

6-month Project Progress Report Year 2

Name of Project: Livable Cities Program

Name of Partner: Work for a Better Bangladesh

Report by: Najnin Kabir, Project Coordinator of Livable Cities

Background

WBB Trust has been working on issues of urban transport planning since 2004, and since 2006 directly on ecocities, with the financial and technical support of HealthBridge. Bangladesh cities have unfortunately instituted a number of urban policies that need to be addressed, and are considering others that need to be revised. For instance, the housing code enforces the provision of car parking for all buildings, despite the fact that only 1% of the population actually owns a car. Transport policies focus on giving advantage to cars, while failing to consider pedestrians or cyclists; they also aim to ban rather than preserve cycle rickshaws. The environmental law, whatever its weaknesses, is not sufficiently enforced, and no more than lip service is paid to measures to preserve the nation's rivers from pollution and encroachment.

The health of the Bangladeshis population is greatly affected by the state of its cities. Inability to engage in physical activity contributes to already high rates of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. Pedestrians are the main victims in road crashes. High rates of pollution particularly affect the lung health of the low-income groups. High spending by the government on transport reduces its ability to invest money in other, less elitist programs; for example, improved sanitation would greatly contribute to improved health, particularly of children.

While much is negative in the current situation, the potential for positive action is also significant. With the experience gained from its many years of successful work in tobacco control, WBB Trust knows how to address policy issues and promote positive change.

Vision:

In all cities in Bangladesh:

- Children can play in the street and walk to school safely
- Everyone can walk to a local park to visit with the neighbours and enjoy nature
- Everyone can walk to stores and services
- Everyone can cross the street easily and safely
- Cycling is common for recreation and for transportation

- When people need to leave their neighbourhood, they can take public transit
- Everyone has access to clean drinking water
- Water is treated as a precious resource
- Lakes, rivers, parks and streets are free of pollution
- People hear children laughing not cars honking
- People breathe clean air
- People have access to healthy foods

Goals:

The overall goals of the project are:

1. Increase the number of people who choose to be active and to eat healthy foods.
2. Increase the number of people who live, work and play in livable neighbourhoods.
3. Increase the number of healthy public policies that support the creation of livable neighbourhoods.
4. WBB is a recognized leader in Livable Cities around the world.

Executive Summary

During the first 6 months of the second year of the project, WBB continues to make progress towards achieving its objectives. Further growth in the Livable Cities Network has occurred and there are now 60 organizations advocating for livable cities issues in Bangladesh. We are now seeing a shift in the way the media and experts talk about transportation policy in the city. In the past, rickshaws were blamed for traffic congestion and the focus was on creating more room for private automobiles. That is changing and experts are beginning to demand the control of the private automobile. This changing social norm will have important implications as we continue our work and will hopefully result in greater support for fuel-free transportation options. Significant time and effort in the first half of this year was spent on conducting a research study examining the quality of the pedestrian environment. This study, and the activities associated with it, has already produced commitment among policy makers for changes and we expect to see additional commitments made in the second half of the year. Finally, advocacy efforts among WBB and our network members paid off this year as we now have a separate Rail Department under the Ministry of Communication. This is a significant victory in our efforts to encourage greater investment in rail in the city.

Goal : Increase the number of people who live, work and play in livable neighborhoods.

Completed Activities	Reach - numbers	Reach – percentage	Result/Immediate Outcome	Impact/Intermediate Outcomes	Variance
6 face to face meetings with organizations	# 36 NGOs (25 NGOs are old and 11 NGOs are new)	6% (estimate approximately 600 Organizations could do LC Work)	60 organizations are now interested in livable cities (including ones with whom we did not communicate this period).	60 organizations advocating for LC issues, 3 partners advocated successfully against passage of water law. 3 partners organized a demonstration for walking facilities.	
2 newsletters distributed for a total of 3000 copies	1000 NGOs (and 500 to govt. officers, other institutions, etc.)	100% (broader group of NGOs – not just those that could do LC work)	1000 NGOs have increased awareness of on-going activities related to LC.		
1 instance of information sharing (reports produced by other NGOs/ Government offices)	400 NGOS	67%	400 NGOs have increased awareness of LC issues.		
Poster, Sticker and Leaflet Pedestrian Cycling Vendor	350 NGOS	58%	350 NGOs have increased awareness of on-going activities related to LC.	Network organizations demand more materials for arranging campaigns	
Poster on Water	350 NGOS	58%	350 NGOs have increased awareness of on-going activities related to LC.		

Goal: Increase the number of healthy public policies that support the creation of livable neighborhoods.

Completed Activities	Reach - numbers	Reach – percentage	Result/ Immediate Outcome	Impact/ Intermediate Outcomes	Variance
Public Transport (Bus for Urban area)					
2 view exchange meetings - 2 press release	# 35 each event from different NGOs # 30 each event # 6 Different stakeholders (Often same people come to several events)	5.8% (total 600 NGOs) 6 % journalists (# 500 journalists)	Participants discussed views and more aware of issue related to public bus. Increased coverage in newspapers and internet on these issues.	Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has added 100 new buses to Dhaka’s transportation system. Shifting paradigm of experts as they are now demanding the government control cars by introducing high parking charges rather than rickshaw ban.	
Prepared 2 newspaper articles: 1 article in Bhorerkagoj 1 article in Janata	Bhorerkagoj circulation = 20,000 Janata circulation = 15,000	0.0012 % of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public and policy makers about issues.	CNG stations are closed for 3 hours in every day in Dhaka by the government decision. School buses continue to run in Dhaka.	

2 Radio Program on Urban Transport System focused on Bus	750,0000 listeners	Estimated 5% of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public about issues.		
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Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities					
4 view exchange meetings: -1 on Pedestrian Right issue -3 on Walking and Cycling 4 press releases	# 32 each event # 15 per event # 48 Different stakeholders (Often same people come to several events)	# 5.3% NGOs # 3% journalists	- Participants discussed views and more aware of issue related to pedestrian rights. Increased coverage in newspapers and internet on these issues.	Increase awareness on walking among people. We have excellent and authentic study document and pilot project design on pedestrian environment for Dhaka. Created an opportunity to implement two pilot projects for improving pedestrian environment in Dhaka.	
2 bicycle rallies -distributed 300 copies of leaflet per program -2 press releases	# 12 each event # 15 per event	2% NGOs 3% journalists	30 instances of media coverage. Increased awareness among participants for importance of bicycle facilities.	Bicycle use appears to be growing in Dhaka. New groups have started promoting bicycles in Dhaka. Also critical mass continues	

Meeting with Gazipur pouroshova Mayor, Commissioners, Engineers			City mayor, councilors and officials are aware about importance of walking and to create supporting environment. Others stakeholders also want facilities for walking.	to organize every month in Dhaka.	
Meeting with Tongi pouroshova Mayor, Commissioners, Engineers					
Meeting with City Corporation Uttara Ward Commissioners, Local People					
3 Radio Program on Pedestrian and Cycling 2 Pedestrian 1 Cycling	750,000 listeners	Estimated 5% of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public about issues.		
Prepared 3 newspaper articles: 1 article in Bhorerkagoj 1 article in Janata 1 article in Bangladesh Arthoniti	Bhorekagoj circulation = 20,000 Janata circulation = 15,000 Bangladesh Arthoniti= 10,000	0.0015 % of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public and policy makers about issues.		
Rickshaw					
1 view exchange meetings	# 15 NGOs # 25 journalists # 25 Different stakeholders	2.5% NGOs 5% journalists	Participants discussed views and more aware of issue related to rickshaw. Increased coverage in newspapers and internet on these	Government withdrew some of the rickshaw bans it had passed. More people raised their voice to protest against rickshaw ban.	This was an unplanned activity but we needed to mobilize to fight the rickshaw ban. WBB has worked on this issue before with

			issues.	A lawyer of High Court filed a writ petition against rickshaw ban.	success. However, we need to continue to be vigilant.
1 press conference	# 30 journalists # 5 NGOs	# 6% journalists # 0.8% NGOs	15 instances of media coverage. Increased awareness among participants for importance of rickshaw.	People who are travel by rickshaw benefit, especially women, children, older people, and the disabled from the decision of withdraw some restrictions on rickshaw as they are the groups most likely to rely on rickshaws for regular travel.	
2 Demonstration against rickshaw ban	# 34 NGOs participated (17 in each) # 36 journalists (18 per event) # 700 members of general public per event	# 5.6% NGOs # 7.2 % journalists	28 instances of media coverage. Increased awareness among participants for importance of rickshaw.		
2 Campaign 1- on line campaign 1- Letter campaign	# 700 internet users # 12 NGOs send letter		8 instances of media coverage. Increased awareness among participants for importance of rickshaw.		

Noise					
2 demonstration programs (e.g. human chain): -2 press release - 2 for involve police to implement Noise regulation -distributed 300 leaflets at every program	# 30 NGOs participated (15 in each) # 16 journalists (8 per event) # 700 members of general public per event	# 5% NGOs # 3.2 % journalists	12 instances of media coverage. Increased participation of network partners Increased awareness of general public, policy maker related to problems with noise.	Department of Environment actively involved with this issue as they run mobile court. Department of Environment also planning a 3-year program for working on Noise issue.	
2 Radio Program on Reduce Noise	750,0000 listeners	Estimated 5% of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public about issues.		

Rail					
1 view exchange meeting	# 36 NGOs # 28 journalists # 15 Different stakeholders	# 6% NGOs # 5.6% journalists	Participants discussed views and are more aware of issue related to rail. Increased coverage in newspapers and internet on these issues.	Bangladesh Railway add new locomotives to their fleet. Increased demand for travel on rail for safe journey.	
4 different demonstration for development of rail to ensure a safe Journey	# 32 NGOs # 60 journalists	# 5.3% NGOs. # 12% of journalists	40 instances of media coverage. Increased participation of	Government declared a new department under ministry of communication for rail.	

-4 press release			network partners Increased awareness of general public, policy makers related on rail issues.	Railway workshop started to make passenger coach and freight wagon. Stopped providing 10,000 driving licenses without test on 20 th meeting of Road Safety Council. (Not clear if this is permanent or temporary measure.)	
1 Radio Program Railway development for Better Environment	450,0000 listeners	Estimated 3% of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public about issues.		

Water					
5 demonstration for water issues -2 for against passage of water law -2 for Stop Privatization - 1 Re-use water 5 press releases	# 15 NGOs each # 12 each	# 2.5% NGOs. # 2.4% of journalists	40 instances of media coverage. Increased participation of network partners Increased awareness of general public, policy makers related on water issues.	Government formed a review committee for draft water law. Water law was not passed because of anti-people approach in articles of the law. Network organizations	
Seminar on Nature and Water - 1 press release	# 12 NGOs # 8 journalists	# 2% NGOs. # 1.6% of journalists	Participants discussed views and more aware of issue related to	are more interested to work on water issue. 3 organizations	

			water. Increased coverage in newspapers and internet on these issues. 10 newspapers and internet covered on these issues	arranged demonstration program against water privatization. Also 1 organization arranged a roundtable meeting on the same topic.	
-letter Campaign on against passage of water law	# 10 NGOs	# 1.6% NGOs.			
-2 Radio Program	750,000 listeners	Estimated 5% of Bangladesh population			
Prepared 2 newspaper articles: 1 article in Bhorerkagoj 1 article in Bangladesh Protidin	Bhorerkagoj circulation = 20,000 Bangladesh Protidin circulation = 10,000	0.01 % of Bangladesh population	Raised awareness among general public and policy makers about issues.		

Reports:

Dhaka's BRT Walkability Strategy: Ensuring that Dhaka's Transportation Infrastructure is Pedestrian-Friendly.