

# **Individualized and diversified community empowerment**

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## **Abstract**

Since 1960's the community development was the theme policy for the central government in Taiwan. Thousands of neighborhood communities were established. For a very long periods of time community was just a tool for election and governance. Majority of community programs, such as enhance community infrastructure, promote production for better social welfare, and cultivate better resident 's community identity, were implemented in a top-down fashion. Among over 6000 community organizations only about 12% of the community were considered to be well established. Majority of the community were either not been well developed or poorly developed. Seventy percent of the community budgets were sponsored by the local government.

The resources for implement programs were varied among communities. In the past well established community organizations tend to get more chance to be empowered than those were not may account for the gaps. In recent year the community empowered program were sponsored by many local governments. The capacity building for "weak community" was especially appealed by many community experts.

There were many community-based programs sponsored by different section of central or local government. Well established communities are more likely sponsored. On one hand, community can get diversity empowerment from different resources. On the other hand, it also widened the gaps between communities with different level of capacity.

Giving many fail experiences of top-down helping and misunderstanding the meaning of empowerment, in this paper the essence of community empowerment were restated. The benefits and risks of community empowerment were discussed as a reminder to avoid creating “the squeaky wheel get the oil” phenomenon. The individualized empowerment program was suggested by many community experts. The capacity building program can be designed according to the level of community development. At the last the community empowerment programs sponsored by central and local government in recent year were also discussed.

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