Session: Policy Showcase 2, Policy Innovations to Maximize Impact

Session Reporter: Zelig Dhi Lee, Carrie Li, Chloe Lim

Moderator: Patsian Low, Director, Asia Policy Forum, AVPN

Speakers:
- Ken Ito, Regional Head, East Asia, AVPN
- Hideo Tone, Program Officer, Group for International Grants, The Toyota Foundation, Japan
- Ning Yeh, Counsellor, Executive Yuan, Taiwan
- Rohan Sandhu, Associate Director, International Innovation Corps, India
- Sigy Thomas Vaidhyan, Director (HRD), National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), India

Provocateurs:
- Belinda Chng, Director, Policy & Programs, Milken Institute, Singapore
- Wonyoung Kim, Head of Company Building and Accelerating, Crevisse Partners, Korea

Key Takeaways:
- Governments and other stakeholders can play a collective role in aligning expectations and developing an ecosystem conducive for social innovation.
- Governments have the ability to help scale social initiatives piloted or implemented at local levels by other players for the national benefit.
- Transparency and accountability for use of public resources as well as the reporting of outcome indicators are critical to build stakeholder trust and support for social innovation initiatives.
- Stakeholders need to work within the existing bureaucratic mechanisms as a means to strengthen their relationship and cooperation with government agencies.

Welcome and Introduction
- Liza Green, Vice President, Corporate Citizenship APAC, Credit Suisse: Credit Suisse supports the Asia Policy Forum as it believes that it is important to collaborate with governments through applying policy lens in order to make an impactful change. Observed throughout the conference that very few initiatives have been showcased with either a policy angle or government involvement. Encourage all to leverage the conference platform to work with different actors to go a long way, even if one has a very small amount to give away.
- Jonathan Yip, UNESCAP: Having worked in the UK government and the private sector previously, I sympathize with government officers as they have to deal with bureaucratic processes. As such, it is important to support policy-makers in their work to drive change. We need to leverage on the policy angle to drive the SDG agenda. I think we have made a very big effort to get policy makers to attend this conference, where the

audience diversity presents a "real appetite" to support policy makers to drive the necessary policy innovations needed. As such, I hope that government officials present today can take the "inspiration" from this conference back to their respective countries and drive the SDG agendas forward.
● Barbara Mueller, BMW Foundation: BMW Foundation (BMWF) focuses on leadership development where they inspire and support leaders to realize their own aspirations for social impact. Pleased to work with AVPN especially this year for the launch of the inaugural AVPN-BMW Policy Leaders Lab, a one-year fellowship programme involving 13 policymakers from eight Asian countries.

Ken Ito / Hideo Tone
● Toyota Foundation is a traditional grant-making foundation in East and Southeast Asia supporting several non-profit activities.
● Collaboration with various stakeholders to map out the work on social impact is critical to avoid duplication of resources, as such, the collaboration between Toyota Foundation and Ken Ito on his research project is critical to help understand the space better.
● Ken Ito's research focuses on how social innovation will affect ecosystems.
● Examples raised:
  ○ Care Center Yawaragi, Japan – First established in 1987 to offer eldercare services which was incorporated into Japan's eldercare insurance policy in 1995. Was replicated subsequently in Taiwan and South Korea, as well as kickstarted the eldercare industry in Japan.
  ○ Baobei Huijia, China – online platform set up by parents with missing children as a support network as well as to find their missing children. Spinoffs included the creation of Iyiyun Map, a Geospatial platform to map information on missing children in 2013 by Iyiyun (a Social Enterprise), and the China Child Safety Emergency Response App / Wechat platform by the Zhongshe Social Work Development Foundation (a GONGO), resulting in increased institutionalization of social innovation. The Ministry of Public Security used the app model to create "Lost Children Information", a similar platform in 2016.
  ○ SI Drive – A research project funded by the European Union (EU) aims at understanding the characteristics and impact of social innovation to formulate of basis for policy development through theoretical analyses and case studies on social innovation. The research includes identifying transferable prototypes which can be transferred to different environments and countries.
  ○ Pilot Program – Employability Development of Handicapped People – working with several foundations in Asian countries, as well as with policymakers / foundations to institutionalize new values / models.

Table Discussion with Presenter
● Role of Government – if you want the government to take initiative in social innovation, you need to demonstrate successful case.

- Q: How active is the Japanese Government in the social innovation space?
  - Ken: The government is very technology-driven. They think they know the most with respect to social systems / innovation and they don't expect cross-sector innovation. They're looking at businesses taking the lead. As such, there is a disconnection between policy research and the actual practice of policy. The Singapore Government might be more nimble.
  - Hideo: It might be better to think in terms of city-based innovation when considering Singapore as it is more like a city-state.
- Q: Do we see practitioners being ahead or more a matter of giving more freedom?
  - Delegate – Government don't necessarily lag behind. Timing may not necessarily fit into the government administration's agenda. They want to prioritise things. Tangible things tend to be easy to access. Governments are risk-averse. When they take the initiative, they've a reporting system, who is going to take responsibility? Government official don't necessarily want to do innovation, so how do we get the government more involved in the social innovation process? It would be easier to make sure that project stays with us if it fails.
  - Delegate – The government has many constraints, where we can use the social sector as the piloting tool. For example, NITI Aayog's model has worked for the last twenty years. The government set up two demo schools where the person who founded the NGO (running these schools) taught everything on his own. After 20 years, the Indian government approached the NGO to teach the teachers.
  - Delegate – We're still struggling with social innovation in Singapore's non-profit space. We are faced with a "developed country paradigm" where there is an expectation of the government to solve problems.
  - Ken – Data and evidence is important to help bring social innovation forward.
  - Delegate – The waiting list in government school shows that Sigy chose Delhi so that key decision makers can see the programme. Now they've school with 400 students and 70 in the waiting list. They recruited teachers from top colleges. In addition, they are currently learning from the Singapore curriculum. New generation of leaders coming forward who are more open to new ideas.
  - Delegate – We need to find something different. For example the Indian Prime Minister declared Rajasthan as open defecation free but we told the government that the matrix used has loopholes. We need to sit down, do a project, adopt a district to solve the root cause. Need to get people to feel accustomed sitting in a 'box', set up a proper water system. If you sewage is full, who will collect it? Lastly, someone needs to finance it in a cost-effective manner and empower companies in the local district. The government should play role of cheer leader.
  - Delegate – Can role of government be about "broadening of funnel". Can we be more upstream rather than making decision on the spot? Goes back to question of trust. From there you can be a partner rather than a decision maker.
  - Delegate – SIB started from a recidivism reduction programme in the UK. The way the SIB model worked for the NPO was that the government was not saying

that its model is the best. SIB facilitates mutual respect between various parties and trust building.

Ning Yeh
- Highlighted the work of Audrey Tang, Digital Minister whose mandate is to foster open government and social innovation.
- Four pillars of Open Government
  - Transparency
  - Accountability
  - Participation
  - Inclusion
- Open government is essential to build trust. For example, all meetings and interviews with Audrey Tang are recorded and published publicly. This is to ensure that no one opinion will be left behind or ignored, as well as to encourage more constructive dialogue as people exercise greater accountability for their comments made during these meetings.
- Private sector and civil society can organize by themselves or via interest groups. The more freedom the society has, the less trust people have in the government. Hence, the Taiwanese government focuses on building democracy and trust by being transparent.
- The Public Digital Innovation Space (PDIS) aims to overcome space restrictions and connect people through digital technology. The initiative aspires to create a culture based on trust where people from different disciplines, backgrounds, spheres etc. can get together to discuss issues and discuss action plans.
- According to a survey, four out of five Taiwanese people agree with the idea of Social Entrepreneurship, however only one out of five can name a social enterprise.
- Social Innovation Lab
  - Launched in Oct 2017
  - Community space where social innovation workshops, as well as Minister meet-up sessions take place
- Taiwan also has a regulatory sandbox platform to encourage social entrepreneurs, investors and other stakeholders to work with the government to innovate new initiatives.

Table Discussion with Presenter
- Radical transparency is very important to rebuild the dialogue between the citizens and the government. By posting video tapes online, the government can also gather data about people's reaction to the tapes so that policy makers can gain a better understanding about the citizens.
- Policy makers represent a community of experts, and a lot of times, they don't see the needs of communicating with the general public. Engaging in this radical transparency does not mean putting the government officials on trial. Furthermore, to think about the jury trial system in the Western society, having a jury does not mean doubting the judgement of the judge, it provides a collective wisdom and also facilitate communication

among the public (represented by the jurors) and the authorities (represented by the judge).

Rohan Sandhu
● Systems Thinking is critical as no one stakeholder can address issues alone. We want to make sure that all interventions are able to be done in a systematic manner in order to address the needs of 250 million students in Rajasthan, India.
● The Rajasthan state government has worked with various stakeholders towards strategic partnerships. Government partnerships often go unnoticed because departments don't always talk to each other. The government's role is to construct the 'highway' so that the 'cars' (or stakeholders) can move forward together.
● India's public education system perceived as 'laggard'. However, there has been increased enrolment in public schools in Rajasthan (from 52% in 2014 to 57% in 2016). In addition, the state has seen improvement in learning outcomes where the state ranks second in India (an improvement from 26th). However, there's a big gap in infrastructure financing, such as overcrowded classrooms and low access to computers.
● The Rajasthan state government created a crowding platform "Gyan Sankalp" to allow donors and philanthropists to provide funding in a variety of ways and contribute to specific schools.
● Gyan Sankalp is more than just a portal, but also provides a means to visualize the infrastructure needs of each of the 53,000 government schools in Rajasthan in real-time, where the districts can follow-up in a timely manner. In addition, donors can link up with District Officers, School Headmasters etc. to identify and address specific needs.
● The government was able to raise more money, where the community becomes an active consumer and investor in education which holds the government accountable for the utilization and management of funds donated.
● There is a thriving Social Enterprise space in India, where data collected can help the government to understand the CSR market due to greater transparency and knowledge sharing mechanisms.
● Lessons learnt:
  ○ Funders need to understand the need to invest in capacity-building of governments, as government has the mandate and ability to reach out to the most amount of people and bring them together.
  ○ Funders also need to understand that they can't expect rapid transformation, where the government theory of change might last decades as opposed to years / months.
  ○ Government must be given the space and time to change, let them be the anchors of change.

Table Discussion with Presenter

- Q: System-strengthening is a slow process and outcomes take long to manifest. How can different sectors work together to develop quick wins into long-term outcomes and systemic change?
- In Indonesia, they are concerned that if the minister changes, the embarked project may lose momentum. It took them 10 years to put in place a simple SME credit proces
- Private and public sectors work very differently, which makes it difficult for them to collaborate. Private sector players will be more or less consistent (in terms of processes, etc.) whereas public sector changes a lot depending on who is in power
- Top-performing bureaucrats in India change departments rather frequency (once every few years).
- Government bureaucrats are like primates, where they will try to change things that were previously in place in order to leave their own legacy, Therefore, it will be hard to make change sustainable. In order to overcome this, technology platforms have been leveraged to engage the local actors.
- Local community actors can also strive to keep the government actors accountable.
- In Singapore, efforts are being put by government in the area of strengthening community stewardship.
- SG Cares help to identify social organisations in the specific residential district. The initiative entails getting the private and social organisations to form a network, communicate as well as coordinate with one another to ensure they can run larger-scaled initiatives on their own without government intervention.
- The Singapore government is currently piloting this initiative in two districts. Despite being more risk averse in the past, the Singapore civil servants are given more room to experiment and fail now.
- Thailand: City development companies to run services that the government cannot afford to, and these social enterprises apply for funding from the government.
- Despite having technology as communication enablers, the government should still invest in having face-to-face interactions with citizens to build trust.

Sigy Thomas Vaidhyan
- NITI Aayog is a policy think tank which advises the Indian Prime Minister on sustainable transformation efforts.
- Despite the Indian government pumping more resources in improving education for children (US$75 in 2010 to US$103 in 2014 per pupil), learning outcomes continue to fall (from 46% in 2010 to 40% in 2014).
- The learning process needs to be iterated many times until it becomes a sustainable system. The complexities increase over time. Stakeholders are not completely plugged in the system, where it is important to engage all players at various stages.
- Interventions (such as visions, scale and plans) have to be very integrated which should consider the following:
    - Co-creation of autodidacts
    - Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation
    - Community Engagement

- - ○ Child Capability Focus
    - ○ Capacity
  - The State budget has its challenges and same approval process which can take years. When you want to innovate / scale, you need to do so beyond the scope of the state budget. Hence, donor funding is very important at base so as to create momentum.
  - NITI Aayog proposes the SATH E-Model as an alternative innovative financing model to the Development Impact Bond (DIB). In the case of the Educate Girls DIB, evaluation costs take up a high proportion of money (around 37.5% of costs). Under the SATH E-Model, the state government is proposed as the service provider (covering 95% of the costs) while NITI Aayog is the evaluator (at no cost) which is a circular model. NITI Aayog argues that if this model can be implemented in three states, we will be able to do policy advocacy at the central government level. We need to work within the existing system framework and exist after achieving what we want.
  - We work with the state government to improve each outcome measurement (learning, access, infrastructure, equity, governance) for the School Education Quality Index (SEQI).

Table Discussion with Presenter
  - Through the trust fund, the government can align service providers came together and put them into the package for teacher training system, classroom intervention etc.
  - We are implementing some new programs on the learning states and teachers' platform in other states. For the World Bank, to multi-donor trust funds, the minimum is USD 2 million, and all stakeholders are welcome to join. One of the World Bank project is the whole systemic reform of data management and collection for policy initiatives.

Provocateurs' Remarks:

- **Kim Wonyoung**
    - ○ In Korea, if a social enterprise comes out with an idea, the government introduces something similar six months later. Asks Ken to consider how he would minimize size effects when government intervenes in the market mechanism, how can the SPO carry on with their business idea?
    - ○ It is crucial for government to adopt and institutionalize social innovations from social entrepreneurs, but when government intervenes in the market, how can the government minimize the side-effects of their intervention and protect the social enterprises' business interests during the process?
    - ○ For Taiwan, asks Ning Yeh to consider to make the radical movement of transparent government sustainable. More measures may be needed to build accountability for government officials beyond posting video clips of meetings.
    - ○ Promoting transparency is indeed an important first step to build trust between the civil society and the government, but what are the next steps for ensuring the strategy is sustainable?

- **Belinda Chng**
  - How do we try to rethink change / process in how we do things?
  - When we think about impact investment, philanthropic funding, we need to bear in mind that an entire array of government responses is required e.g. data collation, analysis, trend monitoring.
  - Government has diverse mandates in impact investing, so it is important for government to leverage on the resources and the expertise from other stakeholders especially the private sector.
  - Need to think about how we can leverage other partners, sectors especially the private sectors. For example – Pingan insurance (China) – an app on 'good doctor' such as tele-medicine, e-consult, e-prescription – a lot of information is there and there are 50 million users. Most companies tend to keep information to themselves for their own customers' use. However, the Pingan licence product for their mobile application services is not at a high price. Instead of government building an entirely new system, they might want to consider buying some of the technology and implement it at the national level. Security issues can be worked out.
  - It might be better for the government to align objectives amongst themselves, where government funding (as taxpayers' money) can be directed towards safer investments. This is because the government has the mandate to protect taxpayers' interests by pursuing low-risk investments, where certain projects need involvement of other stakeholders to bear the risks.
  - As such, innovative funding strategies are necessary where we may want to think about how funding in general can be better financed in different ways.