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Transformation of a local vacant lot into a community-based park through a tri-partite collaboration

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ABSTRACT

Open spaces function as the lungs of a city, providing environmental and social benefits. In a densely populated city like Dhaka, community-based open spaces play a crucial role in enhancing urban livability. The sustainability of such spaces largely depends on effective management. However, these spaces face multiple barriers in this regard. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the transformation of a community-based open space named Road No. 17 Park, understand the connection with other organizations and identify challenges faced. Employing Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), the research identifies that the committee's strong relationships with the Ward Councillor and the local parliamentary member facilitated management activities, while unity among members remains its core strength. However, inadequate financial resources pose significant challenges. Hence, the study recommended future guidelines on the management of community-based open spaces, highlighting effective Public-Private Partnership and funding from NGOs and the local government.

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Community-based; management; open space; PRA; park

Introduction

The open spaces work as breathing spaces for the inhabitants within a locality. Additionally, they are considered an important socio-cultural element of society by influencing the lifestyle and behavior of the residents (Sultana & Parvez, 2014). These spaces help in mitigating and adapting against the impacts of climate change by reducing carbon footprint and protecting from the effects of the urban heat island as well (Fryd et al., 2011). Moreover, using the open spaces improves physical and mental wellbeing (Sugiyama et al., 2008). Hence, SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) urges universal access to green and public spaces by 2030, with its target 11.7.1, which is taken to track the average share of open space for public use by city dwellers (UNSD, 2020).

Community-based open spaces are usually those local pieces of land which are managed by the residents of a community. They can be gardens, parks, playgrounds

etc. (Bush & Doyon, 2017). Citizens' participation in the governance of such contemporary urban green spaces is evident all around the world. These spaces establish an emotional bonding with the community as well (Mohapatra & Mohamed, 2013). They often highlight the changing roles and relationships between local state and non-state actors (Rosol, 2014). Empirical results show the emergence of a new political acceptance of autonomously organized projects and active citizen participation in urban green space governance (Rosol, 2014).

Therefore, these spaces facilitate the achievement of SDG 11. They also align with the motto of the Sustainable Development Goals "Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)" and ensure a participatory approach in decision-making, which has been highlighted by SDG 5: Gender Equality (target 5.5), SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (target 16.7) and SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals (target 17.1.17) (UNSD, 2020).

Community-based open spaces can provide locally grown food, reduce dependency on imports, support community building, promote active living and empower marginalized communities (Taber et al., 1997). In developed countries, it is seen that the government promotes the participation of community members in managing open space. Initially, the government takes responsibility for renovating and redeveloping open spaces. The responsibility of managing those spaces is rendered to the community afterward. Furthermore, they have developed supporting regulatory documents to ensure the appropriate transfer of rights. For example, in Baltimore City, USA, a well-structured guideline was developed to hand over government-owned open spaces to the community through a privatized land trust program. This land trust not only ensures financial backup but also advocates for the management team in any hostility faced (Baltimore City Office of Sustainability, 2010).

Moreover, the government in a few developed countries has prepared guidelines or plans to help the community manage these spaces. In Boston, USA, the government has made a management plan for the open spaces focused on community participation (Boston Parks and Recreation Department, 2008). Similarly, in Victoria State, the government highlighted the necessary measures for communal open spaces in their guideline for urban design. A separate section in the guideline was designed to ensure the accessibility, usability and security of these spaces through appropriate management processes (Victoria State Government, 2023). Moreover, under a project of Community Ownership and Management of Assets (COMA), a guide was developed for the local authoritative officials and the community on key issues that are required to be considered while managing any community-led open spaces (Shared Assets, 2016). Moreover, the community-based management model for the national parks in Australia has been highly praised since it upholds the socio-cultural values and rights of the indigenous people (Hou et al., 2022). Therefore, it can be said that in developed countries abroad, the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) is extremely strong and serves as one of the primary components in strengthening the sustainability and management of community-based open spaces.

However, in Asian countries, the PPP in the case of managing open spaces is not as prominent as in other developed countries. In fact, their roles are often conflicting due to the absence of a proper guideline for management. Despite the hostility, few community-based open space management programs have been conducted in different Asian countries. For example, the "Community in Bloom Program" is such a program which

not only demonstrated potential positive changes in the management of the greening of Singapore but also has opened opportunities for other civic spaces (Tan et al., 2009). In Hanoi, Vietnam, even a training on community rights in supervision of planning and management of community public spaces was arranged to secure participation in the preservation, and upgrading of such spaces (Hien, 2015). Malaysia prefers co-management and community-based management for their national parks, as these practices ensure better conservation of natural resources (Bakar & Zainon, 2019). Additionally, a stakeholder-based SWOT analysis of such green spaces within Medan City, Indonesia, revealed that although funding from NGOs is a big opportunity for them, land acquisition for the green spaces remains a great challenge for the government (Fatah et al., 2024). Additionally, due to the weak capacity of the government officials in preparing planning documents, aligning the regulations for these spaces with the active legislative documents and plans is being hampered (Fatah et al., 2024).

Despite their reluctance toward PPP, a few Asian countries attempt to provide some recommendations to manage the community-based open spaces, similar to those in developed countries. In the city of Depok, Indonesia, the stakeholders' functions in the management of green open spaces are described, emphasizing "all-inclusive participation" from different classes of people, to create better community bonding (Malik, 2017). While managing Kuang (a religious urban green place) in Thailand, the community people opined that the citizens' comprehensive knowledge should be utilized to add value to expert decisions, and the governing bodies should promote citizen involvement to enhance dynamism (Samandi & Tantayanusorn, 2006). Additionally, they think that the management of such places should frame definite goals and avoid confusion. This is because it is believed that participation in managing and protecting these open spaces could give an initial outlook of the expected outcome of effective participatory planning (Javaid & Habeeb, 2018). Hence, encouragement and utmost support from the government in the management of community-based open spaces is necessary. In India, a special participation technique in managing the open spaces of New Delhi was introduced, called the "Bhagidari System" (Raut & Raut, 2013). This participatory system is environment-friendly, includes all levels of the government and includes technology and nature-based features (Raut & Raut, 2013).

Community participation has been practised for a long time in Bangladesh. The first occasion of institutionalizing community participation happened in the mid-90s through the process of establishing community clinics (Banik et al., 2023). Similarly, there are practices of community participation in the field of disaster management, especially for flood management (Shaw, 2006). The potential of applying community participation has been explored in other sectors in Bangladesh, such as arsenic mitigation (George et al., 2012).

Although the concept of community-based open spaces was not well practised in Dhaka earlier, it has become quite popular recently. According to the WHO, a minimum of 9 m² green space per capita should be available in a city (Kuchelmeister, 1998). Also, one of the criteria for determining a healthy urban environment is identifying the ease of access to the park within a distance of less than 500 meters (GED, 2018). The Detail Area Plan for the Dhaka Metropolitan Area (DMP) suggested one acre of park for every 12,500 city dwellers (DAP, 2022). However, in 2020, the amount of available green space in the DMP area was only 1.97% (Khan et al., 2023). Green spaces of Dhaka are managed by

a number of organizations, which include Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkho (RAJUK) and Public Works Department (PWD). Among these green spaces, DNCC and DSCC manage 54 registered parks and 11 playgrounds (Chowdhury, 2014). Moreover, these spaces lack sufficient infrastructure and facilities, have safety concerns, an absence of management, and are prone to illegal encroachment (Islam et al., 2015). The context of the insufficiency of open spaces and improper management by the government resulted in the emergence of community initiatives of open space management in Dhaka.

Boishakhi Park at Banani, Shahid Dr Fazle Rabbi Park at Niketon, Chowdhury Para Children's Park at Khilgaon and Zinda Park at Narayanganj (which is located close to Dhaka) are some of the examples of community-based open space management (Fairouz, 2024; Rahman, 2024; Tabassum, 2017). Besides these, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) like WBB Trust also worked on upgrading a few small community-based parks and playgrounds in different locations of the Mirpur area in Dhaka City (WBB Trust, 2020). The study area of this research, the Road No. 17 Park, was such an initiative by the WBB Trust. This was a tri-partite collaboration among DNCC (the local government), WBB Trust (NGO) and UN-Habitat (the donor) and the local people. These community-based open spaces have several significant impacts on the local area. Again, they face several challenges during operation and management. A thorough understanding of a community-based park in terms of its evolution, management process and the challenges will help in facilitating the management and ensuring sustainability of all community-based open spaces in Dhaka and other South-Asian cities. Therefore, this research intends to study the transformation of a vacant land parcel into a vibrant community-based park. Followed by that, it will study the network of entities that are engaged in the management of the park. It will also identify the challenges faced by the community during the management of the park with limited resources.

Materials and methods

Study area profile

The criteria that were followed while choosing the study area as a case study for this research were as follows-

- It was a community-based open space
- It needs to be managed actively by the committee members

The study area, Road No. 17 Park, fits both criteria. This park is located at Road No. 17, Block C, Ward No. 2, Pallabi, Dhaka, with an area of 0.52 acres (2104.18 m²). The name of the management committee of this park is "C Block Road No. 17 Barir Malik Kollyan o Unnoyon Committee" (C Block Road No. 17 Landlord Committee for Development) which consists of 32 members. The land of this park is under the ownership of the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC).

This park was implemented jointly by DNCC, Work for Better Bangladesh Trust (WBB Trust) and UN-Habitat, taking the help of the community people. Under this project, WBB Trust selected six sites in Ward No. 2,4,5,7 and 9 of DNCC in Mirpur

and among them, one site was this park (WBB Trust, 2019). Hence, this park is a perfect example of a Public-Private-Local People coordination. Moreover, this park has a significant history of being used as a recreational place before the birth of Bangladesh by the community people residing on Road No. 17. Additionally, despite multiple illegal efforts of occupation by vendors and occupiers in the past, this park could sustain due to the strong management from the management committee. Therefore, this community-based park was chosen as a case study for the research.

Data collection and analysis

All the data for this research were collected from primary sources, specifically by conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and via applying Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools during those discussions. Hence, this study applies a qualitative research method. The FGD sessions were attended by four members from the management committee of the park. Moreover, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with one of the officials from the WBB Trust who was involved in the project of the park construction and one member from the management committee of the park were conducted. The interviews helped in understanding the role of WBB Trust after the construction of the park.

The data collection was conducted in 2020. The initial bond-building with the management committee and observation of the park were conducted in person. However, due to the government-imposed lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the data had to be collected through online surveys, via Zoom meetings.

PRA is a methodology which helps in learning and understanding rural life and environment from the rural people. In conducting their analysis, planning and taking action for the future, PRA requires the researcher to undertake the role of facilitator (Cavestro, 2003). This method can also be used in urban areas and is therefore sometimes referred to as Participatory Urban Appraisal (PUA). Two types of PRA tools were used for this research – Time-Related and Relationship-Related PRA tools. While conducting the FGDs with the members of the management committee, with the help of the Timeline tool, the participants explained the historical background of the park, their community and the management committee. The management network of the management committee of the park, with the institutions related to the formation and management of this park, was understood from the members of the management committee by applying the Venn Diagram. Finally, the SWOT analysis disclosed internal and external factors of the park and the management committee while managing it. This issue was also understood based on the discussions from the members.

The PRA tools not only facilitate data collection but also work as a data analysis method (Cavestro, 2003). This is the uniqueness of the method. Hence, all of the tables and diagrams prepared using those tools were generated during the discussions. The explanations of those tables and diagrams were written based on those discussions with the management committee members as well.

Results

Formation of the neighborhood, its park and management committee

The formation of this area dates back to the historical event of the Hindu-Muslim Riot in 1964. The community people migrated to this neighborhood at that time and have been living there since then. [Table 1](#) shows the historical timeline of Road No. 17 Park and its management committee.

However, the history of this park dates back to the Pakistan Period, when it remained a vacant land parcel between two roads. Since then, it has been used as an informal place for playing football, badminton and other sports. During the years 1980–85, land robbers tried to occupy the park. However, the members of the management committee protected the park. In 1995, the committee planted trees at this place for the first time. In 2006, a 3-foot boundary was provided by the City Corporation, which was elongated in height to 7–8 feet in 2011. Finally, in 2019, with the help of the government and WBB Trust, Road No. 17 Park was officially implemented. This park works as a prime attraction for the children now and contains playing instruments such as seesaws, swings, etc. and sitting arrangements for children. Additionally, different trees are planted along the boundary of the park. A few exercise instruments for the adults, who usually come with the children, are present inside the park as well.

The management committee of the park was informally formed at first. In 2018, the committee was officially formed by an election among 32 members from the neighborhood, before the construction of the park.

Management process of the park

Management network of the management committee

The management committee consists of a total of 32 members from each of the 32 houses of the neighborhood. [Figure 1](#) shows the organogram of the management committee.

Table 1. Historical evolution of the Road No. 17 Park, Pallabi and the management committee.

Year	Historical Timeline of the Road No. 17 Park, Pallabi and its Management Committee
1964	Residential settlement started with the migrant population
Before 1971	The park area was initially used as an informal place for playing for local people
1980–85	Attempts to encroach on the land by local influential people disrupting the use of this park by local people
1986–95	Informal use as a playground continued
1995	A tree plantation program was undertaken by the local committee, and the open space was used as an informal place for playing
2006	A 3-foot boundary wall was constructed by the City Corporation around the open space
2011	The height of the boundary wall was raised to 7–8 feet
2016	Vendors tried to occupy this place, but the local community resisted this attempt The Victory Day was celebrated in this place for the first time The local people felt the need of a committee to manage this place, and they informally formed a committee
2018	Finally, an official committee was formed, consisting of 32 members.
2019	In cooperation with WBB Trust the local community started to develop this place as a formal park by installing a number exercises and sport equipment, plantation of trees and providing other necessary facilities.

Source: Author, September–October, 2020.

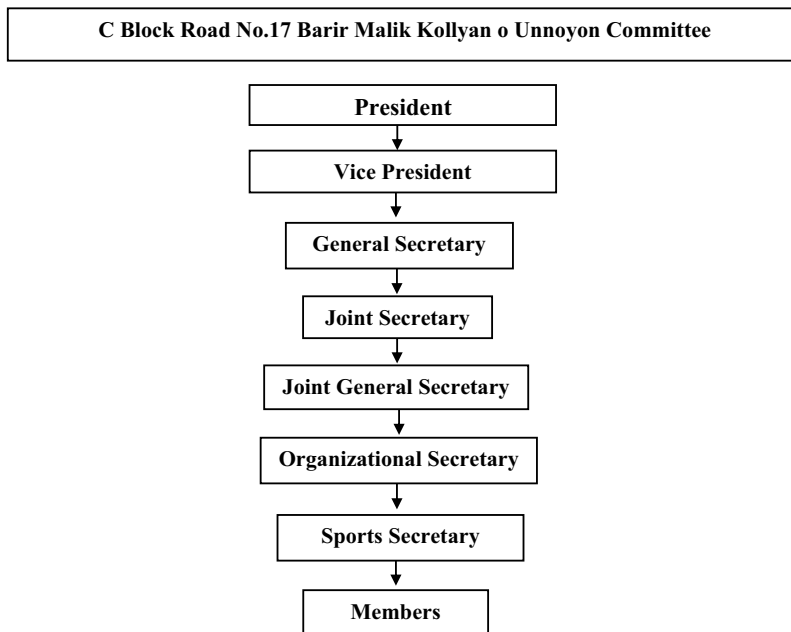


Figure 1. Organogram of C Block Road No.17 Barir Malik Kollyan o Unnoyon Committee. Source: Authors, September–October, 2020.

The committee has 7 core members (from the President to the Sports Secretary) and 25 general members.

The members of the management committee have a very strong relationship with each other since they maintain a strong unity and bonding among themselves. They usually do the basic managerial works, including cleaning of the sitting arrangements, playing instruments and drainage system, etc. The park does not need to be cleaned every day due to a smaller amount of waste. The committee contacts the City Corporation's cleaner before any national program or event. The arrangement of festivals and events in the park is also the responsibility of the management committee. Moreover, if there is any complaint, the users can inform the general secretary directly, and then the committee sorts out the problem.

Additionally, the committee developed a policy based on which they manage the park. According to that policy, the expiration of the committee was decided to be 2 years after formation. Hence, after every 2 years a new committee is elected. However, due to the pandemic situation, no election took place in 2020.

Other institutions with which the management committee is linked with are – the locally elected Member of Parliament (MP), Ward Councillor, community people, WBB Trust and Dhaka Electric Supply Company Limited (DESCO). The influence and strength of the relationship are illustrated in a Venn Diagram in [Figure 2](#).

It can be seen that the management committee has a strong relationship with the community people (users) inside the boundary of Ward No. 2. The reason behind this is that, without the users, the park could not have been sustained. On the other hand, the

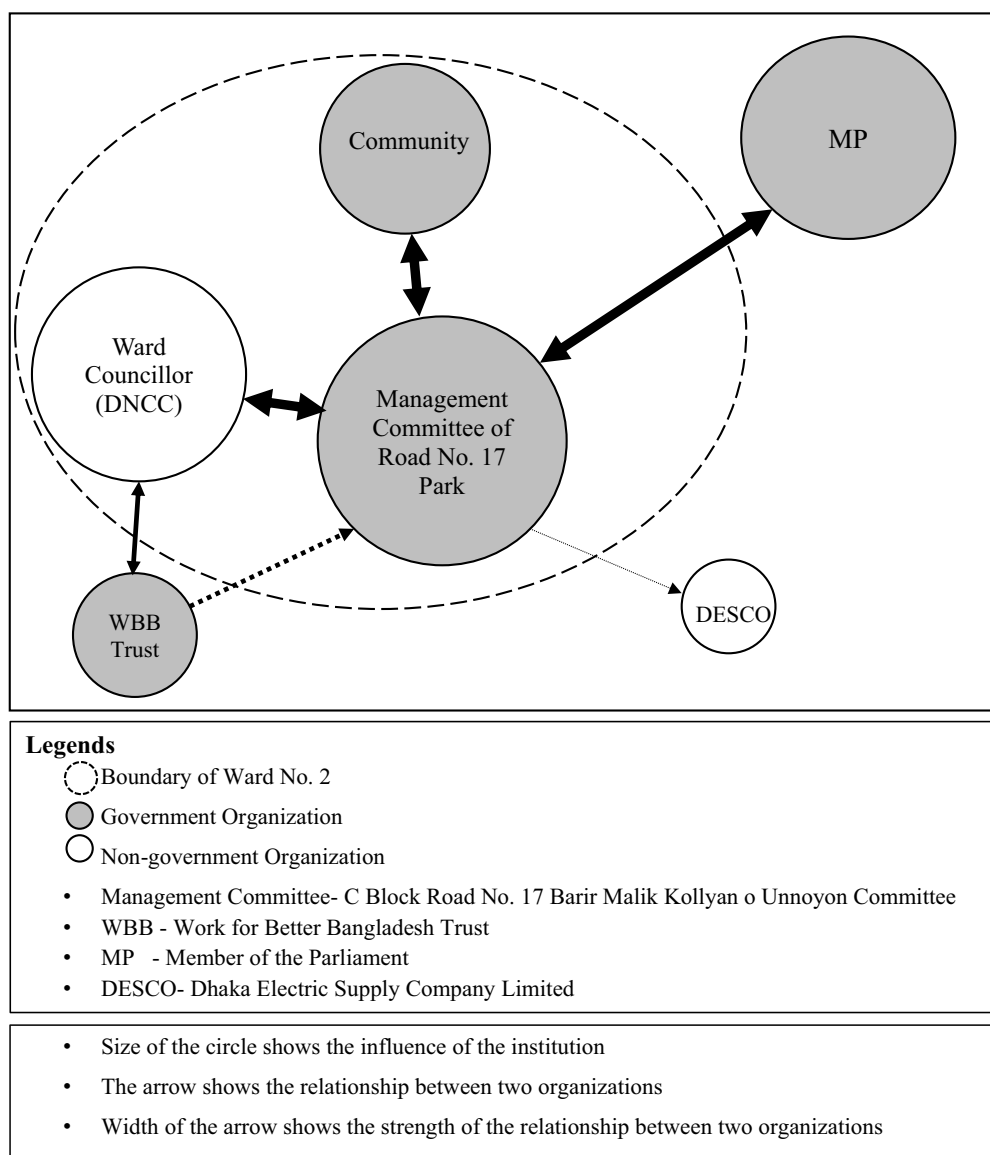


Figure 2. Venn Diagram of Road No. 17 Park. Source: Authors, September–October, 2020.

users are satisfied with the service of the committee. They seek the help of the committee members directly regarding any complaint and the committee try their best to solve it.

Another authority inside the boundary of Ward No. 2 is the Ward Councillor. The management committee also has a very good relationship with him, since he was the one who approached the management committee for the construction of the park. The committee approaches him if anything is needed and he also helps them.

The remaining three organizations that are located outside the boundary of Ward No. 2 are MP, WBB and DESCO (See Figure 2). Similar to the Ward Councillor, the committee has a strong relationship with the MP since he suggested forming a management committee

initially. The management committee has a very cordial relationship with him and can approach him in any need as well.

To enhance small open spaces in such a way that they integrate into the neighborhoods and that too by ensuring the participation of both government and community people, the WBB Trust took the initiative to redesign the Road No. 17 Park. However, this committee has a moderate relationship with WBB Trust. This is because, although WBB Trust constructed the park for them, they did not receive their help in management as per their expectation. From the management committee, it came to light that WBB Trust helped in repairing a few playing instruments for a year after the construction of the park, only (till 2020). From then on, the entire responsibility of managing the park is taken by the committee members themselves. The WBB Trust accepted its shortcomings in this regard. They mentioned that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, similar to other projects, they faced a shortage of funds from the donor in this project. Hence, they had no other choice but to offer help to the management committee only till the beginning of the pandemic (till 2020).

The management committee has the weakest relationship with DESCO. This is because previously they approached DESCO for providing the lighting facility of the park. However, DESCO denied any cooperation on that and told them to arrange it on their own.

There is also a relationship in which the management committee is not involved. That relationship is sustained between the Ward Councillor and WBB Trust. Both have a relatively strong relationship between them since they jointly constructed the park (See [Figure 2](#)).

SWOT analysis

The residents and park users are satisfied with the unity and trust the committee has shown since the beginning. Although the members have a positive attitude toward helping financially during any crisis, they do not have sufficient funds. Commercial organizations feel less interested in getting involved, as there is no profit in it. Although they get moral support from the MP and the Ward Councillor, which is their strength, however, no financial support has been provided from them. In fact, according to the official from the WBB Trust, they encouraged the participation of the Ward Councillor in the entire process of the park construction to ensure the financial sustainability of the park. However, that did not happen. Hence, the entire cost of managing the park is borne by the members of the management committee.

There are external threats and opportunities as well. Waterlogging is a threat that the committee members as well as park users are always facing. During the rainy season, it becomes nearly impossible to use the park. Another threat is that they received minimal support from the WBB Trust after the construction of the park.

The park is within the list of the Dhaka City North Corporation (DNCC). Thus, there is a great opportunity for the park to get both financial and management-related support from the Government and Private Organizations. With that help, the committee may get the chance to extend the park and equip it with additional features, such as a trail for walking, expansion of the park, extra sports facilities etc. [Table 2](#) shows the SWOT analysis of the park.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of Road No. 17 Park.

	Strength	Weakness
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity and trust among the committee members • Attitude to help financially in times of crisis • Occasional cleaning support for the park is received from the Ward Councillor and the MP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of a regular flow of funds for management • Commercial organizations do not involve as sponsors because there is no scope for profit from the investment • No regular financial support is available from the Ward Office for the maintenance of the park
	Threat	Opportunity
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterlogging due to the uneven surface of the park • After completion of the development of the park, very little support was received from the WBB Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the development of the park, it was included in the list of the parks of DNCC • Help from the Government and Private Organizations

Source: Authors, September–October, 2020.

Discussion

A number of research papers have been studied in this research to get an overall idea of the scenario of the community-based open space management abroad. The kind of spaces are found to be well appreciated and practised by the government and local people. In developed countries, although the government takes the initial step in developing them, it transfers the responsibility of their management to the local people, keeping proper coordination with them. In fact, the USA formulated management plans for open spaces by incorporating community-based management processes and providing directions for the management committee (Baltimore City Office of Sustainability, 2010; Boston Parks and Recreation Department, 2008; Victoria State Government, 2023). A similar community-based model developed in Australia focuses highly on the indigenous people and their perspective (Hou et al., 2022). Moreover, training for community public spaces to ensure active participation from the local people in managing them was seen to be arranged in Vietnam (Hien, 2015).

However, the Asian countries are facing a few barriers in managing these spaces. The Public-Private Partnership is not well-reformed in this region due to overlapping and a lack of coordination among the relevant government bodies and other entities. The lack of legislative power of the government restricts the alignment of managing community-based open spaces with the national documents as well (Fatah et al., 2024). Moreover, there are complexities in land acquisition from the government for such open spaces (Hien, 2015). Although Indonesia has sufficient funding from NGO's and the government for managing community-based open spaces (Fatah et al., 2024), Vietnam still needs resource mobilization in terms of both land and finance, from the government and other parties, to protect these spaces (Hien, 2015).

Similar experiences were also evident in the study area. Road No. 17 Park and its neighborhood have an eventful historical background. These events testify to the resilience of the park and the community people against all the political and social barriers it faced in the past. Additionally, those occasions have strengthened not only the coordination among the community people but also the relationship of the management committee with the users. Such a strong emotional attachment, fueling the active

management of the parks and forests, was also evident abroad, such as in England (Shared Assets, 2016).

This supportive relationship among the members of the committee works as the major driving factor in managing the park. Because of this unity, every member of the community is associated with the management process. This ensures the “all-inclusive participation,” which was suggested for Depok City, Indonesia (Malik, 2017). This management has further been eased by the moral support from the Ward Councillor and the local MP.

The joint effort of the Ward Councillor, WBB Trust and the management committee in establishing the park sets a positive note of Public-Private Partnership similar to the “Community in Bloom Program” in Singapore (Tan et al., 2009). However, the moderate relationship between the WBB Trust and the management committee might impose hindrances in ensuring the long-term management of the park. This gap can be overcome by the strong coordination between the Ward Councillor and the WBB Trust.

Waterlogging within the park in the rainy season has been identified as a threat. To mitigate this problem, the park can seek additional help from the City Corporation, as it is listed under DNCC. This enlistment will work for them similarly to the “land trust” system adopted in Baltimore City, since it might assure them both financial and managerial benefits from the local government (Baltimore City Office of Sustainability, 2010).

The dreams and desires of the management committee regarding the park are aimed at ensuring user-friendliness. The committee wish to maintain the legacy of taking care of the park throughout generations. Hence, they are intended to provide training facilities on the management of the park to the younger generations. Since they have a good interaction with local MP and Ward Council, similar to Hanoi, these trainings can be organized by the government bodies (Hien, 2015). Moreover, they are willing to make the park accessible and usable for elderly people by constructing a dedicated walking path. These measures will ensure the achievement of SDG target 11.7.1 for Ward No. 2 and for this park in the definitive sense. Additionally, this is also following the motto of LNOB. Moreover, their willingness to manage the park in a participatory approach in the future will fulfill the SDG targets 5.5, 16.7 and 17.1.17.

Despite all these opportunities, the financial sustainability of the open space is still at stake since it is entirely dependent on donations from the committee members, and the PPP in this park is very weak. To solve this issue the management committee is attempting to receive sponsorship from other organizations, such as banners or billboards in exchange for funding or providing lighting facilities from the lighting companies, etc. They are even hoping for funding for private organizations. This is a huge opportunity for them, similar to the case in Medan City, Indonesia (Fatah et al., 2024). Besides DNCC, the relevant government institutions, such Department of Environment, the Department of Waste Management, etc., can also render financial help to this park.

However, the stakeholder analysis for managing such types of open spaces, similar to those abroad, such as in Boston, Baltimore, New Delhi, Australia, etc., has not been conducted yet in Bangladesh (Baltimore City Office of Sustainability, 2010; Boston Parks and Recreation Department, 2008; Hou et al., 2022; Raut & Raut, 2013). Hence, the responsibilities and coordination of the related organizations are still unknown. The uncooperative behavior of DESCO toward the management committee is a prime example of that. Hence, all of these concerns call for a well-structured guideline for community-

based open spaces. As described in the studies of Thailand and India, these guidelines need to be the bridge between the management of the community-based parks, like Road no. 17 and participatory planning (Javaid & Habeeb, 2018; Samandi & Tantayanusorn, 2006). The committee intends to preserve the natural beauty of the park and plant more trees. Hence, protecting the natural resources of the community-based open spaces should be a crucial issue in the future guidelines, similar to Malaysia (Bakar & Zainon, 2019).

Conclusion

Managing a community-based open space is a good concept for creating value for society. Since this type of open space management works as a source of developing Public-Private Partnerships, it should be encouraged by the government.

The management committee of Road No. 17 Park dreams of extending the services and facilities of the park, if they receive any financial assistance from interested organizations. This applies to other community-based open spaces as well. Hence, a well-organized management guideline for community-based open spaces by the government, emphasizing the strengthening of Public-Private Partnership and funding from the local government and NGOs, will pave the path to increasing the amount of such open spaces in the urban areas.

This guideline is required to ensure the social, environmental and most importantly, the financial sustainability of the community-led spaces and delineate specific contributions and responsibilities from the relevant stakeholders. From the manuals abroad and this case study, it can be realized that the historical background and family legacy of a community hold a profound value in the management process of such open spaces. Hence, the adopted guideline in future must do justice to their emotional attachment toward the managed spaces. To ensure this, similar to the manuals developed abroad, the adopted guideline should follow a bottom-up approach to uphold the community's rights over the open space. Also, the lack of support from a few stakeholders hindered the management of this park. Hence, the future guideline should ensure proper coordination among the relevant stakeholders as well.

The only limitation of this research is that the FGDs were held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, depicting the true perception of the committee members and applying the tools online were difficult. Nonetheless, the management committee dreams of upgrading the layout of the park by making it elderly people-friendly. Hence, future participatory research focusing on redesigning the park based on the perception of the community people of Road No.17 and the management committee members is necessary to facilitate the accomplishment of their dream. Moreover, the financial crisis of the park is a major concern for the management committee. Hence, future studies on how long-term financial support can be provided to such community-based open spaces can be useful in this regard.

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