Roundtable on "Reimagining the Social Service Sector"

Monday, 28 November 2016
Seminar Room 2-1, Level 2, Manasseh Meyer

SESSION 3
Evaluating Impact across the Social Service Sector

PRESENTATION BY

Dr Justin Lee

Research Fellow
Institute of Policy Studies

Purpose

1. **Assets**: What are the different types of groups or community assets relevant to the social service sector?

2. **Focus**: What social causes, whose issues and what types of needs are considered relevant and how should they be prioritised?

3. **Approach**: How should social needs be addressed and with what relative emphasis? (service provision, community development, policy advocacy)

4. **Relations**: What is the relationship between the state and voluntary organisations in the social service sector? What are potentially useful ways of collaboration and how can we facilitate productive interactions between diverse community assets?

Background

"People whose networks span structural holes have early access to diverse, often contradictory, information and interpretations which gives them a good competitive advantage in delivering good ideas. **People connected to groups beyond their own can expect to find themselves delivering valuable ideas, seeming to be gifted with creativity.** This is not creativity born of deep intellectual ability. It is creativity as an import-export business. **An idea mundane in one group can be a valuable insight in another**." (Ronald Burt, *The Social Origins of Good Ideas*)

Background

- Diverse community assets have different strengths

- "Its not how many people you know, its how many kinds" (Ronald Burt)

- Inclusion or exclusion criteria defined by policymakers, apex organisations and large funders matter because they facilitate or stifle the growth of certain organisations and causes

1. ASSETS

The Usual Suspects

- VWOs (NCSS)
- NGOs, QUANGOs, Civil Society
- Grassroots organisations (PA)
- Social Enterprises (raiSE)
- CSRs (Global Compact)
- Philanthropists, Foundations (NVPC/AVPN)

Under the Radar Groups

Lesser Known Organizations and Societies

- Cooperatives

- Mutual Benefit Organisations

- Faith-Based Organisations and their community service activities

- Community Service Offices in IHLs and schools

- Social Innovation Labs:

- Social Cause Consultancies: Conjunct, Empact, JustCause Asia

- Hillview Civilian Sports Club

Under the Radar Groups

Professional Groups (Besides social workers, psychologists, therapists)

- Socially Engaged Artists / Community Arts
- Designers, Social Architects
- Engineering Good
- DataKind, SAS User Group
- Game Designers

BRACK

WOK COLLABORATIVE

engineering GOOD

designsingapore

serious games asia
bridging communities : harnessing technology : enriching lives
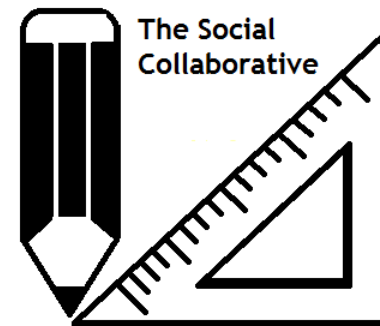
DataKind

Under the Radar Groups

Informal Groups and Networks

- Kopitiam Lengkok Bahru

- Social Collaborative

Potential of these Under the Radar Groups

Why other professional skills are useful

- Contrast Social Work and Community Arts approach to End of Life

- Professional Blind Spots

2. FOCUS

How Social Needs Are Classified in Singapore

Provision of the '*basic*' needs of the *vulnerable* or *disadvantaged* segments of these groups:

- Elderly (eg socially isolated, frail)
- People with Disabilities & Mental Health Issues
- Children & Youth (eg abused, at risk)
- Families (eg low-income, alt family types)

Landscape of Social Services

- See Annex A for a typology

- Voluntary vs Statutory welfare services and where they are

- Welfare philosophy and investment strategy: focus on the most severe needs as basic support, or more upstream on prevention? Is 'optimal functioning' still 'welfare'?

What Causes and Whose Needs?

What's not included, or not a priority

- Migrant workers (foreigners)
- LGBT (too controversial)
- Animal welfare (AVA not NCSS)
- Disaster relief (eg Red Cross in Singapore vs Red Cross elsewhere)

3. APPROACH

Approaches to Addressing Social Needs

- Direct Social Service Provision
- Policy Advocacy
- Community Development

Does our sector mainly emphasise service provision?

4. RELATIONS

New Ways of Organizing & Collaboration

1. Technology enabled groupings without need for formal management

e.g. Open collaboration to understand social needs

See **http://wiki.socialcollab.sg/**

2. Collective effort to address 'wicked problems'

e.g. 'Collective Impact' projects, 'Giving Circles'

Summary

1. New groups are now possible

Technology has made it easier fro groups to self-assemble and for individuals to contribute to group effort without requiring formal management (and its attendant overhead). These tools have radically altered the old limits on the size, sophistication and scope of unsupervised effort…We hadn't had all the groups we wanted, we've simply had all the groups we could afford (Clay Shirky)

2. New ways of organizing and governance of these groups are possible

'Experimentalist governance', 'collaborative governance', 'holacracy' are all experiments to re-design how we organize, and distribute authority to innovate beyond the limitations of traditional hierarchical systems

3. Productive ways of collaboration across these groups are possible

Open Collaboration and Collective Impact are examples of ways to coordinate multi-actor collaborations so that all-can-contribute in a way that coherently accumulates their efforts.

DISCUSSION

1. **Assets** – Just VWOs or more than that?

2. **Focus** – Current basket of causes and needs? How should it be decided?

3. **Approach** – Service provision or beyond?

4. **Relations** – New vertical and horizontal relationships?

Based on this discussion, please write down questions worth surveying VWOs about

Thank You

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