International Grant Program Online Seminar

Ethics and Logics of International Collaborative Projects

Report

March 2022

THE TOYOTA FOUNDATION

Foreword

The Toyota Foundation's International Grant Program has been providing grants under the theme of "Cultivating Empathy Through Learning from Our Neighbors: Practitioners' Exchange on Common Issues in Asia". The Foundation supports projects by people from diverse backgrounds across sectors and countries who collaborate and co-create as colleagues working on the same issues and build partnership relationships that lead to social change. Although there are a wide variety of themes and methods to work on, there are certain philosophies and ideas that are required for any international collaborative project, points to focus on in implementation, and common obstacles.

This event was designed to provide a forum for in-depth discussion and reflection on the ethics and logic underlying international collaboration through a total of four sessions, involving recipients of the International Grant Program and outside experts.

This report provides an overview of the projects implemented by the speakers and the key points discussed at all four seminars. The full version and digest versions of the seminar videos are available on the Toyota Foundation YouTube channel.

https://www.youtube.com/c/TheToyotaFoundation

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Yuko Harada Field Study Division Manager, Cross Fields
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Moderator   **Shigeto Sonoda** Professor of Sociology and Asian Studies, Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA), The University of Tokyo

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Sunit Shrestha Founder and Managing Director, ChangeFusion
Ken Ito East Asia Director, Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)
Patsian Low Chief of Staff, Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)

Introduction of the Moderators

Session1 & 4

Shigeto Sonoda
Professor of Sociology and Asian Studies,
Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia (IASA),
The University of Tokyo; Selection Committee Chair,
International Grant Program, The Toyota Foundation

He specializes in China studies, comparative sociology, and cultural transformation in Asian societies. From the perspective of how Asian societies are changing under the impact of globalization, he conducts comparative sociological research on foreign companies operating in Asia, social stratification in China, and the perception of China within Asia. His major publications include "Japan in the Eyes of Asians", "Testimony: The Japan-China Joint Venture", "How to Cope with 'China Risks'", "China Impact", and "Global Views of China".

Session 2 & 3

Ryoko Kida
Executive Director,
Machida City Community Activity Support Office

After graduating from J. F. Oberlin University, she worked at the Toyota Foundation, where she was in charge of planning, developing, and managing grants for research and projects in Japan and abroad. Since 2014, she has been in charge of subsidizing community activities throughout Japan, building a network with civic groups and people involved in the community across the country. In 2019, she participated in the launch of the Machida City Community Activity Support Office and was appointed Executive Director in October of the same year.

*Their titles and affiliations as of when they presented.

Tokihiko Fujimoto Associate Professor, School of Political Science and Economics, Meiji University

He was born in Kumamoto City in 1984. In March 2009, he completed the first half of the doctoral program in sociology at Doshisha University. After completing his graduate studies, he worked at the Shimane Prefectural Mountainous Regions Research Center, the JST Research Institute of Science and Technology for Society, the Graduate School of Engineering at Kyushu University, and the Faculty of Agriculture at Shizuoka University before assuming his current position in April 2020. He received his Ph.D. in Engineering (Kyushu University, 2013) for his dissertation, "A Study on Local Entity Formation for Renewable Energy Social Capital Development". He is also the author of "The Power of Thinking About Community Planning" (Mishosha, 2022).

Isamu Ishii Representative, Gokase Renewable Energy Company

He was born in Gokase Town, Miyazaki Prefecture. He worked at the Gokase Town Office from 1978 to 2010, established the Research Institute of Gokase Community Development in 2010, and the Research Institute of Gokase Renewable Energy in 2012. In the process of thinking, discussing, and working together with residents to solve problems in Gokase Town, such as agriculture, employment, welfare, energy, and the aging of the population, he discovered that the abundant water in the area can be a powerful tool for revitalizing the community through small-scale hydroelectric power generation, and is working to create a sustainable community through small-scale hydroelectric power generation.

Outline of the Projects

Sustainable Agriculture of Rural Area in Mekong Delta, Vietnam and Mountainous Area, Japan by Community-based Action for Effective Utilization of Bio-wastes Resources（FY2019）

Under the theme of "Recycling of Bio-waste Resources and Regional Circular Agriculture," participants will learn how to recycle waste biomass resources as thermal energy and manure, based on the lifestyles that have developed in accordance with the topography of tropical Vietnam and temperate Japan. Participants in Thanh Tay village in Hau Giang province in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam work on community biogas and food waste composting while those in Gokase town in Miyazaki prefecture work on manure creation and biogas heat utilization. The main subjects taking on this challenge are the women of Japan and Vietnam who have supported daily life practices and shaped the local food culture. These cross-border key persons are now practicing to lead social change by connecting food and agriculture locally while cherishing their daily lives and creating beautiful farming villages.

Socio-Technological approach for building sustainable community through the corporative action installing Small-Scale-Hydropower in Japanese and Indonesian rural area.（FY2014）

The issue in rural Indonesia is "community development" in terms of poverty, unlighted areas, medical care, education, etc., while in Japan, it is "community support" due to the decline of the local regions caused by the rapid aging of the population. In the field of small-scale hydropower generation, Gokase Town in Miyazaki prefecture has experienced delays in technology and high prices, while in West Java Province, the introduction of such generation has not progressed due to the lack of functioning maintenance and management by the local community. We sought solutions by mutually utilizing the technologies and knowledge of both countries.

We discovered the potential of "Kincir" (handmade micro hydroelectric generator in Indonesia), which has been handed down in unelectrified villages in Indonesia, as a tool for resident participation and consensus building, and held a workshop on technology transfer to Gokase Town. Involvement in the production of the technology provided inspiration to think about the use of the "good electricity" generated by the local nature and formed a learning opportunity and subject for thinking about sustainable local survival strategies.

Yuko Harada Field Study Division Manager, Cross Fields

After graduating from university, she worked as a corporate sales representative for an IT company, and then earned a master's degree in international development from an overseas graduate school. She joined Cross Fields in 2016 after working on rural development projects in Malawi and Kenya for an international cooperation NGO. After working as a project manager, she assumed her current position in 2020. She is working with local communities and partner organizations to form new programs and create more value through them.
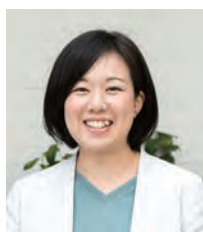
Sayumi Nishikawa New Initiative Leader, Cross Fields

After graduating from university, she worked for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), where she was involved in the formation and management of ODA projects in the Middle East and North Africa. She joined Cross Fields in 2018. After working as a project manager in the planning and management of corporate volunteering programs and field study workshop programs, she has been working as a new initiative leader since 2021 to explore projects that promote the resolution of social issues through cross-sector collaboration.

Outline of the Projects

Solution transfer beyond border through exchange of management personnel – With social sectors of Japan and Vietnam（FY2019）

In recent years, as social issues are becoming more complex and diverse, NPOs and social enterprises in the social sector have become important actors. However, these organizations across Asia face many obstacles including shortages of human resources and finances. This sector needs to develop further to create greater impact to the society. Two of the biggest challenges are "growth of middle management" and "solution transfer". To address these issues, we will implement a scheme in which middle management personnel from Vietnamese and Japanese organizations go on exchange volunteering program to learn from each other at the front lines. By empowering the entire sector, we aim to accelerate the resolution of social issues and accelerate collaboration with other sectors such as corporations.

Advancing sustainable organic farming in Asia: A focus on Japan, Philippines and Vietnam（FY2017）

In Japan, interest in organic farming has been increasing along with the growing awareness of environmental conservation, but it cannot be called widespread yet. In the Philippines and Vietnam as well, not only are producers taking a strong interest in organic farming, but consumers are also becoming more conscious of food safety and are demanding organic vegetables, but the penetration rate remains low. In these three countries, the main members of this project were social enterprises involved in organic farming, to promote mutual understanding of the issues in each country and to learn from each other's good practices. Mutual visits were made to the three countries to conduct farm tours, customer interviews, and lectures by university professors on macro perspectives. With the aim of promoting organic farming, production handbooks for farmers and manuals for implementing Community Shared Agriculture practices were prepared and distributed. The creation of an international network of different stakeholders in organic agriculture was a major achievement of this project.

▶ YouTube

How does a collaborative relationship take shape in an international project that is premised on mutual differences? We exchanged opinions on what we are aware of and what we consider to be important factors among the various people involved in the project, transcending the theme of the project and our respective positions.

The dialogue about "good technology" is the beginning of "action"

I see international collaboration as a partnership supported by a project concept.

The main entity for international collaboration is the Research Institute of Gokase Renewable Energy, a resident- and community-based organization created by local residents. The main actors are the local residents, and engineers and researchers like us are involved with them as colleagues, based on the realities of their lives.

In this context, I think our common issues were the idea of good technology and the attitude of pursuing individuality.

In our project, through the method of exploratory fieldwork, we have shared our empathy by playing freely and nurturing the life force in the "space". As we traveled together and talked deeply, I really felt that "action" was sparked.

Fujimoto

Based on the fragmented knowledge we have, logic inevitably sounds important, but it is not always the case.

I think it was very impressive that the logic and ethics that bring it all together are made up of the sensibilities and unique elements of each individual.

Sonoda

Creating "co-creation" beyond expectations

The participants learned about employment of people with disabilities and the spread of organic farming.

We at Cross Fields are like a hub that connects different sectors and regions, whether in Japan or overseas, to create collaborations.

The major lesson I learned was that in a collaborative project, it is not enough to focus only on problem setting and problem solving.

By building strong relationships between people, empathy and learning at the level of values and principles are created, leading to value creation that was not initially envisioned, and empowering the participants.

I would like to call this "co-creation".

I think it is important to recognize the importance of strong relationships between people and to intentionally create such places.

Harada

Even if it is online, it is possible for members with different backgrounds and values to communicate and create value together across countries, and I believe that the essence of online collaboration is not significantly different from that of face-to-face collaboration.

However, we realized that as long as it is conducted online, it is necessary to be innovative a bit

Nishikawa

based on the characteristics and limitations of online collaboration.

The key to success is trust, and how you can build a collaborative, heart-to-heart relationship is the basis for everything. Then, when we went back to the starting point and the essence of our activities, wondering what and for whom what we are doing now is connected, it was important for us to develop empathy and belief in our efforts and turn them into energy.

It is very revealing that various values can come from different places than what is planned.

Sonoda

Individual resources shaped into wisdom by working together

Nishikawa

I believe that talent is not only developed within an organization, but are also developed by the partners with whom we collaborate.

Mindset is more important than skills, and you have to really face the person in front of you with sincerity.

Ishii

I went to Indonesia to present an initiative for community development in Gokase Town and met a powerful organization.

I was inspired by a group of people who have great ambitions to change their community and country, and I was aware that I could bring the ideas of this organization back to Japan for development.

In the past, in mountainous areas, there used to be solidarity called "Yui", where everyone in the village worked together to do various things.

There were similar places all over Japan, but I would like to revive the "Yui" in Gokase Town.

I believe that we need a variety of knowledge and information to create a community, and that the cooperation of people outside the community is absolutely necessary.

Fujimoto

The power of craftsmanship transcends language, as people are delighted or surprised when they make the same thing.

Our learning together is largely about learning the way of living.

Harada

I think it's important to create places where people believe that something can be created by sharing things, even if they are inconclusive or vague.

I think that by doing so, we can create a place where something unexpected can be created.

Collaboration is a very universal theme and process, yet its players are extremely unique.

Today's discussion illuminated the process of recognizing our own unique resources, mobilizing them and combining them with the resources of others to create a form of knowledge.

In this process, I think the key words are "planning and emergence". Deviations from the plan, or things you hadn't thought of, come up. In the logic of planning alone, this "emergence" may not be something that is desirable. However, if you look at it over a long period of time, this emergence would turn out to be meaningful.

Sonoda

Arihiro Minoo Associate Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Waseda University

Previously he was an Assistant Professor and an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Sociology, Toyo University, after completing his doctoral course in Waseda University in 2013. He is the author of Anthropology of Fair Trade, and Field Education from Anthropologists (co-editor). He has researched the social and economic impacts on coffee producers by the implementation of fair trade scheme since 2008.

Mio Nogawa Executive Director, Alternative People's Linkage in Asia (APLA)

She is a graduate of Sophia University, Faculty of Foreign Studies. She joined APLA in 2008 when it was established, and has been mainly responsible for community development projects in Timor-Leste and Indonesia, as well as public relations and events in Japan. She has been in her current position since 2020. She is the editor of "Nonwar, Dialogue, NGO: Our Progress Across Borders and Generations" (Shinhyoron Publishing, 2017), "Making Chocolate Made from the Beginning" (Rural Culture Association Japan, 2018), and "The Bitter Truth of Sweet Bananas" (Commons, 2020).

Outline of the Projects

Project for Fostering Youth Farmers' Leaders Toward the Practice of Natural Circularity Agriculture in the Cash Crop Cultivating Areas（FY2016）

This project aims to facilitate interactions by the young small-scale farmers who are the members of the agricultural organizations which are the partners of the APLA — Alternative People's linkage in Asia — and ATJ — Alter Trade Japan — in Laos (Bolaven Plateau), Timor-Leste (Ermera District), and Philippines (Negros Island). In these three areas, it is difficult to practice sustainable agriculture and secure staple foods as they face various risks caused by the single cash crop cultivation. Therefore, to avoid such risks, it is necessary to reevaluate the diversity of their own ecosystems and the value of their natural resources, practice circular agriculture, and pass down the practices to the next generation. In Negros Island, in particular, there is an farmers' school (Kaneshige Farm Rural Campus: KF-RC) that has been supported by APLA for many years. This project aims to deepen mutual understanding of regional issues as a premise for spreading the model of circular agriculture practiced there to coffee producing regions in Laos and Timor-Leste.

Yuichi Watanabe
Secretary General, The Laboratory for Global Dialogue

He is a filmmaker and producer. He has covered refugees and internally displaced persons in the Afghan war, the civil war in Aceh, and the war in Iraq. Since the "Japan-Afghanistan High School Student Videophone Dialogue" in 2002, he has been pursuing the possibilities of grassroots citizen dialogue and interactive video. Since 2013, he has been implementing collaborative projects through two-way engagement between Japan and Indonesia.

Makiko Nakagawa
Director, The Laboratory for Global Dialogue; Researcher, Institute of Educational Research, Bunkyo University

She has three years of teaching experience in Thailand, and two years in the Philippines coordinating study tours and educating local staff. As Director of the Laboratory for Global Dialogue, she is also involved in the "Global Dialogue" project, which connects people around the world through video calls, and the community art project in Aceh, Indonesia, which is a collaboration between Japan and the affected areas.

Outline of the Projects

Creating "New culture" through community art projects by Indonesian workers and local people in rural Japan（FY2020）

The practice of how to accept the ever-increasing number of foreign human resources, such as trainees, is directly related to what we want to do with our own society. Through the dispatch and acceptance of foreign human resources, the project aims to transform the relationship between Kesennuma, Miyagi Prefecture, and Ponologo, East Java, which is currently no more than an exchange of labor, into an opportunity for unique and valuable cultural creation by carrying out a community art project on both sides. Through a spiral of mutual exchange, such as interviews with foreign human resources, the creation of ongoing places of residence, projects that incorporate elements of each other's festivals, documentaries that serve as places for collaboration in the production itself, and mutual visits, we are aiming to build a platform for cultural creation in Japan and Asia, using trainees as a catalyst.

Community art project between afflicted areas of Japan and Aceh（FY2017）

Passing on the experience of disasters is a shared issue in the tsunami-affected areas of Japan and Aceh, Indonesia. In the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, some of the remains of the disaster have begun to be opened to the public, but tourism in the disaster-affected areas is still in its infancy, and there are many lessons to be learned from Aceh, which suffered first. On the other hand, in Aceh, 17 years after the earthquake, awareness of disaster prevention has been declining, and there are expectations for community art as a creative act that goes beyond the framework of artists and viewers, which is being tackled in the disaster-stricken areas of Japan. In this project, we introduced community art to Aceh and built a base and network of activities for young people. In addition, we were able to mediate the development of social tourism not only in Aceh but also in Japan, and our outputs such as the film produced as a legacy of the disaster and our participation in the Sanriku International Art Festival were highly evaluated. The participants learned from each other across different areas such as the region where they live, art, earthquake, environment, and tourism.

Session 2: How to create a place for collaboration

Date: Aug. 27, 2021

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With the global COVID-19 pandemic, opportunities for direct interaction have been reduced and social distancing has become a requirement. In the context of the very difficult situation of "creating places", the participants talked about how they perceive "places" in the implementation of the project and how they are trying to overcome the challenges.

Having a "place" brings about the sharing of multiple perspectives

Minoo

The goal of the project was to connect three locations: Bolaven Plateau in Laos, Negros in the Philippines, and Timor-Leste, and to provide a forum for young farmers from our organization, APLA, and our affiliate, ATJ, to interact with each other.

What was important here was that in addition to learning each other's skills and knowledge, by receiving an outside perspective, participants were able to realize the value in their own community that they had not noticed.

Watanabe

From 2017 to 2020, we conducted disaster area tours and community art projects that connected Aceh, Indonesia, which was hit by the Sumatra earthquake, with the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. And now, a project that was planned consecutively from there is under way.

This project aims to bring together the increasing number of technical interns in Japan and local communities to work together to overcome barriers.

Through implementing wide variety of plans, I feel that we have created a place where even though cultures and religions differ between Indonesia and Japan, we can recognize each other's positions and perspectives, exchange and dialogue, and change each other again.

Gathering up chance occurrences

Nakagawa

In our activities, we have been working by placing value on a bottom-up approach. People of all ages, genders, backgrounds, and religions are participating in this project, so I believe that there are human relationships and power relationships that are inherent. I was particularly conscious of the importance of connecting with their interest, awareness, and initiative by getting into their minds and eliciting what they hadn't said or what they had been thinking.

Nogawa

All the facilitators involved were always conscious of the importance of chance occurrences, emergence, and what is created. It's a project where it's hard to set what we call performance targets, so we wanted to focus on the process of change rather than outcomes.

In our role as facilitators, we spent a year being very conscious of how to pick up small seeds that happened by chance occurrences and not by our intention, and how to verbalize them and share them with the whole group.

Kida

It is important to understand what happens by chance and to be prepared to change the program flexibly in response. But I think that it requires a lot of courage.

It is very difficult to read a context with different backgrounds, cultures, and languages, but on the other hand, Japanese people from a homogeneous and high-context society may be less conscious of this among themselves. Truly because of the international collaboration, I got the impression that there was a conscious effort to see and verbalize context that was not explicit.

Interaction between "place" and facilitators

Minoo

I think the important thing for interaction is how you change by interacting with others.

The implicit assumptions of the self are broken down and the way we look at things is changed, and at the same time we can see the society we live in a different way.

I believe for such a change to occur, the facilitator must eventually be able to function well together with the creation of the "place". I think that when the facilitator becomes aware and asks questions, something becomes apparent to the people involved, which is then reflected in the creation of a new place.

Nakagawa

I think that the meaning of cultural exchange is to feel a sense of self-transformation and to have a perspective of looking at oneself from the outside. This time, I was able to see the process of children acquiring such things in their own way. For example, by incorporating small activities such as bringing food that is available in both Japan and Indonesia to the exchange and eating it together, or translating songs into Japanese and Indonesian and having the children sing them together at the exchange, I think that we can create a place online as well.

Kida

The role of the facilitator is to pick up the chance occurrences and incorporate them into the program, and to verbalize them and give feedback to create self-transformation.

I also learned that it is not only the facilitator's role to verbalize, but also to support each other's verbalization.

It takes a great deal of time to carefully repeat such a process, so I think that the question of how much we can tolerate and support change and the unexpected is also a question for donors, such as the Toyota Foundation.

Atsushi Yano Researcher, AKY Inclusive Community Institute LLC.

He was born in Osaka in 1986. He is a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Engineering, Osaka University. His major is urban planning. In 2016, he joined the AKY Inclusive Community Institute and became involved in community development in socially disadvantaged areas in Osaka City. Since 2018, he has been enrolled in a graduate program, aiming to go back and forth between research and practice.

Geerhardt Kornatowski (Jay) Associate Professor, Faculty of Social and Cultural Studies, Graduate School of Integrated Sciences for Global Society, Kyushu University

He received his Ph.D. (human geography and urban studies) at the Osaka City University Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences. His work focuses on the spatial manifestation of inequality and non-governmental means of welfare delivery in East-Asian city-regions, especially Hong Kong and Singapore. He is currently exploring community hub initiatives for foreign workers in the extended city-region of Fukuoka.

Outline of the Projects

Establishing a Platform for the East Asian Inclusive City Network: From divided to inclusive cities（FY2017）

This project was conducted as a problem-solving action research to identify the impact of negative regional effects in socially disadvantaged areas in cities in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, and to derive practical issues to be addressed. As a part of the project, we held the "Urban Administration Network Seminar" (10 sessions) to create a network of domestic researchers, practitioners, and policy making staff, and the "East Asia Inclusive Cities Network (EA-ICN) Workshop" (2 sessions) to exchange experiences on issues and practices for inclusive cities in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. In addition, we have published three books to disseminate our findings to the public so that they can be applied to actual policies and practices. The most significant achievement of this project is the establishment of local network organizations in Japan (ICN-JAPAN), Korea (ICN-Korea), and Taiwan (ICN-Taiwan) for further collaboration among cities. After the completion of the project, we are continuing our activities with the aim of launching the East Asia Inclusive Cities Network (EA-ICN) as a formal platform to strengthen the collaboration among these organizations and to take more concrete and visible actions.

Kiyoko Kanki
Prof.Dr.Eng., Dept. of Architecture and Architectural Eng. Graduate School of Eng., Kyoto University

A researcher and planner, specially focusing on rural and urban planning with community initiatives and evolutionary conservation of cultural landscapes. Advocating the idea "dynamic authenticity" from the activities of international field schools in Borobudur, Indonesia as well as Bali and Jakarta. In Japan, she is engaged in the preservation and design of local entities in Kyoto, Izumisano, Yuasa and the Kii Mountain Range (World Heritage Site).

Megumi Nabata
Representative Director, NPO Partnering to Nurture Community Engawa Design

She was born in Kasugai City, Aichi Prefecture. She graduated from Sugiyama Jogakuen University and completed a master's course at the Graduate School of Design & Art, Aichi Sangyo University. She studied under the late Yasuhiro Endoh. She is involved as a facilitator in community development activities and public projects in various areas, mainly in the Chubu region. She has been involved in activities in the Nishiki 2-chome area of Nagoya City since she was a student. And in March 2018, she launched Nishiki 2 Area Management Co., Ltd. and assumed the position of Representative Director.

Outline of the Projects

Designing the future of unofficial urban villages in mega cities of Asia: Sharing the experience of Xizhou Tribe at the Kampung Aquarium reconstruction（FY2018）

Inhabitants of Kampung Aquarium, a high-density settlement including informal settlements, located on the inner coast of a bay in North Jakarta, were forcibly evicted in 2016 to make way for a provincial tourist attraction. About 700 inhabitants were evicted and the area was cleared, but the new governor who took office in 2017 allowed them to return, and the settlement was rebuilt. To achieve a community-led reconstruction plan here, we collaborated with local urban planners who are working on urban planning and reconstruction design with the participation of inhabitants. We connected the experience of the self-reliant and participatory settlement design in the Xizhou Tribe of Taiwan, which was supported by the Toyota Foundation from 2009 to 2011, with the experience of reconstruction activities nearing completion. The goal of this project was to contribute to the process of recognition of unrecognized urban settlements throughout Asia through the evaluation of the culture of self-reliance and coexistence through exchanges between Indonesia, Taiwan, and Japan.

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Engagement with the local community is essential for projects with collaboration at their core.

Each participant is a both researcher and a practitioner. They spoke about the importance of watching and creating change with a long-term perspective and determination, going back and forth between micro and macro.

What is borne from the interaction between "home" and "how to live"

Jay

This project addresses on urban challenges related to social inequality and aims to overcome them through the concept of inclusive cities.

It focuses on so-called 'socially disadvantaged areas', which are spaces frequently depended upon socially vulnerable classes, such as the homeless and immigrants. At the surface, they appear to be full of disadvantages. However, when we enter and get familiar with these areas, we find that they possess critical know-how in tackling extreme forms of inequality, and thus we prefer to frame them as service hubs instead of merely socially disadvantaged areas.

Our task is then to bring together service hubs of East Asian city-regions and to create a platform for NGOs, researchers, and government agencies to facilitate the exchange of progressive practices and ideas.

Kanki

It was based on the Toyota Foundation's support of our efforts to sustain the housing of the Xizhou Tribe in the periphery of the metropolitan area of Taipei, Taiwan, 10 years ago. After that, when there was a discussion about how to revive a settlement (kampung) near the sea in Jakarta, Indonesia, which had its inhabitants forcibly evicted, I thought that we should think about this together with Taiwan, so we started this project.

Nabata

At the time, the Xizhou Tribe was not officially recognized, and they were being evicted, but they started a movement to send out the message that society should learn from their way of life and enriching lives.

I get the impression that the driving force behind the project is the dynamism that emerges from the tension among the government, which is the first sector, NPOs, which are the third sector, and the inhabitants. I think both projects have in common the innovation that comes from the interaction between the hardware of the "home" and the software of the "way of living".

Kida

Connecting communities and research by doing

Kanki

I think that in urban planning, the objective tends to be to go with some standard, or when it comes to land use, the main objective is to increase its market value.

However, if you think that this is historically important or that the power of the residents is important, you can think that urban planning can take more actions such as "Let's officially approve it as is!" rather than applying a framework.

In other words, we should stop using the terms formal and informal and make it official.
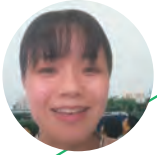
Nabata

I believe that even if you come from outside, you are still a member of the community. The first thing I think is that the common welfare is to aim for each person to live in a good mood every day, regardless of whether they are inside or outside of the community, so I try to speak of them as seniors and juniors in the community these days.

Yano

Through the project, I realized the advanced and interesting nature of community development in socially disadvantaged areas, and I thought that I could convey the positive aspects and abundant support practices in the form of research, so I am now enrolled in a doctoral course at a graduate school.

A mix of individuals with a sense of the front lines, changing reality

Kanki

For cities, the question of whether or not they can fight gentrification is very troubling, and I think it is one of the biggest challenges for the future. I am now sending out a strong message about kampungs, that they are not slums if there is an organized environment and that is why they are there.

I think there are many people in the world who think that urban planning should be based on protecting the livelihoods of many people, but we need to discuss with people in other fields a kind of value shift in what the goal of urban planning is.

Jay

After all, there are various individuals and different stances.

For example, there are various stances on the rights of the homeless to reside in public space and different framings of public space in general. So, there were some diverging opinions at first, but eventually we share the same mission (of tackling inequality). I think our platform network has become very useful in terms of promoting inclusive initiatives.

Kida

Rather than applying urban planning, I thought it was necessary to reverse the process and create plans from each small thing that exists, such as places and people.

In the future, when we make policies and move things forward, it will be difficult to find the value of a place or thing unless each of us has a good sense of what is happening at the front lines.

I felt that researcher and whatever were just a title, and that it was going to be a mishmash, just as the inside and outside of the community were going to be mixed as we moved forward.

Pham Kieu Oanh Founder and CEO, Centre for Social Initiatives Promotion (CSIP)

Oanh is a pioneer in the field of social enterprise development, child protection and women's rights in Vietnam. Since 2008, she built CSIP as the leading local social entrepreneurship ecosystem builder that incubated over 200 social enterprises and social innovation initiatives, advocated for the development of social enterprise legal framework and being a hub of resource mobilization for social enterprises and impact businesses in Vietnam.

Sunit Shrestha Founder and Managing Director, ChangeFusion

Sunit has over 10 years of experience in social enterprise as well as social investment development. He was part of the setup of various social innovation initiatives. Thai Social Enterprise Promotion Board (Thai government SE support mechanism), B-KIND and Governance Funds, pioneer Thai ESG mutual funds with built-in venture philanthropy structure. Taejai.com, largest Thai crowd giving site, Media for Social Justice Fund and Open Data initiatives such as Corrupt0 and Thai cofacts.

Outline of the Projects

Marking tourism works for local communities:
A mutual learning from Vietnam and Thailand (FY2018)

Located in South East Asia, Vietnam and Thailand inherit beautiful natural resources and rich culture heritage that enable tourism to thrive. Consequently, both countries witnessed the raising of mass tourism, but mass tourism has little contribution to the local economy. In this context, 'sustainable tourism' or responsible tourism is emerging as an alternative approach to tourism. Unfortunately, there are very few projects that are successful from the beginning due to the lack of providers that can offer appropriate services. They are normally micro or small enterprises which have very little knowledge, limited access to the international market and insufficient financial resource to grow their business at a scale. This project, which aims to strengthen CBT practitioners by sharing quality experiences and building a learning platform for skills acquisition and market access, involved Local Alike from Thailand, SapaO'chau from Vietnam, and others. These social enterprises are the ones that have injected vitality into local communities by creating models of community-based tourism (CBT) that take into account environmental, social, and cultural sustainability. The pilot CBT model, using the know-how gained from this learning process, serves as a demonstration site for those practicing CBT in Vietnam and Thailand.

Ken Ito East Asia Director, Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)

Ken Ito has a bachelor degree in economics and MBA in International Management from The American Graduate School of International Management (Thunderbird) in the United States. Ken spent 10 years in the private sector, with his last position at GE Capital. Ken teaches at Graduate School of Media and Governance as Lecturer and conducts research programs as Project Assistant Professor from April 2016. He is the Founder and Executive Director of Social Value Japan, a Japanese affiliate of Social Value International since 2012.

Patsian Low Chief of Staff, Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN)

Patsian Low is Head of Platforms, working closely with the Chair and CEO to ensure effective planning and execution of strategic priorities. She serves as the head of AVPN's action platforms for social investors across Asia to build stronger and more collaborative efforts towards impact in critical thematic areas like Gender Equality and Climate Action, among others. Previously, Patsian also served as Policy Advisor to AVPN's action platform for policymakers across Asia to build stronger and more collaborative social impact funding ecosystems.

Outline of the Projects

Accelerating Cross-Border and Cross-Sector Collaboration Through Social Investment（FY2020）

Achieving the SDGs by 2030 will require an additional investment of $2.1 trillion in funds. Although public and private organizations have participated in efforts to resolve the issues, the results have been far from satisfactory. In response to this situation, it is hoped to create impact and scale for projects that contribute to solving social issues by mobilizing and appropriately allocating human, financial, and intellectual capital through collaboration across sectors and borders.

The AVPN Leadership Lab, which is a pillar of this project, is a public-private partnership program that aims to 1) strengthen capacity and create opportunities for different sectors to collaborate across borders to realize social investment, and 2) build partnerships to implement sustainable social investment. Over a period of 18 months, this project will provide eight policy makers and leaders of public-private partnership projects selected from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand with opportunities for consultation by AVPN and AVPN members, outreach to AVPN members for collaboration, and presentations at international conferences organized by AVPN.

Session 4: How to develop the capability to manage collaboration

Date: Oct. 25, 2021

full version
（90min.）

▶ YouTube

digest version
（10min.）

In the fourth and final session, we welcomed speakers from two projects and four countries to talk about creating platforms that nurture social entrepreneurs and encourage connections. It is an initiative to move society by linking activities to market movements, social investment and policy making.

Creating learning that transcends cultural and sectoral differences

Oanh

The theme of our project was "Making tourism works for local communities".
CSIP is a Vietnamese organization whose mission is to support social enterprises in the country. We want to contribute to community-based tourism (CBT), as tourism is an important tool to reduce poverty and connect rural people to the major cities and abroad. This time, we collaborated with Sunit of ChangeFusion, who is working on a similar initiative in Thailand. We share good practices and learn from each other's processes through capacity building, including those involved in the field of tourism, policy makers, and other companies with deep roots in the community.
As one of the outcomes of this project, we jointly developed CBT guidelines for Thailand and Vietnam and provided training for practitioners.

Sunit

We worked on a cross-country collaboration, and as the project progressed, we learned that there were similarities and differences in many aspects. It was important to recognize situations arising from cultural differences and to make good use of them to move things forward. In collaboration, it is necessary to clarify what you expect from each other and what you are trying to achieve. At the very least, we need to create proper channels of communication to share and utilize various views.

Connecting people while mobilizing resources

Ito

AVPN is an NPO established in Singapore in 2012. It is a platform organization consisting of various stakeholders who support the promotion of social investment and strategic philanthropy in the Asian region. We are creating an ecosystem for social investment, building a community of policy-makers, supporting policy making, and encouraging investments that lead to social impact.

Patsian

We are looking for opportunities to learn from each other across sectors as well as borders. The "Policy Lab" that we are working on in this project is a place where people from various organizations such as private sector investors, government representatives, and institutions involved in policy making can create opportunities for collaboration.
There, we offer a 12-month fellowship program to eight policy makers and influencers selected from three countries: the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand. To support fellows in building relationships

with private sector stakeholders, we provide small group consultations with each fellow to create opportunities for practical knowledge exchange, capacity building, and networking. The consultations will focus on policy themes and initiatives that each fellow would actually like to see developed on a larger scale in his or her country. We hope that they will actively utilize the AVPN network to promote social investment.

There are four goals for the program. First, provide the network that the AVPN has and help fellows expand their potential for activities. Second, build the capacity of the policy and social investment sectors to learn from each other's best practices and insights. Third, to ensure that more resources are devoted to Asia's critical development challenges by increasing the number of supporters of social investment and allocating more financial and non-financial resources to social impact. Finally, we will identify and introduce policy makers and others who are already taking steps to promote collaboration across sectors and borders.

People's responsiveness to support challenge and continuity

How the follow up on the program and its effectiveness be measured when a fellow's duties change due to a transfer?

Sonoda

I think there are two points in terms of sustainability. The first is whether a longer program can be continued in the Policy Lab. If such programs are only for a short period of time, such as three or six months, there is not much development, and it is difficult to determine if they are really successful. Secondly, given that governments can easily change their portfolios, I think it is practical for the Lab to keep track of the fellows and other partners that they are working with. This is because even if the key people are transferred, we can cooperate with those who are connected to them.

Patsian

What efforts are being made to develop community leaders?

Sonoda

The younger generation, for example, intermediate community leaders in their 20s or early 30s, are using various social media such as TikTok to connect their communities with the market. I think that intergenerational communication that shares such successful models is also very beneficial in local communities.

Sunit

In many social enterprises, contradictions will arise between the various conditions, but these contradictions may become the driving force for new challenges.
If you have a really good strategy, maybe nothing unexpected will happen, but in reality, when you try to do something new, many unexpected things will happen. To overcome this, we must not rely on logic and design, but on the human responsiveness. I think the two case studies today clearly illuminated the importance of this talent development.

Sonoda

The Toyota Foundation

The Toyota Foundation is a grant-making foundation established in 1974 by the Toyota Motor Corporation. It views events from a global perspective as it works to support activities that bring broad, long-term benefits to society. The Toyota Foundation identifies issues in a wide range of areas in line with current needs, including human and natural environments, social welfare, and education and culture, and provides grants for research and projects that address these issues.

International Grant Program

The grant program focuses on deepening mutual understanding and knowledge-sharing among people on the ground in East and Southeast Asia who are finding solutions to shared issues. Through promoting direct interaction among key players, the grant program aims to survey and analyze situations in target countries, obtain new perspectives, and expand the potential of future generations. With multinational teams comprised of participants from diverse backgrounds, projects can avoid conventional linear relationships, such as "supporter and supported" or "instructor and trainee," and instead form cooperative and creative alliances that consider, act on, and construct solutions to shared issues. The grant program anticipates that these partnerships, which extend beyond such factors as nationality, age, and organizational affiliation, will produce significant social change through fostering a process of mutual learning.

Therefore, the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020 had a significant impact on the objectives of the international grant program, not to mention ongoing grant projects. Although restrictions on international travel continue, in addition to aiming for new online exchanges and collaboration, we will look once again for opportunities to meet in person to question the significance of sharing of time and places. We are thus implementing a program in which grant recipients can share their current situation and disseminate their efforts widely.

Current and future global challenges are complex and intertwined, and finding clues to solutions will require sustained collaboration and co-creation by a variety of actors, both online and offline. We hope that this grant program will continue to organically bring together leaders from neighboring East and Southeast Asia to achieve its intended goals.

THE TOYOTA FOUNDATION

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Access to the digest movies with English subtitles.

https://www.youtube.com/c/TheToyotaFoundation

トヨタ財団助成プログラム、セミナー等の最新情報は ウェブサイトからご覧ください。

For the latest information on the Toyota Foundation, please visit the website.

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