STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Highlights of achievements by cities from Cohort stage
March to October 2021
The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge is hosted by the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, in collaboration with Bernard van Leer Foundation and with the technical support of WRI India. This Challenge aims to incorporate a focus on neighbourhood-level improvements that promote healthy early childhood development (0-5-year-old children) in the planning and management of Indian cities.

This brochure recognizes efforts of 25 Cohort cities and highlights some of the projects implemented focusing on early childhood-oriented solutions. The cities identified one pilot neighbourhood and formulated multiple projects across sectors which were complementary and integrated with each other in the neighbourhood, to improve quality of life of young children and families in the city with the help of various stakeholders and experts. These projects were implemented over 7 months (March to October 2021) of Cohort phase through tactical and permanent interventions.
Foreword

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has been anchoring a suite of Missions and programs to tackle a whole gamut of urban issues in India. Be it Housing for All under PMAY-urban, sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission or water supply under AMRUT or technology enabling service delivery under the Smart Cities Mission. In an emerging paradigm at the Ministry, for the first time we are taking the lens of certain citizen groups to reimagining our cities. In partnership with the Bernard van Leer Foundation, we are investing in cities to nurture early childhood development and to make them work for caregivers.

In the past two years, young children have lost precious time and opportunities to support their healthy development and future potential. As Indian cities build back in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are committed to transforming the public domain, including streets and public spaces, to be people-oriented, inclusive, and supportive of healthy lifestyles. Shaping cities that are healthier, friendlier places for the very young and those who care for them, including women and senior citizens, and vulnerable communities in particular – is key to shaping cities of the future.

We are building heavy infrastructure - but beyond that, we need small-scale interventions in everyday spaces that improve the daily life and lived experiences for all. We also need to reach people and involve them in taking ownership and participating in the upkeep of public spaces, which ultimately belong to them. Local neighbourhood-level planning is critical in getting citizens, local officials, and elected representatives to jointly prepare solutions that reflect their aspirations and enhance overall quality of public life. The emphasis on such local-level engagement through the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge is very welcome.

I am happy to see such changes happening in cities of various sizes and regions all over India through the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, and other initiatives including IndiaCycles4Change, Streets4People, EatSmart, Transport4All and India Clean Air Challenges. As we celebrate the 75th year of India’s independence, the growing momentum behind enhancing our streets and public spaces is a vehicle for securing the dignity and joy of our citizens. I congratulate all the cities, including the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge cohort, who are leading this change on ground.

Message from the Mission Director, Smart Cities Mission, MoHUA

The Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, has been investing in addressing urban issues from various lenses and innovating ways of mobilising the urban ecosystem in India. Since the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the Mission has rolled out national level campaigns to prioritise healthy and active citizenry through IndiaCycles4Change, Streets4People, Nurturing Neighbourhoods, EatSmart, Transport4All and India Clean Air Challenges. Beginning with a competitive federalism approach, these challenges have grown to become movements - by the people, for the people and of the people of urban India.

Investing in cities that nurture early childhood development and work for caregivers is a new and unique lens for looking at urban development and citizen experience in India. Never before have city engineers in India’s urban local bodies been asked to look at cities from 95 cms above ground - i.e. height of a toddler. Through the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge, Smart Cities, for the first time, are re-imagining their neighbourhoods to work for infants, toddlers and their caregivers. Because of this challenge, we now understand better that access to a safe, supportive public realm during the critical early years of a child’s life is essentially linked with strong long-term social, economic, and developmental outcomes.

Through a participatory and consultative approach, city engineers and planners are discussing and co-creating solutions with caregivers of young children, anganwadi workers, health workers and early childhood development experts. The solutions are tested via quick, cost-efficient tactical interventions through a combination of temporary and permanent elements in public spaces. Learnings from the trials are helping to understand the impact, correct course if required, and move towards scaling-up permanent solutions across the cities.

Young children and women, especially from vulnerable groups in these transforming neighbourhoods, are spending more time outdoors - playing, pursuing community-oriented activities, and safely accessing essential services for their health. Solutions implemented to address the specific needs of young children also follow basic principles of pedestrian safety, women-friendly, nature-based, public art-based, and culturally anchored development in their local neighbourhoods. Therefore, these solutions not only work for young children, they work well for all.

In this book, we are proud to share stories from the pioneering cohort of 25 cities that participated in Phase 1, i.e. pilot phase of the Challenge. As we transition to the next phase, I would like to extend my hearty congratulations to the 10 winning cities, who will be supported to scale up the changes and become lighthouses for the rest of the country.

Kanai Kumar Joint Secretary and Mission Director Smart Cities Mission Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Message from the Bernard van Leer Foundation

The Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge is an inspiring example of how innovation and change on-the-ground can happen when partners come together for a common goal. Cities were invited to reimagine and improve spaces from the perspective of young children and families, make streets accessible and safe for them, and improve access to early childhood services; and each participating city came through with innovative work of the highest quality at a neighbourhood-level. From converting dump yards and unused spaces into play zones to microparks and well-equipped vaccination centres for young children, the Nurturing Neighbourhood cities have put in commendable effort, shown remarkable results, and inspired other cities.

An early childhood lens in urban planning and design, especially at a neighbourhood-scale, is a sustainable and inclusive way to reimagine our cities. A focus on core infrastructure and better quality of life for a city’s youngest residents ultimately benefits all people. The Bernard van Leer Foundation has aims to support partners in making cities places where infants, toddlers, and their caregivers can thrive, and this challenge is a massive step in this direction. We would like to thank the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Smart Cities Mission for launching and leading this important initiative and the World Resources Institute India for its continued technical support. Congratulations to all the winners as well as each participating cities for making this challenge an enormous success.

Rushda Majeed
India Representative
Bernard van Leer Foundation

Message from WRI India

It is heartening to see how Indian cities enthusiastically participated to make public spaces, streets and facilities more accessible to infants, toddlers, and their caregivers. We are thankful to the Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for providing cities a platform to ramp up early childhood-friendly interventions and to the Bernard van Leer Foundation for their support in making this work possible. I congratulate the 10 Nurturing Neighbourhoods finalists and others who strove for change on ground. Making our cities more walkable and accessible, with a focus on the most vulnerable, is critical to shaping a resilient, low-carbon and liveable future.

Dr. O.P. Agarwal
CEO
WRI India
A Good Start for All Children

Why 0-5 matters

Research indicates that in the first few years of life, a child’s brain makes as many as 1 million neural connections per second. A child’s development from the prenatal stage till the age of five shapes lifelong social and developmental outcomes. Therefore, they need access to a safe and stimulating physical environment that enables positive experiences and supports them to achieve their full potential.

Young children aged 0-5 years (also referred to as infants and toddlers) are dependent on their caregivers and experience the public realm as a unit. Caregivers could be parents, grandparents, pregnant mothers, elder siblings, other family members or any paid caregivers taking care of young children.

There is compelling evidence that investing in early childhood development can translate to better health, greater ability to learn and work with others, and higher incomes in adulthood.

Positive interactions of infants, toddlers and caregivers with the surrounding environment is crucial for stimulating healthy development. Urban design and policy can maximise these positive interactions for infants, toddlers, and caregivers.

The ITCN Framework provide cities with a roadmap for neighbourhoods where young children and their caregivers feel safe, explore, play and engage with their built and natural environment.

Further details: Infant, Toddler, Caregiver-Friendly Neighbourhood (ITCN) Framework

5 Objectives of Infant, Toddler, Caregiver- friendly Neighbourhoods

- SAFE
- GREEN
- ACCESSIBLE
- PLAYFUL
- INCLUSIVE

Source: NACDD-GDCI

Further details: Infant, Toddler, Caregiver-Friendly Neighbourhood (ITCN) Framework
Nation-wide participation by cities in the initial phase

In Nov 2020, through an open call to Indian cities, all the Smart Cities, Capital cities and cities above 5 lakh population were invited to participate in the challenge. Cities prepared their application by identifying 5 early childhood-oriented solutions as pilot projects in a neighbourhood. The applications were evaluated by the jury to identify shortlisted Cohort cities.

Over 60 applications


25 cities shortlisted for cohort stage

The Cohort

Agartala • Bangalore • Coimbatore • Bharuch • Erode • Hubballi • Dharwad • Aurangabad • Bhopal • Chennai • Bhubaneswar • Tirunelveli • Lucknow • Mangalore • Solapur • Voltore • Surat • Thane • Raipur • Ludhiana • Muzaffarpur • Madurai • Jodhpur • Karimnagar • South Delhi • Saharanpur • Noida • Thanjavur • Ghaziabad • Patna • Toothukudi • Shimla • Amravati (AP) • Gangtok • Shivamogga • Varanasi • Karnal • Kalyan Dombivali • Kakinada • Kochi • Kohima • Kota • Nagpur • Rajkot • Ranchi • Rohtak • Rourkela • Salem • Surat • Tiruvananthapuram • Tiruppur • Ujjain • Vadodara • Warangal

The Cohort cities implemented tactical interventions of temporary and/or permanent solutions for their 5 pilot projects in the neighbourhood.

Collectively the Cohort cities implemented over 70 trials and pilots over 7 months and prepared scale-up plans.

DISCLAIMER: This map is for illustrative purpose and does not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of WRI, concerning the legal status of any country or territory or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

CITIES THAT WORK FOR THE VERY YOUNG AND THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM ARE CITIES THAT WORK FOR ALL!
The impact of the cohort stage

100,000
Young children benefited
This includes children benefiting from visiting the improved facilities, open spaces and amenities.

1 Million
Users benefited
This includes caregivers of the children benefited, anganwadi and health workers and residents using the projects.

200+
Champions to drive the change
Local leaders, government officials, NGOs, individual experts and other stakeholders

CITIES ARE PLANNING TO SCALE UP

10X
Projects and beneficiaries
Cities plan to scale 10 times the number of projects and beneficiaries.

Highlights of implemented projects by cities in their pilot neighbourhoods

1. Addressing caregivers’ needs in public spaces
Cities piloted solutions to enhance convenience for caregiving activities in public spaces, thereby improving mobility of caregivers who are predominantly women and elders in Indian context

2. Refurbishing anganwadis and PHCs with play and amenities
Cities refurbished early childhood development-oriented facilities such as anganwadis and primary health centers and their surroundings to enhance safe access, play opportunities & convenience

3. Inclusion of the most vulnerable
Cities implemented projects of safe and clean public spaces and amenities addressing needs of young children living in slums, areas of economically weaker and marginalized.

4. Reclaiming space for play in the neighbourhood
Cities created new public spaces for young children by reclaiming residual under-utilized spaces or created dedicated spaces for play in existing public spaces.

5. Creating safer walking experiences
Cities piloted enhancing safer and stimulating walking experiences for young children and caregivers using streets, intersections, and public transit stations most used by them

6. Enhancing connection with nature
Cities enhanced opportunities for young children for sensory play among natural areas, places of bio-diversity, exposure to traditional herbs and waterbodies.

7. Promoting community action and sustenance
Cities enabled women and local citizen groups to join in creating public spaces for young children and help monitor and ensure upkeep of the implemented projects.

Categorization of the projects are not exclusive, as most of the projects span across multiple factors mentioned here.

PHC – Primary health centre, AMRUT – Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation, ISBT – Inter-State Bus Terminus
1. Addressing caregivers’ needs in public spaces

a) Pram system at Hosur Interchange, Hubballi Dharwad
b) Kids’ vaccination centre at Marmohan Nagar PHC, Jabalpur
c) Waiting hall and lactation booth at ISBT, Jabalpur
d) Lactation pods at 4 locations, Basanti Colony and Uditnagar, Rourkela
e) Lactation booth at Char Dham Chowraha, Ujjain
Hubballi-Dharwad Bus Rapid Transport System (BRTS) serves around 1 lakh commuters everyday. The agency introduced a shared pram system at Hosur interchange premises for better convenience of passengers with young children, while accessing buses at the terminal. Priority seating and queuing for young children, caregivers and pregnant women was also implemented in 100 BRTS buses. This has enhanced the daily convenience of caregivers travelling with their young children and reinforced the positive image of public transport.

Jabalpur
Child-Friendly Vaccination Center

The city pioneered the idea of a children friendly vaccination center as a response to the Covid-19 situation. They converted an existing building into a dedicated children’s vaccination centre and the vacant land around 260 sq.m was transformed into children-friendly areas. Playful waiting spaces were reclaimed from parking, a diaper vending machine and a changing station were added. This has helped to reinforce Primary Health Centers (PHCs) as a response to Covid-19 and through the lens of young children.
Jabalpur
Young children & caregiver friendly public bus terminal

Jabalpur ISBT (Inter-State Bus Terminal) is a major transit terminal with a high footfall of around 10000 users, where families spend long hours waiting. The city reimagined the waiting space to be friendlier for young children and caregivers by introducing dedicated play area and secure breastfeeding space for mothers in the waiting hall. This has enhanced convenience and comfort for caregivers travelling with their young children.

Waiting hall and lactation booth at ISBT

Source: Jabalpur Smart City Limited

Rourkela
Support for caregiving in public spaces

Women often find it inconvenient to feed their babies in public spaces, which leads to reduced time spent out of home. To change the scenario, the city introduced multiple lactation pods in public parks, markets and at early childhood services. This has encouraged women to travel with their babies and raised awareness among the community regarding healthy breastfeeding practices.

Lactation pods at 4 locations, Basanti Colony and Uditnagar

Source: Rourkela Smart City Limited
**UJJAIN**

Support for caregiving in public spaces

Ujjain experiences thousands of pilgrims including young children and caregivers spending considerable time in its public spaces. The city introduced lactation booths as a part of the pilgrim amenities’ centre and to be replicated across the city. The initiative encourages women to travel with their babies and raises awareness among the community regarding healthy breastfeeding practices.

Lactation booth at Char Dham Chouraha

2. Refurbishing anganwadis and PHCs with play and amenities

- Anganwadi at Pragati school, Agartala
- Anganwadi at Shantinagar, Bengaluru
- Anganwadi and Maternity hospital at Periyar Nagar, Erode
- Anganwadi at Khairebad, Hyderabad
- Anganwadi at Sathnagaci, Indore
- Anganwadi at Eravelli road, Kochi
- Anganwadi at Karuppalam, Kochi
- Govt. middle school at Forest colony, Kohima
- Anganwadi at Dargapur, Rourkela
- PHC and Municipal School at Athwa, Surat
- Anganwadi at Galicha Colony, Ujjain
AGARTALA
Improvement of access to an anganwadi

The anganwadi near Pragati school was disconnected from the neighbourhood with no clearly defined access. The city created a dedicated access road and revamped the immediate surroundings of anganwadi to make it safer and playful for young children and their caregivers. In the 100 sq.m space, open drains were closed, and spillover play space for children are added. This has enhanced the playtime for children and reimagined the anganwadi as a positive public space.

BENGALURU
Enhancing young children specific play at an anganwadi

The anganwadi is located in the dense neighbourhood as part of a school campus without any delineated play spaces. It is refurbished with dedicated play spaces of around 300 sq.m, for young children by adding age-specific play opportunities, appropriating handrails, toilet and washbasin to children’s height, connecting paths and seating for caregivers. This has encouraged children to be more independent and offers enhanced play opportunities.
ERODE
Reclaiming space for people at early childhood development (ECD) services

This site, with an anganwadi and maternity hospital in the same compound, receives high footfall of young children and caregivers, but lacks play or waiting spaces. The city improved the accessibility to the compound by providing safe crossings and converting vacant spaces into playful waiting areas. This has led to more convenience for the young children and caregivers and potentially benefitting around 100 users everyday.

Source: WRI India

Anganwadi and Maternity hospital at Periyar Nagar

HYDERABAD
Introducing play space by revamping an anganwadi

Anganwadi at Khairatabad

The anganwadi is located in a dense neighbourhood in the central part of the city which lacks basic amenities. The city revamped 360 sq.m. of space around the anganwadi to provide opportunities for play and learning by converting the underutilized spaces in the premises. This has generated a new public space for young children in the neighbourhood who previously lacked access to such spaces.
INDORE
Revamping anganwadi with basic infrastructure

Anganwadi at Sethi Nagar

This anganwadi is situated along a prime location in the city, with high enrolment from the surrounding informal settlements and lacked in basic infrastructure. The city revamped the premises by repairing the building, providing water connection in toilets, drinking water taps, repair of play equipment, and organized parking along the entrance. The 180 sq.m. of transformed space has led to more convenience in usage of the premises by young children.

KOCHI
Playful waiting spaces at anganwadi

The anganwadi is located in a residential neighbourhood with dilapidated access and lacked play and waiting spaces. The surrounding areas were filled with construction debris. The city revamped the anganwadi with provisions for safer access and created playful outdoor spaces and shaded waiting areas. This has added 33 sq.m of public space as an anchor for the community.
KOCHI
Creating safe pocket spaces for play along early childhood development (ECD) services

Anganwadi at Karippadam

This neighbourhood lacked in public spaces for children, with most vacant spaces used for parking. The city implemented tactical intervention of creating dedicated space of 42 sq.m, for children adjacent to the anganwadi, by removing parking, adding floor-based games and low-height seating. This has encouraged children to play outdoors, especially girl children, and for women to spend time outdoors.

Source: CSML

KOHIMA
Multi-purpose public space at school

Govt. middle school at Forest colony

Due to the hilly terrain, the neighbourhood has very few public spaces. The community decided to open up the 180 sq.m. of space in the middle school as a play space for young children in the area, beyond school hours. The space in the premises has been converted into multi-purpose space with play opportunities such as equipment for toddlers and nature-based sensory play elements.

Source: Kohima Smart City Development Limited
ROURKELA
Reimagining anganwadis for young children

The city consulted anganwadi workers and caregivers in the neighbourhood and identified the need to reimagine anganwadis. Further, two model premises were redeveloped with BaLA (Building as Learning Aid) concept, basic amenities, nursing stations, outdoor play opportunities for children and waiting space for caregivers were added. This has benefitted 150 young children and women and led to anganwadis becoming a key public space in the neighbourhood.

BEFORE

AFTER

Source: Rourkela Smart City Limited

ANGANWADI AT DURGAPUR

SURAT
Re-imagining public spaces along early childhood development (ECD) services

The Primary Health Center and municipal school are key anchor facilities for young children and yet they often lack children-specific elements. The city improved the surroundings of these facilities of around 160 sq.m., with age-specific play zones and dedicated waiting spaces. This has led to enhanced opportunities to play and spend time outdoors at the early childhood development services.

PHC AND MUNICIPAL SCHOOL AT ATHWA

Source: Surat Smart City Development Limited
UJJAIN
Stimulating walk to the anganwadi

The access to the anganwadi had become a dumping site - unsafe and unpleasant for children and caregivers. The surrounding area of around 450 sq.m. was transformed creating clean public spaces used for children’s play and convenient seating for caregiver-oriented activities. The area has become a positive public space even beyond the anganwadi’s working hours.

Anganwadi at Galcha Colony

3. Inclusion of the most vulnerable

a) Arjunpura garden, Indore
b) Pocket park at Anand Bharati ground, Kakinada
c) Public play space at Leprosy pada slum, Rourkela
d) Ramat Rath (mobile play van), Vadodara
e) Anganwadi at Balasamudram, Warangal
The neighbourhood garden was isolated from the residential areas in the immediate surroundings. The city revamped the garden and made it more inclusive and accessible by opening a gate with the adjoining community of around 200 families thereby drastically reducing the circuitous travel to reach the garden. 2000 sq.m. of garden space was improved with buffer of air purifying plant species to reduce exposure to pollution from the surroundings, age-appropriate and nature-based play opportunities and a lactation room were added. The improvement has led to more outdoor time spent by children and women.

Source: ISCDL

INDORE
Opening garden gates for all!
Arjunpura garden

KAKINADA
Transforming an abandoned space to a play space for all
Pocket park at Anand Bharati ground

The site is a multipurpose ground with heavy footfall and is in proximity to informal settlements, a government school and a library. The abandoned space of around 240 sq.m area along the entry to the ground was transformed to create play spaces. Open drains were closed, shaded space, barriers from traffic and play equipment of recycled materials were installed. This has led to enhanced play opportunities for around 100 young children and multi-usable space for their caregivers, especially women.

Source: WRI India

BEFORE
AFTER
Pocket park at Anand Bharati ground
ROURKELA
Public play spaces for the vulnerable

Children of leprosy affected people are the most vulnerable and often excluded section in the society. To ensure inclusive play opportunities for these underserved children, a new play space of 200 sq.m. was created within the slum by repurposing residual open ground, adding simple play and learn elements and seating areas for caregivers. This has led to the creation of formal play space for around 30 most vulnerable children.

BEFORE

AFTER

Source: WRI India

VADODARA
Play space on wheels to reach underserved

Young children in dense settlements lack access to play spaces. Ramat Rath, a mobile van with pop up play opportunities was introduced consisting of interactive, playful elements and movable equipment suitable for young children. The mobile van creates a temporary play space of around 140 sq.m. serving around 30 children.

It has enabled access to play for young children in informal settlements and vulnerable areas where access to formal public play spaces is not available.

Ramat Rath (mobile play van)

Source: WRI India
The anganwadi is located in a busy area in proximity to a slum settlement and faced issues such as water-logging. The city improved access to the facility by covering open drains and speed calming measures. 320 sq.m. of toddler friendly play spaces were enhanced inside the anganwadi including shaded seating and assembly area. Murals, plantation and play opportunities on the street were also added. This emphasized the importance of the anganwadi as a community public space.

WARANGAL
Playful anganwadi for young children

Anganwadi at Balasamudram

Anganwadi at Balasamudram

Source: WRI India

4. Reclaiming space for play in the neighbourhood

a) Prapti park at Ramnagar, Agartala
b) Puttani (tiny) park, Shanti Nagar, Bengaluru
c) All abilities’ park, Dharamshala
d) SP Residence park, Dharamshala
e) SKM park at Periyar Nagar, Erode
f) Totot at CP-Shahkar Nagar Main Park, Indore

Source: WRI India

Vivekananda Park at Ramarao Peta, Kakinada
Bus Stop & Anganwadi play space, New Reserve Colony, Kohima
Gayatri Vihar Temple Park, Kota
Babulal Vaidya Public library at Sadar, Rajkot
Anganwadi under Vadsar flyover, Vadodara
AGARTALA
Clustered children-oriented public space
This play space is located within 300m from Pragati anganwadi and school in a residential area. The park was under-utilised and mostly used by older children. The city revamped the park as a focal public space of the neighbourhood with a dedicated toddler play space of around 530 sq.m. with play equipment along with caregiver-oriented amenities. Clustering of public space along with multiple community activities has led to more time spent by young children and their caregivers in the park.

BENGALURU
Converting dump yard to putaani (tiny) park
Accessibility to public open spaces in brownfield areas is a challenge. Therefore, the concept of pocket parks for dense developments was developed. Underutilized space of 90 sq.m. in the quarters’ area is converted into a play and interactive place for young children and caregivers, who also participated in the implementation of the project. This has enabled a sense of ownership for the public space within the community and serving around 45 children and 100 caregivers.
Dharamshala
Play space dedicated to all abilities
The city administration revitalized the biggest public space of around 2000 sq.m. to provide age-appropriate play for all children by introducing play equipment, improved access points and seating to address the requirements of all abilities in the existing park. Equipment to engage caregivers and all age groups were also included. This has led to higher footfall of children visiting.

Source: DSCL

Dharamshala
Revitalizing existing public space in neighbourhood
The site is in proximity to various public buildings in the neighbourhood like hospitals, high court and thus sees high footfall of users. The city revitalized the dilapidated park to improve access, provide seating spaces and lighting. This has led to revamping of 300 sq.m. of park space used as a waiting space for the visitors and public space for the local community.

Source: DSCL

All abilities’ park

SP Residence park

BEFORE

AFTER
This existing neighbourhood park is one of the very few public spaces available and has high footfall from all age groups. The city created a dedicated play area of around 200 sq.m. for young children with sensory trails, engaging play opportunities, and seating spaces at multiple heights. This has led to more time spent by toddlers in the public space.

SKM park at Periyar Nagar

INDORE
Pedestrianised access to park and dedicated play space
Totlot at CP Shekhar Nagar Main Park

This existing park experiences high footfall of users from the surroundings. The city pedestrianized the main access street and created a public space of 720 sq.m. at the entrance to the garden by reorganizing municipal garbage truck and other vehicle parking. Also introduced a dedicated young children-oriented play area of 500 sq.m. including sensory trails, play opportunities, seating, and a lactation booth. This has led to more time spent by young children in the public space.
**KAKINADA**

Introducing age-appropriate play

Vivekananda Park at Ramarao Peta

This park is one of the oldest recreational spaces in the city, which attracts a huge footfall and offers a wide range of activities. However, the premise lacked opportunities of play for young children. The city created a dedicated play space of about 1260 sq.m. for toddlers including age-appropriate play equipment and natural material, open-air theatre was renovated as a play space. This is benefitting around 100 children and 600 caregivers, spending more time in the waterfront premise.

Source: Kakinada Smart City Corporation Limited

**KOHIMA**

Reclaiming space along the anganwadi and transit stop for ‘play’

The small abandoned space between the bus stop and anganwadi was transformed into a play space and waiting area for young children and their caregivers. The space is shielded from traffic and provided with a refurbished kitchen garden, sandpit and age-appropriate play opportunities catering to the toddlers regularly visiting the space. This has led to around 100 sq.m. of safe play space for anganwadi children and for those waiting at the bus stop.

Bus Stop & Anganwadi play space, New Reserve Colony

Source: WRI India
This neighbourhood park located in close proximity of day care centres, schools and a temple has high footfall of all age groups, however it lacked a playful area and seating elements.

The city refurbished the 200 sq.m. park area with age-appropriate play opportunities and appropriate seating for caregivers. This has led to enhanced outdoor time for around 100 young children and caregivers.

KOTA
Age-appropriate play at the community garden
Gayatri Vihar Temple Park

RAJKOT
Playful space to wait at the public library
Babulal Vaidya Public library at Sadar

The state-of-the-art library has a dedicated toy library and therefore draws high footfall of young children and caregivers who spend considerable time in the premises. A dedicated toddler play space of around 90 sq.m was introduced with floor painted games, learn and play elements and seating spaces for caregivers. This has led to more time spent by children playing outdoors.
The anganwadi premises below the flyover were long neglected, encroached by parking and the presence of garbage dumps leading to anti-social activities happening at night. The city transformed this underutilized area into a vibrant public space providing a variety of sensory play opportunities and as a flexible space that can host multiple community activities. The 390 sq.m. of reclaimed public space serves around 130 children using the anganwadi and from the surrounding areas.

5. Creating safer walking experiences

a) Thadagam street improvement, Coimbatore
b) Thadagam junction improvement, Coimbatore
c) BRT stations, Hubbali Dharwad
d) Eat street at Ramarao Peta, Kakinada
e) Open street at Model Town, Rohtak
f) Health and wellness centre, DAVMAC, Rourkela
g) Street improvement along NSC Bose Park, Rourkela
h) Junction improvement at Balasamudram, Warangal
COIMBATORE
Making toddlers walk to the park safer
Thadagam street improvement

The lakefront is being redeveloped with renewed public spaces which people find difficult to reach. Access to the lakefront is being enhanced through tactical interventions of a continuous, obstruction-free footpath, buffer from traffic and bus stop with comfortable waiting spaces. The tactical intervention has improved access along the 300m road stretch connecting to the lakefront for pedestrians and cyclists.

BEFORE
AFTER
Source: WRI India

COIMBATORE
Reclaiming pedestrian space at the junction
Thadagam junction improvement

The junction, the main access point to the lake front, is redesigned to make it safer for young children and everyone to cross the busy intersection through tactical intervention. Traffic flow is streamlined and made one-way along a direction to reduce conflicts and added pedestrian space of around 160 sq.m. This has enhanced overall safety and convenience for all pedestrians.

BEFORE
AFTER
Source: WRI India

Source: WRI India
HUBBALLI-DHARWAD

Playful bus stations

BRT Stations (Bus Rapid Transit) are important everyday public spaces for the local community. The city experimented creating playful transit areas of around 300 sq.m. by introducing floor-based games and playful installations along the foot-over bridges, waiting spaces in the station area to make the space more welcoming for children. This has helped to reimagine the everyday utilitarian transit areas for around 50 young children and 200 school children users, into more humane public spaces.

Source: DULT

BRT Stations

The street connects to schools and colleges but beyond working hours, the area was underutilized and perceived unsafe. The city pedestrianized the 230 m street stretch into Eat Street, an outdoor recreational street. Adjoining to it, a dedicated toddler zone of around 190 sq.m was created by reclaiming an unused vehicular street, added with age specific play and overlooking seating spaces for caregivers. The pedestrianized plaza has become the focus of the community, especially families with young children.

Source: WRI India

KAKINADA

Toddler zone by reclaiming space from traffic

Eat street at Ramarao Peta

The street connects to schools and colleges but beyond working hours, the area was underutilized and perceived unsafe. The city pedestrianized the 230 m street stretch into Eat Street, an outdoor recreational street. Adjoining to it, a dedicated toddler zone of around 190 sq.m was created by reclaiming an unused vehicular street, added with age specific play and overlooking seating spaces for caregivers. The pedestrianized plaza has become the focus of the community, especially families with young children.
The neighbourhood street was dominated by vehicles and the local community wanted to reimagine the street as a public space. On a Sunday morning, the street was temporarily closed for traffic and transformed into a lively public space promoting walking, cycling and providing numerous play opportunities for young children and caregivers. Around 2000 people including 150 young children experienced the temporary public space. The event has brought together the community and enhanced awareness on non-motorized transport and the usage of public spaces.

ROHTAK
Open street for play on Sundays

Open street at Model Town

This Primary Health Centre (PHC) serves around 10000 people in the neighbourhood whereas the access route had open drains, electric transformers, unorganized parking and deserted areas and was perceived unsafe. The city closed the open drains and created footpath along the premises, added play spaces for children, waiting space for women, breast feeding pods, and a traditional herbal garden. This has made the PHC safer and friendlier for children and women.

ROURKELA
Safer access to primary health centre

Health and wellness centre, DAVMAC

Source: Rohtak District Administration

Source: Rourkela Smart City Limited

Source: WRI India
This street connects to a city level park with the residential areas. However, it lacked a dedicated pedestrian space and making it unsafe for pedestrians accessing the park. The city revamped the 70 m stretch of the street to develop a dedicated footpath space with buffer from vehicular traffic, and seating shaded with trees at regular intervals. This has led to increased safety and convenience for everyone using the street.

WARANGAL
Junction improvement for safe access to schools

The street connects to schools, anganwadis, open spaces of the neighbourhood. The key junction of the street was redesigned with safer crossings, a pedestrian plaza with play opportunities and waiting spaces with seating for caregivers. This encourages safer pedestrian conditions for around 4000 users accessing various activity centres for children and caregivers in the neighbourhood.
6. Enhancing connection with nature

a) Chhatra Sangh pond at Ram Nagar, Agartala
b) Shivnagar AMRUT park, Jabalpur
c) Trikoni park at Subhadar Layout, Nagpur
d) Zakir Hussain park at Morabadi, Ranchi
e) Peti park at Balasadumram, Warangal
AGARTALA
Bringing back traditional pukur (pond) as a public space

Chhatra Sangh pond at Ram Nagar

The traditional waterbody (pukur) lacked clear access and remained under-utilized by the community. The city restored the waterbody and enhanced the access to the public space by creating a continuous pathway, with shaded resting decks and lighting at regular intervals. This has brought back the traditional public space of 800 sq.m. to the community.

Source: ASCL

JABALPUR
Enabling nature-based play

Shivnagar AMRUT Park

The existing neighbourhood park lacks age-specific play elements. The city experimented with nature-based play opportunities in an area of about 100 sq.m. by involving local children to build bird feeders and plant stimulating species of shrubs and trees. Sensory path of various textures, sandpit, mud pots to play with sounds, climbing mounds and seating areas were also installed. This has enhanced access to play opportunities for underprivileged children from the surrounding areas.
The park is regularly used by elderly residents who bring young children along, but it lacked opportunities for play and interaction with natural materials. Therefore, the park was refurbished to enhance young children’s experiences by boosting bio-diversity of the area through nature-based solutions and stimulating play opportunities. This has reinforced play opportunities for 200 users including children and caregivers everyday.

NAGPUR
Enhancing bio-diversity at the local park
Trikoni park at Subhedar Layout

Once a famous public space, this park was abandoned 10 years ago and remained inaccessible to the public. The 3400 sq.m. area park was refurbished and opened for everyone as an herbal garden with more than 1000 medicinal plants and spices planted, play opportunities created with recycled materials and family-friendly amenities. Dedicated walkways and crossings were added to ensure safer access to the garden. This has helped to re-establish the connection with traditional nature-based medicines for young children and their families.

Source: WRI India

RANCHI
Exposure to traditional herbs by revitalizing abandoned park
Zakir Hussain park at Morabadi

Source: Ranchi Municipal Corporation
The city ideated a pet-friendly park, which will attract children and all age groups. A dumpyard was transformed into a Pets’ park of around 3000 sq.m., with pets’ play area, gym facility for all ages, shaded seating, flower garden and a lotus pond. Connectivity to the park was also improved by creating footpaths and signages through tactical interventions. This has enhanced opportunity for children and everyone to interact with nature.

Source: GWMC, Source: WRI India

7. Promoting community action and sustenance

a) Anganwadi at Macchi Bazar, Indore
b) Vikasnagar park, Jabalpur
c) T M Mohammed park at Eraveli road, Kochi
d) Roadside park at Forest Colony, Kohima
e) Public play space at Durgapur B Slum, Rourkela
The anganwadi sees a high enrolment of women and young children being the only facility in the surrounding areas. The city revamped the anganwadi and its premises which had become a dump yard and encroached by various activities, hampering its functioning. The city induced a community led reclamation of the public space, influencing change in attitude towards the anganwadi. The 600 sq.m. of facility premises has become a positive public space and enhanced convenience of access for children and caregivers.


dump yard

public space

enhanced convenience of access

The 600 sq.m. of facility premises has become a positive public space and enhanced convenience of access for children and caregivers.

This neighbourhood park was disused and in a derelict condition where children of the community had very few play opportunities. Around 400 residents from the community helped to transform the 1-acre park, to create age-specific play spaces, sensory trails, plantation and shaded seating spaces. The city also signed an MoU with the Resident Welfare Association to monitor and maintain the park.

Source: WRI India

Source: WRI India

Source: WEEW Consultants

Anganwadi at Macchi Bazar

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RECLAMATION OF ANGANWADI FROM DUMP YARD

ANGANWADI AT MACCHI BAZAR

COMMUNITY-LED TRANSFORMATION OF PARK

Vikasnagar park

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RECLAMATION OF ANGANWADI FROM DUMP YARD

Source: JSCL

This neighbourhood park was disused and in a derelict condition where children of the community had very few play opportunities. Around 400 residents from the community helped to transform the 1-acre park, to create age-specific play spaces, sensory trails, plantation and shaded seating spaces. The city also signed an MoU with the Resident Welfare Association to monitor and maintain the park.

Source: WRI India

Source: WRI India

Source: WEEW Consultants

Anganwadi at Macchi Bazar

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KOCHI
Breaking barriers for young children & women in public spaces

The neighbourhood park had limited accessibility due to high boundary walls, with instances of anti-social activities in the park. The community got together to break down the compound wall of the abandoned park to make it transparent, with multiple entries. Seating spaces and informal play opportunities were added. The transformed 260 sqm. of park has around 100 users including around 30 children to play outdoors, especially girl children, and for women to spend time outdoors.

KOHIMA
Community-led reclaiming of space for young children

In the land starved hilly city, the local community got together to convert the area dumped with waste into a parklet for young children and their caregivers. Safer access to the space is enhanced by providing speed calming measures, crossings, a toilet, plantation and waiting spaces. This has provided play opportunities for around 200 children in the community and enhanced safer access along the connecting streets.
Children in the slum lacked dignified play space, they were often playing in unsafe surroundings. New public play space of 200 sq.m. benefitting around 30 children was created in the central area of the slum by repurposing residual open ground, adding simple play and learn elements and seating areas for women. The city enabled ownership of the place with women leaders from the slum and local women groups related to nutrition and health related programs to ensure monitoring and upkeep of the place.

Testimonials by Caregivers

“Earlier this park was underutilized because of the unscrupulous activities at odd times of the day. Parents would not allow their children to go to this park. Now the improvements, especially the pulling down of the boundary wall, will help the parents to feel at ease as they can keep an eye on them.”

-Hussain, Secretary, Resident Association, Kochi

“Walking my daughter to school is a task itself, with the speeding vehicles, broken footpaths and on-street parking, I am very thankful that steps are being taken to ensure safe access to schools. It was enlightening to see how the city looks like for our children and what issues they face.”

-Shamsheer, Father of 4-year-old Shaima, Bengaluru
**Testimonials by Frontline workers**

“We are extremely happy. Finally, we can call kids to this place. It is an unbelievable transformation!”

- Jubeda, Anganwadi teacher, Machhi Bazaar Anganwadi, Indore

“Every Wednesday, mothers come to the primary health center with their babies for polio and other immunizations. They used to face a lot of problems of breastfeeding while waiting in the queue. Now, the installed breastfeeding pod is helping them to sit and breastfeed with ease, which has also improved the immunization process at the center.”

- Jhuni, ASHA worker, Urban Primary Health Center DAV-MAC, Rourkela

“Children need open spaces to breath and play with their friends. Earlier they were not happy to play inside the anganwadi and we faced many difficulties to handle them. Now my students will be happy after this implementation.”

- Smt. Eliamma, Anganwadi teacher, Kochi

**Testimonials by City officials**

“The spaces are created with an idea of how a city looks from a 3 feet perspective and how young children enjoy nature-based play elements like sand pits. These pilot interventions are very innovative in nature. We need more such facilities in the city. We are also planning to scale up these interventions.”

- C Hari Kiran, Collector and District Magistrate, Kakinada

“Nurturing Neighborhoods Challenge helped us to visualize and see how much we can do for ITC communities for our city. This becomes a platform for us to work under areas of early childhood education, mother and children’s health, slum development, and women’s freedom under the umbrella of ITC friendly City. Rourkela had an incredible experience working on this thematic area, and we are looking forward to working more on this significant issue.”

- Dibyajyoti Parida, Former Chief Executive Officer, Rourkela Smart City Limited, Former Municipal Commissioner, Rourkela Municipal Corporation

“Data collected reflected positive change indicating increase in footfall of ITC groups post intervention by Jabalpur. The best part was the smile on the faces of children which we documented by taking pictures and testimonials from their caregivers.”

- Ankur Khare, Chief Data Officer, Jabalpur Smart City Limited
Cities prepared and implemented young children-oriented solutions over a period of 7 months during the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge and monitored their usage for a few weeks. Cities further prepared and documented their proposals in the month of October 2021 and presented to the jury, based on which 10 winning cities have been identified.

Source: Coimbatore Smart City Ltd.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Following section is to recognize and appreciate efforts of all agencies and experts during the initial two phases of Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge.

Source: WRI India

Thought Leaders

Hardeep Singh Puri
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Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Manoj Joshi
Secretary
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Durga Shankar Mishra
Former Secretary
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

Kunal Kumar
Joint Secretary and Mission Director
Smart Cities Mission
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

We would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Hardeep S Puri, Hon’ble Minister, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs; Mr. Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Mr. Durga Shankar Mishra, Former Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Mr. Kunal Kumar, Joint Secretary and Mission Director, Smart Cities Mission, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for their leadership, support and guidance at every step to shape neighbourhoods for young children and their caregivers through the Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge.
and lay a clear path to scale up the concept and proposals. Following pages include some of the Champions feedback to review and improve the projects, spreading the word regarding Young Children-friendly Cities & Consultants, Interns, Citizens & especially Children & their Caregivers for taking initiatives, giving constructive Frontline Workers, Self Help Groups, Residents Welfare Associations, Elected Representatives, Contractors & Consultants, Interns, Citizens & especially Children & their Caregivers for taking initiatives, giving constructive

We wish to take this opportunity to appreciate all the Commissioners, Joint Commissioners, CEOs, Other Nodal Heads, Nodal Officers, all Government and Semi-Government Departments & Agencies and their entire teams, other Private Agencies & Heads of the Agencies, Department of Women and Child Development, NGOs, Frontline Workers, Self Help Groups, Residents Welfare Associations, Elected Representatives, Contractors & Consultants, Interns, Citizens & especially Children & their Caregivers for taking initiatives, giving constructive

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Champions of Nurturing Neighbourhoods

Agartala
- Agenda Smart City Limited
- Pegasus
- Rajendra Suwalka, Ward Member, Nagar Nigam Kota, North
- Sonu Qureshi, Deputy Mayor, Nagar Nigam Kota, North
- Dr. Zafar Mohammad, Social Welfare Department

Kota
- Kota Smart City Limited
- Nagpur Nigam, North

Kohima
- Kohima Smart City Limited
- Social Welfare Department
- Naga Police

Kollam
- Kollam Smart City Limited
- Social Welfare Department
- Thomas Mathew

Nagpur
- Nagpur Smart And Sustainable City Development Corporation Limited
- CEIL - South Asia

Nagpur Municipal Corporation
- Deependar Chandranath Tewari, Mayor

We would like to thank all the Champions of Nurturing Neighbourhoods of participating cities of India. Your leadership and sincere efforts have played a vital role in shaping neighbourhoods of Indian cities.

Agartala
- Bangladesh
- Director of Urban Land Transport
- Bengaluru
- Director of Urban Land Transport

Visit our website for more information on Champions of Nurturing Neighbourhoods identified in respective cities.

Bangalore
- Directors of Urban Land Transport

Agartala
- Bengaluru
- Directors of Urban Land Transport

Kochi
- Kochi Smart Mission Limited

Jabalpur
- C-HED

Kota
- Kota Smart City Limited

Kollam
- Kollam Smart City Limited

Nagpur
- Nagpur Smart And Sustainable City Development Corporation Limited

For more information about Champions of Nurturing Neighbourhoods, please visit our website at [Champions of Nurturing Neighbourhoods](http://www.championsofnurturingneighbourhoods.com).

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Champions of Nurturing Neighbourhoods

Rajkot
- Rotakia Smart City Limited
- Rotakia Municipal Corporation
- Women and Child Development Committee
- Saradabhai Pandit, MLA

Thiruvananthapuram
- Thiruvananthapuram Smart City Limited
- Women and Child Development Committee
- Saradabhai Pandit, MLA

Vadodara
- Vadodara Municipal Corporation
- Women and Child Development Committee
- Sanjib Desai, MLA

Warangal
- Women and Child Development Department
- Collector, Hanamkonda

Application Phase Expert Jury

Dr. Abhik Lahiri
Chair, Department of Urban Planning and Technology
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- **Bhubaneswar, India**
  - PC: Newindianexpress.com
- **Boa Vista & Recife, Brazil**
  - PC: BvLF
- **Pune, India**
  - PC: PMC, Urban 95 Pune
- **Tel Aviv, Israel**
  - PC: BvLF
- **Tirana, Albania**
  - PC: Bloomberg City Lab
- **Udaipur, India**
  - PC: BvLF

**India**

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- **Chetan Nandani**
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- **Prem Chaudhary**
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2021 Connect Karo

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- Sarthak Rath, Architect, Haridwar Smart City Corporation Limited
- Naushad Ahmad, Urban Planner, Lucknow Smart City Corporation Limited
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