

# Resettled life, Unsettled state of Education!



*A study on the impact of resettlement on continuity  
of education in Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar*

# Introduction:

Resettlement of the poor from the centre of the city to the outskirts impacts not only residents' livelihoods and access to municipal services but also children's education.

Previous reports argue that resettlement of families in colonies such as Kannagi Nagar and Semmencherry disrupt children's education. For instance, a study by Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN) and Information and Resource Centre for the Deprived Urban Communities (IRCDUC) found that resettlement to Kannagi Nagar was one of the reasons why 35% of 413 children between the ages of 5-18 years dropped out of school. These findings are echoed in other reports by the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and Praxis (Annexure 1).

After the floods in Chennai in November and December 2015, the Tamil Nadu state government started evicting families living on river banks and resettling them in its colonies in Ezhil Nagar and Perumbakkam. Since these evictions are a reaction to the floods, they have been sudden and unplanned. As a result, the continuity of children's education is likely to get disrupted, and this prompted us to undertake this study.

This exploratory study attempts to investigate the educational status of school-going children in Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar, both newly constructed and occupied resettlement sites. The question that animates this study is: to what extent does the resettlement of a family impact the continuity of a child's school education?

The study finds that 14% of 135 school-going children in slums have stopped going to school after shifting to the resettlement colony. Also, more than half of 115 school-going children in resettlement colonies are still going to the school that they were attending before they relocated to Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar. Although parents of children from resettlement colonies and non-profits in the city have been demanding adequate and quality education infrastructure in resettlement colonies, our study finds that this infrastructure has not been provided.

## About the resettlement colonies:

Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar in Okkiyam Thoraipakkam are resettlement colonies located at the outskirts of the city. Both colonies were constructed in 2013. According to the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board's (TNSCB) policy documents, the tenements were constructed to resettle slum families living in "objectionable areas".

Ezhil Nagar has 6,000 tenements built by TNSCB at a cost of Rs. 228.60 crore under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). Tsunami Nagar has 2,048 tenements built by TNSCB under World Bank supported Emergency Tsunami Reconstruction Project at a cost of Rs. 106.11 crore. The size of each house in the tenements measures between 250-357 sq feet according to government [documents](#). A [report](#) published by non-profit CAG reveals that 2,650 of the tenements in Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Colony were occupied by May 2015. The state government of Tamil Nadu is currently allotting the remaining tenements in Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar to families affected by the Chennai floods of December 2015.

**Table 1 : List of Projects under which people were relocated to Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar**

Resettlement Colony Name	Name of Project	Year	Number of tenements allotted (Approx)	Source
Ezhil Nagar	Metro Rail Project and Integrated Storm Water Drain Project	Sep-09	200	Eviction Mapping conducted by Transparent Cities Network In July 2015 <sup>1</sup>
Ezhil Nagar	Integrated Storm Water Drain Project	Dec-14	400	Eviction Mapping conducted by Transparent Cities Network In July 2015
Ezhil Nagar	Cooum River Restoration Project	May-15	200	Eviction Mapping conducted by Transparent Cities Network In July 2015
Tsunami Nagar	Marina Loop Road Project	May-15	1,300	Eviction Mapping conducted by Transparent Cities Network In July 2015
Ezhil Nagar	People affected by floods in Chennai during 30th Nov to 7th Dec	Jan-16	900	<a href="http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/More-Than-900-Slum-Dwellers-Get-New-Home/2016/01/05/article3212371.ece">http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/chennai/More-Than-900-Slum-Dwellers-Get-New-Home/2016/01/05/article3212371.ece</a>

An earlier fact finding [study](#) on infrastructure and services at Ezhil Nagar by Transparent Cities Network in October 2015 revealed that there was only one government primary school from class 1-5 functioning in Ezhil Nagar and there was

<sup>1</sup> Transparent Cities Network's eviction mapping [study](#), conducted in July 2015 leveraged informally held information from activists and community based organisations to enumerate slum evictions in Chennai between 2005 and 2015.

not a single secondary or higher secondary school in the area. The study revealed that there was a shortage of teachers and classrooms. As a result, students of the first and second grades studied in the same classroom and were taught by the same teacher. Also, the school lacked toilet and water facilities, and students were made to sit on the floor due to the lack of furniture.

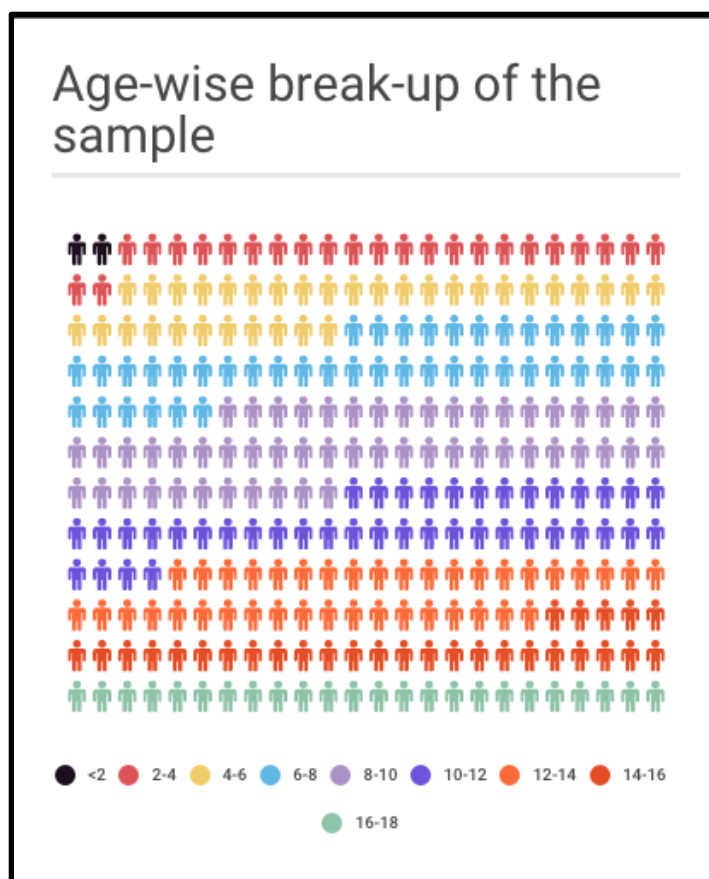
## **Methodology:**

Four of our researchers visited Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar on three days: 19, 20, and 21 January 2016. Due to time and resource constraints, we used convenience sampling as our sampling strategy, one that involves selecting respondents who were easiest to reach.

The survey was designed to assess whether resettlement had an impact on a child's education and we administered it to 147 respondents from 75 households. In our sample, 82% of our 147 respondents were parents. When the parent was absent, we spoke to another family member who had knowledge of the child's education. In six instances, we spoke to a child. We asked the child about his/her educational status, and also about the educational status of his/her siblings.

Out of the sample of 147 children, 58 are boys with an average age of 10 and 51 are girls with an average age of 9. We did not collect data on the sex of 38 children because a question on sex break-up was introduced after the first day of survey.

An age-wise break-up reveals that the distribution of the sample is mixed. The largest group sampled was only 27 percent of the total sample, and were between 8-10 years of age.



The 75 families we spoke with in Ezhil Nagar originally lived in areas such as Egmore; Greenways Road; Indira Nagar; Jafferkhanpet; Kannagi Nagar; Kellys; Kottivakkam; Mannadi; Nandambakkam; Parrys; Saidapet; Santhome; Teynampet; Velachery; Vyasarpadi and Walltax Road.

Most families (54) were evicted from Royapuram zone, an administrative division in the north of the city, and the least number of families were evicted from zones such as Anna Nagar in the west, and Alandur and Perungudi in the south of the city. An interactive map showing the families' area of residence before resettlement can be found [here](#). Families we spoke to had moved to Ezhil Nagar between 2-3 days and 1-24 months ago.

Our study has several limitations. For one, we used convenience sampling, and as a result our sample is not representative of the population living at Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar. A systematic sampling strategy, that involves sub-grouping respondents into block or area of original residence, would have yielded data that can be easily generalised to the population at the resettlement colonies. Secondly, our survey was conducted at a time when people were shifting into their tenements at Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar. Many families we spoke to were in the process of shifting, and had not thought about their child's education.

Thirdly, most of our interviews were with parents. Teachers, who could have given us information on the psychological effects of resettlement, and students, who could have given us information on whether it affected their academic performance, are under-represented in our study. Finally, we did not survey the schools in the area because many teachers refused to speak with us without specific instruction from the state government's Department of Education. As a result, we could not capture information on the availability and adequacy of infrastructure and the quality of education post-resettlement. Had we been able to conduct a school survey, we could have assessed what facilities the government has provided for the colony.

## Findings:

### Summary statistics

#### Out of total of 147 children surveyed,

- In slums, 135 of them went to school and 12 did not.
- Of 12 who did not go to school in the slum, 11 were too young to attend school, according to their parents. One child was found to be uneducated, and did not attend school both in the slum and the resettlement colony.
- Out of 11 who were too young to attend school in the slums, 8 are presently attending school in Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar.
- In Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar, 123 children went to school and 22 did not. We do not have information on the education status of two children.

**Table 2: Summary data of sample**

	Going to School	Not going to School	No Information	Total number of children surveyed
In Slums	135	12	0	147
In Ezhil Nagar and Perumbakkam	123	22	2	147

### Status of Education

#### **15% (20/135) of 135 school-going children in slums have stopped going to school after shifting to the resettlement colony.**

Of the 20 children who have stopped going to school, 70% (14/20) plan to enroll in school in the future. 12 of these children have stopped going to school because their families moved into the colony only up to three months before the survey. The remaining two children, originally from and studying in Jafferkhanpet, moved into the

colony nine months before the survey, but have still not been admitted in school for unknown reasons.

Two of the 20 children, siblings originally from Pudupet, moved into the colony 7 years ago but lost all their documents in a fire accident. Their mother said that she was unable to secure admission in any school without these documents.

**Almost one-fourth (8/38) of the children who shifted to the resettlement colony less than a month before the survey, do not go to school.** These children are from Saidapet, a place badly affected by the floods in November and December 2015. These children do not go to school because their families have just moved in and do not have information on schools nearby and admission procedures.

## Continuity of Education

**There is only one government upper primary school (up till Class 8) in Ezhil Nagar and no school in Tsunami Nagar. Classes 6-8 were added to the Ezhil Nagar government school in November 2015.**

**Although the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board conducted several enrollment camps to enroll children in schools after the floods, interviews with parents revealed that many were not aware of it.**

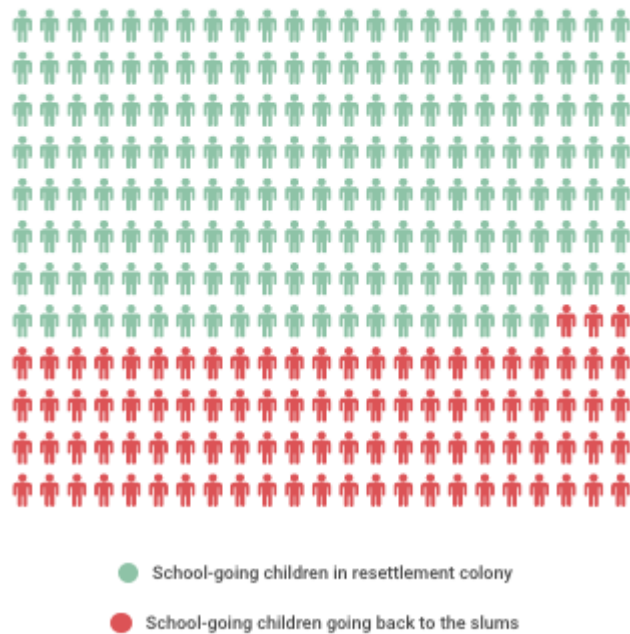
**Of the 115 children who went to school in both slums and resettlement colonies, more than half (62%, 60/115) are still going to the school that they were attending before they relocated to Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar.** Of the 123 school-going children in resettlement colonies, 8 did not attend school in slums, and started attending school only when they moved to the resettlement colony. Only 115 students went to school both in slums and in the resettlement colony.

**In fact, more than half (55%; 10/18) of the children who are in classes 9-12 go back to schools that they were going to before resettlement.**

There is only one government school, at Kannagi Nagar, that has offers classes 9-12. From our interviews we learnt that parents prefer sending their children to the school they were attending for a variety of reasons. For one, parents with children in class 9-12 revealed that they did not want to pull their children out of school since they had to take government public exams. They felt that changing schools in these years would adversely affect academic performance. One respondent revealed that she preferred to send her child to a girls-only school, and since this type of school was not available in the area, she sent her child back to the slum for school.



## Proportion of Children going back to the schools they were attending before relocation



### Type of School

**Of our sample of 147, 123 went to school in the resettlement colony. 33% of these school-going children attend government schools in Ezhil Nagar and Kannagi Nagar.**

Parents did not seem to have a problem with getting admission into these schools. In fact, two parents who shifted to Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar in January 2016, got their children enrolled into government schools during a camp organised by the TNSCB.

What parents did complain about was the quality of school infrastructure and teaching. Several parents complained about toilet and water facilities in these schools. One mother originally from Wall Tax road, near Central Station said that the Ezhil Nagar government school organised water cans and toilet facilities only after repeated complaints from parents. One parent from Teynampet said her child came back home to use the toilet, as the one in the Ezhil Nagar school was poorly maintained.



Some parents complained about the quality of teaching in the schools at Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar. One parent originally from Pudupet said she had taken her son out of the school in Kannagi Nagar because the teacher did not monitor academic performance. Another, originally from Wall Tax road said that teacher absenteeism was common.

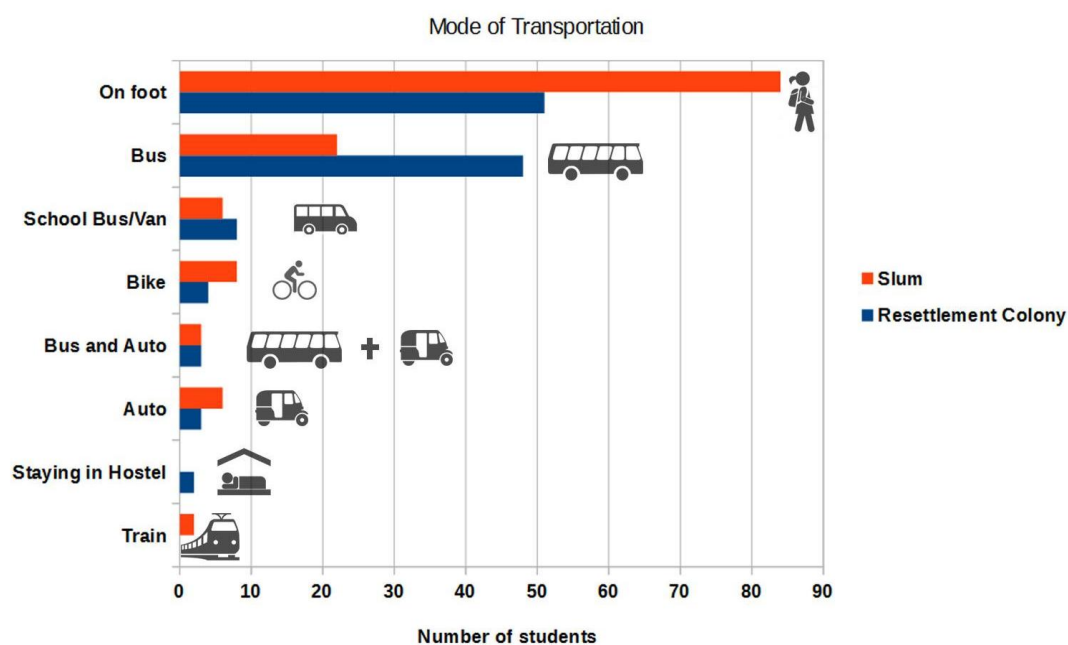
**Of the 123 school-going children in the resettlement colony, 7 are attending private schools near Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar.** Discussion with these parents revealed that the quality of education was better in private schools. One resident, originally from Santhome, had admitted his child into a private school. He preferred private over government schools because “the coaching in the school is good. There is a degree of neatness in the school and everybody has to wear uniforms”. Even residents who had not yet admitted their children in schools seemed to prefer private schools over government schools. For instance, a resident originally from Saidapet, who had not yet admitted his child in school said “I cannot afford a private school but I feel quality is better in private schools”.

### Mode of Transport

**Before resettlement, 62% (84/135) of 135 school-going students were walking to school.** Interviews with parents revealed that these schools were within walking distance of their slum settlement. Only 19% (26/135) of the students took a school transportation or government bus.

**In the resettlement colony, 43% (53/123) of 123 school-going students went to school by bus and 41% (51/123) went to school on foot.** Our interviews with parents revealed that the children who go back to schools in the slums, spend a large part of their day (at least four hours) commuting to and from their schools. They revealed that children had to travel in crowded buses. They also said that although there are several Deluxe and Express buses, these are not affordable.

**33 students who went to school on foot are using buses or vans to go to their schools after shifting to Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar, indicating that schools are more difficult and expensive to access in the resettlement colony.**



## Recommendations:

### Status of Education

- In the absence of studies conducted on the state and sufficiency of infrastructure of schools in the resettlement colony the government should set up a committee consisting of academicians, researchers, civil society organizations and community members to assess and report on the same and prepare a roadmap for improvement. The committee should then monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the report to ensure that appropriate and timely action is taken.
- The Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) and Corporation of Chennai should disseminate information and organise outreach activities to inform families about enrollment camps, admission procedures and facilities in schools in and around Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar. This will help families take early and informed decisions on their child's education.

### Continuity of Education

- The government should open more primary, high schools and higher secondary schools in the area so that the child can continue his/her education in the resettlement colony. While the norms specify that there should be 1 primary

school for a population of 300 and 1 upper primary school for a population of 500, there is only 1 upper primary school functioning at Ezhil Nagar catering to both Ezhil Nagar and Tsunami Nagar with a population of 2650 households. Tsunami Nagar does not have any schools.

### Mode of Transport

- The government should provide adequate and free transportation facilities including special buses for the children in the early hours and evenings until adequate educational facilities are created in the resettlement colonies.

## Annexure 1: Review of literature on the impact of resettlement on education

Title of Publication	Year of Publication	Information of Education	Link
Forced to the Fringes, Disasters of Resettlement in India, Kannagi Nagar Chennai, study conducted by HLRN and IRCDUC	2014	“Thirteen percent of children in the age group of 6-14 years are out of school and 35% of the children in the age group of 15-18 years are school dropouts.”	<a href="http://www.hic-sarp.org/documents/Kannagi_Nagar_Report_2.pdf">http://www.hic-sarp.org/documents/Kannagi_Nagar_Report_2.pdf</a>
Forced to the Fringes, Disasters of Resettlement in India, Kannagi Nagar Chennai, study conducted by HLRN and IRCDUC	2014	“Resettlement has been the major reason for 35% of children in the age group of 15-18 years to drop out of school. According to the study, 42% of children are forced to commute long distances by bus to their schools, which are located close to their original sites of habitation in the city”. The same report has given various set of recommendations to different departments to expedite the process of ensuring quality education to the children in Kannagi Nagar.”	<a href="http://www.hic-sarp.org/documents/Kannagi_Nagar_Report_2.pdf">http://www.hic-sarp.org/documents/Kannagi_Nagar_Report_2.pdf</a>
Report of PUCL Fact Finding Team on Forced Eviction and Rehabilitation of Slum	2011	“Children have dropped out of school because of evictions in the mid academic year.”	<a href="http://www.ids-uva.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/7-PUCL-Report.pdf">http://www.ids-uva.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/7-PUCL-Report.pdf</a>

Dwellers in Chennai			
		<p>“Though it is not a very common practice, some families resort to stopping their young girls from going to school to fetch water so that other family members can go to work.”</p> <p>One of the reasons for children dropping out or going back to the schools in the original settlement is the inadequate facilities in the resettlement site.</p>	<a href="http://www.ids-uva.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/7-PUCL-Report.pdf">http://www.ids-uva.nl/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/7-PUCL-Report.pdf</a>
Eviction, Housing and Livelihood in Chennai By V. Francis Adaikalam	2010	This study reveals that due to eviction without due notice, many children dropped out of school.	<a href="http://www.mcrg.ac.in/rw%20files/RW36/2.Francis.pdf">http://www.mcrg.ac.in/rw%20files/RW36/2.Francis.pdf</a>
Fourth publication of the Voice for Change, Newsletter by Praxis Publication	2015	Children from Kannagi Nagar said that special bus services are needed to help them go to school during the peak hours. This would help reduce their stress.	<a href="http://www.praxisindia.org/user_praxis/file/Uploads%20Studies/Voice%20for%20Change%20Urban%20Poor%20Children%20Redefining%20Safe%20Spaces.pdf">http://www.praxisindia.org/user_praxis/file/Uploads%20Studies/Voice%20for%20Change%20Urban%20Poor%20Children%20Redefining%20Safe%20Spaces.pdf</a>

## Annexure 2: Map showing the original residence of sample

