

Fostering Collaborative Governance for Rural Revitalization

Abstract

The research on collaborative governance, through its application in rural community revitalization, demonstrates a viable action model to empower actors from across different sectors for sustainability impacts. The action research project on the revitalization of Lai Chi Wo has shown that collaborative governance can help not only re-establish socio-economic vibrancy of rural communities through active engagement and collective actions, but more importantly foster cross-sector partnerships and social resilience. The project has received international accolades in recognition of its novelty and impact, including the prestigious Special Recognition for Sustainable Development in the 2020 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation and the 2021 Asian Townscape Award by the UN Habitat. Building on the Lai Chi Wo experience, the Hong Kong SAR Government adopted the collaborative approach and established the Countryside Conservation Office with a HK\$1 billion budget to engage various stakeholders in revitalizing Hong Kong's rural areas. To further scale up the impact, a regional consortium has been formed for comparative research and promotion of a collaborative approach to sustainability.