream planning approach or are visible in very limited ways that do not capture the ground realities and the dynamics and their implications on people's lives. Can these invisible residents be made central to the process of planning? Can they be empowered with the knowledge and tools necessary to participate in planning processes? Can we develop an alternative, equitable planning practice that is built bottom-up through participatory practices?

In pursuance of answers to these questions, we attempted a pilot in participatory local area planning for solid waste management (SWM) in Bombay Hotel[2], which spanned 2016 and 2017. This case study is a documentation of this pilot. 'Public participation' in planning processes in India and why it has been problematic is the focus of **PART 2** of this case study, closing with a wish list of our ideal for public participation. This ideal forms the basis for how we designed and implemented the pilot in Bombay Hotel. **PART 3** contains the what and how of the pilot, detailing the process we followed and the limitations we worked within. **PART 4** is an analysis of the experiment based on the standards we had set for ourselves (discussed in the **PART 2**). Did we achieve true public participation, making the residents central to the process of planning for their areas? What were the costs involved, the limitations, and the difficulties in the process, and do the results justify these? Is participatory planning a viable, functional alternative to the current planning practice, and what needs to be done to make it such? These questions are sought to be answered in **PART 4**.

Note: When we began our partnership with local civil society and community-based organisations for this project, we had the ambition of creating a local area plan with the participation of the communities to address issues of tenure security and access to services. However, due to several limitations that are described in detail in **PART 3** *of this case study, we decided to limit the scope of the pilot to creating a participatory SWM plan as a first step. While our engagement in Bombay Hotel and with the local partners continued even after the completion of this case study, this is a documentation and analysis of the process for preparing a participatory SWM plan.* ◆

2 Bombay Hotel is a locality near the southern periphery of Ahmedabad. It is presumed that the area got its name from a hotel in the area which no longer exists. More details about the locality are given in **PART 3**.

PART 2
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING LANDSCAPE IN INDIA

Public Participation in Policy

What Participation? Why Participation?

Sherry Arnstein (1969) gets to the root of the matter when she defines (citizen) participation as (citizen) power: Participation is *"the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future"*. That is, citizens are empowered to impact planning outcomes. Empowerment is defined by the World Bank as "*the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes*". Her "ladder of participation" provides a working hierarchy of different levels of participation, from manipulation and therapy at the bottom of the ladder amounting to 'non-participation', moving up to the 'tokenism' of informing, consultation, and placation, and the top of the ladder constituting 'citizen power' through partnership, delegated power, and citizen control (Arnstein 1969).

Democracy has become limited to "territorially based competitive elections of political leadership for legislative and executive offices" (Fung & Wright 2001). Beyond casting their vote, the average citizen has little role or influence in political decision-making. One of the effects of this is seen in the manner in which cities are governed and planned for. For example, Ahmedabad's planning processes exclude most city inhabitants from decision-making by only recognising land owners as stakeholders. Contrary to this, participation seeks to deepen democracy and achieve its central ideals of "facilitating active political involvement of the citizenry" (Fung & Wright 2001). Participation centres the policy (in this case, the planning of the city) on the citizen by making them active agents in the process of planning. Power is resituated in the citizen so that they may impact planning outcomes through effective participation and, consequently, this results in more inclusive outcomes.

Policy Elements to enable Empowered Participation

What are the necessary elements of a good and effective citizen participation policy that would result in empowered participation?

1. The policy must be inclusive. Its design must include considerations for all categories of affected residents. An urban planning policy, this would include *all* urban residents and users of city spaces: not just owners of property, but the occupiers of the property, and all those who inhabit the city and use its resources and spaces—residents of apartment buildings and residential societies, slums, and streets; workers, business owners, and street vendors. It must take into account the relative power of these stakeholders and be designed to put them all on an equal footing. For example, business owners are likely to have more power to influence the planning process than workers. The latter would require additional capacity-building measures to allow them to participate effectively.
2. The policy should specify and empower a single implementing government department and office, along with its roles and responsibilities, to ensure effective participation. This must be accompanied by a clear and adequate budgetary allocation for the purpose.

3. The policy must have an element of, and a required budgetary allocation for, capacity building for officials who will be responsible for actuating the citizen participation requirements. In the past, the lack of capacity of such officials has resulted in poor and counterproductive implementation of public consultations (Raman 2013).
4. Capacity building for officials should be supplemented with a requirement for building awareness and capacity amongst stakeholders too, to enable effective participation. There needs to be a continuous sharing of information that is accurate, relevant, and up-to-date, so that stakeholders can make informed choices. Ideally, funds should be made available to different stakeholder groups for the appointment of experts who can advise and advocate for them, keeping in mind their specific interests and priorities.
5. The policy must ensure that the design of the process gives *actual* (and equal) power to all these stakeholders, i.e., their inputs must be reflected in the final outcome. This means that the process must not be simply for 'consultation' or 'information', with final discretion resting with the officials on whether to accept such inputs (Arnstein 1969). Conflicting inputs, or skewed participation with a silent majority, though, must be guarded against, so that inputs are not one-sided. Mediation of conflicting inputs to arrive at a commonly acceptable resolution is essential. Skewed participation should be avoided through capacity building. There should be an obligation to accept the inputs in letter and in spirit. In the ideal scenario, even the manner and processes of citizen participation could be subject to citizen participation. Decision-making should be decentralised and delegated to the level closest to the grass roots. Krishnaswamy et al. call this the "principle of subsidiarity" (2017). Inserting several government levels in decision-making would dilute the citizens' participation.
6. Finally, it should specify a method by which residents can hold the government accountable for the outcome of the process to ensure that their inputs are reflected in it. The participation process thus does not end with receiving inputs, but continues throughout the life cycle of the larger government project or scheme, extending to its proper implementation in line with residents' aspirations.

India's urban planning policy and regulatory framework do not fare well by these standards. Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) were two flagship urban development and housing schemes of the central government, announced in 2005 and 2009 respectively and which ran until 2014. JNNURM vowed to invest Rs.66,085 crore in 67 cities over 7 years (later extended by another 2 years) to improve urban infrastructure and governance structures. It required each city to prepare a detailed City Development Plan (CDP) with "citizen participation time and again during the CDP preparation process" (MoUD 2009). Receiving funding was contingent on passing a Community Participation Law (CPL).

RAY aimed at achieving "slum-free cities" by upgrading and bringing all slums into the ambit of formal housing. RAY guidelines required public consultations at all stages in preparing the 'Slum-Free City Plans of Action' and even allowed for slum residents to create plans for their slums and submit them to the government for implementation. RAY's *Guidelines on Community Participation (2013–2022)*, issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India, suggested that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or community-based organisations (CBOs) should be appointed as intermediaries between the government and slum residents; these organisations should thus undertake the enumeration and surveys of slums, and then be involved in planning for them.

In practice, public participation under these schemes was a non-starter. The CPL was supposed to be framed along the lines of a model Nagara Raj

Bill, drafted at the national level by proponents of corporate-led governance paradigms (Kamath et al. 2013). Until 2009, only 12 states had passed a CPL and no Area Sabha or Ward Committees had been constituted (TERI 2010). The draft CPL had also been criticised for the corporatisation of urban politics which would likely result in fewer positive outcomes for the poor (Kamath et al. 2013). Most cities submitted their CDPs with no public consultations at all (Kamath et al. 2013). Where such consultations were held, they were mere formalities—a tick on a box to fulfil a mandatory requirement—inviting a few elite Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), some consultants and experts, and industry lobbyists.

There were many reasons for the half-hearted attempt at public participation: there were no clear guidelines on what constituted public participation; official capacity or efforts towards building that capacity were lacking; and, no resources were committed for holding effective consultations (Raman 2013).

Participation as framed under the JNNURM and RAY amounted to tokenism on Arnstein's "ladder of participation": informing, consulting, and placating residents. In practice, however, the implementation was either one step below as therapy or manipulation, with participation being used to further the government's agenda on market reforms, or was entirely non-existent.

The current urban planning government schemes are Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), and the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY). The SCM aims "to promote cities that provide core infrastructure and give a decent quality of life to its citizens, a clean and sustainable environment, and application of 'Smart' Solutions." Funding under the Mission is competitive, with each city having to submit a proposal. Citizen participation was one of the criteria for assessment. An office memorandum from the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), dated September 23, 2015 (Subject: Citizen consultations to prepare Smart Cities Proposals), provided specific guidance to city governments on the extent of citizen involvement and suggested, inter alia, that Internet hotspots be set up in slums to enable such 'participation'. The home page of the Mission's official website[3] has a slide show that emphasises the importance of citizen engagement, providing statistics of how many winning cities created their own mobile app and used SMS, WhatsApp, etc. for citizen engagement.

AMRUT aims at providing water, sanitation infrastructure, and storm-water drains, and developing open spaces and public transport infrastructure in cities. Its guidelines document suggests that the Service-level Improvement Plans (SLIPs) and the CDPs formulated by the ULBs should be made with citizen participation. This is one of the criteria on which the SLIPs are to be assessed. However, later in the document, the first-stage consultation is suggested to be held at the draft Detailed Project Report (DPR) stage for course correction, making participation in planning quite an afterthought. Like SCM, AMRUT too emphasises the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) for citizen participation.

PMAY aims at providing 'Housing for All by 2022' through slum rehabilitation, credit-linked subsidy, etc. (MHUPA 2015). Public participation does not feature in the guidelines document of PMAY, except for a *singular mention* of consulting slum dwellers while designing slum rehabilitation projects.

These new schemes, other than PMAY which is unconcerned with participation, continue the rhetorical emphasis on public participation, but in a way that is bound to be limiting and exclusionary. The emphasis on ICTs and 'smart' means of 'citizen consultation' limits participation to those who have the capacity to access the Internet and use government websites and apps to provide inputs on plans

3 http://smartcities.gov.in/

for their cities. Research in Kalyan-Dombivli in Mumbai on the e-grievance systems showed a bias towards the middle class and those already empowered (Martinez et al. 2011). Additionally, inputs given through these media are bound to be general in nature and, therefore, limiting. Information is being provided only to those who can access it online. People are given the illusion of participation through rather superficial means. However, there is no true transfer of power to the citizens to decide how the government uses its funds for development.

In Ahmedabad, the GTPUDA lays down a largely non-participatory procedure for the preparation and implementation of Development Plans (DPs) and TPSs by the Area or Urban Development Authority, requiring that these plans be published for suggestions and objections from the public. The GTPUD Rules (Rule 17) also require that a meeting of land owners be held to explain the tentative proposal and elicit suggestions and objections that *may* be taken into consideration by the Authority. These rules exclude an overwhelming majority of affected residents who do not own land, but live and work on it. In the case of informal tenure or no tenure security, residents have no say at all. Participation in this too is exclusionary and limited to tokenism.

The pilot that this case study elaborates on was thus conceived as an attempt towards a *truly* participatory manner of planning, designed to achieve informed deliberation and empowerment of residents. Planning, even for the SWM service in an informal settlement, is seen as a political process that would lead to social development through community participation. ◆

PART 3
THE PILOT

The idea of a participatory planning pilot originated in a meeting with some Ahmedabad-based NGOs, hosted by CUE, on March 4, 2016. Perhaps because of CUE's initiative in organising this session and its technical expertise in urban planning, the discussions centred on using the local area plan (LAP) provision of the GTPUDA, newly added in 2014.[4] These discussions evolved into the idea of a participatory LAP for an informal settlement as an alternative to the top-down urban planning that has been in practice. Creating such an alternative plan would confirm that participatory planning was possible, meaning that there is a high potential for improved outcomes for informal settlements and their residents. However, we could not start out by talking about TPSs, land and tenure security, and 'cutting' (the colloquial term for demolitions). As discussions progressed over the next few months, Bombay Hotel was selected as the focus area for this plan. Based on a recce of the area, conducted by the CUE team and facilitated by three NGOs working in the area and their networks, it was decided that a focus on the issue of health through measures such as SWM, *anganwadis* (childcare and nutrition centres established and run under the Integrated Child Development Scheme of the central government), and healthcare infrastructure would be a good starting point. Finally, we settled on creating a participatory SWM plan for the Bombay Hotel area with the active involvement of the community.

We worked and planned for the pilot primarily with the Centre for Development (CfD), which works on the issues of child rights and education, and Janvikas (JV), which works towards social development. Although the two organisations have different focus areas, both work with the economically and socially marginalised groups. They are routinely approached by these groups with concerns related to access to basic services and evictions. The issue of solid waste was of interest to both the organisations because of the immensity of the problem in the area.

The area itself was the subject of study of a report by the CUE and CfD on violence in urban planning in 2015–2016. This report formed the basis of our intervention in the area. Counter-intuitively, the CUE was a little reluctant to site this project in Bombay Hotel since the earlier study had revealed the complex politics of the area. In 2015, a local leader had even been stabbed to death for trying to stop some illegal activities there. However, CfD and Janvikas were confident and enthusiastic about carrying out this exercise in the Bombay Hotel area, and allayed CUE's concerns.

The division of work was decided as follows:
JV would work in the northern half of Bombay Hotel, while CfD would work in the southern half. CUE would design the process, train both the NGOs and the community volunteers to implement the plan, and co-ordinate all the activities. The first step was for CUE to develop the methodology for the community mapping, while JV and CfD would start building interest in the area through conversations with local leaders and residents.

4 The procedure for forming and implementing an LAP is quite similar to that of a TPS but for one major difference: the planning authority has some freedom in determining the area that is subject to the LAP, while the boundaries for TPSs are predetermined by AUDA.

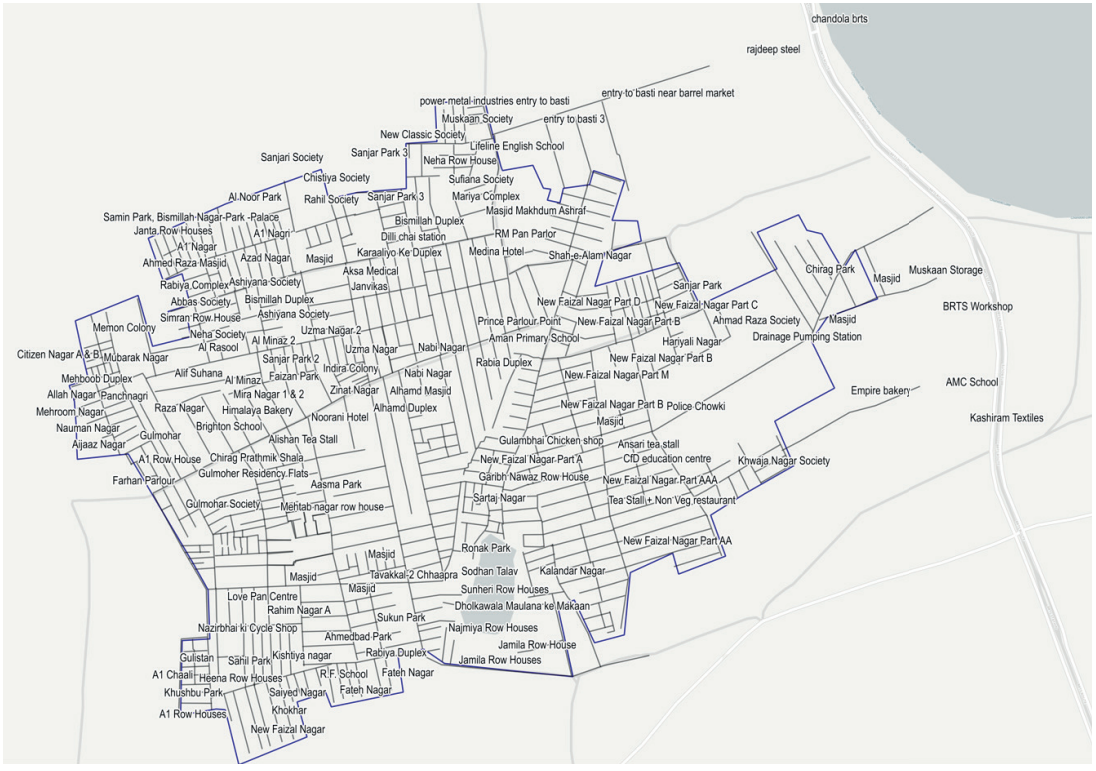
Bombay Hotel

Bombay Hotel is an informal settlement located on the southern periphery of Ahmedabad, adjacent to the city's only garbage dump. While residential development began in the area in the late 1990s, it picked up after the communal riots of 2002[5] when the area emerged as one of Ahmedabad's new Muslim ghettos. The area originally consisted of agricultural lands which were sold illegally to builders. Some of the land was then further divided into smaller parcels upon which residential structures were built to provide low-income housing to Muslims (Mahadevia et al. 2016b). Salma Bano, a resident of the area for the past 20 years, recalls, "Back in 1996, when we had first moved here, the area was like a jungle. We would often find snakes in our houses."

Most residents who moved here in the aftermath of the 2002 riots from the Shah-e-Alam refugee camp were victims of violence and displacement. Citizen Nagar, a neighbourhood in the Bombay Hotel area **(Map 1)**, right at the foot of the dumping ground, was the first rehabilitation colony that the victims moved into when the refugee camps closed. Today, the population of Bombay Hotel also consists of migrant workers predominantly from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. A large section of the immigrant population is made up of single male migrants who work in garment workshops and textile or chemical factories. Several Bengali families reside near Pirana, one of the major garbage dumping grounds in the city. They work as waste pickers and manual scavengers. Estimates by community leaders suggest the ratio of residential to commercial land use to be 80:20, with approximately 60 per cent of the residents living on rent.[6]

Map 1

The Bombay Hotel area's boundary, roads, and neighbourhoods



Source: Map prepared by the author

5 For more information on the Gujarat communal riots of 2002: Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2003. Communal Riots in Gujarat: The State at Risk? *Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics*, Issue 17, p.6.

6 As per the discussions during the Participatory Planning Workshop, which was held on December 6, 2016.

The increase in the area's population post the riots was not accompanied by access to basic services and social infrastructure, thereby adding yet another dimension to the systemic marginalisation faced by the community. A few basic services such as roads, drainage lines, and water connections were provided in the Citizen Nagar neighbourhood as a result of a PIL filed in the Supreme Court by an NGO in 2004. No Objection Certificates[7] were obtained by some residents in order to gain access to these services with the help of NGOs such as the Savera Charitable Trust, JV, CfD, and Sanchetna (Mahadevia et al. 2016b). Some of the roads connecting Bombay Hotel to the main road where the Bus Rapid Transit System operates were constructed during this period. Two arterial roads running east-west were completed between 2004 and 2006, marginally improving access.[8]

TPSs were developed for the Bombay Hotel area, based on surveys done in 2003–2004, but their implementation had not started till 2013. Repeated delays coincided with an increase in informal development in the area. By 2012–2013, the TPSs were increasingly at odds with the ground reality in the area. Residents objected to the implementation because it would result in the demolition of an estimated 2,200 houses (Desai 2016). Aided by political representatives, demolitions for road-widening were averted through a series of negotiations with the government—consequentially, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) agreed to reduce the planned width of the roads. Although some 'cutting' was carried out in Faizal Nagar (a neighbourhood in Bombay Hotel), this also brought access to services in the form of construction of new roads and a police post in the area. Since 2010, services such as drainage connections, water supply through tankers, streetlights, etc. have been introduced in the area in limited ways, facilitated by negotiations between community leaders, political representatives, and AMC officials.

However, concerns still remain regarding the implementation of the TPSs and the further demolitions they may lead to. For long, Bombay Hotel has had poor access to water, sanitation, health, and waste management services. In the absence of such services from the state, many builders have provided private services such as soak pits for sanitation, borewells for water, etc. As a result, in the absence of a welfare state, a nexus has developed between the informal service providers and the political elements, with both parties reaping benefits.

Over the last few years, an informal patron-client relationship too has been facilitated between the local politicians and the community by local leaders. The provision of water supply is being made—four borewells have been sanctioned, of which two have been built (in Faizal Nagar and Thakur Vas respectively). In November 2016, water pipelines were being laid in the area. We were also informed that land had been identified for building a hospital and a school.[9]

Since these negotiations (and the resultant developments) are based on the personal dynamics between the AMC and the local leadership, smaller neighbourhoods within Bombay Hotel, which do not possess the same kind of networks, do not gain access to similar services. Consequently, development in the area has not been uniform. This also reflects the inability of the local leadership and the community to view Bombay Hotel as a single, cohesive unit, where one's own area-level concerns are inextricably tied to larger issues and gaps in service delivery. This insularity is particularly evident in the more upwardly mobile neighbourhoods located in the western part of Bombay Hotel such as Chirag Park, Faizal Nagar, and Sufiyan Society. Their attempted disassociation from the rest of the area may also be in part due to a perceived stigma attached to Bombay Hotel for being close to Pirana, which lies in the eastern part of Bombay Hotel.

7 *Na vandha praman patra* (as it is called in Gujarati) is a certificate from the AMC, stating that it has no objection to the provision of water and sewage connection services being provided. This is a mechanism whereby informal housing units below 40 sq. m. can access these services

8 *Sharif-bhai* from the CfD mentioned this during the Participatory Planning Workshop held on December 6, 2016.

9 *Ghulam-bhai* and *Alim-bhai* mentioned this during the Participatory Planning Workshop held on December 6, 2016.

Bombay Hotel is also fraught with social tensions that are largely linked to economic vulnerability. The primary occupations of the residents include driving autorickshaws and working in the textile, dyeing, and chemical factories and in garment workshops, while some women also engage in home-based work like stitching, embroidery, kite-making, rolling tobacco, and ironing. These industries attract many migrant workers from Bihar, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh, who stay in the area only for a couple of years. There is a degree of resentment and hostility directed towards these migrants by the resident homeowners. There is a feeling that due to their itinerant status, the migrants are not invested in the long-term development of the area and do not throw in their lot with the locals. A complaint that frequently recurred in conversation was that 'they' (migrants) do not unite with the rest of the community to tackle various issues, including the garbage problem. According to a resident of Mehtab Nagar, a neighbourhood in Bombay Hotel, "Even if everyone agrees not to throw garbage outside, 'they' will continue doing so. They don't see how this affects the entire community because they are gone the next day."[10]

Limitations

We had to work with several limitations when designing the process for the SWM plan. The first and overarching problem was that our partner NGOs neither had dedicated funds nor other resources to carry this project through. The staff working on this pilot also worked on other projects, thus being available only when the demands of other funded projects had been satisfied. Activities could not involve any expense, since no specific budgetary allocations had been made for this project.

Second, we were designing and implementing a participatory planning process without the backing or involvement of government authorities, who should have ideally been anchoring it. This reduced the credibility of the project and diminished its potentiality. Community involvement was sought with these caveats. This was compounded by a sense of frustration amongst the Bombay Hotel residents who felt that they have continuously been subjects of different research studies, without having witnessed any consequent improvement in the provision of services.

Last but not least, in designing the process, it was important to take into account the specific interests of the partnering NGOs so that their buy-in remained high. The effectiveness of the pilot must therefore be judged in this light.

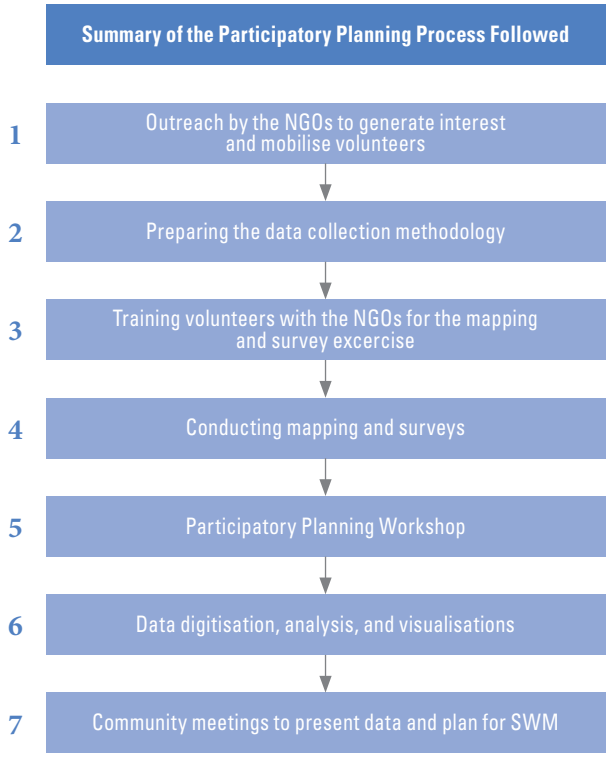
The Process

Broadly, the process we determined at the beginning of the project was to first conduct community outreach to inform residents, raise their interest, and get their buy-in, so that they would be willing participants in the participatory data collection on the status of SWM infrastructure and services in the area. We would then analyse the data and present it to the community through simple and easy-to-understand maps and visualisations. This would be done through community meetings, to triangulate the data and to build a common understanding of the gaps, problems, and impact of the limited provision of services from the AMC. These meetings would also be used to record community inputs on the infrastructure and services that they want in their neighbourhoods, which would then be used to create the draft SWM plan. Once ready, the draft plan would be shared with the community, through large meetings held in the area, for modifications and approval. At these meetings, a strategy would be drawn up with the community's participation for pursuing the plan's implementation with the support of the AMC and political representatives.

10 Mentioned during the community meetings held in February 2017 by Janvikas.

Figure 1

Outline of the Process of the Pilot



The process is detailed below:

Step 1:
Outreach by the NGOs to generate interest and mobilise volunteers

Once it was decided between JV, CfD, and CUE in mid-July 2016 to pilot a participatory SWM planning exercise in Bombay Hotel, the first step was to introduce the idea to the community. This was to be done by JV and CfD in August 2016 through informal conversations with residents and local leaders, simultaneously recruiting volunteers from within the community for mapping.

However, we realised during the training **(Step 3)** that this was not done at all. Although this was a disappointing start, we realised that there were quite a few reasons for the same: This was the first step of an unfunded project and there was uncertainty about its continuity. No one wanted to devote resources and engage communities in a process that may not take off. Another problem was that the NGOs' staff who were to engage with the community had not been present during the planning meetings. As a result, they were unclear on what they were to tell the community. Further, the NGOs' staff who were communicating with the residents were steeped in the tradition of viewing NGOs as service providers and the communities as beneficiaries. In participatory planning, it is necessary to empower the residents to believe that they can be agents of change themselves. Therefore, the little communication that did take place was skewed. A workshop on participatory planning to start the project would have been very useful in orienting the NGOs' staff to the approach we were attempting to apply here.

Step 2:
Preparing the data collection methodology

In the meantime, CUE prepared the methodology for mapping and data collection. The aim was to collect data on the existing SWM infrastructure and service provision in the area to determine sufficiency and plan accordingly for improvements.

We considered and prepared both paper mapping and the KoBoToolbox[11] for this. The advantage of paper mapping is that it is low-tech and easy for the community to follow. The advantages of using KoBoToolbox include a reduction in digitising and cleaning data, paper printing, and errors or blanks in data; a major disadvantage of it, though, is an increased chance of inaccurate location data. However, as we found during the pilot, almost no one possessed smartphones that were capable of running a KoBoToolbox survey; therefore, only paper maps were used.

11 KoBoToolbox (www.kobotoolbox.org) is an online tool that allows users to create their own survey form for data collection and mapping using smartphones.

Garbage mapping was limited to the Bombay Hotel area of 1 sq. km. that was demarcated during CUE's earlier study. This provided a geographical boundary for the survey. We mapped the roads and landmarks within this boundary by using Google Earth's satellite imagery, through sessions with the field staff from CfD and JV who were familiar with the area (to make corrections in the Google Earth tracings), and through transect walks accompanied by field staff using iOS applications such as Mytracks and GPS[12]. Landmarks included shops, restaurants, societies, and prominent buildings such as multistorey apartments, government buildings, schools, etc.

Using the boundary and the roads, the focus area was divided into 68 rectangular tiles ranging from 10 to 19 sq. m. each, using markers on Google Earth.[13] Tiles were then grouped together to form sets, with a master map for each set.[14] The tile sets served two purposes: (1) they demarcated the areas that the CfD and JV were individually responsible for, along with those that each survey team was required to cover; (2) breaking down the area into smaller plots made the mapping manageable, thus making it possible to organise the process and follow its progress.

Paper mapping used a tile set with the SWM service survey, in which the surveyors were to mark garbage, construction debris, sewage, chemical waste, and dumpsters on the map. We experimented with these markings in two ways: The first way was to mark the spot on the map with a number alongside it (following a consecutive numbering system). In addition to the other survey sheets, the volunteers were also given a garbage and SWM infrastructure sheet,[15] on which they would note down the number marked on the map and tick the boxes to indicate what they were marking. In this method, the maps were only marked with numbers. In the second method, we provided the volunteers a legend sheet[16] which included various symbols and colours that were to be used to mark the different kinds and the volume of waste. These were to be drawn directly within the tiles. During the pilot, volunteers showed a preference for the latter method. This also had the advantage of the maps being used as survey tools by the volunteers, beyond just being visual resources in and of themselves.

The SWM service survey asked basic questions to the residents of Bombay Hotel about garbage collection and street sweeping done by the AMC-employed staff, the frequency of dumpsters being emptied, and the method of garbage disposal.

The data collection methodology was finalised over two internal meetings at CUE and one that was held with both the NGOs. Some issues discussed during the meeting with the NGOs[17] were how to identify respondents for the survey; the sample size; and, how to triangulate the data from the surveys.

For the SWM survey, we decided to interview two respondents per tile, who were to be chosen randomly by the surveyors. However, the surveyors were asked to select respondents from different parts of the same tile, i.e., not those who lived right next to each other. The location of the surveyed household/shop was to be marked on the map to allow for geographical analysis later.

We piloted the surveys with the volunteers and the staff of CfD and JV to test for efficiency.[18] Based on inputs during the debrief, the survey tools were finalised.[19] These were prepared in English and then translated into Gujarati for the community volunteers and the NGOs' staff.

12 These are both Android and iOS applications that track locations using the global positioning system.
13 Annexure 3.
14 Annexure 4.
15 Annexure 5-1.
16 Annexure 5-2.
17 Minutes of the meeting held on August 6, 2016: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1w_n2gMbQueHo2nGbChKKDdoUHhqKgXngxvNFassbnMw/edit?usp=sharing.
18 The survey tools used, along with the data collected during the pilot and other related documentation, can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7YU9NT1U2SnBTQXM.
19 See **Annexure 5** for the final survey forms and the legend sheet.

Step 3:
Training volunteers for the mapping and survey exercise

This methodology was communicated to the NGOs' staff and the volunteers through training held in September 2016. The mapping and surveys were to be carried out by local volunteers from Bombay Hotel, with co-ordination support and guidance from the NGOs' staff. We scheduled the training as advised by the NGOs' representatives on a weekday. The venue was organised by CfD in the premises of Brighton School, a private school in Bombay Hotel.

We began the training with an introduction to the pilot and how it had developed through discussions with the local NGOs, emphasising the participatory nature of the process to empower residents to bring about change. Next, we showed them a map of Ahmedabad (using Google Earth) with the Bombay Hotel area's boundaries marked on it. The local participants were urged to introduce themselves and share which area of Bombay Hotel they lived in, thus familiarising everyone with the idea of maps and how to use and interpret them. This itself evolved into a participatory exercise, with those who grasped maps easily helping those who were not as comfortable using them yet.

Following this, we got into the meat of the training, introducing the tile sets and the contents of each package that included tiles; a master map; a garbage key or legend sheet; a survey sheet for the SWM service; and, writing/marking stationery. The methodology (as described in **Step 1** above) was conveyed to all the participants at first.

Teams of four were created, with each comprising at least one staff member from an NGO and one from CUE, and provided a mapping/survey toolkit (including a master map and a tile that was close to Brighton School) to be tested in the field.[20] The CUE staff took their group through the entire methodology once again and addressed all questions that came up during this process. The teams then went out in the field. Due to a delayed start, we had only about 45 minutes to complete the field trial. Each team was asked to complete at least one entire road that was mapped on the tile. After the teams returned, we had a short debrief to address the doubts that arose during the field trial.[21]

It was during this training that we realised that the NGOs had not been able to do any outreach beforehand. Volunteers from one NGO did not even know why they were there. Several volunteers, who were young school and college students, left early for their classes and did not attend the field trial. This limited the effectiveness of the training. A late start meant that, for the most part, the training was useful only for those staff members from the NGOs and the few volunteers who were present throughout the training process. It was particularly useful for the volunteers who had assisted in piloting the methodology and they proved to be invaluable resources during this training.

There were many other factors that further reduced the effectiveness of the training. Our preparation for the training was wanting in that we had not accounted for a large group of volunteers and staff. There were upwards of 20 staff members and volunteers present, with people going in and out throughout the training. The session started more than an hour later than the scheduled time because one of the NGOs was late in arriving with the volunteers they had selected. Further, the volunteers kept arriving halfway through the training, missing important information shared with the teams right in the beginning. CUE's communication at the training could also have been better, considering the participatory nature of the project and its aims. For example, repeating the information again and again for those who had arrived late may have been useful to all volunteers. The school also turned out to be a very noisy and distracting venue on a weekday—afternoon school was in session in an adjoining classroom even as our training was ongoing. The impact of these shortcomings became clearer only as we progressed to the next step.

20 These sets, which had been created especially for the purpose of training, can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7a2QtY-jVSSUdrb0U.

21 Documentation pertaining to the training (including the field trial) can be accessed from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AlpqTt_BJhxL8lbt-so5iisLxlC3o5DkmXKO78ESslQY/edit?usp=sharing.

Step 4: Mapping and surveys

At the end of the training, we handed over the prepared sets to both CfD and JV, according to the areas that they were meant to cover. There were a total of 11 sets with 68 tiles.[22] The NGOs' staff were to co-ordinate with the volunteers to complete the data collection.

One NGO began mapping by mid-September 2016. However, in a meeting with their co-ordinator for the project on October 12, 2016, to review the maps and data, we were told that the mapping and data collection was done almost entirely by a few staff members. On the first day scheduled for mapping, the volunteers turned up, but they wanted to leave within an hour or so; thereafter, they did not return. This was reflective of the lack of outreach and interest generation that we should have been able to do before moving on to data collection. Volunteers had been recruited in a rather ad hoc manner, without them being informed about what they were meant to do and why. This was also partly because of the lack of clarity amongst the NGOs' staff. Unfortunately, CUE was appraised of this only after the NGO had completed its data collection, so we could not attempt a course correction for the area covered by this NGO.

The other NGO had been unable to commit staff for co-ordinating the mapping and data collection processes; so, even a month after the training, they had been unable to begin work on the project. We considered this an opportunity to conduct refresher training and accompany the volunteers while they carried out mapping. This NGO had used to run an education centre for children in and around the focus area. As a result, they were able to call upon their students (aged 14 to 17) as volunteers. Many of these volunteers had helped pilot the methodology in late August 2016, and so had been subjected to multiple trainings (in smaller groups) where the chief objective of the whole exercise could be conveyed to them clearly.

Yet, we observed many problems during mapping and data collection. There was widespread scepticism amongst the residents towards the surveys; many had inhibitions about providing their names and other details, despite the surveyors informing them of their identity, the survey's purpose, and asking them to participate in the survey to possibly help improve their surroundings. Certain members of the community were actively hostile to our presence in the area. A political party worker and an onlooker told us not to conduct surveys there because they believed that the names of the participating women would be misused as part of a petition opposing Triple Talaq.[23]

The volunteers too were cynical about participatory practices and believed that 'nothing can be done in this community'. There was condescension in the attitude of the staff and volunteers, as they were steeped in the tradition of service-providing NGOs that viewed residents as beneficiaries. This attitude was contrary to the underlying philosophy of the pilot that intended to imbue residents with agency and power.

These developments underscored the lack of outreach and awareness building and, to some extent, the lack of buy-in that the NGOs had in the area. However, the data outcomes from this exercise were still very positive.

22 All tile sets can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7dFV2bTNjYmZEbjg.

23 At that time, the Supreme Court of India was hearing a case challenging the practice of Triple Talaq amongst Indian Muslims. Those opposed to the hearing were afraid that the names and addresses of the Muslim women we surveyed would be wrongly used to show their support for the petition challenging the practice.

24 Minutes of the internal meeting at CUE can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7MFhFQ19IRGJuLTg; minutes of the meeting with CfD can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7NUdKeWZRY1JFeDA; and, minutes of the meeting with JV can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7V0VDUVNZX2U1a3c.

These concerns were discussed in an internal meeting at CUE, and later with both the NGOs separately. From these meetings, the following points were worthy of note:[24]

i. It became evident that there was a lack of clarity amongst the NGOs about the process. In retrospect, more frequent meetings and discussions, perhaps bi-weekly, could have ensured that the project remained fresh in the memory of the staff of both the NGOs.
ii. Both the NGOs were quick with reassurances that they had a lot of community buy-in and were keen on taking the work forward.
    a) CfD mentioned the existence of informal CBOs in Bombay Hotel: a women's organisation and a (male) community leaders group. We agreed that they should reach out to these groups to seek their support for this exercise.
    b) JV said that it had formed a membership-based sangathan (organisation) of women from Bombay Hotel that provides services such as applying for government documentation and schemes. JV proposed to leverage this sanga than for its outreach.
iii. Both the NGOs agreed that it would be best to reach out to political representatives as well as organise a meeting with the AMC councillors.
iv. The proposed idea of organising a workshop on participatory planning to orient the staff and the volunteers in the methodology of participation, where the NGOs emerge as facilitators of empowerment for communities, was well-received. It was scheduled for December 6, 2016.

Step 5:
Workshop with the staff of CfD and JV on participatory practices and their application in the context of Bombay Hotel[25]

The primary objectives of the workshop were to reorient the NGOs' staff to, and reiterate the importance of, participation for this project; to clarify next activities; and, to build the morale of the team by sharing digitised maps with the surveyors. The workshop was also an opportunity to take stock of and share reflections from the experience so far. For the workshop, we had requested CfD and JV to invite their staff members, all volunteers, and the community leaders from Bombay Hotel who would be engaged in the project. CfD chose a hotel's banquet hall in a central location as the venue. *Ghulam-bhai, Alim-bhai*, and *Mahroof-bhai* were some of the community leaders who attended the session. Unfortunately, CfD volunteers were not present—we were told that, being a weekday, they were busy at school.[26]

During the mapping process, we had discerned a feeling of cynicism, both within the community and amongst the volunteers. Many felt that the community would never come together to rally for change and therefore will never be able to improve their lot. To counter this, we identified 'positive stories' from within Bombay Hotel that showcased examples of leadership, participation, and collective action, which had, in turn, led to tangible results. We hoped that this would also tackle the negative belief that it is *impossible* to negotiate with the AMC, since these examples showed that political will can be generated through community involvement and mobilisation.

25 Referred to in the following text as the Participatory Planning Workshop.
26 This was a recurrent problem when co-ordinating activities with the NGOs and their volunteers throughout the project—the NGOs would agree on a date and time when the volunteers would not be available.

Four positive stories were documented. These were identified mostly by the CUE team during field visits through conversations with the locals and with the assistance of the CfD staff. We had taken photographs and recorded the interviews (audio)—using these, we had created a ten-minute, audiovisual film[27] to be shown during this workshop.

1) In Chirag Park, under the leadership of a resident schoolteacher and her husband (AMC staff member), the neighbourhood was able to ensure that its streets were always clean.
2) Salma Bano, when she moved to Bombay Hotel in 1996, realised that there was no school in the vicinity for her children to attend; so, she opened a school herself in a masjid, which, at its peak, had 400 students. When the masjid requested that the school be moved elsewhere, since the student capacity had grown too large for the premises, she opened an *anganwadi* at home, which she runs till date.
3) Khushbu Park is a small neighbourhood where all residents themselves, out of concern for the health of their children, ensured that the streets are kept clean and swept daily.
4) Nauman Nagar is not paved, does not have any AMC vehicle coming for waste collection, consists of some premises under construction, and is yet kept clean by its residents.

These four stories showed that the community was willing to act collectively when given an opportunity. This was an important realisation for the community members as well as the NGOs' staff. The film acted as an effective strategy and research tool that led to a better understanding of the area and its residents.

Broadly, the plan of the Participatory Planning Workshop was as follows:[28]
We began by asking participants to write a few sentences about their attitude towards Bombay Hotel and its residents. We were to ask them to do this again at the end to evaluate if the workshop had had any measurable impact on them. However, due to several delays, we had to forego this second assessment. This was followed by an introduction to anchor the workshop, explaining the objectives of the project and why community participation was integral.[29]

A few staff members and volunteers then shared their experience of the data collection exercise, their perspectives and attitudes towards the locals.[30] This was used to anchor the discussions and unpack the group's own biases towards Bombay Hotel. Once these biases were exposed, we showed the short film on positive stories from Bombay Hotel, following which the participants created a timeline of the history of Bombay Hotel on a wall. Through discussions and the process of co-creating this timeline, we were able to recreate, to some extent, the development of Bombay Hotel over the years since 1996. The timeline exercise brought out a rather comprehensive popular history of the area—comprising historical events, building of roads, emergence of new leadership, change in political and administrative representatives, etc.—contextualising the area from the people's perspective. This explicit and visual sense of the development in Bombay Hotel through community efforts was powerful. Participants agreed that although a lot was still needed to be done, much improvement had been accomplished over the years.[31]

Thereafter, we carried out participatory stakeholder mapping for Bombay Hotel, where the participants could identify different groups and individuals who could impact the project and also who would be impacted by it. We divided the stakeholders into those who would be supportive and helpful, and those with whom we would have to be more cautious—for whom the status quo might be the most beneficial, or those who would like to be seen as doing the most for the residents. This exercise helped in enumerating the different groups that the project must engage with to increase the chances of a successful outcome.

27 This can be downloaded from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zI-aK000I7X0p1M1lVVXFGZkk.
28 **Annexure 6**.
29 **Annexure 6-3**.
30 **Annexure 6-4**.
31 **Annexure 7**.

Two presentations were made on participatory tools and practices that emerged respectively in the context of Kutch post the 2001 earthquake (Setu Abhiyan's Mahiti Kendras)[32] and of the fishing communities facing threats to their livelihood in Chennai.[33] These gave the participants some ideas on what could be done with participatory approaches, as opposed to a service–beneficiary mode of operation. As a precursor to the discussion on the project's next steps, we shared some draft outputs of the data collection exercises—maps showing the garbage spread and disposal methods. What emerged from this discussion was the need to build awareness among residents about the health impacts of improper garbage disposal. However, because the meeting was delayed and many of the sessions overshot their time limit, many participants began losing interest towards the end of the workshop. The idea that the participatory tools which had emerged in Kutch or Chennai could be applied to Bombay Hotel too was perhaps lost on many. Neither was this effective in informing them on how the next steps should be executed.

During the discussions, it was decided that it would be best to take the AMC councillors into confidence and gain their support before starting the community meetings. Meanwhile, CUE would complete the data analysis and visualisations and conduct trainings for the CfD and JV staff on interpreting and communicating this data to the community.[34]

To a large extent, the workshop was effective in addressing the cynicism of the participants and in energising them for the project, but we were unable to give sufficient emphasis on the role and importance of participation in the exercise.[35]

Step 6:
Data digitisation, analysis, and visualisations
The data collected by CfD and JV was handed over to CUE in the last week of October 2016. We held an internal training on October 25, 2016, on digitising the tiles, created during the paper mapping process, using QGIS, an open-source mapping software. The tiles and the surveyed data represented on them were digitised by six people over a period of two weeks (supplementary to other work).[36] The digitised data was used to create several maps and charts representing the problem of waste management in Bombay Hotel. These maps and charts were prepared in English, and their Gujarati translations were added with CfD's assistance.[37]

Step 7:
Community meetings to present the data to the residents of Bombay Hotel and seek their inputs for an effective SWM plan for the area
We first trained the CfD and JV field staff members on the maps and charts created for the community meetings, so that they understood them and were, in turn, able to explain the same to the community when seeking their inputs and discussing possible solutions for SWM. For this, i.e., the Training for Staff for Community Meetings, we prepared a note on the agenda for the community meetings[38], a presentation with the maps and pie charts[39], a note on the health impacts of poor garbage disposal methods , and templates for documenting the meetings and collecting health data[41].

Approaching this issue through the health perspective was relatively apolitical, would likely spur change in individual practices, and could be used as a means of advocacy of the AMC. One way of strengthening advocacy was through the collection of data on the incidence of illnesses from the local contacts made at each community meeting. The template for the health data listed specific diseases

32 **Annexure 6-5**.
33 **Annexure 6-6**.
34 Referred to as Training for Staff for Community Meetings.
35 The report of the Participatory Planning Workshop can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7TEQ1bC1zaEljZkU.
36 A detailed and reflective process document is available as Annexure 8.
37 The outputs that were created are available as Annexure 9.
38 **Annexure 10-1.**
39 **Annexure 10-2**.
40 **Annexure 10-3**.
41 **Annexures 10-4** (for the meeting) and **10-5** (for the health data).

and conditions linked with unsanitary garbage disposal. This was to be left with the local contact person identified at each meeting, and collected back after a week—giving them time to fill in the template, based on the inquiries they made amongst their neighbours. The blank map of Bombay Hotel (showing only the roads, boundary, and landmarks) was to be used by the NGOs' field staff to mark the radius of each meeting and number the meeting. Any location-specific inputs such as where a dumpster should be placed or where the AMC vehicle should stop were also to be represented on this map.

The Training for Staff for Community Meetings was carried out separately for both NGOs. The training for CfD, conducted in their office on December 15, 2016,[42] was engaging and effective. The CfD staff were encouraged to share how they organised public meetings, with the CUE team providing specific inputs on ensuring inclusion and wide participation. The maps and what they represented were discussed in detail. We emphasised that the data shown in the maps was not set in stone and that, during the meetings, it was important to seek the participants' inputs on whether the representation was accurate and in line with their lived experiences. The training also attempted to make the staff think about the connection between the different variables presented. For example, in an area close to a lake with a high concentration of garbage, the preferred method of disposal may have been to throw the waste into the lake. But, was this true irrespective of the presence of a dumpster nearby? And if it were present nearby, then why would the residents throw the waste into the lake instead of using the dumpster? The staff members understood these angles and actively participated in the discussion. Unfortunately, the project co-ordinator from CfD could not attend the training; this proved to be a matter of difficulty later. We took him through the materials once in February 2017, before the community meetings began, but it was not as effective as the training had been.

The training for JV which was scheduled for December 22, 2016[43] was organised as a community meeting instead due to a gap in understanding. Consequently, a second session was organised for JV in January 2017.[44] A senior staff member took a lot of initiative during this meeting, displaying ownership over the process. However, he had not been present during the Participatory Planning Workshop and he was uncertain if the community would be able to grasp the maps. After the training, we were a little concerned that the involved staff members' personal beliefs or biases could possibly work against the spirit of participation and impact the community meetings by placing a limitation on what is shared by the staff with the community at the outset. He was also not supportive of collecting the health data. Despite having discussed the significance of this data with the senior staff member from JV, we realised that it had not been collected.

All through December 2016 and January and a part of February 2017, both CfD and JV tried to organise a meeting with the AMC councillors, but the latter remained elusive. Finally, after a delay of over two months, we took the collective decision to commence the community meetings without their support. Through the efforts to organise these meetings, and because of the support of community leaders, it was likely that the councillors were aware of this project and its objective. So long as we did not face any opposition during the community meetings, we decided that we would continue with the project as planned.

We met the primary co-ordinators of both NGOs separately, to conduct refresher training on the maps and the plan for the community meetings. JV started with its first community meeting in Citizen Nagar on February 15, 2017. Two staff members from CfD also attended this meeting. Being the first meeting, there were some points that the JV staff missed, which came up during the debrief later. For example, the emphasis on health impact was missing.

42 The notes from the training for CfD staff can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7SE9pajY5NzRRVGc.

43 The notes from this meeting can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7UHctaTV5NzNrMFU.

44 The notes from the training for JV staff can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIaK000I7TFpxbHRuUTJBeVd-mU3RNdGwyR1E4WmhLUDVZ.

The remaining meetings were held in quick succession after this. Between February 15 and 28, 2017, the JV staff had held 27 community meetings in all.[45] At least one representative from CUE attended almost all meetings. The average number of participants per meeting was about 16, with a majority of them being women.[46]

The meetings developed a format after the first few: The field staff would select an ideal space to hold a public meeting in a specific locality, covering usually about 4–8 lanes. A resident would be requested for the use of their charpoy (which can usually be found leaning against their doors). The maps would be spread on the charpoy—first would be the landmarks map of Bombay Hotel. As a member of the field staff set this up, the others would walk through the nearby lanes, knock on the doors of homes, and corral residents to the meeting venue. At the sight of the maps, residents usually asked if we were from the government and had come to the Bombay Hotel area for 'cutting'. In response, the staff would tell them about the SWM survey.

Within 10 minutes, a crowd of about 10 to 25 people would have gathered. The staff would then begin by introducing themselves, their organisation, and their work in Bombay Hotel. They would then refer to the survey and, often, someone remembered the survey and mapping exercise from several months ago. The landmarks map was then introduced. They would point to the main roads traversing the area, the major landmarks, and eventually lead to the location of the meeting. After having explained the context, the team would display the garbage spread map to emphasise the magnitude of the problem, followed by the maps showing the concentration of garbage with the garbage disposal survey results. At every point, they would ask if the maps were representative of the residents' lived experiences. Very rarely were there disagreements.

Using the maps, the staff would ask why the situation was so bad, who was responsible for it, and then they would talk about the impact of garbage and burning plastic on residents' health, especially their children's health. They would sometimes remember to point out the cleaner areas of Bombay Hotel, highlighting how the residents in these localities had taken control of the situation and had monitored each other with regard to throwing garbage on the streets. The residents at the meeting would be asked how they could improve the situation around them, and an attempt would be made to get a concrete commitment from them. This did not always work, though. They would be asked which service from the AMC would work best for them—as in, whether they wanted a dumpster or the AMC vehicle to collect the garbage and, in the case of the latter suggestion, where this vehicle should stop for garbage pick-up. This location was recorded on the landmarks map. Finally, we would ask someone to take leadership in the area, to be the contact person as the project proceeded further and to collect health data. The template for collecting health data was not carried and all the contacts were told that it would be given to them at a later date. However, as mentioned earlier, this did not happen.

The meetings were useful to update and correct our understanding of AMC's garbage-collection service as well. For, we found out that this service had reduced drastically since December 2016–January 2017 to only once in two weeks or so.

CfD held four community meetings in February 2017 and was thereafter unable to commit human resources to anchor the meetings. Meetings in the remaining neighbourhoods were completed in May 2017.

45 All the minutes and photographs from the community meetings organised by JV can be accessed from https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B33zIa-K000I7al9yWUgxU2dDRnM; minutes of two meetings (as samples) can be accessed from **Annexure 11-2**.

46 For the Bombay Hotel areas covered in each meeting, which are a part of the JV community meetings planning map, see **Annexure 11-1**.

The process described above took place between August 2016 and May 2017. The data from these meetings[47] was digitised in the same manner as the survey data and used to prepare an SWM plan for the area. The SWM plan was presented at a meeting of community leaders from Bombay Hotel in November 2017. Their suggestions were incorporated and the final SWM plan was prepared and handed over to JV and CfD for it to be taken further with the community and the authorities in March 2018.

It is remarkable that this much progress was achieved without a dedicated budget for this project. However, it is still necessary to assess (1) whether the process has indeed been participatory; (2) whether institutionalising such a process is feasible and desired; (3) and lastly, in case this process were to be institutionalised, what are the specific design features that a state participatory planning policy must include in order to be successful. ◆

47 For a map of the planning inputs received during the JV-led community meetings, see **Annexure 11-3**.

PART 4
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, YES?

Participation in the Process

Participating in community mapping and data collection: It was our hope that the entrenched presence of JV and CfD in the area would generate goodwill and give the project a certain credibility, which would, in turn, prompt members from the community to readily participate on their own in this exercise. Not only would this ensure greater participation right at the outset, but it would also enable the community to engage with the issues in their area through a new, possibly more holistic, perspective. Their familiarity with maps over the course of this exercise would boost their confidence when it came to communicating the data (prepared after the mapping) to their peers and other members of the community. Instead of the NGOs sharing their findings, community participation would result in the community discussing these findings amongst themselves, with the NGOs only acting as facilitators for these discussions.

However, the mapping and survey exercises were not as participatory in nature as we had planned them to be. This was a failure of the initial outreach and, subsequently, of the training on mapping and surveys held before the mapping exercise. This was acknowledged by JV, "The mapping could have been more participatory. The willingness is there in the community. If we are unable to bring together community volunteers, we should wait and ready the community for this first."[48]

CfD managed to involve two volunteers from the area. All the other volunteers were from surrounding areas (Danilimda and Khodiyar Nagar). Almost throughout, the volunteers were unsure of the objective of the mapping and surveys, despite repeated trainings and refreshers. This may have been because the training was not able to gauge the capacity of the staff and volunteers and pitch the information to them at the right level of understanding; or, because of the general disinterest and cynicism with which they approached this work. This lack of clarity, in turn, reflected in their demeanour. They would easily get frustrated with people who were not forthcoming with the survey questions and would resort to sweeping generalisations about the area and the community. This attitude was in contradiction with the intended participatory approach. Residents were neither a part of, nor in control of, the process; rather, they ended up being mere subjects to gather information from.

This is what had spurred us to organise the Participatory Planning Workshop in December 2016. Unfortunately, the volunteers from CfD did not attend that workshop. Attending the workshop and the exposure to the positive stories and examples of community action would have helped them develop a more nuanced understanding of the area and challenged their generalisations about its residents.

This is relevant to another problem that repeatedly arose during the pilot, i.e., the scheduling of trainings, workshops, meetings, etc. JV and CfD might have felt obligated to complete each activity within the agreed time and gave us dates and timings that were invariably inconvenient for the community volunteers. For example, the training on mapping and surveys was scheduled with at least 10 days' notice. Yet, most volunteers were recruited on

48 Jeetendra-bhai, a senior staff member of JV, mentioned this in an interview dated January 4, 2017, conducted to collect feedback from JV on the implementation of the project.

the morning of the training with no background information about why they were made to attend such a session. Similarly, the Participatory Planning Workshop on December 6, 2016, was fixed with the consent of both the NGOs, after explaining its purpose and requesting that the volunteers who collected the data be present. But, the workshop was scheduled for the morning of a weekday when most of the volunteers would be in school/college and unable to attend. Conversely, during the Training for Staff for Community Meetings that was scheduled exclusively for the staff of JV, local residents of Bombay Hotel had been invited by the NGO. As a result, the main objective of this meeting, which was to ensure that the staff members had a strong grasp on the maps and the kind of questions to be raised in the community meetings, was not met. Even when this session was organised for the second time in JV's office, the field staff were unaware of, or perhaps unable to articulate, the purpose of the training. There was also an attitude of 'getting things done' with one NGO, which viewed each step as a task, a tick on a checklist. While this ensured that progress was made, and usually within timelines, this was at the cost of participation in the process.

In addition, a few incidents make one question whether it was wise to have allowed children as community volunteers. The mapping exercise brought us in contact with some sections of the community that were either uncomfortable by our presence or openly hostile to us. In these situations, the children were unable to navigate the situation tactfully. To cite an example: We had just been told by a local political worker that no one is to conduct surveys in the area, after which the worker filled up one of the SWM service surveys himself, answering all the questions in the affirmative. Just down the same road, we decided to speak to a woman about the problems she faced with respect to waste disposal. Eventually, she agreed to answer the survey questions, but refused to provide her name. This was not important, but one of the young volunteers told her that it was okay to give names as this political leader had filled the survey as well. The young volunteer, unable to gauge the social and political pressures in the area, thought this would prompt the woman to be more forthcoming. Instead, this made the woman even more diffident and she refused to answer any more questions. Finally, in this area (Faizal Nagar), we were unable to survey even the two respondents per tile as per our initial plan, and it remained under-represented in the analysis.

Community participation in the Participatory Planning Workshop and the subsequent Training for Staff for Community Meetings: The workshop held on December 6, 2016, was a bright spot between the mapping exercise and the period before the community meetings started. The planning of the workshop allowed us to explore Bombay Hotel in a positive light—looking for and documenting positive stories, which helped in reorienting even our attitudes towards the place and the project for the better. CfD and JV were able to bring their field staff and several community leaders to the workshop. CfD volunteers, however, were missing, and their engagement seemed to end with the mapping exercise. The group of participants at the workshop were from different parts of Bombay Hotel and they brought diverse perspectives and understandings of the problems and developments in the area since 1996. The workshop allowed for truly participatory knowledge building and sharing, which was instructive to most participants.

Locating positive stories within the community helped in providing a socio-historical background from the people's perspective. This, in turn, informed the approach to participation. The mapping, surveys, and positive stories, along with the Participatory Planning Workshop, made it evident that people are acutely aware of the various problems in the area, whether it is the general lack of access to basic services or the specific problem of SWM. However, awareness generation was needed in being able to delineate a coherent cause-effect understanding of

the problem of waste management. When the community was asked about the cause for the improper disposal of solid waste in the area, the answers were varied: Some believed it was a result of the failure of the AMC to deliver services, while others pointed to apathy and lack of initiative within the community; some even blamed their political representatives for not taking proactive steps and being more interested in retaining their political positions instead. This was especially evident during the workshop, and it might have had something to do with the fact that those present also represented certain interest groups.

In general, people in Bombay Hotel would come up with generic and, sometimes, uninformed explanations for the SWM problem. The presentation on positive stories from the area and the participatory stakeholder mapping during the Participatory Planning Workshop was important because it informed people about the specifics. The stories were shared organically by the community, after some probing; this proved to be a good way of consolidating information that was already known to the community. Their inputs gradually became less broad and more specific, nuanced, and contextual. The 'timeline' exercise also helped in this respect.

It was found, both over the course of the Participatory Planning Workshop as well as during the training with JV at their information centre in Bombay Hotel on December 22, 2016, that the presence of political representatives prevented the meetings from being truly participatory. While seeking their insights and getting assurances from them in terms of further action was important, it was an impediment to have them present at every meeting at the stage where we were trying to build community interest and the confidence that people have the power to change things for the better. This was especially evident in the initial training for JV staff, where the agenda of the meeting had anyway gotten derailed on account of the sheer number of community members present. Political workers who were present at the meeting would take on a paternalist attitude, while hearing the complaints, which possibly suggested, 'We will get these things done for you!'; whereas, the emphasis of the community meetings should have been on 'What can we, as a community, do for ourselves?'

Participation in the community meetings organised by JV[49]: A challenge of public participation in this case was to ensure that people do not become cynical towards the concept of a local, participatory SWM plan when faced with larger systemic issues such as the Pirana dump. Related to this is the question of how the merits of participation, for its own sake, not just as a skill or tool but as an outcome in itself, can be presented to communities. These were both difficult tasks and we succeeded partly in both.

The community meetings had a rocky start in Citizen Nagar, as the field staff were warming up to the maps and the methodology. But JV conducted 27 meetings across the northern half of Bombay Hotel, covering almost the entire area. A total of 527 people attended these meetings. One of the field staff members who accompanied the team was from the Bombay Hotel area, and her presence made a lot of difference to the number of people who attended the meetings. In one meeting that she could not help with, there was an abysmal turnout of only two people. This was also partly because the neighbourhood was the beneficiary of some direct political patronage and had good access to water and a regular AMC garbage pick-up service. They had no use for a participatory planning process!

A large part of the community meetings was about sharing the data that had been collected by the NGOs in the form of the maps. In our assessment, this was interesting to the community because it demystified maps a little bit. For the community, till now, maps had only been associated with 'cutting'; the meetings organised by JV now presented the area to them through these maps in a friendlier manner.

49 This paper only contains an analysis of the participation in the community meetings held by JV since we could not be present for the community meetings organised by CfD.

In some meetings, there was also appreciation for the fact that the collected data was being brought back to the community. Usually, they did not see the outcome of the surveys done in the area. What we did was a departure from that norm, and it added to the feeling of importance.

The community meetings were sites for a lot of counselling—they were necessarily used as spaces for awareness building on more sustainable SWM practices. The field staff would tell residents that they should not make their children throw the garbage because it was not good for their health; also, if they did so, they would be fined! The areas around the dumpsters were usually filthy, acting as breeding grounds for rats, flies, and mosquitos. And the children were forced to throw the garbage bags from a distance, usually adding to the filth. They were counselled to throw garbage inside the dumpsters and not on the streets or around their homes. The staff also had to explain that requesting the AMC for individual dustbins in each house would not solve the problem, because those dustbins would have to be emptied somewhere. When residents requested that a dumpster be given for their neighbourhood, the staff would ask where they would like it to be placed. This would cause some discussion, with some objecting to the idea of it being close to the houses. Finally, residents requested that a dumpster be placed only in areas where open space was available and where the residents could have control over who used the dumpster.

However, all stakeholders were not engaged in these meetings. For example, the people who ran the tailoring workshops in the area, and threw out all the waste cloth on to the streets and dumped it on vacant plots, were not approached at all. In some meetings, the efforts to ensure that the area was well represented were minimal. In some, there was a high dependence on political party workers, which almost certainly resulted in exclusion: only those residents with whom the party workers were familiar would be called to attend the meeting. Additionally, when helping us organise these meetings, the political party representatives would talk about the public interest litigation pertaining to the closing of Pirana, the city's dumping ground, which had nothing to do with our effort. Not only was this likely to cause confusion, but it would have also jeopardised our efforts if the legal case did not go well for the residents.

Although, in one case, the involvement of the political party representative actually had an inclusive outcome: A small neighbourhood, which had perhaps developed after the boundary of Bombay Hotel was marked in 2015, had been excluded from the survey and had not been accounted for in the community meetings either. The JV staff felt compelled to organise a meeting in that area, on the insistence of the political party representative. Since this area was a gap in our survey, the agenda for this meeting was different from that of the other meetings—this was designed to be more of a focus group discussion to gather data.

Another manner in which the meetings were not participatory was that the field staff would consistently chase away the little children. They did not see it as an opportunity to raise awareness among the children about general hygiene and about the usage of dustbins. For them, the time spent on the children was wasteful, diverting the attention of the adults present.

In all, the meetings were positive because they provided a space for the residents to engage in on the matter of SWM, not just with our teams, but even with each other. This was the first time that the people of the Bombay Hotel area had been given an opportunity such as this to talk about what they expected from the AMC for waste management. This was also the most comfortable they have been with maps, which, until then, had been associated in their minds with evictions and demolitions.

Design Features of Public Participation Policy

Was the process thus far participatory? As described above, the answer is a mixed one. There were many challenges in managing the attitudes of the field staff—in terms of the ability of the NGOs to commit time and resources, negotiating the political dynamics, and including all stakeholders. However, it was possible to navigate most of these challenges with some success.

Is it feasible and desirable to institutionalise such a process? Is 'participation' of the empowering sort that we were trying to attempt here scalable? The short answer to these questions is that it takes a strong intention, determined efforts, and the right resources. It is heartening that we have managed to get this far without devoted resources—a fact which indicates that if the government had had the will to support this project, then (with its resources) a much deeper and more effective participation process could have been evolved.

So, based on our experience in this project, what design features should a successful public participation policy have? Our experiences provide a fresh perspective to the importance of some of the six points discussed in **PART 3:**

Orientation and continuous training for all the staff: This was the first stumbling block that we faced. The restricting mindsets with which the field staff approached the project were not conducive to building a sense of empowerment in the community. The Participatory Planning Workshop was quite impactful in changing attitudes, so an orientation with similar content would have avoided the struggles that we faced in the beginning. Continuous training would have helped in deeply embedding open, inclusive, and participatory attitudes. This was true for the field staff, and it would hold true for officials engaged at all levels throughout the participatory planning process.

Continuous information dissemination: One thing that we felt had been missing from our process was the ability to keep up a programme of continuous information dissemination. Ideally, we would have liked to create permanent spaces within the community for residents to approach us to allow for two-way communication at all times, instead of being limited to a number of community meetings. Such information desks (advertised through posters), displaying the maps and asking important questions on their preferences with regard to waste management or providing vital information, would have also been an interesting way to gauge the interest of the community and to recruit volunteers.

Inclusive of all stakeholders: The word 'inclusive' here refers to not only the poor and disempowered, but to all stakeholders equally. Our plan, at this stage, may not succeed because it excludes a large part of the waste generators—for example, people working in the tailoring industry in the area; unless we consult them on their needs related to waste management and weave these into our plan, Bombay Hotel is not likely to look visibly cleaner, despite all other components of the SWM plan having been implemented faithfully.

Accountability: Just as the government should be accountable to citizens, NGOs and actors such as CUE should also be accountable. Once such a process is commenced, residents give their time to the process and are promised some outputs. This should not be taken lightly. In April 2017[50], we were at a huge risk of having invested a lot of time and effort—not just our own, but also of the community—without any tangible output. That would have left the community even more cynical than when we had started the project. It was the question of accountability which ensured that we did not stop work on the project.
While no system for accountability had been conceived, all three organisations involved held each other accountable, at least on the question of whether we should proceed, given the difficulties of limited resources.

50 One of the NGOs was on the brink of pulling out in the middle of the project due to a lack human and financial resources. Alternative arrangements were made for resources that allowed their continued participation.

Community inputs: The incident from the community meetings where residents requested individual dustbins in households tempered our idealism regarding the acceptance of community inputs. The process should allow for some level of counselling (such as in this case of sustainable waste management practices to explain to residents why their request for individual dustbins would not solve their problem). The content of such counselling should be determined by experts in the field. Feasibility and sustainability should ideally be the yardsticks for acceptance of community inputs. If stakeholders were provided the funds to engage an expert or advisor, it would ensure that inputs were in their best interests.

In addition to the above design features are the following lessons that we learnt from our experiences:

Importance of local networks: For a truly participatory planning process, at least a part of the staff must be hired locally to help with ground-level organisation and outreach. The presence of a local among the field staff anchoring the community meetings would have made a huge difference to the residents' reception of the project and their interest in it. If the area is already organised, informally even, in some manner, those networks must be tapped into for information dissemination. The policy should then include a requirement for hiring staff locally for each area.

Continuous productive engagement: This is necessary for the community as well as for the facilitators to remain in touch with the pulse of the community. Our long gaps between the various engagements meant that much had changed in the interim. It also justified the cynicism that we were met with in October 2015, when, in response to a question from a resident, we had said that we would be holding community meetings to share the data in early December 2015. We ended up doing this only in February 2016, and in the area of the resident in question, the meetings had not been held till the first week of May 2016. Residents lose interest, commitment, and faith when continuous engagement is missing.

Cognisance of the role of the negotiator amidst competing interests: This became prominent during the community meetings held to gather inputs for the SWM plan, especially in relation to where the dumpsters must be placed. As facilitators, we had to be careful in the meetings to ensure that the demands of one group did not impinge on the rights of, or inconvenience, other groups. One must be aware of this role and be trained to play it with fairness and equity.

Experience from this pilot shows that at a truly decentralised level, it is possible for the government to enable empowering participation through these policy features. What is required is only the will and intention to enable this empowerment. ◆

Closing Note

This case study was written in May 2017 when the process for the preparation of a participatory SWM plan for Bombay Hotel was still under way. The case study follows the process of engagement with the community till March 2017.

Postscript (April 2018)

The SWM plan for Bombay Hotel was prepared and presented to a meeting of community leaders in November 2017. Based on their inputs, some changes were proposed and a final community SWM plan was prepared. This was modified to streamline the logistics of waste collection. Both plans have been handed over to JV and CfD to be presented to the AMC and to pursue its implementation.

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