



How urban poor communities in Asia are dealing with the **Covid** crisis

Case studies in **MYANMAR**

1

COMMUNITY GARDENS: Even before the pandemic hit, the large community housing projects that had been built by members of the Women's Savings and Development Network in Yangon, with support from Women for the World, had been incorporating vegetable gardens and tree planting. These gardens became an even more important source of food and extra income after the coup.



2

RENOVATING COMMUNITY CENTERS: After the military coup d'état in February 2021 and subsequent violence and chaos, the women in the savings network badly needed safe places to meet and organize their various Covid and network activities. So they enclosed and renovated the existing community centers that were part of three of their largest housing projects.



3

BOOSTING LIVELIHOODS: The ongoing political crisis has further disrupted an economy that was already in bad shape because of the pandemic. When many had lost jobs and prices for everything were skyrocketing, the savings groups became a crucial lifeline for people. Even when the collective savings had dwindled, the women found ways to boost incomes and reduce expenses.



Community response to the **COVID CRISIS** in Yangon, Myanmar

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January 2022

Introduction

Since a military coup on 1st February 2021, political unrest has been growing in Myanmar. Soon after the coup, many people started to join peaceful protests across the country. The military took power and started deadly crack down on civilians both physically and systematically. Civilian armed resistance has escalated since May primarily through People's Defense Forces (PDF) which was formed mainly by those who supported NLD and against the military, while some also joined existing ethnic armed organizations who have been fighting and struggling under exclusions from many right and ethnic conflicts over the decades. With continuous brutal violence, massacres and burning by the military, Myanmar has descended into Civil War. These practices can be understood as a strategy by the military to take control, create an environment of terror, silence civilians and divide them – which can continue to take place in across the country. The political unrest affected many parts of daily life, paralyzed banking sector, food shortage, skyrocketing daily products, joblessness, halt of economy. Many people were in need for cash. Although some banking services started to operate again after several months of coup, people still need to start queueing before the sunrise and stand for 4-6 hours. The amount of withdrawal, as well as expenses on debit credit cards are limited. Along with physical tortures and crack downs, the military's surveillance, draconian laws created an environment of terror.

Under such situation, the life of urban poor became even more dire. Already from 2020, due to the first and second wave of Covid-19, many lost jobs and incomes. The coup brought further food shortage, joblessness, and daily uncertainty made them more insecure as most informal dwellers have less social network and inadequate source of information in general. In addition, the military deliberately targeted working-class population, partly because they were the one of the major groups who led the initial protests through its labor union. In March, the Military imposed Martial Law to five townships where relatively have more urban poor population. From October, forced evictions have been taken place in many parts of the city. At least 8,000 families became homeless by their brutal demolition without any compensation only in a few days.

On top of deep political, economic and social crisis, covid-19 outbreak brought additional health crisis and griefs. Hospitals were not functioning, medical stuff were less, vaccination and testing were collapsed, medical supplies were out of stock. An exact number of cases and fatalities were unclear. However, it was said at least 1,000 daily fatalities from covid in the country for a while in July. While infection was very rapid, oxygens and other medical supplies were in short which made many people unable to access to the medical facilities, end up losing their life at home without treatment. When the outbreak was at its peak, three types of queues were common in Yangon; ATMs, oxygen supplies and crematoriums and morgues. Still, standing the lines for oxygens supplies are very dangerous because people can get shots or confiscated by the military. Many doctors and healthcare workers who were on CDM volunteered to help people for the treatment secretly as they were under constant threat by the military's violence. By continuously threatening and arresting medical workers, the military made the country's already weak healthcare system collapsed during political crisis and a global pandemic.



(left) A white flag to show need for food ([RFA, 2021](#)) (right) Self donation stand "If you are in need, please take & If you have extra please donate" ([The 74 Media](#)).

Under such difficult situation, people tried many ways to help each other, such as creating a signal of yellow and white flags to show the need for food or medicine, leaving donation table to share extra foods, forming

volunteer groups and create safe shelter list for the people who are on the run. Ironically some of such initiatives became a subject of crackdown. Like many informal contexts in other countries, people in Myanmar commonly practice under informal understanding to function as much as possible outside of bureaucratic system, particularly as the elder generation have been experiencing six coup and four totalitarian regimes in the past. In a way, they are getting used to come up with solution as much as they can under the restriction of total authoritarian regime. So, despite all this crisis, or because of this difficult situation, people are coping, surviving creatively and tactically.

This case study documents how the mobilised urban poor community responded to this double crisis through community-led housing (CLH) network, supported by an NGO Women for the World and grassroots women's group Womens' Saving Development Network (WSDN). This alternative approach to housing is based on collectiveness, from how the former squatters or renters organize in savings groups, to how they mobilize, map, survey, find land, construct their houses and carry on the long-term development of their settlements in achievable and sustainable way. It started as a small initiative by purchasing a small plot of land collectively by a women's saving group under an authoritarian regime in 2009. In 2019, the scheme was adopted by the regional government as part of their public low-cost housing program. Within only a year, the scheme achieved providing houses for more than 1000 families across three townships in semi-formal community common land provided by the regional government for free. During the 1st and 2nd wave of covid in 2020, although many people lost job and incomes, and some got infected, the community coordinated well to respond to the situation such as sharing or providing emergency assistance, channeling loans through larger saving networks. This has proven the strength of the community system. Based on these achievements, they were planning to scale up this initiative of collective housing to other townships, as well as starting new streams such as on-site upgradation and community development fund system. However, these were all interrupted by the coup. Since February 2021, in order to minimize the visibility, the community stopped collective activities such as saving for a while. Similar to the other people in the country, community were surrounded by everyday insecurity, joblessness, constant fear and unrest.

One major concern from the coup was the risk of evictions along with confiscation of the 'community common land', as these titles were given by NLD-led former regional government which the military opposed. Under the current total control by the military, it is easy for them to grab these lands. In order to avoid such situation, WfW and community have been trying their best to show that the community and space are functioning. Another concern was the risk of social punishment on WfW in working with the authority associated with the military government. Although WfW is not supporting military, it is difficult to avoid completely. However, other people against the junta might think that WfW is approving 'the military government' – by seeing that WfW is working with newly appointed local authorities. There are also internal issues within the community such as political disputes, internal conflicts, thefts, mistrusts. Such internal conflicts cannot be avoided in their daily collective process but the current political situation made it more complicated and serious, which made everyone need to be careful with all the small actions, words and attitudes.

The third wave of covid-19 infected to almost all households in the communities as well as WfW team. However, community leaders managed to get medical treatment by contacting doctors who were on CDM. They also managed to buy oxygen concentrator and other medical supplies collectively. Meanwhile, WfW and community leaders have been sharing awareness information about covid-19, as well as updates on restriction of mobilities, security situations so that they could reflect to the arrangement of logistics for the emergency response to be carried out safely.

As the result, very few percentages of people lost their lives. Most of them were able to survive from bitter illness. After recovering from illness and infections calmed down, WfW started visiting them individually to understand the situation more. They found that some community decided stop saving. In that kind of situation, the senior leader showed the video materials of saving. They sometimes talked about the other trajectories if they had not had their own house through CLH, how they would have been. Given the current large-scale evictions, community felt even more security by having their own house despite the loan requirements. Communities also shared their stories, how they dealt with the situations among themselves. The remarkable experience shown during this double-C crisis – covid and coup - is that women become more resilient to cope with the crisis, with the love and strong desire to live for their families. The processes of their survival demonstrate how the collective can be stronger compared to those who need to live individually. This is mainly because of the systems which the community have such as; an information system, a savings and finance system, and a network system. Especially the network of saving groups and housing projects is helpful to support and share resources each other. In the informal areas, or individual communities, it is difficult to communicate with them to support as they do not have such system, in terms of resource provision or information about eviction threats.

However, communities cannot happen organically. It needs mobilisation. Projects and saving groups can be tools for the mobilisation to sustain collective activities which strengthen their community through the system and affective dimensions. Particularly, the housing projects which were completed in 2019 - [a model called Mya Myit Thar, in partnership with a former Yangon Regional Government](#) - were relatively new and the time spent for the mobilisation of these communities were shorter than old CLH due to the schedule restrictions by the government stakeholders. Therefore, WfW focused on supporting these new CLH – East Dagon, South Dagon and Shwepyithar to support their actions to cope with the crisis. These actions are reported as case studies in the next section which are; green community, community centre upgradation, cooperative shops and documentary production.

	Shwepyithar I	Shwepyithar II	South Dagon	East Dagon
Location	Ward 19, Wingabar neighborhood	Ward 19, Wingabar neighborhood	Ward 146, Hlaw Gar Road	Ward 130, Ba Htu Road and Yay That Sat Yone Road
Plot size	8.2 acres (360,000 square feet)	13 acres (566,280 square feet)	5 acres (220,000 square feet)	11.5 acres (500,000 square feet)
No of households	264	310	147	296
No of residents	1,056 people	1,222 people	668 people	1,193 people
Female / Male	543 / 513	630 / 592	358 / 310	614 / 579
Average hh size	4 people	3.9 people	4.5 people	4 people
Landowner	DUHD	DUHD	YCDC	YCDC

Overview of each CLH under Mae Myit Thar Scheme *This can be replaced with map, or map+table if needed.

There were two strategies behind these initiatives.

One is to use the activities as therapy to get active and come out of the very dark mind from overlapping crisis. Similar to Tsunami or any other natural disaster, even if the situation is bad, better to get active and help than sitting around alone and devastated. This strategy was also based on the reflection by the director of WfW when she was interacting with the community. *"Before, it was almost depressing. But now by feeling that you are needed by someone, I got energized. By doing together, the wheel started to move"*. In fact, one community leader mentioned; "Laughter is the best medicine!!". Then others said; *'Lives are not in our hand but surviving is our strength to be a human!!'* Some community leaders shared; *'We do not worry for ourselves and families, we worry for our communities and saving groups'*. And the laughter was shared through the group. Like this, their collective actions were possible because of the system and these actions also function as a therapy, providing laughter and security.

The second point is using the small projects and activities to occupy the land which they were allocated as community common land when they established in 2019. By keeping the government land in this way, they aim to reduce the risk of grabbing and confiscation by the military. As of the beginning of 2021, there were still some vacant spaces in their compound, as the community were initially planning to do other projects incrementally. After the coup, every day, the community and WfW worry that if there is land left vacant like that, the military would take it back. To prevent such scenario, they constantly use and show that they are using the land by building houses, gardening, planting trees, building fences, operative cooperative shops, conduct all kinds of activities. In East Dagon, they also built some 20 new houses on their vacant plots. All of their activities had to be conducted in careful manner. Similar to all the other populations, the community is under constant risk of the military's patrol or investigation. In order to avoid any risk, they do not talk about political stuff, and remain in minimum activities which they can clear immediately if anyone alerts the military's visiting.

The project mentioned in the next case studies are ongoing initiatives to demonstrate the strength of community, and achievable way of living in secure and peace as much as they could in the difficult time.



(Left-right) 1. Community laugh together by playing game, 2. Building a new house to occupy the land, 3. Discussing priorities among community

CASE STUDY 1: Farming, planting and gardening



Lots of CLH sites are now covered with rich diverse green plants from flowers to trees, vegetables, herbs and fruits – making the “green community”. Some houses are carefully decorated with these plants, showing the owner’s aesthetic, pride and care. There are also community gardens and farms which are harvesting lots of fresh vegetables which helped community a lot during the crisis.

In general, it is common to have such plants around their houses in Myanmar, but it does not happen much when the person lives only temporary because the practice of planting requires continuous care, which gradually encourages their sense of ownership to the place. There are many benefits in green community such as; for better health and wellbeing, better nutrition, improving financial situation, healthier environment, strengthening the community bonds. It is also important from the aspect of climate change, to reduce carbon emission and mitigate heat.

The practice of green community scaled up in the Mya Myit Thar (MMT) housing project sites during 1st and 2nd wave of covid-19 in 2020. Coincidentally, this was the time for the project “[Community-led Heat Mitigation](#)” which was supported by the Cities Alliance. Originally, this project aimed to build on existing community’s knowledge to inform importance of heat issues as well as raising collective awareness through the practice by urban poor. Then, the difficulties during covid-19 highlighted importance of such community’s farming practices which helped a lot to mitigate the damage of food shortage, as well as sustaining their community and hope. Strategically, the greening activities were important mobilization tool to sustain the community, especially Myar Myit Thar housing projects which were relatively new. In addition, the green outcome turned out to be strong evidence to persuade, attract authorities and beyond, showing the value of such farming/practice and capacity of ‘urban poor’.

As a part of this project, first, community shared their experience on the heat. Many had been already perceiving the increasing level of the heat. Then they shared current practices to mitigate the heat, such as changing the material and structure of the house. They also conducted temperature assessment by thermometer in different locations and time so that they can have shared understanding what elements can generate or mitigate heat. Based on their shared knowledge and assessment, they discussed what they can do – from changing material and/or structures of roof, wall, window and entrances, and planting. Unfortunately, not everything became realized yet because of the coup and pandemic which brought up larger concerns and everyday difficulties, as well as inadequate material and human resources. However, the project was an opportunity which visualized important community’s knowledge around heat and environment, as well as scaling up their green practice.



Heat assessment in different spots by using thermometer

Practices during the crisis

The post-coup crisis brought a serious food shortage. Many people lost a job and got in debt while the food price was skyrocketing. Some community members have gone to the home in the villages to survive, where they can at least get food. But for those who have stayed in Yangon which is about 80-90 % of the community, community gardens became a lifeline. They increased the amount of produce which became a source of everyday food and income. There are many community gardens both individual and collective on their compound. In many households, individual small gardens are much easier and popular as some are not used to collective practices. Such individual gardening created a kind of positive competition which became an opportunity to visualise their aesthetics and sense of ownership. It gradually created common interests and topic to shared space/knowledge. These increased the number of participants in the collective activities. Some communities even borrowed additional land around their compound to produce more vegetables. Some wants to do individually.

The knowledge and practice of heat-mitigation were also important in the time of covid-19 as they need to stay at home more than ever. To mitigate heat, apart from planting, there were other local knowledge such as staying shades under the house and big trees, wearing light-color clothes, drink lemon juice, splashing some water over the zinc roof to cool it off and repeating the process until around sunset, installing a ceiling inside the house which reduces the direct heat coming from the roof, painting the concrete boards of the house to add another layer on the exposed side of the wall to the sun, some houses are installing new windows for better ventilation, hanging plastic or other sheets down from the roof at the facade of the house to protect from direct sunlight.

Knowledge sharing

In the community, there are some people from rural area who have rich knowledge about planting, farming and tree. So, they share the knowledge to those who do not know much about planting., most of which are those from cities. They also had some advice from the landscape designers. In terms of seedings, they used to get them from a local wholesale shop. But after some recognition, there were some donations from landscape designer and local plant shops. In 2020, having seen rich green environment grown by the community, the former minister of environment donated 1000 of tree seedings. Many people in the city, including those in informal settlements do not know much about techniques of planting and farming. The community from CLH are now planning to share their knowledge and seed bank to help them to start growing plants. The community also developed a handbook for green community with the support of Community Architects, which could be utilized to support their knowledge sharing,

What do they plant, how much?

The type of plants varies. They choose based on availability, suitability for the season, cost and preference. Some can grow quickly. Some can be produced twice or more per year. Some people suggested planting fast-growing trees such as bamboo and lemon. After cropping, people consume by themselves, as well as to donate or sell harvested vegetable and fruits. They are now planning to utilize them as sources for food delivery services as a part of cooperative business. They are also choosing plants which is more cost efficient., like that which can be utilized for the construction material such as bamboo, or those which later their fruits can be sold in high price, like mango, jackfruits. These longer term, specific objective can be also a source of motivation, make them feel that it is not only a temporary solution.

" By providing future vision and long-term project, they can think it is not a temporary thing. They can hope".

	Vegetables	Fruits	Flowers
Shwepyithar	<i>okra, roselle, beans plants, Taiwanese and Chinese water convolvulus, amaranth, mustard, chin leaves, radish plants, Chinese kale, ladyfingers</i>	<i>mango tree, siri tree, jackfruit tree, eugenia tree, neem tree</i>	<i>water hyacinth, roses</i>
East Dagon	<i>star flowers, calabash, ladyfingers, and légumes</i>	<i>Fruity trees: mango and coconut trees, siri tree, Indian almonds</i>	
South Dagon	<i>roselle, cucumber, bitter gourd, watercress, okra, corn, mint</i>	mango	

Planting trees

Trees are also used to create shades and cover the roof, which can make houses cooler when people must stay at home all day in very hot conditions. Compared to smaller plants like most vegetables and flowers, trees need more planning as it requires space and need to consider how their branches, leaves and roots will be to consider the effect to the surroundings. Especially, big trees which are expected to create a big shade needs consideration. It also needs to other factors such as water pipe, drainage, because the root of trees can be quite long and strong. At the moment, many planted trees are not tall at all. They want to create more shades, so they recently planted trees which can become taller and create some more shares such as mango, jackfruits.

Collective and Individual - Use and negotiation of the space – collective and individual

Although activities around green community are effective tool for community mobilisation, it does not have to be always collective. In fact, many community members, especially in the beginning, felt more comfortable with working individually. As WfW, it was important to understand their situation (I.e. how much they are ok with collective actions) and dynamics (I.e. how these people can be led by whom) and mix individual and collective activities in good balance according to their situation. Type of space varies from individual plots in front of each house, common plots, common streets, outside of CLH compounds. Depending on the area features such as size, soil type, sunlight, water, they choose appropriate type of plants. In South Dagon, they started using the pond as common well for the daily use such as cooking, washing and watering farms. There is also a large shaded space around the lake. People often have relaxing moment there to escape from afternoon heat.

Recycle and reusing:

Utilising existing materials is one of the ethos of community members which is good to reduce the environmental and financial impact. For example, they use natural fertilizers like eggshells, water from washing the rice, humus, burnt paddy husk, shells of onions and scales, gills, and skins of fish and chicken near the roots of trees, ashes at the base of the plants, manure, sand, general organic kitchen waste. These reduce the cost, although some community members found it difficult and takes longer to make the plant grow in the beginning. They figure out appropriate soil and fertilisers for each plant, often mix or reuse from previous farming, or share with others. In terms of watering the plants, they do with the drain water or water from the pond. Some community members also get the humus from the abandoned landfill site.

Outcomes

These practices did not only increase their source of income, mitigate heat, but also strengthen community through collective continuous practices. The green neighborhood literacy became a seeds or catalyst to nurture a healthier community.





(Left to right) 1 Plan of Sough Dagon CLH. Green part is garden of community leader, yellow parts are private farms 2. Pond in South Dagon, 3. A lady resting under the big shade by the pond, 4. A person preparing structue for the green in front of their house, 4. A farm in South Dagon

CASE STUDY 2:

Community center renovations

Renovation of community centres functioned as a foundation to bring people together. Originally, most of the CLH comes with community centers which is an important space for the meeting, chatting, events or any other collective daily activities. In the East Dagon community, the original community center was designed in an opened manner, without doors to lock. Some parts were open for the air circulation purpose. The roof was made of zinc which often made inside very hot. There was a still leaking issue from the roof in both South Dagon and East Dagon. The floor didn't have any cover but just a concrete material.

Still, these were used for number of different activities, or even without specific purposes, people just spent time there.

Since the coup, these community centre have not been used for a long time as it became risky to get together. Technically, [gathering of more than 5 people have been banned by the military just soon after the protest](#) along with imposition of night curfew. Although in practically many populations are able to gather, this condition can justify in case they want to arrest the people. Meanwhile, random people from outside of the community came to the housing compound in and looted. Trashes were left, some parts of the windows and walls got damaged. Spaces were also used by the children to play. As a result, the community centre became dirty and deteriorated. The community decided to renovate the community centre. This – having a proper space for getting together - was important first step to enable them to start many other collective actions.

In order to make it safer, in East Dagon community, they made a fence and added a stronger door with locks. The floor tiles have been changed, broken windows have been replaced and walls were repainted. They covered the slabs which was leaking before. In order to make it cooler with better ventilation, they opened up the steel sheet just under the roof, and added timber planks.

After East Dagon, renovation plan and work took place in South Dagon. This order made two benefits. First, they were able to share construction materials and tools. Second, they were able to share knowledge and learning from the former experiences. As of January, the community is still discussing about the design and process in Shwepyithar.

In South Dagon community, they made an old water pump house into an office storage and instead moved water pump under the new structure. Similar changes were applied as East Dagon. They made a fence, added bamboo doors with locks, replaced windows, covered the floor with tiles and replaced walls to brick walls from broken smart board (a material made from a polyester-based plastic and melamine-based plastic) made wall. They covered slabs and added a storage place.

The material prices have been increased double or triple since the coup. To reduce the cost of renovation, WfW and the community went to other former construction sites, or places which structures were demolished, and purchased recycled materials in cheaper prices. Some materials were also donated for free.

The actual physical change inspired people with new energy. Even during the construction, some people started saying, *"Something is happening"* *"I also have to do something"*. The renovation also provided job opportunities to the carpenters.

After the completion, the community center became very clean and provided a positive and fresh feeling. People start coming to the meeting and start talking about this and that issue. The space has been used for many different purposes. Initially it was planned to be used for the meetings for collective actions such as saving and farming, workshops, trainings, children's education, storage to keep stock for the shop. But now, the spaces are also used for individual level such as temporary sleeping place to be away from their partner when they have an argument. The keys are kept by the committee leaders and normally it is closed at night and/or the time people are not using. So, when someone has a personal request, they need to explain the reason to the committee leaders. In that sense, the committee leaders tend to know many gossips.

Community centre renovation took place in three housing project sites, but this happened one by one. First they did in East Dagon, followed by South Dagon and Shwepyithar. By doing so, they were able to share the construction tools and materials to save cost. It was also efficient to share the knowledge from other community members.

Many ideas and plans were developed already in these renovated community centres. Now inside is cooler and people feel more comfortable about getting together.

During the crisis of coup and covid, it became more difficult to get together. With different political thoughts or insecure feeling, there were also mistrust, or at least people did not wish to trust unnecessarily given the risk of receiving any harm or all the other violence. Under totalian control, even small information of helping people can result in house arrest. There were fake news on internet and social media. Especially, people like the community in CLH have limited digital literacy and insecure about which information to follow or trust. For these people, physical space and in-person communication was all the more important to feel secure during the crisis.

Although renovation of the center does not do directly to the joblessness or food shortage or health issues, this was very important change which made a foundation for re-organise, activate the community. The case demonstrated the importance of physical space and concrete evidence of change to motivate people.



Community centre before renovation East Dagon



(From Top Left) 1. Renovated East Dagon Community Centre with fencing, 2. Community meeting at the renovated centre in East Dagon, 3. New layout of community centre and water pump in South Dagon, 4. Community meeting at the renovated centre in South Dagon, 5. Slab covered the hole, 6. Rearrangement with timber planks for the better ventilation, 7. Damaged wall made of smart board before the refurbishment, 8. Entrance of community centre and fence at South Dagon

CASE STUDY 3:

Livelihood generation and cooperative shops

The ongoing political crisis brought disrupted economy which was already damaged from the covid-19. It is estimated that the country's economic situation will be worse by 18% or more next year. The product prices have increased dramatically (Write how much they increased). The fuel price increased the transportation cost and brought shortage of food, medical goods and all the other essential things. Many people lost their job – even after they started withdrawing from CDM, the political situation made many businesses to halt their activities in Myanmar. Even during the covid 2nd wave (before the coup), xx% has lost their job, x dd (Habitat report). It is estimated certainly more in the current crisis.

Banking services had been paralyzed for a while and it became difficult to get cash. Even after it started recovered, there are still long waiting time, and limited services on ATM. For example, if one person goes to ATM and stand in the line from 6am, she/he can get only in the last minute if fortunate, with limited amount to 300,000 kyats per day. All the transaction also started require additional 30% for the transaction fee. When one person needs to transfer cash to another, the bank started to require them to come to the bank with IDs. This means it made it difficult to transfer to somewhere in distance. Under new regulation, all the account, past transactions of NGOS can be checked by the military, which implies there is more risk of confiscations by the military.

This situation made the community members in CLH feel more about the strength of saving groups and network, by being able to have access to the cash and resources, as well as for the mental wellbeing by feeling security and social infrastructure which they can support each other. Similar to other urban poor populations, many people in the community also lost their jobs. Some people secretly took loan from money lenders outside and had debt. The community started to plan about cooperative shops which they can buy and sell the products in wholesale price, which are generally 20-30 % cheaper than the market price. In East Dagon, they set up bamboo structure for the new market which consists of 30 units of shop spaces. The committee chose 30 business out of 100 ideas to open their shop in that new bamboo market. As of January 2022, they are still discussing how to manage each shop. Some people who submitted the idea but could not be selected opened or plan to open their business in front of their house and/or common areas. In Sout Dagon, some people started opening their shops to sell daily products for the neighbors in front of their house.

There are many types of business such as; raw meat, rice, cooked curry, rice, potatoes, onions. Cloths. Medical supplies, haircut. There might be more variations once some shops started operating. The wholesale who got know about the idea contacted WfW and offered their help/collaboration, in order to support the community's initiatives. Many are purchase from whole sale in 20-40% cheaper. Although this has not yet started, this initiative will give some hope and active energy in the community. The planning process already energised community to start something.





(Left- right) : A new bamboo market in East Dagon. Shops community opened in front of their house