

The CIIF Evaluation Consortium

Final Report
for
Evaluating the Outcomes and Impact of
The Community Investment and Inclusion Fund
(CIIF)

Social Investment and Social Network: An
Analysis of the Collaboration between Third
Sector and Private Sector in the CIIF Projects

Submitted by
Chan Kam Tong, Ng Man Kit and Sit Mung Kwan

Unit for The Third Sector Studies,
Department of Applied Social Sciences,
Hong Kong Polytechnic University

To

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau

FEBRUARY 2006

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The study of “Social Investment and Social Network: An Analysis of the Collaboration between Third Sector and Private Sector in the CIIF Projects” is part of the evaluation study commissioned by the Health Welfare and Food Bureau and undertaken by the PolyU Team under the CIIF Evaluation Consortium. The major purpose is to provide independent assessment on the effectiveness of the Fund and individual projects in serving its purposes, in developing social capital.

This current study, with its research focus being focused on tripartite partnership, anchors the conceptual framework on the concepts of social capital and tripartite partnership in particular. The primary research questions of the current study to be examined are: (1) To what extent has social capital been promoted in the tripartite relationship amongst government, private sector and NGOs in the CIIF projects? (2) What are the critical success factors of good practice for the continuous improvement of CIIF-funded projects in developing social capital, the promotion of tripartite partnership in particular?

RESEARCH METHOD

Six CIIF-funded projects were examined in this study. They were selected primarily on the basis of whether or not having involved into collaboration between third sector and private

sector, while attending to the criteria in terms of variety in different batches, duration, clientele and location. The key research methods include a series of in-depth interviews with the key stakeholders and a documentary analysis of the official documents, including project proposals, progress reports that were submitted to the CIIF Secretariat in the project period. The series of interviews were held individually between March 2005 and December 2005 with the chief executive / senior administrators and project management frontline staffs of the NGOs, representatives from private sector (collaborators of Corporate and SMEs) and governmental officials who were involved in the selected projects.

FINDINGS

Given the generation of social capitals was the key objectives of the CIIF projects, efforts and endeavors being put on bonding, bridging and linking of relationships were discerned throughout the project process. On the part of tripartite partnership, it was found that close working relationship amongst service operators in exchanging views and experiences and synergy was created between NGOs and the private sector. While tripartite partnership was itself a concept of bridging relationship, the selected projects attended also to some sorts of bonding relationship like neighborhood caring and linking relationship such as mentoring. With the bonding, bridging and linking of relationships were introduced to the projects, structural social capitals, cognitive social capitals and collective social capitals were built at both individual and organizational levels.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

In evaluating the critical success factors of good practices for the promotion of tripartite partnership, the study identifies three domains of 'partnership capacity' leading to the success of such collaboration. It is considered that the aforementioned social capital outcomes could be brought about upon the development of three types of 'partnership capacity', which are as follows:

1. **Networking capacity** - the ability of different parties to have extensive and resourceful networks to find partners to work together, in specific to personal networks on both individual and organization levels were built.
2. **Solidarity capacity** - the generally accepted standard of shared values, in specific to mutual trust was built.
3. **Mutuality capacity** - the respect of the collaborating partners for achieving a win-win situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For Policy Makers:

1. While the leading roles and facilitating roles of government are equally important in most of the projects, active involvement of government is deemed necessary.
2. The government might need to attend to the importance of communication and coordination across Departments at both Bureau and District level.
3. The government might need to attend to the creation of opportunities of communication and coordination across different sectors.
4. In the promotion of the concept of "Social Capital" and "Corporate Social Responsibility" to private sector, the work needs to target not only on the sizable corporate but also the

small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

5. When involving private sectors, both large corporation as well as the SMEs are deemed to be equally valuable as potential partners.
6. The government might also consider institutionalizing reward mechanism which motivates the involvement of private sectors.

For Academic and Professional Bodies:

1. Academic and professional bodies might take initiatives to arrange more exchange between training institutes and the NGOs / private sector on social capital.
2. Development of curriculum on social capital / or integrating the themes of social capital and tripartite partnership into existing social work or social administrative training programmes could be considered.
3. Development of indicators for measuring the “social capital outcomes”.

For Practitioner, Public and Business Collaborators and other Stakeholders:

1. Practitioner, public and business collaborators and other stakeholders could also take initiatives on the promotion of the concept of social capital and sharing their valuable and impressive stories with regard to social capital building through media.
2. Sharing of “Good Practices” in annual convention or forums by practitioner, public and business collaborators and other stakeholders are encouraged.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has been conducted basing on the six selected CIIF-funded projects in so far as to address the purpose of the whole evaluation study as specified in the Evaluation Brief. Firstly, in assessing the effectiveness of the strategies pursued in achieving the CIIF's objectives, the evaluation team has focused on analyzing the approaches and strategies adopted and examined the extent of goal-attainment in terms of the development of the partnership. Secondly, with a view to appraising the contribution of the CIIF-funded projects towards promoting the development of social capital, the team has examined the extent of "structural social capital", "cognitive social capital" and "collective social capital" as a result of the CIIF-funded projects involving tripartite partnerships. Thirdly, in order to evaluate the aggregated impact of the CIIF-funded projects on the groups and communities involved, the team has assessed and documented the impacts from the interviews with different relevant stakeholders. Fourthly, in order to identify the critical success (or otherwise) factors common to the projects, the team has thoroughly examined the stated purposes / objectives, scope, format, mechanism, process and intended outcomes, so as to identify the critical success factors or illustrations of good practice for the continuous improvement of CIIF-funded projects, the promotion of tripartite partnership in particular.

This chapter will devote to the fifth objective, advising on the policy implications and mapping out future strategies for the further development of social capital. The evaluation team will base on the results of the investigation and make recommendations for enhancing policies on fostering tripartite partnership and corporate social responsibilities in Hong Kong. In the following, suggestions shall be made to enhance the effectiveness of the strategies in achieving the objectives of CIIF social capital building; to increase the contribution of CIIF-funded projects towards the development of social capital; to increase the aggregate

impact of the CIIF-funded projects on the groups and communities involved; to improve the CIIF operation in promoting social capital objectives; to strengthen the critical success factors at a meso level; and, finally, to advise on the policy implications and map out future strategies for the further development of the CIIF and social capital, targeting on policy makers, academics, and practitioners, public and business collaborators and other stakeholders.

To enhance the effectiveness of the strategies in achieving the objectives of social capital building, the CIIF might take into consideration that social capital is still an emerging concept in the Hong Kong context. While further promotion of the concept is called for, before all there is a pressing need to better operationalize the concept of social capital itself and hence make the assessment of its extent of goal-attainment and its level of contributions more measurable. Such endeavors shall in no doubt be able to facilitate the development of “Evidence-based Practice” in which service operators become more cautious about the outcome of the projects or programmes.

To increase the contribution of CIIF-funded projects towards the development of social capital, there is a need to get more service operators involved into the schemes. In the vetting exercise, the CIIF might encourage innovation and creativity through benchmarking, and thus consider giving higher priority to projects with new and creative services ideas. Besides, it will be of referencing values to fellow practitioners, let alone the service operators, that the CIIF considers working on some consolidation of the operation experiences in the past three years by such publication as “Casebook on Building Social Capital in Hong Kong”, in which those project workers could contribute by sharing their invaluable experiences in implementation.

To increase the aggregate impact of the CIIF-funded projects on the groups and communities involved, the CIIF might consider enabling a wider dissemination of the concept of social

capital and tripartite partnership in particular to the public. Namely, regular symposium and annual conference or Expo could be conducted to disseminate the good practice experience. Besides, more publicity through media could be adopted.

To improve the CIIF operation in promoting social capital objectives, firstly, the CIIF might consider allowing greater flexibility for the service operators to develop their funded projects. To facilitate the work of the projects, on the one hand the government might consider doing more promotion of the projects so as to increase legitimacy and recognition by the public and the private sector to the operation of the projects; on another the government might consider increasing the communication amongst various Bureaus / Departments at both central and local levels (e.g. District Council). To facilitate the exchange of experience, the CIIF might consider the development of “knowledge management” (KM) tools.

To strengthen the critical success factors, i.e. the three types of partnership capacity, namely networking capacity, solidarity capacity and mutuality capacity, as discussed, the government could take into consideration of measures for strengthening these different types of partnership capacity individually. Namely, to enhance the networking capacity, capacity building on partnership could be looked into by considering training regarding the themes of social capital and tripartite partnership to the practitioners and potential partners. To enhance the solidarity capacity, the government might consider creating more opportunities for communication, e.g. conducting periodical meetings like conferences and sharing sessions which engage people from different sectors. To enhance the mutuality capacity, it is essential to look to the motivations of each party for their involvement. In particular, the government could consider more on how to motivate the involvement of private sector, for example development of recognition mechanism such as award presentation, or giving pragmatic rewards to private partners for their involvement by offering taxation deduction just like

donation.

Actually, in considering the policy implications and future strategies for the further development of the CIIF and social capital, policy makers, academics, and practitioners, public, business, collaborators could play different parts. The following present recommendations to these different stakeholders individually:

For Policy Makers:

1. While the leading roles and facilitating roles of government are equally important in most of the projects, active involvement of government is deemed necessary.
2. The government might need to attend to the importance of communication and coordination across Departments at both Bureau and District level.
3. The government might need to attend to the creation of opportunities of communication and coordination across different sectors.
4. In the promotion of the concept of “Social Capital” and “Corporate Social Responsibility” to private sector, the work needs to target not only on the sizable corporate but also the small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
5. When involving private sectors, both large corporation as well as the SMEs are deemed to be equally valuable as potential partners.
6. The government might also consider institutionalizing reward mechanism which motivates the involvement of private sectors.

For Academic and Professional Bodies:

1. Academic and professional bodies might take initiatives to arrange more exchange between training institutes and the NGOs / private sector on social capital.
2. Development of curriculum on social capital / or integrating the themes of social capital

and tripartite partnership into existing social work or social administrative training programmes could be considered.

3. Development of indicators for measuring “social capital outcomes”.

For Practitioner, Public and Business Collaborators and other Stakeholders:

1. Practitioner, public and business collaborators and other stakeholders could also take initiatives on the promotion of the concept of social capital and sharing their valuable and impressive stories with regard to social capital building through media.
2. Sharing of “Good Practices” in annual convention or forums by practitioner, public and business collaborators and other stakeholders are encouraged.