

Minecraft Participatory Design Workshop



05-06 July 2019

Seminar Room, Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB Trust)



Work for a
Better
Bangladesh
Trust



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Introduction

UN-Habitat is implementing a project regarding public space in Dhaka, Bangladesh with partnership Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB Trust). Under the project WBB Trust has selected six sites in ward 2,4,5,7 and 9 of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC). All the sites are located in Mirpur area. Currently the spaces lack necessary components and not accessible for all. Considering the needs and demands of community people WBB Trust and UN-Habitat have decided to intervene in these places with cooperation of DNCC. The focus of the intervention is to make these spaces safe, accessible and inclusive for women, girl child, toddlers, elderly people, poor and person with disabilities (PWD).

Background

One of the core aims of city authorities is to improve the quality of life of its citizens. Hard to measure, yet universally understood, it is about placing greater emphasis on improving the user experience of citizens in our cities and towns that matter most for them. Neighborhoods should be somewhere people want to be and are happy to belong to. Open public spaces are key contributors to the general well-being of citizens, meeting a range of social, environmental and health benefits as well as making areas more attractive. This is why designing, maintaining and ensuring the protection of public spaces is vital to promote vibrant, healthy and sustainable cities.

Global Public Space Programme of UN-Habitat proposes to reposition open public spaces as dynamic democratic spaces at the centre of the physical environment. This can be achieved through democratic design processes, supplemented by participatory design methods and guidelines, and strong interdisciplinary collaboration across a diverse network of actors (i.e. city officials, designers and engineers).

As a part of that process UN-Habitat conducted a participatory Minecraft public space design workshop from 5-6 July, 2019. The training took place in the WBB Trust office which is located on Jafrabad, Rayerbazar. A total of 36 participants took part in this training event, of which 12 were female. All the participants were from areas surrounding the sites.

The participatory workshop was jointly organized by UN-Habitat, DNCC, Healthbridge-Canada, Block by Block and WBB Trust. WBB Trust provided the venue, necessary logistics, computers and other utilities. Mr. Sohel Rana from UN-Habitat, Maruf Hossain, Najnin Kabir and Ziaur Rahamn from WBB Trust acted as the key facilitator for the workshop and Eugenio Gastelum organized the sessions on Minecraft and advised on design techniques.

Session One

Opening Session

The opening session was attended by Professor Dr Ishrat Islam from Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET); Sohel Rana, Urban Planning and Design Officer at UN-Habitat and Minecraft expert Eugenio Gastelum. The session was presided over Director of Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust Gaous Pearee and facilitated by Program Manager Maruf Hossain from same organization.

Maruf Hossain expressed hope that the workshop will be conducted in a very friendly and participatory way. Participants will create design of their own area and those will be finalized after consultation with implementing authority.

Mr Sohel Rana explained that Minecraft workshop is a part of ongoing collaboration between Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust and UN-Habitat for the Public Space Project in Mirpur area of Dhaka. He also explained how Minecraft game will help participants to create designs in participatory way. Mr Rana stretched the importance of participatory approach while improving or creating public spaces to make those safe, accessible and inclusive. He updated the participants about projects of UN-Habitat in 50 countries of the world including some examples of positive changes in Bangladesh. He ensured the participants to provide with all kinds of support.



Picture 1: Opening session of Minecraft workshop

Dr Ishrat Islam thanked UN-Habitat for bringing the international concept in Bangladesh. She was amazed to see the participation of all age group. Dr Islam expressed her anxiety about

future generation as the unplanned urbanization has caused major obstacle towards their proper growth. She stretched the importance of public spaces for their health benefits and as shelter during natural calamities. She discussed about the components of standard parks and playgrounds and expressed hope that the designs created by the participants will be incorporated in Detailed Area Plan (DAP) of Dhaka and implemented soon.

Gaus Pearee welcomed all the participants to the workshop. She stretched the importance of inclusive society and wellbeing of future generation. Lastly she wished the success of overall workshop.

Session Two

Public Space Design Consideration for Dhaka

In this session participants were given a clear idea about issues to be considered while designing public space. The session was facilitated by Program Manager of WBB Trust, Maruf Hossain. He mentioned that according to DAP per 12,500 citizens of Dhaka city needs 2-3 playgrounds which size is 2 to 3 acres. But there are only 235 and among these 141 belongs to institutes/organizations. Unplanned urbanization in Dhaka has snatched parks and playgrounds from the children. They are deprived of minimum physical activity and gradually becoming addicted to electronic gadgets, resulting to obesity and other health hazards. Local parks can be a solution to this problem.



Picture 2: Maruf Hossain, Program Manager, WBB Trust, presenting on Public Space Design Consideration for Dhaka

Maruf Hossain stretched importance of improving local parks and ensuring mixed use of land by showcasing good example of Enrique Penalosa, Mayor of Bogota, Columbia and Danish architect Jan Gehl. He also discussed about the kids' zone in Boiskhai playground (done by a

joint collaboration of WBB Trust, HealthBridge and UN-Habitat) which is constructed in 2018. The development has increased presence of toddlers, female, especially girl-child in the playground. He then explained the reason of selecting the six spaces from Mirpur area to develop and also discussed about some components of a quality park. He mainly focused on ensuring safety, accessibility and inclusiveness.

Session Three

Consultation with Participants/ Community

The session was facilitated by Mr Sohel Rana from UN-Habitat. During this session participants were divided into six groups. After group formation, Mr Rana explained the participants their activities. Each groups identified the key problems of their own spaces during this session. They also identified the desirable potential solutions of those problems and listed the amenities they want in their parks.



Picture 3: Community consultation during Mineacraft workshop

After a participatory discussion session, each group prepared their list of problems, possible solutions and desirable amenities. Later each group presented their lists to others. The facilitators and volunteers played a key role in managing the discussion, dealing with potential conflicts and provided necessary support. After the presentation the facilitators displayed each

of the groups' lists of issues in the training venue so that the participants could consult them while building their models in Minecraft.

Session Four

Introduction to Minecraft Game/Software

The session was jointly facilitated by Mr Soheli Rana and Eugenio Gastelum. First Mr Rana gave a basic idea of Minecraft game to the participants. He stretched the importance of the workshop to ensure the reflection of the community demand regardless age, sex, religion, ability while implementing a project. He showed various examples of minecraft workshops around the world, such as- Kenya, Haiti, Peru, Surabaya etc to give an idea to the participants. He explained that due to fund limitation WBB Trust and UN-Habitat will implement some of the proposals given by the community. A complete design will be handed over to DNCC; if possible, they will implement the rest. He explained the challenges of Minecraft workshop are that it requires time and needs to be organized during weekends to get participants of all ages. He also requested the participants to attend two days workshop otherwise; the purpose of the occasion will not be fulfilled.



Picture 4: Mr Soheli Rana from UN-Habitat is providing basic ideas on Minecraft

Later Minecraft expert Eugenio Gastelum conducted a live demonstration of the controls of Minecraft game using a digital projector. After that, the groups were given time to play. The facilitators and organizers circulated around the room to support the participants with all kinds of problem regarding the game and ensured that all participants are getting chance of playing the game.

Session Five

Introduction of the Minecraft Model and Site Visit

The session was facilitated by Minecraft expert Eugenio Gastelum. The selected six sites are quite far away from the training venue. So the site visit was done before workshop days. It was made sure that all the participants have clear idea about the existing objects and situation of their own spaces. All the groups checked the existing models of their own site on the group-wise assigned computers. Basic Minecraft techniques were taught by Eugenio so that the participants could see the existing model on the computer to compare it with the real site. Participants were clarified about all their questions.

Session Six

Learning Minecraft

The session was also facilitated by Minecraft expert Eugenio Gastelum. He provided the participants with an overview of the design and building processes and instruction on different building techniques. It was ensured that all participants have clear idea about the game and control. Facilitator answered all questions raised by the participants. After that participants started practicing Minecraft on the models of their spaces on assigned computers.



Picture 5 : Minecraft expert Eugenio Gastelum is teaching techniques

Session Seven

Group Exercise: Building models in Minecraft and improving proposed sites

After learning the game each group started to build their model based on the discussion with their group members. The design was based on the community consultation that took place earlier in the workshop. Each group were encouraged to be creative and requested to be cooperative with other group members. Participants started to build structure on the existing sites on their assigned computer followed by their findings from previous group consultation session. After this session, participants visited children's corner of Boishakhi playground in Rayerbazar, a previous intervention of WBB Trust, HealthBridge and UN-Habitat.

Session Eight

Group Exercise-1

Day two of the workshop started with group exercise and participants continued to improve their models. Participants were given three and half hour to develop their models. During the group exercise, facilitator and organizers were always present to answer questions, provide support and demonstrated additional building techniques as per requirement from the groups. They also ensured that participants are saving their works regularly and all group members had equal input in designing and building the model.



Picture 6: Group busy in preparing their model

Session Nine

Group Exercise-2

During this session participants continued to work on their model and ensured that they have integrated all their ideas and thoughts in it. As per direction from the Facilitator, each group identified their priorities (mentioning 3 demands) for park development. Each group also determined how they would present their model and prepared arguments for their proposals. The facilitators attended to questions and provided feedback when necessary.

Session Ten

Group presentation of the Minecraft models

The session was facilitated by Mr Sohel Rana from UN-Habitat. Prior to group presentation Mr Rana conducted evaluation of the workshop through an evaluation form. Six groups presented their models to the participants and invited guests. Representatives from the DNCC, Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (RAJUK) and other NGOs were present during the presentation. Each group presented their model and explained the reason of the modification or addition of their proposed elements. Each group was also asked to make a list of three main priority services and facilities in their model. Each group presentation was followed by a question and answer session. During the presentations, the facilitators also noted the priorities and modifications suggested by the participants.



Picture 7: Model presentation during the Minecraft Workshop

Session Eleven

Closing Remarks

The closing session was facilitated by Maruf Hossain from WBB Trust. In this session Md Ashraful Islam, Director, RAJUK; Dr Tariq Bin Yousuf, PD, Urban Resilient Project and Upgrading, Regenerating and Greening of the Urban Spaces in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC); Debra Efroymsen, Regional Director, HealthBridge-Canada were present as guests. Mr. Maruf Hossain welcomed all guests and thanked them for their enormous support. Then Mr. Sohel Rana expressed his greetings and hope that RAJUK and DNCC will follow bottom up approach like Minecraft workshop while undertaking any development project. He mentioned that Minecraft workshop reflects the need of the community. The design made by the community will be implemented with the support of authority after converting those into architectural design. He mentioned that it is important to intervene in the small scale parks for better result. Debra Efroymsen stretched the importance of active life and how children especially girls in Dhaka are deprived of it. She highlighted the success of kids' corner in Boishakhi playground that has welcomed a lot of girls and women in the field.



Picture 8: Closing ceremony of Minecraft Workshop

Mr. Ashraful Islam expressed hope to implement the designs because those can be implemented with small investment. He highlighted the challenges of creating larger scale parks and playgrounds and necessity of utilizing unused spaces. He suggested involving corporate organizations for sponsorship. Dr Tariq Bin Yousuf mentioned that though participatory approach consumes time but it is very important to improve and create parks and playgrounds. Minecraft is a useful tool in this regard. He said that the draft designs will scale-up by planner

and architect soon. Then construction work will start after validation workshop with the communities. Finally, guests were distributed the certificates among the participants.



Picture 9: Participants received certificates after completing the workshop

Problems, solutions and demand identified by groups:

Group: Jasmine (Golartek Eid-gah Playground, Ward-9, Mirpur)		
Problems	Solutions	Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of security • No separate play space for children • No facility for person with disabilities • No public toilet • No supply of water • No safety net • No facility for boys and girls of different ages • Insufficient light • Weak management • No waste bin • No shade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure security • Separate play space for children • Sitting arrangement for guardians • Public toilet • Water supply • Safety net for children • Playing opportunity for boys and girls of different ages • Sufficient light • Management committee under the leadership of ward councilor • Planting trees beside wall • Waste bin • Cycling opportunity for boys and girls • Guard room 	<p>All the solutions mentioned here are the demands of community. Our field is big and it is possible to make all the changes.</p>

Group: Rose (Mirpur_12_D_Block_Park)		
Problems	Solutions	Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shops and vendors • The park is not accessible from west side due to height • Only male youths get opportunity to play cricket and football in the open space • Children do not get playing opportunity • No walkway and sitting arrangement for elderly • Playing equipments for children are disorganized and insufficient • Insufficient light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopkeepers and vendors will be discouraged if there is proper law enforcement, playing equipments for children and walkway for elderly. • West side of the park should be made accessible • If playing equipments for children, walkway and trees are introduced in the open space, male youths will not be able to play cricket and football. • Sufficient and modern 	<p>Improve the space as per recommended solutions.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garbage • Entrance is insufficient and not well designed • Depredation of youth groups after dusk • Boundary wall of the park created problem • Totally insecure • No park management committee • No public toilet and no water supply (neither drinking nor for watering plants) 	<p>playing equipments for the children should be installed in an organized way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkway • Initiative to remove garbage • Sufficient electricity • Accessible entrance • Repair boundary wall • Community people should be well involved with the park management process • Water supply • Public toilet and drinking water 	
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Group: China Rose (Mini park_mirpur_13_ward_4)		
Problems	Solutions	Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of security • Garbage • Depredation of some group of people • Depredation of drug addicts • Ill management of sewerage system • No facility of drinking water • No public toilet • Mismanagement to use the space as park • No management committee • Not convenient for all age group • No walkway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7-8 feet grilled boundary, so that the field is visible from outside • entrance as per necessity • Enough light • Modern waste bin • Monitoring under specific committee • Monitoring under specific committee • Good drainage system • Drinking water • Public toilet • Walkway around the park • Accessible for persons with disability • Sitting arrangement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient equipment for children to play and physical exercise • Specific committee under the leadership of councilor • Separate public toilet for men and women • Grilled boundary wall and necessary entrance • 4 feet wide walkway and accessible for persons with disability • Install faucet for drinking water • Flowers and small stoned monument to improve landscape • Lamppost • Shade • Sitting arrangement around trees

Group: Water Lily (Open Space, Ward-7)		
Problems	Solutions	Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garbage/bad smell • Temporary market • Occupancy/fence • Lack of light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove garbage • Eradicate temporary market • Demolition of the fence or boundary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste bin • Sufficient play equipment • Sitting • Walkway • Pure drinking water • Flower plants • Sufficient open space • Sufficient light

Group: Gardenia (Urban Agriculture_Pollabi_Ward-2)		
Problems	Solutions	Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No boundary and lack of security • Lack of electric light • Lack of cleanliness • Adjacent library is not accessible for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A grilled boundary to ensure security • Sufficient light and improving landscape • Sufficient waste bin • Acquisition of the library by City Corporation and renovation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient playing equipments for children • Walkway around the park • A garden and improving landscape • Sitting arrangement • Pure drinking water • Management committee • Grass • Playing opportunity for persons with disability

Group: Tuberose (Bauniabadh Eidgah Palyground_Kalshi_Mirpur)		
Problems	Solutions	Demand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garbage • No boundary • Illegal occupancy • Water clogging • Lack of greeneries • Lack of lighting • No opportunity for girls and persons with disability • No public toilet and water supply • Depredation of drug addicts • Lack of maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness and solution of water clogging problem • Reclaim the space from illegal occupants and drug addicts • Boundary and gate • Create playing opportunity • Lighting, water supply and public toilet • Children corner • Convenient environment for girl child and persons with disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and non-government collaboration • Involving community, CBO, GO, NGO, INGO • Involving local public representative • Creating awareness family, school and all relevant groups about physical and mental growth of children • Discussion about the necessity of playground in religious establishment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No walkway and sitting arrangement • No surveillance camera and signboard • Lack of political will • Not suitable for playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkway for elderly • Surveillance camera and signboard • Political will • Management and creating awareness among people • Suitable for playing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A management committee • Security initiative for children, especially girls • Annual budget for maintenance • High time to think about future generation and their physical and mental development • A child and user friendly playground
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Priority List Prepared by Each group

Sl	Gardenia	China Rose	Rose	Tuberose	Jasmine	Water Lily
1	Greeneries, boundary, light	Kids' Zone	Walkway	Boundary	Kids' corner	Multipurpose playground
2	Playing equipment for children	Boundary wall	Playing equipment for children	Two Gates	Sufficient light	Play equipment
3	Walkway	Walkway	Trees	Kids' corner	Sitting arrangement	Sitting arrangement

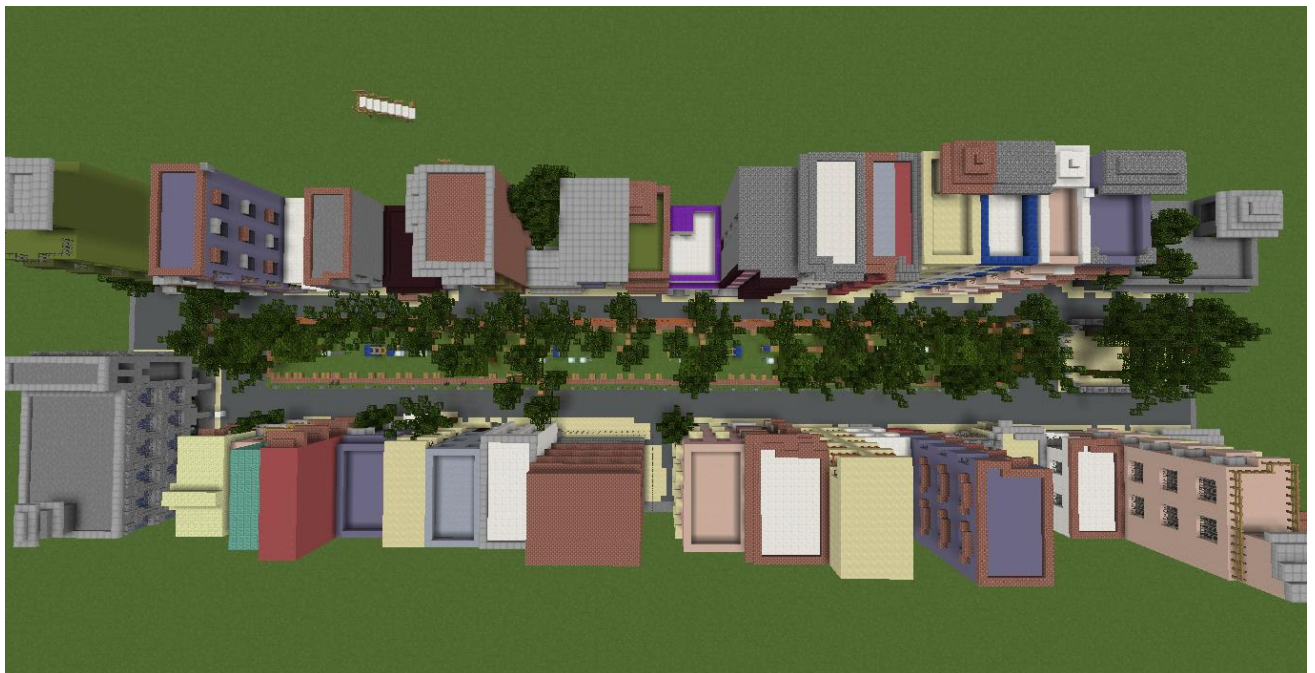


Picture 10: Group photo at the end of Minecraft workshop

Models prepared by groups



Picture 10: Model prepared by group Water Lily (Open Space, Ward-7)



Picture 11: Model prepared by group Rose (Mirpur_12_D_Block_Park)



Picture 12: Model prepared by group China Rose (Mini park_mirpur_13_ward_4)



Picture 13: Model prepared by group Jasmine (Golartek Eid-gah Playground, Ward-9, Mirpur)



Picture 13: Model prepared by group Tuberosa (Bauniabadh Eidgah Palyground_Kalshi_Mirpur)



Picture 13: Model prepared by group Gardenia (Urban Agriculture_Pollabi_Ward-2)