

REPORT ON SLUM VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Background

A study on the slums in Periyanaickenpalayam (PNP) & Narasimhanaickenpalayam (NNP) in Coimbatore was done with a view to ascertain vulnerable slums in both the Town panchayats (TPs) based on the aspects of vulnerability at household level, ward level and slum level for optimal use of available resources based on its level of priority. This profound study was processed with certain identified parameters such as authorization status, location, migration status, NGOs/CBOs operating for developmental support, condition of approach road to the slum, housing, basic amenities, health care facilities, etc. There are about 11 slums existing in Periyanaickenpalayam and Narashimanaickenpalayam, among them the most vulnerable, moderate and least vulnerable will be categorized based on the assessment. Thus this study brings out the significant needs of the slum especially those factors affecting the sanitation and health scenario, which has to be met through a focused intervention.

Aims

- To understand the existing scenario and the relevant vulnerability determinants of the slum.
- To intervene in the identified topmost vulnerable slum on implementing the status of full cycle sanitation

Methodology

The primary data was collected with the help of a tool called Slum Vulnerability Assessment. It is in the form of a questionnaire with 22 indicators that was discussed (Focus Group Discussion) and observed among the community members. The information was also verified from the existing secondary resources like recent surveys of City Corporation. The scoring for each indicator was acquired with the help of assessment criteria. Each indicator has a scoring scale from 0 to 2, representing its

status where “0” stands for least vulnerable, 1 stands for moderately vulnerable and “2” stands for extremely vulnerable.

The cumulative score is calculated and represented through a colour coding accordingly,

- Cumulative score between 0 – 15 represents least vulnerable category indicated with green colour coding
- Cumulative score between 16 – 30 represents moderately vulnerable category indicated with yellow colour coding
- Cumulative score between 31 – 42 represents extremely vulnerable category indicated with red colour coding

Each slum in the two town panchayats (PNP and NNP), 3 slums in PNP and 8 slums in NNP were likely to be selected for the vulnerability assessment study. The methodology that was used to implement the slum vulnerability assessment tool is a qualitative research component called Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

Findings

- a) Slum status:** Slums in both the TP's are registered under the Slum Clearance Board still there are certain constraints for the slum dwellers in subject of benefiting the grants sanctioned by the government. Some of them are victims as they aren't aware about the schemes that are available for them. Of all the slums in the two TPs, Arijana Colony and Balavinaigar Nagar slums are seemed to have BPL households. The BPL household dwellers of Balavinaigar Nagar don't have a BPL card to attain benefits. Most of the slums dwellers in the two TPs dwell in households which are fairly pakka. Balavinaigar Nagar slum which is a notified slum is in extremely vulnerable state on account of its sanitation scenario as it doesn't have a drainage provision. About 20% of the dwellers in Pudhupalayam and MGR Nagar (union road South) don't have identity proofs documents.
- b) Location of the slum and housing:** Pudhupalayam, Arijana Colony, Union Road (south) and Anna Nagar are prone to hazardous exposures as it is located either near drains, roadside, river or railway track. Arijana Colony located adjacent to an open drain is more likely to have poor health indicators. Out of the

other slums Vivekanandhapuram has inadequate housing in terms of overcrowding with a population about 748 which leads to easy spread of communicable diseases and also people have mentioned there is a prevalence of diarrhea. Except Anna Nagar and Balavinaigar Nagar all the other slum dwellers opened up about the common disease that affect them - cold, fever, stomach ache and seasonal disorders.

c) Basic services (water supply, drainage, toilet, electricity): For the water source all the slum dwellers are depending on the community based common pipe water connection. Balavinaigar Nagar doesn't have drainage facility. In rest of the slums the drainage has no concrete structure and are maintained inadequately. Balavinaigar Nagar, Muraugan Nagar, Union Road (south) and Kuppuchipalayam are the slums which don't have toilet facility. All the other slums households depend on community/shared toilets. There is no constraint for electricity in any of the slums in the two TPs.

d) Nature of occupation/ employment: Men in the slum are mostly engaged with employments as construction workers, painters, drivers, sanitary workers, shopkeepers and private regular job holders. Whereas, women practice construction work and work as housemaids. Those who work as housemaids earn a better amount of Rs. 2000 per month which is practiced more among the women in Balavinaigar Nagar. A majority of the occupation setting in most of the slums in the two TPs is construction work. Daily wage earned by Men is Rs. 700 and women are about Rs. 300 – 400.

e) Access to health services: Most of the slums are not proposed to regular outreach services either by Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANW) or Anganwadi Workers (AWW). Excluding Anna Nagar, Balavinaigar Nagar and MGR Nagar (Union Road, south) all the slums benefit outreach activities conducted by ANM once in a month. Ohm shakthi nagar, Arijana colony and Vivekanandhapuram have a (Public) primary health care facility that is easily accessible, not more than 1 km from the slum. Sometimes for minor illness the people from these slums also prefer going to private qualified providers within or outside the slum. Lack of acceptability is the reason captured from most of the slum dwellers for not using the PHC facility which is available within the slum. For the slums which don't

have PHC facility inside the slum, the dwellers travel more than 2 km to seek public health facility. Anna nagar, Viveganandhapuram and Ohm shakthi nagar has functional Anganwadi centre under Integrated Child Development scheme within the slum in half kilometer distance.

- f) Education:** MGR nagar (Union road, south), pudhupalayam, Ambedkar nagar are moderately vulnerable in education, but people still earn a living working on un-skilled or semi-skilled jobs. Also the percentage of BPL household is nil or below 10 % in all the slums except balavinaigar nagar and Arijana colony (which has 11-49% BPL households). There is no adversity of child labor in any of the assessed slums. Children are encouraged to go to school even if the parents are less educated or illiterate. There are 1-2 higher secondary schools within 2 km radius from all the slums except Murugan nagar and MGR nagar (Union road, south). Murugan nagar has a high school within 2 km radius while the children from MGR nagar (Union road, south) have to travel more than 2 km distance to approach a public school.
- g) Gender status:** In slums like Vivekanandhapuram, Murugan nagar, MGR nagar(Union road, south), pudhupalayam, balavinaigar slum, Anna nagar and Arijana colony the percentage of female literacy rate is higher than the male. There are one or more active self-help groups in all the assessed slums who work on promoting livelihood. It is obvious that the female slum dwellers are the active participants in the community. Women are encouraged to go to work except in few households who have young children to be taken care of. There is gender equality in almost all the slums as women are given opportunities to make decisions regardless of gender.
- h) Social capital:** When it comes to caste majority, people dwelling in all the 11 slum are homogenous, especially those in slums such as Balavinaigar nagar, pudhupalayam and Rakkipalayam. There is only a slight variance in ethnic group in other slums.
- i) Existence of Developmental organization and activities:** Kuppuchipalayam slum has experienced an intervention from a welfare program called JC Nalla Sangam that had worked for promoting livelihood. Other than

that none of the slums have experienced intervention from any of the NGO/ Civil Society Organizations.

Through the assessment process the result derived shows that on the whole none of the slums have acquired the status - most vulnerable. Slums such as MGR Nagar (Union road south), Pudhupalayam, Balavinaigar Nagar seemed to be moderately vulnerable. Kuppuchipalayam, Anna nagar, Rakkipalyam slums are on the borderline of attaining moderate vulnerability.

Discussion

Access to health service is considered to be a necessitating obligation to escape the status of vulnerability. Slums such as MGR nagar (Union road, south), Anna nagar, Murugan nagar, Rakkipalayam, Pudhupalayam, Balavinaigar nagar seek private qualified provider within/ outside slum (or) have to travel more than 2 km away from the slum to seek a public health facility as they don't have primary health care facilities within the slum. Residents in Kuppuchipalayam and Ambedkar nagar slum seek primary health care services from the public health facility which is within half a km distance. Ohm shakthi nagar has a primary health care facility within the slum but still in certain cases the dwellers take treatment from the public facility which is more than 2 km away from the slum.

The most vulnerable slums in the circumstance of sanitation are Kuppuchipalayam, Murugan nagar, MGR nagar (Union road south) and Balavinaigar nagar where the people don't have an access to toilet leading to an influence that has a direct impact on the health status of the community. In Balavinaigar nagar the TP constructed a community toilet between the financial years 2013 to 2014 which is not yet declared, has various gaps and issues behind it. Necessary step has to be taken to trigger the dwellers by implementing community led total sanitation methodology to use the existing community toilet or to build IHHL through SBM. Balavinaigar nagar and Arijana colony has households (11-49%) below the poverty line, where the community toilet will

probably be used by the dwellers (especially BPL households) rather than building an individual household toilet.

The socioeconomic status of the slum dwellers is significantly affected by the factor of alcoholism/any other substance abuse. In every assessed slum, not less than 70% of adults involve in alcoholism. In slums like Arijana colony and Vivekanandhapuram even the women especially the old aged womankind indulge alcoholism.

Conclusion

The slum dwellers have to realize they are responsible for the consequences of their health hazards due to inadequate sanitation. More frequently the children below 5 years who are more prone to diseases suffer the consequences. For the slums that don't have any outreach services the dwellers have to take an initiative to get aware and benefit of the health programs.

If the government takes necessary action to provide sanitation facility for those needy slums, the dwellers have to make use of it purposefully without any exploitation. The slums which are found to be moderately vulnerable need to have a long-term target intervention to condense the scenario of vulnerability. Thus this assessment will be very much helpful to focus the neediest.