

2010 JOINT WORLD CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Asset Based Community Development: Way to Sustainable Development**

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**OUTLINE**

- z Concept of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
- z Review application of ABCD in Community Work Projects in Hong Kong
- z Discuss in what ways ABCD can sustain community development and preserve the values and essence of community work of social work intervention

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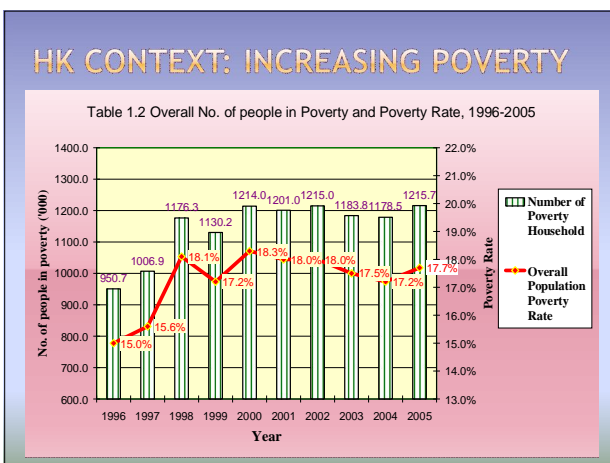
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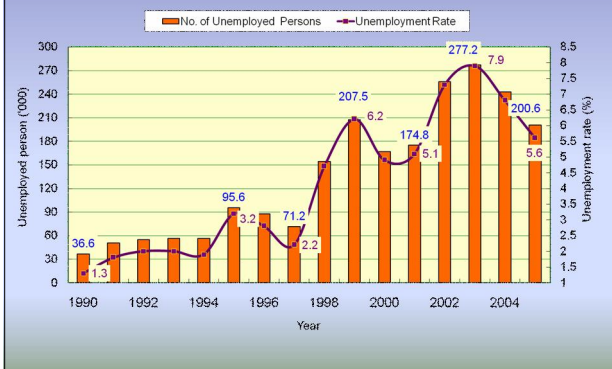
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## HK CONTEXT: RISING UNEMPLOYMENT




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## ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (ABCD) MODEL

- z McKnight & Kretzmann of Northwestern University proposed Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) Model in 1993
- z Building the communities "from inside out"
- z From Need-based to Asset-based
- z To recognize, map, link and mobilize all kind of assets in the community

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## WHAT ARE THE ASSETS INSIDE A COMMUNITY ?

- z Not only the ability and skills of individual members, but also kinship, religious, cultural and social activities—informal network / social capital
- z Asset also includes **formal institutions** e.g. government departments, private enterprises, schools, hospitals and community centres

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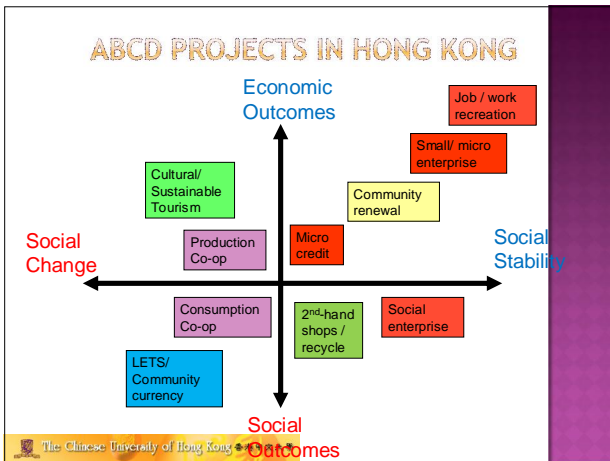
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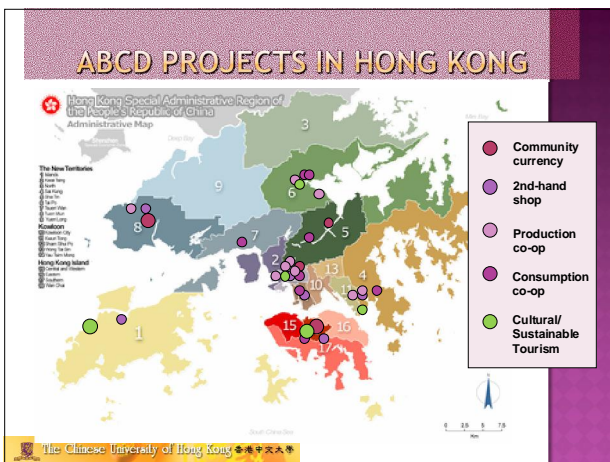
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- ### STRATEGIES OF ABCD
- z Appreciative inquiry
  - z Recognition of social capital
  - z Participatory approach
  - z Community economic development
  - z Strengthening the civil society
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## APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY

### z Cultural Tourism

- | YWCA Tai O Neighbourhood Level Community Development Project (NLCDP)
- | CFSC Lei Yue Mun NLCDP
- | St. James Settlement Wanchai Community Centre



### z Sustainable Tourism

- | HKFWC Tai Wo Women's Centre

### z Community visit and guided tour

- | HKFWC Lai Kok Women's Centre
- | SoCo Shamshuipo Tour



### z Oral History Project

- | SKH Ngau Tau Kok NLCDP



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## OUTCOMES

- z Residents especially the younger generation learn about own community's successful experiences and stories in the past;
- z Outsiders understand and appreciate the cultural heritage, human and natural life of the community
- z Enhance residents' self-image, belongingness and appreciation of his/her own community
- z Most of these appreciative activities involve active and long-term participation of the residents

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## PRESERVE/ REBUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

### z Mutual help - preserve and rebuild bonding Social Capital

- | Mutual help child care centre for women



### z Filling social gaps - building bridging social capital

- | Women and elderly - Accompanying the elderly to clinic cooperative



### z Linkage social capital

- | Poor and middle class - Mentor scheme for poor children



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## OUTCOMES OF BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

- z Residents, social workers and government recognize social capital as an important asset of the community
- z Preserve, rebuild, and reinforce social capital is recognized as an important strategy in alleviating the poverty and unemployment problem
- z ABCD successfully builds up bonding social capital (trust, cooperation, solidarity) and extends 'bridging' social capital between heterogeneous groups to certain degree, but there is still room for improvement for gender and class mix.
- z Only a few projects could improve linkage social capital.

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## PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

- z Focus on ability and resources of every member, allow equal and full opportunity to participate
- z Increase members' commitment to the development of the community
- z Most ABCD projects by NGOs follow this participatory and bottom-up strategy and maintain the tradition and essence of community work of social work intervention

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## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED)

- z Link and mobilize different assets in the community and bring forth collective cooperation to explore and develop different/ alternative economic development models
- z CED Projects in HK
  - ┆ Community Currency
  - ┆ Production/ Consumption Co-ops
  - ┆ Second-hand shops

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## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (CED) PROJECTS IN HK

- z Under the high poverty and high employment context of Hong Kong, CED projects intend to utilize the abilities, skills and experience, which cannot be utilized in the market economy to serve other members in the Community.
- z The main objectives of CED are to improve the quality of living of the participants and to let the participants regain the meaningful life and dignity to alleviate the unemployment and poverty problem.

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## COMMUNITY CURRENCY / LOCAL EXCHANGE & TRADE SYSTEM

- z COME - Time Coupon (Wanchai)
- z Youth - Resident Exchange System (Shatin)
- z IRI- Flower (Shamshuipo)
- z Tuen (Tuen Mun)



社區生活券《花》



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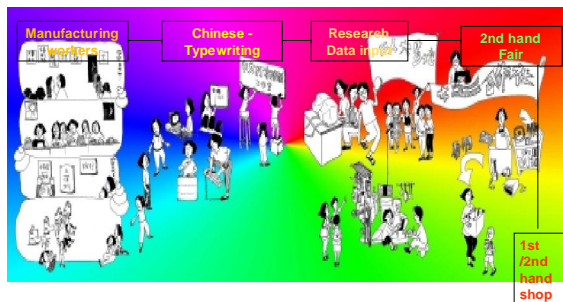
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## PRODUCTION CO-OP



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## PRODUCTION CO-OP

- z Women workers Coops - mainly middle-aged ex-manufacturing workers
- z Tuck-shop, domestic helper, cleaning, carer, printing, vegetable/mushroom farming, community tourism/ guide
- z Men Workers Coop - middle-aged construction workers



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## CONSUMPTION CO-OP

- z Organic farming products: vegetable, tofu
- z Green products: soap, cleaning agent
- z Daily consumable: toilet tissue
- z Product form local small enterprise: peanut oil



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HKWWA – Kwun Tong



Yan On Tong - Tuen Mun

## 2ND-HAND SHOP

社區 **二手店**

**回收**  
家居用品、電器、傢俬擺設、  
正印VCD、CD、書籍、文具、玩具、  
手提錶包、衣服、鞋、傢俬等  
網際網絡對的環保的社區 傢私和電器是低收入家庭最大支出

**他種資源可再用**  
**讓頭分類好管理**  
絕大部份屬於耐用、配件充足或維修件有現貨的用品。文字物品請帶去圖書館及學校。  
請將以下物品分類處理：(1) 衣服 (2) 易碎物品 (3) 膠樽 (4) 雜件或雜項物品 (5) 電器

Poster of 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand shop – IRI (Shamshuipo)

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## OUTCOMES OF CED

- z Reuse the abandoned assets (people, place, relation) in the community
- z Empower the residents to use their own skills and ability in improving their living
- z Participants regain dignity and self-esteem and have self control and autonomy over his/her life chance
- z Improve quality of life of poor families but cannot eliminate poverty completely
- z Not only focus on economic issues, participants also are concerned about wider political issues and the development of civil society

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## STRENGTHENING THE CIVIL SOCIETY

- z Participation in town planning, transport planning and urban redevelopment project
  - ┆ Wanchai residents: Wedding-Card Street, Wanchai Open Market
  - ┆ CED projects: Political Fun Fair at the Anti-Express Rail Campaign
- z Concern with sustainable development
  - ┆ reflection on consumption style
  - ┆ relationship with nature and other spaces
- z Support local small businesses and anti-monopoly



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## OUTCOMES

- z Many projects focus on the citizenship and rights of the community members, which is different from 'client identity'
- z Participants can have synergy with professionals, academics in concerning with wider policy and political issues and not just focus on their own "bread and butter" issue
- z Understanding, cooperation and trust between groups and communities are enhanced, more coordinated efforts and campaigns are witnessed

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## DISCUSSION

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## FROM RECOGNITION TO MOBILIZATION OF ASSET

- z Not only to recognize and map their assets--the individuals, local associations and institutions but to mobilize them for development purposes
- z Rebuild strength, explore new opportunities, new production and income source
- z Multiple dimensions of Asset: Financial, Space, Material, Social, Cultural and Spiritual

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## FROM "ASSET" TO "CAPITAL"

- z Asset is just potential resource for development
- z Many assets like labour skills of unemployed workers, empty shops in poor communities are considered by the mainstream society as "useless", "out-dated" and not "utilized" by the market economy
- z To certain extent, ABCD is to revitalize the asset in the community to become capital for development purpose

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## DIVERGENCE

- z 'Small is beautiful' vs 'Economy of Scale'
- z 'Alternative Living' vs 'Poverty Alleviation'
- z 'Cooperative' vs 'Critical' towards mainstream business and government
- z Priority on Social objectives vs. Economic objectives

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## CHALLENGES & FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- z How can ABCD projects be sustainable?
  - i Time-limited funding sources have great impacts on stability of organizers
- z Connection and Solidarity among projects
- z Linkage with policy advocacy e.g. town planning, economic development planning

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Once my daughter was doing her homework, she asked me, "What is sustainable energy?". I thought for a long time, finally I told her, "People, only people are sustainable energy. With people, everything is possible."

Amy, Single Parent in welfare joining CED project

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THANK YOU!



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