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From Feedback to Action: #AppKaraBusKara Campaign Insights

The Low Carbon Mobility Networks in three cities of Maharashtra, comprising diverse civil service organizations and concerned citizens, strives to reduce carbon emissions. To address city-specific issues and devise localized solutions, Parisar organized a series of participatory workshops. Through these workshops, various solutions were shortlisted and prioritized. In Pune, it became evident that the lack of essential commuter information, particularly regarding bus routes, significantly contributes to Punekars' reliance on private vehicles. To gain deeper insights into this issue, we initiated the Bus Pravasi Series, engaging with commuters across Pune to collect their stories. Additionally, we met up with PMPML officials to advocate for a user-friendly bus app and understand the reasons behind the delay in its launch.

Three steps of our campaign:

- **Gathering Commuter Perspectives:**
  We started with the Bus Pravasi Series to gather valuable insights into the challenges faced by bus users from diverse demography. This data served as the foundation for our campaign strategy, highlighting the critical need for improved commuter information.

- **Engagement with PMPML:**
  We engaged in several discussions with PMPML officials to emphasize the necessity of a swift launch of a bus app, reflecting the concerns and needs of commuters.

- **On ground demands:**
  To comprehensively grasp the challenges faced by the broader commuter community, we established booths in six strategic locations across Pune. These locations were carefully selected based on the diverse frequencies of bus services, ensuring that the varying needs of commuters were captured effectively.

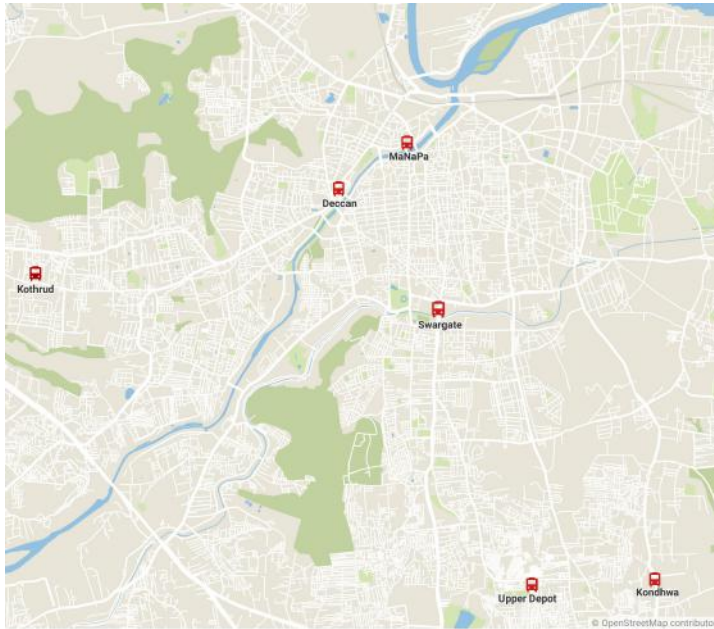## On ground campaign:

Pic 1: Demand card

Fig 1: Locations of the campaign

During the **"App Kara Bus Kara"** campaign, our demand card featured a comprehensive list of 10 demands derived from our consultative workshops. These demands were aimed at addressing the key challenges faced by commuters in Pune's public transport system. Additionally, we provided a column for comments and suggestions, allowing participants to share their insights and perspectives.

Over the course of **12 days,** (from 20th March - 1st April) we engaged with people from different backgrounds at **six** different bus depots in the city. We were successful in getting a total of **1319 bus pravasis** to write their feedback and inputs on the proposed demands. This extensive outreach allowed us to capture a diverse range of commuter perspectives and preferences, ensuring that our campaign reflected the needs and priorities of the broader community.
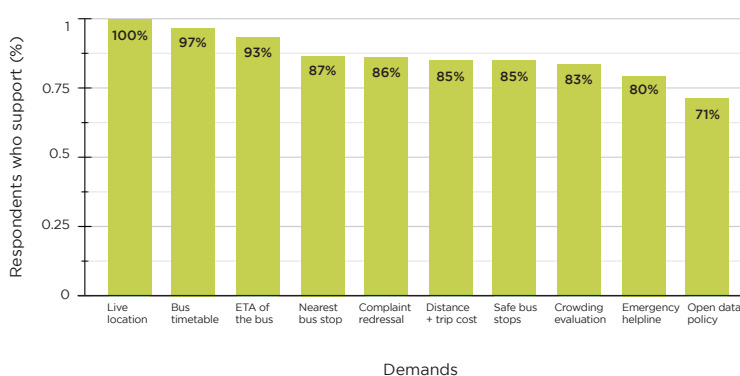
Data gathered through demand cards:

Fig 2: Respondents and their demands

Data Collection and Analysis:

Commuters were asked to indicate their preferences by ticking the demands they deemed necessary or helpful for daily commuters. This method facilitated quick and efficient data collection, allowing us to gather insights from a large number of respondents. We utilized qualitative content analysis to analyze the comments written on the demand cards. This method involved interpreting the content to identify themes, meanings, and patterns within the demands and comments provided by participants. By focusing on understanding the context and deeper implications of the communication, we gained valuable insights into the needs and priorities of Pune's commuter community.

The demand analysis reveals significant insights into the priorities of Pune's commuter community. Among the 1319 respondents, demands for live bus location, bus timetable and route, and ETA of buses garnered the highest levels of interest, with 1313, 1278, and 1228 responses, respectively. This indicates a strong desire for real-time information and efficient planning tools among commuters. Additionally, demands related to the location of the nearest bus stop, distance and cost of trips, and safety ratings of bus infrastructure were also prominent, with responses ranging from 1100 to 1145. These findings underscore commuters' concerns for accessibility, affordability, and safety in their daily travels. Furthermore, demands for satisfactory complaint redressal (1135 responses) and availability of PMPL data for third-party applications (938 responses) highlight the importance of accountability and transparency in public transportation services. Overall, the analysis suggests a pressing need for improvements in information dissemination, service reliability, and customer support within Pune's public transport system to enhance the commuting experience for residents.

Content analysis of comments and suggestions:

Content analysis is crucial in understanding the insights and sentiments expressed by participants, especially in qualitative data gathered from sources like demand cards. By analyzing the content, researchers can identify patterns, themes, and key findings that may inform decision-making and campaign strategies. In order to gain insights a total of **107 demand cards** were selected and analyzed using content analysis methodology. This method allowed us to extract meaningful insights from the data and ensured that the sample is not biased and is representative of the population.

Key Findings from Content Analysis:

1. Demand for Real-Time Bus Information:
   - 16 comments mentioned the importance of live location tracking of buses.
   - 22 comments emphasized the need for bus timetables and routes.
   - 16 comments highlighted the significance of knowing the arrival time of buses at stops.
   - The primary focus on these demands reflects commuters' desire for accurate and up-to-date information to plan their journeys effectively, indicating a need for real-time tracking features in the proposed app.

2. Time-Saving Measures:
   - Participants expressed a desire for features that would save time, such as live bus tracking and access to bus timetables.
   - This highlights the importance of efficiency and convenience in public transportation services, with commuters seeking tools to streamline their travel experience.

3. Payment Convenience:
   - There was a demand for the inclusion of a UPI payment mode for tickets in the app, eliminating the need for cash transactions.
   - This reflects a preference for digital payment methods and a desire for greater convenience in ticket purchasing.

4. Wayfinding Accessibility and Multilingual Support:
   - Participants suggested features to enhance accessibility, such as multilingual display boards on buses.
   - This demonstrates an awareness of the diverse needs of commuters and a desire for inclusive transportation services.

5. Information dissemination during Special Events and Circumstances:
   - Concerns were raised about timely information regarding temporary route changes during events like Ganesh Utsav and Varkari pilgrimages which affect ticket prices and travel routes.
   - Participants also highlighted issues with online ticketing systems, suggesting that the app could address such challenges for smoother transactions.

Noteworthy commuter perspectives from our on ground interactions during the campaign:

- **Updated Wayfinding signages:**
  During our on-ground interactions throughout the campaign, one notable commuter perspective that emerged loud and clear was the demand for updated wayfinding signages which mention bus routes, numbers and the frequency of the bus. Commuters expressed a strong desire for clear and informative signage that would help commuters from all backgrounds and literacy levels navigate the bus transport with ease without dependency on the app.

- **High-Frequency Areas:**
  Commuters in high-frequency areas encounter challenges related to bus timing, lack of information on connecting buses, and safety concerns. Issues such as overcrowding, rash driving, and inadequate seating arrangements disproportionately affect vulnerable groups, including women and people with disabilities.

- **Low-Frequency Areas:**
  In regions with low bus frequency, commuters, especially women and students, struggle with irregular schedules and safety concerns. Alternative modes of transportation, such as walking or rickshaws, are preferred due to the unpredictability and inconvenience of bus services.

- **Bus Driver and Conductor Perspectives:**
  While acknowledging the potential benefits of a bus app, drivers and conductors express concerns about increased workload and potential technical issues. They highlight the unjust blame they receive for systemic issues beyond their control, affecting their job satisfaction and public perception.

Pic 2: School students holding the demand signs at MaNaPa bus depot.

Pic 3: Bus app Installation at Kothrud bus stop.

Pic 4: Demand card being signed by an elderly gentleman at Deccan bus depot.

Pic 5: People waiting longer than one hour sharing the issue and signing the demand card at Kondhwa bus stop.

Pic 6: Volunteers explained the issue to Pravasi at Swargate depot.

Pic 7: People were eager to know how to deal with low-frequency issues and save their time at Bibwewadi depot.

Bus Pravasi- Male
commuters' perspectives

Bus Pravasi- Female
commuters' perspectives

#AppKaraBusKara
campaign video

Bus Pravasi and
the BRTS