

How the Livable Cities team has been adjusting to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic



Like all of you out there, we, the Livable Cities (LC) team at HealthBridge have had to make big adjustments to keep ourselves and our colleagues safe during the pandemic while continuing to do our important work in contributing to better health around the world. While the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought new challenges, we have also discovered that, in some ways, the world has become even smaller and more connected. Our LC team, with of over 20 partners from Asia and Africa, has been meeting twice a month, joining Kristie Daniel, the LC Program Director. During these meetings, partners prepared presentations on various themes, we posted questions on Facebook that led to lively discussions, then we had a call to summarize and discuss. It was the first time that our LC partners came together regularly for group chats. A post-meeting survey we conducted found that the partners reported the meeting to be very useful and that it helped lessen their sense of isolation. On the ground, our LC partners have switched from in-person events to organizing many webinars; in Bangladesh, WBB Trust has partnered with Ecocity Builders to organize a remote satellite conference. Partners have also shared ideas for allocating more street space during the pandemic to those on foot and bicycle, and for active recreation, to help people stay healthy while maintaining physical distance.

While we certainly look forward to the day of getting to have more in-person contact, we are also happy to discover working methods that reduce our need to travel, whether within a city or across the globe, and thus help reduce climate emissions. We hope that all of you are staying safe and healthy!



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