

Kalasipalya Market: Restoring Order to One of Bengaluru’s Oldest Markets



Kalasipalya Market is one of Bengaluru’s oldest and most important trading hubs. Yet, for years, it carried the visible scars of neglect—overflowing waste, clogged drains, and roads buried under rotting tomatoes. Despite its strategic location along the K-100 drain corridor, waste management here had never been addressed through a structured, market-specific system.

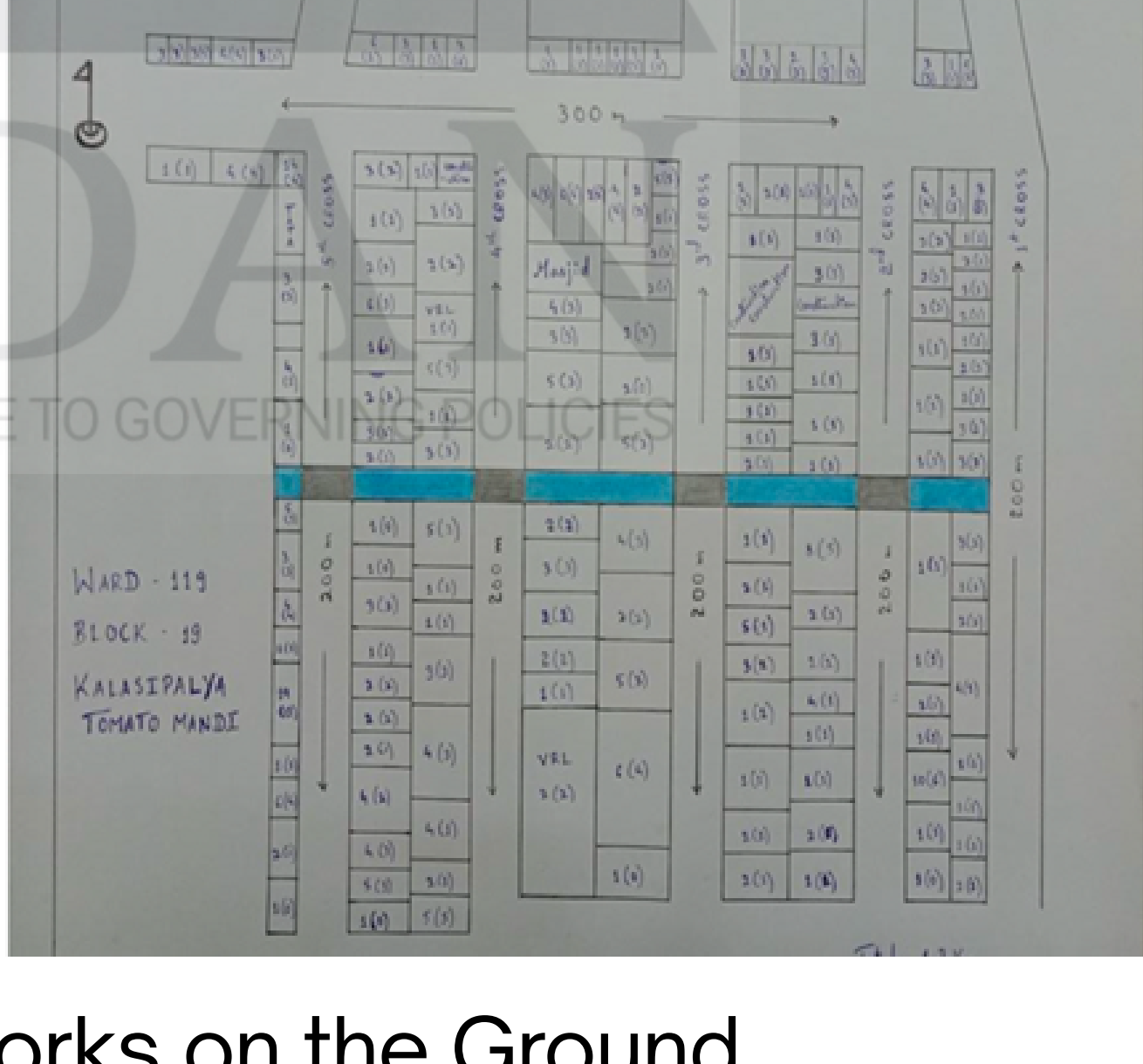
The result was predictable. Vendors routinely discarded damaged produce onto roadsides and directly into the stormwater drain. Waste collection was irregular, segregation was absent, and black spots multiplied. What was missing was not effort—but design, coordination, and accountability.



1. Starting with the Real Problem

Vedan Trust, along with BBMP and SVP India, began by acknowledging a simple truth: markets do not function like residential areas. Kalasipalya’s long working hours, high waste volumes, and dense vendor activity required a system built around its realities—not assumptions.

We chose Block 19 (Tomato Mandi) as the pilot zone and conducted detailed manual mapping to understand shop types, waste streams, distances, and operational flow. This data-driven approach revealed the scale of the challenge—over 300 active shops generating large volumes of organic waste daily, with no reliable collection mechanism.



Designing a System That Works on the Ground

Based on these insights, a clear operational plan was put in place:

- Dedicated time-based allocation of pourakarmikas
- Multiple BBMP auto trips aligned with peak waste generation hours
- Separate collection of rotted tomatoes in crates
- Scheduled dry-waste pickup from shops
- Clear division of roles between vendors, sanitation workers, and supervisors

This was not about adding new resources—but optimizing what already existed.

3.2 - ALLOCATION OF PK

TIME	PK	CROSS
6:30 to 8:30 am	Pk 1	1 st Cross
8:30 to 10:30 am	Pk 2	2 nd Cross
11:15 to 12:15 pm	Pk 1	3 rd Cross
	Pk 2	4 th Cross
		Main Road
12:45 to 1:30 pm	Pk 1 and Pk 2	5 th Cross

3.3 - BBMP AUTO ALLOTMENT

TIME	PRACTICE
7:30 TO 8:15 am	Clearing the Black spots
8:15 to 9:30 am	Collection of rotted and damaged tomatoes from the vendors (wet waste only).
9:30 to 10:30 am	2 nd trip for waste tomato collection from vendors.
11:30 to 1:30 pm	Collection of dry waste from shops and waste from PKs.

Awareness, Accountability, and Behaviour Change

System design alone isn’t enough in a market ecosystem. Behaviour change was critical.

Vendors were engaged through continuous on-ground awareness, clear instructions, and a strong feedback loop. WhatsApp groups were created to ensure real-time communication between vendors, BBMP officials, and Vedan’s team—bringing transparency and shared responsibility into daily operations.



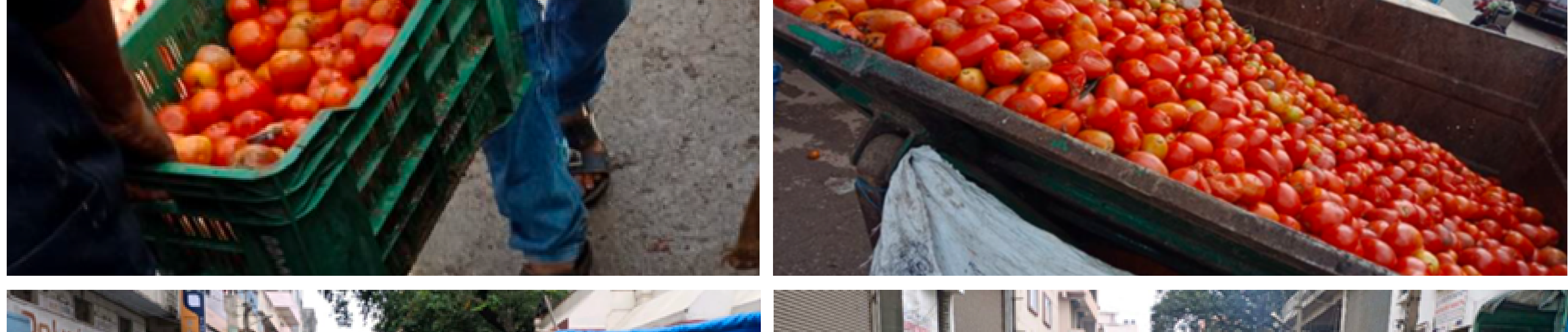
To reinforce compliance, marshals imposed fines for violations such as roadside dumping and drain disposal. Over time, these fines reduced significantly—an indicator that habits were changing.

Visible Results in Weeks, Not Years

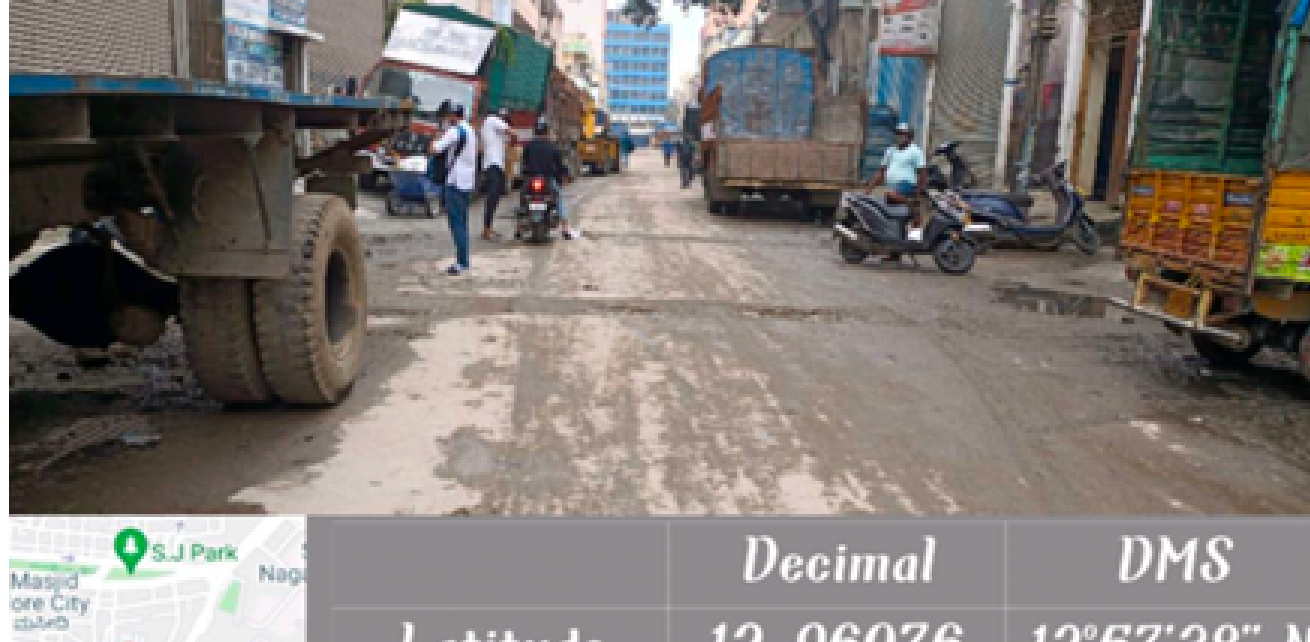
The impact was unmistakable.

- 80–90% of internal roads became visibly clean
- Black spots were eliminated across multiple lanes
- 1–2 auto-loads of waste tomatoes were collected daily instead of entering drains
- Vendors adopted the practice of storing waste separately in crates
- Drain dumping reduced drastically, easing pressure on the K-100 corridor

For a market where cleanliness had been elusive for over a decade, this transformation was historic.



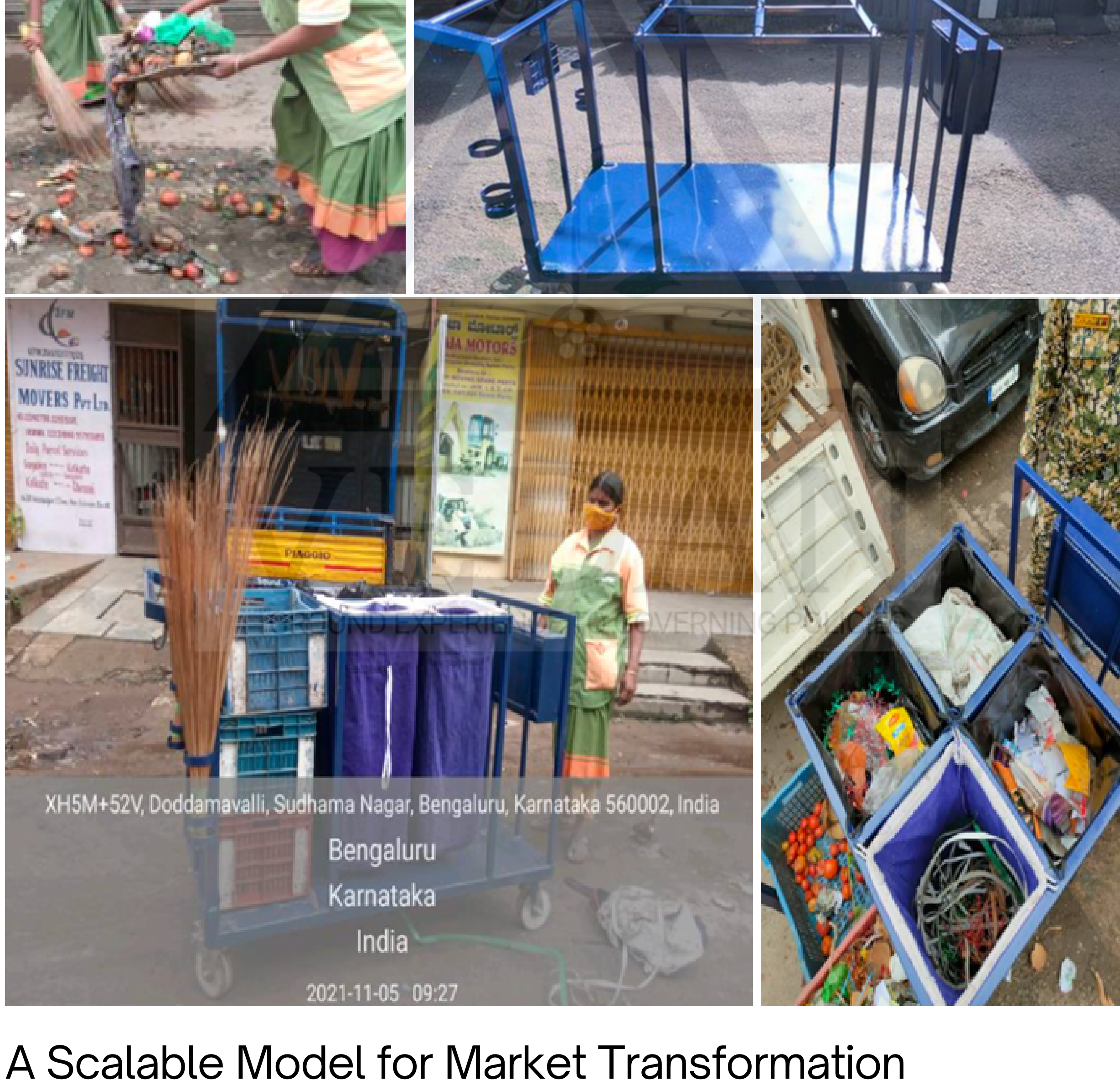
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Infrastructure That Supports the System

To sustain these gains, targeted infrastructure improvements were identified—protective grills over drains, boundary walls at dumping points, improved road surfaces, and redesigned waste trolleys that allowed on-the-spot segregation. Each recommendation was practical, affordable, and directly linked to daily operations.



A Scalable Model for Market Transformation

Kalasipalya proved a critical point: the problem was never the volume of waste—it was the absence of a system designed for the market. By aligning waste management with how the market actually functions, Vedan demonstrated that even the most chaotic environments can be transformed. With Block 19 completed, the same model is now ready to be rolled out across remaining blocks—one section at a time, one system at a time.

For donors and partners, Kalasipalya stands as proof that strategic intervention, not large budgets, creates lasting change.

Conclusion: When the System Worked, So Did the Market

The Kalasipalya Market initiative is no longer operational today—but its story is far from a failure. In fact, it is one of the strongest proofs that systems, not behaviour change campaigns or enforcement, are what make markets work.

During the period when a clear waste management system was in place—defined roles, timely collection, autos, and predictable processes—the market functioned efficiently. Vendors segregated waste, cooperated with collection schedules, and actively participated in keeping the market clean. The transformation was visible and widely acknowledged by officials, workers, and long-time market observers. For the first time in many years, waste stopped clogging drains, black spots reduced, and organic waste was handled scientifically instead of being dumped.

However, once the system support was withdrawn—autos stopped coming, collection became irregular, and accountability weakened—the entire structure collapsed. Not because vendors resisted, but because the system failed them. Today, vendors continue to ask for what once worked: regular autos, predictable collection, and a functioning framework. Their demands themselves are evidence that behaviour change had already taken root.

Kalasipalya proves a hard but essential truth:

Without a system, no amount of cleaning, penalising, or moral policing will sustain change. And with a system—even a simple, low-cost one—markets respond immediately.

This experience shows that sustainable market waste management does not require massive investments or endless monitoring. It requires designing systems that respect market realities and ensuring their continuity.

Kalasipalya worked when the system existed. It failed when the system was removed.

That lesson is invaluable—and it must guide how future markets are transformed.