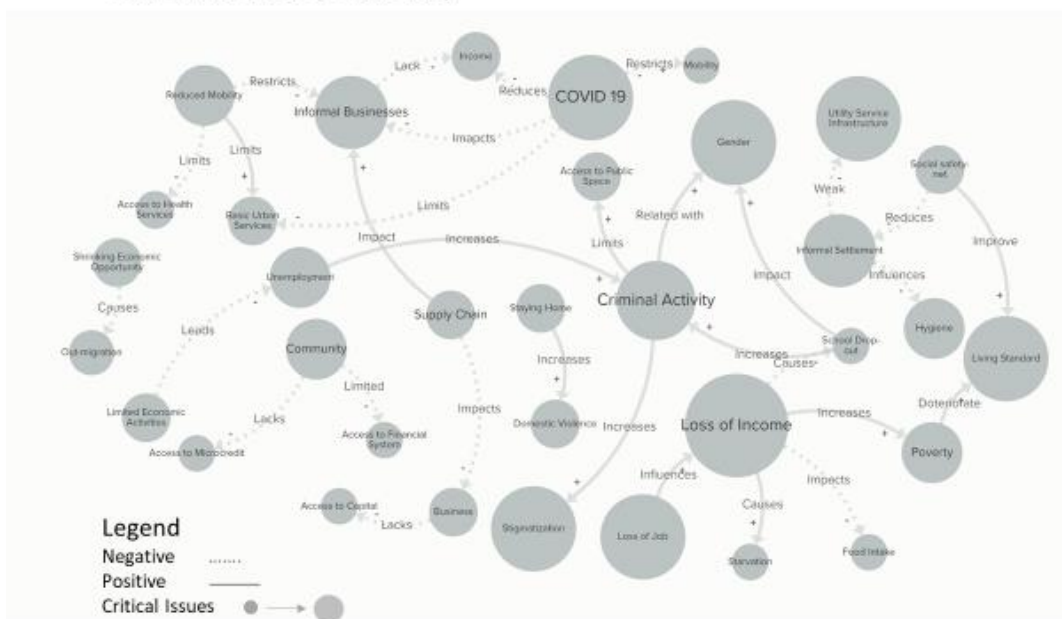


# BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE THROUGH LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION IN KARAIL, DHAKA, BANGLADESH

## Project work

Our case study represents Virtual Urbanist, an NGO, working for improving the lives of the vulnerable population in the informal settlement in Bangladesh. Karail, an informal settlement in Dhaka, is a representative case for assessing livelihood parameters in terms of access to basic urban services, land tenure, infrastructure and housing, access to economic opportunity, safety and security concerns, and integration with city in the context of COVID 19. It is the largest informal settlement in Dhaka and home to 286,000 people and more than 60,000 households, occupying an area of 90 acres. Like all other informal settlements, community from karail is started experiencing acute shocks of the pandemic. Many have lost their jobs, informal businesses are impacted, access to basic urban services are now limited etc. Most importantly, mobility restriction imposed by the government and stay home order made all possible streams of livelihood vulnerable. The causal interdependency of the issues is presented in the following diagram:

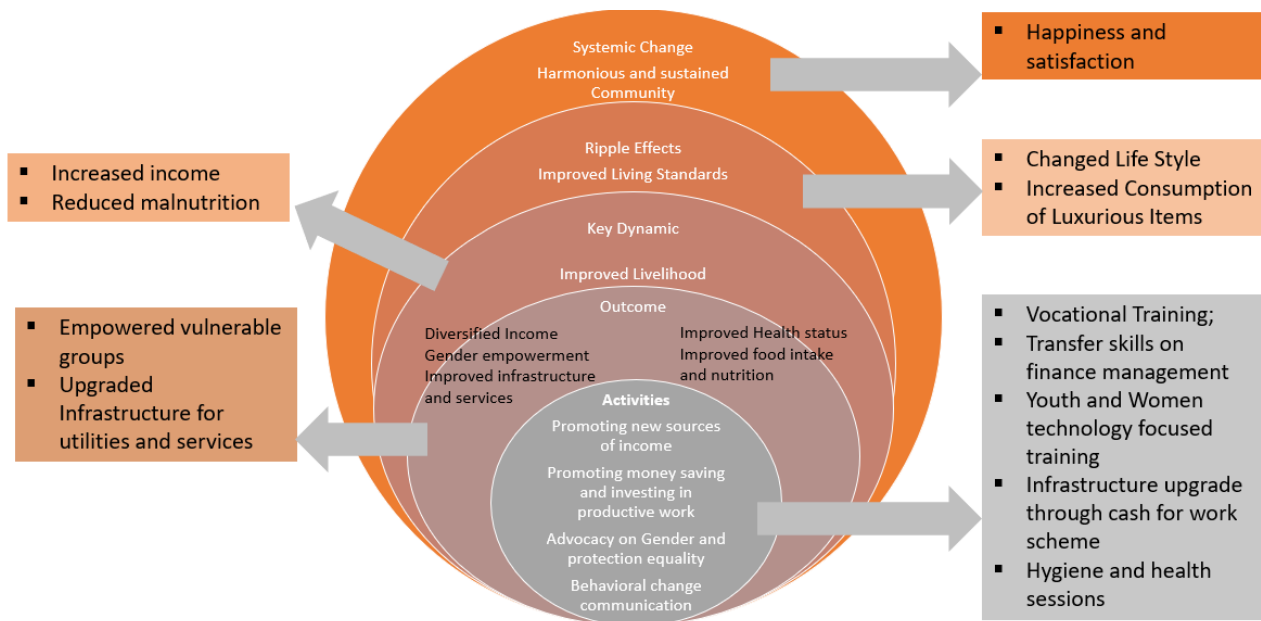
Causal Interdependency



We considered all the key stakeholders surrounding the community who can support and play a key role within the model. We kept the City Corporation and the local community at the center and tried to rope in other actors who can contribute to the process. Once the City Corporation approves the model and modality of interventions, we will identify the target beneficiaries, i.e. unemployed or out of work women and youth, who can be trained and engaged as home-based enterprises. We will facilitate formal partnership between local CBOs, on behalf of the beneficiaries, and local training institutions (capacity building), financial institutions (financing capital) and private sector (market linkage). An NGO with local experience and string linkage with these stakeholders will be engaged into the process through partnership. The local NGO and CBOs will also play a direct role in coordination with the diverse stakeholders, work on raising mass awareness as well as ensuring replication of the model beyond the project period. The figure below summarizes the major stakeholders and their engagement:



Furthermore, we looked into the impact of interventions in the community from short term to long term considering its sustainability. The immediate actions start with providing training opportunities to the vulnerable population in the informal settlement and improving infrastructure for access to utilities and services. Through involving private sectors and social enterprises to offer vocational opportunities, more female and vulnerable groups are able to build their capacity to enter the job market. The intermediate impact includes increase of livelihood skills, diversified market, and promotion of gender equality. When people has more stable income, a longer-term impact would bring the change in terms of financial independent which brings the gender empowerment and equality in the household as well as in the community. Furthermore, when income is increased and basic necessities are met, people start to explore more luxurious items beyond daily necessities which ultimately contribute to their life style and living standards improvement. Similarly, awareness on health and hygiene and diet diversity will be increased through awareness raising program which will have positive impact to reduce the morbidity, mortality and malnutrition status of the community. After all these accomplishments would contribute to the community towards happiness and satisfaction. The following diagram summarizes the logic of the intervention:



## Learning points (contents and process of the course)

- Urban composition is complex and interacts with many aspects ranging from physical infrastructure, policy/procedures, social dimension to environment and economy. COVID has further made it more complex. To make the city resilient, all aspects to be engaged and support each other and multi sector and stakeholder approach is crucial to cope with the global crisis climate change, multi-caused and multi-hazards condition;
- The summer school 2020 has helped us to develop not only personal understanding but also promote team work and gave us the impression that the active learning is possible through virtual platform. Furthermore, it helped us to articulate developing systems, analyzing the problem in the city using different tools and techniques including Miro board, CityRAP, etc. Furthermore, the lecture session on multiple cause analysis, trends and key drivers, stakeholder analysis, SWOT analysis helped us to sharpen our skills to dig out the problem and envisioning session helped us to dream the future using dependable methodology;
- We also learned through exercising interdependencies between multiple stakeholders and the power dynamics and interdependency among them. For this, ARUP team helped us to exercise KUMU. Now, we know the path and resources on how to excel it and explore more and utilize to ease our needs during the professional adventure.

## Reflections from exploring COVID19 as a global crisis

Once the global crisis of COVID-19 comes to an end, it will leave us to live under 'new normal' circumstances. It might lead us through a paradigm shift as we are getting introduced to new best practices and replicable models across the communities of practice. From a city resilience

perspective, the pandemic showed us the need for moving towards resilient and more sustainable livelihood alternatives. It also demonstrated that safer hygiene practices need to become the norm among urban communities which would lead to better health scenario. People now are getting used to home-grown organic food sources as practices like rooftop and yard gardening gaining popularity which can be scaled up. People are also adopting eco-friendly modes of transportation like walking and cycling. In times of physical distancing, social networks are giving further rise to e-commerce which is further promoting home-based livelihoods. All these behavioral changes within the urban lifestyle will contribute to urban resilience as well as reduce the impact of climate change on the community. While we might see a drastic improvement in health and hygiene scenario for the urban communities, we might also experience reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emission due to change in transport modality and alternative livelihoods. The pandemic has also provided an opportunity for the policy makers and key actors to collaborate and respond together, which will strengthen the coordination mechanism for triggering an effective response mechanism in future emergencies.