

One year since the implementation of the "Reaching Out Community Service Center" project in 13 districts of Seoul

## **Support provided for a total of 12,281 poor, at-risk families**

A total of 130,000 visits made by nurses and social workers from Seoul's "welfare bases"

One year of the Reaching Out Community Service Center project in numbers

<b>Major projects</b>	<b>Achievements</b>
Number of visits to welfare recipients	54,293 → 132,210 (up 244 percent)
Number of poor, at-risk families identified	12,281 households
Number of additional public officials hired to work at community service centers	448 people
Number of welfare recipients per social welfare worker	170 people → 115 people (down 32 percent)
Number of neighborhood plans drawn up by residents	235 plans

\* For 80 neighborhoods in 13 districts of Seoul

\* Results achieved between July 2015 and June 2016

Source: Seoul Metropolitan Government

### **Community service centers have "vitalized neighborhoods."**

#### **Seoul Metropolitan Government to establish community service centers in all districts by 2018**

Two years ago, a mother and her two daughters who lived together in a rented apartment on the basement floor of a house in Songpa-gu, Seoul, chose to take their own lives instead of continuing to suffer in poverty. They left a suicide note and KWR 700,000 in cash to cover their remaining rent and utility bills. The woman and her

daughters had no income, as they were unable to work due to their poor health; however, they did not qualify for social welfare. The tragedy sent shock waves throughout Korean society.

This year marks the first anniversary of the first phase of the "Reaching Out Community Service Center (Reaching Out Center)" initiative, which was launched in July 2015 by Seoul Metropolitan Government to identify and eliminate blind spots in the welfare system, thereby preventing any further incidents like that of the mother and daughters in Songpa-gu. Previously, the city's community service centers had only provided administrative services to citizens who actually visited the centers. However, they have now become bases for welfare services, which are provided by social workers who pay visits to residents in need. Since its implementation, the initiative has been praised for dramatically improving the welfare delivery system.

On July 17, Seoul City announced that 12,281 poor, at-risk households (average of 153 households per neighborhood) have been newly identified in 80 neighborhoods of 13 districts in the first phase of the Reaching Out Center project. This achievement was made possible by the "neighborhood officials," welfare planners, and visiting nurses who paid 132,210 visits to residents and learned about the specific circumstances of each neighborhood. The number of visits paid to residents who qualify for welfare increased 2.5 times compared to the previous year (54,293 times).

As part of Seoul's Emergency Welfare Support program, a total of KWR 4.1 billion was provided as emergency living and housing expenses to 8,791 households suffering from unexpected job loss or illness. In addition, Seoul City addressed a total of 14,437 welfare cases, providing temporary housing, tailored allowances, and aid through other institutions, such as hospitals.

For 1,334 families that are coping with complex combinations of difficulties that are difficult to resolve within a short period of time, the city is cooperating with private organizations and experts working in the field to provide continuous aid.

Seoul City has noted that the number of welfare recipients rose by 12 percent, from 75,502 in June 2015 to 84,727 last month. In addition, the number of welfare recipients per social worker decreased from 170 to 115, following the hiring of 558 additional social welfare personnel to staff the community service centers, and the number of automated civil service machines tripled, efficiently reducing the administrative capacity dedicated to handling simple civil complaints.

The implementation of the Reaching Out Center project has also transformed the community service centers into open, public spaces for residents' use, thereby vitalizing communities.

Among the 80 neighborhoods involved, 76 have opened up their community service centers on weekdays, weeknights, and even weekends for conferences, meetings, events, and classes. Underused spaces in the centers have been turned into "neighborhood energizers," effectively doubling the amount of space available for the use of residents. Moreover, "neighborhood planning teams" have been formed to

help residents identify the problems that their neighborhoods are facing. Currently consisting of 1,058 residents, the neighborhood planning teams in 14 neighborhoods drew up 235 plans for addressing problems in various areas, including livelihood, safety, infrastructure, and environment.

The city plans to implement the second phase of the initiative in 283 neighborhoods of 18 districts this year and expand it to all 424 neighborhoods of Seoul's 25 districts by 2018. On July 18, Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon will attend a ceremony to officially launch the second phase of the Reaching Out Center initiative and visit the community service center in Eungam 2-dong, Eunpyeong-gu.

Reported by Jeong Dae-yeon

*Newsis*

## **Signing Ceremony for Agreement on Mutual Respect and Cooperation among Seoul City, Districts, and Architects**

Reported by Choi Jin-seok

[Seoul, Newsis]

Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon (eighth from left) is holding the signed agreement and posing for a picture at the Signing Ceremony for the Agreement on Mutual Respect and Cooperation among Seoul City, Districts, and Architects held at a multipurpose hall in Seoul City Hall on February 1, 2016. From left: Lee Hae-sik, mayor of Gangdong-gu; Jo Gil-hyeong, mayor of Yeongdeungpo-gu; Roh Hyeon-song, mayor of Gangseo-gu; Park Hong-seop, mayor of Mapo-gu; Kim Wu-yeong, mayor of Eunpyeong-gu; Yoo Deok-yeol, mayor of Dongdaemun-gu; Seung Hyo-sang, city architect; Park Won-soon, mayor of Seoul; Kim Young-jong, mayor of Jongno-gu; Kim Seong-hwan, mayor of Nowon-gu; Mun Seok-jin, mayor of Seodaemun-gu; Kim Su-young, mayor of Yangcheon-gu; Lee Seong, mayor of Guro-gu; Yoo Jong-pil, mayor of Gwanak-gu; and Kim In-cheol and Shin Chun-gyu, supervisors

## **“Reaching Out Welfare” saves a neglected baby and collapsed old woman.**

One year since the launch of Seoul’s “Reaching Out Community Service Center” project

1,443 social workers and 450 nurses

130,000 visits made in 283 welfare blind spots

Task of addressing the budget increase highlighted



Han In-ae (left), a social welfare worker from Seoul’s Banghak 1-dong Community Service Center, visits Yoon, a basic livelihood security recipient, at her home to provide a welfare consultation. A total of 283 (60.8 percent) of Seoul’s 424 neighborhoods are currently participating in the “Reaching Out Community Service Center” project (through which social workers pay visits to the households of expectant mothers and elderly residents over the age of 65). [Image source: Banghak 1-dong Community Service Center]

Last September, Kim E-den, 33, a child welfare social worker at the Anam-dong Community Service Center in Seongbuk-gu, Seoul, found a one-month-old infant lying on a dog training pad when visiting the home of a couple in their early 20s. At the time, the infant’s parents were playing games on their smartphones. They said they “didn’t have the money to buy diapers, so [they] put him on the training pad.” Strewed on the floor next to the baby were unsterilized baby bottles and partially chewed dog treats. “I just went out, bought a diaper, put it on the baby, and took him to the hospital,” said Kim. “It’s too horrible to even imagine what would have happened if I hadn’t gone there to check on the baby at home.”

Last July, Kim Bo-min, 39, a visiting nurse at the Yongsan Community Service Center in Dongdaemun-gu, Seoul, found Kim, 74, passed out in a motel room. Suffering from lung cancer and dementia, the elderly woman had been evicted from an inn because of her urinary and fecal incontinence and moved into a motel run by a caretaker. Her room was filled with a fetid odor, and her comforter was stained with

blood. The caretaker, who was supposed to be caring for Kim, had brought the elderly woman to the motel but had neglected her. Kim Bo-min, the visiting nurse, said, "I took her temperature, and found that she had a high fever. So I brought her to the municipal hospital. Caretakers are generally busy doing housework and chores, leaving little time for them to provide medical support as well."

Since the family suicide incident that occurred in Songpa-gu in 2014, Seoul Metropolitan Government and other local governments have implemented various measures to address blind spots in the welfare system. One of the most notable initiatives is Seoul City's "Reaching Out Community Service Center (Reaching Out Center Project)" project. The key aspect of this initiative is that it dispatches public officials from community service centers to make in-person visits to people in need of welfare benefits and provide them with social welfare services. For this project, the city hired 1,443 new social workers and 450 nurses to provide visiting services.

So far, this service has been implemented in 283 of Seoul's 424 administrative neighborhoods.

Seoul City estimates that the Reaching Out Center project has significantly strengthened the social welfare network. "We are eliminating the blind spots that were difficult to identify under the existing system," said Yoo Mi-ok, the head of a team in the Local Autonomy Administration Division. "From last July to June this year, our social workers made a total of 132,210 visits to citizens, which is about 2.4 times more than a year ago (54,846)."

The city government plans to increase the number of public officials working in the area of social welfare by 2,000 in order to continue identifying and eliminating welfare blind spots and expand the target areas of the universal visiting service provided through the Reaching Out Center project to areas all across Seoul.

However, the budget increase is still an issue that needs to be resolved. "Currently, the central government covers half of the wages of 393 social workers," explained Yoo. "But this is only temporary, with Seoul City becoming responsible for bearing the cost after three years. So, we are requesting that the central government provide additional support." Another problem is the insufficient administrative capacity to cope with the increased number of welfare recipients. Geum Hyun-seop, a professor at Seoul National University's Graduate School of Public Administration, said, "The purpose and achievements of the Reaching Out Center project are commendable, but there are additional administrative costs involved in identifying people who qualify for welfare. In addition to increasing citizens' accessibility to welfare, the city also needs to come up with a plan to include the additional costs in its budget."

Reported by Seo Jun-seok





The inside walls of the community service center were taken down, and the library located in the corner of the building was renovated and expanded. The project to renovate the Seongsu 1-ga 1-dong Community Service Center was a joint collaboration among the participating residents, attentive public officials, and insightful professional architects.

## **“Is This a Library or a Community Service Center?”**

**Since the renovation of the Seongsu 1-ga 1-dong Community Service Center, more and more people have been coming to the center and expressing greater faith and hope in public officials.**

“The creation of a space where people can read books and take a rest led to an increase in the number of visitors to the community service center, which in turn led to improvements in the quality of the administrative services the center provides. This transformation of spaces at community service centers throughout Seoul has spurred efforts to enhance the welfare, health, and community spirit of the city’s neighborhoods.”

“Is this the community service center?” This is what many people ask when they first visit the Seongsu 1-ga 1-dong Community Service Center, because neatly arranged bookcases with over 7,000 books and children running around and playing in the building are something you would expect to see at a nursery instead of a community service center.

There is actually a nursery on the first floor of the Seongsu 1-ga 1-dong Community Service Center, along with administrative offices on the second floor and a gym on the third floor. As the center occupies a former factory building, it has always had plenty

of space, but few residents visited the center, because it is located on the outskirts of the neighborhood and surrounded by small factories. However, since the center was renovated and a small library added, more and more residents have been coming to the center, turning it into a popular space for residents in the local community.

This transformation was made possible thanks to the efforts made by the public officials to gain a better understanding of the residents and their needs. The first step in the transformation of the Seongsu 1-ga 1-dong Community Service Center began with information sessions that were held to explain the purpose of the “Reaching Out Community Service Center” project. During these sessions, in which public officials listened to the opinions of residents, revised their plan, and explained the plan again and again to the residents, Lee Myeong-ho, a professor at Myongji University who participated in the renovation project as a public architect, showed dozens of sketches for the new center to the residents in attendance.

“They wanted to turn the community service center into a space for the residents,” said Shin Sang-gu, 61, president of the Seongsu-dong 1-ga 1-dong Residents’ Council and CEO of the Licensed Real Estate Agency in Seongsu. “So, we suggested that the library be located in the front of the building, so visitors wouldn’t have to walk past the administrative offices every time they visited. We thought this would encourage more people to use the library. Thankfully, the staff at the center agreed to relocate their workspaces, and the architect also took our opinion into consideration. And now we have this amazing space.” Shin explained that the best part of this renovation process was that it gave the residents greater faith in the administrative system.

Now that there was a space for the residents to read books and play with their children at the community service center, residents of the neighborhood began visiting for recreational purposes rather than to file civil complaints. On their own initiative, the residents tidied up the bookshelves and brought flowers to place in the library, demonstrating their appreciation for the newly created space. As a result, the government administrative building has been transformed into a place where children can play and residents regularly meet together.

Since the administrative space and the library are divided by only a glass wall, residents also have more chances to meet with public officials, which has helped the community service center staff identify more of the residents’ administrative needs. As part of the reorganization of the offices, the desks were rearranged to help increase officials’ level of focus, and cement walls were torn down, bringing significant change to the public officials and their organization as well.



“It was hard to talk about our work amongst ourselves because we were always in our own offices and cubicles,” said Lee Mi-ran, 53, director of the Seongsu 1-ga 1-dong Community Service Center. “Now, however, we can simply look up and talk to each other. We share the burden of simple tasks more often and share more information as well.” Inspired by these changes, Lee now has a bigger plan for the center. “The site on which our center is located is quite large, but the building is old, so we are unable to use all the available space. However, if we build a new building and use it as a multipurpose cultural space, I believe we will be able to provide higher quality services for our residents.” Shin Sang-gu, head of the residents’ council, also wants to create a public space for residents on the roof of the building. Through communication between the residents and public officials, they are gradually getting closer to realizing their dream of transforming the community service center into an open space for residents.

## Transformation of a Community Service Center Based on the Ideas of Residents

An interview with Lee Jae-hee, head of the Majang-dong Residents’ Council and leader of the initiative to renovate the Majang-dong Community Service Center

Actively participated in the “Reaching Out Center” project

Suggested beneficial ideas from the residents’ perspective

Proposed adding wooden dividers to the counter

Increased the comfort of residents and public officials alike



Lee Jae-hee, head of the residents’ council, participated in the renovation of the Majang-dong Community Service Center. Here, she is explaining the wooden divider at the counter, which helped make the administrative office a much more welcoming place.

The participation of residents drove the transformation of the Majang-dong Community Service Center.

A resident of Majang-dong for 16 years, Lee Jae-hee, 45, head of the Majang-dong Residents' Council, is one of the people who played a leading role in transforming the community service center. Lee actively participated in the renovation project, proposing various ideas and promoting changes to increase the convenience of residents.

"I watched the promotional video for the 'Reaching Out Community Service Center' (Reaching Out Center) renovation project over 10 times last year. I also attended every single information session and residents' meeting. I felt that our district office and the architect involved in the project really listened to the opinions of the residents, leading to results that were largely what we were all hoping for."

One of the areas in which Lee's ideas were fully reflected in the project was the wooden panels and dividers that were installed at the administrative office counter. Originally, the counter was one long section, but wooden panels and dividers were installed to create windows, offering a greater sense of stability and comfort for both the public officials and residents.

"One elderly gentleman who came to the office said he felt uncomfortable waiting in line because of the random, inevitable eye contact that occurred between him and the other officials sitting behind the counter. By installing the dividers, we were able to reduce the awkwardness of residents, as they no longer have to avoid unnecessary eye contact with other officials."

The children's ballet class program, held twice a week at the Majang-dong Community Service Center, was quite popular among the residents. However, there was no comfortable space for the dancers' mothers and younger siblings to wait during the hour-long class. Lee had a great idea for solving this problem as well.

"We placed a long table and chairs on the first floor of the community service center, near the entrance, and turned the space into a small book café. We also set up a recreation room for the younger children. Now, mothers can relax at the café while their kids are in ballet class and their younger children play in the recreation room."

For residents who want to learn more about the neighborhood, the community service center has also made leaflets available at the counters, and a ramp was installed at the entrance of the building, where there had only been stairs before, for the convenience

of people with disabilities and mothers with strollers. These were all suggestions made by residents.

In the initial stage of the Reaching Out Center project, there were concerns that the main goals of the initiative, such as the restoration of communities, might not be clearly communicated to residents and that the renovations might end up simply reorganizing spaces. However, many residents responded very positively to the renovation of the community service center, and more and more people started stopping by the center for reasons other than filing civil complaints. "People come for various reasons: to grab something to drink, to take a rest, or to use the bathroom," said Lee. "And when they come, they greet and talk to each other. That never happened before (laughter)."

Lee pointed out that the "Health Counseling Room" is the space used most frequently by residents. As people are becoming increasingly interested in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, not only the elderly but also young people now come for simple health checkups in relation to various health concerns.

However, Lee said she feels sorry for the public officials at the community service center. "One third of the center's first floor is now dedicated to residents, which means the offices of the administrative team had to be moved to the third floor. Now, whenever they need to communicate with other teams, they have to walk up and down the stairs. I'm sure all residents, including myself, are grateful to them for making that sacrifice."

Lee, who spends three to four hours a day at the community service center, laughed as she said, "When my husband asked me why I had become so involved in neighborhood activities, I told him it was because it was fun. He said that as long as I was having fun, it was fine with him. My second daughter, who is in sixth grade now, sometimes brings her friends to the workshop at the community service center and tells them to take sewing classes."

Lee became interested in the community service center when she first began volunteering in the community. For three years, starting in 2008, she volunteered to teach quilting to parents of students at Majang Elementary School. As the number of children attending the school increased, there was no longer enough space at the school to hold the quilting classes. So, she stopped by the community service center and asked if it was possible for her to hold quilting classes there, but they turned her down, possibly because they had mistaken her for a for-profit instructor.

Later, in 2013, when the residents' council opened a book café in front of the Majang Community Service Center, Lee noticed that the neighborhood was beginning to change. She met with Kwon Chang-seok, former director of the Majang-dong Community Service Center (current director of the Local Autonomy Administration Division of Seongdong-gu Office) and asked him about the reason the café had been established in the neighborhood and its usage. Kwon was pleased by Lee's interest. Lee then told Kwon about her three years of teaching quilting classes and how more residents of the neighborhood were becoming interested in her classes. Lee said, "His response took me completely by surprise. He said, 'People who are interested in our neighborhood should be involved in the neighborhood,' and recommended me as a member of the residents' council. I had no idea what the residents' council was, but I joined and started working right away."

All six members of the residents' council received barista training for the operation of the book café, and it took a year for the café to gain a steady flow of customers. In response to the open call for the "Residents' Specialization Project" in Seongdong-gu in 2014, Lee submitted a proposal for a quilting workshop. Three years ago, with funding from the district, Lee was able to open a quilting workshop on the fourth floor of the Majang-dong Community Service Center.

## **Different but Similar: The Principles of Spatial Renovation**

The community service center renovation project is not simply focused on increasing the efficiency of the spaces in the centers. Seoul Metropolitan Government, which aims to transform Seoul into a "welfare city," hopes to make the community service centers hubs of the welfare ecosystem by helping them restore the sense of community in their neighborhoods and eliminate welfare blind spots. The most important factor in this initiative is the voluntary participation of residents. Residents must actively participate in the renovation of their community service centers, improve the efficiency of administrative services, and help strengthen their communities. The following are the principles that guided the community service center renovation project.

Create an open space that can be shared by residents

Community service centers should be open spaces that are accessible even outside of official business hours. In order to secure spaces for residents to use and share, underused spaces, spare spaces, and waiting areas should be transformed into spaces for residents.

#### Rearrange administrative and consultation spaces

The “Reaching Out Center” project aims to strengthen the welfare system of each neighborhood. Since additional personnel will be placed in the centers, it is important to rearrange the spaces efficiently. The counters and rooms where welfare consultations are provided should be renovated, and community service centers should implement “smart work” (non-assigned workspaces, etc.) systems.

#### Use the budget and spaces economically and practically

Furnishing the rearranged spaces should involve the reuse or recycling of existing furniture or the use of practical materials so as to reduce the costs of the renovations, which will be conducted throughout the city at around the same time. If new furniture is required, it should be custom-made with a view to maximizing the use of space.

#### Apply a universal design that emphasizes user convenience

The community service centers should be designed in consideration of user convenience and accessibility, increasing the number of points of contact between residents and staff. Information signs, boards, and other visual information that serve as a guide to visitors should be designed so that everyone, regardless of disability or age, will be able to understand them without difficulty.

#### Have residents and experts (architects, etc.) participate and work together

This is the most important principle in successfully transforming community service centers into places for residents. It is crucial to create a system of cooperation through which the administrative officials and architects can understand and respect each other and that encourages residents and staff members at the community service centers to participate in the entire renovation process.

Park Yong-tae, reporter



# **Removing the Director's Office at Community Service Centers, Tearing Down Walls, and Making the Centers Accessible 24 Hours a Day**

**Three neighborhoods with Reaching Out Community Service Centers that promote the growth of their communities and offer more welfare services**

Community service centers are the administrative institutions at the forefront of the welfare delivery system, where the residents of Seoul and public officials interact most closely with each other. Originally called “neighborhood associations,” the centers were renamed “neighborhood offices” in 1955 and then “community service centers” in 2007, combining the functions of the administrative offices and town centers of rural villages. With the expansion of public service areas, it became more important to clearly identify residents’ administrative needs and demands, and the name “community service center” seemed to better reflect these institutions’ purpose of increasing residents’ capabilities to achieve local autonomy. Although it has been nearly 10 years since the neighborhood offices were renamed “community service centers,” people still refer to them as “neighborhood offices,” because the functions of the centers have barely changed over the course of 10 years.

Seoul Metropolitan Government implemented the “Reaching Out Community Service Center (Reaching Out Center)” project to transform the community service centers into institutions that “address the welfare and healthcare needs of residents and support local communities.” The overall goal of the initiative is to shift the welfare paradigm from “waiting (for) welfare” to “visiting welfare” and eliminate the blind spots in the welfare system. Toward this end, Seoul City has increased the number of social welfare workers and visiting nurses at the community service centers and is striving to create a welfare ecosystem at the neighborhood level through which residents themselves can participate in identifying and caring for their fellow residents in need.

The main focus of the community service center renovation project is increasing the work efficiency of the staff members at the centers and creating more open spaces for residents to get together and communicate with each other. The city plans to incorporate residents’ opinions and the unique characteristics of each neighborhood into the centers.

The city government has also created the Urban Space Improvement Bureau, comprised of 74 architects who are capable of providing the necessary expert

knowledge that residents lack. These architects visit community service centers to explain the goals of the renovation project and hold public hearings to gather residents' opinions, which they then actively incorporate into the design and construction process. In this way, Seoul has been able to transform 74 of its 424 community service centers. In addition, public officials are actively playing a role in closing the offices of neighborhood heads and reducing the size of their workspaces. These changes being made to community service centers have encouraged more residents to voice their opinions regarding their neighborhoods, showing the potential for further change in the functions of community service centers.

The community service center renovation project definitely has administrative aspects, but it also involves a great deal of work on the part of residents in restoring their communities. To highlight some examples of what Seoul residents can do to transform their community service centers, we will examine the dramatic changes that were achieved at three centers last year.

## **Glass Doors to Attract More Neighborhood Residents**

### **Majang-dong Community Service Center**

At the Majang-dong Community Service Center, small slides and other playground equipment for children were set up inside the building, and a ramp was installed at the entrance to make the center more accessible to people with disabilities. These efforts of the city government to bring public officials and residents closer and form a sense of unity were recognized by the central government when the Majang-dong Community Service Center received an Excellence Award at the Republic of Korea's 8th Public Design Awards, hosted by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in 2015.

"You can see diverse scenes of everyday life in the front of the community service center," said Chung Isak, director of a.co.lab and a participant in the renovation of the Majang-dong Community Service Center. Speaking about the Majang-dong Community Service Center renovation project, he said, "I hope that the residents are now able to enjoy the environment surrounding the center much more than before."

The interior of the renovated Majang-dong Community Service Center features an atmosphere much like that of a pleasant coffee shop. Depending on the needs of residents at any given time, the space with the long table on the first floor of the center can serve as a book café, a reception room, or a conference room. The "Health Counseling Room," where residents can receive basic health checkups, is another



great facility in the center. There are spaces in the counseling room where the residents can receive health counseling as well.

The width of the counter in the public service office was also reduced from one meter to 50 centimeters, creating a greater sense of closeness between the residents and staff members of the community service center, and a large recreation space for children was created so that parents can keep their children in sight while taking care of other matters. Although the size of the workspace for staff members has been decreased, the overall change has been positive. “The changes brought about as a result of the renovation have not been related simply to the space,” said Nam Gang-woo, 53, director of the Majang-dong Community Service Center. “Our workers have developed greater awareness, and the positive reactions to the shared space will be crucial to the community service center’s transformation into a space for all residents.” Nam seemed confident that the center will play a major role in the process of restoring the neighborhood community.



A ramp was installed at the entrance of the Majang-dong Community Service Center to allow easier access for people with disabilities.

## **A Welfare Space That Embraces Residents**

### **Siheung 1-dong Community Service Center**

The Siheung 1-dong Community Service Center is a model project of the Reaching Out Center initiative, which aims to achieve a fundamental shift in the welfare paradigm. With the addition of 20 welfare planners and visiting nurses to the center’s staff for the implementation of the “Reaching Out” welfare service, the center was forced to find more efficient ways of using its existing space, as the ratio of administrative tasks to welfare services was about to undergo a dramatic change from 7-to-3 to 3-to-7.

“We classified the types of public services requested by residents, the amount of time required to provide each service, and the nature of each service,” said Jeon Jinhong,

director of B.A.R.E., who participated in the renovation project as a public architect. In carrying out the project, Jeon's first step was identifying the "density" of services, after which he arranged the public service counter so that simple services are provided closer to the entrance while more complicated and time-consuming services are provided further inside the space. Also, two separate areas were created, one for general administrative services and one for welfare services, and a one-stop service counter was installed to simplify some of the administrative services.

Conference rooms and document cabinets were relocated to the second floor to maximize the size and efficiency of the public service area, and the tables were replaced with tables of the same length but narrower to create more space. For welfare consultations, which are often in high demand by residents, the community service center transformed various spaces into consultation counters and rooms, featuring everything from small, foldable tables and chairs to a closed-off consultation room in the center of the community service center.

Since there is such a high demand for welfare in the neighborhood, the closed-off consultation room is popular among residents seeking welfare consultations. All of these changes would not have been possible without the dedication and conviction of the public officials and their willingness to make sacrifices, including the removal of the director's office and use of smaller desks and tables, among others. The desk of the center's director is now located near the entrance of the public service area, allowing residents to make contact with him much more easily and thus increasing his work efficiency. In this way, the Siheung 1-dong Community Service Center has been reborn as a welfare space that wholeheartedly embraces its residents.



With the addition of 20 new welfare planners and other social workers, the Siheung 1-dong Community Service Center rearranged and replaced its desks with streamlined tables to create more space for residents. (Image provided by Seoul Metropolitan Government)

## **A Place Where Culture and Administration Come Together**

**Songjeong-dong Community Service Center**



A small concert with an audience of about 50 people. This concert was possible thanks to the changes made by the local police office, Seongsu Community Welfare Center, and the Songjeong-dong Community Service Center.

The Songjeong-dong Community Service Center, which is located on the side a hill in the neighborhood, is a large building, but the interior was rather narrow and confined. Rieh Sun-young, a professor at the University of Seoul's School of Architecture who participated in the renovation project, adopted the concept of an "indoor public street" to "connect" the streets to the community service center, seeking to reflect the village-like characteristics of the Songjeong-dong neighborhood in the design of the center. To create an "open, street-like space where information and opinions are exchanged," the administrative service areas were separated, and underused spaces were reclaimed. Rieh said, "It is my hope that all kinds of activities and events will be held on this 'indoor public street,' which can be closed off with shutters at the end of business hours."

The public service area in the community service center was divided into two spaces, separated by four shutters, to create an indoor street stretching from the entrance of the building to the terrace. In order to make the space look more like a street, the concrete walls were torn down and replaced with glass walls. Also, the extra space that lied outside the concrete walls was turned into a terrace, expanding the community service center to the outside of the building, and a beam projector and pull-down projector screen were installed so that the center could be used by residents as a community theater or conference room. Thanks to these efforts, it was possible to hold a small music concert at the center.

"After the installation of surveillance cameras along the 'indoor public street,' we plan to have the center open 24 hours a day," said Hwang Sun-seon, director of the Songjeong-dong Community Service Center. "To prevent crime and accidents, we are working with the police patrol division to find ways of increasing patrols in the area." The Songjeong-dong Community Service Center has now been transformed into a place dedicated to the neighborhood and its residents, where culture, administrative affairs, public officials, and residents all come together.



The interior of the Songjeong-dong Community Service Center became much brighter after the concrete walls were torn down and replaced with glass walls. When the shutters installed above the counters are closed, the community service center is transformed into a completely different place. (Jang Cheol-gyu, reporter)



# How the Votes of 772 Residents Changed a Neighborhood

Neighborhood assembly held in Dobong-gu's Chang 2-dong, a neighborhood with new hope!

July 7, 2016



A neighborhood with dreams is born when residents begin taking the initiative to solve local problems on their own. The "hope tree" installed on the wall of the Chang 2-dong Community Service Center contains all of the hopes and dreams of the residents. (Reported by Jang Su-seon)

A little after 10 a.m. on June 11, at the fountain park behind Chang 2-dong Community Service Center in Dobong-gu, Seoul, people began gathering underneath the tented shades of the plaza in the park. From children about 10 years old to middle and high school students, women and men in their 30s and 40s, and elderly people in their 70s and 80s, the residents who gathered at the park were as varied as the colors of the rainbow. Soon, more than 100 residents had gathered at the plaza. They greeted each other and began reading through the neighborhood newspaper. At 11 a.m., when the aerobics performance and other celebratory performances were over, Kim Mi-seon, the head of the neighborhood planning team, took to the stage.

"Thank you. We will now begin the Chang-2 dong Neighborhood Assembly. Today, we will share with all of you the agenda we have identified and vote on them to decide the order in which they will be carried out. If we hope to solve our neighborhood's problems in the order that is decided today, we will need as many residents as possible to show interest and participate in the process."



In Seoul, where many people do not even know who their neighbors are, this neighborhood assembly began with these words from Kim. In the plaza, all 250 chairs were occupied, and many people were standing. Kim gave a detailed introduction to the work the neighborhood planning team had done over the past five months. The team was formed in December 2015 with about 130 residents, who divided themselves into groups focused on five different areas—teens, culture, sharing, the environment, and clubs—and actively observed and identified problems in the Chang 2-dong neighborhood. In May, they selected seven ideas on how to improve the neighborhood: (1) ensuring a safe commute to and from Changlim Elementary School for the schoolchildren, (2) making the neighborhood safe and clean, (3) establishing a Chang 2-dong “memory warehouse,” (4) being good neighbors to multicultural families, (5) establishing a neighborhood hall operated by residents, (6) forming a group of parent guidance counselors for teens, and (7) installing bus stop shelters.

The team members in each area took to the stage to explain their agenda and asked the residents to support their efforts. Even when the team members were giving presentations on the issues, residents were lining up in front of the ballot box and submitting their votes. Each resident was asked to choose three ideas and cast three votes. In addition to the 420 residents who voted that day, 302 residents had already cast their votes online. A total of 722 residents of Chang 2-dong cast 2,166 votes altogether. After all the ballots were cast, “Et Cetera,” a musical group that aims to communicate through music, began performing when the tally started. When the encore song, “What About My Age,” came to an end, Kim once again stepped onto the stage. It was the highlight of the assembly—she was going to announce the results.

#### 창2동 마을계획단 활동 과정



출처: 창2동 마을계획단



Activities and achievements of the Chang 2-dong Neighborhood Planning Team

1. Created a preparation committee for the neighborhood planning team (Oct. 2015).	2. Launched the neighborhood planning team and decided on five focus areas (Dec. 2015 to Jan. 2016).	3. Surveyed the neighborhood and held discussions on the neighborhood's issues (Mar.).
Promoted neighborhood planning to residents and recruited team members.	Held a launch ceremony for the neighborhood planning team at the community service center. Organized various issues into five categories.	Surveyed the neighborhood for issues according to focus areas. Discussed over 30 different hopes and desires shared by residents in order to choose the agenda.
4. Held an intensive workshop to choose neighborhood agenda (May).	5. Held the Chang 2-dong Neighborhood Assembly (Jun. 2016).	
Held intensive discussions to choose the agenda for the neighborhood assembly. Decided on seven ideas for the neighborhood and one special agenda.	Shared the agenda and voted on their priority.	

Source: Chang 2-dong Neighborhood Planning Team

### **Total of 676 votes cast for “ensuring a safe commute to and from Changlim Elementary School for schoolchildren!”**

Over 90 percent of voters chose “ensuring a safe commute to and from Changlim Elementary School for schoolchildren” as an important issue that needs to be resolved in the neighborhood, followed by: making the neighborhood safe and clean (545 votes), establishing a neighborhood hall operated by residents (258 votes), and installing bus stop shelters (202 votes). “There is very heavy traffic at the three-way intersection in front of Changlim Elementary School, but the roads are rather narrow, so we are concerned about the safety of the children,” said Kang Gui-woong, the neighborhood official at the Chang 2-dong Community Service Center. He added, “This has been an issue for a long time, so there was a consensus among the residents that something has to be done about it. But we have to think about the cost of widening the roads and address any legal issues involved, as this neighborhood is a semi-industrial area.”

“The fact that over 1 percent of residents participates in the neighborhood assemblies makes them highly meaningful,” said Kim Eun-hee, leader of the General Neighborhood Team at the Reaching Out Community Service Center Promotion and Support Group in Dobong-gu. She added, “Chang 2-dong has become a great role model, as more people participated in the assembly.” A total of 722 of the 30,944 residents of the neighborhood, or about 2.3 percent, participated in the Chang 2-dong Neighborhood Assembly.

An agreement-signing ceremony was also held at the neighborhood assembly, with the mayor of the district office, head of the residents' council, and head of the neighborhood planning team promising to implement the agenda. Dobong-gu Mayor Lee Dong-jin said, “The top three ideas from the online votes are the same as those chosen through the votes cast at the assembly.” He went on to say, “We will not lose sight of these hopes and desires of the residents, and are planning to hold in-depth discussions with the neighborhood planning team to implement the agenda.”

As the district mayor said, such neighborhood assemblies are not the finish line but the starting line for change. Now, the residents have to work together with the local governments to resolve the issues they have identified and seek various solutions. The Chang 2-dong Neighborhood Planning Team is planning to carry out the projects that can be implemented using the KRW 7.5 million in funding from Seoul Metropolitan Government. These include: installing bus stop shelters, creating a “memory warehouse,” and forming a group of parent guidance counselors for teens. The task of ensuring a safe commute to and from Changlim Elementary School for schoolchildren, which the majority of residents chose as a major problem, was designated as a mid- to long-term project.

Jo Yu-jeong, a second-year student from Jeongeui Girls’ High School and a volunteer at the assembly, smiled as she said, “I am proud to be a member of this neighborhood, and was happy to help the elderly residents at the assembly. I attended Changlim Elementary School, so I know how dangerous those narrow roads really are.”

At 2 p.m., the neighborhood assembly came to an end. The residents smiled as they listened to the Changlim Elementary School’s Neulyesol Choir sing “The Neighborhood is Hope.” The lyrics are as follows.

“Look around. Do you know each other? We seem to be living alone. Have I seen you before? A moment of hesitation, and we pass each other by. Sometimes it’s hard to get to know each other even when we want to be friends. But don’t hesitate. You can start saying, ‘Hello, nice to meet you. I’m your neighbor. Let’s be friends.’ We need each other. Let’s gather our thoughts and solve our problems. Let’s make it ‘We’ instead of ‘I’ in this neighborhood. The neighborhood is hope.”

Reported by Park Yong-tae



# Neighborhood Embraces a High School Student on the Brink of Collapse

Over the last year since launch of the “Reaching Out Center” project, 12,271 poor, at-risk households have been identified. Also, a welfare ecosystem has been created for the implementation of neighborhood-based welfare services.



On the afternoon of September 1, Kim Min-gyeong (left) and Oh Jin-seok (middle), welfare planners at the Banghak 3-dong Community Service Center in Dobong-gu, visited the home of a neighborhood resident whose second child suffers from psychological and language-learning disorders. (Jang Cheol-gyu, reporter)

“Reaching out welfare services and neighborhoods residents create together.”

This is the slogan of Seoul Metropolitan Government’s “Reaching Out Community Service Center (Reaching Out Center)” project, which has been implemented with the goal of creating a welfare ecosystem. The Reaching Out Center project was test launched in 80 neighborhoods in July 2015. Starting on July 1, 2016, the project was expanded to 283 neighborhoods in 13 districts.

At the launch ceremony for the Reaching Out Center project, Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon said, the “Reaching Out Center initiative has been in the works for several years. It is an initiative that will transform Seoul into a people-centered city and change the city’s administrative paradigm.” He made it clear that the Reaching Out Center project is an initiative that will lead the transformation of Seoul into a city that truly cares about its people.

**In connection with neighborhood-based resources, it has become possible to provide continuous support.**



The test launch of the Reaching Out Center project led to achievements that the existing welfare system has been unable to accomplish. The welfare planners and visiting nurses who were assigned to the 80 community service centers made a total of 132,210 visits to residents' homes over the course of a year. This is 2.5 times more visits than were made in the year before the project was launched. The average visitation rate for elderly residents and low-income, at-risk families rose to 62 percent and 88 percent, respectively. Moreover, with the help of local residents, the city was able to identify 12,281 additional low-income, at-risk families. Through the Seoul Emergency Welfare Support program, Seoul Metropolitan Government provided KRW 4.1 billion to 8,791 people.

The support of the city government was provided in connection with local institutions and welfare resources, depending on the circumstances of each welfare recipient. Through different types of government support, including the provision of temporary housing, customized allowances, and referrals to welfare institutions, hospitals, and other organizations, Seoul Metropolitan Government is continuously helping at-risk families escape from difficult situations. This was made possible thanks to the welfare ecosystem and networks of local relationships that have been formed by neighborhood officials and the neighborhood project director, who now have new duties to perform under the Reaching Out Center project.

Choi Yu-jeong (assumed name, high school senior) also received assistance through the welfare ecosystem created by the Reaching Out Center initiative. After her parents divorced when she was in sixth grade, Choi lived with her mother and older brother. Her mother, who had been undergoing chemotherapy for Stage IV cervical cancer, ran away last December. However, the welfare database showed that Choi was still living with her mother, leaving her with almost no chance of receiving Basic Livelihood Security benefits. Gas had been cut off to the apartment in 2013 for failure to pay the bills, and she was receiving a "restricted supply" of electricity. Her and her brother also owed over KRW 10 million in overdue rent. Since she had no money for living expenses, she lived on school lunches.

When Choi's homeroom teacher learned about her situation, she arranged for Choi to meet with Yun Sin-jeong, a welfare planner on the Ssangmun 2-dong Visiting Welfare Team. Yun reported on Choi's grave situation at a "comprehensive, neighborhood-level case meeting." As a result, Choi was selected as an at-risk case, and was able to receive assistance from local welfare resources.

The Dobong Hope Welfare Center helped Choi's older brother find a job and met with Choi's mother and persuaded her to apply for Basic Livelihood Security. Also, the overdue gas bills were paid with donations. Thanks to the help of local welfare institutions, Choi was able to secure KRW 5 million to make the deposit she needed to secure an apartment and buy cooking utensils. The community service center issued Choi a Dream Tree Card, which is given to underfed children, and also provided daily necessities. Last June, she was selected to receive Basic Livelihood Security benefits, and the welfare center helped her receive the Children's Hope Scholarship. Choi's landlord was aware of her situation and graciously did not ask for the overdue rent. When Choi's mother passed away in August from cancer, the funeral was conducted with the help of social welfare provided by Seoul Council on Social Welfare. With the help of her local community, Choi is now able to focus on her studies, and her older brother is adjusting well to his new workplace.

In the future, there will be more and more such cases of previously unknown welfare blind spots being discovered. Thanks to the Reaching Out Center project, a total of 1,334 such social work cases have already been identified and are being systematically managed. The ones that require long-term support are handled through the “Comprehensive Case Management” program, which involves private organizations and social welfare workers.

The “Visiting Health Service” program under the Reaching Out Center initiative is also making notable achievements. A total of 30,694 people aged from 65 to 70 years old in 80 neighborhoods have been receiving regular visits from social workers, who check their blood pressure, blood sugar, and symptoms of depression, dementia, weakness, and other health issues. Among them, 7,209 people who showed signs of dementia, depression, or weakness were referred to dementia support centers or other medical organizations.

### ‘찾아가는 동주민센터’ 시범사업 1년의 성과 ※80개 동 2015년 6월~2016년 7월 기준

#### 인적·행정적 기반 강화

총 **558명** 동주민센터 인력 총원



사회복지 공무원  
**452명**



방문간호사  
**106명**



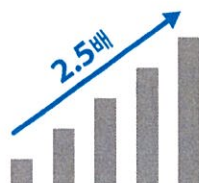
시행 효과



1인당 복지 대상자  
**170명 → 115명**

#### 가정방문

시행 전 1년  
**5만4293회**



시행 뒤 1년  
**13만2210회**

#### 새롭게 발굴한 빈곤위기 가정



총 **1만2281가구**



월평균  
**1023가구**



동평균  
**153가구**

#### 전국 최초 보편적 복지 실행

총 **3만6377명** 방문 건강관리



① 65세 및 70세  
총 **3만694명**



**7209명**  
치매 등 조기 발견



의료기관 연계  
**1만2966건**



② 출산가정 **5683명** 방문 >> 산모 건강 점검·정보 제공



Achievements Made during the Year-long Test Launch of the Reaching Out Community Service Center Project			
*80 neighborhoods, from June 2015 to July 2016			
<b>Stronger human resource and administrative base</b>			
Hired an additional 558 welfare personnel at the community service centers.			
Social welfare workers	Visiting nurses	Effects of implementation	Number of welfare recipients per social welfare worker
452	106		170 → 115
<b>Home visits</b>			
One year before the project was launched	2.5 times	One year after the project was launched	
54,293 visits		132,210 visits	
<b>Newly identified low-income, at-risk families</b>			
12,281 households	Monthly average 1,023 households	Neighborhood average 153 households	
<b>First city in Korea to implement universal welfare</b>			
Health checkup visits for a total of 36,377 people			
1. 65 to 70 year olds 30,694 people	7,209 people Detected symptoms of dementia and other diseases in the early stages	Referred to medical institutions 12,966 cases	
2. Visited 5,683 households with new mothers and infants	Provided health checkups and information for expectant mothers		

### **Additional 1,788 welfare personnel hired for the full implementation of the Reaching Out Center project**

A total of 5,683 households with new mothers also received visits from social workers, who provided health checkups for the mothers and infants and counseling and information on breastfeeding, childrearing, and postpartum depression. Households deemed to be in need of assistance will receive visits from visiting nurses until the child turns two.

With the expansion of the Reaching Out Center initiative to 283 neighborhoods this year, Seoul City hired 1,448 additional social workers and 340 visiting nurses this year and last year. Including the neighborhood project experts that were hired over the past year, about seven new social workers have been added to each community service center, reducing the number of welfare recipients per social worker from 170 to 115.

The city plans to expand the Reaching Out Center project to all 424 neighborhoods across Seoul's 25 districts by 2018. Seoul Mayor Park Won-soon said, "We will expand the Reaching Out Center initiative throughout Seoul and eliminate welfare and healthcare blind spots through the creation of a closely-knit welfare network. Our efforts to achieve innovation will continue until the welfare administration has been completely systematized and neighborhood communities, with strong connections among residents, have been formed." Seoul's experiment and efforts to strengthen its welfare system have planted a seed of change that will transform the welfare system of the entire nation. The welfare standards of Seoul citizens are now expanding to

Jeju Island and Sejong City, and Seoul's Reaching Out Center initiative has spread to other cities, including Jeonju.

Reported by Park Yong-tae