

Summary Report 2021-2022

The health of the Bangladeshi population is greatly affected by the state of its cities. As Bangladesh tries to tackle major problems such as climate change, non-communicable diseases, road safety, water pollution, noise pollution and air pollution, ensuring cities are livable is critically important. In 2021-2022, Work for a Better Bangladesh implemented several great projects to improve the life of residents in Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital city:

Farmers' Market to Ensure Safe, Healthy, and Nutritious Food

In 2021, we organized a pilot project titled Street Food Vending and Farmers' Market Establishment. The project aimed to ensure access to affordable and safe nutritious food in low-income communities sourced and sold by local farmers.



The program involved 10 farmers from Birulia and Savar who would market and sell, every week their produce in T-Block, Rupnagar R/A, Mirpur, and Ward no-6 of Dhaka North City Corporation. 1500 to 2000 consumers would visit the market each week and the farmers would sell approximately 50,000 BDT (\$700 CAD) of product. As the market is established in low-income communities, the beneficiaries are mostly from low-income groups.



In addition to ensuring access to safe and healthy food, this pilot project aimed to set an example of placemaking. The original place where the market was established used to be a garbage dump. With this initiative, we successfully reclaimed the street for people and turned it into a beautiful market. To achieve this, WBB consulted with stakeholders, organized community engagement activities, and promoted the initiative through mass media. From our meetings with stakeholders, we decided on a location for the farmers' market and identified suppliers who grow safe produce and were interested in participating.



Through community engagement with the immediate communities, we received positive comments about the proposed farmer's market and assessed local expectations. In addition, by visiting the existing farmers' market in Dhaka, we were able to learn from the farmers' experience. Before the inauguration of the farmers' market, we conducted promotional activities (distributing leaflets, miking, displaying banners, etc.) and organized webinars with journalists. After the inauguration of the farmers' market, we continuously surveyed the opinions of farmers, organized focus group discussions, and tried to understand the opinions of the local community to assess and improve their experience. After the pilot project was completed, we continued the market and it is thriving. In 2022-2023, we will be starting more farmers' markets in lower-income communities in Dhaka.



Mobile Playground: Creating Playing Opportunities for Children

Dhaka city lacks parks and playgrounds, especially play spaces for children under 5 years old and adolescent girls. To create opportunities for people to socialize and play, we started organizing mobile playgrounds in two communities, Niribili Housing and Saikat Housing, in the Rayerbazar area.

To begin the project in Niribili Housing, we first organized a series of meetings to gain approval from the President of the Housing Society and the Ward Councilor of Ward No.34. In addition, we shared the mobile playground plans with the local communities to get feedback. Once permission was received, we organized the event with help from the President of Niribili Housing Society and the Ward Councilor who wished to scale up the project and expand it to Saikat Housing. Children were involved and supported us in organizing and concluding the event. In addition, local people in the Saikat Housing community gave us a place to keep all the equipment. Two officials from WBB Trust weekly go to the event for monitoring.

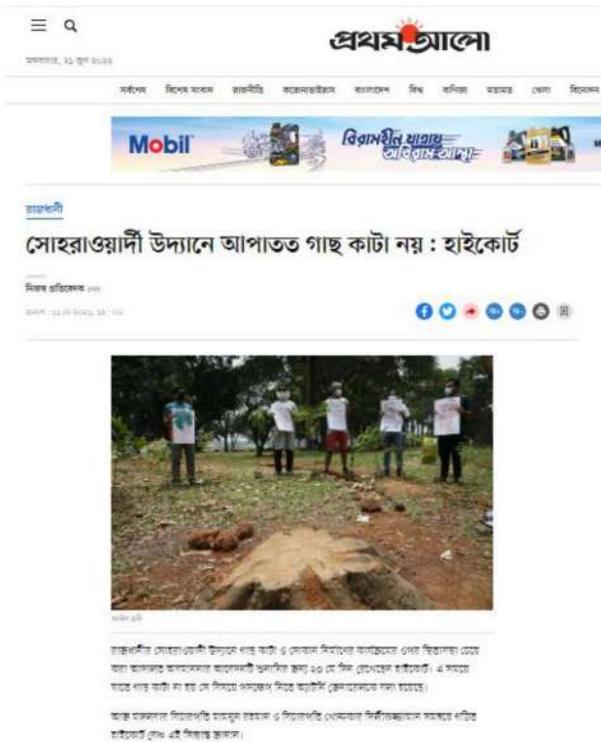


In Niribili Housing, the mobile playground has been organized for 25 weeks. Weekly approximately 70 people, the majority of whom are children less than 5 years old from the local community, come and participate. In addition to young children, many adolescent girls from the surrounding houses regularly participate or come to socialize.

In Saikat Housing, the mobile playground has been organized for 16 weeks and each week more than 100 community members participate in the event. Most of these participants are children less than 5 years old. The initiative has created playing opportunities for children as well as socialization opportunities for adults, especially young women.

Saving public spaces

WBB Trust is always on the lookout for news and policies related to livable cities’ issues. Once we identify issues that require our attention, we will send letters to relevant authorities and organizations, which we have found to be important advocacy tools. By sending letters to relevant authorities, we have successfully stopped the encroachment of three open public spaces: one pond in Comilla City Corporation, one city-level park (Sohrawardi Udyan), and one playground in a housing society. The pond was going to be filled to create a government official's housing, the trees in the city-level park were going to be cut down to make space for a restaurant, and the playground of the housing society was going to be turned into apartments. By sending letters to relevant authorities, the Supreme Court ordered that the infrastructure building should stop and that the open spaces should be kept as they are. Sending letters is one of the easiest advocacy tools available to us and has sometimes proven to be the most powerful.



High Court ordered to stop cutting down trees in Sohrawardi Uddyan



High Court orders Department of Public Works to stop building infrastructure in the playground of Kallyanpur Housing

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