

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES FOR EQUALITY

Policy Brief VI.4

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policy brief

VI.4.1 Introduction

One of the topics mentioned by residents in most interviews was the issue of Maré's infrastructure¹. It was noted that the issue of services provided by the State is precarious, requiring urbanization, sanitation, electricity, space arborization, garbage disposal, the presence of a bank agency, post delivery flow, and other services that the rest of the city gets efficiently and Maré does not receive.

Residents have proposed greater participation in the decision of priorities and more government investment, improvements in sanitation and electricity, regularity in garbage disposal and provision of services.

The infrastructure sector is intended to serve people and make space occupation worthy to residents. Slums historically suffer a reflection of abandonment by the State: the services provided to residents are poor and do not meet all needs.

On the distribution of electricity, a basic resource for survival and much mentioned during the interviews, it is essential to point out that there are still places in Maré that don't have electricity, and other sectors with poor power service, with no upgrades, and therefore, the power surges become more frequent due to this deficit of the State. During the summer period the power consumption increases and on energy peaks the hours without electricity become routine. The delay in reconnection and the absence of this service are problems that accrue to other existing infrastructure deficits in the slum.

Underscoring that water distribution is precarious, residents claim a local sanitation plan. There are still many places in Maré that have neither water distribution system, much less sewage. In periods of very heavy rains, several areas of Maré overflow,

¹ Research methods: involved individual interviews with leaders and residents well known in Maré; 4 interviews with constant action groups; Analysis of academic papers and articles in local newspapers; Research production analysis carried out by NGOs operating in the territory; Workshop offered to the UFRJ course of Public Management for Economic and Social Development.

locomotion becomes impossible and water reaches people's homes with dirt residues leaving them vulnerable, exposed to open sky ditches.

"Piper water don't reach certain homes, but the dwellers pay the bill to maintain their names "clean". Today the key problem for the Association is that work (Água para Todos Program), because everybody complain." Elizabeth Roque, director of the Resident Association of Roquete Pinto ².

By another angle it is important to note that the residents must have organized the storage of their waste. Many of the open sky ditches that exist in Maré are used as garbage dumps, where some residents throw their trash, which causes other problems of sewage concentration during rainfalls.

Bins facilities were insufficient and the removal of rubbish too slow. There is no maintenance of the bins and the result is an unpleasant stench for people living near the dumps, the infestation by pests and, with the rain, the garbage that remains out of the bins ends up falling in ditches or clogging open drains, resulting in the worsening of sanitation problems.

About services, interviews point out that there is much insecurity. There is no banking agency, and before there weren't even ATMs for withdrawals and residents had to get around to the Bonsucesso neighborhood to perform a simple banking service. Many criticisms were directed to the Post Office, because this service does not meet all of the Maré shantytown³. Places like Baixa do Sapateiro, where the post office does not deliver at the homes of residents and other places where the mail is delivered negligently or at the wrong address. In the transition periods of the year service gets very poor, often forcing people to retrieve their mail at post office agencies. There is a

² Investment from CEDAE in Maré according to a local blog: "There will be an investment of R\$ 35 million only in Maré, amount passed by the PAC 2 (Growth Acceleration Program 2). It consists on a set of interventions like the new collector trunk of Faria Timbó river. This package will get to Maré, Manguinhos, Alemão e Jacarezinho. In Maré, the construction works will contemplate the communities from Parque União till ^{Conjunto} Esperança. The other three communities (Roquete Pinto, Praia de Ramos e Marcílio Dias) that will not be assisted by this project will undergo a verification of their faced needs." (Maré de Notícias, 35 edition, November 2012 – www.redesdamare.org.br).

³ Residents from 5 of the 16 communities of Maré still suffer to get a letter. The Post Office says that the situation will be solved after the oficialisation of street names.

need to provide preservation services to green areas in Maré as well as local afforestation.

VI.4.2. Policy Recommendations

- The infrastructure problems need to be addressed with greater government investment and with service maintenance policies;
- Basic electricity and sanitation need to be constantly reviewed because residents demands always tend to increase;
- Universalization of access to basic services provision and its regulation.