

**The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
Network on Community Development
Proposal on Social Inclusion Teams**

Introduction

This proposal aims at making recommendation for the reallocation of existing resources arising from the terminated Neighborhood Locality Community Development Projects (NLCDPs). It is suggested to set up the social inclusion teams so as to address the needs of specific target communities, including New Arrivals/ Cross-boundary Families, Residential New Public Rental Housing (PRH) Estates and Affected Rural Area in New Development Area, in 3-years project basis.

Background

There are about 440,000 low-income families, where household income is less than half of median household income in Hong Kong; among them, 230,000 household are working low income families, with reference to 2001 Population Census¹. In view of the low social-economic status and limited capacity, these communities are always neglected and excluded from the society.

Seeing the importance of social harmony and sustainable development, it is the principal objective to alleviate poverty and reduce social exclusion.

It is believed that social inclusion approach help alleviate poverty by mobilizing asset of the community, including the persons and community resources in the locality. In addition, networking service facilitates active interaction among different community groups which create community synergy in bringing not only personal growth, but also building stronger community capacity for sustainable community development.

Three specific target groups, including New Arrivals/ Cross-boundary Families, New Public Rental Housing Estate (i.e. Kwan Chung Estate) and Affected Rural Area in New Development Area (i.e. northeastern part of New Territories), are recommended to be served by the newly established Social Inclusion Teams. The general project rationale, functions, strategies, content and output are sketched below while the specific background of each project, characteristics, budget and service target are attached under each project theme.

Rationale

It is believed that social inclusion approach help alleviate poverty, personal difficulties and family problem by mobilizing asset of the community, including the persons and community resources in the locality.

¹ HKCSS (2003). A Statistical Profile of Low-income Households in Hong Kong. HK:HKCSS

Networking service facilitates active interaction among residents which create community synergy in bringing personal growth and stronger community capacity for sustainable development.

Objectives

- To provide community-based support to the residents by using **Community-based Networking Approach²** and **Asset-based Community Development approach³**;
- To explore asset of community and facilitate formation of and strengthening of informal **support and service networks⁴** in the neighborhood for capacity building of the residents, which enhances social capital for sustainable community building;
- To mobilize of community groups' relationship interaction and engage them in community economic development;
- To ultimately strengthen **community and economic capacity** and facilitate **social integration**, which contribute to a caring, just and harmonious society.

Functions

- To build up community capacity by empowering the residents through building social support network;
- To foster and empower people of self-help and mutual-help capability in solving community problems by encouraging people to interact with one another through participation in a series of activities and networking groups;
- To address the needs of and empower disadvantaged communities by mobilizing the available community resources and bridge the needy with the necessary resources;
- To enhance community cohesion and harmony in a sustainable fashion by encouraging independence and community participation in building up their communities.

Strategies

- To facilitate formation of networks for special needs groups for empowering them with self help and mutual help abilities;
- To mobilize organization of community concern networks for promoting community participation; and
- To build linkage among networks for a caring and cohesive community.

² **Community Based Networking Approach** refers to the building of informal and semi-informal social networks of interpersonal relationship in a geographical community with the aims to provide community-based support and promote self-help and mutual care in the community. The ultimate objective is to help build a caring and cohesive community in the locality. Social capital of the locality is strengthened and enhanced.

³ Wong Hung (2005) Presentation on Seminar on Community Development at the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (March 15, 2005).

⁴ **Support and Social Network** can be defined as "A set of personal contacts through which individual maintains his / her social identity and received emotional support, material aid and services, information, and new social contacts. Walker K. N. et.al. (1997). Social Support Networking and the Crisis of Bereavement", Social Science and Medicine. Vol.11 (1997), p. 34-41.

Characteristics

Social inclusion team emphasizes active identification and mobilization of the strengths and asset of the community for sustaining community development, which improve the living environmental condition and quality of community life.

Opportunities for reciprocal interaction and socio-economic activities among different community groups are to be initiated by organizing targeted community groups with support and networking efforts of the service operators.

Service Scope

- To reach out and work with the residents in forming informal **support network** in the locality;
- To mobilize and network community resources in enhancing members' **self-help and mutual-help capabilities**;
- To **enhance community participation** of the residents and interactive communication with various community groups; and
- To engage the target group in **socio-economic capital building activities** for prevention and alleviation of poverty.

Service Output

- No. of social support networks organized
- No. of people participated in the organized social support networks
- No. of inter-network activities
- No. of persons involved in community cohesion activities (include local and the service target population)
- No. of people engaged in economic activities;
- No. of community problems / issues with members' participation
- No. of partnership plan implemented

Service Outcome

- % of service target reported of improved social support
- % of service target reported of increased sense of belongingness to the community
- % of service target reported of increase participation in community
- % of service target reported of increase confidence for employment

Evaluation

- Submitting service outcome statistic quarterly or half-yearly
- Submitting service report and service plan annually
- Comprehensive performance evaluation at the end of the contract
- Maintaining communication with HAD

Project 1: New Public Rental Housing Estates

Background

At present, there are more than 13 PRH estates⁵ with newly move-in in recently years. It is estimated that the concerned population is at least 177,000⁶. It is the Government statement that over 30,000 PRH units will have to be built annually in the next few years. Given the majority of residents in new estates are originated from the general waiting list and they have moved to the estate just for a relatively short period of time, they are not familiar with the new environment and have weak social support network in the community.

Major Target Groups

- Low incomes
- Unemployed
- Women
- New arrivals
- Single-parent family

Justifications for setting up the Teams

Social service is a facilitator in developing the network and also a supporter to cater for community need. However, due to absent of long-term service planning mechanism and coordination, it is the common problem that the existing social service provision is not able to meet the need of new estates.

For example, Kwan Chung Estate, with population of more than 13,000, has an elderly center, a social service center and several time-limited social service projects only. The residents and district council members always expressed their worry over the hidden family and social problem in such newly completed PRH Estate. Developing the community support network and outreaching service for early-identification demand action immediately.

The team initiates and supports the reciprocal interaction and socio-economic activities by organizing targeted community groups. Besides, it emphasizes early identification of problems and mobilization of the strengths and asset of the residents for improving the quality of living environment and community life.

Subvention

With reference to NLCDP and the community needs, an annual subvention of \$1.5 million (excluding rent and rates) on a Lump Sum Grant (LSG) mode for 3 years is proposed for the service operation for each team.

Premise

A project office is required for administration and service delivery. Rent and rates in respect of premises for delivery of the subvented activities will be reimbursed separately on an actual cost basis.

⁵ Including: Oi Tung Estate, Shek Pai Wan Estate, Choi Ying Estate, Upper Ngau Tau Kok Estate, Lei Yue Mun Estate, Yau Lai Estate, Un Chau Estate, Mei Tin Estate, Ching Ho Estate, Tin Ching Estate, Kwai Chung Estate, Shek Lei (II) Estate, Lam Tin Estate.

⁶ Answer to budget question 2009-10 (LWB(WW)237).

Project 2: New Arrivals and Cross-boundary Family

Background

In the past 5 years, more than 220,000 new arrivals, about 120 daily, settled in Hong Kong. Given the majority of the new arrivals are “mainland wife” and their children, in general, there is only one bread-winner and it is usually the husband who goes out to work. The majority of the mothers are a full-time housewife occupied with taking care of their families.

The new arrivals and cross-boundary families are generally less-affluent with their household income below the median income of all domestic households over the territory. These household recorded a decline in their median monthly income from \$13,000 in 1996 \$12,000 in 2006, equivalent to 69.6% of the median monthly income for all domestic household in the year (\$17, 250).

Major Target Groups

- Low incomes
- Unemployed
- Women
- Single-parent family

Justifications for setting up the Team

As originated from mainland China with limited network in Hong Kong and low economic status, they have little social support in adapting life into Hong Kong. The HKCSS survey (2009) indicated that seeking help or receiving assistance from personal network is seldom.

Owing to the integration exercise, those specialized services were merged into integrated service. Thus, no specialized service for the social inclusion and development on the NA community is provided presently. As the newly developed integrated service is, however, confined and segmented into a small boundary, there is none territory-wide social inclusion project.

The team initiates and supports the reciprocal interaction by organizing groups and activities. Besides, it emphasizes early identification of problems and mobilization of the strengths and asset of the new arrivals for improving the quality of living.

Subvention

With reference to manpower provision in NLCDP and the community needs, an annual subvention of \$1.7 million (excluding rent and rates) on a Lump Sum Grant (LSG) mode for 3 years is proposed for the service operation.

Premise

A project office is required for administration and service delivery. Rent and rates in respect of premises for delivery of the subvented activities will be reimbursed separately on an actual cost basis.

Project 3: Social inclusion and Support Team in Rural Squatter Area

Background

The 10 Large-scale infrastructure⁷ (LSI) projects, being push ahead before 2014, will accelerate the change of land use and living environment in the rural area. According to the figures in 2001, there is more than 230,000 resident in the rural squatter area and the resident are generally low-educated, low-income and old age. They have less understanding about the impact of the works and capacity to overcome the change.

Kwu Tung North, Fanling North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling, identified as suitable New Development Area (NDA), one of the 10 LSI, i.e. the 3-in-1 NDA, is a remarkable area that the existing 10,000 residents are affected by the projects which create a long-term and deep effect in the community and living.

Major Target Groups

- Low incomes
- Unemployed
- Elderly
- New Arrivals

Justifications for setting up the Team

The rural squatter area is a deprived area in where there is lack of basic facilities, e.g. mail box, concrete paved road, streetlamp, etc. Being a non-indigenous inhabitant village without formal village committee or organization, it is not easy to channel the community concern to government and cater the community needs by their local network. As there is few social service provided in the remote rural area, the main stream welfare services mainly locating in the town center, the resident of the squatter area is always helpless and in a disadvantage situation.

Owing to the works, the residents may undergo a big environmental and social change. For example, they may lose their present accommodations and resettle to a new environment. This is a heavy social, psychological and financial burden for the deprived groups.

For facilitating the residents to overcome the changes and smoothing resettlement process, social support and social services is the important facilitator. But, as the mainstream social service mainly locating in the towns is low assessable for the rural residents. Those disable and old age families, etc. are very difficult to seek support or social service.

The team initiates and supports the reciprocal interaction and mutual engagement by organizing groups and activities. Besides, it emphasizes early identification of problems and mobilization of the strengths and asset of the residents for preparing the change.

⁷ 1. The Tuen Mun Western Bypass and Tuen Mun-Chek Lap Kok Link; 2. The Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong Express Rail Link; 3. Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge; 4. Hong Kong-Shenzhen Airport Co-operation; 5. Hong Kong-Shenzhen Joint Development of the Lok Ma Chau Loop; 6. New Development Areas (NDAs)

The NDA project is a large scale and scheduled project. The social inclusion team will benefit the community and enhance their capacity to overcome the change. As there is NLCDP service in Fanling North, it is recommended to render the service on the Kwu Tung North and Ping Che/Ta Kwu Ling district.

Subvention

With reference to manpower provision in NLCDP and the community needs, an annual subvention of \$1.5 million (excluding rent and rates) on a Lump Sum Grant (LSG) mode for 3 years is proposed for the service operation.

Premise

A project office is required for administration and service delivery. Rent and rates in respect of premises for delivery of the subvented activities will be reimbursed separately on an actual cost basis.

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