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JANAAGRAHA
JANAAGRAHA CENTRE FOR CITIZENSHIP & DEMOCRACY

Policing
in Bengaluru
during the COVID-19
pandemic

December 2020

![Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship & Democracy]

JANAAGRAHA CENTRE FOR CITIZENSHIP & DEMOCRACY

ABOUT JANAAGRAHA

Janaagraha is a non-profit trust working towards the mission of transforming quality of life in India's cities and towns. It works with citizens to catalyse active citizenship in city neighbourhoods and with governments to institute reforms to city governance (what we call "city-systems"). Civic Learning, Civic Participation and Advocacy and Reforms are Janaagraha's three major strands of work to accomplish its mission

Research Team

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the fore the huge gaps in the capacity of Indian cities' administration to address the challenges that such a crisis brings. The Police Department in Bengaluru, as in many other cities across India, has stepped in to help with many COVID-19 related response tasks. Through much of this work they have worked with the Community Policing model and engaged with citizen volunteers at scale.

In all of this, the police are essentially working in areas for which they have received no prior training or capacity building given what we are dealing with is a large-scale health issue and not a law and order problem per se. India's cities have borne witness to both negative and positive media portrayals of the police during this time while anecdotally in Bengaluru for example, the feedback from citizens on the police in this time has been positive.

The aim of this work was to systematically research and create an evidence-based picture of policing during the time of COVID-19 from the perspective of citizens, police and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Bengaluru. In particular, the research aimed to understand what worked well and what could be improved with regards to communication and partnerships to work together, by these different stakeholders, on key issues during the pandemic. This was done with a view to further such partnerships and capitalise on learnings with regards to behaviour, resilience, engagement and commitment from the police which could become the focus of training points as we move forward, whether in crisis or not.

METHODOLOGY

Surveys were undertaken with the three stakeholder groups:
- 525 citizens of Bengaluru/citizens in Bengaluru during the pandemic were surveyed through an online survey. Citizens were of a range of ages, genders and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Qualitative interviews were done face-to-face with 24 police personnel of a range of ranks from 24 police stations across the city.
- 14 citizens, affiliated with CSOs in Bengaluru or citizen volunteers, completed an online survey.

FINDINGS

The overwhelming sentiment arising out of this research is a fundamental positive shift in how the police and policing in Bengaluru are perceived, since the pandemic has hit. This is particularly so from citizens - as reported by they themselves and by police in their reflections on how citizens see them. Citizens feel there are more police on the streets, they feel safer and overall, they feel the police are doing a good job during the pandemic. All while the citizens are very aware of the additional roles and responsibilities the police have had during the pandemic and the challenges this has led to.

It appears that increased and effective engagement between the police, citizens and communities has been central to the shift, aided at times by technology. The engagements include positive and helpful police and a greater understanding between both stakeholders. Citizen volunteers and NGOs, working in partnership with the police, have also been instrumental in this, embodying the community policing philosophy and practise which has been growing in the Bengaluru police since 2013. Indeed, citizens who approached the police or who engaged with a volunteer during the pandemic were overwhelmingly more likely to feel the police are doing a good job than those who hadn't interacted in this way.

The police themselves noted more engagements with citizens, particularly communities such as women, migrant labourers and the elderly along with the benefits of extensive use of citizen volunteers as well as NGOs to support their work. All while navigating the challenges of manpower, longer hours, judging citizen sincerity, navigating rules, regulations and exceptions as well as ensuring their own mental and physical wellbeing. Police noted, however, that citizens gained a great understanding of the police challenges during the pandemic which they felt has helped shift the perception. Maintaining this level of community engagement appears critical to sustaining these improved relations. Indeed, this is also how CSOs perceive longer-term partnerships working with the police, with they themselves facilitating these engagements.

NEXT STEPS

The police can consider reenergising the Community Policing program and the Area Suraksha Mitra (citizen volunteer) decentralized police station support and with a more diverse range of community representation within the volunteer base. In doing so, the police can capitalise on the positive behaviours and engagements of both the police and citizens as well as on social media and other communication tools and apps which have seen increased use during the pandemic. This would help to ensure:
- A continued and sustained police presence on the ground.
- Sustained, deeper and positive engagements with all citizens in hyper-local contexts, both directly and through citizen volunteers/CSOs.
- Targeted and effective engagements with specific communities like women, the elderly, the urban poor, migrant labourers etc.

All of which would help manpower (and indeed, promote better recognition of citizen volunteers in the community), help to document and identify communities, understand their changing needs and concerns, share up-to-date information (both ways), ensure police presence and availability, build trust, build awareness of crimes and thereby improve responses and engagements across all policing matters whether in times of crisis or not.

In addition to training and emphasis on community policing, additional focus on preparedness for crises can include preparation of guidelines/SOPs and documents on specific, vulnerable communities, essential items, exceptional circumstances and response approaches. All while continuing to maintain focus on the physical and mental wellbeing of the police personnel.

01.
BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the fore the huge gaps in the capacity of Indian cities' administration to address the challenges that such a crisis brings. Even as city governments are stretching themselves to meet the demands of what is a global situation not faced by any country in modern history, the police across urban centres have been brought in to play a role they have hitherto been unexposed to.

The Police Department in Bengaluru, as in many other cities across India, has stepped in to help with many COVID-19 related response tasks. This includes monitoring quarantined patients, assisting in patient transport to hospitals and treatment centres, supplying food and relief material, supporting migrant travel to hometowns. Through much of this work they have worked with the Community Policing model and engaged with citizen volunteers at scale. Furthermore, the police are monitoring lockdown and COVID-19-related rule adherence and attend to violations of the same with the required diligence and seriousness characteristic of the situation.

In all of this, the police are essentially working in areas for which they have received no prior training or capacity building given what we are dealing with is a large-scale health issue and not a law and order problem per se. While lockdowns and curfews for political and social unrest are common place in India and the democratic context, the intensity, duration, and extent of what we are now experiencing is far wider and greater than what has previously been the case. Furthermore, the impact of these rules and regulations for COVID-19 have a far deeper, and in most cases negative, impact on the functioning of citizens in their everyday lives and livelihoods. The latter bringing much more civic unrest than perhaps experienced before.

While the police may have been seen as high-handed and aggressive in some cities and towns, the general feeling in Bengaluru, picked up anecdotally from citizens, has been positive with regards to the work the police department are doing around COVID-19. There is suggestion that citizens of the city are finding the police there to be a reliable support system, helping affected citizens find succour and support in managing the ill effects of the pandemic. This, despite the fact that many police officers across the ranks have tested COVID-19 positive, highlighting the dangers of working in the frontline. It is important therefore, to understand any possible discrepancies between citizens' perceptions of policing during this time and some of the more negative media portrayals.

The aim of this work therefore, was to systematically research and create an evidence-based picture of policing during the time of COVID-19 from the perspective of citizens, police and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Bengaluru. In particular, the research aimed to understand what worked well and what could be improved with regards to communication and partnerships to work together, by these different stakeholders, on key issues during the pandemic. This was done with a view to further such partnerships and capitalise on learnings with regards to behaviour, resilience, engagement and commitment from the police which could become the focus of training points as we move forward, whether in crisis or not.
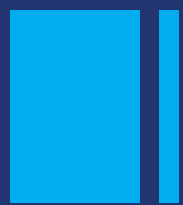
02.
RESEARCH
OBJECTIVES

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research were to build up a picture of policing during the COVID-19 pandemic from the angle of three stakeholder groups with regards to a range of things for each group as below:

1. **From citizens of Bengaluru and citizens in Bengaluru during any part of the pandemic**
   - Familiarity and use of initiatives started by the police.
   - Perceptions of the impact/usefulness of the initiatives above.
   - Understanding of/familiarity with, the police's additional roles and responsibilities during the pandemic.
   - Interactions with the police related to the pandemic (including any volunteering activities).
   - Perceptions of effectiveness of the above interactions – good practice examples/suggestions for improvement.
   - Perceptions of safety and security overall during the pandemic.
   - Perceptions of police during the pandemic overall.

2. **From the Bengaluru City Police**
   - The training gaps perceived in executing additional roles and responsibilities taken on during the COVID-19 pandemic.
   - What initiatives have been instigated by the police to help manage the pandemic, e.g. social media campaigns, communication tools, harnessing of citizen volunteers, etc.
   - Whether crime patterns have changed/crime has increased.
     » If so, in what way/what crimes.
     » How the police response had changed accordingly.
   - Challenges with all the above, e.g. the additional roles and responsibilities, initiatives, engagements with citizens and any change in crime patterns.
   - Whether they feel public perception of the police has changed.
     » If so, in what way – positively/negatively.
   - Best practise examples and recommendations arising out of all of the above, for example, resource allocation, crime response, engagement with citizens.
     » With regard to everyday, 'normal' policing.
     » With regard to future preparedness for crises such as this one.

3. **From Civil Society Organisations Working in Bengaluru**
   - Engagements with the police before and during the pandemic.
   - Whether there were any issues in developing relationships with the police.
   - CSO and police cooperation and utilisation before and during the pandemic.
   - Best practises in terms of working with the police.
   - Challenges in working with the police.
   - Longer-term partnerships between police and CSOs.
   - Understanding of/familiarity with, the police's additional roles and responsibilities during the pandemic.
   - Perceptions of challenges faced by the police during the pandemic.
   - Perceptions of police during the pandemic overall.

Brought together, the research aimed to understand what aspects of behaviour and engagement from the police is beneficial to build on going forward, particularly within a model of Community Policing, citizen volunteering and engagements with CSOs.
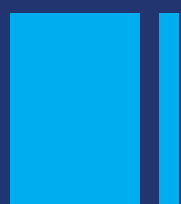
03.
METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

Perception surveys were designed separately for each of the stakeholder groups; citizens, police and CSOs. All surveys were conducted between October-November, 2020. The details of the administration for each are given below.

3.1 CITIZEN SURVEYS

To capture a representative picture of citizen perceptions across Bengaluru, 500+ citizens were surveyed resulting in a sample with 95% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval (based on 96.2L Bangalore urban population, Census, 2011). Citizens with a range of demographic background variables were sampled, including broad coverage across gender, age and income level.

Given restrictions with lockdown and physical distancing and limited ability to work on the field, surveys were done online and administered by a field work agency, to their large pool of citizens.

The survey took no more than 20 minutes to complete and was available in English and Kannada, as necessary. Systematic checks were done on data, real-time, which allowed for any course-corrections, as necessary.

3.2 POLICE SURVEYS

As well as senior tiers of police officers (ranks above the Police Inspector), there are approximately 220,000 police personnel in Bangalore urban, spread across 108 police zones, each with an associated police station.

Police from across the ranks (including constabulary and senior positions) and from different police zones were surveyed to paint a cohesive picture of police perceptions across urban Bengaluru. To facilitate this process, a series of police stations were selected to include geographic coverage across Bengaluru urban, differing citizen population density and police station sizes.

While the plan initially was to sample multiple police personnel (ranked Police Inspector and below) in a smaller number of stations, to achieve 20 interviews, this was difficult considering the busy schedules of the stations and instead, each interview was done in a different station. This in fact, broadened the geographical scope of the study. Over and above this, it was planned to do up to five interviews with more senior Bengaluru police personnel including for example, Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and the Commissioner.

Given Janaagraha's on-going partnership and work with the Bengaluru police, it was possible to organize the survey administration without complication. Each of the surveys were administered face-to-face while maintaining social distance and following all required COVID-19 protocols. The surveys were conducted by Kannada-speaking field surveyors. Recordings were taken when permission was granted while otherwise, detailed notes were taken. Each interview lasted no longer than 30-40 minutes.

3.3 CSO SURVEYS

The survey was scripted online in English. To reach as many people working and volunteering for CSOs as possible in the short time-frame, the link was shared through different networks. The survey included a screening question in case it reached anyone not eligible to respond. The survey was open to anyone working or volunteering for a CSO in Bengaluru before and/or during the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey took no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

04.
RESULTS
— CITIZEN SURVEYS

RESULTS – CITIZEN SURVEYS

4.1 CITIZEN SAMPLE

525 citizens completed the survey, resulting in a sample with 95% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval (based on 96.2L Bangalore urban population, Census, 2011). A good demographic breakup of citizens was also achieved. The split between men and women was almost equal as shown in Figure 1. One respondent identified as 'other'. Just over half of the sample (52%) had lived in Bengaluru for more than 2 years as shown in Figure 2. The majority having lived in the city between 6 months and 4 years while a large proportion have also lived in the city for more than 10 years (16%).
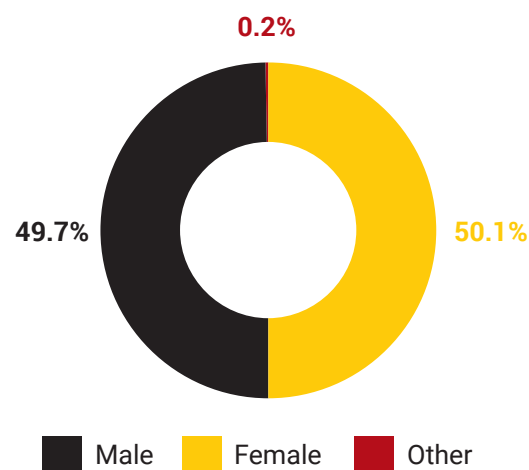

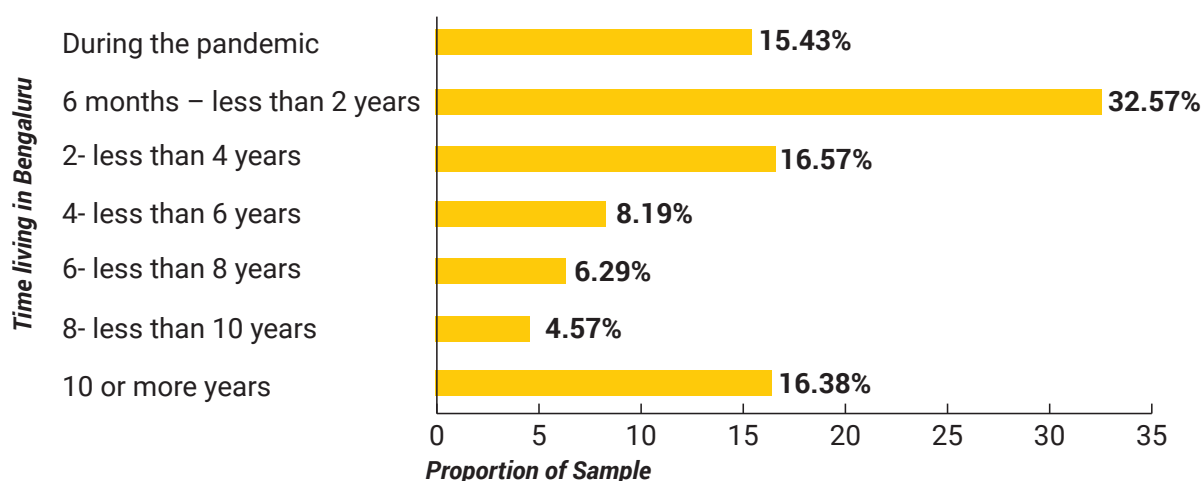**Figure 1: Gender make-up of the sample**

Figure 2: Time living in Bengaluru by sample

The age profile of respondents was slightly skewed towards younger citizens (18-34 years old) though 38% of the sample are over 35 years old (Figure 3).
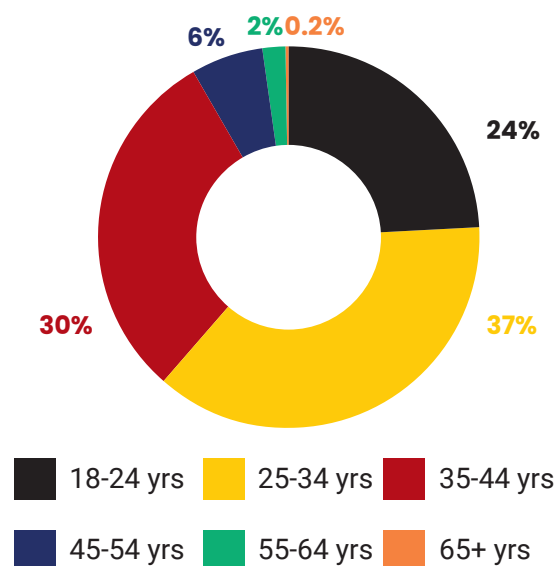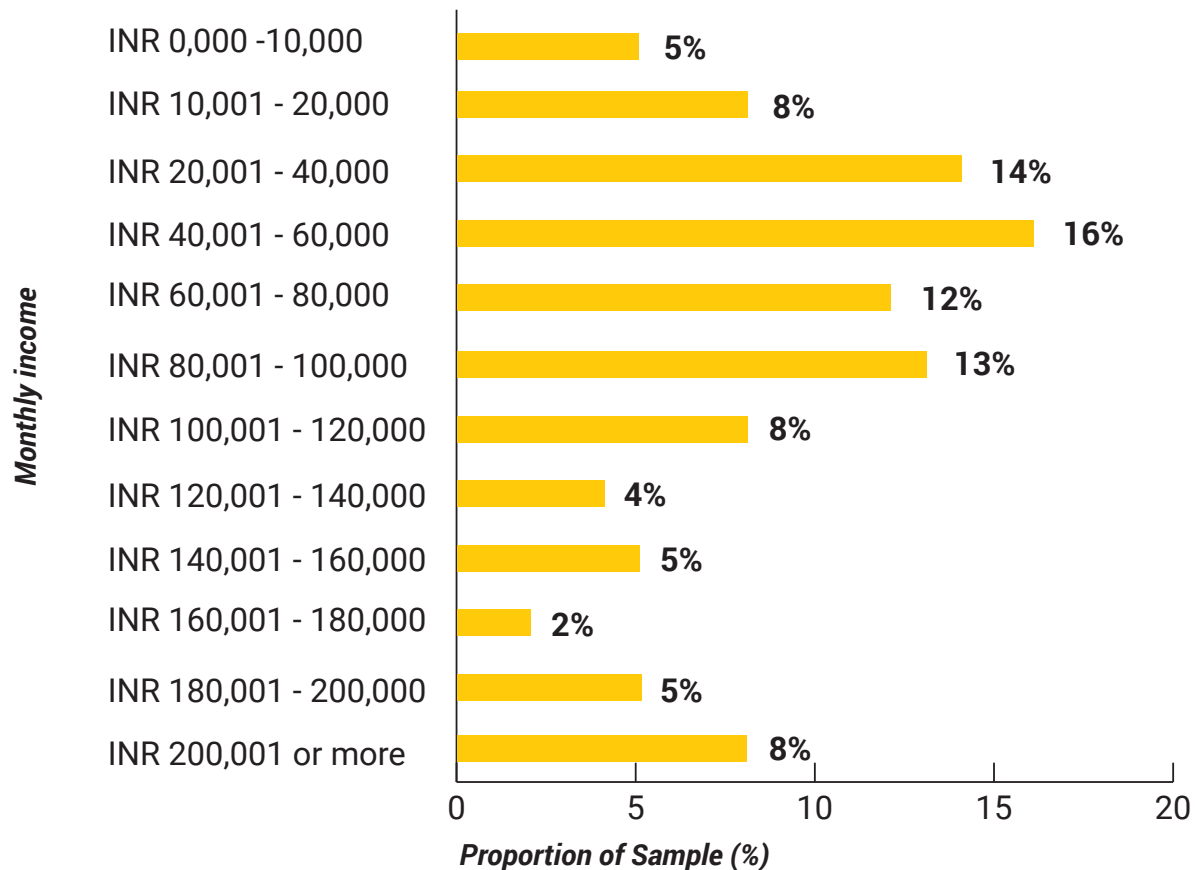

Figure 3: Age profile of sample

Furthermore, there was a wide variety of monthly household income of our citizens, representing a variety of economic circumstances of our sample (Figure 4).

Monthly income

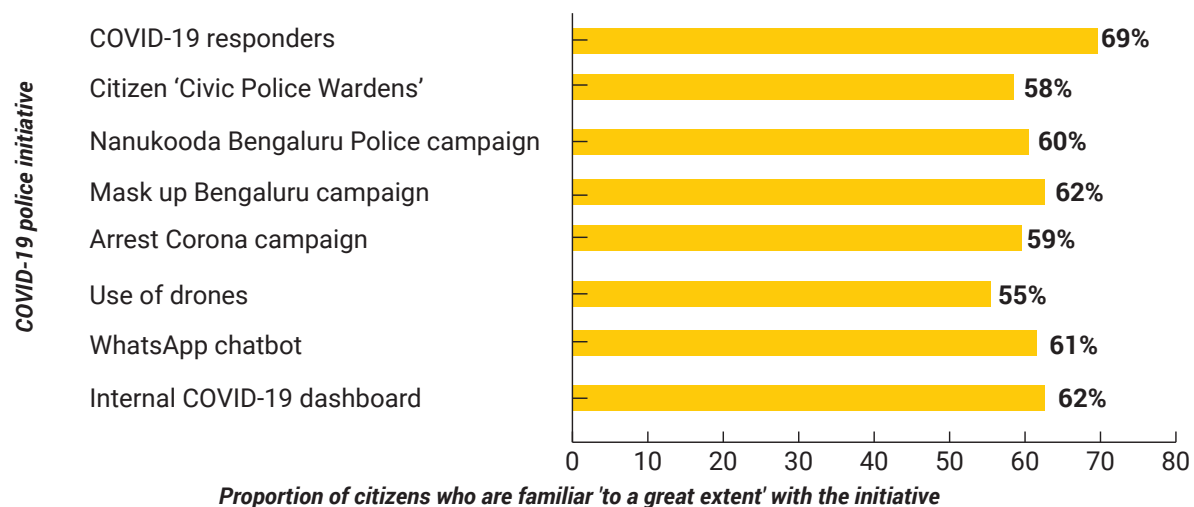| Income	Proportion
INR 0,000 -10,000	5%
INR 10,001 - 20,000	8%
INR 20,001 - 40,000	14%
INR 40,001 - 60,000	16%
INR 60,001 - 80,000	12%
INR 80,001 - 100,000	13%
INR 100,001 - 120,000	8%
INR 120,001 - 140,000	4%
INR 140,001 - 160,000	5%
INR 160,001 - 180,000	2%
INR 180,001 - 200,000	5%
INR 200,001 or more	8%

Proportion of Sample (%)

Figure 4: Monthly household income profile of sample (INR)

4.2 CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS

4.2.1 Bengaluru City Police (BCP) initiatives

During the pandemic, a range of initiatives were implemented by the Bengaluru City Policy in response to the crisis. Citizens were asked to what extent they were familiar with the different initiatives.

The pattern for knowing each of the initiatives was relatively similar across the board. The majority (between 55-69%) of citizens were familiar 'to a great extent' with each initiative as shown in Figure 5. Between 3-10% of citizens were unaware of each initiative.

COVID-19 police initiative

Initiative	Proportion
COVID-19 responders	69%
Citizen 'Civic Police Wardens'	58%
Nanukooda Bengaluru Police campaign	60%
Mask up Bengaluru campaign	62%
Arrest Corona campaign	59%
Use of drones	55%
WhatsApp chatbot	61%
Internal COVID-19 dashboard	62%

Proportion of citizens who are familiar 'to a great extent' with the initiative

Figure 5: proportion of citizens who are familiar 'to a great extent' with each initiative

There was no discernable difference between men or women. However, citizens who indicated they were familiar to a great extent with all of the initiatives were most likely to (proportionally) belong to the group of citizens who were in Bengaluru only for a portion of time during the pandemic. This is intuitive given 'stranded' citizens may have been more likely to need to engage with police/ask for help because of unfamiliarity with the city and less likelihood of having networks or connections there. Furthermore, they are more likely to have needed to take action like try to leave the city for home for example. Interestingly, the proportion of citizens who were greatly familiar with each initiative tapers off, the longer citizens have been living in the city, with the only exception being those who have lived in the city for more than 10 years (see Figure 6). Those between the ages of 25-44 years were more likely to be familiar 'to a great extent' with each initiative. Those over 55 were considerably less likely to be very familiar with the initiatives.

Proportion of citizens who are familiar to a 'great extent' with all the initiatives
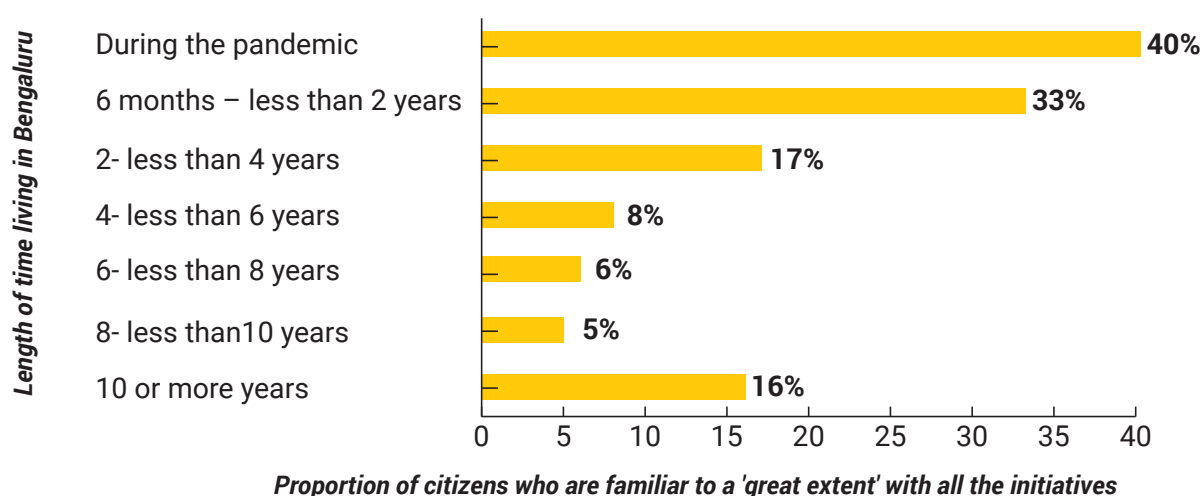
As Figure 7 shows, the majority of citizens who have heard of each initiative believe it has been useful/impactful. The strongest agreement of this is for the COVID-19 volunteer responder initiative which sees individual citizens volunteer their time to support the police. Except in the case of the 'mask up Bengaluru' campaign, men were slightly more likely than women to 'strongly agree' the initiatives were impactful. As with familiarity, those in the age group of 25-44 years old, were also generally more likely to 'strongly agree' that the initiatives have been impactful. Those over 55 were systematically less likely to agree though in the case of two social media campaigns (Arrest Corona and Mask up Bengaluru), the 55-64-year olds were most strongly in agreement of their effectiveness. There was little discernable pattern in the awareness of those from different income categories, nor in their perceptions of effectiveness of the different initiatives.
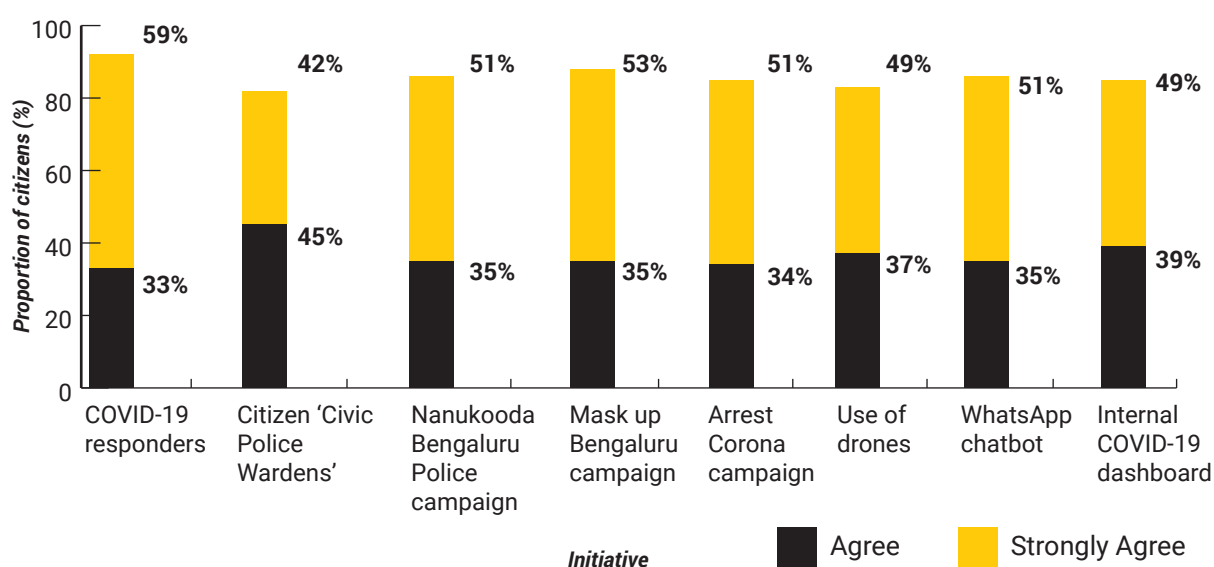
Figure 7: Out of those who have heard of the initiatives – the proportion of citizens who agree or strongly agree the initiative has been useful/impactful
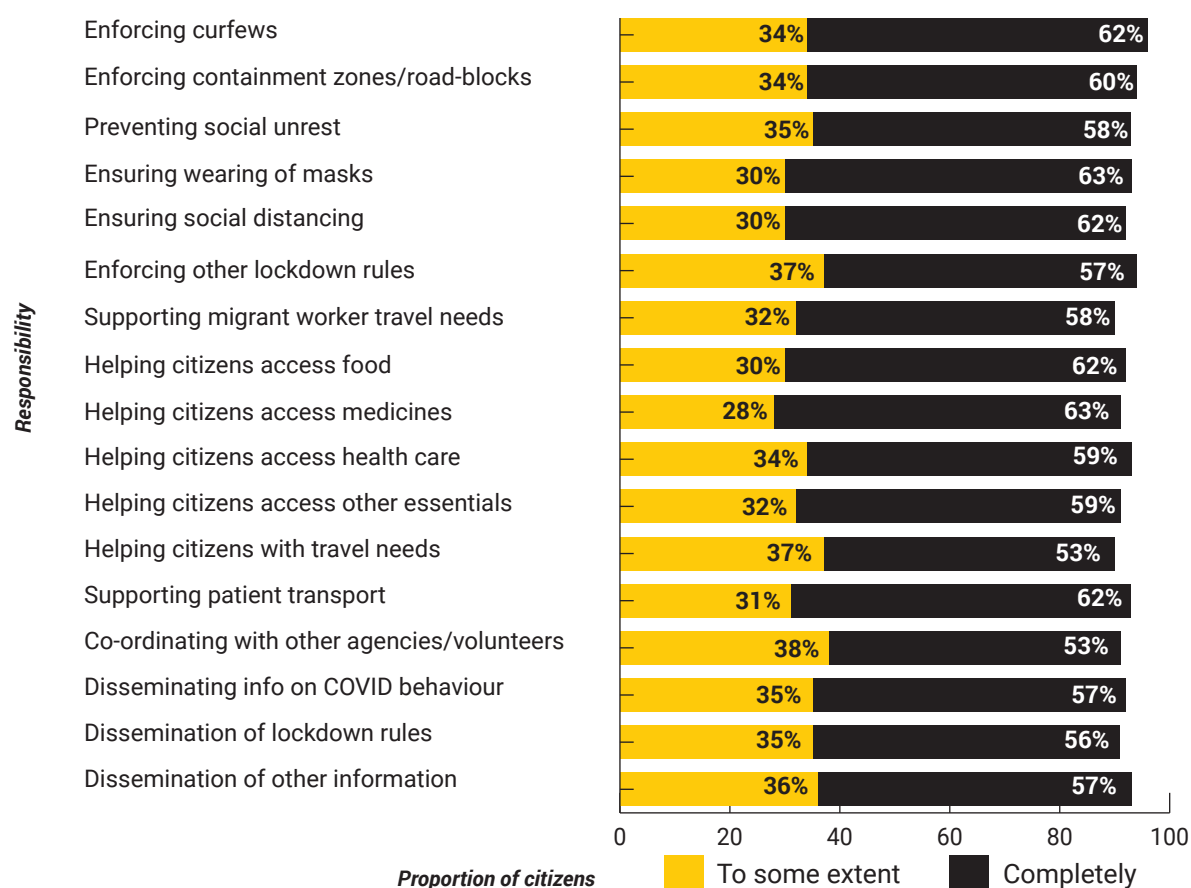
4.2.2 Additional Responsibilities of the Bengaluru City Police (BCP)

Citizens were asked an open-ended question to gauge if they knew the additional responsibilities which have been taken up by the police during the pandemic. The vast majority of respondents were able to list one or two additional responsibilities such as enforcing the wearing of masks (and collecting fines relatedly), enforcing lockdown/ quarantine/curfews/keeping people at home, social distancing/dispersing crowds, road closure and shop/vendor closure as well as reminders on COVID-19 preventative behaviours such as sanitising. To a lesser extent, citizens mentioned traffic and travel management, helping the needy, providing access to food (to those in need/those in quarantine), helping with access to COVID testing/healthcare access in general (including medicines), co-ordinating with and recruiting volunteers and helping senior citizens. Within this, only two citizens mentioned migrants as a specific group of citizens which the police helped. Many citizens simply mentioned that police were 'enforcing COVID-19' rules and/or were doing a good job of this in the city. Only a handful of citizens took the opportunity to mention anything negative for example, police taking bribes.

Most citizens believe the police have fulfilled these additional responsibilities at least to 'some extent' as shown in Figure 8. Women are systematically less likely than men to indicate they feel the police have fulfilled each additional responsibility. While mostly this is by only a few percentage points, particular things that stand out including helping citizens (other than migrant workers) with travel needs and permissions, helping citizens access things other than food and medicine such as soap water, and dissemination of information on accessing health care/food/rations and general lockdown rules and regulations.

It is again those in the age bracket of 25-44 who have a more favourable view of the police's fulfilment of all of these responsibilities and those 55 and over, the least. There is a notable exception however, with regards to 'ensuring social distancing' where the 18-34 year olds carry the most favourable view of the police's enforcement. This may be because this younger age bracket of citizens is more likely to gather in larger groups. Additionally, there's a more equal view of the police's fulfilment of responsibilities across the ages from 25-54 years old with regards to helping citizens access food, health care and medicines as well as dissemination of lockdown rules and information on combatting the virus. Additionally, those from the top tiers of income are more likely to feel that the police have 'completely' fulfilled their responsibilities when compared with those on the lowest incomes.

Figure 8: Proportion of citizens who feel the police have fulfilled their additional responsibilities

4.2.3 Interactions with the Bengaluru City Police (BCP)

Across gender, age and income, systematically the majority of citizens indicated they have interacted with the police more during the pandemic than ever before (65% overall across all citizens) and only 13% said they have interacted with them less. Two types of interaction between police and citizens during the pandemic were explored. Firstly, those where citizens approached police and secondly, those where police approached citizens.
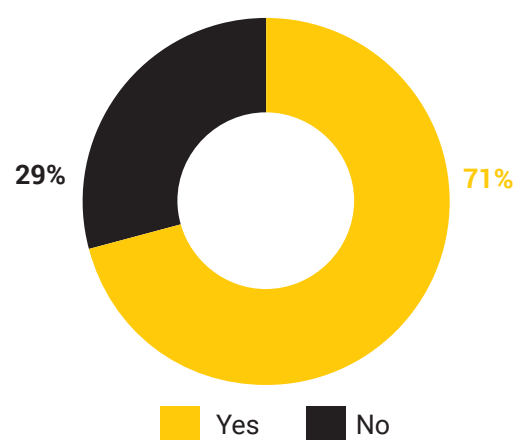
Almost three-quarters of citizens surveyed have approached the police for something during the pandemic (Figure 9).

While overall, women were as likely as men to say they had approached the police for something during the pandemic, men were much more likely to have approached for multiple reasons (see Figure 10).

29% **71%**

Yes   No

Figure 9: Have citizens approached the police for anything during the pandemic?
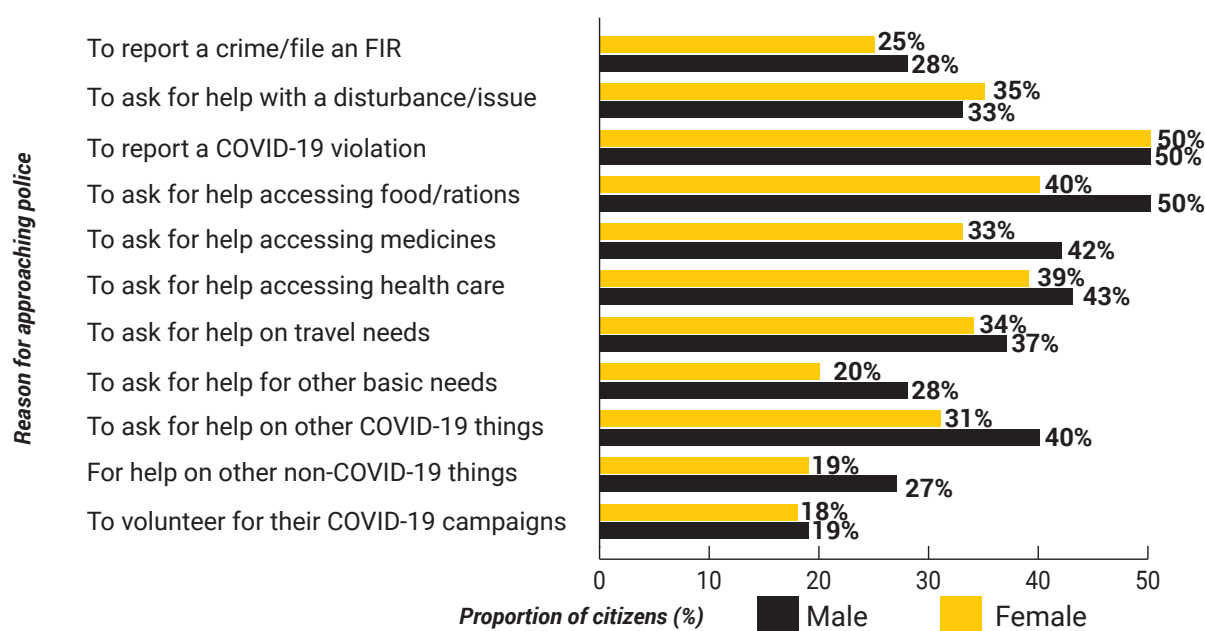
Those in the younger age bracket (18-44 years) are more likely to have approached the police than those aged 45 and over. In fact, approach to police declines linearly as age increases after age 45. Those from the higher income brackets are more likely to have approached the police. With 81% those earning 160K monthly or more indicating they had approached the police compared with 70% of those earning less than this (distributed relatively consistently across these income bands).

Reasons for approaching the police ranged but most common for both men and women was to report a COVID-19 violation. The only reason for which women were more likely to approach the police as compared with men was to ask for help with a disturbance. Men were considerably more likely to approach for help on COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 things including help in accessing health care, travel and rations.

Those from lower income households (earning <60K a month) were systematically less likely than those from higher income households (>160k a month) to be approaching the police for help across all the different reasons except in three categories; accessing medicines, seeking help with a disturbance and reporting a COVID-19 violation. To that extent, those from households with lower incomes were less likely to approach the police for any basic needs they may have had beyond medicines, for example access to food/rations or other items or even access to health care. This may be because they did not think the police could help with such needs but could for the more stereotypical law and order issues. Accessing medicines was the one exception to this finding.

Reason for approaching police

Reason	Female	Male
To report a crime/file an FIR	25%	28%
To ask for help with a disturbance/issue	35%	33%
To report a COVID-19 violation	50%	50%
To ask for help accessing food/rations	40%	50%
To ask for help accessing medicines	33%	42%
To ask for help accessing health care	39%	43%
To ask for help on travel needs	34%	37%
To ask for help for other basic needs	20%	28%
To ask for help on other COVID-19 things	31%	40%
For help on other non-COVID-19 things	19%	27%
To volunteer for their COVID-19 campaigns	18%	19%

Proportion of citizens (%)   Male   Female

Figure 10: Proportion of citizens approaching police for different reasons

Over 70% of citizens (both men and women) 'strongly agreed' that the police were effective in dealing with their need when they approached them. Almost all of the remainder of citizens 'agreed' this was the case so only a handful of citizens did not believe the police were effective in handling their need. Although those who were older were less likely to have approached the police, they were more likely to 'strongly agree' that the police were effective in dealing with their need with 84% of 45-54 year olds 'strongly agreeing' this was the case compared with 67% of 18-24 year olds. While by income, 80% those who were from higher income households 'strongly agreed' that the police were effective, compared with 60% of those from lower income households.

Reasons why citizens felt that the police were effective in dealing with their needs included predominantly comments on the nature of the engagement. Police were described as being polite, punctual, generous, helpful, quick-acting, trying their best, selfless and courageous. Furthermore, some citizens described the help the police afforded to them, for example, one mentioned, "they helped me reach my parents who live far away.' Other examples include the police taking action quickly against people organizing a gathering in an apartment, helping people reach the airport, dispersing crowds quickly and effectively, introducing people to relevant government agencies, as well as helping poor people get shelter and providing food to the needy at their own expense. The creative nature of the police was also captured by one citizen who said:

"In the early days of the lockdown in April and May, videos of police personnel wielding lathis on motorists and others had gone viral. However, the police quickly tried more creative tools including humour to spread awareness and keep people indoors--a strategy that has worked to a large extent. More citizen engagement is only likely to help."

There were only a handful who felt their engagements with police were ineffective but those who said this noted police were too busy handing out fines to be helpful and took a long time to help with accessing things which were needed like medicines.

A nearly equal proportion of citizens as had approached the police themselves, indicated that the police had approached them during the pandemic (67%). The most common reason for the approach was to check the citizen's compliance with COVID-19 regulations.

Men were 2% more likely to have been approached by the police than women but as shown in Figure 11, were more likely to have been approached for something unrelated to the pandemic or asked to help volunteer with the police.
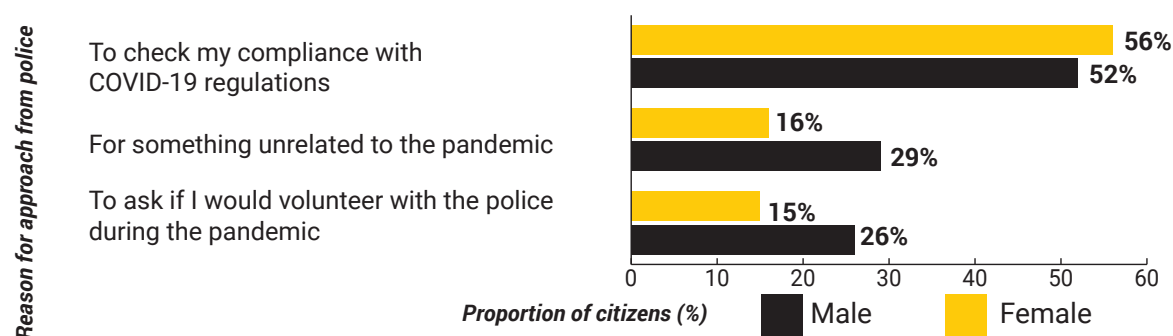
Figure 11: Proportion of citizens (by gender) approached by police for different reasons.

Interestingly, as you move from the age categories of 18-24 to 45-54, there's a linear increase in citizens being stopped but this declines for those aged 55 and over. This is similarly reflected in the different reasons for being approached disaggregated by age (Figure 12). Those who were from higher household incomes, were more likely to have been approached by police during the pandemic. However, in terms of reasons for being stopped, these were broadly similar across income categories although those better off were more likely to have been asked to volunteer with the police.
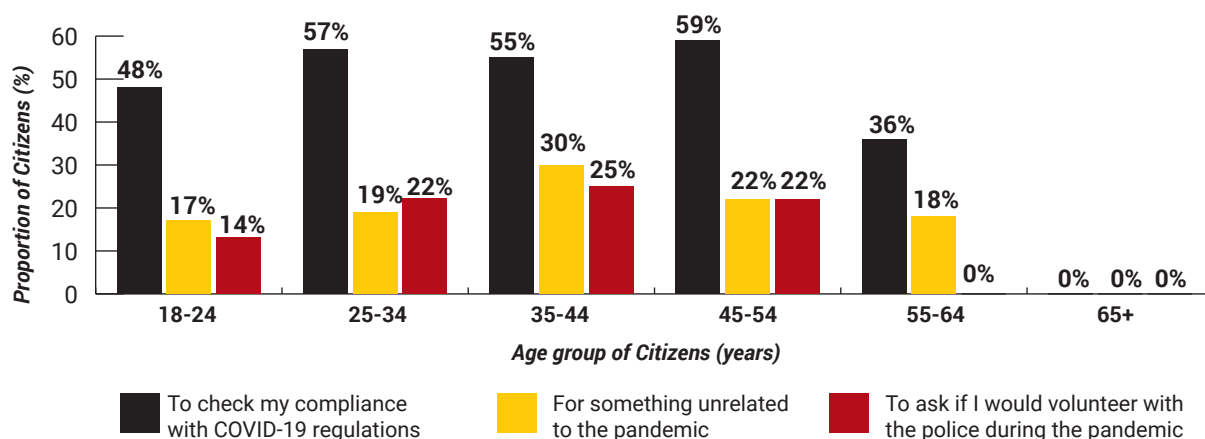
Figure 12: Proportion of citizens (by age) approached by police for different reasons.

In terms of satisfaction of approach by the police, men were slightly more likely to say they 'strongly agreed' they were satisfied with the interaction (69% compared with 64% of women). Those in the age bracket of 35-54 years were most likely to 'strongly agree'. Likewise, those in the middle-income brackets (>60k but <160K) were also most likely to 'strongly agree' they were satisfied with the police approach and interaction.

As with citizens approaching police, when police approached citizens, the reasons citizens felt satisfied were equally to do with the general approach of the police. Citizens mentioned police were polite, patient, helpful, humble, listened, calm, informative on things happening in the local area, were trying their best, they didn't ask for a bribe, maintained social distance, yet were firm and strict in implementing COVID-19 rules, provided guidance where citizens were unsure and handled people with patience and made them understand the situation.

A smaller group of about 25 citizens who were not satisfied mentioned things such as the police not wearing masks, not understanding why they, the citizen, had to leave the house as well as the police being aggressive. One citizen mentioned the police were more responsible during the full lockdown but less in control now with the series of 'unlocks'.

4.2.4 Interactions with Citizen Volunteers (who are working with the BCP) During the Pandemic

As well as a large proportion of citizens engaging with police during the pandemic, a large proportion of citizens also indicated they had interacted with a citizen volunteer, who was/is working with the BCP, during the pandemic (Figure 13). Men were 4% more likely to have done so than women. Engagements with a volunteer increased linearly for citizens aged 18 to 44 years after which they tailed off. As with engagements with the police themselves, those from higher incomes were more likely to have engaged with a volunteer (84% of those earning over 160K monthly compared with 67% of those earning less than 60K).

Over 93% of both men and women felt these interactions with volunteers were helpful. Men were slightly more likely than women to 'strongly agree' this was the case as were citizens aged 35-44 years. While those who were from higher income households, were more likely to have engaged with a volunteer, it was those who were from middle income households who were most likely to 'strongly agree' that the interactions were helpful.
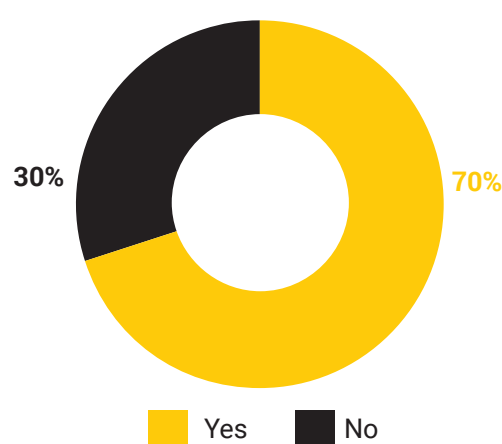
Figure 13: Proportion of citizens who have interacted with a citizen volunteer during the pandemic

4.2.5   Perceptions of Policing During the Pandemic

The majority of citizens of strongly agree that they have noticed more police on the streets during the pandemic than before. This is echoed most strongly by those in the middle age and middle-income brackets. Men are slightly more likely than women to strongly agree with this (Figure 14).
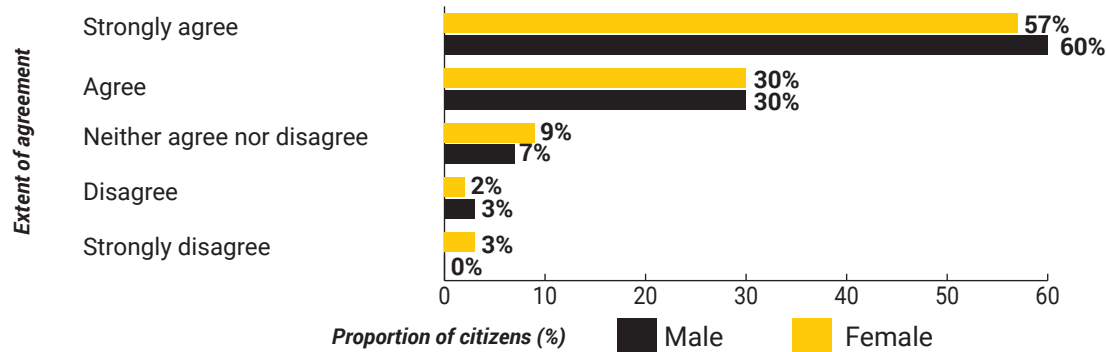

Figure 14: Extent of agreement by citizens that there have been more police on the streets in Bengaluru during the pandemic than before

Furthermore, the majority of citizens recognize that many aspects of policing during COVID-19 are challenging for the police (Figure 15). Women however, are systematically less likely to believe each aspect is 'very challenging' as compared with men – up to 10% difference for both anxieties about catching COVID-19 and longer working hours.
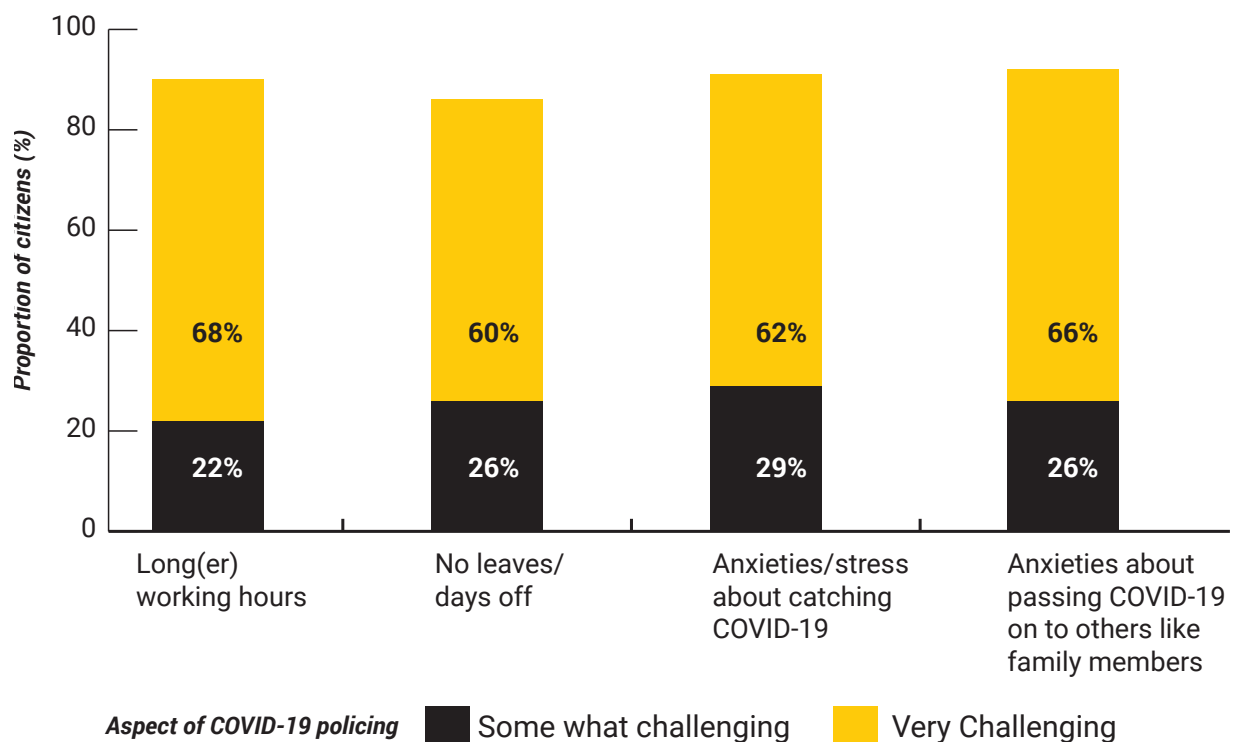
Figure 15: Extent of challenge citizens believe each aspect of COVID–19 policing poses for the police

Furthermore, the proportion of citizens who believe the aspects are 'very challenging' increase by age up to a point before they decrease. Except in the case of anxieties about catching COVID-19, which may reflect citizens' own anxieties with risks of the virus and its intensity being higher for those who are older (Figure 16). Those living in households of monthly incomes greater than 60K are more likely to indicate that aspects are challenging, except in the case of working longer hours.
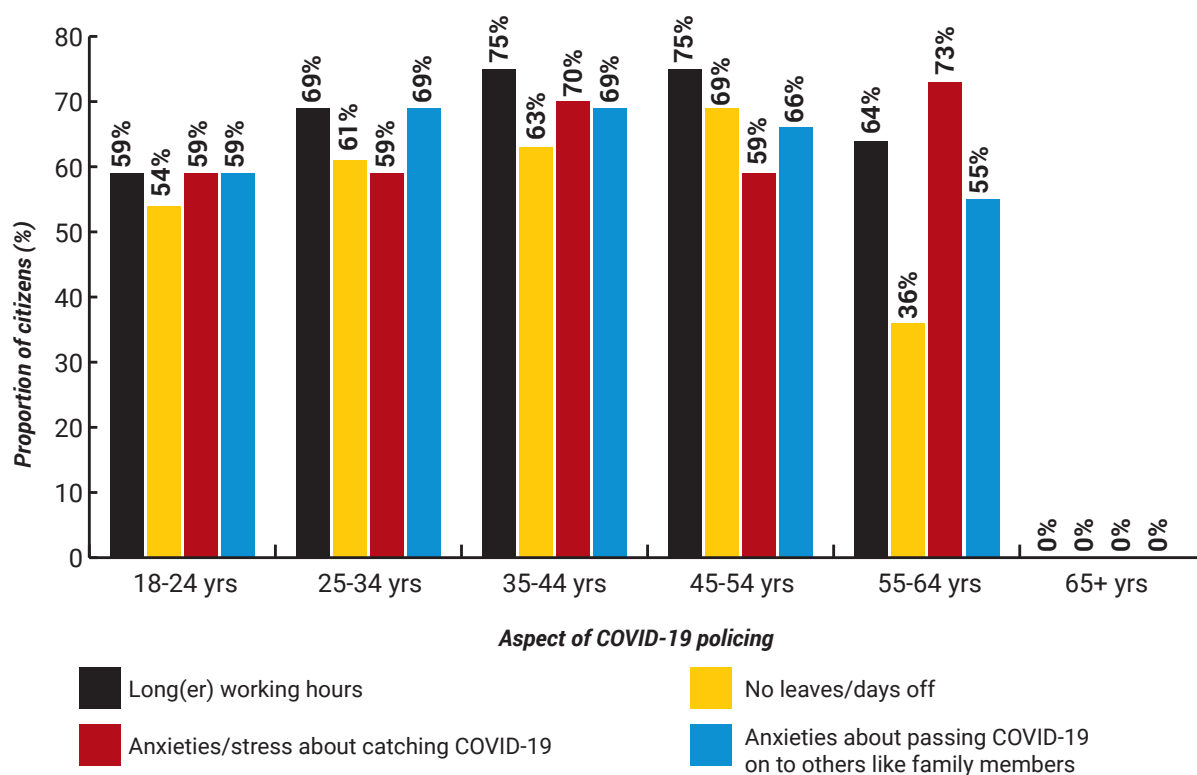
**Figure 16: Extent of citizens (by age) who believe each aspect
of COVID-19 policing is 'very challenging'**
*(note: the number of citizens interviewed over 65 was low
so responses to be considered with caution).*

Very few citizens disagree or strongly disagree with the sentiment that the BCP have done and are doing a good job during the pandemic (Figure 17). Men are slightly more likely to 'strongly agree' this is the case, as are those aged 35-44 and those in the middle-income brackets. What's revealing is that citizens who approached the police for anything during the pandemic were proportionally more likely to indicate that they 'strongly agreed' that the police were doing a good job during the pandemic (69%) compared with those who had not approached the police (50%). This is equally the case for those who engaged with a citizen volunteer (69%) compared with those who did not (52%). There is no such difference seen with regards to the perceptions of those who were and were not approached by the police, both equally likely to 'strongly agree' that the police are doing a good job (64%).
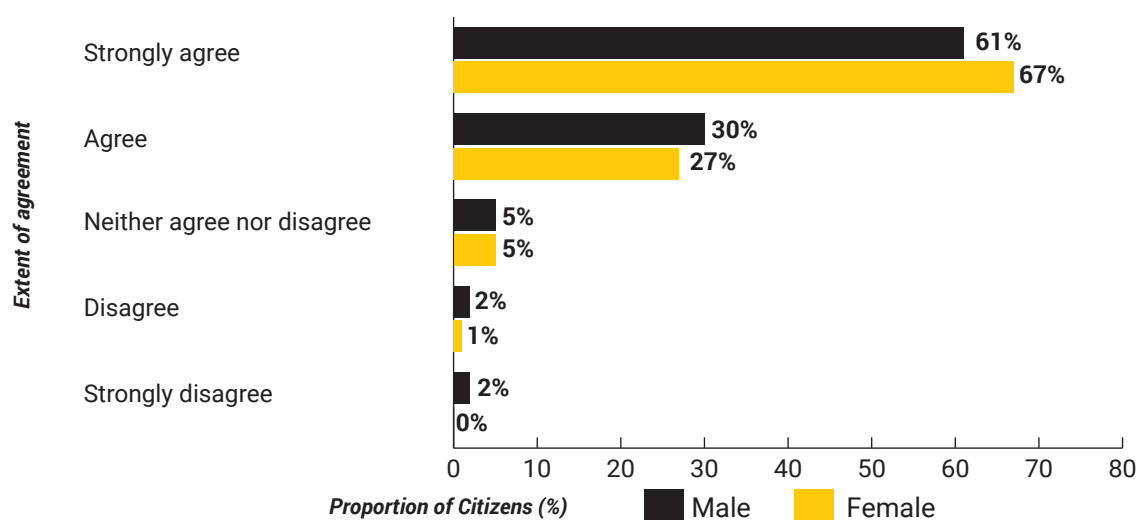
**Figure 17: Extent of agreement by citizens that the Bengaluru City Police have done/are
doing a good job during the COVID-19 pandemic**

90% of citizens feel a little or a lot more positive now about the police than before the pandemic (Figure 18). This matches what we see in the police surveys from police's perceptions of how citizens see them now. Police overwhelmingly feel that citizens have a better perception of them now than before the pandemic. Female citizens are 7% less likely to indicate they're 'much' more positive now than before the pandemic, as compared with men. Those aged 55-64 are more likely than any other age group to say their perception of the police has not changed during this time (neither positively nor negatively) with 27% in this age group saying this compared with 7% of citizens overall. It is those in the middle-income bracket who are most likely to indicate their perceptions are much more positive now that before the pandemic.

The reasons given by citizens around why they feel more positively towards the BCP now echo what has been said before in terms of why citizens have felt more satisfied with their engagements with the police during the pandemic mentioned above. These include descriptions of the police as positive, calm, alert, respectful, helpful, polite, brave, hard-working and vigilant. Furthermore, they were described as taking on their (new) responsibilities well, being more proactive now than ever before, working long hours, being more approachable, more trustworthy and treating people equally.

Figure 18: Citizens' perceptions of the Bengaluru City Police now, during the pandemic, as compared with before the pandemic

Situational descriptions were also made with the citizens describing the sense that 'the police are everywhere', that they are putting people's safety needs above everything else and are rising up to the challenge of the pandemic. There was praise for the police providing mental health support, helping needy people, risking their lives for the community, sacrificing seeing their own families and essentially maintaining discipline and handling the pandemic very well.

The few citizens who indicated they feel less positively about the police now mentioned police taking bribes, not being proactive in helping during the pandemic, not understanding people's needs and misusing their power.

The findings around the overall very positive perceptions of the BCP are reflected in how safe citizens feel now as compared to before the pandemic, with 83% of citizens indicating they feel 'a little' or 'a lot' safer now than before. There is little difference by gender but those living in households with earnings over 60K monthly are more likely to indicate they feel much safer now than before. While, again, the 55-64 year olds are most likely to say they feel the same way as before. Additionally, citizens who interacted more with the police during the pandemic than before were hugely more likely to indicate that they feel much safer (70%) than those who interacted with the police during the pandemic the same amount (29%) or less frequently than before (35%). This demonstrates the unequivocal need for engagements between citizens and police to facilitate perceptions of safety. Since engagements between the two groups have increased in the pandemic, this is something to consider continuing and building on. Furthermore, there's a similar trend for citizens who felt there was a greater police presence on the street during the pandemic, feeling much safer now than before (74%) as compared with those who felt there was less presence (only 25% of these citizens felt much safer than before).
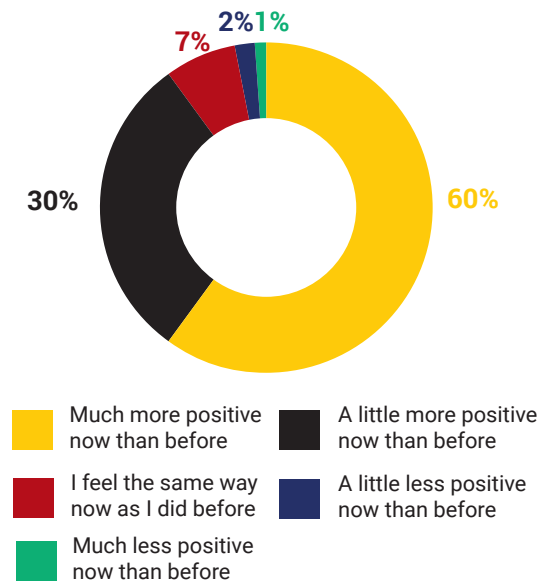
4.2.6 Policing Going Forward

In terms of improvements going forward as the police continue to work through the pandemic, suggestions from citizens were to continue as they are with improvements in politeness, kindness and helpfulness. Also, citizens felt police could be stricter where necessary, continue creating awareness around the pandemic, be more attentive to and not forget 'normal' crimes, engage with communities and listen to their needs, not fall back into 'old ways' (beating/aggression were mentioned) and instead maintain consistency with this improved approach to policing. Additionally, citizens mentioned the police should also not 'drop the ball' on the pandemic needs of enforcing mask wearing, social distancing etc.

For any disaster going forward, citizens would expect the police to be similarly diligent. As one citizen mentioned, "*they should be as much alert as they were during the pandemic*". Citizens noted other things they would expect from the police which would be greater foresight into how people can be reunited with their families, especially to other states (some referring to the plight of migrant workers specifically though others speaking in general), ensure relevant training of the force, better coordination with district authorities as well as greater knowledge consciousness and closeness in communities overall. Also mentioned were having greater female police presence, being clearer on what the essentials are and allow the transport/movement and vending of these or delivery by police themselves. One citizen mentioned that for police themselves, a welfare officer should be appointed at every unit to motivate and support police personnel.

Though a handful of citizens mentioned rowdy and rude behavior as well as bribe-taking should decrease from the police and they should be more understanding of people's needs and circumstances, additional comments from citizens were overwhelmingly positive:
- "*They should stop taking bribes.*"
- "*I'm not satisfied with their rowdy behaviour and selectiveness.*"
- "*Very rude behavior towards public should reduce.*"
- "*They were awesome and beyond my expectations.*"
- "*Police have acted like warriors during this pandemic time and I salute them.*"
- "*I am very grateful to them for working hard and risking their life and working extra hours for the citizens.*"
- "*I praise their attentiveness to the needy.*"
- "*When I was walking on street to get rations, holding my child, the police told me to stop. They got the ration delivered to my home.*"
- "*I also want to become police in future as these police are helping people.*"
- "*First I thought them as people who were corrupt and did nothing but they are better than I expected.*"

4.3 CITIZEN SURVEY KEY TAKE-AWAYS

The key take-aways from the citizen survey findings are as follows:

Police initiatives in response to COVID
- The majority (between 55-69%) of citizens were familiar 'to a great extent' with each of the initiatives introduced by the BCP during the pandemic.
- Most citizens felt each of these initiatives had been useful/impactful. The strongest agreement of this was for the COVID-19 volunteer responder initiative.
- Those who indicated they were familiar to a great extent with all of the initiatives were most likely to (proportionally) belong to the group of citizens who were in Bengaluru only for a portion of time during the pandemic. This is intuitive given 'stranded' citizens may have been more likely to need to engage with police/ ask for help because of unfamiliarity with the city and less likelihood of having networks or connections there. Furthermore, they are more likely to have needed to take action like try to leave the city for home for example.
- Additionally, there's a larger familiarity from those in the age group of 25-44 years old who were also generally more likely to 'strongly agree' that the initiatives have been impactful.

Additional responsibilities of the BCP
- The vast majority of respondents were able to list one or two additional responsibilities of the police which related to the enforcement of COVID-19 rules such as wearing masks, enforcing lockdowns and social distancing.
- To a lesser extent, citizens mentioned traffic and travel management, helping the needy, providing access to food (to those in need/those in quarantine), helping with access to COVID testing/healthcare access in general (including medicines), co-ordinating with and recruiting volunteers and helping senior citizens. Within this, only two citizens mentioned migrants as a specific group of citizens which the police helped.
- Most citizens believe the police have fulfilled these additional responsibilities at least to 'some extent'.

- Those in the age bracket of 25-44 have a more favourable view of the police's fulfilment of all of these responsibilities and those 55 and over, the least. There is a notable exception however, with regards to 'ensuring social distancing' where the 18-34 year olds carry the most favourable view of the police's enforcement. This may be because this younger age bracket of citizens is more likely to gather in larger groups.

### Interactions with the BCP and citizen volunteers

- Across gender, age and income, systematically the majority of citizens indicated they have interacted with the police more during the pandemic than ever before (65% overall across all citizens) and only 13% said they have interacted with them less.
- A nearly equal proportion of citizens as had approached the police themselves during the pandemic (71%), indicated that the police had approached them in this time (67%). Likewise, 70% of citizens reported engaging with a citizen volunteer during the pandemic.
- The most common reason for approaching the police was to report a COVID-19 violation and equally, an approach from the police was most likely to check the citizen's compliance with COVID-19 regulations.
- Those from households with lower incomes were less likely to approach the police for any basic needs they may have had beyond medicines, for example access to food/rations or other items or even access to health care. This may be because they did not think the police could help with such needs but could for the more stereotypical law and order issues. Accessing medicines was the one exception to this finding.
- Those in the younger age bracket (18-44 years) are more likely to have approached the police than those aged 45 and over. In fact, approach to police declines linearly as age increases after age 45. The same is true of police approach to citizens after age 55 and of engagements with citizen volunteers.
- The majority of citizens believed that the police were effective in dealing with their needs when they approached them and were satisfied with the engagements when the police approached them or they engaged with citizen volunteers. Reasons why predominantly centered on the nature of the engagements. Police were described as being polite, punctual, generous, helpful, quick-acting, trying their best, selfless, courageous. Furthermore, that they did not ask for a bribe and maintained social distance.
- There were only a handful who felt their engagements with police were ineffective but those who said this noted police were too busy handing out fines to be helpful and took a long time to help with accessing things which were needed like medicines.
- Those from higher incomes were more likely to have engaged with a volunteer (84% of those earning over 160K monthly compared with 67% of those earning less than 60K). These citizens were also more likely to have been asked to volunteer themselves.

Perceptions of Policing During the Pandemic

- 90% of citizens feel a little or a lot more positive now about the police than before the pandemic.
- Citizens who approached the police for anything during the pandemic were proportionally more likely to indicate that they 'strongly agreed' that the police were doing a good job during the pandemic (69%) compared with those who had not approached the police (50%). This is equally the case for those who engaged with a citizen volunteer (69%) compared with those who did not (52%). There is no such difference seen with regards to the perceptions of those who were and were not approached by the police, both equally likely to 'strongly agree' that the police are doing a good job (64%).
- Citizens who interacted more with the police during the pandemic than before were hugely more likely to indicate that they feel much safer (70%) than those who interacted with the police during the pandemic the same amount (29%) or less frequently than before (35%).
- There's a similar trend for citizens who felt there was a greater police presence on the street during the pandemic. Those who felt this, were proportionally more likely to report feeling much safer now than before (74%) as compared with those who felt there was less presence (only 25% of these citizens felt much safer than before).

Policing going forward

- In terms of improvements going forward as the police continue to work through the pandemic, suggestions from citizens were to continue as they are with improvements in politeness, kindness and helpfulness.
- Citizens felt police could be stricter where necessary, continue creating awareness around the pandemic, be more attentive to and not forget 'normal' crimes, engage with communities and listen to their needs, not fall back into 'old ways' (beating/aggression were mentioned) and instead maintain consistency with this improved approach to policing.
- Citizens mentioned the police should also not 'drop the ball' on the pandemic needs of enforcing mask wearing, social distancing etc.
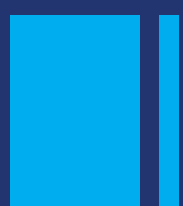
05.
RESULTS
— POLICE SURVEYS

RESULTS – POLICE SURVEYS

5.1 POLICE SAMPLE

A diverse range of 24 police personnel was interviewed across 24 stations in Bengaluru urban. Within these interviewees, personnel were of a variety of ages, genders, ranks and completed years of service (in the police force overall and specifically in Bengaluru). The sample details are described below.

Of the 24 interviewees, ten were female and 14 were male. Interviews were conducted with personnel across the ranks as can be seen from Table 1.

Table 1: Interviewees by rank and gender

Rank	Female (n)	Male (n)	Total (n)
Constabulary - Constable, Head Constable	4	6	10
Assistant Sub Inspector, Sub Inspector	3	5	8
Inspector	1	2	3
Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner	2	1	3

Length of service in the police force of the interviewees ranged from 2.5 years to 35 years. Length of service in the Bengaluru City Police specifically, ranged from 1.5 years to 35 years (see Figure 19). Most personnel had been serving in Bengaluru between 1.5-5 years, including two of the interviewees from the top ranks.

Police personnel across a range of ages were interviewed (see Figure 19).
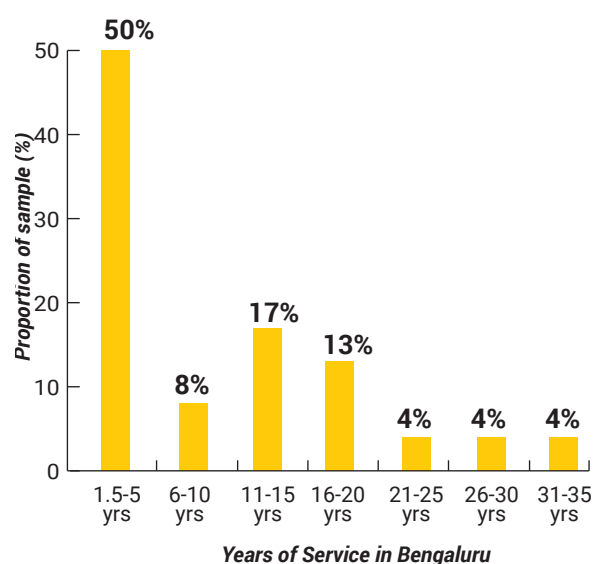
Figure 19: Years of service in Bengaluru of police personnel in sample
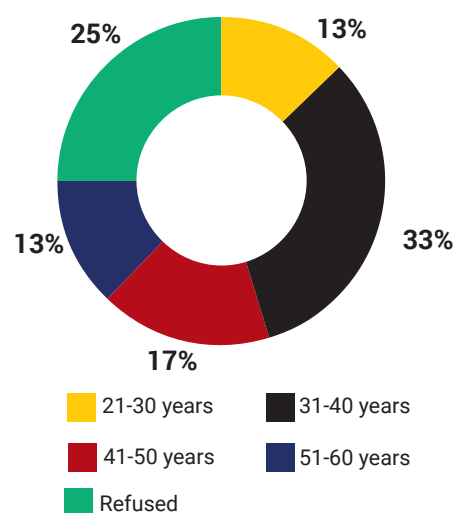
Figure 20: Age distribution of achieved sample of police personnel

There was a good distribution of these personnel's stations across the city as can be seen in Figure 21. There were two to three stations included from each of the Central, East, North East, South, South East and Whitefield police zones as well as four in each of the North and West zones.

Figure 21: Spatial distribution of sampled police station locations across Bengaluru (green dots)
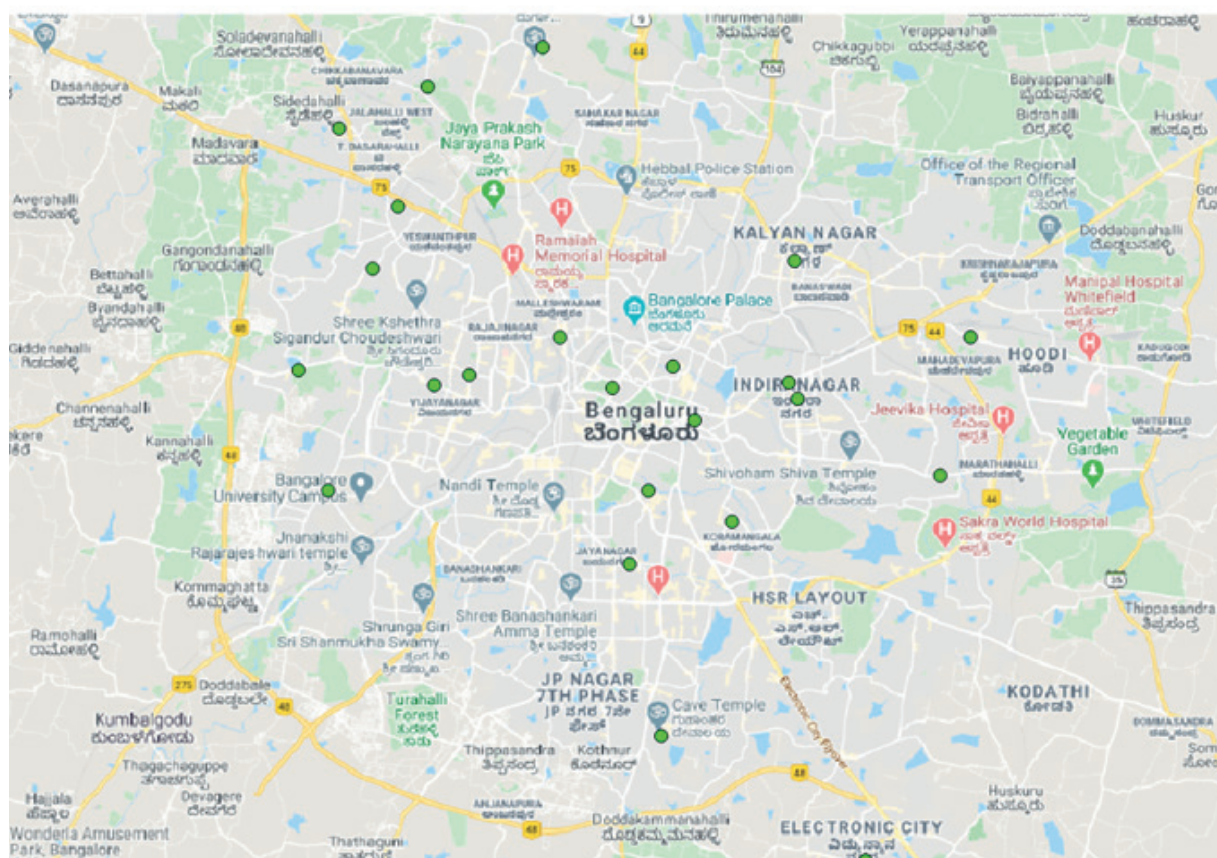
5.2 POLICE SURVEY RESULTS

The sections below summarise the qualitative insights given by the police during interviews and reflect their perceptions of the situations discussed.

5.2.1 Crime Patterns

Overall during the pandemic, especially during the initial lockdown, crime rates for most crimes decreased. Since citizens are inside more, there have been fewer crimes like pickpocketing as places are no longer so crowded and there is little bus commuting. Likewise, house robberies are less common since more people are at home, though locked homes were a greater target. Although in the initial days of the pandemic, the central business district area of the city saw a rise of accidents as people started to prepare for the lockdown, traffic crimes and accidents have reduced greatly during the pandemic due to the lower volume of traffic, particularly compared with normal rates on the outskirts of Bengaluru. Due to rising unemployment rates because of the pandemic, there was some expectation of an increase in crimes but overall this has not happened.

Having said that, as well as COVID-19 violations and aggression from public around restrictions, there have been increases in crimes such as domestic violence, marital/family disputes, quarrels with neighbours and cyber-crimes though not across all stations. Cyber-crimes include online bullying, online catfishing for money, but also for example getting calls/texts from an unknown person saying that they would offer loans, asking for an account number/ card pin number, indicating you've won the lottery etc. Other examples of such 'cheating' crimes include offering fake/non-existent COVID-19 tests and fake/non-existent medicines for COVID-19 patients. Interviewees also noted citizens reporting to police that their neighbours had COVID-19 symptoms but did not get tested. Landlords reported tenants not paying rent while tenants reported landlords for asking too much rent. Additionally, since the stricter lockdowns have been lifted, reports of chain snatching are increasing again.

Crime reporting mechanisms have also shifted. There's been a decrease in reports made at stations and an increase in reports made by phone and through online mediums.

5.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Police

Police personnel were asked if the roles and responsibilities of the police force changed during the pandemic and if so how and whether this differed across ranks. Police noted that normal duties did not really change, though their weightage may have become less in certain cases. For example, while traffic regulation was reduced as a function of there simply being less traffic, instead there was more work at road blocks and check points to monitor and verify vehicles and travel permits. Indeed, most police indicated they essentially had additional responsibilities during the pandemic and certainly therefore worked much longer hours. For example, in the traffic context, the issuance of such travel e-passes and all the nuance of the categories such as vehicle passes, single-person passes, emergency passes etc. as well as capturing and returning vehicles. Furthermore, in containment zones, where the BBMP placed barricades in the surrounding 100 meters, the police had to work 24/7 to monitor containment.

Additionally, the police noted they became like parents and educators of the citizens of the city on all matters to do with COVID-19; keeping people inside and spreading awareness on the virus, reminding people to wash their hands, maintain distance and wear masks and to avoid unnecessary travel. Furthermore, the police were tasked to enforce all the new rules and thereby having to control crowds, monitoring new announcements and regulations around the pandemic as well as ensure adherence to shop and vendor regulations and monitor home quarantines for example. One officer mentioned that the military was drafted in to work alongside the police.

The police were also drafted in to facilitate people in emergencies, particularly medical ones, often using their own vehicles in such cases. One officer also mentioned the police's role in removal of dead bodies within their police zone, in coordination with the BBMP. The police distributed sanitary hygiene products to women, as well as sanitizers and masks and were also at the front line of providing food, shelter and travel aide to migrant workers. With such large volumes of migrant workers, there were additional challenges of keeping large crowds of them from coming together too and liaising medical checkups. Furthermore, the police, in partnership with the Labour Department liaised with the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) and Indian Railways on travel and a range of NGOs as well as the BBMP on food.

In some cases, the police were also picking up work which NGOs may have done previously. For example, one officer mentioned that where in the past organisations like Nirasrithara Parihara Kendra and Auto Raja foundation may have helped poorer citizens, including beggars, access food and other basic needs, this aide was filtered to only those who tested negative for the virus during the pandemic. It fell to the police to help those who were COVID-19 positive and liaise with the BBMP and the Health & Family Welfare Department on their care. As one officer described it, '*the police were not just implementers of law and order but also took on a humanitarian role during the pandemic*'.

As well as caring for the public, there were welfare responsibilities towards their own staff also. These included providing protective gear to police personnel but also sanitizing police stations and in some cases running kitchens in police stations due to long hours of work.

Differences across ranks
Naturally within a police station there are officers who perform different roles. Likewise, during the pandemic, the additional responsibilities were distributed in this way. The constabulary were mostly working on the ground and higher ranks were playing supervisory roles. One officer noted 'As the jurisdiction increases, the functionality is more or less the same as always'. It is only that additional and different responsibilities were attributed to the police as a whole. Vehicles would be checked and seized by the constabulary but judgements on releasing captured vehicles would often be taken by higher ranks, for example. Having said that, given the unprecedented circumstances, across the ranks there were often officers just helping where needed with one interviewee noting that even the Commissioner was on the field at times with the public.

Two officers noted that police over the age of 55 were given 'rest' by the Commissioner and instead of going out onto the field, these officers focused more on COVID-19 awareness initiatives in an office-based role.

5.2.3   Police Response and Initiatives in Light of the Pandemic

The following section describes how the police have used different tools and initiatives to respond to their additional roles and responsibilities during the pandemic.

Social media
Social media has been actively used by the police to raise awareness of the virus including regulations and how to stay safe. Platforms such as Twitter, WhatsApp and Facebook have been routinely used by the police for this leveraging on different campaigns and have often used celebrities to endorse them. One officer noted that each police station started its own social media handles for local-specific information. Furthermore, advertisements have also been placed in printed newspapers.

Community Policing volunteers also managed local WhatsApp and Facebook groups and provided information about how to use masks and sanitisers through this medium. One officer estimated there to be over 4,000 WhatsApp groups created, all for different local areas.

Other communication tools
A range of other tools were also used by the police to communicate to the public. Vehicular public addressing systems were used as well as static ones for announcements around the pandemic. In cases, auto-rickshaws were hired for this purpose. Other officers also mentioned public addresses done through drone speakers. Additionally, pamphlets and brochures were distributed, some of which were specifically image-based to ensure accessibility by illiterate citizens and children.

In other initiatives, 'corona helmets' were created, with virus shapes protruding from them to raise awareness and some officers drew corona pictures on the roads.

One officer mentioned a video conferencing initiative which was organised, entitled, 'Ee Samvadha'. Within this, they had arranged for some doctors to give COVID-19 awareness to local citizens.

A range of apps were used increasingly during the pandemic. The Seva Sindhu portal was used to issue travel passes for example. Furthermore, the KSP (Karnataka State Police) app was used more frequently to register complaints and an email ID was available for this too. The E-lost app is there to check for stolen mobile phones while the Suraksha app works for women who face any issues like harassment or violence by directly sending the location to the 100-emergency number.

Another officer mentioned the increased use of CCTV to monitor public areas.

With regard to the manner of communication and engagement, one officer mentioned the change they witnessed in police personnel with them demonstrating more patience with citizens and helping the needy with their own salaries. They noted that before the pandemic, officers may not always register complaints but now are responding to issues in a positive way.

Changes in patrolling/feet on street
Along with an increase in patrolling, a lot of stationary placement on-ground in terms manning road blocks, checkpoints, border points and quarantined areas was introduced due to the pandemic as well as facilitating movement of citizens where necessary. Essentially there's been an increased focus on traffic regulation in patrolling. The area coverage has also increased for some stations and officers, from one to two divisions for example. Furthermore, shift patterns have been amended to accommodate the 24/7 nature of these responsibilities.

Patrolling itself now involves more citizen engagement with COVID-19 awareness initiatives and monitoring shop opening times and COVID-19 behaviours accordingly.

Targeted engagements with specific citizen groups
There were a range of targeted initiatives and interventions which were used for specific citizen groups during the pandemic. In particular for women, the elderly, the urban poor, daily-wage workers, those with particular medical needs (e.g. dialysis patients) and migrants. One officer mentioned proactively collecting information about needy people during patrolling. At times there was also engagement with particular religious groups, especially religious leaders as well as community leaders. Police engaged with them to solicit help in closing religious spaces and guiding people in their communities to follow the pandemic rules.

The plight of migrant labourers was probably the most documented throughout the pandemic and the police worked closely with this community. In many ways, the police department was the interface between the administration and the migrant labourers. As mentioned earlier, the police, in partnership with many agencies such as the Labour Department, the BBMP, Health & Family Welfare department and transport agencies such as BMTC and KSRTC worked on locating, identifying and verifying migrant labourers as well as meeting their health, food, shelter and travel needs throughout the pandemic. After registration on the Seva Sindhu Portal, E-passes were issued for travel, medical checks were conducted on the Palace Grounds and tickets issued to these citizens for buses and trains home to their native places. Some officers mentioned extending their own vehicles to help transport these citizens to the grounds and transport stations. In the time before travel was approved, which took many weeks for some, shelter (in community and function halls), food and basic resources were also facilitated by the police in many cases. This help was also extended to those migrant labourers who chose not to travel but to stay in the city as well as other poorer citizens.

With regards to the elderly, the police for example, helped these citizens access their medicines, either by guiding a caregiver, fast-tracking their queue positions or delivering the medicines themselves. Furthermore, they facilitated trips to hospital in their own Hoysala vehicles and intervened where there were complaints of additional charges for medicines and resources by medical shops. One officer mentioned the initiative 'Namma Hiriyaru' (translated as 'Our Senior Citizens') which was set up specifically to help the elderly. This initiative essentially saw the police check up the elderly and assist them with any needs. Another officer mentioned the allocation of nodal officers in different areas to canvass and facilitate the needs of the elderly.

Many examples were cited of the specific aide that was afforded to women. Some officers indicated that door-to-door visits were made to understand the needs of women. Sanitary hygiene products were distributed, pregnant women were escorted to and from hospital or taken in police pink hoysalas. The latter was something extended to any citizen with medical needs. Some officers mentioned specific counselling centres and helpline numbers for women which were set up for victims of domestic abuse, in light of the fact that domestic violence cases have increased in the pandemic. Furthermore, one police officer noted that the police contacted particular doctors to seek help and suggestions for pregnant women when beds were all filled. Likewise, another officer mentioned facilitation of COVID-19 tests for pregnant women to ensure admission to hospital for giving birth. In particular one officer recounted the case of a women who delivered a baby and was tested positive for the virus. Unfortunately, several doctors and nurses in the maternity ward were also tested positive. The police then insisted all those in the unit underwent COVID-19 tests and facilitated this process.

Partnering with volunteers, NGOs and others
Most police indicated increased partnering with volunteers and NGOs (such as Mercy Corps, Janasnehi, Let's be the change, Atreya Foundation, Kashimata, and Ayur Arogya) during the pandemic as well as other organisations such as Embassy, Prestige, High ton company, BHEL, ISCON, the Lorry Drivers Association, the Sikh Association and Infosys. In general, NGOs and corporate organisations approached the police rather than vice versa though in some cases, police were engaged already with NGOs and these partnerships intensified during the pandemic. This is contrary to citizen volunteers, for whom the police put out a call for on the BCP website and the Ex Commissioner requested citizens through media to come forward to work as volunteers. Additionally, many stations were already engaging with volunteers through for example community policing where volunteers are known as Area Suraskha Mitras (ASMs).The collective term used for police citizen volunteers during the pandemic has been the 'Corona Warriors'. In addition to individual volunteers, one officer noted that they made tie ups with Resident Welfare Associations/ Societies (RWAs/RWSs), some of whom they were familiar with from before the pandemic.

Generally speaking both NGOs and other organisations provided resources both for needy citizens as well as people working on the front lines such as police personnel, health workers, BBMP staff, other NGOs and volunteers. Such resources ranged from medical kits, face shields, sunglasses, tents, chairs, food/dry rations, drink and kitchen provisions. Many of these resources were handed over to the police for distribution. NGOs also worked with the police to guide the distribution of donated resources, given their geographic familiarity with communities in need and also offered translation when required. Simultaneously, the police also worked to ensure the safety of NGO staff and volunteers, ensuring safe passage when they were delivering rations and resources. One officer mentioned the Crimes against Women and Children (CWC) wing coming forward to the police station to report instances of domestic abuse and harassment on behalf of women, during the pandemic. Another NGO, Ayur Arogya, raised money to help with distribution of sanitary pads, and other resources needed by women, the distribution of which was facilitated by the police.

Compared with before the pandemic, engagement with NGOs has definitely increased. One officer recounted the coordination within their station of almost 40 NGOs. However, there is a hardly any mention of sustained engagement with NGOs beyond keeping their names recorded in police stations to draw upon for any future needs. Individual volunteers have seen more sustained engagements with the police.

Additionally, some NGOs (and volunteers) worked on technical matters, such as mapping where to buy and access basic needs such as food and medicines. Tagged to this were opening times so that citizens could plan their trips outside carefully and avoid staying outside unnecessarily or travelling around to find open shops etc.

Many new citizens have come forward to volunteer with the police during the pandemic, in addition to volunteers who were already working with the police in their station limits, through community policing, the civil defence wing, as traffic wardens, in RWAs and other citizen committee members. While many female volunteers came forward, officers suggested the majority were male. Many police in our sample mentioned the great and invaluable work these citizens have done without remuneration and without the powers of the police force. One officer mentioned the essential dynamic of volunteers working at the 'gully-level' to facilitate communication to and from citizens in every corner of the city. Likewise, another mentioned that these hyper-local volunteers were essential since even relatively local travel was difficult and restricted, especially in the early stages of the pandemic. Citizens reduced the stress and workload of the police force.

Volunteers have been harnessed to do a huge range of things, from helping at traffic checkpoints to drawing educational graffiti, creating awareness around the pandemic, helping the elderly, women and migrants, controlling crowds, picking up seized vehicles, handling PA-announcements, registering complaints, counselling victims, reporting local crimes and verifying documents.

One officer mentioned auto-rickshaw drivers as a particular group of volunteers. These drivers helped to transport citizens to hospital when needed, for example pregnant women. They took no fee to do so.

Much of the coordination and training of these citizens happened though WhatsApp and was done by the already established community policing volunteers. Additionally, some police in our sample mentioned daily briefings by senior officers also. One officer mentioned some difficulty in citizens recognising and acknowledging volunteers in their roles due to their lack of uniform which caused some issues. Likewise, another officer mentioned that the volunteers affiliated with their station did not interface directly with the public to ensure no mis-information or communication. Another mentioned citizen volunteers always worked side-by-side with the police to avoid any issues in validation. Others in our sample mentioned that the volunteers working with them were issued police jackets to help determine their authenticity to the public.

Other materials, resources, initiatives and engagements
Some other initiatives and resources were mentioned by the police in our sample which helped them during the pandemic, for example:
• The police department provided some protective gear including PPE kits where needed to some in our sample, including masks, gloves, sanitisers as well as some refreshments and kitchen sets to cook in police stations, when restaurants were not open.
• Trying to use more contactless enforcement like digitally recording violations and taking photos where necessary.

5.2.4 Public Perception of the Police

Across the board, the officers in the sample indicated that they felt the public perception of the police is more positive now than it was before the pandemic. On a sliding scale of -5 (less positive than before) to +5 (more positive than before), all sampled officers placed their perception between +3 and +5.

The police in our sample felt the reasons for this were to do with citizens being more acutely aware of the work of the police, the reliance of citizens on the police for many things during the pandemic and the police being available for the public in this time, the greater amounts of engagement between the two groups as well as the many humanitarian things they did, the fact they were risking their lives, supporting all communities equally and all the coverage of this work through the media. There were many examples of the police going above and beyond to help citizens, for example, beyond what has already been described above, police officers donating plasma, donating their own salaries to causes and other personal sacrifices. The interviewees noted that the pandemic has given citizens a chance to engage more deeply with the police and communication channels have equally been opened up – through WhatsApp, social media, increased visibility and availability on the street and through civic volunteers.

Mostly the police in the sample felt that the new-found appreciation and positive perception was equally there from citizens across different communities and mostly because they felt that the police treatment of citizens from different communities was also equal. A few officers mentioned that younger citizens may not have changed their perceptions of the police as the police had come down hard on unnecessary roaming around the city coupled with the closure of bars and places where they may normally congregate. At the same time, other officers mentioned that police are now seen as role models, as much as doctors for example were, prior to the pandemic and citizens, especially the youth, now wish to join the police force. This latter comment is echoed in the citizen survey findings where this was mentioned by citizens themselves as a result of seeing the work of the force.

Another officer noted that particularly the perception among women of the police has improved. With officers more engaged in the welfare of women, the two groups have become more familiar with each other. They are coming forward more regularly to register complaints and some have come to offer food and drinks to support the police in this time.

5.2.5 Main Challenges During the Pandemic

The police in the sample identified a range of challenges they have been facing during the pandemic. First and foremost, safeguarding their own personal safety and health was a particular challenge. While interfacing with the public, the police of course could never know who may have the virus. Indeed, hundreds of police officers have tested positive for the virus and many have lost their lives. This concern spilled over into family life, limiting contact with them. Not only because of these health concerns but also the long working hours required due to the needs of the situation. Due to these risks, there were mental and physical health concerns of the police personnel as well as relatedly, the need to sanitise work spaces. In short, the interviewees noted a lot of additional mental and physical load for police officers and their families. In addition they mentioned that some members of the public did not want to engage with the police because they were worried about the police having been in contact with so many people and the chances of catching the virus being higher.

One officer mentioned that initially there were challenges in practicalities like knowing where to place road blocks, knowing who to stop and check, who to give travel pass priority to, what could be considered essential services and such things. Another officer mentioned that the public did not always recognise or respect volunteers and their requests or actions.

Convincing people to stay inside and/or abide by the range of new rules was also cited as a great challenge by many officers. One noted that particularly those who had lost jobs, were more likely to flout rules. Furthermore, another officer noted that while some rules were obvious, there were many rules which citizens were ignorant of such as how many people could travel in a car together and the opening times of shops. Thereby making it more challenging to enforce them consistently and constantly.

There was mention of the issues around managing the expectations of the police from citizens and understanding the bandwidth and resource constraints of the police and other institutions (which in themselves were issues for the police). For example, one officer mentioned that in containment zones, there was an expectation from citizens that everything (like all kinds of foods, other needs etc.) would be given and met by the government but of course, this is not possible due to the huge population and number of zones being processed. Furthermore, there were naturally issues at times with the issuance of travel passes or other resources which caused difficult interactions with citizens.

Due to the increase of cyber-crimes during the pandemic, there were some challenges in handling these. Additional cyber-crime divisions have now been set up to handle these.

Other challenges faced by the police include officers going out in the night to find migrants who left shelters to walk home, and explaining the dangers to them of doing so as well as identifying and verifying migrants through their paperwork. Furthermore, struggling with the needs of homeless citizens when they are tested positive and require hospital admissions was hard and at the same time an officer mentioned that police were also asked to detain COVID-19 patients who 'escaped' from hospital which created tensions in the force. Likewise, there was tension in maintaining social distance from citizens and at the same time having to handle disputes which is difficult at distance.

Judging the sincerity of citizens and their needs was another challenge raised by several officers, particularly after granting permissions to find citizens have not been entirely truthful of their circumstances.

From a purely practical standpoint, lack of public transport made it hard for some officers to get to work and back home again.

5.2.6 Best Practise Examples Arising out of the Pandemic

A number of aspects of policing during COVID-19 were described by the police as good examples for the future. They're bucketed here by application into 'normal' policing, future preparedness for other crises and ways in which there may be greater, sustained and deeper engagements with local communities.

Normal policing
With regards to everyday 'normal' policing there was suggestion that there could be more use of police resources to help people when needed. For example, using police vehicles to transport pregnant women to hospital. Additionally, building on the idea of police as role models and sharing experiences and positive actions to influence other citizens, for example, the donation of plasma by officers which happened during the pandemic.

A great deal of trust had to be exercised by both citizens and police of each other during the pandemic. Although broken trust was mentioned as a challenge by the police, there were many engagements between the two groups which happened on trust which resulted in positive outcomes; including facilitating access to food, medicines, basic needs, emergencies, travel etc. These have allowed for trust to be built between citizens and police. Building and deepening this trust is something that can be taken away as a necessity from the pandemic.

Extending beat patrols to be done by two people rather than one, even if one is a volunteer is hugely valuable. During the pandemic the police paired their patrols where for example, one person was static at a check-point in the beat and another was patrolling around the beat. Furthermore, patrolling for longer hours across the day, as has been done during the pandemic, may well be very beneficial for controlling crimes.

Future preparedness for crises
The experience itself of the pandemic, many officers indicated, has shown that they can handle anything in the future. At the same time, there has been a realisation that physical and mental health is of upmost importance and should be maintained to ensure fitness for any future crises.

Documenting everything was a best practise example given by one officer. An example of this is around collecting information on migrants, NGOs, donors and volunteers which has created a series of databases of information and connection points which will be very helpful to help serve the public in the future. In particular officers noted that bonds created with NGOs and citizens will stand them in good stead for any future engagements on particular needs.

One officer mentioned the importance of storing and maintaining resources wisely. This is because if anything in particular is needed during another crisis it may not be available or may be extremely expensive.

Engaging more deeply with communities/citizens through community policing model
Experiencing the extensive help of citizen volunteers has demonstrated the benefit of this kind of engagement, especially in very local contexts to give and receive very context-specific knowledge. Additionally, to facilitate the work of the police and support in critical tasks, such volunteers are really beneficial. For example, by being very local, citizens can often reach people more quickly. As one officer described, the life of a citizen was saved because a volunteer was able to reach them sooner than an officer would have. Also, the sheer volume of work and citizen needs can be more quickly and efficiently addressed using volunteers. Keeping a network of this kind would be very useful.

5.2.7 Training Needs

In terms of training needs for the police themselves, the majority of police in the sample mentioned that there were no training gaps which needed to be filled during the pandemic. Many officers mentioned that in their base training, disaster management was adequately covered as well as health and fitness training, law and order maintenance, peace of mind training and how to deal with the public. Furthermore, with the pandemic hitting without great warning there was little time for training. One officer noted that it wasn't training per se that was needed, only communication. And indeed, most offers interviewed mentioned frequent briefings (mostly daily) and WhatsApp updates as the most pertinent forms of engagement related to information and communication. That said, officers did note the preparation of standard operating procedures (SOPs), circulars detailing COVID-19 precautions that should be taken by staff and in stations and adoptions of new work and shift patterns. A few officers noted that some additional training on situations like pandemics would be useful. One mentioned that although for many weeks officers desisted from using their latis (sticks), these were again used later to control crowds in place of other techniques and that more training around controlling the public would be useful.

What additionally came through in the interviews was that there was a particular focus on the mental and physical health of the police staff. Officers in the sample noted online classes for mental health which were offered as well as yoga training and stress management information. Furthermore, one officer noted weekly consultations with doctors while others mentioned diet information, tips for boosting immunity and ayurvedic tips. Once officer mentioned an online video conference training with National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences (NIMHANS) doctors.

Many officers in the sample also noted that volunteers were trained on communication with the public, how to follow safety measures as well as mechanisms for raising awareness around the pandemic. As with police themselves, citizen volunteers were exposed to daily briefings and WhatsApp communications and instructions.

5.3   POLICE SURVEY KEY TAKE-AWAYS

The following section highlights the key take-aways as intimated by the sample of 24 interviews undertaken with police personnel in 24 stations across Bengaluru.

Crime Patterns
- Overall during the pandemic, especially during the initial lockdown, officers in the sample noted that crime rates for most crimes decreased since many more people were staying indoors.
- Having said that, as well as COVID-19 violations and aggression from public around restrictions, officers noted there have been increases in crimes such as domestic violence, marital/family disputes, quarrels with neighbours and cyber-crimes though not across all stations.
- Crime reporting mechanisms have also shifted. There's been a decrease in reports made at stations and an increase in reports made by phone and through online mediums.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Police
- Police interviewed noted that normal duties did not really change, though their weightage may have become less in certain cases where they were less relevant, for example, traffic regulation reduced. That said, most police indicated they had additional responsibilities during the pandemic, with regards to enforcing COVID-19 rules and regulations, and certainly therefore worked much longer hours.
- The police noted while enforcing, they also became like educators of citizens of the city on all matters to do with COVID-19.
- In addition, the police in the sample noted many partnerships with others to provide relief and aide, such as the BBMP, the labour Department, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), Indian Railways and a range of NGOs. This included provision of food, shelter, medicines, travel assistance, sanitary hygiene and medical care to migrant labourers, women, the poor and the elderly in particular.
- As well as caring for the public, there were welfare responsibilities towards their own staff also. These included providing protective gear to police personnel but also sanitizing police stations and in some cases running kitchens in police stations due to long hours of work.

Communication
- Interviewees noted that social media has been actively used to raise awareness of the virus including regulations and how to stay safe, this includes through hyper-local WhatsApp groups managed by community policing volunteers.
- Vehicular public addressing systems were used as well as static ones for announcements around the pandemic. Pamphlets and brochures were also distributed, some of which were specifically image-based to ensure accessibility by illiterate citizens and children.
- A range of apps were used increasingly during the pandemic, for example, the Seva Sindhu portal was for travel passes the Karnataka State Police app to register complaints, the E-lost app for stolen mobile phones and the Suraksha app works for women who face any issues like harassment or violence.

Changes in Patrolling/Feet on Street
- Interviewees noted that along with an increase in patrolling (24/7 coverage, wider areas), a lot of stationary placement on-ground in terms manning road blocks, checkpoints, border points and quarantined areas was introduced as well as facilitating movement of citizens where necessary.
- Patrolling itself now also involves more citizen engagement.

Targeted Engagements with Specific Citizen Groups

- There were a range of targeted initiatives and interventions which were used for specific citizen groups during the pandemic as noted by officers in the sample. In particular for women, the elderly, the urban poor, daily-wage workers, those with particular medical needs (e.g. dialysis patients) and migrants. These predominantly covered needs in terms of food, shelter, medical care, sanitary hygiene and travel assistance.
- As mentioned above, many such engagements were done in partnership with a range of different agencies such as the BBMP.
- At times there was also engagement with particular religious groups, especially religious leaders as well as community leaders. Police interviewed mentioned they engaged with them to solicit help in closing religious spaces and guiding people in their communities to follow the pandemic rules.

Partnering with volunteers, NGOs and others

- Most police indicated increased partnering with volunteers and NGOs during the pandemic as well as other organisations like corporates and RWAs. In general, NGOs and corporate organisations approached the police rather than vice versa though in some cases, police were engaged already with NGOs and these partnerships intensified during the pandemic.
- This is contrary to citizen volunteers, for whom the police put out a call for. Additionally, many stations were already engaging with volunteers through for example community policing.
- Generally speaking, the police noted that both NGOs and other organisations provided resources both for needy citizens as well as people working on the front lines. Some worked on technical matters, such as mapping where to buy and access basic needs.
- Many of these resources were handed over to the police for distribution. NGOs also worked with the police to guide the distribution of donated resources. Simultaneously, the police also worked to ensure the safety of NGO staff and volunteers.
- By officers interviewed, there is a hardly any mention of sustained engagement with NGOs beyond keeping their names recorded in police stations to draw upon for any future needs.
- Many new citizens have come forward to volunteer with the police during the pandemic and have been co-ordinated by an already well-established network of volunteers through for example, the community policing initiative.
- One officer summarised the essential dynamic of volunteers working at the 'gully-level to facilitate communication to and from citizens in every corner of the city.'
- Over and above these channels of communication, volunteers were harnessed to do a huge range of things, from helping at traffic checkpoints to drawing educational graffiti, creating awareness around the pandemic, helping the elderly, women and migrants, controlling crowds, picking up seized vehicles, handling PA-announcements, registering complaints, counselling victims, reporting local crimes and verifying documents.
- Individual volunteers have seen more sustained engagements with the police than NGOs though issues of credibility were noted with citizens not always acknowledging volunteers in their roles.

Public Perception of the Police

- Across the board in the sample, the officers indicated that they felt the public perception of the police is more positive now than it was before the pandemic.
- Mostly the police felt that the new-found appreciation and positive perception was equally there from citizens across different communities and mostly because the police treatment of citizens from different communities was also equal.
- Police felt the reasons for this were to do with citizens being more acutely aware of the work of the police, the reliance of citizens on the police for many things during the pandemic and the police being available for the public in this time, the greater amounts of engagement between the two groups as well as the many humanitarian things they did, the fact they were risking their lives, supporting all communities equally and all the coverage of this work through the media.

Main Challenges During the Pandemic

- First and foremost, police interviewed mentioned safeguarding their own personal safety and health as a particular challenge.
- This concern spilled over into family life, limiting contact with them. Not only because of these health concerns but also the long working hours required due to the needs of the situation.
- Due to these risks, there were mental and physical health concerns of the police personnel.
- One officer mentioned that initially there were challenges in practicalities like knowing where to place road blocks, knowing who to stop and check, who to give travel pass priority to, what could be considered essential services and such things.
- Convincing people to stay inside and/or abide by the range of new rules was also cited as a great challenge by many officers.
- There was mention of the issues around managing the expectations of the police from citizens and understanding the bandwidth and resource constraints of the police and other institutions (which in themselves were issues for the police).
- Judging the sincerity of citizens and their needs was another challenge raised by several officers, particularly after granting permissions to find citizens have not been entirely truthful of their circumstances.
- From a purely practical standpoint, lack of public transport made it hard for some officers to get to work and back home again.

Best Practise Examples Arising out of the Pandemic

- With regards to everyday 'normal' policing there was suggestion that there could be more use of police resources to help people when needed. For example, using police vehicles to transport pregnant women to hospital.
- A great deal of trust had to be exercised by both citizens and police of each other during the pandemic. Although broken trust was mentioned as a challenge by the police, there were many engagements between the two groups which happened on trust which resulted in positive outcomes. Building and deepening this trust is something that can be taken away as a necessity from the pandemic.
- Extending beat patrols to be done by two people rather than one, even if one is a volunteer, is hugely valuable.
- There has been a realisation that physical and mental health is of upmost importance and should be maintained to ensure fitness for any future crises.
- Documenting everything is extremely important. For example, the information on migrants, NGOs, donors and volunteers which has been done by some stations and has created a series of databases of information and connection points which will be very helpful to help serve the public in the future.
- Experiencing the extensive help of citizen volunteers has demonstrated the benefit of this kind of engagement, especially in very local contexts to give and receive very context-specific knowledge and reach.

Training Needs

- The majority of police interviewed mentioned that there were no training gaps which needed to be filled during the pandemic. Many officers mentioned that in their base training, disaster management was adequately covered as well as health and fitness training, law and order maintenance, peace of mind training and how to deal with the public.
- Officers noted daily briefings/communications and noted the preparation of standard operating procedures (SOPs), circulars detailing COVID-19 precautions that should be taken by staff and in stations and adoptions of new work and shift patterns.
- Additionally, mental and physical health of the officers was taken very seriously and many officers noted a range of online classes and engagements to help with this.
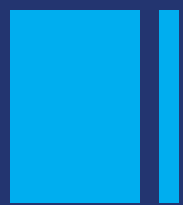
06.
RESULTS – CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION SURVEYS

RESULTS – CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATION SURVEYS

6.1   CSO SAMPLE

Eight citizens who went to complete the CSO survey were not, in fact, working for a CSO in Bengaluru. These eight citizens were filtered out of the survey. A total of 14 citizens, affiliated with CSOs in Bengaluru or citizen volunteers, completed the survey. These CSOs included Global Concerns India, Youthline Foundation, Aashwasan Foundation, Aadhyathe Trust, Sampark, Samarthanam and Citizen Welfare and Apartment Associations. Two of the citizens were part of the Corona Warriors, one was a citizen volunteer with the Community Policing initiative while some citizens did not want their CSO's name to be disclosed/did not mention their CSO affiliation.

The citizens were working or volunteering for organisations and initiatives centred around a range of target groups or activities as shown in Table 2. The most predominant was the provision of food and rations, followed by working towards safety and security and for migrant communities specifically. Over and above these options, other activities mentioned were healing, welfare association activities, solving of civic issues an identification of potential beneficiaries.

Table 2: Focus areas of the organisations the citizens work with

Focus area*	N
Working with women	7
Working with children	7
Working with migrants	8
Working with urban poor	6
Working with LGBTQ+ community	1
Working with religious minority communities	2
Working with specific caste communities	1
Providing food and rations	11
Working to provide livelihoods	4
Working towards safety and security	9
Providing basic non-food/shelter needs such as clothes, soap, water	6
Providing shelter	2
Providing healthcare	4
Disaster response	6

Respondents could choose more than one option as necessary.

As shown in Table 3, most respondents were volunteers or employees of the organisations mentioned. Three founders also responded.

Table 3: Position/role of the respondents

Position/role	N
Volunteer	5
Employee (full time or part time)	4
CEO/Senior leader	0
Founder	3
Governing Council Member	1
President of the association	1
Total	14

The overall response to the CSO survey was low and included citizen volunteers for the police as well as CSOs so only raw numbers are reported in the analysis and any generalisation of the findings is also limited.

6.2 CSO SURVEY RESULTS

### 6.2.1 Perceptions of Policing during the Pandemic

Respondents were asked what they think have been the additional responsibilities of the police during the pandemic. Most listed some of the core responsibilities as well as additional amounts of nuance, covering much of what the police have mentioned themselves. This included:

• Almost everything related to ensuring citizens remain inside their homes, including home isolation after initial lockdowns for COVID-19 patients/secondary contacts.
• To arbitrate when fights erupted during the distribution of food-rations, violence when hospitals refused to admit patients who require urgent assistance but not affected by COVID-19.
• Vehicle/citizens passage including transportation of citizens to hospitals and addressing migrant passage.
• Relief/aid to a range of communities like migrants, slum dwellers, the homeless.
• People engagement/spread awareness of the pandemic to citizens including through loudspeaker announcements.
• Increased frequency of beat patrols with loudspeaker announcements.
• Maintaining of social distancing at retail/ neighbourhood stores.
• The entire co-ordination of migrant travel from registration, to booking, to communication and logistics
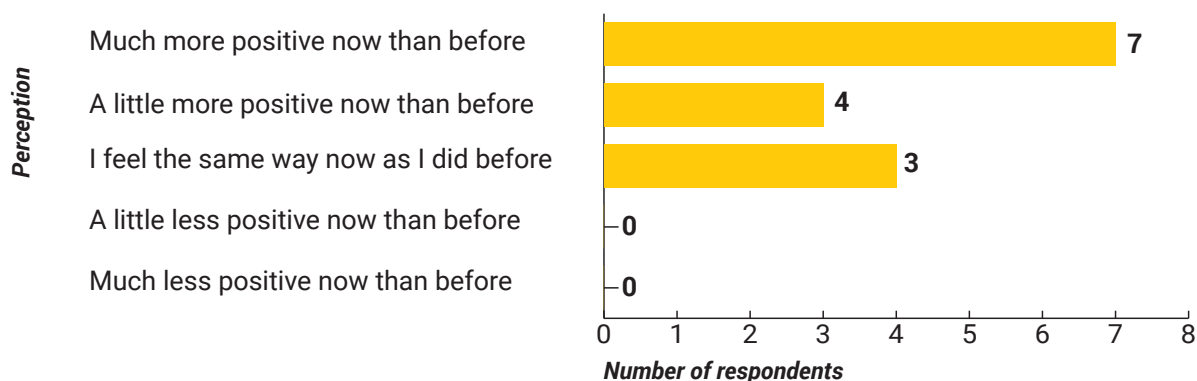• Monitoring incoming travellers, their home isolation and logistics etc.

Respondents were also asked if they could outline the challenges faced by the police during the pandemic. Most of the 14 surveyed had a good grasp of the core issues which have been mentioned by police as well as others and collectively they mentioned:

• Low manpower.
• Lack of sufficient transportation for all police personnel to travel to spots of conflicts.
• Longer working hours than the usual already-long hours.
• A lot of additional responsibilities making them over-burdened.
• No proper protective gear even though they are in danger of, and have a very high degree of propensity to contracting COVID-19 as well as transmitting this to their families.
• Police handling helplines for women with no training or experiences in coordinating services immediately required by women/families affected by family conflicts/domestic violence/cruelty in marriage or dowry harassment.
• Dealing with citizen resistance to lockdown rules and measures.
• In the above, the police sometimes found it difficult to remain calm and collected.
• New SOPs being created very frequently during the lockdown and those not being effectively communicated down the chain of command as well as poor government guidelines.
• Technology support being patchy and not as effective as it could have been. Websites built for reporting/ registration were very slow for example with poor data entry options; a lot of co-ordination was manually handled and led to repetitive calling/follow-ups; home isolation/contact tracing could have been done better with technology for example.

With this in mind, the vast majority of the 14 respondents 'strongly agreed' that the BCP have done/are doing a good job during the pandemic (Figure 22). No one disagreed. Furthermore, the majority also feel more positive now about the BCP than before the pandemic (Figure 23) though four respondents said they feel the same way.
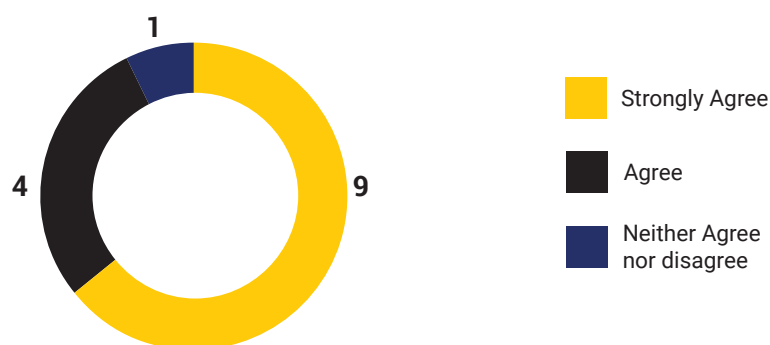
Figure 22: Extent of agreement that the Bengaluru City Police have done/are doing a good job during the COVID-19 pandemic

Perception

Much more positive now than before — **7**

A little more positive now than before — **4**

I feel the same way now as I did before — **3**

A little less positive now than before — **0**

Much less positive now than before — **0**

Number of respondents

Figure 23: Perception of the Bengaluru City Police now, during the pandemic, as compared with before the pandemic

6.2.2 Working with the Police Before the Pandemic

Ten of the respondents indicated that they/their affiliated organisations had worked with the BCP before the pandemic.

The respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the police co-operated well with them/the CSO before the pandemic. The majority (n=7) 'strongly agreed' while the remaining three 'agreed'. Likewise, the majority 'strongly agreed' that the police had utilised them/their CSO well before the pandemic. Only one respondent said they neither agreed nor disagreed with this (Figure 24).

1

2

7

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neither Agree nor disagree

Figure 24: Extent of agreement that the police utilised them/their CSO well before the pandemic (figures are presented as raw numbers)

Issues that were mentioned in working with the police before the pandemic included a negative attitude of some police personnel, shortage of police staff, poor utilisation of volunteers and not being able to work closely enough with the required police departments. One CSO mentioned they found that the police were not in favour of registering cases of gender-based violence, threats to lives of women and children, domestic violence, family conflicts or missing/trafficking cases.

However, many mentioned excellent engagements on for example, installing CCTVs in partnership with the police, corporative and friendly police generally. Furthermore, and support and collaboration with awareness programmes was mentioned by several respondents including on topics such as gender, the rights of women, children, LGBTQI+ issues, domestic violence, human trafficking, caste-related atrocities, policing and involvement of community in addressing issues of safety and protection of vulnerable people.

6.2.3 <u>Working with the Police during Pandemic</u>

Twelve of the respondents indicated that they worked with the police during the pandemic. Out of these, seven noted that this happened organically out of work they were already doing with the police before the pandemic. Four respondents indicated they made the approach to police while in one case, the respondent indicated the police came to them. One respondent indicated that they approached the police to offer their support that no partnership happened during the pandemic. They indicated that lack of communication and planning was the likely reason why no partnership arose. The remaining respondent said no approach was made from either them or the police to work together during the pandemic.

The range of work done in partnership was as follows:
- The majority mentioned working together to distribute food and rations to needy communities. One mentioned actual donation of the food also while another mentioned the police identifying those in need of rations while they distributed there accordingly.
- Distributing medicines.
- Distributing resources such as masks, sanitisers, gloves.
- Spreading COVID-19 awareness generally.
- Monitoring COVID-19 violations.
- Monitoring law and order.
- Assisting migrant labourers' needs.
- Identifying migrants in remote areas of the city.
- Co-ordinating police volunteers across areas of work.

As before the pandemic, the majority of the 12 respondents 'strongly agreed' that cooperation from the police was good during the pandemic and that they/their CSO was utilised well. No one disagreed with these statements.

Having established engagements with the police since before the pandemic, over a long period of time was mentioned as contributing to the good relationship with the police during the pandemic. Respondents mentioned different things which worked well in their relationship with the police that helped them provide adequate relief and support during the pandemic. These included:
- Being considered as allies to the police.
- Providing additional man-power to the police.
- Support in identifying and reaching the urban poor from the police including facilitation in acquiring travel passes so relief could be distributed.
- General positive and humble attitudes on both sides.

In terms of what could have been better, according to respondents the following would be considerations:
- Use of the CSOs/volunteers for more engagements and work.
- Zone-wise allocation of control rooms and better communication back and forth to reach more needy citizens on the ground.
- Better engagement and coordination with citizens on the ground.
- Accepting digital travel passes as well as physical ones to avoid unnecessary detainments.
- Related to bullet above, clearer identification of volunteers from the start.
- No change of police leadership during the pandemic.
- Better identification of essential workers. A respondent gave the example of an informal worker in the waste management sector being beaten for being out when doing this essential work.
- Not over-burdening the police with duties such as caring for the migrant labourers so as to instead focus more on controlling the pandemic through enforcement of mask wearing, social distancing etc.

Additionally, respondents mentioned the tireless working of the police during the pandemic as incredible. As one respondent said, '*This was my first experience with working with the BCP and I was left with tremendous respect for their commitment and hard work during the pandemic. Despite it being an unprecedented situation, the police personnel I worked with dealt with all the new issues in a rapid fashion while maintaining a humane approach. They were also keenly aware of the pockets of areas with population most at risk and directed us in a way to ensure aid reached the needy*'.

6.2.4 Longer-term Partnerships with the Police

The majority of the 14 respondents foresee a longer-term partnership with the police, with only one saying they don't (Figure 25). The reason for the latter being that the Corona Warriors was created in direct response to the COVID-19 pandemic and, being completely volunteer run, has disbanded for now. Those who said maybe felt that in some ways the police were too busy to establish a partnership.

Do you foresee a longer-term partnership with the police?
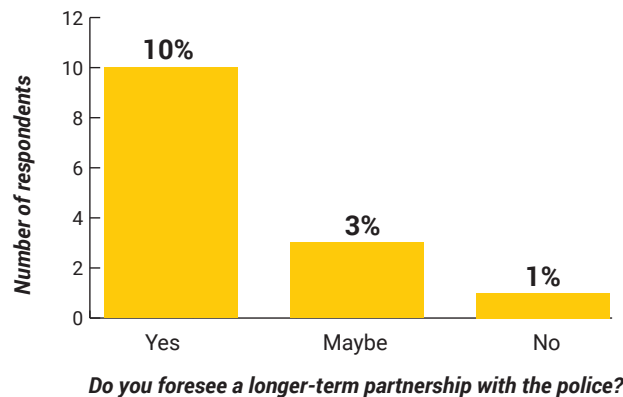
Figure 25: Do you foresee a longer-term partnership with the police?

In terms of the nature of longer-term partnerships that could occur, responses were mostly specific to the nature of the work being done by the individuals and CSOs and included:
- Working at the police commissioner's office to respond to calls on the women/child helplines during the day and night, at specified stations.
- To be the point of first contact to these women, children, elderly victims and survivors.
- To work together in cooperation to enhance safety in public places by informing the police about criminal/suspicious activities.
- Cooperate and assist those affected in road accidents.
- To assist the police in organizing meetings with communities and when schools/colleges reopen-to create awareness of issues and build confidence in children, vulnerable citizens/communities and the local police.
- To facilitate citizen engagement and volunteers, especially since the police to citizen ratio is very poor.
- To work on future disaster management planning and relief work by analysing any data collected during this pandemic, in conjunction with the BBMP also. Particularly at the ward-level if such data is available.
- To ensure the safety and security of the stakeholder groups these organisations work with, for example, waste pickers.
- To raise awareness on different issues so events can be organised jointly.
- To continue installing CCTVs in key locations and improve safety.

Additionally, many respondents took pains to note that longer-term partnerships with CSOs, volunteers and resident welfare associations are essential for the police, not only for day-to-day engagements normally but for any emergencies in the future also. This collaboration which can also include elected representatives and government departments can help the city improve in the long-run.

6.3   CSO SURVEY KEY TAKE-AWAYS

Perceptions of Policing during the Pandemic
- Most of the 14 individuals surveyed were able to list some of the core additional responsibilities of the police during the pandemic as well as additional amounts of nuance, covering much of what the police have mentioned themselves. This includes things such as ensuring lockdowns, home-isolations, vehicle/citizen passage, refuge and aid to those in need, greater beat patrols and increased engagement with citizens on all aspects of the pandemic.
- Interviewees also tended to have a good grasp of the issues which the police have faced including for example, low manpower, larger volume of work, longer working hours, resistance from citizens to COVID-19 protection measures and a dynamic situation with frequent rule and guideline changes.
- The vast majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' that the BCP have done/are doing a good job during the pandemic. No one disagreed.
- The majority of CSO respondents also feel more positive now about the BCP than before the pandemic.

Working with the Police Before the Pandemic
- Out of 10 respondents of CSOs, who had worked with the BCP before the pandemic, 7 'strongly agreed' the BCP co-operated well with them/the CSO before the pandemic.
- Issues in partnerships highlighted were negative attitude of some police, shortage of police staff, poor utilisation of volunteers and non-registration of certain cases.
- Many however, mentioned excellent engagements with corporative and friendly police and support and collaboration with awareness programmes.

Working with the Police During the Pandemic
- Twelve of the respondents indicated that they worked with the police during the pandemic. For most this happened organically out of work already done together.
- In one case an approach to the police was made but poor planning and communication were cited as reasons this did not come to fruition.
- Work done in partnership included identification of those in need, distribution of food and rations, medicines and other resources, spreading awareness, monitoring COVID-19 violations and other law and order issues as well as co-ordinating police volunteers across areas of work.
- As before the pandemic, respondents mostly 'strongly agreed' that cooperation from the police was good during the pandemic and that they/their CSO was utilised well. No one disagreed with these statements.
- Established relationships that pre-dated the pandemic was mentioned as contributing to good relationships with the police. Additionally, what worked well was positive and humble attitudes from both stakeholders, the fact NGOs provided additional manpower to the police and helping to provide succour to those in need.
- CSOs mentioned, as improvements in their partnerships, there could have been even more use of them, more hyper-local operations and engagements with citizens on the ground and more rational distribution of work such that police were less engaged with humanitarian tasks which NGOs could do so police could focus on law and order.

Longer-term Partnerships with the Police
- The majority of the 14 respondents foresee a longer-term partnership with the police, with only one saying they don't. Those who said maybe felt that in some ways the police were too busy to establish a partnership.
- In terms of the nature of longer-term partnerships that could occur, many responses were specific to the nature of the work being done by the individuals and CSOs. That said, many oriented around supporting engagements between the police and the CSOs' specific communities of interest as a result of incidents or in times of need.
- Additionally, many of the suggestions centred around enhancing public safety and facilitating information flow more generally from citizens to the police with regards to for example, criminal/suspicious activities. This included awareness building in communities of crimes etc.
- Some CSOs suggested support in disaster management planning and relief work by analysing any data collected during this pandemic.
- Additionally, many respondents took pains to note that longer-term partnerships with CSOs, volunteers and resident welfare associations are essential for the police, not only for day-to-day engagements normally but for any emergencies in the future also.
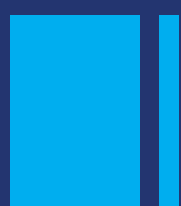
07.
DISCUSSION

SUMMARY DISCUSSION

The overwhelming sentiment arising out of this research is a fundamental positive shift in how the police and policing in Bengaluru are perceived, since the pandemic has hit. This is particularly so from citizens - as reported by they themselves and by police in their reflections on how citizens see them. Ninety percent of the citizens sampled feel 'a little' or 'a lot' more positive now about the police than before the pandemic. Citizens feel there are more police on the streets, they feel safer and overall, they feel the police are doing a good job during the pandemic. All while the citizens are very aware of the additional roles and responsibilities the police have had during the pandemic and the challenges this has led to. It seems paramount that the police build on this positive wave as they move forward to foster trust and to facilitate safety and security.

It appears that increased and effective engagement between the police, citizens and communities has been central to the shift, aided at times by technologies such as social media, WhatsApp and other apps such as the Karnataka State Police App, E-Lost and the Suraksha App. The engagements include positive and helpful police and a greater understanding between both stakeholders. Citizen volunteers and NGOs, working in partnership with the police, have also been instrumental in this, embodying the community policing philosophy and practise which has been growing in the Bengaluru police since 2013. A majority of citizens interviewed did/experienced each of approaching the police themselves during the pandemic, interacting with a citizen volunteer and were approached by the police. And, those who did the former two, were overwhelmingly more likely to feel the police are doing a good job than those who hadn't interacted in this way. The majority of those who engaged with the police also found them to be kind, polite, patient, helpful and humble.

The police themselves noted more engagements with citizens, particularly communities such as women, migrant labourers and the elderly along with the benefits of extensive use of citizen volunteers as well as NGOs to support their work. All while navigating the challenges of manpower, longer hours, judging citizen sincerity, navigating rules, regulations and exceptions as well as ensuring their own mental and physical wellbeing. Police, however, noted that citizens gained a great understanding of the police challenges during the pandemic which they felt has helped shift the perception. Maintaining this level of community engagement appears critical to sustaining these improved relations. Indeed, this is also how CSOs perceive longer-term partnerships working with the police, with they themselves facilitating these engagements.

To that end, the police can consider reenergising the Community Policing program and the Area Suraksha Mitra (citizen volunteer) decentralized police station support and with a more diverse range of community representation within the volunteer base. In doing so, the police can capitalise on the positive behaviours and engagements of both the police and citizens as well as on social media and other communication tools and apps which have seen increased use during the pandemic. This would help to ensure:
• A continued and sustained police presence on the ground.
• Sustained, deeper and positive engagements with all citizens in hyper-local contexts, both directly and through citizen volunteers/NGOs.
• Targeted and effective engagements with specific communities like women, the elderly, the urban poor, migrant labourers etc.

All of which would help manpower (and indeed, promote better recognition of citizen volunteers in the community), help to document and identify communities, understand their changing needs and concerns, share up-to-date information (both ways), ensure police presence and availability, build trust, build awareness of crimes and thereby improve responses and engagements across all policing matters whether in times of crisis or not.

In addition to training and focus on this, additional focus on preparedness for crises can include preparation of guidelines/SOPs and documents on specific, vulnerable communities, essential items, exceptional circumstances and response approaches. All while continuing to maintain focus on the physical and mental wellbeing of the police personnel.

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