

BETHEL BIBLE SEMINARY

PARACHURCH PARTNERSHIPS FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE HONG KONG CHURCH NETWORK FOR THE POOR  
(HKCNP)'S CHILD DEVELOPMENT FUND

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband and best friend William, and my beloved children Darren and Jayme, for their encouragement throughout my study. May the lessons in this dissertation be a part of our spiritual relational journey together wherever we are.

## **You Are Blessed**

When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

3 “You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you, there is more of God and his rule.

4 “You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

5 “You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

6 “You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.

7 “You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.

8 “You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

9 “You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of competing or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

10 “You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.

11-12 “Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort, and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even! For though they don’t like it, I do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.”

— Matthew 5:1-12

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Most importantly, I want to thank God for giving me this opportunity to study at Bethel Bible Seminary and prepare this dissertation, and for what I have learnt in the last ten years. By His grace, I was able to finish this dissertation, and I pray it will be a blessing to others in extending His partnership and transforming our cities. I am looking forward to seeing how God will use me through this experience to further His Kingdom.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AAC	Academic Affairs Committee
BBS	Bethel Bible Seminary
CCF	Community Care Fund
CCPA	Christian Care for the Poor Action
CDF	Child Development Fund
CDMF	Child Development Matching Fund
CDIA	Child Development Initiative Alliance
CICM	Church Intensive Community Mentoring
COP	Commission on Poverty
CPA	Certified Public Accountants
CSSA	Comprehensive Social Security Assistance
DTL	Doctor of Transformational Leadership
ED	Executive Director
ERB	Employees Retraining Board
FA	Food Angel
FBO	Faith-based Organisations
FSS	Financial assistance schemes
HKCNP	Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor
HK	Hong Kong
HKU	The University of Hong Kong
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PDP	Personal Development Plan

PLC	Personal Learning Community
PolyU	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Post-CDF	Post-Child Development Fund
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
RHS	Public Rental Housing Scheme
RNO	Religious Network Organization
QMN	Quality Mentorship Network
SARS	severe acute respiratory syndrome
SAR Government	Special Administrative Region Government
SDUs	Subdivided units
SIA	Subsidy Scheme for Internet Access Charges
STS	Student Travel Subsidy Scheme
TA	Textbook Assistance Scheme
UNDR	United Nation Development Report
YETP	Youth Employment and Training Program
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YUM	Youth Upward Mobility program
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

## ABSTRACT

One in five people in Hong Kong live in poverty, and the widening gap between rich and poor is officially the highest among the developed regions. This inequality affects the overall well-being of society and is one of the potential sources of social tension, political unrest, and heightening fear in the city. The researcher analyzed the historical development and current situation of poverty in Hong Kong in order to address the root causes of the poverty problem.

The purpose of the research is to identify key elements of an effective parachurch partnership for poverty alleviation in Hong Kong, using the Child Development Fund program advocated by the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor as a case study. The researcher aims to utilize the creativity, flexibility, and expertise of different parachurches to address the problem in Hong Kong and identify effective collaborative elements for empowering churches to resolve the problem, bringing God's peace to transform the city.

The researcher adopted a qualitative research approach and conducted in-depth interviews with forty-four people from twenty-two partners who participate in the program. The research identified four key elements, namely, *vision, trusted and committed leadership, relationships, and social capital*, for achieving successful and effective parachurch partnership to address the problem. Vision and trusted and committed leadership nurture the beginning and development of a partnership, while relationships and social capital facilitate the performance and maintenance of the partnership.

The proposed partnership elements not only offer insight into these relationships, but also help empower parachurches to strengthen their partnership with churches further and generate more social capital to address the problem. Such a model is also applicable and beneficial to other ministerial organizations, regardless of whether or not they are in the poverty ministry.

**Keywords:** Poverty Problem, Parachurch Partnership, Poverty Alleviation, Child Development Fund Program, Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, Collaboration, Empowerment, Transformation, Vision, Trusted and Committed Leadership, Relationship, Social Capital

## CHAPTER 1.

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

How can Hong Kong's war on poverty be won? If the alleviation of poverty cannot be achieved by one person, is it possible with the power of Christian community and parachurch partnerships? The wealth gap in Hong Kong, which is dividing our society,<sup>1</sup> is officially the greatest among all developed regions, with the Gini coefficient having reached an alarming level of 0.539 in 2018.<sup>2</sup> According to the Central Intelligence Agency's World Factbook, in 2020, the Gini Coefficient of Hong Kong ranked first of the developed regions and countries of the world.<sup>3</sup> This inequality not only matters to people living in poverty, but also affects the overall well-being of society. Inequality also increases the vulnerability of societies to economic crises and prolongs the time it takes to recover from such crises. These varied impacts can combine to generate potent sources of social tension, fertile ground for political and civil unrest, instability and heightened human insecurity.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Oxfam Hong Kong. "Hong Kong Inequality Report," May 8, 2018, [https://www.oxfam.org.hk/f/news\\_and\\_publication/16372/Oxfam\\_inequality\\_report\\_Eng\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org.hk/f/news_and_publication/16372/Oxfam_inequality_report_Eng_FINAL.pdf). (accessed June 10, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> The Gini coefficient is a statistical measure of distribution used as a gauge of economic inequality, measuring wealth distribution among a population. The coefficient ranges from 0 to 1, with 0 representing perfect equality and 1 representing perfect inequality. Jim Chappelow, "Gini Index Definition," Investopedia (Investopedia, January 29, 2020), <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gini-index.asp>.

<sup>3</sup> Central intelligence Agency, "Country Comparison: Distribution of Family Income, Gini Index," <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2172rank.html> (accessed April 3, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Inequality Matters: Report on the World Social Situation 2013* (New York: United Nations, 2013), 21-22.

The Hong Kong Christian community has a long history of providing charity relief since the eighteenth century, so why is the problem getting worse? According to information from the Hong Kong government in 2017, there are more than 800 Christian (including Catholic) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Hong Kong.<sup>5</sup> What then is the role of a parachurch in poverty alleviation? If our churches have the credibility and resources to revitalize our city, could parachurches collaborate with churches effectively, and play an important role in seeking *shalom* (peace among the rich and poor) in our divided city?

According to Yu Miu Wan, former HKCNP Executive Member and General Secretary of the Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship, a parachurch has three important missions.<sup>6</sup> The first is to respond to the need of the city, transform the gospel into action, and allow people to experience the love of Jesus in their daily struggles. The second is to be a pilot or a subject matter expert in their special calling to partner with churches to reach the community and lead people to Christ. The third is to support churches and empower them to serve the church from inside out.<sup>7</sup> A parachurch should therefore play an important role in connecting churches to the needs of the city.

The key questions or problems are how to utilize the creativity, flexibility, and expertise of different NGOs to better serve the Hong Kong city, especially in the area of

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<sup>5</sup> Research Office, Information Services Division, Legislative Council Secretariat. "Fact Sheet: Religious Facilities in Hong Kong," December 8, 2017, 1-9.

<sup>6</sup> Miu Wan Yu, "Hoeng Gong Fuk Jam Gei Kau Dik Wui Gu 香港福音機構的回顧[Review of Hong Kong Evangelical Institutions]" Hong Kong Association of Christian Organizations, September 13, 2012, <https://hkaco.org.hk/2003/12/31/10-years-articles-03/> (accessed June 10, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

poverty alleviation, and how might parachurches collaborate with churches in an effective manner? Is there any model for that collaboration?

In 2003, a group of Christian leaders gathered together to pray and respond to the unemployment problem caused by the SARS epidemic in Hong Kong. From their collaboration with and support of the local churches, a thousand jobs were created in the church community, and network leaders continued to meet to respond to the ensuing poverty issues. After this success, the network continued to meet and support different poverty initiatives. Their pilot mentoring program was adopted as part of a city-wide official government poverty alleviation program called the Child Development Fund (CDF), involving collaboration between churches and parachurches. Then, in 2008, the leaders of the network decided to form the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor (HKCNP), to facilitate collaboration among Christian communities in serving the poor. The network, chaired by Rev Li Ping Kwong, emphasizes the processes of empowerment, knowledge sharing, community capacity building, and sharing God's love in order to achieve *shalom* in the city. This example demonstrates that parachurches can indeed collaborate with churches in addressing the poverty problem.

When it comes to the problem of structural poverty in Hong Kong, the strategic collaborative power of the Christian community is needed to tackle the problem and multiply resources to make an impact. Tackling the problem of poverty requires collaboration and partnership among and between Christian communities.

In the light of the above, and to address these questions and problems, the researcher seeks to identify the features of an effective partnership among parachurches, identify the challenges and opportunities of partnerships, and develop effective church

collaboration network principles to alleviate poverty in Hong Kong, with reference to the existing practice of the CDF program. It is hoped that the research will empower more Christian leaders to collaborate in poverty alleviation in Hong Kong, and that the elements identified can be applied to other urban environments as well.

### **Statement of Purpose**

To determine the features of a parachurch partnership model that can contribute to poverty alleviation in Hong Kong, using the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor's Child Development Fund Program as a case study.

### **Definitions of Key Words and Terms**

#### *Parachurch:*

The prefix "para" means "alongside," "by," or "near," and the term parachurch thus means "alongside the church." This term is used to designate the relationship and function of organizations whose primary ministry is outside the direct authority of local churches or congregations.<sup>8</sup> Parachurches are an extension of churches in the community and fill the service gaps of the church in reaching the lost in the community.

#### *Partnership:*

Partnership is the unique opportunity of working with the Triune God and the Body of Christ to accomplish mission under the power and direction of the Holy Spirit.<sup>9</sup>

#### *Poverty alleviation:*

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<sup>8</sup> Sunday H. Daleng, "The Partnership between Churches and Para-Church Organizations in Nigeria: Trends, Implications and Prospects" (DMin diss., Asbury Theological Seminary, May 2016), 7. <https://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1840&context=ecommonsatsdissertations> (accessed July 12, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> As defined by Enoch Wan and Kevin P. Penman, "The Why, How and Who of Partnership in Christian Missions," *Global Missiology* 3, no. 7 (2010), <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/view/61/178> (accessed July 17, 2019).

Poverty alleviation is an approach that seeks to bring people to a place of wholeness. The United Nations Development Reports define poverty as the “denial of opportunities and choices most basic to human development to lead a long, healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self-esteem and respect from others.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Audience**

The intended readers will be Christian leaders in parachurches who are interested in building strong partnerships; Christians who have a heart to serve the poor in the city; Christian networkers looking for ways to connect; Christians possessing the understanding that the frontier of mission has shifted to the cities in the twenty-first century; local churches that are willing to take on the challenge to serve the poor in the city as an integral mission; church leaders who have the heart to transform the community; Christians in government; foundations; and people in business who are interested in partnering with the church community to alleviate poverty in Hong Kong.

### **Stakeholders**

The stakeholders will be Christian leaders in parachurches that have a vested interest in collaborating with and transforming communities in Hong Kong. The direct beneficiaries will be HKCNP network partners in the Child Development Fund (CDF), since I am using this program as the case study in this research. The findings from the research will help strengthen these partnerships and expand collaboration in achieving the program objectives. The second group of beneficiaries will be HKCNP partners, who are

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<sup>10</sup> United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5.

in the network, and can learn from this research how to strengthen the partnerships within their communities. The last group will be Christian leaders in parachurches who would like to learn how to expand their partnerships and become more connected with one another in addressing social problems in our society.

### **Scope and Limitations**

This project will not address all poverty alleviation work in Hong Kong. It will only focus on one aspect, *intergenerational* youth poverty alleviation, and one program, the HKCNP CDF mentoring program. This program was selected because of its long history dating back to 2007; its diversified partnership base of more than twenty different entities; its citywide and church impact; and the accessibility of the key leaders in this program. Due to the limited time frame for this research project, the scope of the research will be limited to a focus on the CDF program within the Christian community in the HKCNP network.

### **Integration with Dimensions of Transformational Leadership**

The context of this project relates to the researcher's role as the Executive Director of HKCNP of the last eight years, and in building the network from fifty to currently more than 300 partners. The researcher has been privileged to meet and collaborate with great Christian leaders in Hong Kong churches, NGOs, schools, and professions. The researcher's role in assessing the strength and need for each partnership, building bridges, and facilitating strong collaboration among the network in serving the poor has been very rewarding.

As a CPA, the researcher has enjoyed her corporate executive role in building up the financial bottom line for her clients and sharing their goals and the return of their

investment. After accepting Christ in 2001, the researcher experienced the transformational power of the gospel and the passion of building up His Kingdom on earth through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. By working with the Christian community in serving the poor, the researcher recognizes the power of collaboration in building up social capital for the poor. The researcher has reflected on her walk with God through her experiences and has accepted her calling to build up His “triple bottom line”<sup>11</sup> ministry. The “triple bottom line” in ministry is the researcher’s personal goal, and consists of three main elements: financial sustainability, social impact, and spiritual transformation of the city.

God assured the researcher that He was all she needed for the role with HKCNP, and that she should stay humble as a servant leader, be a peacemaker and bring unity to the community. God gave the researcher three words: unity, servant leaders, and humility. Those words have been guiding principles in following Him ever since, especially during tough times in building His partnership at HKCNP.

The researcher has experienced poverty in her own organization as well, and understands the fears, and thus seeks to empower partners to achieve financial sustainability so that they can focus on their calling. Our Christian partners are serving the poor with the love of Jesus Christ and focusing on the holistic welfare of the community. They are making a huge social impact by actively expressing biblical values to create a ripple effect in reaching the community. This researcher has had the privilege

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<sup>11</sup> The triple bottom line aims to measure the financial, social, and environmental performance of a company over time. Will Kenton, “How There Can Be Three Bottom Lines,” Investopedia (February 5, 2020), <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/triple-bottom-line.asp> (accessed March 19, 2020).

of listening to their stories, and it is important to have an effective network to share those stories and experiences to build one another up. The Gospel has transformational power to liberate the poor from the shackles of poverty.

With so many people suffering in poverty these days, more organizations need to adopt the triple bottom line approach to bringing justice, providing employment, shaping education, protecting the underprivileged, restoring relationships, and truly bringing *shalom* to our city. The researcher prays the elements of a successful parachurch partnership identified in this research will multiply triple bottom line ministries in the Christian community that are aimed at transforming our city.

## CHAPTER 2

### CONTEXT OF MINISTRY

#### Historical Background

In the 1950s, Hong Kong was a city characterized by manufacturing factories with upwardly-mobile job opportunities for low-skilled workers. However, when China encouraged foreign investment in the 1980s, many factories in Hong Kong relocated northward to take advantage of the cheap labor and low operating expenses, resulting in the decline of industrial development in Hong Kong. As the financial services industry started to develop in the 1990s, the market no longer needed low-skilled workers, and the gap between rich and poor widened.<sup>1</sup>

The prolonged economic downturn in Hong Kong from 1998 to 2003 was another factor contributing to the slowdown in employment earnings among low-income workers.<sup>2</sup> Unemployment, underemployment, and pay cuts were more commonly seen in this group than in the higher income group during this period of corporate downsizing and cost-cutting, and led to a widening of the income gap.<sup>3</sup> The Asian Financial Crisis in 1997 and the global financial tsunami in 2008 worsened the bubble economy of Hong Kong, which mainly relied on the financial and real estate sectors. In general, those with properties and funds to invest in Hong Kong became richer, while those who did not grew poorer.

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<sup>1</sup> Siu Fai Yip, 葉兆輝, *Heong Gong Pan Kung Man Tai Zan Seong* 香港貧窮問題真相 [The Truth of Hong Kong's Poverty Problem] (Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company Limited, 2017), 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Yip, 葉兆輝, *Heong Gong Pan Kung Man Tai Zan Seong*, 2-3.

With globalization and rapid technological development, many manual jobs have been replaced by machinery. As a result, low-skilled laborers with limited skills are facing structural unemployment poverty problems. In addition, capitalists monopolize most of the industries in Hong Kong, and small household businesses have little room to survive. With skyrocketing increases in rents, it is impossible to start or maintain a small business, and there seems to be no way out. The ageing population, low birth rate, increasing numbers of new immigrants, and slow social mobility are also factors behind Hong Kong's poverty problem. The extreme dichotomy between the high-skilled and low-skilled labor market intensifies the wealth gap.<sup>4</sup>

### **Poverty Statistics**

Despite being one of the fastest-growing economically developed societies in the world, Hong Kong has many people living below the poverty line. The poverty line in Hong Kong is based on the concept of “relative poverty” and is set at 50 percent of the median monthly household income before policy intervention (i.e., before taxation and social welfare transfer). The poverty line in 2017 is \$4,000 for 1-person households, \$9,800 for 2-person households, 15,000 for 3-person households, \$19,900 for 4-person households, \$20,300 for 5-person households, and \$22,500 for greater than 6-person households.<sup>5</sup> In 2017, before policy intervention, the number of overall poor households, the size of the poor population, and the poverty rate were 594,000 households, 1,376,600

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>5</sup> Census and Statistics Department, Office of the Government Economist Financial Secretary's Office, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017* (Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, November 18, 2019), [https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/pdf/Hong\\_Kong\\_Poverty\\_Situation\\_Report\\_2017\(2018.11.19\).pdf](https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/pdf/Hong_Kong_Poverty_Situation_Report_2017(2018.11.19).pdf). (accessed November 24, 2019).

persons and 20.1 percent, respectively. After policy intervention, the corresponding figures were 419,800 households, 1,008,800 persons and 14.7 percent.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the fact that Hong Kong's gross domestic product has increased by approximately 50 percent from 2001 to 2011, the average income of Hong Kong families only increased by 10 percent during the same period.<sup>7</sup> As per the *Quarterly Report on General Household Survey* (April to Jun 2019),<sup>8</sup> 11.6 percent of employed persons had monthly employment earnings of \$50,000 and over, while the median monthly employment earnings of employed persons was \$18,700, with foreign domestic helpers excluded. At the same time, the cost of living is high in Hong Kong. According to the "Worldwide Cost of Living 2016"<sup>9</sup> from the *Economist's* Intelligence Unit, the cost of living in Hong Kong ranked second in Asia, and has risen seven places since 2015. Hong Kong ranked fourth in 2018.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017* .

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Census and Statistics Department, "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey (Oct – Dec 2018)," <https://www.statistics.gov.hk/pub/B10500012018QQ04B0100.pdf>. (accessed November 24, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> *The Economist*, Intelligence Unit, "Worldwide cost of Living 2016," [http://pages.eiu.com/rs/783-XMC-194/images/EIU\\_WCOL2016\\_FreeReport\\_FINAL\\_NEW.pdf?mkt\\_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRovuK7AZKXonjHpfsX56%2B8vXqW21MI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGkI4Jts thl%2BSLDwEYGJiv6SgFTbjGMbht2bgMUhU%3D](http://pages.eiu.com/rs/783-XMC-194/images/EIU_WCOL2016_FreeReport_FINAL_NEW.pdf?mkt_tok=3RkMMJWWfF9wsRovuK7AZKXonjHpfsX56%2B8vXqW21MI%2F0ER3fOvrPUfGkI4Jts thl%2BSLDwEYGJiv6SgFTbjGMbht2bgMUhU%3D) (accessed November 17, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> *The Economist*, Intelligence Unit, "Worldwide cost of Living 2018," [https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/WCOL\\_2018\\_Free\\_report.pdf?mkt\\_tok=eyJpIjoiWXPVd09UY3I0bVF4T0RabSIsInQiOiJQUkRNe3R0SUFUcGhPNXIMY0J3OUJhZGICZjMxTjNYS3Y5OHMwUWMxcXZacWRaR01Xd0oweGFmd1BOODB0OVNqUIB2bENBUVQxWFc3WEp4QkIwSCsyZmZJNG5SS1NscHhaMG8yZHc5NkNVZ2VGU2Zad0MzNFA1d0xneGN4ZzJTbiJ9](https://pages.eiu.com/rs/753-RIQ-438/images/WCOL_2018_Free_report.pdf?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiWXPVd09UY3I0bVF4T0RabSIsInQiOiJQUkRNe3R0SUFUcGhPNXIMY0J3OUJhZGICZjMxTjNYS3Y5OHMwUWMxcXZacWRaR01Xd0oweGFmd1BOODB0OVNqUIB2bENBUVQxWFc3WEp4QkIwSCsyZmZJNG5SS1NscHhaMG8yZHc5NkNVZ2VGU2Zad0MzNFA1d0xneGN4ZzJTbiJ9) (accessed November 17, 2019).

The gap between the rich and poor is great. The Census and Statistics Department of Hong Kong recorded an increasing trend in Hong Kong's Gini coefficient for the past ten years, from 0.533 in 2006 to 0.539 in 2016.<sup>11</sup>

The impact of poverty on housing is widely recognized. In 2016, 3.3 million people, which is 44.7 percent of Hong Kong's population, were living in public housing.<sup>12</sup> Worldwide, Hong Kong is the most expensive city to live with the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in 2019 being US\$3,685 (around HK\$ 28,700).<sup>13</sup> Many residents who live below the poverty line are therefore forced to live in sub-divided units, which are formed by splitting a unit of quarters into two or more with cramped and unhealthy living conditions. As rents continue to increase, some poor people may even settle in caged homes or become homeless, thus losing their privacy and dignity.

Poverty is a pressing social issue that demands urgent attention, especially in the area of the working poor and youth poverty. A person was considered to be of the working poor if he or she was engaged in paid employment and was living in a household whose income fell below the poverty line.<sup>14</sup> In the past ten years (2007-2017), the wages of low- and medium-skilled jobs have increased by only 10 to 20 percent. The Government has continuously outsourced low-skilled jobs. Low-skilled workers have no

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<sup>11</sup> Commission on Poverty, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2015* (Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 2016). [https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/pdf/poverty\\_report\\_2015\\_e.pdf](https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/pdf/poverty_report_2015_e.pdf). (accessed November 17, 2019).

<sup>12</sup> David Vetter, "How Hong Kong's Public Housing System Works: Costs, Waiting Times and Sales," *South China Morning Post*, January 19, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/society/article/2182106/why-public-housing-shortfall-will-remain-thorn-hong-kongs>. (accessed November 26, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Enoch Yiu, "Singapore, Bangalore beat Hong Kong in Deutsche Bank's Worldwide Quality-of-life Poll. Beijing is in Second-last Position," *South China Morning Post*, May 21, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/business/companies/article/3011011/singapore-bangalore-ahead-hong-kong-deutsche-bank-quality-life>. (accessed November 25, 2019).

bargaining power and are subject to harsh exploitation. They live in poverty, and their offspring face the threat of inter-generational poverty.<sup>15</sup> In 2017, the poverty rate of working persons after recurrent cash intervention was 4.9 percent. The poor population of working groups after recurrent cash intervention was 480,800.<sup>16</sup>

Regarding youth poverty (youth here defined as those aged between eighteen and twenty-nine),<sup>17</sup> since 1996, increasing numbers of young people's incomes have been lower than the corresponding annual poverty line because of the huge self-financing post-secondary course loans they bear from attending sub-degree courses, such as higher diploma and associate degree programs.<sup>18</sup> Those programs provide students with an alternative route to university education by equipping them with the credentials needed for the job market. However, this alternative pathway is far from that of the university program in helping students build their career paths. Those courses do not help them to raise their income or improve their skills and thus find career advancement greater than that of a high school student. Post-secondary educational attainment by the working poor amounted to 27,000 persons, accounting for about 3 percent of the overall poor population. Among them, nearly two-thirds (64.2 percent or 18,000 persons) had a degree or higher academic qualification.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017*.

<sup>15</sup> Yip, 葉兆輝, *Heong Gong Pan Kung Man Tai Zan Seon*, 20.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-24.

<sup>17</sup> Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017*, 101.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

Between 1981 and 2011, the child poverty rate in Hong Kong rose from 17.3 percent to 26.4 percent. In 2017, the population of poor children aged below eighteen was 0.177 million persons, with a poverty rate of 17.5 percent.<sup>20</sup> Poor children face inequality because they are limited in their access to opportunities available to their wealthier counterparts, which they are entitled to and need for healthy development.<sup>21</sup> Children from grassroots families therefore benefit greatly from the CDF program as it aims at helping those aged between ten and sixteen, whose families are either earning a household income less than 75 percent of the median monthly domestic household income, or receiving financial assistance, including the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance; the Working Family Allowance, or full grants from student finance schemes administered by the Student Finance Office.<sup>22</sup>

### **Relevant Congregational and Community Issues**

Hong Kong has a long history of Christian involvement in social services. Since the eighteenth century, western missionaries who failed to enter China for direct evangelism mostly came to Hong Kong to start churches and to spread the gospel, especially after Britain officially colonized Hong Kong island in 1842. After the British colonization, a huge group of refugees rushed into Hong Kong from mainland China. The population of Hong Kong increased drastically from 20,000 in 1844 to approximately

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<sup>20</sup> Census and Statistics Department, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017*, 27.

<sup>21</sup> Vera Tang, "Is Social Capital as Important as Human Capital in Child Poverty Alleviation?" *Poverty in a Rich Society* (2017): 145-178, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2n7q0f.14>.

<sup>22</sup> Child Development Fund (July 15, 2019), <https://www.cdf.gov.hk/en/index.html>. (accessed January 17, 2020).

120,000 in 1866.<sup>23</sup> From 1842 to 1866, mission organizations took up the responsibility for education in Hong Kong. The Government supported mission organizations in building schools to nurture translation talent for use by the Government. The missionaries were also involved in medical missions. For example, the Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, which was established by the London Mission Society in 1887, was the first hospital in Hong Kong to provide western medical treatment to the Chinese poor.<sup>24</sup>

With the ongoing wars between warlords in China in the 1910s to 1920s, many Chinese fled to Hong Kong. The missionaries and mission organizations saw the needs of Chinese refugees and decided to develop a related ministry to continue their mission in China.<sup>25</sup> The missionaries took up the role that originally belonged to the Government and developed disaster-relief services providing food, clothing, necessities, and shelter for the Chinese refugees.<sup>26</sup> For example, The Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches' Union was established in 1915, with the aim, not only of liaising with churches from all denominations, but also of providing relief services and shelter for refugees and the poor. The establishment of the YMCA (1901), the YWCA (1920), and the Salvation Army

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<sup>23</sup> "Table of Shipping, Migration and Population, 1841-1930," in *An Eastern Entrepot: A Collection of Documents Illustrating the History of Hong Kong*, ed. B. Endacott (London: H.M.S.O, 1964), 132-133.

<sup>24</sup> Hospital Authority: Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, [https://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha\\_visitor\\_index.asp?Content\\_ID=100171](https://www.ha.org.hk/visitor/ha_visitor_index.asp?Content_ID=100171) (accessed March 19, 2020).

<sup>25</sup> Fuk Zang Jing, 刑福增 "Jan Leon: Bin Guk Haa Dik Heong Gong Gaau Wui 引論：變局下的香港教會" [Introduction: The Churches in Hong Kong Under Changing Situations]; *Bin Guk Dik Pui Wui Haa : Cung Zin Hau Dou Hau Gau Cat Heong Gong Gaau Wui Se Gwaan Si Leon 變局的徘徊下：從戰後到後九七香港教會社關史論* [Wandering Under the Changing Situation: On the History of the Churches' Social Caring in Hong Kong from Post-War to Post-97], (Hong Kong: Inpress, 2018), 20.

<sup>26</sup> Yip, 葉兆輝, *Heong Gong Pan Kung Man Tai Zan Seong*, 86.

(1930), to name but a few, has also provided diversified social services and made an outstanding contribution.<sup>27</sup>

During the Second World War, many refugees poured into Hong Kong from China. The population of Hong Kong increased from about one million in 1936 to 1.6 million in 1941.<sup>28</sup> Christians and Christian organizations provided housing in this critical time. For example, the Methodist Church built the first Christian village for refugees, the Wesley Village. In 1955, the village had eighty units that could accommodate 500 people. Apart from residential areas, there were schools, clinics, family-run factories, a community center, and churches.<sup>29</sup>

Until the middle of the twentieth century, Christianity gradually developed in Hong Kong under the influence of colonialism and imperialism. Christian communities developed close “partnership” relations with the colonial ruler, enabling them to become involved in social services more easily. The Cultural Revolution spilled over from China from May 1966 to October 1976. Hence a large number of refugees rushed to Hong Kong. The baby boom and the influx of refugees caused the population to rise from 2.2 million in 1950 to 5.1 million in 1980. Charitable Protestant and Catholic organizations took up many social responsibilities. The Government willingly supported and helped out with policies. For instance, a fire broke out in 1953, leaving 50,000 people homeless, and

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<sup>27</sup> Miu Wan Yu, “Hoeng Gong Fuk Jam Gei Kau Dik Wui Gu 香港福音機構的回顧 [Review of Hong Kong Evangelical Institutions],” Hong Kong Association of Christian Organizations, September 13, 2012, <https://hkaco.org.hk/2003/12/31/10-years-articles-03/> (accessed June 10, 2019).

<sup>28</sup> Caroline Courtauld, May Holdsworth, and Simon Vickers, *The Hong Kong Story* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1997), 58.

<sup>29</sup> Gwong Git Kwong 鄭廣傑, “Gei Duk San Gaau Zoi Heong Gong 基督新教在香港 [Protestantism in Hong Kong],” *Zyun Tai Jin Tou: Gei Duk Zung Gaau Zoi Heong Gong* 專題研討：基督宗教在香港 [Symposium: Christianity in Hong Kong] (December 5, 2006), 5.

the Bishop of the Anglican Church, Ronald Owen Hall, persuaded the government to build resettlement areas to accommodate the victims, using his special status in Hong Kong government circles.<sup>30</sup>

In the 1970s, the Hong Kong Christian Council organized a consultation meeting on mission.<sup>31</sup> It expressed concerns about social needs and the wealth gap and reiterated the church's responsibility in society. Afterwards, more parachurch organizations were formed to provide charitable social services that emphasize evangelism, building up the Christian community, and empowerment. Forty percent of all the schools in Hong Kong were opened by Protestant and Catholic organizations, while 44 percent of all students attended schools with a Christian background.<sup>32</sup>

In 2000, the number of Hong Kong people living below the poverty line (with less than \$2550 monthly income) was 1.25 million.<sup>33</sup> Seven parachurch organizations (the Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement, Cedar Fund, Mission to New Arrivals, Jubilee Mission, Urban Peacemaker Evangelistic Fellowship, the Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship and the Society for Truth and Light) cooperated to establish the “Christian Care for the Poor Action (基督徒關懷貧窮行動)” (CCPA). They expressed discontent

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<sup>30</sup> Jing, 刑福增 “Jan Leon: Bin Guk Haa Dik Heong Gong Gaau Wui,” 22.

<sup>31</sup> The Hong Kong Christian Council, *Cat Sap Nin Doi Heong Gong Gaau Wui Dik Si Ming--Lou Heong Jyu Gai Waak Zi Naam* 七十年代香港教會的使命——「路向與計劃」指南 [The Mission of the Church in Hong Kong in the 1970s: A Guide to “Directions and Plans”], (Hong Kong: The Christian Council, 1971).

<sup>32</sup> Kwong, “Gei Duk San Gaau Zoi Heong Gong 基督新教在香港 [Protestantism in Hong Kong],” 5.

<sup>33</sup> LegCo Panel on Welfare Services, “Characteristics of Poor Households and the Poor in Hong Kong And Poverty Alleviation Policy Recommendations,” Submission from the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, Paper No. CB (2) 317/01-02 (09), November 12, 2001. <https://www.legco.gov.hk/yr01-02/chinese/panels/ws/papers/ws1112cb2-317-9c.pdf>. (accessed February 12, 2020).

with the lack of concrete action by the Government in fighting poverty.<sup>34</sup> Once again, the Christian parachurches responded to social needs.

In 2002, twenty-nine senior pastors responded to God's call to serve the poor in Hong Kong and continued to meet to pray for God's direction in establishing a poverty alleviation movement in Hong Kong.<sup>35</sup> Due to severe unemployment problems in Hong Kong following the SARS outbreak, the group solicited job openings from the church community, opened an employment hotline, and helped more than a thousand people find jobs.

In 2005, the Government formed the Commission on Poverty (COP)<sup>36</sup> to tackle Hong Kong's severe poverty problem, the challenges of rising income disparity, unemployment of low-skilled workers, intergenerational poverty, and the elderly in poverty. The major focus of the Commission's work includes increasing understanding of poverty, making immediate improvements, and identifying a direction for future work. The Commission believes that poverty issues are becoming increasingly complicated and

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<sup>34</sup> Zi Wai Wu, 胡志偉 “Saa Si Si Jeok Jyu Gaau Wui Wui Jing 沙士肆虐與教會回應[SARS Rages and Church Response],” *Christian Times*, April 27, 2003. [https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=18627&Pid=6&Version=0&Cid=275&Charset=big5\\_hkscs](https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=18627&Pid=6&Version=0&Cid=275&Charset=big5_hkscs) (accessed February 12, 2020).

<sup>35</sup> After 2002, the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor (HKCNP) became concerned about the unemployment situation during the economic downhill. Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, *Annual Report 2013*, 6. [http://www.hkcnp.org.hk/fileadmin/user\\_upload/New\\_Web\\_File/Annual\\_Report/Download/HKCNP\\_annual\\_report-2013.pdf](http://www.hkcnp.org.hk/fileadmin/user_upload/New_Web_File/Annual_Report/Download/HKCNP_annual_report-2013.pdf). (accessed August 25, 2019).

<sup>36</sup> “The Commission of Poverty has established various initiatives from setting the official poverty line, formulating and launching the Low-income Working Family Allowance (LIFA), mounting the territory-wide retirement protection consultation exercise to strengthening support for disadvantaged groups, enhancing the upward mobility of young people with grassroots background and furthering the work of the Community Care Fund (CCF) and social innovations.” Retrieved from Information Services Department, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government of the People's Republic of China, “Welcome Message,” Commission on Poverty, March 21, 2019, <https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/welcome.html>, (accessed February 2, 2020).

can no longer be satisfactorily resolved by the efforts of any one sector alone, and that joint efforts from the community are needed.

### **History of HKCNP and CDF**

In 2006, the above group of senior pastors and parachurch leaders saw the opportunity to build a network to mobilize 1500 churches, 850 Christian NGOs, and 500,000 Christians in Hong Kong to serve the poor in Hong Kong under initiatives from the COP.<sup>37</sup> The Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor was formed to create a unified platform to respond to God's calling to serve the poor in Hong Kong. While different groups of people in the community, including the underprivileged, have benefited from poverty relief support and from attending church services offered by their local churches, there is potential to maximize the impact to reap further benefits for the larger community through enhanced collaboration and partnership with Christian organizations.

To tackle the intergenerational poverty problem, Dr. Philemon Choi (vice-chairman of HKCNP) advocated a mentorship program with Dr. Charles Chan (the deceased director of HKCNP), who had spent ten years studying mentorship programs in seven countries. In 2007, HKCNP first launched the "Church Intensive Community Mentoring Pilot Program" with more than twenty-one participating churches serving youths in low-income families.<sup>38</sup> The program made use of the "one to one, mentoring with companion" model to support the overall development of the youth, as a solution to the problem of intergenerational poverty. The Government later adopted the model and allocated \$300 million to establish and implement the "Child Development Fund" (CDF),

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<sup>37</sup> Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, *Annual Report 2013*, 6.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

as a long-term policy aimed at helping the next generation.<sup>39</sup> In 2007, HKCNP switched from a pilot model-building role to a facilitator role in encouraging Christian partners to join the program to inject Christian values.

Through the partnership and collaboration between churches, NGOs, schools, businesses, and government sectors, the CDF served to mobilize and empower participating youth to work out their development plans. This resulted in promotion of a mentoring culture, the building of social assets, narrowing the gap between rich and poor, and eliminating intergenerational poverty. The HKCNP assisted with recruiting and training mentors, sponsoring matching funds, organizing joint activities, conducting empirical studies, and sharing knowledge to support and empower Christian partners to join the CDF Program.

Since 2008, HKCNP has sponsored over twenty partners in more than sixty projects (seven batches of district-based and five batches of school-based projects). While the total number of mentees that have joined the CDF program is around 14,000, HKCNP has sponsored more than 7,000 mentees, with over six million in matching funds. The HKCNP strategically worked with the business sector to leverage resources and social capital to alleviate the city-wide poverty problem. For instance, partnering with the Quality Mentorship Network, Child Development Fund, and Child Development Initiative Alliance, the HKCNP actively recruited business leaders from a wide range of industries, such as Mr. Chan Yim Kwong (insurance), Mr. James Chen (education), Mr. Henry Cheung (finance), Mr. Jason Chiu (IT), Ms. Helen Fong (philanthropy), Mr. Carl Gouw (hospitality), Mr. Allen Ha (event management), Mr. William Lo (aviation), Dr.

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<sup>39</sup> Child Development Fund, July 15, 2019, <https://www.cdf.gov.hk/en/index.html> (accessed January 17, 2020).

George So (SME), and Dr. Ricky Szeto (retail) into their advisory committee to build up social capital within the partnership.<sup>40</sup> As these are devoted Christians as well as key business decision-makers with great influence in both their industry and personal professional networks, the HKCNP is able to connect with people of widely varying social status.

The HKCNP participates actively in assisting mentor recruitment, sponsoring matching funds, and coordinating joint functions, to name but a few. In the seven batches of district-based programs and the four batches of school-based programs, the HKCNP has sponsored twenty-nine partners to take part in seventy projects. In March 2019, HKCNP was awarded “The Supporting Organization Award” and “Long Service Award – Supporting Organization” by the Hong Kong Government’s Labour and Welfare Bureau, acknowledging the continuous effort of supporting the CDF Program since its pilot stage. This was a major confirmation of a successful partnership.

### **Current Situation**

The huge disparity between rich and poor is a critical issue in Hong Kong. Inequality is one of the factors that breeds poverty. On the one hand, Hong Kong is a rich city. In June 2019, Hong Kong was ranked the most expensive city in the world to live in

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<sup>40</sup> Mr. Chan Yim Kwong (Former Regional Director of Agency of AXA China Region Insurance Company Limited), Mr. James Chen (School Supervisor of ECF Saint Too Canaan College), Mr. Henry Cheung (Senior Consultant of Xinhua Finance Agency), Mr. Jason Chiu (Chief Executive Officer of Cherrypicks), Ms. Helen Fong (Chairperson of Hong Kong China Foundation), Mr. Carl Gouw (Principal and Chief Executive Officer of ACTS Group), Mr. Allen Ha (Former Chief Executive Officer of Asia World Expo), Mr. William Lo (Chief Financial Officer of Airport Authority Hong Kong), Dr. George So (Founding Executive Vice President of Hong Kong Greater China SME Alliance Association), and Dr. Ricky Szeto (Executive Director of Hung Fook Tong Holdings).

for the second consecutive year,<sup>41</sup> but it is sad for those who are stuck in this small city with nowhere else to go. At the same time, Hong Kong's average salary was just HK\$16,791 per month.<sup>42</sup> Much of the public is facing squeezed living spaces, unaffordable rents, crowded commutes, long working hours, and having to watch the pampered rich with all their luxury daily. This phenomenon reflects the failure of the economic system; the rich have grown richer, while the poor—despite their hard work—have not been able to share the fruits of economic growth.

Due to the severity of the situation, the Government has made poverty alleviation a priority. The Chief Executive's current policy of poverty alleviation is to encourage young people to become self-reliant through employment. Social security and welfare services should help those who cannot help themselves on a reasonable and sustainable basis.

Christians in the business sector could create shared-value and promote caring-oriented development instead of profit-oriented development. There is room for the Christian community to collaborate in more long-term planning and partnership to improve the holistic living standard of the poor.

Poverty is reflected in all aspects of the society, such as ageing, education inequality, labor rights, racial inequality, and housing policy. The solution to the poverty problem is not just the responsibility of the Government. It requires the attention and participation of people from all walks of life.

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<sup>41</sup> Cathy Adams, "These Are the World's Most Expensive Cities to Live In," *The Independent*, June 26, 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/hong-kong-most-expensive-cities-in-world-tokyo-singapore-seoul-asia-a8975246.html> (accessed June 29, 2019).

<sup>42</sup> "Why Hong Kong Is Not Singapore – It's All about Money and Politics," *South China Morning Post*, August 1, 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3020789/hong-kong-and-singapore-so-similar-yet-so-different-its-all-about> (accessed August 19, 2019).

### **How This Project Can Transform an Aspect of Christian Ministry**

Hong Kong has a long period of Christian leadership in social services, and there are many resources in the Christian community to make a difference in poverty alleviation in Hong Kong. Parachurch organizations are more involved in the community, are able to see the service gap, and can develop a service model in response to the needs of the community. The researcher believes the parachurch has a pioneering role in leading the church and the Christian community to effectively partner together in dealing with poverty alleviation issues and thereby bring peace and transformation to the city. To achieve this, parachurches need to understand their partners to find out what resources they can provide, and what elements are lacking, their attitudes towards collaboration, and their feedback in facilitating the implementation. This study thus aims to help parachurches effectively collaborate in poverty alleviation in Hong Kong.

For this research project, the researcher has used the HKCNP CDF program as a case study to demonstrate the above transformation for several reasons. First, this program aims at collaboration with parachurch organizations to deal with the poverty problem in Hong Kong within a larger context of the poverty ministry of the Christian community. The program aims to encourage community engagement; delineate responsibility between the Government, social welfare sector, and community organizations; foster public-private partnerships; and mobilize social capital in alleviating poverty. The program also seeks partnerships with the social sector to engage the underprivileged in the social network and thereby activate their motivation and search for opportunities to break their cycle of poverty.

Second, the CDF program uses a mentoring approach to encourage participating children to plan for their future and develop asset-building habits to address the problem of inter-generational poverty. Such assets include not only savings, but also intangible ones, such as positive attitudes and social networks, which are beneficial in their future development. The program intervenes in mitigating inter-generational poverty, which is strategically important because it is an early-stage poverty intervention measure. Studies show that children with good mentoring relationships exhibit significantly higher levels of hope, in addition to better academic performance. Through mentoring, adolescents' cognitive and identity development is promoted, which encourages them to learn for life and enhances their life-management, thereby reaching the goal of self-regulation.<sup>43</sup> The CDF participants are required to draw up a personal development plan (PDP) with specific targets (both short-term and long-term), under the guidance of mentors and the NGO operators. In the third year of the program, the NGO operators monitor the progress of the children and determine whether they have achieved their development targets.

Third, the CDF program has been demonstrated to be successful through previous studies and the most recent February 2020 Government research findings. An overview of the achievements of the program is attached as Appendix 1, which documents the overall effectiveness of the program in enhancing participants' abilities in resource

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<sup>43</sup> Wendy S. Y. Lau, Xiao-Chun Zhou, and Simon M. K. Lai, "The Development of Mentoring-Relationship Quality, Future-Planning Style, and Career Goal Setting among Adolescents from a Disadvantaged Background," *PsyCh Journal* 6, no. 1 (September 2017): 76-82, (<https://doi.org/10.1002/pchj.152>). 77.

management, academic achievement, future planning, academic and career planning and development, personal networking, communication skills, and social capital.

Therefore, the CDF provides a good case for studying the role of partnership in poverty alleviation. The researcher believes that the principles learned from this successful program will help more parachurches lead Christian partnerships in serving the poor more effectively, thereby transforming the lives of the poor and also the city.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

There is a scarcity of literature dealing with poverty in Hong Kong specifically from a Christian perspective, although there is extensive coverage of parachurch partnerships in poverty alleviation worldwide. This literature review explores trends in the literature and identifies the knowledge gap in the research topic.

#### History and Trends of Parachurches in Social Service

Different scholars have adopted historical and action approaches to analyzing faith-based organizations (FBO). These organizations are characterized by one or more of the following: affiliation with a religious body; a mission statement that makes explicit reference to religious values; financial support from religious sources; a governance structure where the selection of board members or staff is based on religious beliefs or affiliation; and/or decision-making processes based on religious values.<sup>1</sup>

Several books have been written on the history of major faith-based organizations, which include parachurches. For example, John O'Grady<sup>2</sup> and Donald Gavin<sup>3</sup> have provided general histories of Catholic charities, while Dorothy Brown and Elizabeth

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Ferris, "Faith-Based and Secular Humanitarian Organizations," *International Review of the Red Cross* 87, no. 858 (2005), 311-325, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1816383100181366>.

<sup>2</sup> John O'Grady, *Catholic Charities in the United States History and Problems* (Washington: Nat. Conference of Catholic Charities, 1931).

<sup>3</sup> Donald P. Gavin, *The National Conference of Catholic Charities: 1910-1960* (Milwaukee, WI: Catholic Life Publications, 1962).

McKeown examined Catholic Charities and the churches' role in American welfare.<sup>4</sup> Huggins described how changes in social welfare caused poverty and how Protestants fought against poverty in Boston around the turn of the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Gary F. VanderPol also studied parachurch organizations from a longitudinal perspective. He documented the historical development of American evangelical missions to the poor from 1947 to 2005 and reviewed the missions of the main parachurch organizations.<sup>6</sup> To summarize, the historical development of parachurches in the United States has been of interest to scholars and journalists over a long period.

Different approaches to the collaboration between Church and parachurch have been put forward. John Hammett has suggested a servant-partnership approach, which is based on a claim of theological priority for the Church, in both local and denominational expressions, as well as the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. In his model, parachurch organizations work as legitimate and valuable partners with churches in ministry, yet still have a subordinate status to the Church.<sup>7</sup> Jerry White, the former president of the Navigator Parachurch Organization, has also probed into the collaboration between Church and parachurch. He has identified six views on the

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<sup>4</sup> Dorothy M. Brown and Elizabeth McKeown, *The Poor Belong to Us: Catholic Charities and American Welfare* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Nathan Irvin Huggins, *Protestants against Poverty: Boston's Charities, 1870-1900* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1971).

<sup>6</sup> Gary F. VanderPol, "The Least of These: American Evangelical Parachurch Missions to the Poor, 1947-2005," (PhD diss., School of Theology, Boston University, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> John S. Hammett, "How Church and Parachurch Should Relate: Arguments for a Servant-Partnership Model," *Missiology: An International Review* 28, no. 2 (2000): 199-207.

relationship between churches and parachurch groups and has proposed solutions to break down the barriers between both.<sup>8</sup>

Nancy Ammerman found that among Protestants, factors other than theological tradition may have more to do with the willingness of a congregation to cooperate with the parachurch sector. Urban and suburban churches are more likely than rural churches to utilize the parachurch sector, as are larger churches. Newer congregations and those with large numbers of individuals who are not lifelong members of the denomination are the most likely to go outside of denominational boundaries to acquire resources.<sup>9</sup>

Different theological traditions thus hold different views on the legitimacy and status of the parachurch, and this will affect how a parachurch reacts in a collaborative relationship. This present research investigates further how factors like organization and structure impact the effectiveness of the parachurch partnership (see chapter 6).

### **Types of Parachurches and their Roles**

Christopher Scheitle's identification of parachurch activity sectors within the population of Christian non-profits in the United States, plus the statistics of Hong Kong parachurches, are summarized in the table below.

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<sup>8</sup> Jerry E. White, *The Church and the Parachurch: An Uneasy Marriage* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1983).

<sup>9</sup> Nancy Tatom Ammerman, *Pillars of Faith: American Congregations and Their Partners* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 82-90.

Table 1: Comparison of parachurch activity sectors in the US and Hong Kong

Types of parachurch	Description	No. in the US <sup>10</sup>	No. in Hong Kong <sup>11</sup>
<i>Charismatic Evangelism</i>	Highly focused on worship and conversion. Common activities include mass revivals, dramatic and musical performances, and itinerant speaking.	387	62
<i>Relief and Development</i>	Non-profits are working toward short-term relief of emergencies and long-term economic development, charities.	229	150
<i>Education and Training</i>	Engaged in activities that try to improve the quality and functioning of the larger Church, including Church consulting, training new pastors, or lay religious education.	259	114
<i>Publishing and Resources</i>	Include non-profits, whose primary purpose is to translate, publish, and distribute printed and other forms of media.	253	90
<i>Radio and Television</i>	The activities in the Radio & Television sector are fairly self-descriptive.	135	56
<i>Missions and Missionary</i>	Common activities include church planting, long-term missionary support, and the organization of short-term mission trips.	312	62
<i>Fellowship and Enrichment</i>	Focused on serving particular social groups, such as mothers, prisoners, men, or specific occupations. They attempt to provide outlets for building community and nurturing faith among these groups.	147	63
<i>Advocacy and Activism</i>	These organizations work toward particular social and legal issues inspired by their faith. The sector also includes non-profits organizations trying to reform particular religious groups.	97	22
Total		1819	619

The summary shows that there are many different types of parachurches fulfilling different missions with their unique expertise in different sectors, especially in Hong

<sup>10</sup> Christopher P. Scheitle, “Parachurch Profiles: From Christian Cowboys to Donating Cows,” in *Beyond the Congregation: The World of Christian Nonprofits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement, “Heong Gong Gaau Wui/ Gei Kau 香港教會/機構 [Hong Kong Church/Organization]” (Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement, 2001). <http://search.hkchurch.org/Search/top.asp> (accessed December 6, 2019). Information from Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement in 2001 includes Protestant organizations only.

Kong. It is believed that the power of parachurch and the Christian community can be strong if they can be united and collaborate with each other.

Among all the services provided by parachurches, some scholars have particularly recognized the contribution of parachurches in poverty alleviation and social transformation. Gary VanderPol studied the historical development of American evangelical missions to the poor from 1947 to 2005, and agreed that missions to the poor draw Christians together in fellowship and partnership.<sup>12</sup> Julie Adkins, Laurie Occhipinti, and Tara Hefferan provided an in-depth ethnographic community study of faith-based development organizations in the United States, reviewing their role by exploring the various ways they attempt to fix the social gap and alleviate poverty among the poor and powerless.<sup>13</sup>

Paul Cloke agrees that parachurches play a significant role in social services, particularly in tackling the poverty problem in society,<sup>14</sup> and concludes that FBOs reflect a faith-based response to poverty, which is both innovative and effective, and that faith-based networks seem to be a catalyst for addressing poverty-related issues.<sup>15</sup> This present research will make reference to networks and find out how network leaders empower the Christian community in the context of the intersection between religion and social betterment.

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<sup>12</sup> VanderPol, "The Least of These."

<sup>13</sup> Julie Adkins, Laurie A. Occhipinti, and Tara Hefferan, *Not by Faith Alone: Social Services, Social Justice, and Faith-Based Organizations in the United States* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Paul Cloke, Andrew Williams, and Sam Thomas, "Chapter 2. Faith-Based Action Against Poverty: Christians Against Poverty and Church Action on Poverty," in *Working Faith: Faith-Based Communities Involved in Justice* (Milton Keynes, UK: Authentic Media, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

## **Elements of Parachurch Partnership**

Partnerships among Christian or Christian communities are discussed in much of the literature, with most in the context of the United States, and focusing on three common elements of an effective Christian partnership, namely, relationship, vision, and leadership, as summarized below in order of importance.

### **Relationship**

A relationship is the foundation for all kinds of partnerships. Nate Ledbetter agrees that everything rests on the relationship, claiming that partnership flows in and through relationships.<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Brooks holds the same view, and elaborates that partners should build a relationship in the context of a community so that a partnership will not rely on any one person.<sup>17</sup> Ronald Sider, too, argues that an authentic relationship that goes beyond toleration and reaches for a kind of reconciliation is needed for partnership.<sup>18</sup> Brooks even suggests that before working together, partners should live together to build a close relationship.<sup>19</sup> This suggestion seems a bit idealistic in the context of the Hong Kong parachurch, as most participants in partnerships are the staff of parachurches and a perfect relationship will rarely be formed. The researcher will nonetheless testify in the research that a good relationship is needed in order to establish a healthy partnership.

Other elements, such as trust and communication, stem from a strong relationship. Phillip Butler argues all durable and effective partnerships are built on trust and whole

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<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Brooks and Nate Ledbetter, “The Value and How To of Church Based Partnerships,” Christian Community Development Webinar, 2019, <https://ccda.org/product/the-value-and-how-to-of-church-based-partnerships/> (accessed January 21, 2020).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ronald J. Sider, *Linking Arms, Linking Lives: How Urban-Suburban Partnerships Can Transform Communities* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008).

relationships.<sup>20</sup> Eleazar Fernandez concurs with Butler and claims that trust and respect are the foundations for a lasting and healthy partnership.<sup>21</sup> A partnership can sprout, grow, and thrive only in the spirit of trust and respect.

To build trust in a partnership, all partners should be well-informed with no cover-up or secrets. Vision Synergy suggests that members of a successful network should communicate well with each other and with others outside the network who have a stake in what the network is doing.<sup>22</sup> Butler concurs and proposes that active and positive communication is at the core of strengthening ownership and trust in a group and its collaborative process.<sup>23</sup>

Yu Mun Tang, who studies how the CDF helps children in poverty achieve holistic development, suggests that trust is a cornerstone for long-term partnership and commitment to helping children over a longer period. This may require time for parties in the program to get to know each other's roles and strengths with an open-minded attitude of cooperation.<sup>24</sup> Trust is more explicit in Christian communities. Christian capital

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<sup>19</sup> Brooks and Ledbetter. "The Value and how to of Church Based Partnership."

<sup>20</sup> Phillip Butler, *Well Connected: Releasing Power and Restoring Hope through Kingdom Partnerships* (Colorado Springs, CO: Authentic Publishing, 2006), 50.

<sup>21</sup> Eleazar S. Fernandez, "A Theology of Partnership in a Globalized World," *Review & Expositor* 113, no. 1 (2016). 23-31, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0034637315619004>,30.

<sup>22</sup> "Health Factors of Effective Networks," Synergy Commons, December 21, 2018, <https://synergycommons.net/resources/tool-health-factors-effective-networks/> (accessed January 21, 2020).

<sup>23</sup> Butler, *Well Connected*, 178.

<sup>24</sup> Yu Mun Tang, "Helping Poor Children out of Poverty? A Multiple-Case Study of School-Based and Community-Based Programmes in Hong Kong" (PhD diss., The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2013),238.

emerges in the religious networking organization as a unique component of bonding capital, where trust is enhanced when people clarify that they share the same religion.<sup>25</sup>

The present research will extend the above and identify contributing factors in the building of trust and relationship in a parachurch partnership, and show how social capital emerges through the partnership process. Social capital is defined as either bonding or bridging social capital, where increased opportunities or resources are created for individuals because of their connections within a group (i.e., bonding capital) or for the group due because of connections with other groups (i.e., bridging capital).<sup>26</sup> The CDF program is proven to promote good personal networks and social support for participants (Appendix 1) and the process is detailed through this research.

### **Vision**

Scholars have frequently emphasized the importance of vision in drawing people to form a partnership and work together. In this connection, Vision Synergy advises that a vision that is clear, broadly shared, and relevant to each member contributes to the effectiveness of a partnership;<sup>27</sup> while Butler agrees that partnerships are durable, effective, and usually strategic when driven by a great vision.<sup>28</sup> However, Brooks and Ledbetter claim that as people of God, Christians should partner with Christians, even if there is disagreement because the partnership is ecumenical.<sup>29</sup> Their viewpoint will be tested in the research with a practical lens. Butler also states that the longer-range the

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<sup>25</sup> Nathan R. Todd, "Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice: An Ethnographic Case Study," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 50, nos. 1-2 (2012), 239.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

<sup>27</sup> "Health Factors of Effective Networks," Synergy Commons.

<sup>28</sup> Butler, *Well Connected*, 151.

<sup>29</sup> Brooks and Ledbetter, "The Value and How to of Church-based Partnerships."

vision, the more challenging it will be to form and sustain the partnership.<sup>30</sup> As a result, limited and achievable objectives have to be set up, since goals that are too broad or unrealistic will weaken the confidence of the group.<sup>31</sup>

## **Leadership**

According to Butler, a good leader should take the initiative to commit to both the process and purpose of the partnership and even the connections between partners.<sup>32</sup> Vision Synergy agrees that a network leader should practice good facilitation, build consensus, and foster a collaborative environment.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Fowler adds that an influential network leader would not lead from a position of authority and in a top-down manner, but will instead encourage each member to work towards a shared goal and help those within the network to take on the leadership role when they are best suited to do so.<sup>34</sup> Fernandez argues that all partners should be of equal status in a partnership, especially in light of power-differentials between partners and the different positions that they occupy in the socio-economic hierarchy. Such arguments will be examined in this research to see whether an equal approach for parachurch partnership is possible in Hong Kong's poverty-related setting.

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<sup>30</sup> Butler, *Well Connected*, 39.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>33</sup> "Health Factors of Effective Networks," Synergy Commons.

<sup>34</sup> Keith Fowler, "What Makes a Great Network Leader?" Synergy Commons, August 17, 2019, <https://synergycommons.net/resources/what-makes-great-network-leader/> (accessed January 6, 2020).

## **Obstacles to Parachurch Partnerships**

### **Funding Problems**

Paul Cloke, Andrew Williams, and Sam Thomas see parachurches struggling to find adequate funds to secure the operation of the organization. It is difficult for a parachurch to balance the need to raise the funds to meet the needs of the poor while ensuring enough funding to sustain the organisation.<sup>35</sup> They also recognize that the sources of funding may limit a faith-based organization's ability to speak out freely on the political and economic front about the true causes of poverty for fear of offending potential donors.<sup>36</sup>

### **Partnership Difficulties with Churches**

There are five hindrances to church and parachurch cooperation, i.e., dogmatism about non-essentials and differing scriptural interpretations, the threat of conflicting authorities, the harmfulness of strained relationships, rivalry between ministries and suspicion about finances.<sup>37</sup> Because of these hurdles, a parachurch may be able to fulfill the functions the church is unable to undertake, because a parachurch can be more focused on complementing and empowering the church community to serve the poor with flexibility and specialization. Nordstokke suggests parachurches have particular expertise when it comes to addressing various religious traditions and the role of religion in promoting development. It is further suggested that their social character keeps

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<sup>35</sup> Cloke, Williams, and Thomas, "Faith-Based Action Against Poverty."

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Clint Le Bruyns, et al., *Developing Church Workplace Synergy, and the Great Commission. Cooperating in World Evangelization: A Handbook on Church/Para-Church Relationships* (LOP 24). Lausanne Movement, May 14, 2018. <https://www.lausanne.org/content/lop/lop-24> (accessed May 15, 2019).

parachurches close to people at the grassroots level, enabling them to communicate in a way that connects with people's basic worldviews and values. The grassroots approach allows them to offer marginalized people a stable social framework for promoting their rights.<sup>38</sup> The gap-filling role of the parachurch and the resulting win-win position allows for a non-competitive partnership between the church and parachurch.<sup>39</sup>

### **Legitimacy**

Scheitle considers the major criticism of parachurches is lack of accountability to anyone but themselves. While, in theory they work in collaboration with and within church structures, in reality they work outside of those structures. He argues that the parachurch should be initiated and overseen by churches to further their biblical legitimacy.<sup>40</sup>

## **Poverty**

### **Hong Kong Urban Poverty**

Yip suggests that the spatial distribution of urban poverty in Hong Kong is not homogeneous and that areas with a high degree of poverty are clustered systematically. Past research, too, has investigated the heterogeneous spatial-social reason for urban poverty, suggesting that different regions and social groups are facing different kinds of urban poverty problems, such that a heterogeneous program is needed to understand the various nuances of urban poverty, instead of misrepresenting them with a roughly

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<sup>38</sup> Kjell Nordstokke, "Faith-Based Organizations and Their Distinct Assets," *Swedish Missiological Themes* 101, no. 2 (2013), 189.

<sup>39</sup> Scheitle, *Beyond the Congregation*, 52.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

averaged result.<sup>41</sup> A concentration of high poverty levels is found in both the inner-city and suburbs of Hong Kong.<sup>42</sup> Yip concludes that economic restructuring and class-based congregation, racial segregation, demographic structure, and public policy all contribute to urban poverty.<sup>43</sup> He also writes that poverty is not an isolated phenomenon. “It is about all aspects of society. It requires the attention and participation of people from all walks of life.”<sup>44</sup> Therefore, the researcher seeks citywide collaboration to tackle the problem of poverty in Hong Kong spiritually, collectively, and holistically.

### **Intergenerational Poverty**

The researcher reviews the problems in poverty alleviation, and the issue of the intergenerational transmission of poverty in particular, with its many related structural and behavioral characteristics.<sup>45</sup> Intergenerationally transmitted poverty signifies the private transmission of poverty from older generations of individuals and families to younger generations and has special relevance to the issue of childhood poverty.<sup>46</sup> Children reared in poverty are more likely to themselves experience poverty in

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<sup>41</sup> Siu Fai Yip, 葉兆輝, *Heong Gong Pan Kung Man Tai Zan Seong* 香港貧窮問題真相 [The Truth of Hong Kong’s Poverty Problem] (Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company Limited, 2017), 90.

<sup>42</sup> Yingqi Guo et al., “Poverty Concentration in an Affluent City: Geographic Variation and Correlates of Neighbourhood Poverty Rates in Hong Kong,” *Plos One* 13, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190566>.

<sup>43</sup> Yip, 葉兆輝, *Heong Gong Pan Kung Man Tai Zan Seong*, 93.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.

<sup>45</sup> Jake M. Najman et al., “The Inter- and Intra- Generational Transmission of Family Poverty and Hardship (Adversity): A Prospective 30 Year Study,” *Plos One* 13, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0190504>.

<sup>46</sup> Karen Moore, “Frameworks for Understanding the Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty and Well-Being in Developing Countries,” *SSRN Electronic Journal* (2001), <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1754527>.

adulthood.<sup>47</sup> Adverse life experiences are found to be strongly associated with poverty, and there appears to be a causal link between these adverse life experiences and family poverty.<sup>48</sup> Jake Najman et al. track changes in family poverty over thirty years and find that respondents living in poverty are more likely to have experienced multiple episodes of poverty in their families of origin.<sup>49</sup>

Intergenerational continuities in low-income families can be seen as one of the explanations for the persistence of poverty in society. Children of the poor, however, do not inherit a culture of poverty. Rather, their poverty is largely a result of inequities in the social structure. When the social structure fails to create equality of opportunity for those who come from disadvantaged families, intergenerational continuity along family lines persists and results in the perpetuation of poverty, generation after generation.<sup>50</sup>

Francis Fukuyama holds a similar view and points out that individuals often perceive economic distress not as resource deprivation, but as a loss of identity. He calls for “ambitious social policies” to help the poor and underprivileged, and argues shared identity is needed to hold society together. He believes that while many of us fight over economic issues, the primary political struggles involve demands for the recognition of our dignity as members of different groups. Helping the poor to discover their identity and receive recognition from the society is an important step in poverty alleviation and

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<sup>47</sup> Jake M. Najman et al., “The Inter- and Intra- Generational Transmission of Family Poverty and Hardship (Adversity): A Prospective 30 Year Study.”

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Hagith R. Shlonsky, “Continuity in Poverty Along Family Lines: A Re-examination of the Intergenerational Cycle of Poverty,” *Human Relations* 37, no. 6 (1984): 455-471, <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872678403700603>.

the attainment of dignity.<sup>51</sup> The Christian community accordingly has a role to play in breaking this social inequality of intergenerational poverty, following the example of God, who institutes the year of sabbath and jubilee to restore equity in society.

### **Nature of Hong Kong's Poverty Problem**

In a place rich in resources like Hong Kong, poverty is an injustice that can and must be overcome.<sup>52</sup> Hung Wong states that the Hong Kong Government adopts a rather passive and weak role when facing the deteriorating poverty problem. Based on neo-classical ideology, the government believes that poverty in Hong Kong can only be alleviated, not eradicated.<sup>53</sup> The poverty alleviation strategies and policies proposed by the first Commission on Poverty were short-term and piecemeal. More long-term remedial poverty alleviation policies, such as strengthening poor people's work incentives, collaboration among different departments in delivering training and employment assistance, as well as establishing the Child Development Fund are mostly needed.<sup>54</sup>

Wong criticizes the primary motive of the Government in declaring that "poverty eradication is impossible" as political.<sup>55</sup> According to his analysis, the dominant philosophy of the Government is liberalism, *laissez-faire*, and neo-classical ideology, which sees poverty as a necessary evil, a part of social reality, and a kind of hardship that

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<sup>51</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay from the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy* (London: Profile Books, 2015), 82.

<sup>52</sup> Cloke, Williams, and Thomas, "Faith-Based Action Against Poverty."

<sup>53</sup> Hung Wong, "Is Poverty Eradication Impossible? A Critique on the Misconceptions of the Hong Kong Government," in *Poverty in a Rich Society: The Case of Hong Kong*, ed. K. W. Maggie Lau and David Gordon (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2017), 185.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 197.

motivates the poor to work hard.<sup>56</sup> Since the Government has not made the poverty problem a high priority, there are many opportunities for the Christian community to respond to the need by partnering together.

### **Poverty Alleviation**

While childhood poverty shares manifestations with poverty experienced by adults, there are some important different causes and effects. Crucially, childhood poverty may have lifelong consequences. By highlighting childhood poverty, the researcher is not placing the needs of children above other groups, but is promoting diverse strategies for poverty reduction and eradication.

In Hong Kong, several welfare programs contribute directly or indirectly to alleviating child poverty.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, one study shows that the four welfare programs detailed in the footnote below are somewhat ineffective in child poverty reduction because of their low coverage or low benefit level. Most welfare programs are inefficient (except the CSSA), as a significant proportion of their recipients are not poor, and the share of program expenditure that goes towards filling the poverty gap is quite small.<sup>58</sup>

Correspondingly, thus research will investigate whether there is any other effective way to tackle the intergenerational poverty problem instead of merely delivering

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<sup>56</sup> Wong, "Is Poverty Eradication Impossible?" 197.

<sup>57</sup> 1. The means-tested Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) scheme is the major cash transfer program for children. It provides the last resort for families unable to support their children financially or to meet their basic needs. 2. The Public Rental Housing Scheme (PRHS) provides low-income families with affordable housing. 3. Financial assistance schemes (FSS): the School Textbook Assistance (TA) scheme, the Student Travel Subsidy (STS) scheme, and the Subsidy Scheme for Internet Access Charges (SIA). 4. Community Care Fund (CCF) provides financial assistance to families living in economic hardship. Kelvin Chi-Kin Cheung et al., "Evaluating the Effectiveness and Efficiency of Hong Kong Welfare Programmes in Reducing Child Poverty," *Children & Society* 32, no. 6 (August 2018): 481-491, <https://doi.org/10.1111/chso.12290>.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

recurrent cash benefits; and, most importantly, whether the Christian community can contribute to the alleviation of the poverty problem through collaboration.

### **Research Gap**

Research has previously been conducted to identify the importance of parachurch commitment to social services and to discuss the legitimacy of parachurches partnering with churches and secular institutions. One important similarity is that most scholars have discussed the parachurch in the context of the United States, and have neglected the development of parachurches in other countries. The parachurch in Hong Kong has not been adequately analyzed by scholars, and as Tong rightly points out, little work has been done on the history of Hong Kong Christianity from an ecumenical perspective.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the study will attempt to fill this knowledge or research gap and provide insights on how Hong Kong parachurches might partner with Christian communities effectively in order to alleviate poverty by examining whether the partnership elements are applicable in the context of Hong Kong's Christian communities and social problems.

The historical development of the Hong Kong parachurch has attracted attention from scholars in recent years. However, the bulk of the work has concentrated on particular or individual organizations, while the macro parachurch partnership principles in Hong Kong are understudied or overlooked. Leong investigated the Christian disaster relief ministry in Tiu Keng Leng district in the 1950s and discovered that relief work by missionaries mainly focused on fulfilling the basic needs of the refugees: establishing medical clinics, granting loans for building houses and employing social services as a

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<sup>59</sup> Wing Sze Tong, "Ecumenical Perspective on the History of Hong Kong Christianity: The Mission Consultation Conference of the Church in Hong Kong in the Eighties for Case Study," (PhD diss., Chinese University of Hong Kong., August 2012).

tactic to attract refugees to believe in Christ.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, Ha studied the charity work of Catholic missionaries, particularly in Wan Chai district during the nineteenth century.<sup>61</sup>

Most churches have not fully utilized their privileges to transform their communities, and reduce their role to emergency relief only. For example, Kung Lap Yan conducted a survey looking into the effectiveness of churches doing charity work in Hong Kong, and discovered that most thought they could only provide temporary and limited help to cover emergency needs. Most service recipients ranked the charity work of churches effective, and did feel the love and care from churches after receiving help, which increased their trust in and sense of belonging to the churches.<sup>62</sup> However, generally speaking, churches tend to separate gospel preaching from social services, and tend to employ social services as an evangelical tool instead of thinking about bringing long-term solutions and impact to the local community. In this connection, Ze rightly points out that the gospel is about the whole person, including both physical body and soul.<sup>63</sup> Our care for the needs of the human body is precisely the fulfilment of the

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<sup>60</sup> Gaa Leon Leong, 梁家麟, *Fuk Jam Jyu Min Baau – Gei Duk Gaau Zoi Ng Sap Nin Doi Dik Tiu Ging Ling* 福音與麵包——基督教在五十年代的調景嶺 [Bread and the Gospel – Christianity in Tiu Keng Leng in the 1950s] (Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary Christianity & Chinese Culture Research Centre, 2000).

<sup>61</sup> Kei Lung Haa, 夏其龍, *Sap Gau Sai Gei Tin Zyu Gaau Zoi Waan Zai Ci Sin Gung Zok* 十九世紀天主教在灣仔的慈善工作 [The Social Welfare work of Catholics in the 19th Century] (Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Centre for Catholic Studies, 2016).

<sup>62</sup> Laap Jan Gung, Can Zaak Kwan, 龔立人, 陳澤群, *Fuk Lei Jyu Seon Jeong Heong: Gong Gaau Wui Teoi Hang Ci Wai Zi Gwo Haau Jin Gau Bou Gou* 福利與信仰：香港教會推行慈惠之果效研究報告 [Social Welfare and Faith: Report on Effectiveness of Hong Kong Churches Launching Social Welfare Projects] (Hong Kong: Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion & Culture, 2002), 27.

<sup>63</sup> Jam Sang Ze 謝任生, “Leon Jan Jin Sai San Tai Jyu Seong Dai Gau Suk Dik Gwaan Hai (On the Relationship between Human Flesh and the Salvation of God) 論人現世身體與上帝救贖的關係,” *Jau Fuk Jam Cyun Kap Kung Jan?* 有福音傳給窮人? [Preach the Gospel to the Poor?] (Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 2001), 117.

requirements of the gospel.<sup>64</sup> The parachurch can thus fill a gap in the work of local traditional congregations by providing services for social services' sake and serve the underprivileged without any "religious pressure." Parachurches can thus garner collective resources across many churches to tackle complex social tasks, such as poverty alleviation.

To conclude, there is so far no comprehensive and systematic research on Hong Kong Christian parachurch partnerships at a city-wide level, or any studies investigating the elements of parachurch partnerships that may contribute to poverty alleviation. This present research contributes to building up research at a city-wide level by interviewing CDF operators and beneficiaries from twelve out of eighteen districts in Hong Kong, namely Kwun Tong, Kowloon City, Wong Tai Sin, Tsung Kwan O, Tung Chung, Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan, Sha Tin, Ma On Shan, Yuen Long, Tin Sui Wai, and Chai Wan, among which Kwun Tong, Yuen Long, Wong Tai Sin and Kwai Tsing have higher-than-average poverty rates. It is further observed that their child poverty rates were all higher than the average figure.<sup>65</sup>

Features of a successful parachurch partnership in Hong Kong have not been adequately analyzed by any scholars as far as the researcher knows. Despite the rapid increase in parachurch organizations, they have received very little attention. Therefore, this research will attempt to bridge the gap and identify features of parachurch partnerships that utilize Christian capital in impacting our city. Christian capital emerges

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<sup>64</sup> Ze 謝任生, "Leon Jan Jin Sai San Tai Jyu Seong Dai Gau Suk Dik Gwaan Hai," 117.

<sup>65</sup> Census and Statistics Department, Office of the Government Economist Financial Secretary's Office, *Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017*, Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, November 18, 2019, [https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/pdf/Hong\\_Kong\\_Poverty\\_Situation\\_Report\\_2017\(2018.11.19\).pdf](https://www.povertyrelief.gov.hk/eng/pdf/Hong_Kong_Poverty_Situation_Report_2017(2018.11.19).pdf). (accessed November 24, 2019).

in the religious networking organization as a unique component of bonding capital, where trust is enhanced when people clarify that they share the same religion.<sup>66</sup>

Many people have placed the responsibility for alleviating poverty in the hands of the Government. Scholars have studied the partnerships between schools and enterprises to alleviate childhood poverty.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, few have investigated how church and parachurch can collaborate to alleviate poverty in Hong Kong. Furthermore, past CDF research conducted by K. L. Chan has focused on the long-term development of CDF participants,<sup>68</sup> while Dr Charles Chan has provided an overview of the features and outcomes of the CDF.<sup>69</sup> To the best of my knowledge, no CDF parachurch partnership research has been done from a religious perspective. In this research, I study the parachurch's role in recruiting Christian mentors to deal with poverty alleviation, and explore how the CDF program helps underprivileged youth break inter-generational poverty.

### **Key Reference Model**

While searching for a proven parachurch model, the researcher reviewed the relevant literature that focuses on parachurch partnerships in the urban context and their success factors in achieving their missions. It was found that Todd studied a parachurch network organization very similar to HKCNP and came up with a model that serves as a

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<sup>66</sup> Todd, "Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice," 239.

<sup>67</sup> Tang, "Helping Poor Children out of Poverty?"

<sup>68</sup> Edward Ko Ling Chan, *Study on the Longer-Term Development of Child Development Fund Project Participants* (Hong Kong: Department of Social Work & Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong and Policy 212017).

<sup>69</sup> Charles C. Chan et al., "A Review of Features and Outcomes of the Hong Kong Child Development Fund," *China Journal of Social Work* 6, no. 2, 2013: 127–48.

very good reference for this research.<sup>70</sup> The organisation is called “Christian Network,” and was formed in late 2003 by two local religious leaders from different Christian congregations in a moderately sized Midwestern community, in order to provide a venue for Christians to work for mercy and justice. The network conducts face-to-face meetings; links people from different congregations; recruits and trains Christian leaders and volunteers; serves as a hub to bridge social capital; prioritizes community issues; forms community coordinating councils to organize community events that serve low-income families in the community for community betterment and social justice; provides congregational engagements in the community; and empowers the community setting and resource distribution to low-income families.<sup>71</sup> Both Christian Network and HKCNP are local networks that mobilize Christian communities working for charity. The HKCNP founders also came from different denominations.

### **Application**

The researcher refers to Todd’s model of religious networking organizations to determine the key features of successful partnerships under their three major categories, which are (1) *purpose, organization, and structure*: According to Todd’s model, the purpose should be comprehensive and stated clearly in organizational documents. A successful religious networking organization is well-organized with a clear leadership structure and defined roles. An effective religious networking organization sets up open role structures, allowing old and new members alike to become involved; (2) *social capital and social networks*: The network creates bridging connections between

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<sup>70</sup> Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice,” 232.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

volunteers and different congregations by mobilizing manpower and resources from congregations to increase bonding in the larger community. Religious networking organizations serve as a hub that incubates bridging social capital; and (3) *intersection of religion and social justice*: The network attempts to meet local community needs by linking religious congregations. A religious networking organization that intersects faith with community betterment attracts more partners to become involved in partnership. Details of Todd's model are set out in Appendix 2.

The HKCNP engages Christian partners to serve the mission of God in our city. In HKCNP's case, the mission is a relational ministry of poverty alleviation with Christian partners, mobilizing more Christians to join this movement in Hong Kong. This researcher finds Todd's model most relevant to HKCNP's program in terms of its aim to mobilize all Christian partners in the city, its strategy to solicit the participation of different congregations, its heart for the whole city, its guiding principles of compassion and mercy, and the desire to cultivate self-sufficiency among the poor.

However, Todd's model has a social justice basis and does not involve a large number of partners or consider the duration of their operation in the network.<sup>72</sup> This present research setting is poverty alleviation. The researcher will thus expand the scope of Todd's model with the CDF program, which has been in operation for a long time.

### **Benefits of Todd's Model**

The review of Todd's model has benefited this research in several ways. First, the researcher has identified some general key elements of parachurch partnerships and has better understood the success of parachurches as well as the various factors contributing

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<sup>72</sup> Todd, "Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice," 232.

to an effective partnership. The researcher used the above features and the literature review, plus her own experience in this area, to design the research method and interview questions. Second, the researcher validated and justified the elements in the research and looked at the dynamics between these different elements. Third, in addition to the features identified in Todd's model, the researcher also introduced elements of parachurch partnership evident in the case study of the CDF in association with the HKCNP. The researcher used the main components of Todd's model to review the HKCNP and identify key success factors and hence further develop the HKCNP as a strong parachurch partnership for poverty alleviation in Hong Kong.

The researcher is not treating parachurch partnership as a panacea for the social problem; rather, it is a platform to stimulate dialogue among Christian communities to break through their limitations and differences in values. To the best of this researcher's knowledge, such research into Hong Kong parachurch partnerships to alleviate poverty is unique and has not been done before.

## CHAPTER 4

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS

The following biblical review looks at the three themes of the research, i.e., *parachurch*, *partnership*, and *poverty alleviation* along with a focus on *youth mentoring*. A clear understanding of the above themes from the Scriptures offers insights into the research and helps in identifying elements that follow God's values.

#### Church/ Parachurch

##### Church in the Old Testament

The word *qahal* in Hebrew [6951]<sup>1</sup> represents an organizational structure in ancient Israelite society, which can mean multitude, company, congregation, or assembly. It appears in the Bible 123 times and refers to a community of peoples in Genesis 48:4, the community of Israel in Exodus 12:6, and the whole community of Israel in Leviticus 16:17.

In *Committed Communities*, Charles Mellis looks for church models in Scripture.<sup>2</sup> He lists several groups, especially in the Old Testament, where he considers that “the Church is seen in sodality expression.”<sup>3</sup> He cites, among others, Noah's family and the Joshua-Caleb team, also seeing the solidarity of the patriarchal family as a possible early expression of group commitment.

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<sup>1</sup> James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order. Together with a Comparative Concordance of the Authorized and Revised Versions, Including the American Variations; Also Brief Dictionaries of the Hebrew and Greek Words of the Original, with References to the English Words* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1890).

<sup>2</sup> Charles J. Mellis, *Committed Communities: Fresh Streams for World Missions* (South Pasadena, CA: W. Carey, 1976).

## Church in the New Testament

*Ekklēsia* in Greek ([1577])<sup>4</sup> is the root of the term “ecclesiology” and “ecclesiastical.” *Ekklesia*<sup>5</sup> means out of (*ek*), to call (*kaleo*), and together means the “called-out assembly.” The various translations include assembly, congregation, the Israel of God, the Church, and even the whole body of Christian believers. The word *Ekklēsia* appears in the Bible 114 times and is translated as Church in different contexts (Matt. 16:18, Acts 14:27 and 1 Cor. 1:1).

Based on the Bible, the Church is a *community* of people gathered around Jesus, committed to worshipping him and serving His Kingdom in the world.<sup>6</sup> The Church is a community of people who are conformed to the pattern of Jesus, not to the pattern of the world’s culture. Therefore, the Christian community must, in some sense, be “different from” the world around it, maintaining fundamental points of antithesis.<sup>7</sup> John Stott claims that if Church as counter-cultural community realistically accepts Jesus’s standards and live by them, it will be the alternative society God always intended it to be and will offer the world an authentic Christian counterculture.<sup>8</sup> In short, the Church is a community that has traded the values of the present world for the truth of the Kingdom.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mellis, *Committed Communities*

<sup>4</sup> Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Howard A. Snyder, “The Church as Community,” in *Liberating the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1996), 112-131.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount: Christian Counter-Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Snyder, “The Church as Community,” 112-131.

He also opens up what it means to truly be a follower of Jesus, by exploring the nonconformity in Christian discipleship:

The church has a double responsibility in relation to the world around us. On the one hand we are to live, serve and witness in the world. On the other hand, we are to avoid becoming contaminated by the world. So, we are neither to seek to preserve our holiness by escaping from the world nor to sacrifice our holiness by conforming to the world.<sup>10</sup>

The church community is the Kingdom community only when it is formed around Jesus and lives by the Spirit for the sake of the Kingdom.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, we can use our gifts collectively to solve the poverty problem in Hong Kong and to bring His Kingdom to the poor. The Church community cannot exist without commitment to Jesus as Lord and to one other as brother, and sister.<sup>12</sup> Real community means shared time, shared meals, shared priorities and some level of economic sharing, including some genuine economic mutual dependence.<sup>13</sup>

Teamwork is important when discharging God-given missions. In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gave the great commandment to the whole team of disciples. Therefore, the Church is commanded to work as a team with other believers, presumably including other Christian parachurches. Paul followed Christ's teaching and teamed up with others in discharging the God-commissioned work. For example, he worked with his intimate co-workers, such as Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:18) and Titus (2 Cor. 8:23) to extend God's Kingdom on earth. Paul also intentionally teamed with his intimate circle of Silas

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<sup>10</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Radical Disciple: Some Neglected Aspects of Our Calling* (IVP Books, 2012), 45.

<sup>11</sup> Snyder, "The Church as Community," in *Liberating the Church*, 135.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 137.

(Acts 15:39-41), Barnabas (Acts 12:25) and Timothy (Phil. 1:1-2). We need to follow his example in capitalizing that power of God in working together as a team in serving our community.

### **Parachurch Partners in Unity with the Church**

According to Lausanne Occasional Paper 24, the church-parachurch partnership should be promoted.<sup>14</sup> Christians are encouraged to respect one other as fellow stewards of the gifts given to each of us and as signs of the arriving Kingdom of God (Rom. 12:3), communicating effectively with integrity, together discovering the Lord's vision for our common task (Jas. 3:17-18), learning from each other, growing in flexibility, maturity, and unity in Christ as we listen to Him together, and watch Him at work in our partnership (1 Cor. 12:18-21). Partners in the Christian community are encouraged to trust in God and each other, and at the same time be accountable to God and each other, taking care to understand trust and accountability within each other's cultural context (2 Cor. 5:9-11). When we do these things, especially across differences of culture and material wealth, we demonstrate the transforming, unifying power of the Holy Spirit, glorifying God's name among the nations through our lives and deeds (1 Pet. 2:9-12) and respect each other's God-given callings, resources, strengths, and influence (1 Cor. 14:26-33).

### **Partnership**

Parachurch organizations need to follow God's way of partnership to achieve the goal of effectively empowering the Church to be His agent of change in our city. In his book, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, Christopher Wright

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<sup>14</sup> Snyder, "The Church as Community," in *Liberating the Church*, 137.

claims that by understanding the Scripture, we can transform God’s teaching into an effective strategic partnership, and the people of God should commit in partnership to achieving holistic mission from God—to reclaim the world and the created order.<sup>15</sup>

### **Partnership in the Bible**

In the Old Testament, we are called to have good partnerships with each other in order to achieve good results. For example, Moses partnered with Aaron and Hur in leading the Israelites to defeat Amalek and experience God’s amazing power (Exod. 17:8-15). The Bible emphasizes the power of unity or partnership in saying that “two are better than one because they have a good return for their labour” (Ecc. 4:9-12) and “Can two walk together, except they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3).

In the New Testament, the term “*koinonia*” means partaking together, having a share in partnership, fellowship, and communion, or sharing the life of the Christian community. Paul emphasizes the elements of good partnership in his letters to the churches, including altruism (Rom. 15:26, 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:13), grace (Gal. 2:9-10) and fellowship (Phil. 1:5).

There are good examples in the Bible of addressing spiritual and material needs through partnership. For example, partnership is expressed as participating in the lives of one another in such a way that the needs of all are met (Rom. 12:6-13). In 2 Corinthians 9:1-4, partnership is also practiced through sharing material resources. Paul expounds the principles of partnership as he exhorts the church in Achaia to match the generosity of the churches further north (Rom. 15:26-27). They are pleased to do this, and indeed they owe

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<sup>15</sup> Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible’s Grand Narrative* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 98.

it to them; for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material things.

### **Partnership from a Theological Perspective**

In *Liberating the Church: The Ecology Of Church & Kingdom*, Howard Snyder argues that partnership is an idea essential to the very nature of God.<sup>16</sup> Partnership speaks of God's relationship with humanity and indicates the true relationship between human beings.<sup>17</sup> Through partnership, we experience Church community as a true extension of His Kingdom on earth in blessing others in the city, especially the poor who need Him.

#### *Trinity and Partnership with God*

Enoch Wan argues that the Trinity is God's model of partnership in Christian mission.<sup>18</sup> God is inviting us to loving community with all those whom He loves to be His "co-lovers." There are three major ways of being co-lovers in His Trinity. Firstly, we love the Triune God. Secondly, we love the family of God. Lastly, we love the world, and we join with Him to accomplish His eternal plan. As parachurch partners serving the community, we are accomplishing His eternal plan and showing our love for Him. The Trinity is a community of three divine persons, each is unique in their divine nature, each needs the others to complete their tasks, and cannot be separated.

According to Cathy Ross, our selfish instincts make equal co-operation much more difficult than despotism and people tend to co-operate when they have control in the

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<sup>16</sup> Snyder, "The Church as Community," in *Liberating the Church*, 131.

<sup>17</sup> Cathy Ross, "The Theology of Partnership," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 34, no. 3 (2010): 146. Ross manages the Crowther Centre for Mission Education at the Church Mission Society. She is also the J. V. Taylor Fellow in Missiology at the University of Oxford, and the General Secretary of the International Association for Mission Studies.

relationship. Therefore, it is very important that the parachurch is submitted to the lordship of God and sincerely united in heart with their partners for His agenda. His Kingdom's agenda is great enough for each of us to have a piece of the pie. It is necessary that the parties concerned should acknowledge a common loyalty to something outside of themselves, which is the transcending loyalty to God.<sup>19</sup>

### *Relationships in Partnership*

Ross identifies relationship as the key to effective partnership, and it starts from our relationship with Christ.<sup>20</sup> The first concern in partnership is to know one another and cultivate relationships by observing, listening, and asking questions. Listening and seeing is vital to all human relationships and vital to partnership if we want to know the other as a human being.<sup>21</sup>

Giving is also indispensable in a relationship. Both partners practicing giving and receiving in a spirit of mutual respect will enrich the relationship. The minimum level of giving will lead to a minimum level of self-sacrifice. In terms of the partnership, this means responsibility. To be in a partnership means to be committed to giving within the partnership and through it.<sup>22</sup>

Forgiving is a powerful and essential dimension of any human relationship, and any partnership. This means acceptance of all the liabilities and limitations that may arise

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<sup>18</sup> Enoch Wan, and Kevin P. Penman, "The Trinity: A Model for Partnership in Christian Missions," *Global Missiology* (2010), <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/viewFile/138/397> (accessed May 23, 2019).

<sup>19</sup> Ross, "The Theology of Partnership," 146.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 145.

from relating with others whose weakness and sin might injure us, just as for them it involves acceptance of the liability and limitations that follow from our weakness and sin. Mutual forgiveness is the only way forward; without it, any partnership is bound to dissolve or at least fragment.<sup>23</sup>

### *Heirship and Freedom in Partnership*

Ross analyzes the theology of partnership and suggests that the word conveys the meaning of heirship.<sup>24</sup> The word “partner” derives from the Anglo-French *parcener*, an old legal term that denotes co-heirship. Co-heirship evokes overtones of ancestry, with suggestions of property rights, ownership, status, and dignity, as well as an underside of power, wealth, jealousy, suspicion, and litigation.<sup>25</sup> The definition of a partner is “one who shares, takes part, is associated with another in action.”<sup>26</sup> “Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17) shows us the sublime heights to which partnership can aspire.<sup>27</sup> As partners, we are co-owners of His resources in His Church community, and we need to join with actions of sharing those resources to the poor.

Ross also argues everyone in a partnership must accept genuine involvement, a committal to the other partner in trust. We learn to give up control and share responsibility. Partnership involves a ready acceptance of responsibility, a readiness to serve the common enterprise. The essence of partnership is a relationship entered upon in

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<sup>23</sup> Ross, “The Theology of Partnership,” 145.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

freedom by persons who remain free.<sup>29</sup> Without this freedom, there is no true partnership. It is not a forced relationship; we should not be compelled to enter into it.

### *Sharing of Suffering and Power*

A genuine partnership means complete sharing, even of suffering, for as Ross states, “All are equally involved; all have committed themselves to God in trust. All have a share in common responsibility; all recognise that they belong together, that is one member *suffers* they all suffer, all have liability for each. Partners share the *suffering* of one another.”<sup>30</sup> The incarnation is indeed the supreme model for this.<sup>31</sup> Following His model of incarnation, we need to get rid of our pride and sense of entitlement, recognizing that our power and privilege is from Him, and all are equal in the eyes of God. With this sense of humility, we will then be willing to share what He has given us to build a mutual relationship and be His light in the city.

### **Poverty Alleviation**

According to Heidi Unruh and Ronald Sider, God intends that all people have the opportunity to earn a modest living and be dignified members of the community.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Timothy Black points out that as humans were created, and by God, so all human beings should be treated equally. Human beings are the “image-bearers” of God

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<sup>29</sup> Ross, “The Theology of Partnership,” 145.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>32</sup> Heidi Rolland Unruh and Ronald J. Sider, *Saving Souls, Serving Society: Understanding the Faith Factor in Church-Based Social Ministry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 75.

and, therefore, inherently deserve respect and dignity. One cannot honor God and at the same time treat another person in a manipulative, dehumanizing and disrespectful way.<sup>33</sup>

### **Poverty in the Old Testament**

The “poor” in the Old Testament usually refers to those who are impoverished due to calamity or through exploitation. They are likely to have become poor through the often intentional activities of others, bringing them to God’s special attention.<sup>35</sup> According to Black,<sup>36</sup> seven Hebrew words, such as *Ani* and *Anav*, describe poverty in the Old Testament (see Appendix 3 for a full list). These words for the poor are understood as metaphors for the concept of powerlessness. God gives us a good understanding of the nature and causes of poverty so we can practically serve and care for the poor.

In the Old Testament, God cares for the poor, and commands, for example, the whole Israelite community give an offering to the Lord (Exod. 35:4-5), not to be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward the poor, and to be openhanded and freely lend to them whatever they need (Deut. 15:7-8). Those who are generous will themselves be blessed (Prov. 22:9), will lack nothing (Prov. 28:27), their children will be a blessing (Ps. 37:26), and He will bless a generous nation (Mal. 3.10-12). Black notes God cares for the poor by different means, such as listening (Ps. 69:33), delivering the needy when they cry out (Ps. 72:12) and giving to the poor (Ps. 112:9). God sets up the year of Jubilee to free all slaves and debtors (Lev. 25:40-41), restore each clan’s patrimony (Lev. 25:10) and He

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<sup>33</sup> Timothy Jay Black, “A Biblical Approach to Poverty Alleviation: A Case Study of Pinelands Methodist Church, Phambili NgeThemba’s Community Building Efforts through Job Creation In Langa Township” (PhD diss., University of Pretoria, 2009), 108.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

declares the year of liberty (Ezek. 46:17), all to restore social equity and ensure that poverty does not persist through generations. This biblical value of social equity is at the core of the CDF program.

In a highly competitive urban society like Hong Kong, most citizens are under the impression that “winning at the starting line” is the golden rule for success and prosperity because the wealth (economic capital) of parents to a certain extent determines the achievement (cultural capital) of their offspring. In other words, family and economic circumstances greatly determine one’s chances of success in life. Children from poor families have lower chances of success in life, and poverty is likely to be transmitted from generation to generation.

The HKCNP and a group of Christian mentors disagree with this, believing that all are created equal and liberated by God. Therefore, the HKCNP and Christian communities actively participate in the CDF program to reduce intergenerational poverty by promoting the longer-term development of children from disadvantaged backgrounds by strengthening their capacities and instilling hope through Christian-based mentoring.

Liberation theology involves critical reflection on Christian praxis in light of the Word of God and putting the words in practice. An essential component of liberation theology is that God’s love for and commitment to the poor is a fundamental aspect of the gospel. The researcher is aware that liberation theology originally referred to the Exodus. As this concept developed, it became political and more controversial. Liberation theology is now adopted by evangelists to show social concern for the poor and liberation for oppressed peoples, and the researcher accepts these evangelists’ explanation of liberation theology in this research. When God performs mighty acts to reveal His nature

throughout human history, he also intervenes to liberate the poor and the oppressed. God came to Moses in the burning bush to end the suffering and injustice experienced by the children of Israel at the hands of the Egyptians.<sup>38</sup> God desires to be known by His people as the Liberator of the oppressed. The Lord of the Universe is at work correcting and liberating the poor.<sup>39</sup> This theology has been strongly criticized, however, and the researcher is aware that not all Christian scholars agree with it.

### **Poverty in the New Testament**

In the Bible, a major aspect of Jesus's mission is to bring good news to the poor (Luke 4:18), and he was always with the poor (Luke 6:20-21). Scripture teaches us that injustice and oppression are the most fundamental causes of poverty and God wants us to partner with Him to liberate the poor and lift up the victims of injustice. Jesus identifies his mission by quoting the prophet Isaiah, claiming that he is the fulfilment of the Scripture, in proclaiming good news to the poor and setting free the oppressed (Luke 4:18-19). As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to serve the poor in our communities and set them free. As Jesus was poor himself (see Appendix 4), he knows what it is like to be poor, and he teaches us how to be generous by Himself giving generously with His life on the Cross. Similarly, Paul, in his final charge to Timothy, advises him to command the rich to be generous and willing to share (1 Tim. 6:17-19). Besides physical poverty, Stott explains the genuine meaning of spiritual poverty in Matthew 5:3: "To be poor in

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<sup>38</sup> Black, "A Biblical Approach to Poverty Alleviation," 107.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

spirit is to acknowledge our spiritual poverty before God. The Kingdom of God is given to those who recognize and acknowledge their spiritual bankruptcy before God.”<sup>40</sup>

### **Poverty Alleviation in Theological Perspective**

Stott claims that serving the community is a must for Christians, as “social responsibility becomes an aspect not of Christian mission only, but also of Christian conversion. It is impossible to be truly converted to God without being thereby converted to our neighbour.”<sup>41</sup> Kathryn Feliciano provides theological principles and applicable suggestions for serving the poor, maintaining that Christians should restore the dignity and relationships of the poor while offering them direct services so that the cycle of poverty can be broken.<sup>42</sup>

### **Mentorship with Biblical Values**

Much work has been done studying the relationship between mentoring and childhood poverty. Many scholars have agreed that mentors have a positive influence on underprivileged children, helping them improve in social relationships, cognitive skills and identity development,<sup>43</sup> thus gaining a better chance of breaking the inter-generational poverty cycle. The mastermind behind the CDF program, Dr. Charles Chan,

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<sup>40</sup> John Stott, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount with John Stott - 8 Weeks for Individuals* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2016), 18.

<sup>41</sup> Cheri Fuller and Jennifer Kennedy Dean, *The One Year Praying the Promises of God* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2012), 25.

<sup>42</sup> Kathryn Feliciano, *Love Your Neighbour: Restoring Dignity, Breaking the Cycle of Poverty* (McLean, VA: Institute for Faith, Work & Economics, 2016), 42.

<sup>43</sup> Jamie N. Albright, Noelle M. Hurd, and Saida B. Hussain, “Applying a Social Justice Lens to Youth Mentoring: A Review of the Literature and Recommendations for Practice,” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, nos. 3-4 (2017): 363-381, <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12143> (accessed May 19, 2019); V. C. McLoyd, “Socioeconomic Disadvantaged and Child Development,” *American Psychologist*, no. 53 (1998): 185-204; Eddie Chi Wai Ng, Man Kin Lai, and Charles C. Chan, “Effectiveness of Mentorship Program among Underprivileged Children in Hong Kong,” *Children and Youth Services Review* 47 (2014): 268-273, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2014.09.021> (accessed May 19, 2019).

states that having a supportive adult mentor, accompanied with good interpersonal relationships, may teach underprivileged children various adaptive regulatory behaviours, skills and mindsets, and better prepare them for the future.<sup>44</sup>

The mentoring of Joshua by Moses is well known. In his research, Marty Terrell uses Moses as an early biblical example of one who faithfully mentors his protégé, Joshua, preparing him to complete the task of delivering the Israelites into the promised land of Canaan.<sup>45</sup> Joshua spends forty years in the wilderness with Moses, a significant training time that demonstrates a basic theology of leadership development (Exod. 17:8-16).<sup>46</sup> Choi Yuen Wan Philemon, the vice-chairman of HKCNP, agrees, and in his book *Sang Ming Jing Heong Sang Ming* 生命影響生命 [Life affects Life] writes that Moses is one of the best mentors in Israelite history, since he is willing to work himself out with humility and wisdom.<sup>47</sup>

Marty Terrell describes Jesus's mentoring strategy with his disciples, which includes the elements of selection, association, consecration, impartation, demonstration, delegation, supervision and reproduction.<sup>48</sup> Jesus models an intimate and authentic relationship with God the Father, so he invests in his disciples to build a similar relationship with them. In cultivating the leadership potential of his mentees, Jesus

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<sup>44</sup> Chan et al., "A Review of Features and Outcomes of the Hong Kong Child Development Fund."

<sup>45</sup> Marty Terrell, "Assessing the Impact of Personal Mentoring to Develop Members of the Millennial Generation in Biblical Orthodoxy, Orthopraxy and Orthopathy" (PhD diss., South-Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 40.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>47</sup> Philemon Choi, *Sang Ming Jing Heong Sang Ming* 生命影響生命 [Life affects Life]. (Hong Kong: Breakthrough Publishers, 2001), 215.

<sup>48</sup> Terrell, "Assessing the Impact of Personal Mentoring," 46.

teaches through experimental and verbal instructions. He communicates vision and direction for the lives of his disciples and addresses discerned needs based on his relationships with them.<sup>49</sup>

Paul follows Jesus's model and mentors Timothy in his ministry as his authorized ambassador. Then Timothy ministers under Paul's instruction, and follows Paul's example in preaching, strengthening, and encouraging the body of Christ. Paul encourages Timothy in his lack of confidence (2 Tim. 1:7) and recognizes him as one who serves the interests of Christ rather than his own (Phil. 2:19-23).<sup>50</sup> Paul also employs Timothy in a variety of roles, from travelling companion and epistle co-author to emissary. This wide range of opportunities prepares Timothy well to serve the church in Ephesus as an apostolic delegate.<sup>51</sup> Philemon Choi comments that the relationship between Paul and Timothy shows that mentorship does not depend on methodology, but spirituality; Paul serves as an excellent mentor to Timothy because he is rooted deeply in God's Word.<sup>52</sup>

In summary, the researcher knows that God cares for the poor from studying the Bible. God wants His Church to partner together to serve the poor in extending His Kingdom on earth. The more we study His mission for the Church, His command for our parachurch partnership, and His heart for the poor, the more we become aware of the importance of this research.

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<sup>49</sup> Terrell, "Assessing the Impact of Personal Mentoring," 47.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 48.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>52</sup> Choi, *Sang Ming Jing Heong Sang Ming* 生命影響生命 [Life affects Life], 216.

## CHAPTER 5.

### PROJECT DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the research design and method as well as the research questions, referring to elements identified in Todd's model,<sup>1</sup> and to other literature.

#### Research Design

The researcher studied the relevant literature and identified the theoretical framework related to the research topic (see Chapter 3 for details). In the research design stage, Todd's theoretical framework helped the researcher frame the research questions, decide on the specific research approaches, and identify the concepts and questions to be included in the study. The researcher selected keywords such as *parachurch*, *urban setting*, *partnership/network*, *social betterment*, *Christian*, *poverty*, and *social capital* in the process of searching the literature. Making reference to Todd's framework, the researcher developed three research questions to guide the whole research project.

#### Research Questions and Goals

##### *The First Research Question*

“How do the *purpose*, *organization*, and *structure* of HKCNP impact the effectiveness of the parachurch CDF partnership?”

Based on Todd's model, a well-organized parachurch should have a Christian vision, clear and explicit leadership and open structure, well-defined roles, and a

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<sup>1</sup> Nathan R. Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice: An Ethnographic Case Study,” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 50, nos. 1-2 (2012), 230.

sustained core team.<sup>3</sup> The researcher positioned the questions for the interviewees to discover if the above elements were present and useful, and to find out if the effective parachurch partnership elements identified in Todd's model were applicable and practical for all parachurch contexts.

#### *The Second Research Question*

“How does HKCNP *parachurch partnership network* empower the Christian community in poverty alleviation through the CDF Program?”

In Todd's model, a parachurch allows members to clarify their Christian values, increase bonding capital, strengthen their shared mission, and create a common identification, as Christian capital unifies their work towards common community betterment goals.<sup>4</sup> Most of the research in the literature review has demonstrated how a parachurch connects the Christian community with secular entities in different ways to achieve their objectives, and in this research, the researcher looked at how Christian partnership achieves the purpose of poverty alleviation.

#### *The Third Research Question*

“How does social capital emerging through HKCNP help parachurch organizations enhance the effectiveness of CDF partnership *relationships and trust-building*?”

According to the literature review, relationships and trust-building are two key factors in an effective parachurch partnership. Todd's model shows that a parachurch cultivates a platform for members to share information and knowledge for mutual benefit,

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<sup>3</sup> Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice,” 230.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

recruits members with community experts and intentionally increases the networking among its members to create more social capital.<sup>5</sup> According to Todd, social capital is often discussed in terms of bonding and bridging, where increased opportunities or resources are created for individuals due to their connections within a group (i.e., bonding capital), or for groups due to connections between heterogeneous groups.<sup>6</sup> Social networks generate not only economic resources, but also promote bridging connections across religious communities, between volunteers from different congregations, and with others in the network organization.

Through the three research questions, the interviewees shared their views on the kind of support they receive from the parachurch, the engagement through the parachurch with different secular entities, and how the parachurch empowers poverty alleviation through the CDF program. The key partnership elements identified in Todd's model are summarized in Appendix 2.

## **Qualitative Research Methods**

### **Aims of Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research is *a naturalistic approach* that seeks to understand phenomena in a context-specific setting that produces findings from real-world settings where the “phenomenon of interest unfold naturally.”<sup>7</sup> This present research uses the case of the CDF program under the HKCNP parachurch partnership in the context of the Hong Kong Christian community's efforts in addressing urban poverty.

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<sup>5</sup> Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice,” 230.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2015), 39.

Qualitative research aims at making connections, identifying patterns, and contributing to greater understanding.<sup>8</sup> The core of qualitative analysis lies in the processes of describing a phenomenon, classifying it, and seeing how concepts are interconnected. As rightly pointed out by Elliot Eisner and S. D. Johnson respectively, a good qualitative study can help “understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing.”<sup>9</sup> The researcher aimed to “engage in research that probes for deeper understanding rather than examining surface features.”<sup>10</sup> In short, the primary goal of qualitative research is to turn unstructured data found in texts and other artefacts into a detailed description of the important aspects of the situation or problem.

### **Advantages and Limitations of Qualitative Research**

The researcher selected a qualitative research approach because it is good for accessing and managing data without destroying the complexity and context of the research.<sup>11</sup> The qualitative method allows the researcher to access the variability and complexity of parachurch partnerships, which can only be discovered through the voices and experiences of the operators involved in these circumstances. Specifically, qualitative research is rich in contextual descriptions of meanings and understandings of social phenomena and human behavior. Qualitative data analysis is a highly interactive process

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<sup>8</sup> Kirsty Williamson and Graeme Johanson, *Research Methods: Information, Systems, and Contexts* (Cambridge, MA: Chandos Publishing, 2018), 456.

<sup>9</sup> Elliot W. Eisner, *The Enlightened Eye: Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2017), 58.

<sup>10</sup> S. D. Johnson, “Will Our Research Hold up under Scrutiny?” *Journal of Industrial Teacher Education* 32, no. 3 (1995), 4.

<sup>11</sup> Ochieng Pamela Atieno, “An Analysis of the Strengths and Limitation of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms,” *Problems of Education in the 21st Century* (2009): 13-18.

between the researcher and the data.<sup>12</sup> It is acknowledged that subjectivity is inherent in the process, but interpretations are nevertheless developed methodically to be consistent with all available data and representative of multiple perspectives.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the researcher adopted this approach to engage multiple methods and employ source data triangulation, such as participant observation, interviews, and recordings, in order to build a more valid, reliable, and diverse construction of realities.

The researcher collected and worked with non-numerical data, gathered the data as well as interpreted meaning from participant observations and in-depth interviews. Quantitative data thus cannot be analyzed in this research, but it is believed that qualitative data, such as experience, personal sharing related to partnerships, and relationships weigh more than numerical statistics in this particular research.

### **Case Study as a Research Method**

There are four major types of qualitative research designs, namely, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, and case study.<sup>14</sup> I chose a case study as a research method to guide and support the construction of the descriptive hypotheses. According to Yin, a case study means an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clear.<sup>15</sup> It is most useful in coping with a technically distinctive situation in which there are more variables of interest than data

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<sup>12</sup> Williamson and Johanson, *Research Methods: Information, Systems, and Contexts*, 454.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 18.

points.<sup>16</sup> The researcher decided to adopt a case study as a research method because it can draw on the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis, as well aid in examining the process of change of a case effectively.<sup>17</sup>

The researcher compared different poverty alleviation programs in Hong Kong in order to identify the most suitable for the case study. The table below compares different programs in Hong Kong in terms of parachurch partnership, scale, scope, history and research conducted.

Table 2. Comparing different poverty alleviation programs in Hong Kong

Selection Criteria	Child Development Fund <sup>18</sup>	Food Angel <sup>19</sup>	Employees Retraining Board <sup>20</sup>	Youth Employment and Training Program <sup>21</sup>
Parachurch partnership	53.1% NGO operators are Christian-based	65.6% NGO partners are Christian-based	43.6% service points are Christian-based	55.6% service centres are Christian-based
No. of Christian operators (see Appendix 12)	Total 90 operators 32 NGOs 58 Schools 17 NGOs : Christian backgrounds 30 schools : Christian-based	146 partners 96 Christian-based	39 service points 17 Christian-based NGOs and churches	18 service centres 10 Christian-based organization
Government operated	Yes, operated by the Social Welfare Department	No, operated by Bo Charity Foundation	No, operated by a statutory body established under the Employees	Yes, operated by the Labour Department

<sup>16</sup> Yin, *Case Study Research*, 18.

<sup>17</sup> Jeane W. Anastas and Marian L. MacDonald, *Research Design for Social Work and the Human Services* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999),94.

<sup>18</sup> Child Development Fund, (July 15, 2019), <https://www.cdf.gov.hk/en/index.html>. (accessed January 17, 2020).

<sup>19</sup> "Food Angel," <https://www.foodangel.org.hk/index.php?l=tc> (accessed May 20, 2020).

<sup>20</sup> "Employees Retraining Board," ERB org, <https://www.erb.org/home/erb/zh/> (accessed May 20, 2020).

<sup>21</sup> "E-Learning Support Scheme 2020," YETP, <https://www.yes.labour.gov.hk/Home?c=en> (accessed May 20, 2020).

			Retraining Ordinance	
City-wide	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poverty alleviation	Yes -Alleviates inter-generational poverty through target savings, mentorship and personal development plans	No -Poverty relief: recycles food and provides food rescue and food assistance to needy	Yes -provides vocational support services and encourages self-enhancement to people aged 15 or above, with education attainment at sub-degree level or below	Yes - provides a comprehensive platform of job search with one-stop and diversified pre-employment and on-the-job training for young school leavers aged 15 to 24 with educational attainment at sub-degree level or below
Duration	Since 2008 12 years	Since 2011 9 years	Since 1992 28 years	Since 2009 11 years
Evident Based Research	Yes -3 evident-based consultancy reports / researches	No	1 journal	No

After comparing different poverty alleviation programs in Hong Kong, the researcher decided to select CDF as the case study for this research mainly because the CDF program is evidenced-based. It has three consultancy reports/researches attached, proving it effective in alleviating intergenerational poverty problem, while promoting good partnerships among the government, community and business sectors. The CDF program actively encourages intersectoral collaboration among schools, NGOs, enterprises, and other local community organizations, tapping into rich resources in local communities for the benefit of the development of children. The primary concern of the CDF program is to tackle the problem of intergenerational poverty, by gluing parents, schools, churches, the government and NGOs together effectively. For instance, parachurches partner with Christian communities by recruiting mentors from churches, aimed at providing meaningful and caring mentorship to underprivileged children, and

ultimately transforming their lives with hope. The design of the CDF program itself makes it a suitable object for studying the power of parachurch partnership in poverty alleviation. The CDF program is selected as a case study also because of its strong partnership nature, which matches with the purpose of the study (i.e., to identify effective elements in an effective partnership).

### **Advantages and Limitations of In-depth Interviews**

The primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they provide much more detailed information than is normally available through other data collection methods such as surveys. In-depth interviews also provide a more relaxed environment for the collection of information, as interviewees are generally more comfortable in having a conversation with an interviewer than filling out a standard survey form. In-depth interviews can also uncover valuable insights and enable a researcher to find out the real story, as respondents are more likely to open on a one-to-one basis. It is believed that in-depth interviews serve as one of the most optimal ways for stakeholders to share their views on parachurch partnership, especially some personal experiences with partners, which cannot be derived from a questionnaire and quantitative research methods. Further, data can be collected much faster than with other qualitative research methods, usually within a few weeks, and this worked well with the researcher's tight research schedule.

The researcher chose to conduct in-depth interviews to collect data because it is process-orientated with an emphasis on interaction between the researcher and respondents in giving the meanings of a particular phenomenon. During the process of conducting in-depth interviews, the researcher tried to develop non-hierarchical relationships with the participating interviewees, including operators, mentors, mentees

and convenor. With enough time and space for them to talk and explore the impact of parachurch partnership experiences before and after they joined the CDF program, the interpretation and meanings they gave to their experiences, together with the observed outcomes derived from the data collected from participant observation, enabled the researcher to better understand how parachurch partnerships help parachurch operators effectively implement a poverty alleviation program.

At the same time, the researcher planned the interview questions to prevent subjective and biased opinions as far as possible. The researcher also avoided asking yes or no and leading questions that might limit the responses of the interviewees. The questions were open-ended rather than close-ended. Factual questions were asked before opinion questions, and probing questions were used. Overall, the researcher tried to use effective interview techniques to make interviewees comfortable, and they appeared interested in the research process and provided useful insights during the interview.

### **Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation**

In the following paragraphs, the researcher describes the research process, selection of suitable interviewees, and methods of analyzing and interpreting the data.

#### **Participant Observation and its Aim**

Observation, particularly participant observation, is used in a variety of disciplines as a qualitative research tool for collecting data about people, processes, and cultures.<sup>22</sup>

Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman define observation as “the systematic

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<sup>22</sup> Barbara Kawulich, “Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method,” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 6, no. 2 (May 2005), <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0502430>.

description of events, behaviors, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for the study.”<sup>23</sup> Observations enable the researcher to describe existing situations using the five senses, providing a “written photograph” of the situation under study.<sup>24</sup> Participant observation is a process enabling researchers to learn about the activities of the people under study in a natural setting through observing and participating in those activities.<sup>25</sup>

### **Advantages and Limitations of Participant Observation**

Kathleen and Billie DeWalt claim that participant observation improves the quality of data collection and interpretation and facilitates the development of new hypotheses.<sup>26</sup> Victor DeMunck and Elisa Sobo point out that participant observation allows for richly detailed descriptions, which facilitate the researcher’s goal of describing “behaviours, intentions, situations, and events as understood by one’s informants.”<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, participant observation is conducted by a biased human being who serves as the instrument for data collection: the researcher must thus understand how his/her gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and theoretical positions may affect observation, analysis, and interpretation.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2016).79.

<sup>24</sup> David A. Erlandson, *Doing Naturalistic Inquiry: A Guide to Methods* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1993).60.

<sup>25</sup> Kawulich, “Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method.”

<sup>26</sup> Kathleen Musante DeWalt and Billie R. DeWalt, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers* (Lanham, MD: Altamira Pres, 2011).8.

<sup>27</sup> Victor C. De Munck and Elisa Janine Sobo, *Using Methods in the Field: A Practical Introduction and Casebook* (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 1998).13.

<sup>28</sup> DeWalt and DeWalt, *Participant Observation*, 16.

## **Participant Observation in this Research**

The Researcher has worked for HKCNP as executive director since 2012 and is involved with the planning, execution, partner mobilization, recruitment, and fundraising of the CDF program. The researcher works closely with the board in reviewing Government policy and in development of the CDF program through setting up objectives for the partnership. The researcher also works directly with all CDF partners to empower them in the program and to recruit more partners to join the network.

To build relationships and share information, HKCNP hosts two general CDF mentoring meetings every year, and works closely with the operators during the year to help them with their recruitment, funding, and other partnering issues. The HKCNP works closely with those who need help in finding resources to resolve their issues, and in consequence tends to get to know those partners better. Each year, HKCNP also organizes special programs like Mentor Day to bring partners together and work with different core team members. HKCNP always tries to attend the operators' opening ceremony events, mid-program events, and final celebration events to show appreciation for our partnership. Throughout the years, the researcher has secured strong relationships with key partners and built good relationships with new partners.

The reason why the researcher herself conducted participant observation and in-depth interviews, instead of hiring a third party, is because the researcher's role as the Executive Director of HKCNP had allowed her to build rapport with the participating operators well before conducting the interviews, which was essential for conducting effective research. In fact, contact with the participating mentors and mentees in the field outside the program helped build rapport and relationships. A third party interviewer with

no or little relationship with participants would have the challenge of gaining their trust, which might have limited the kind of information interviewees were willing to share. Furthermore, a third party interviewer may not know the organization or CDF well enough to ask appropriate follow-up questions.

At the same time, the researcher was aware that her role as the Executive Director of HKCNP might create limitations (for example, interviewees might give biased answers or answers pleasing to the interviewer), and therefore took measures to minimize this limitation in the process by balancing the power differential between interviewees and researcher. For instance, the researcher visited the interviewees' offices to conduct the interviews, so as to empower the interviewees to share in a comfortable and familiar setting. Moreover, the researcher interviewed the highest ranking executives of the operators to maintain the balance of power. With NGOs and churches, the interviewer mostly interviewed executive directors and chief pastors; and with schools, principals and vice-principals were invited to join the interview.

Interviewees were also allowed to freely select which staff could join the interview. Accompanied by colleagues, interviewees were empowered to share in a relaxed way and seek advice from their team when necessary. Interview transcripts were sent to all interviewees for their consent before data analysis. Any unwanted material was removed upon request. As a result, the researcher granted the interviewees freedom and rights during and after the interview process to equalize any status and power differential.

As the vision bearer of the CDF program, HKCNP continues to improve the program by conducting research with all partners and by leading pilot programs, such as the post-CDF program, which extends care of youths in the CDF program. The researcher

has worked closely with some of the participants for a long period. Because of the above efforts and interactions, the researcher could better understand the context in which partners operate, had good access to the interviewees, and could probe deeply in the interviews.

### **Data collection from In-depth Interviews**

#### *Selection of Interviewees*

During the planning stage of the research, the research supervisor suggested recruiting interviewees with different backgrounds to provide a variety of perspectives on the CDF parachurch partnership. The researcher first identified the key players and then selected interviewees from different types of respondents.

Since mentors play an important role in the program, the researcher selected two mentors for the interview. As funding for the program is also critical, the researcher selected one donor. The CDF program manager has been with the program for ten years, and it was important to also get his feedback. In order to validate the success of the program, the researcher selected three beneficiaries (i.e. mentees) of the CDF program to share their experiences. The researcher invited the mentees of the two mentors above in order to gain a more comprehensive perspective of the program. The third mentee was referred by one of the interview operators due to his availability.

Since the establishment of CDF in 2008, thirty-two NGOs and fifty-eight schools have been involved in operating CDF projects. Among them, nineteen NGOs have Christian backgrounds, while thirty-one schools are Christian based.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, HKCNP has a total of ninety partner operators, all qualified for the research. The

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<sup>29</sup> DeWalt and DeWalt, *Participant Observation*, 16.

researcher sent out emails in May 2019 to invite interviewees for the research; the first twelve operators to reply by June were chosen. Two more responses were received before the researcher informed all partners that no more interviewees were needed. The findings were subject to bias since the interviewees were from the most responsive organizations. The researcher accepts this limitation due to scheduling demands of the study.

The researcher adopted a full membership role in data collection process. The full membership role means the researcher is completely immersed in the research setting. The researcher studies a setting in which she is already an active member. The researcher conducted both the interviews and participant observation on her own because the insider role status allows for acceptance by the participants, who have established long-term partnerships with the researcher's organization. Since the researcher shares the same identity, language and experiential bases with the study participants, the participants revealed a high level of trust and openness during the interview, thus enabling the researcher to gather data in great depth. At the same time, the researcher was well aware that her role as the Executive Director of HKCNP might limit her to one-sided responses and non-comprehensive answers, and thus employed different strategies to maintain objectivity in this research (See Chapter 5 on research validity, reliability and objectivity). The interviewer also received criticism and disagreement from the interviewees despite her role as the Executive Director (see Chapter 6 for examples).

In the end, the researcher conducted a total of twenty-two interviews with forty-four participants, with a breakdown set out in the table below.

Table 3. Summary of interviewee information

Total number of interviews: 22 with 44 interviewees	
<u>Operators</u>	<u>Key Partners</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 5 NGOs</li> <li>● 2 churches</li> <li>● 7 schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 convener</li> <li>● 2 volunteer-mentors</li> <li>● 1 funding partner</li> <li>● 3 beneficiaries</li> <li>● 1 program staff-member</li> </ul>

The researcher considers that the interview sample is sufficient in this research. The social-science journal, *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, recommends twenty-five to thirty participants as the minimum sample size required to reach saturation and redundancy in grounded theory studies that use in-depth interviews.<sup>30</sup> Daniel Bertaux recommends fifteen as the smallest acceptable sample in qualitative research.<sup>31</sup> Thus the researcher decided not to sample more of the potential population because new data would not shed any further light on the research topic; data saturation had been reached.

Of all interviewees, thirty-three were Christians. Twenty-five interviewees were male, while nineteen were female. All had partnered with the parachurch for at least one year, some for more than ten years. The titles, organization names, years of HKCNP partnership, years of professional experience, years of being a Christian, and CDF project information of the organization are well-documented in this research. The background information of each interviewee is summarized in Appendix 5.

It was assumed that the interviewees enjoy a close and good working relationship with HKCNP, and therefore would be willing to be interviewed and share their views

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<sup>30</sup> Shari L. Dworkin, "Sample Size Policy for Qualitative Studies Using In-Depth Interviews," *Archives of Sexual Behaviour* 41, no. 6 (December 2012): 1319-1320, (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-012-0016-6>).

<sup>31</sup> Daniel Bertaux, "From the Life-History Approach to the Transformation of Sociological Practice," in *Biography and Society: The Life History Approach in the Social Sciences*, ed. Daniel Bertaux (London: Sage, 1981), 35.

freely. It was believed that the interviewees were experienced enough to respond to the questions related to parachurch partnerships.

#### *Development of an Interview Protocol*

The researcher developed an interview protocol to ensure consistency throughout the interviews, thus increasing the reliability of research findings. Interview instruments, including interview guides (Appendix 6), key interview questions (Appendix 7), and an interview consent form (Appendix 8), are well-documented to enhance the validity of the research.

All interviewees were informed of the purpose of the interview, the potential risks and benefits, how the interview would be used, and the expected duration of the interview. The interview steps are listed below:

- a) The interviewer explained the purpose of the interview and the use of a note-taker and audio recorder.
- b) The interviewer invited interviewees to give their informed consent through signing a written consent form; and received advance notice that all information is kept confidential.
- c) The interviewer conducted the face-to-face interview for around one hour after the interviewee had given his/her consent to the interview.
- d) The interviewer started the interviews by asking ice-breaking questions to create a relaxing setting for the interviewees.
- e) The interviewer recorded the gesture, tones, emotions, reactions and anything that might be helpful for analysis during the interview.
- f) The interviewer summarized key data immediately after the interview.
- g) The interviewer verified the information given in the interviews as necessary.
- h) The interviewer transcribed the audio-recorded interview verbatim.
- i) The interviewer returned the interview transcript and the signed consent form to the interviewees for verification within two weeks of the interview. All

unwanted materials were excluded upon the interviewee's request (Appendix 9).

- j) The interview was conducted as part of the research process according to the implementation timetable (Appendix 13).

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach to allow for a conversational mode while being guided by the research theme. The researcher also obtained detailed information about interviewees' experiences and expectations related to HKCNP and the CDF program, as well as HKCNP's role, program operations, relationship building, processes, and outcomes, and explored relevant issues thoroughly, including gaining insights into the kind of elements required for enhancing effectiveness of the HKCNP partnership, identifying perceived misconceptions and improving inter-organizational relationships.

The researcher started to prepare the dissertation proposal, research on the topic, and a list of selected key persons to interview in July. In August, the researcher reviewed the overall plan and scheduled in-depth interviews with potential interviewees. The in-depth interviews took place from July to October. Data analysis followed from September to December.

#### *Formulation of Interview Questions*

While the researcher was scheduling the appointments, literature review research materials were used to finalize the interview questions (Appendix 6), which were developed to prompt participants' responses concerning parachurch, partnership, and poverty alleviation.

Before the interviews, the researcher conducted research into each interviewee to gain a better understanding of their mission and level of partnership with other partners.

After the supervisor reviewed the interview questions and approved the overall plan, the researcher started to invite selected CDF partners to the in-depth interviews in July 2019 by sending out appointment requests.

#### *Conducting the In-depth Interviews*

In-depth interviews were then arranged with interviewees' consent to ensure their willingness, and they were informed of the date, location, duration, interviewers, and purpose in advance. Eventually, interviews were conducted between July and October 2019 in the participants' or interviewer's office or a private room. All the interviews with operators were scheduled at the operators' offices with the team (usually the person in charge of the CDF program and the director of the organization) in a relaxed and private setting. All other individual interviews were conducted in a private office at a location convenient to the interviewees.

### **Analysis of Research Data through Transcription and Coding**

#### *Transcription of Research Data*

After the interviews, the researcher sent the verbatim transcription of audio recordings to the interviewees for review. Once the interviewees had reviewed the transcripts, the researcher converted the content from word into spreadsheet format with source information, index, question or answer indexing, and content of the interviews for coding purposes.

#### *Data Analysis through Coding*

A code in a qualitative inquiry is most often a word or a short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and evocative attribute for

a portion of language-based data.<sup>32</sup> To codify is to arrange things in a systematic order, to make something part of a system or classification, and to categorize.<sup>33</sup> The researcher used coding to develop new thinking about the identified data and then connected them to expand, transform, and re-conceptualize data. Importantly, coding can be about going beyond the data, thinking creatively with the data, asking data questions, and generating theories and frameworks. As Creswell states, text data are dense data, and it takes a long time to go through them and make sense of them.<sup>34</sup> Coding is therefore a way of indexing or mapping data, to provide an overview that allows the researcher to make sense of them in relation to the research questions. Using a spreadsheet allows the researcher to code the interview data based on the codebook (Appendix 11). The researcher adopted the *a priori* coding approach and made use of Todd's theoretical model or framework to identify the major categories and items that need to be coded before coding. The researcher identified *ten* codes from the theoretical framework (Appendix 2), including:

- A1. Purpose
- A2. Organization
- A3. Structure
- B1. Strong Christianity identity
- B2. Network provided context
- B3. Religious similarity created
- C1. Mobilized volunteers and resources from Christian congregations for Event
- C2. Networked religious congregations with one another and local service agencies
- C3. Networked members with community experts
- C4. Shared information and knowledge for mutual benefit

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<sup>32</sup> Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2016).

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> John W. Creswell, *30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2016), 152.

The coding spreadsheet helped the researcher analyze the summarized data to verify the information given in the interviews where necessary, and to read through the interview responses. The researcher coded the transcript on the spreadsheet for each of the interviews according to the elements on the coding reference. Eventually, the researcher consolidated all twenty-two spreadsheets into one large database. In addition, the researcher organized and structured key coding items in *nomenclature* (codebook). Nomenclature is a list of numbered categories intended to represent the full array of possible responses to a specific question (Appendix 11). The researcher sorted the database for each of the elements and analyzed each element in-depth by reading it repeatedly to look for patterns, themes or trends, to identify key findings, and to document findings, conclusion, and recommendations. Reading the data, the researcher immersed herself in the lives and experiences of the interviewees in order to acquire a general, unbiased idea of the data set before focusing on any specific aspects. The researcher assigned appropriate codes to words or phrases on all transcripts, using the listed categories but adding to and refining them as needed. The researcher also paid attention to key statements, for instance, objectives, actions, outcomes, consequences, causes, contexts, and strategies.

### **Interpretation of research data**

The researcher tried to identify patterns and connections within and between different categories. The relative importance of different themes or subtle variations were identified. Moreover, the study assembled all the data pertaining to particular themes and identified the key ideas expressed within each category and discovered the similarities and differences among them.

## Research Validity, Reliability and Objectivity

In the qualitative paradigm, reliability and validity are conceptualized as trustworthiness, and rigor.<sup>35</sup> Michael Patton describes the notion of reliability as one of the quality concepts of qualitative research, which needs to be met in order to claim a study as proper research.<sup>36</sup> To ensure reliability in qualitative research, an examination of trustworthiness is crucial. Clive Seale states that the “trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability.”<sup>37</sup>

### Research Reliability

Reliability can be discerned by examining both the process and the product of the research to ensure consistency.<sup>38</sup> T Campbell notes the consistency of data will be achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of such items as raw data, data reduction products, and process notes.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, clear documentation of repeated procedures was made to validate the consistency of the research.

### Research Validity

Validity means the use of well-established and well-documented procedures to increase the accuracy of findings.<sup>40</sup> Jonathan Lazar suggests that the construction of a

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<sup>35</sup> Nahid Golaafshani, “Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research,” *The Qualitative Report* 8, no. 4 (December 2003): 597-606 (<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol8/iss4/6>).

<sup>36</sup> Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 551.

<sup>37</sup> Clive Seale, “Quality in Qualitative Research,” *Qualitative Inquiry* 5, no. 4 (1999) (<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608191.d32>), 266.

<sup>38</sup> Marie C. Hoepfl, “Choosing Qualitative Research: A Primer for Technology Education Researchers,” *Journal of Technology Education* 9, no. 1 (January 1997): 4, <https://doi.org/10.21061/jte.v9i1>.

<sup>39</sup> T. Campbell, “Technology, Multimedia, and Qualitative Research in Education,” *Journal of Research on Computing in Education* 30, no. 9 (1996): 122-133.

<sup>40</sup> J. W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CASage Publications Ltd., 2013).

database contributes to the validity of research.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the researcher sought to plan the research as described above properly and created a research database in order to establish validity. All materials collected and created during the course of the study, including the procedures and products, summaries, explanations, notes, documents, photos, audiotapes, consent forms, coding spreadsheets and tables, were well-documented.

### **Research Credibility**

Quotations from different respondents are provided throughout the report to add credibility to the information. The researcher also paid attention to confidentiality and anonymity by seeking permission from the interviewees before including any quotes. This kind of narrative data can provide clarification, understanding, and explanation, as well as avoid generalization of results. Before finalizing the research outcomes, the researcher solicited feedback from key interviewees and program stakeholders to ensure that the research findings were true and accurate.

### **Research Objectivity**

To enhance objectivity, and to avoid bias as far as possible in the process of data collection and analysis, the researcher requested three key interviewees validate and review the preliminary results after coding and interpretation of all interview materials, through emails and phone calls. All provided constructive feedback and their comments helped the researcher further adjust the different perspectives, understandings and interpretations collected in an objective manner. In addition, during the data collection process, the researcher took her research assistant with her, in order to have another angle

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<sup>41</sup> Jonathan Lazar, Jinjuan Heidi Feng, and Harry Hochheiser, *Research Methods in Human-Computer Interaction* (St Louis, MO: Elsevier Science, 2017), 315.

on the behaviors of different interviewees. The researcher's personal learning community also played an important role in establishing the objectivity of this research, by reviewing the whole thesis and raising reasonable questions to assist the researcher in filling any gaps in understanding the data in an objective manner and in solving any misunderstandings.

After reviewing the criticism from the interview data, the researcher compared and contrasted the findings (i.e., the interrelationship between categories and participant observation) with the existing literature (theories and findings from other studies) and used Todd's model to assess if the interpretation of the data were meaningful. In other words, the interpretation of data underwent a process of assessment in dialogue with the existing literature, which in turn not only moved the data analysis from a descriptive to a more theoretical level, but also helped to fill the knowledge gap in the existing literature and Todd's model.

The use of multiple data sources to support an interpretation is known as data source triangulation.<sup>42</sup> By employing the strategy of data source triangulation, the researcher selected interviewees from different sectors to respond to the same topic, observing the subtle differences between multiple participants. With the participants' observation data, the study is able to provide context to the analysis. The researcher also conducted a follow-up teleconference with key stakeholders to measure the validity and objectivity of the research results and adjust the results with respondents' feedback (Appendix 10).

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<sup>42</sup> Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1995), 12.

## **Power Balance**

The researcher is aware of her role as the Executive Director of the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, and therefore adopted various tactics to reduce the impact on the research brought about by any power differential between the researcher and the research participants. First of all, all interviews were with the chief ranking individual of the institutions or organizations to ensure equality between the researcher and the interviewees. Before the interview started, the researcher explained clearly to the interviewees, who own the knowledge and experience needed to perform the study, the purpose, potential risks, potential benefits, and confidentiality of the research (Appendix 8). All interviews were conducted upon the interviewees signing the informed consent form. During the data collection stage, the researcher empowered the interviewees by granting them freedom to determine their level of cooperation in the interview, for instance, which team member to include in the interview, the time, date and place of interview, termination of interview, and what information to share with the researcher. The researcher had also spent time building rapport with the interviewees by self-disclosure, running errands, sharing meals, and visiting the interviewees' offices. Most interviewees welcomed the researcher and the researcher built a considerate and sympathetic relationship and a sense of mutual trust with the interviewees.

Furthermore, the researcher was willing to share the data analysis process with the interviewees by allowing them to edit and remove unwanted materials from the interview transcripts. The researcher depended upon the interviewees' permission to use the data in the research. Three key stakeholders also commented and validated the preliminary research results in follow-up phone call interviews. The researcher reengaged the

interviewees to check the authenticity of emerging insights and verify the intended meaning of the interviewees, thereby decreasing the risk of misinterpretation of the interviewees' stories and of inaccurate generalizations. The interviewees were also empowered in this process, because the researcher granted them the right to freely express their opinions on the preliminary results, and assured them that their comments matter to the ultimate research. Overall, these different approaches were employed to enhance the validity, reliability, credibility, and objectivity of the research.

## CHAPTER 6.

### OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the key research results, which are synthesized, interpreted, and linked to the theories and studies discussed in the earlier literature review and biblical rationale.

#### **The First Research Question**

“How do the purpose, organization, and structure of the HKCNP impact the effectiveness of the parachurch CDF partnership?”

#### **Shared Vision**

Of greatest importance is that all interviewees agree that shared vision, mission, and values contribute to the success of a partnership. Interviewees offered an insight into why a vision is essential, stating that vision provides purpose and direction, as well as enhancing trust-building and collaboration among different partners. A shared vision is one that is shared and owned by the relevant parties, and Vision Synergy concurs that a vision that is clear, broadly shared, and related to each member contributes to the success of an active network.<sup>1</sup>

Based on the teaching of the Bible, all Christians are commissioned to take care of the poor, which is a global mission and vision for Christians, as one interviewee (#2, mentor) summarized, saying: “We should start with a clear vision to serve the poor and witness for Christ using love and humility.”

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<sup>1</sup> “Health Factors of Effective Networks,” Synergy Commons, December 21, 2018, <https://synergycommons.net/resources/tool-health-factors-effective-networks/> (accessed January 21, 2020).

### *CDF as a shared vision*

The HKCNP case clearly illustrates the significance of a shared vision in poverty alleviation. Instead of just providing resources and monetary aid to all poor groups in Hong Kong, the HKCNP's vice-chairman, also an interviewee (#1, convener), courageously proposed the CDF program after exploring many case studies and relevant theories from scholars worldwide, suggesting that alleviating intergenerational poverty, one of the best ways of stopping the poverty problem being transmitted from one generation to the next, should be a vision for poverty alleviation in Hong Kong. The main vision or concern of the CDF program is therefore to tackle the problem of inter-generational poverty, which binds parents, schools, churches, NGOs, corporations and the Government in collaborative efforts for our children and the future of the whole society.

The unique feature of the CDF program of "mentorship" has proven effective in alleviating child and inter-generational poverty. Dr. Chan, a deceased former board member of HKCNP, stated that the CDF program provides a good foundation for participating children and creates a favorable condition for their departure from poverty.<sup>2</sup> The participation of CDF mentees is associated with an increase in participation in extra-curricular activities and a decrease in delinquent behaviours.<sup>3</sup> The established literature echoes this positive impact of the CDF program; for example, CDF participants report less hyperactive behavior, emotional problems,

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<sup>2</sup> Charles C. Chan, "A Review of Features and Outcomes of the Hong Kong Child Development Fund," *China Journal of Social Work* 6, no. 2 (2013): 127-148, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17525098.2013.798240>, 130.

<sup>3</sup> Chan, "A Review of Features and Outcomes of the Hong Kong Child Development Fund," 130.

conduct problems, and peer problems than non-CDF-participants. The NGO operators, mentors and parents reported that the horizons of CDF participants were broadened by various activities, such as attending day camps, and training programs. The CDF participants obtained a deeper understanding of themselves and their society, explored their abilities, and formulated ambitions for their future.<sup>4</sup>

#### *Achieving Common Objectives and Collaboration*

Most interviewees recognize the significance of clarifying the vision through communication before establishing the partnership. All parties should ensure that they have a shared vision before collaborating with others. Interviewee #12 established several partnerships with different sectors in the CDF program, ranging from school teachers to business entrepreneurs, for he recruited mentees from schools and liaised with corporations to organize career-related activities for CDF participants. He maintains that all partners, including non-Christian ones, must aim for (and have the same vision of) alleviating the inter-generational poverty problem in Hong Kong. He suggests that partners should always refer back to the original vision after the partnership is established. There are possibilities that partners may go in different directions, even though they are committed to a partnership for several years. Revisiting the vision from time to time helps strengthen the sense of belonging and clarifies the directions and objectives of the partnership.

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<sup>4</sup> Edward Ko Ling Chan, *Study on the Longer-Term Development of Child Development Fund Project Participants* (Hong Kong: Department of Social Work & Social Administration, The University of Hong Kong and Policy 21, 2017).

### *Attaining shared expectations*

The experience of an interviewee (#2, mentor) clearly illustrates the importance of a shared vision in attaining shared or common expectations and outcomes. In the CDF program, mentors are required to keep in contact with mentees at least twice per month. The interviewee gives as much as she can to nurture the mentee because she has the same vision as the district-based program operator with whom she partners. That is, Christians should nurture the rising generation with love and care, and of course, with truth, as in discipleship. She spends extra time taking her mentee to visit tourist spots and monuments in Hong Kong to broaden her horizon, and introduces her to her friends and contacts to broaden her social circle, thereby exceeding the basic requirement of the program. She and her pastor (#14) shared frankly that they want to receive newcomers into their church in the CDF program as their church faces a succession problem.

Nevertheless, her pastor, who is also the program operator, never blames her for being unable to attract mentees to participate in church services, since serving the poor is one of the main purposes of the church in the community. They believe that their reward is in the hand of God. With their shared vision, they do not blame each other or shirk responsibility when the results do not come as expected. They clearly know what they are working for, for whom they are working, and why they are working. Their shared vision leads to shared expectations and shared responsibility.

Similarly, one interviewee (#10, NGO staff) concurs that common values and vision leads to common expectation and outcomes. With the same vision and values, partners soon build trust and a shared mindset.

### *Influence of Shared Religious Belief*

The research offers an insight into a fundamental question—if the purpose of HKCNP impacts the effectiveness of the parachurch CDF partnership, how does one build a shared vision? Some interviewees claimed that shared religious belief leads to a shared direction in partnership, because religious beliefs shape one’s values and mission. People who have the same religion are more likely to have shared norms, rituals, knowledge and perspective, as one interviewee (#11, NGO staff) said: “We are a Christian-based organization, and I guess we have a lot in common when talking about vision and mission, especially in the area of alleviating the poor. I think we are on the same page in this regard.” Another interviewee (#12, pastor) confirmed that “collaboration does not merely mean staying together. Ecumenical collaboration requires shared value and vision, and in the same direction. We can never collaborate if we are poles apart.” Interviewee #22, (schoolmistress) also stated that the school receives many partnership invitations through the CDF program, but she, as a schoolmistress, must guard the school against unreliable partners, and she thus prefers to collaborate with like-minded Christian parties who have a long-term relationship with the school.

Previous literature confirms this finding. Pei Lee’s study finds that religious values and visions do play a crucial role in forming partnerships.<sup>5</sup> Phillip Butler

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<sup>5</sup> Pei Yun Deborah Lee, “Embedding A Transnational Environmental Faith-based Organization: Opportunities and Obstacles in Singapore” (ScholarBank@NUS Repository, 2010-), 26.

agrees with this finding, claiming all partners involved in the partnership must believe that accomplishing the vision is something God wants them to do and that achieving this vision will help partners realize their mission more fully.<sup>6</sup>

To summarize, a shared vision in Christian partnership is mostly, if not fully, attributed to a common religious belief based on the teaching and life of Jesus Christ, who Himself has clear missions in mind, one of which is to take care of the poor and the oppressed (Luke 4.18). Therefore, parachurches are called to partner with the Christian community, because they can reach consensus on the vision and mission more easily due to their shared religious beliefs.

To date, HKCNP partners with sixteen parachurches, three churches, twenty Christian schools and one non-Christian NGO in the CDF program. In one interview a Christian NGO supervisor (#11) questioned why HKCNP partners with a non-Christian school and provides funding to them because she considers that non-Christian might not have the same vision as Christian partners. She believes that Christian partners help low-income people out of love and Christian mission, but HKCNP may not be able to guarantee that non-Christian partners will share the same religious values. The interviewer explained that HKCNP only partners with non-Christian schools and that the non-Christian schools were accepted because they collaborate with Christian NGOs in applying for the CDF program. HKCNP strongly prefers that all partners and mentors are Christians, because their words, deeds, virtues and values will impact youth greatly during the three-year program.

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<sup>6</sup> Phillip Butler, *Well Connected: Releasing Power and Restoring Hope through Kingdom Partnerships* (Colorado Springs, CO: Authentic Publishing, 2006),186.

Therefore, HKCNP prefers to partner with Christians as they are more likely to have the same vision and values.

### *Energizes Effective Partnership and Collaboration*

The research also confirms that a shared vision energizes an effective partnership, as one interviewee (#21, NGO supervisor) stated, saying that an effective collaborative partnership should be driven by a compelling and commonly-owned vision that energizes each participant in the partnership. Similarly, Butler claims that an energizing and challenging vision drives all effective strategic partnerships. This vision must be beyond the capacity of any single person or agency to achieve alone. Only the vision will keep partnerships going.<sup>7</sup> A couple of interviewees (#14, pastor, social worker) also noted that since the vision is more significant than their capacity, they need to connect with others to accomplish it, since the power of one is limited. Alleviating the poverty problem cannot be done individually. In the CDF program, trainloads of resources and manpower are needed to fulfil the requirement for matching funds, mentors, activities, and career-related experience. An independent operator may not have the ability to balance so many things in just one program. In short, the interviewees are empowered by a common vision when they join hands and work together as a team for the common good in tackling the huge issue of inter-generational poverty.

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<sup>7</sup> Butler, *Well Connected*, 16.

## **Committed Christian Leadership**

Leadership is particularly vital to partnerships concerned with poverty alleviation because tackling the issue of poverty involves multiple stakeholders, including the government, society and the business sector, and a leader is needed to coordinate different parties and consolidate resources, ideas and communication. No matter how resourceful and a wise one is, no one can fight this battle without good team leadership. The leadership in a parachurch partnership has two main aspects: leaders in partnership (their personal qualities and reputation) and their leadership roles in the network partnership.

### *Personal Qualities and Reputation of a Leader*

It is important to note that a majority of interviewees placed great importance on the personal qualities and reputation of a leader by advising that a leader who is trustworthy, reputable and publicly credible will attract more people to join the partnership and contribute to the publicity and branding of the network. Interviewee #11 (NGO staff) said, “The branding of the network is formed because we have representative and *well-known* founding organizations. By now, we enjoy advantages if we claim we are partners of this network.” The founding organizations of the HKCNP are the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union, the Hong Kong Christian Council and the Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement, covering a majority of Hong Kong church members. The former two are even claimed to be the largest and the most representative inter-denominational organizations in Hong Kong.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ng Gwok Git, 吳國傑, “Lyun Hap Zou Zik: Waa Lyun Wui, Hip Zeon Wui Gok Sik Jau Ho Bat Tung 聯合組織：華聯會、協進會角色有何不同”？[What is the Difference Between the Role of

Interviewee #18 (schoolmaster) has partnered with HKCNP for just one year, starting with little knowledge about HKCNP. He began a partnership with HKCNP due to his schoolmaster friend's recommendation. However, when he discovered that his friend had been serving in HKCNP for a long time, he shared that HKCNP now seems more familiar to him, saying: "He [my friend] is one of the most pivotal and representative persons in the society. The trustworthiness of HKCNP increases because he serves as a member of the Board of Directors there." He is thus willing to deepen the relationship and continue the partnership with HKCNP.

Being wise is cited as one of the important attributes of a good leader as interviewee #14 (pastor) said: "I have trust in him because we know him very well; we know him for quite a long time, and I think he is wise enough to lead the program. So, when he launched this program, I participated in it in no time."

The vice-chairman of HKCNP, Dr. Philemon Choi, has had a deep concern for youth for over sixty years. He is active in community affairs and is appointed by the Government as a member of various committees related to youth policy and youth services, such as vice-chairman of Commission on Poverty (2005 to 2007), chairman of Commission on Youth (2001 to 2007). He is also a regular seminar speaker on matters related to youth at parents and teachers' associations, school services, and international conferences, as well as being the author of several best sellers and a regular contributor to youth magazines. Based on the good backgrounds of the HKCNP's leaders, partners recognize them as reliable and

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The Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union and Hong Kong Christian Council?],” *Christian Times*, June 7, 2007, [https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=41408&Pid=2&Version=1032&Cid=586&Charset=big5\\_hkscs](https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=41408&Pid=2&Version=1032&Cid=586&Charset=big5_hkscs) (accessed January 16, 2020).

trustworthy on youth and poverty issues and establish a partnership with HKCNP without any doubts.

### **Role of a Leader in Effective Partnerships**

In Todd's model, a successful religious networking organization is well organized with a clear leadership structure and defined roles.<sup>9</sup> He also identifies that the co-founders of the religious networking organization are normally the explicit leaders who perform strong leadership.<sup>10</sup> In this research, the researcher has identified the different roles played by a good leader, as elaborated below.

#### *Servant Leader*

The research offers an insight into the roles of a successful leader. An effective leader is a servant leader. One interviewee (#2, mentor) frankly shared in a follow-up teleconference that leaders who are willing to serve and spread the aroma of Christ are desirable in a partnership. If the network leaders can show servant leadership and have humility in collaboration despite their outstanding achievements and reputation, people will be more inclined to follow them and commit to a long partnership with them. Interviewee #2 was referring to the initiator of the CDF program, also a former board member of HKCNP, who always encouraged her to serve youth in her life. This HKCNP leader proposed the CDF program after a long period of research. However, he does not take credit for his contribution, but sets a role model for others to follow as a servant leader. He also shows great care for the emotional and spiritual lives of mentors, empowering them

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<sup>9</sup> Nathan R. Todd, "Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice: An Ethnographic Case Study," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 50, nos. 1-2 (2012), 235.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

to walk with their mentees in God's grace and love. He listens to others' problems patiently, guides them through their difficulties and spends plenty of time praying with other mentors.

### *Facilitator*

Interviewee #12 (pastor) confirmed, "We expect the network leader to help facilitate and provide a platform for us to line up with other churches and coordinate resources." The interviewee's church is a small local congregation with only three staff overseeing the CDF program. The help from HKCNP is essential to their operation of the CDF, such as introducing speakers and liaising with experts.

The HKCNP supports and offers assistance to operators in different ways. It centralizes recruitment by recruiting Christians as mentors from all churches. In terms of operation, the mentor can decide in which district they wish to serve, and the HKCNP will help liaise with the relevant operators and mentors, and follow-up on their relationship-building to ensure that they understand each other's expectations and have regular as well as positive communication. To reduce the burden on the operator to organize career-related and development activities for the mentees throughout the program, HKCNP invites its advisors, executive committee members and also board members, who are key experts in their fields, to hold seminars and sharing sessions for schools and NGOs.

Due to the diversified background of different partners, it is necessary to have a facilitator to guide the partnership, and to lead and oversee the whole process. One interviewee (#18, school teacher) remarked that the long-term contribution of a network leader is very admirable, because the leader acts as a role model by serving

willingly, acting out his or her calling practically, and pursuing the ministry tirelessly and persistently. An example of such a leader is a key leader in the program, a schoolmistress, who holds a doctoral degree in education. She is also a member of the Youth Development Commission and the founding chairperson of the Hong Kong Association of Careers Masters and Guidance Masters. She provides evidence-based advice and consultation for HKCNP CDF partners to guide them in youth mentoring. Due to the social unrest in Hong Kong and the generation gap, she provides valuable suggestions and advice to HKCNP and its CDF partners on how to understand youth better and walks with them under such a backdrop through different communication channels, such as online communication platform, workshops and meetings.

#### *Fostering Collaboration and Trust*

A leader plays an important role in building trust, and fostering collaboration among different partners. Interviewee #12 (preacher) commented that the network leaders who are good at listening humbly to others' needs help build trust in the partnership: "I think the network leader plays a significant role in connecting all partners to share difficulties and burden. At the network platform, partners can gain knowledge and reference by listening to others' experiences. As you know, two heads are better than one." In this connection, the vice-chairperson of HKCNP, Dr. Philemon Choi, holds two CDF meetings annually and personally by listening to the CDF operators' thoughts and views. When CDF operators raise difficulties in training the mentors, HKCNP organizes an annual Mentor Day to provide training for mentors on such issues as communications, time management, and relationship

building, to equip and to empower mentors with the necessary knowledge and skills and reduce the burden of frontline operators.

This means that while there may be different methods of working among partners, these differences must be acknowledged, and any attempt to force all parties into a common mold must be stoutly resisted. Interviewee #20 (NGO staff) said that the network leaders should deal with expectations, assess the relationships among partners, and serve the partners with a positive attitude.

Therefore, a leader is needed to balance the give and take of all partners. As interviewee #10 (NGO supervisor) revealed, the leader should balance the interests and conflicts among partners, for instance, coordinating the application of the CDF program in different districts to avoid competition, and balancing the contribution of each partner. More importantly, the whole partnership should be led by God.<sup>11</sup> The Labor and Welfare Bureau allows NGOs and schools to apply for district-based and school-based projects, respectively. Since it only approves ten applications from schools and one operator in one district for each batch, the competition is fierce. Some NGOs have few resources, and if they fail to bid for the project, they face a funding problem in maintaining the operation. As a result, HKCNP oversees the application numbers in the eighteen districts in Hong Kong to better allocate the applications among NGOs. Since among the eighteen districts, the competition in Kwun Tong, Tsuen Wan and Kowloon City is the most intense, HKCNP intentionally invites NGOs to apply from other districts such as Yuen Long, Sha Tin, which have fewer applications, in order to avoid conflicts.

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<sup>11</sup> Cathy Ross, "The Theology of Partnership," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 3 (2010), 146.

### *Pioneer*

Most interviewees affirm that a good leader should always be a pioneer in organizing or establishing new projects; for instance, in leading partners to apply for funding, exploring the market gap and supervising the collaborating project at a macro level. Interviewee #10 (NGO) shared that “We are grateful that HKCNP is willing to act as a pioneer and lead us to explore different possibilities, for instance, post-CDF, Mentor Day. HKCNP has always taken up the role to lead and line up the whole thing for us.” The HKCNP is acting as a pioneer in establishing the post-CDF program to extend the life-nurturing campaign until teenagers graduate from secondary schools and enter tertiary institutions or the job market to realize their potential. By assisting youth in career planning and in guiding their growth, youth can attain better achievements, be inclusive of and helpful towards each other in enhancing their upward mobility, and truly lift themselves out of inter-generational poverty. The HKCNP organizes a Mentor Day, which is a half-day activity, to empower and provide training to all CDF partners, including operators, mentors, and potential stakeholders, and utilizes its network to invite credible and professional counsellors and experts to provide training, given individual local centers may not have the capability to organize such large-scale seminars.

### **Partnership with Open Structure but Clear Roles**

#### *An Open Structure*

This research offers an insight into a structure for effective partnerships. A sense of control (structure) is of less importance than other elements in the

parachurch partnership due to its low occurrence in the interviews. A more desirable structure is flexible, open, and less rigid.

The HKCNP provides a good example of such a structure. It has always encouraged newcomers to join the CDF program by providing a Mentor Day workshop for potential mentors and operators to observe and listen to more experienced CDF operators. It welcomes all CDF-related parties to join the Mentor Day workshop and promotes open discussion among participants to mobilize collaboration in CDF. In the HKCNP CDF program, there is no hierarchy that only allows certain people to speak. It allocates two conveners, one program staff-member, and five core team members coordinating more than fifty operators in the program. Meetings are organized twice a year to receive feedback from operators about the actual situation and to build partnerships. Conveners then supervise the program operators from a macro-level, suggesting strategic changes and monitoring the whole development openly and flexibly. HKCNP provides partners with program updates periodically and connects them with their needed resources.

#### *Clear Roles*

While the structure may be open and flexible, it is important to have clear roles for different members. A few interviewees are aware of the role of leading networks and partners. Some agree that partners should have a clear division of work to avoid competition and redundancies. A partnership does not simply mean doing the same thing together. Though working together can bring synergy, it is better to plan strategically so that partners can complement each other well, using their own strengths. Interviewee #9 (NGO staff) said, “In my opinion, every

organization has its contributions, and therefore we play different roles in a partnership. We have to coordinate and collaborate, especially in advocacy and education.”

The HKCNP understands its role in advocacy, and thus always takes the initiative in gathering suggestions and comments from frontline partners, whose role, amongst others, is to give genuine feedback to the Government, reflecting the actual situation from the frontline CDF operator to the Government for purposes of policy formulation so that the CDF program can gain more support in terms of resources and policy. To this end, HKCNP holds two CDF meetings annually to listen to partners’ views and suggestions about continuously improving the CDF, by promoting the program and mentorship culture, recognizing and enhancing the capacity building of implementing organizations, adjusting the capital input of CDF program modestly, fulfilling the needs of the operators, and enhancing the subsequent complementary measures and long-term effects of the CDF.

At the same time, the HKCNP plays a role in supervising the development and promoting the brand of the CDF program. In 2013, together with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the two participating organizations, the Industrial and Evangelical Fellowship and Christian Action, the HKCNP published evidence-based research on the CDF. This study provided data for program improvement and sorted out an operational and executive mode for the program for future reference. In addition, frontline partners play their roles by promoting the CDF program with evidence-based data in order to attract more people to join. Some interviewees (#10, #22) do appreciate this sort of research and look forward to HKCNP conducting

similar comprehensive studies in the future. Interviewee #11 (NGO supervisor) also strongly agrees that the HKCNP should not provide direct services, in order to avoid conflicts and competition with CDF operators, and should devote more effort to championing the program overall.

To summarize, an open role structure allows partners to pursue common interests and promote collaboration. The partnership has limited well-defined core team roles to sustain the operation and an open environment to welcome newcomers and encourage new ideas. This fits well with Todd's model, in which an effective religious networking organization sets up open role structures, allowing old and new members alike to pursue their interests and become involved. The presence of a core group sustains the progress of the organization and provides a consistent place for linking to occur in the interest of promoting social justice.<sup>12</sup> This kind of partnership is also rooted in the doctrine of the Trinity of God, with each person having specific roles and division of work, yet of one unified essence.

### **The Second Research Question**

“How does the HKCNP parachurch partnership network empower the Christian community in poverty alleviation through the CDF program?”

#### **Serving the Neighborhood Community**

Another element required for an effective partnership, as revealed by the research, is serving the community through the partnership. A majority of interviewees affirm that networks that are willing to serve the community stand a higher chance of attracting partners, because the network provides context and a platform for the intersection of faith

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<sup>12</sup> Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice,” 240.

and social betterment. The partnership can thus develop further and take action instead of staying at the vision-outline stage. A partnership that contributes to society is one worthy of existence. First Corinthians 10:24 is the principle here: “Let no one seek his good, but the good of his neighbour.”<sup>13</sup> The community is our neighbor.

Interviewee #9 (NGO supervisor) shared that the CDF program is unlike others, in providing sufficient resources for a community center to follow up with both parents and children for three years. A personal development plan in the CDF is particularly valuable for youth living in a remote district.

Interviewee #6 (beneficiary), who lives in a remote district in the New Territories, recognizes the effectiveness of the CDF program. He was sixteen years old when he participated in the CDF, through which he built a strong relationship with a young Christian mentor, who is an interior designer. During his high school years, his mentor became his main support and shoulder to cry on to relieve the pressure of facing the public examination, as his parents had to work long hours and did not have time to communicate with him about his situation. This mentee was encouraged by the mentor to utilize the targeted saving plan to travel abroad to the United Kingdom to explore the world on his own for the first time.<sup>14</sup> His experience of visiting an urban city planning office to learn more about sustainable city development and industry development inspired him to study civil engineering at University. He was about to graduate and become a professional capable of achieving upward mobility. He claimed that he had

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<sup>13</sup> William D. Taylor, *Kingdom Partnership for Synergy in Missions* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1994), 189.

<sup>14</sup> Targeted Savings encourages participants to set a monthly savings target of HK\$200 over a two-year period. Corporate and/or private donors, together with the Government, contribute a 1:1:1 matching fund for the savings. Each child can achieve up to a maximum sum of HK\$14,400 to implement their Personal Development Plans upon completion of the Targeted Savings programme.

been transformed by the CDF program into becoming more mature and confident. His horizon and social circle had broadened with the help of his mentor and the career-related experience provided by the business partners. He is now himself a mentor in the CDF program, passing his blessing on to the next generation.

As can be seen above, the CDF seeks to encourage youth from disadvantaged backgrounds to plan and cultivate positive attitudes to reduce inter-generational poverty. It also aims to provide these youth with more personal development opportunities. Through formulating and implementing personal development plans, the CDF seeks to encourage these youth to develop asset-building habits as well as accumulate savings and intangible assets (such as positive attitudes and social networks), which are important for their future development.

Some interviewees also reflected that the network acts as a facilitator and assists partners who have limited resources, so that with help from the network, they can finally serve the community more effectively. For example, interviewee #9 (supervisor) shared that their difficulty recruiting sufficient mentors to fulfil the mentor-mentee ratio requirement of the Government (i.e. preferably 1:1 and not lower than 1:3 to ensure that the mentor gives the mentee adequate attention and guidance) as their social center is located in a remote district in the New Territories where most people are reluctant to come and serve. The HKCNP took the initiative to help the operator liaise with a church partner and a professional fellowship. The interviewee appreciates the assistance from the HKCNP and recognizes the network power of HKCNP. Interviewee #12 (pastor) also said, “The network helps the Christian communities to act out their faith practically instead of paying lip service.”

To sum up, the partnership aims to serve the community together for social betterment, and where a sense of bonding and mutual trust is growing. The HKCNP provides help without burdening the NGO partners, many of which appreciate HKCNP not asking them to submit tedious statistics and administrative reports after receiving the funding. Some NGO interviewees reflect that they feel the HKCNP collaborates with them for the sake of the benefits of the program and recipients, instead of merely seeking to complete tasks hastily.

#### *Identifying the Neighborhood Needs of a Community*

In order to serve the community effectively, it is important to first identify the needs. This is in line with Todd's model, in which a network attempts to meet the needs of the local community by linking it with religious congregations. Todd remarks that a religious networking organization has distinct characteristics that lead to different social processes and interactions in the pursuit of community betterment and social justice.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Butler suggests that a successful partnership should start by identifying priority felt needs among the people being served.<sup>16</sup>

The HKCNP is a good example of the above in regularly monitoring the district's latest poverty situation using information available from district councils, the Social Welfare Department, Housing Authority and Commission on Poverty. The HKCNP encourages qualified partners to organize CDF programs in districts that have a high poverty rate, and high new residential and poverty rates. The HKCNP also conducts district studies to understand the genuine situation of the citizens, using questionnaires

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<sup>15</sup> Todd, "Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice," 240.

<sup>16</sup> Butler, *Well Connected*, 17.

and interviews with church partners in the district. Interviewees #12 (pastor and preacher) were mobilized by HKCNP in 2016 to apply for the CDF program in the Sha Tin District, as HKCNP knew that a new Shui Chuen O public estate (with 30,000 underprivileged residents) had just opened, and would provide a precious chance for the church to enter the community by assisting the new residents.

On the other hand, people who have never experienced poverty themselves or who are not willing to engage with and respect the poor will not serve as good partners in the poverty alleviation project. Poverty alleviation is in the real world, not on paper. A network that aims at serving the poor should root its base deep in the community. Through frequent involvement in the community, one has a higher chance of discovering the needs of that community and attracting like-minded people to partner together.

For example, one interviewee stated that the CDF program is bringing more support for the operator (#11, NGO staff), and another said that the social betterment project is an opportunity for Christians to bring the values of justice and mercy (#2, mentor). The NGO operator recruits 120 youths through their community partners (mostly from schools and churches). By serving the youth for three years, the NGO operator gets to know the families and their needs; and can then seek the resources needed to serve together. Interviewee #7, the beneficiary, thanked HKCNP for championing the CDF program and providing him with resources, because he joined the Youth-Upward Mobility (YUM) program, organized by HKCNP after his three-year CDF journey. The YUM program facilitates youth who had poor results in college entrance examinations in the transition from school to the workplace, and helps them acquire skills and experience from employment, as a path for upward mobility. When he failed in the

public examination and felt frustrated after the CDF program, he sought help from the social worker, who referred the case to HKCNP for help. Under the YUM program, HKCNP helped him find a job with career path under the guidance of a Christian mentor. In short, the CDF program acts as a bridge for HKCNP and operators to encounter and touch the lives of youth in need.

*Serving the Neighborhood Community Together in a Network*

Networking is important in serving the community as one interviewee (#14, pastor) pointed out: “The Church has the responsibility to serve the poor in the community; however, one single church cannot fulfil everything, and thus a network is needed. The network can help connect Christians from all walks to serve together.”

The HKCNP is an example of how good networking works. It partners with various experts to serve together in the CDF program. For instance, (i) scholars conduct faith-based research and long-term research to study the effectiveness of the CDF program; (ii) the NGO Child Development Matching Fund provides matching funds for operators; (iii) the Child Development Initiative Alliance provides career-related exposure and experience to enhance young people’s employability; (iv) key persons in the Youth Development Commission and Commission on Poverty reflect the opinions of the frontline operators and recipients to the Government; and (v) youth experts provide professional training and advice to mentors and mentees.

Parachurches serve the community with people or stakeholders with different gifts and functions, being accountable to each other as an assembly of God. Some interviewees (e.g., #16, schoolmaster) suggested that God provides for the partnership, so they need to do good for the community in response, and are willing to leverage their internal

resources for the program if necessary. One interviewee (#19, schoolmaster) echoed that the CDF program provides a platform for different stakeholders in a school to serve the students together. For example, the principal of the school, as the operator, recruits a service program teacher to run the program to fulfil the service requirement; hires a Religious Studies teacher to engage in a program with Christian components; engages a social worker to help the children; recruits alumni and church partners who may use the school facility for mentors; seeks funding support from the Parent-Teacher Association; and deepens engagement with the students and the partners, since the program also has a parent involvement component. Youth and family-related experts and counsellors also provide training and sharing sessions for low-income families through the CDF program.

#### *Serving as a “Kingdom” Community*

The desired unity in partnerships reflects the essence of the church. Genuine church life means shared time, shared meals, shared priorities, and some level of economic sharing, and some genuine economic mutual dependence; in other words, a community life.<sup>17</sup> The human community is the Kingdom community only when it is formed around Jesus and lives by the Spirit for the sake of the Kingdom.<sup>18</sup> Some interviewees revealed that they find strength in Christ (#18, school teacher), can journey, celebrate and cry with the poor (#2, mentor), and that Christianity brought them together to serve the poor (#8, program staff). Strengthening one another is contagious (#12, pastor), and the partnership strengthens each partner’s team and collaboration because the project is so diversified (#22, schoolmaster).

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<sup>17</sup> Howard A. Snyder, “The Church as Community,” in *Liberating the Church* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1996), 112.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## **Loving Personal Relationships**

Importantly, the research shows that all interviewees agree that relationships are the most important contributors to the success of a partnership. In fact, “relationship” ranks the most frequently quoted element among the nine proposed elements. To build a healthy relationship that connects all the partnerships, time investment and communication are required.

### *Christian-based Loving Personal Relationship/fellowship*

Most interviewees recognize the significance of building a personal relationship before establishing a partnership, since personal relationship is the foundation of partnership. Interviewees also reveal that a loving and caring relationship of treating one other like brother and sister is most desirable.

In the context of a Christian community, partners are encouraged to treat one other with Christian love, or *agape*, and incorporate Christian values in relationship building, because love can help us embrace diversity and resolve conflicts. For instance, one interviewee (#16, school vice-principal) frankly shared that she found it unsatisfactory to partner with HKCNP because the implementation of the CDF program fell far short of her expectations. The HKCNP arranged a church to provide mentors and extra-curricular activities for the school to carry out CDF program. The church enjoyed a close relationship with HKCNP and promised to help the school, yet it turned out to be unreliable: the young mentors had high absentee rates, leading to fruitless and ineffectual mentor-mentee relationships, and ultimately adversely affecting the overall outcome of the school’s CDF program. The school vice-principal complained that HKCNP had been deficient in handling the partnership between the school and the church, thus failing to

fulfill its role adequately. A face-to-face meeting with the Executive Director of HKCNP was scheduled to solve the misunderstanding through communication. The HKCNP found out that there had been misunderstandings and mismatched expectations between the school and the church, and immediately arranged another church for the school. More importantly, the school teacher originally in charge was a non-Christian who did not have the same vision as the church and the school. The church mentors spent a lot of extra time building relationships with mentees, while the teacher expected to see the mentors attending all the official mentor session during official program time. The interviewee concluded that Christianity is the key in the CDF program, claiming that any misunderstanding can be easily solved due to the bonding between and shared values of Christian communities. According to one interviewee's reflection (#2, mentor), a network motivated by love will have greater impact and achieve harmony among partners. Partners work most comfortably together when they can share their personal stories in addition to following a formal ministry agenda. As one interviewee (#14, pastor) said:

In my perspective, the relationship is the most important thing in partnerships. Relationship means how well you know each other. Religiously speaking, relationship means loving each other like family members. I think recently, what touches me the most in partnership is...we gather in the past because of ministry and agenda, but gradually I can see that God loves the way we gather just like a family. When we love each other, God rejoices. I also discover that the partnership goes very smoothly when the relationship between partners is just like family members. In contrast, if we do not have a personal relationship, conflicts and diversion may arise easily. Therefore, to me, relationship and trust-building is my priority in partnerships.

The interviewee's response shows that the parachurch partnership relationship should be like that of a family caring for and respecting each other, not just engaging in the project, but being there for each other.

Prayer plays an important part in establishing Christian relationships. Kingdom-minded partners frequently gather to pray and seek God's will for the benefits of others, not just for themselves. For instance, interviewees #2 (mentor) and #14 (pastor) shared that their church prayed together for months before applying for the CDF program as they wanted to know how God would use them to bless the community, and how the church could support its Christians in joining the CDF program. This kind of prayer strengthens the relationship between the mentor and the pastor, allowing them to go through all the difficulties of the three-year program. The collaboration is not out of self-interest, but is of God's calling.

Another interviewee (#21, NGO supervisor) shared that she has established a long-term and stable relationship with her partner in the CDF program. Since they work in the same building and under the same denomination, they often visit each other's offices. As a result, their partnership runs smoothly and has a very low attrition rate among mentors, since they have strong support from and communication with both the participants and partners in the program.

Daniel Dow agrees that network members should take time to build relationships and get to know one another's personal side. Interpersonal connections help partners find what they have in common. The stronger the connections are within the network, the more likely the team is to build mutual empathy and trust.<sup>19</sup>

By contrast, partnering with strangers or acquaintances, where no personal relationship has been established, may have a higher risk of failure since it takes time to know a partner's background, vision, mission and working habits well. For instance,

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<sup>19</sup> Daniel Dow, "How to Build Trust in a Virtual Team," Synergy Commons, April 19, 2017, <https://synergycommons.net/resources/build-trust-virtual-team/> (accessed January 6, 2020).

interviewee #16, the vice-principal, complained that HKCNP mismatched them with an unfamiliar church, leading to an unsuccessful mentorship and a broken relationship between school and church. The church introduced by HKCNP is very passionate, active in social welfare ministry, and youth oriented. The HKCNP had established a close relationship with the pastor and expected the school would enjoy a positive partnership with him. It was the first time the school and the church had collaborated, however, and they failed to establish regular and healthy communication, as the key project manager of the school, on whom the school and church rely, resigned halfway through the project. Misunderstandings, such as shirking responsibility and criticizing one other for failure, arose from lack of communication and mutual understanding. Thus, the HKCNP introduced another church partner to recruit mentors after the previous disappointing experience. This church utilizes the school space on Sundays for services and visits the school regularly on weekdays to have lunch with the students. The partnership now runs smoothly because they knew each other well before partnering in the program, and have developed more than one contact point to secure information exchange.

A good partnership is nevertheless possible even if the partner is non-Christian. For example, one interviewee (#4, fundraising-related partner) shared that she has received many partner invitations and donations from corporations, mostly non-Christian, because they have the same goal of instilling hope in disadvantaged children. For non-Christian partners, the network should promote the shared vision intentionally to glue partners together. Moreover, trust is earned based on the past achievements and profile of the network, quite apart from having the same religion.

Good listening is the key to developing intimate and authentic relationships. For example, at every HKCNP CDF meeting, the host, Dr. Choi will devote at least one hour to frontline operators sharing their views about the current situation so as to understand their needs and difficulties and provide the most suitable assistance. Moreover, CDF program staff make phone calls to their partners regularly to understand their situation. In this matter, Ross points out that the first step toward being an authentic partner is to be a *good listener*, willing to become involved in the lives of others. This requires humility, vulnerability, availability, receptivity, and patience, just like brothers and sisters in families.<sup>20</sup>

### *Friendship*

The research reveals the significance of building friendships in the partnership as a sign of an authentic relationship, as pointed out by interviewee #4 (partner), who has dealt with an array of non-Christian partners and donors in the CDF program: “Maintaining a relationship with partners is of utmost importance. It is just like maintaining a relationship with friends. Treat your partners like friends and the partnership will be sustainable.” For example, when the Government commissions new programs, HKCNP notifies its partners one by one and encourages them to apply. HKCNP also spends time having meals with operators and visiting them to show care and support for their efforts. Operators treasure the relationship with HKCNP and participate in opening or celebration ceremonies to experience and share the joy and achievements of the CDF program.

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<sup>20</sup> Ross, “The Theology of Partnership,” 146.

Sharing personal places of pain and hope, along with other intentional relationship-building efforts, results in an authentic relationship, a friendship.<sup>21</sup> In partnerships aimed at alleviating poverty, conflicts may easily arise over resources, strategies, knowledge, background or competition. Divergences appear often since the poverty issue is very complicated, and requires different sectors to contribute to resolving conflicts. In an authentic relationship, built in Christian love, partners are more inclusive and tolerant.

### **Trust**

Trust is one of the important elements in an effective partnership, and is related to a genuine personal relationship, as discussed above. Effective networking depends on strong relationships of trust among a diverse group of members as interviewee #14 (pastor) describes. Their partners trust each other, and are led not by power but by relationship, since they share similar DNA and are led by the Holy Spirit. Concerning trust, interviewee #12 (pastor) commented as follows:

Trust and sincerity are critical to the partnership. In long-term partnerships, conflicts or misunderstandings may arise. Furthermore, you know, in most of the cases, people are reserved and would conceal their dissatisfaction to maintain a formal partnership relationship. I think this tendency poses a risk to the partnership because the accumulated discontent may lead to a bigger problem. When a problem arises, we must find a way to resolve it instead of avoiding it. If there is something core to the partnership which cannot be resolved, then we may better end the partnership, which may well be a solution as well.

To show how trust operates, HKCNP recruited a mentor from church C for operator D, which had no staff to manage the program for a while. The mentors were frustrated and ineffective. Church C trusted HKCNP and honestly shared their concerns, and allowed us to step in and be involved with their mentors. In the end, HKCNP hired

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<sup>21</sup> Ross, "The Theology of Partnership," 146.

outside mentor trainers to help the mentors, who showed their appreciation for HKCNP in bringing all mentors closer together, thereby resolving their problem.

In general, trust means being open to sharing in a relationship and being sincere. The research offers insights into factors that contribute to building trust in a partnership, as elaborated below.

### *Being Consistently Trustworthy*

Trust cannot be demanded; it is earned. One earns the trust of others by being consistently trustworthy. Without this element of trust, which is nurtured by tested and proven commitments,<sup>22</sup> it is very difficult to develop a partnership, as interviewee #15 (schoolmaster) claimed: trust is earned, not created. People can earn another's trust by being reliable for a long period.

Keith Fowler calls trust the glue that holds networks together, binding leaders, organizations, constituency groups, issues and sectors. Trust grows over a long period and from a solid relationship base.<sup>23</sup> For example, the HKCNP intentionally builds trust among leaders of the partner organizations by organizing special projects such as research, mentor training, prayer meetings, and having meals to bind people together to build trust. Some partners had collaborated with HKCNP from the beginning of the program nine years ago, and are now helping to recruit new partners.

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<sup>22</sup> Eleazar S. Fernandez, "A Theology of Partnership in a Globalized World," *Review & Expositor* 113, no. 1 (2016): 23-31, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0034637315619004>,29.

<sup>23</sup> Keith Fowler, "What Makes a Great Network Leader?" Synergy Commons (August 17, 2019) <https://synergycommons.net/resources/what-makes-great-network-leader/> (accessed January 6, 2020).

### *Common Faith and Values*

The research reveals that having the same faith and values makes it easier to build trust. Interviewee #22 (schoolmaster) said: “To me, the brother and sister in churches, they share the same language with us, and we have the same faith so that our perspective and thinking are very alike. I do not have to train or test him or her for the long term to ensure his or her quality.” Todd’s model supports this finding, with religious homogeneity among partners creating a sense of bonding and mutual trust, as well as providing common norms, rituals and language.<sup>24</sup>

To conclude, since there are 1300 Christian churches of different denominations and uneven resources in the community, and more than 800 Christian-based organizations all aiming at social betterment,<sup>25</sup> subtle but real competition easily occurs as material and human resources are limited. The success and failure of the partnership can easily be traced to the level of trust among the partners. Therefore, the partnership needs to incorporate a powerful trust-building process, as exemplified by HKCNP, to remove barriers and increase opportunities of serving God together in our community.

### **Effective Communication**

Most interviewees touch on the issue of communication when they talk about maintaining a partnership. Communication is important as it builds understanding, increases intimacy and collaboration, and facilitates sharing and consensus.

According to the interviewees, communication means updating and hearing about each other’s needs regularly. The aim is to understand each other and help partners know

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<sup>24</sup> Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice,” 242.

<sup>25</sup> “Chapter 21: Religion and Custom,” *Hong Kong Yearbook 2016* (Hong Kong: Information Services Department, 2016).

each other's needs better. For most interviewees, face-to-face communication is preferred, because it adds a sense of intimacy and belonging, although regular teleconferencing is also useful for updating each other's current situation. Though the ever-evolving telecommunication software available nowadays, verbal communication still serves as a better way to communicate than texting because it reveals the emotions of a speaker, which affects the relationship between partners.

Interviewee #11 (NGO staff) said:

Communicating *simultaneously* is the key to form a healthy partnership. Without it, we cannot get the update information and situation from partners. Furthermore, as time passes by, we will find that our partners change a lot as we do not know, so we need to communicate simultaneously to understand and support each other more.

Another interviewee (#10, NGO staff) said:

Communication is the key to the partnership because if a partner is unreachable and not available, it is very difficult to collaborate. We have to communicate to establish a close relationship and let each other know what is happening right now, what his/her requirements are, and to make things clear.

To facilitate communication, HKCNP has set up a *WhatsApp* group with all CDF partners for sharing and quick updating. The HKCNP sends e-mails occasionally for updating developments. The HKCNP meets its CDF partners once every six months to chat and solicits issues from all CDF partners for discussion in the meeting. The partners take turns to discuss problems they are facing, with ways of recruiting mentors and attracting youth being popular topics. The vice-chairperson, Dr. Choi, always listens and provides solutions and advice to the CDF operators and arranges small group discussions during the meeting. Furthermore, HKCNP organizes annual events and special projects, such as the Post-CDF program and CDF researches, to deepen commitment and communication.

Nonetheless, there were still some cases of ineffective communication between HKCNP and its partners, who complained that the resources from HKCNP were not distributed evenly and fairly. Some complained that HKCNP added more partners, but did not provide sufficient support for each. To resolve the misunderstanding, the Executive Director of HKCNP always made a phone call to the relevant partner to explain the importance of expanding the network and to resolve the conflict.

To conclude, partners may have different concepts and definitions of poverty and different approaches to handling poverty alleviation. Good communication helps partners clarify misunderstandings and misconceptions as well as reach consensus. An effective partnership is made up of diverse partners with their own clear agendas, which requires further communication to fully understand their potential roles and strengths in the partnership and hence evaluate their impact and reduce duplication. Given the differences between partners, success in effective collaboration is achieved through effective communication, in which our common purpose can be emphasized, and our commonalities identified.

### **The Third Research Question**

“How does social capital emerging through HKCNP help parachurch organizations enhance the effectiveness of the CDF partnership relationship and trust-building?”

#### **Social Capital**

Social capital is defined in terms of either bonding and bridging social capital, where increased opportunities or resources are created for individuals, due to their connections within a group (bonding capital) or for the group as a whole due to

connections between heterogeneous groups (bridging capital).<sup>26</sup> Bonding social capital refers to trusting and cooperative relations within homogeneous social networks. Bridging social capital refers to relations of respect and mutuality between people across diverse social networks. Hard social capital refers to task-oriented resources, such as advice and coaching, whereas soft social capital refers to emotional support resources, such as friendship and modelling.<sup>27</sup> Social capital is critical in helping a person achieve upward social mobility and break free of the shackles of poverty, because social capital provides more opportunities and supports to therefore obtain economic capital.<sup>28</sup>

### *Forms of Social Capital*

Some interviewees revealed that resources and funding are the greatest concern in establishing a program and partnership. For most interviewees, the network provides valuable resources for their ministry, including a social circle, sponsorship, human resources, expertise and a platform. Therefore, the network, apart from funding, is a form of social capital.

Social capital helps garner expertise to help with resolving the problem of poverty. The problem of poverty is so great no one can solve it on their own. The network should be equipped with different types of expertise from the academic, social, and operational sectors so that it can provide a comprehensive solution to the poverty problem. Some interviewees agreed that community experts, who are reliable and reputable, make the network relationship more valuable and unique, as they provide experience and resources

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<sup>26</sup> Todd, "Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice," 231.

<sup>27</sup> Vera Tang, "Is Social Capital as Important as Human Capital in Child Poverty Alleviation?" *Poverty in a Rich Society* (2017): 145-178, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2n7q0f.14>.

<sup>28</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. J. Richardson (Westport: CT: Greenwood, 1986), 241-258.

from special channels. Moreover, several interviewees report that the network does help them develop their strengths in the poverty alleviation program, because there is much complementary expertise, and they can thus focus on tasks they are good at.

Though HKCNP has established various kinds of networks with experts of different professions, social capital is not a panacea to all partnerships and poverty alleviation programs. A partner (#9, NG operator) once asked HKCNP to provide assistance recruiting mentors because of their location in a remote district. Coincidentally, HKCNP had known a professional fellowship working near the NGO for years who were willing to serve, best suiting the needs of the NGO. Nevertheless, the partnership did not have a fruitful outcome because there was a huge discrepancy in the working styles, communication habits and backgrounds between the NGO and the professional fellowship. The NGO was experienced in serving the grassroots and knew very well how to communicate with them, while the fellowship consisted of professionals with great knowledge in business, but who were new to the mentorship area. The professional fellowship faced problems and difficulties in building relationships with the mentees from underprivileged families as they had different family backgrounds and social economic status. The professionals found it difficult to relate to their mentees' experiences and show understanding toward the impoverished, because of the socio-cultural gap, such that the mentors found it difficult to empathize with the mentees. Therefore, the mentor-mentee relationship did not run smoothly. In this case, the social capital of HKCNP did not function effectively, despite the shared Christian identity, beliefs and values. This example indicates that a successful parachurch partnership requires not only a wide range of social capital, but also time. Time is essential in

building a deep relationship and for getting to know one other well. Time is necessary for in-depth communication and for solving misunderstandings before the partnership. To spark off the rapport in relationship, both partners need to spend time communicating, discovering each other's expectations and visions, and building trust together, as mentioned in Chapter 6. Furthermore, this case reveals that social capital has to be used appropriately in the CDF program to benefit the mentees. It requires careful and prudent consideration to perfectly match mentors with mentees, based on both parties' backgrounds, values, character traits, and gender, to name just a few. Otherwise, the CDF program will not be able to optimize its effectiveness as originally designed, since mentorship plays a critical role in transforming the mentees' lives in the program. This limitation will be further discussed in Chapter 7, Recommendations for Future Research.

#### *Bridging and Bonding Social Capital through Networking*

An effective parachurch partnership generates bonding and bridging social capital in the community and creates a platform to connect more partners so as to multiply their resources and empower their poverty-related work. The research confirms that networking plays a significant role in bridging social capital as one interviewee (#18, school vice-principal) said:

I try to conceptualize what I think a network is. To me, the network plays different roles, firstly, a hub, building synergy among society-business-government partnership; second, a magnet, attracting Christian-based entities to collaborate; third, a lever, *leveraging* social capital, *bridging* social capital and Christian capital to build synergy.

In interview #18, an interviewee (school teacher) also confirmed the need for networking (using the word "alliance") by saying that: "I think a reputable and expert organization is needed to gather different groups to ally. If there is no party leading the

whole project, the situation would be worse.” For example, the Labor and Welfare Bureau requires operators to prepare a \$4800 matching fund for each participant, and each project needs to recruit a minimum of fifty participants, which means that the operators need to raise \$240,000 in a short period. Many operators feel stressed and frustrated because they are not trained for fund-raising, and therefore the HKCNP helps them to liaise with relevant fund-raising partners, such as the Child Development Matching Fund (CDMF) and acts as a bridge between CDMF and the operator to fulfil the requirements of both CDMF and the Government, so that the operators can focus on giving care to the mentees, rather than on the administrative work of fundraising.

Some interviewees also reported that a network helps them broaden their horizons so that they can receive more resources for or information about poverty alleviation collaboration opportunities from business and Government entities. Several interviewees from district organizations revealed that a celebrated network of credible partners with influence increases their bargaining power and motivation in the poverty alleviation project, because they are certain that the network can provide sufficient resources for them if needed. They are thus less worried and pressured when applying for new poverty alleviation projects. For example, one interviewee (#7, beneficiary) shared that he was able to join more career-related activities in the CDF program, which has helped him to plan his future. These activities were co-organized by the operator and the network, and he was grateful for that. For him, the most impressive experience in the CDF program was a career-related activity related to urban planning, which has motivated him to study civil engineering at the University. He was transformed from a timid to a more confident

person after receiving encouragement and appreciation from his mentor and going through the program.

To conclude, the partnership has played an active role in helping partners to raise funds, recruit mentors, conduct research, and promote the program, gaining support from business, the Government and the community, thus creating more opportunities for bonding among different parties. At the same time, since the partners come from different economic classes, there is a bridging effect in opportunities for the upward mobility of the program recipients. As the partnership increases, it provides more opportunities for different and new partners to join and bless more program recipients.

Bonding and bridging social capital is also effective at the personal level. For instance, the CDF program requires mentors to contact each mentee twice per month, arrange one quarterly group activity, a couple of activities with parents that will involve other partners, and orientation and celebration events for donors to meet the youth, thereby giving the youth bonding opportunities with different people who have the same objective, and also bridging opportunities to meet people of different social status and influence, thus attracting more partners or more resources to the program.

### **Sharing with Kingdom Mind-Set**

Sharing stood out as one of the major elements in effective partnerships in the research. It was found that a majority of participants recognize the significance of a sense of sharing in partnerships, which is ranked the second most frequently-quoted element in the coding. The coding result also reveals that all partners should contribute and commit equally, not in the sense of quantity, but in quality and willingness. People who receive benefits from the network uni-directionally, but are reluctant to give, may harm the

partnerships. Interviewee #12 (pastor) pointed out that sharing does not mean taking advantage of others, but mutual benefit: “In my opinion, we should satisfy each other’s agenda in the process of partnership. All organizations have their agenda to achieve except the great vision in the partnership, so the partnership can only be sustainable when all needs and agendas are fulfilled.” This is echoed by Ross, who states that giving is at the core of partnership; both partners should practice giving and receiving in a spirit of mutual respect.<sup>29</sup> People who are altruistic and selfless are more likely to attract others to work with them in the long term, because they collaborate out of love and mutual benefit, instead of taking advantage of or exploiting others.

In the context of the Christian community, one interviewee offered the inspirational opinion that Christians who are Kingdom-oriented may serve as good partners because they are more willing to give and sacrifice for God’s Kingdom, instead of just working for the good of a particular church, denomination or city.

Interviewee #14 (pastor) said:

Sometimes I think that we are Kingdom-oriented, which means that God has called us not only to focus on our church internally but also on the whole city and the whole world. Our mission is to build the Kingdom of God on earth, including all sectors and all communities, instead of our area only.

A partnership is only sustainable when partners work for one another’s good.

Therefore, partners who would like to commit to partnership in the Christian community need to be equipped with a broader mind, the Kingdom mind-set. Interviewee #12 (pastor) explained why partnership or networking is important in the poverty alleviation project, because many amateurs do not know how to serve, and partnership can provide them with help. “Partnership is particularly valuable to ministry newcomers because they

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<sup>29</sup> Ross, “The Theology of Partnership,” 146.

do not know how to develop with their strength.” For example, some interviewees admitted that partnership does more than what they can do alone; with the experiences, resources, and social contacts gathered from partners, the ministry can develop further and achieve greater effectiveness. In interview #14, the interviewee admitted that he signed up because the church wants to serve the youth in the community. However, he did not have sufficient resources, so he sought help from HKCNP as it had long been partnering with him to serve the district. He knew that HKCNP could assist him. The HKCNP spent a long time praying before they applied for the CDF program and helped them draft a proposal, find donors, recruit mentors, and promote their program. Then God provided the rest and blessed them more than they could have imagined. They are now also successfully serving the partnership.

One thing to note is that while sharing should be the norm of a Kingdom-oriented and effective partnership; not all interviewees agree that they can share everything with their partners, particularly private assets and exclusive resources. Interviewee #10 (supervisor of an NGO) has rich experience in operating the CDF program and has built a fruitful database of mentorship, CDF administrative documents and sponsorship resources. She honestly shared that she refused to grant HKCNP access to the product of her tremendous effort and time. From her point of view, the sharing action of the network platform has infringed her rights, and she feels insecure and disrespected seeing the network platform distribute her work to other partners who have made little contribution to the platform. She solemnly stated: “Sharing is all about equality. I feel uncomfortable when you take away my product to share with others while most of them just look on and do nothing.” This finding sheds light on the freedom and protection in a partnership.

Partners are, on the one hand, expected to share what they have in a network selflessly; on the other, they desire to keep their privacy while protecting their assets.

Apart from sharing resources and materials, another interviewee expressed her reluctance on share her viewpoint and thoughts with partners. The interviewee (#16, vice-principal)'s complaint was that her time in group sharing and discussion was wasted. "Endless sharing is pointless. You know, teachers are super busy. We already have plenty of meetings and sharing workshop to attend. If you have no specific themes or function, don't ever invite me to come and share again. It's wasting my time!" The spirit of sharing might be well intended from good will, but we need to be aware that every partner is unique, just as every person is. To collaborate well with others, we have to adjust based on different people's needs, background, and burdens. Forcing partners to accept rules or habits, regardless of how good these might seem, is disrespectful and offensive.

### **Platform for Sharing**

It is important to provide an effective platform for sharing, and the network is such a platform. Interviewee (#10, NGO staff) showed his appreciation for the sharing platform provided by the HKCNP, saying:

I think the network leader plays a significant role in connecting all partners to *share* difficulties and burdens. At the *network platform*, partners can gain knowledge and reference by listening to others' experiences. As you know, two heads are better than one.

As the parachurch partners in the network follow their Kingdom calling, recognize the resources from their God, take a step of faith to join the program, collaborate in the partnership, celebrate the Spirit-led transformation of lives through alleviation of inter-generational poverty in the Spirit, and experience the joy of sharing, they will be empowered to enhance the effectiveness of the program. As partners connect in the

network and deepen their sense of ownership in the partnership, sharing will become a norm in a healthy relationship. It is therefore important for the HKCNP to be a good witness in always freely sharing its resource as per God's guidance with its partners and demonstrating all resources are from God. The more we share, the more God can multiply and bless.

### **Conclusion**

The researcher derived the above nine key elements of an effective parachurch partnership that contributes to poverty alleviation in Hong Kong by analyzing the responses of interviewees to the three research questions. There are, however, some overarching themes and inter-relationships among the nine elements the researcher will further analyze in the final chapter to consolidate a set of more concentrated and focused elements. The present study has succeeded in offering new and useful insights into the subject and has contributed to the academic world by identifying unique "parachurch partnership elements in Hong Kong," something that has not been researched or studied empirically before.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In the final chapter of this dissertation, a conclusion is reached by summarizing the professional and personal principles learned through the project, followed by discussion of the sustainability of the project outcomes for the future and applications to other similar organizations. This chapter ends with a reflection, from the researcher, of the learning from the research process as well as directions for future research.

The purpose of this dissertation was to determine the elements of a parachurch partnership for effectively addressing poverty alleviation in Hong Kong. The poverty situation is getting worse and it is crucial that churches and parachurch organizations partner together to transform the city. The researcher has learned much from the HKCNP partners and understands more about how a successful partnership operates. The researcher wished to identify the critical success elements in developing an effective parachurch partnership to empower more Christian leaders to collaborate and bring His Kingdom to the city. The researcher also hopes that the identified parachurch partnership elements can bless other cities in helping their poor.

Parachurch, partnership, and poverty alleviation are the critical themes of this qualitative research. The researcher identified knowledge gaps in the study in Chapter 3 and reached answers by interviewing critical stakeholders in the program. Through the twenty-two in-depth interviews and forty-four interviewees who gave different perspectives on the partnership, as well as the data collected by participant observation during the interview, the researcher then summarized the key elements in Chapter 6. It was a privilege to hear from the interviewees about their personal experiences and how

transformation is being achieved through the program. The researcher hopes that more parachurches will see the blessing of partnership and seek greater collaboration in each district of Hong Kong to spread God's love in serving the poor.

### **Summary of Key Research Findings**

The research identified nine key elements in four primary categories (i.e., vision, social capital, relationship, and trusted committed leadership) that contribute to an effective parachurch partnership. The crux is that it is a Christ-centered approach. A full discussion of the individual elements was presented in Chapter 6.

There are several theoretical contributions from this study. First, this study underscores the importance of social capital in facilitating the effectiveness of the poverty-alleviation program and the relationship-building process among parachurch operators. These findings may provide insights for further exploration of the poverty alleviation program, which involves the contribution of and collaboration among Christian communities. This chapter summarizes the key findings by discussing their inter-relationships briefly.

#### **Inter-relationships Between Different Elements**

The researcher explored the inter-relationships among the nine elements by looking at the concurrence, sequence, overlap, and precedence of the research codes. Relevant results are summarized below:

##### *Vision and Sense of Community*

The research reveals that the element of "vision" always occurs with a "sense of community." When the interviewees explained their visions, their answers often related to serving the community and touching the lives of underprivileged children.

In the context of the CDF program and HKCNP, partners have an explicit and clear vision from God—that is, to solve the inter-generational poverty problem through the Christian community network, which is a Christ-centered approach. The aim of CDF operators mainly focuses on helping children and youth escape poverty and find hope for their future. Therefore, partners wish that the network leader of HKCNP will have the same vision as well.

Most interviewees revealed that CDF is the right way for them to enter the community with tangible actions and interactions with children from underprivileged families. Many other projects target children in schools and community centers, but the CDF program is one of the few that includes a mentor to guide the participants' growth. The idea of mentoring and poverty alleviation match the central teaching of the Bible to the point where many Christians are willing to serve and join the CDF program.

In short, the research finding revealed a mutually-reinforcing relationship between a shared vision and a sense of community, confirming that an effective, shared vision has to have the interests of the community at heart. The incorporation of the community as an integral part of this shared vision makes it effective.

#### *Trusted and Committed Leadership*

In the research, the element of “Christian leadership” was often linked to the element of “trust,” which is built upon the trustworthiness of Christian leaders in the network, showing the significance of a Christ-centered approach. The credibility of a leader affects the impact of the partnership. The network leader's past achievements, public image, and reputation determine whether he or she is trustworthy.

The history of HKCNP is fairly short, though it has had significant achievements in the CDF program. Most partners are attracted in the first place by the prominent leader with the quality of servant leadership, instead of by the network itself. Since commitment to the CDF program is quite long, three years, one has to trust the partner greatly before being willing to make such an investment of human resources, donations, and time and effort.

#### *Relationship, Trust, and Communication*

These three elements often appeared consecutively in the research. Trust and communication are the two main pillars that contribute to a successful partnership relationship. There is a mutually reinforcing relationship between these three elements. For example, before establishing an effective partnership, one has to spend time communicating thoroughly and explicitly with potential parties to know and understand one another's background, expectations, and agendas thoroughly. The more open and frank the partners are, the more secure a partnership will be. Trust is established based on words and deeds. The interviewees revealed that they determine whether their partners manage to fulfil their promises as a measure of trust. With mutual disclosure and responsibility, the relationship can be strengthened and further developed.

The CDF provides an excellent platform for drawing different parties, like schools, churches, NGOs, and other organizations, to work and co-operate together, where otherwise they would have little chance to do so. Developing mutual trust, communication, and relationships based on Christian values (i.e., a Christ-centered approach) is particularly essential in the CDF program, because how they collaborate directly affects the growth of children. A well-established partnership based on mutual

trust, effective communication, and Christian-based relationships will not be easily broken over misunderstandings or mere discontent, and can thus be maintained for at least three years for the sake of the participants.

### *Social Capital and Sense of Sharing*

The element of “social capital” often preceded the occurrence of the element of “sense of sharing” in the research. All interviewees agreed that it requires a great deal of social capital, harnessing of tangible resources, money, and volunteers to operate a CDF program.

Not all CDF operators can recruit sufficient mentors, secure sufficient donations, or find appropriate professional assistance. The resources children receive in the CDF program may vary in different districts and operators. For instance, the job-sampling opportunities, the seminars, the kinds of activities, the social status, and the maturity of mentors may differ. The Christian CDF operators wish not only to provide the best resources to their participants, but also to participants in other centers, because they have a Kingdom mindset and a Christian heart to care for the children, regardless of whether they are their clients or not, revealing again the adoption of a Christ-centered approach. Correspondingly, they are willing to share the social capital they own with others in a collaborative manner, benefiting each other mutually, for the sake of the children.

### **Effective Parachurch Partnership**

Through this study, the researcher learned the importance of committed Christian leadership and the roles of different parties in establishing an effective partnership. Based on the research findings, Christian leaders with a heart for the poor in the district and a good understanding of what is going on are critical in an effective parachurch partnership.

Partners need to connect with those trusted and committed leaders, build a relationship with them and have the same Kingdom vision and heart for the city.

Other than leaders, it is also essential to invite like-minded experts to join the partnership, to increase the credibility and social capital of the network. Furthermore, conveners, facilitators, champions, key core team members, and members with different levels of commitments, also contribute to the effective operation and sustainable development of the partnership. Importantly, a convener or leader should intentionally cultivate a sense of community by increasing trust, communication, sharing, social capital, and development of the relationship. The convener/leader also needs to pray for all the partners and seek God's guidance on how the partnership can transform lives for His glory.

On the other hand, effective communication and a Christian-based relationship are indispensable in an effective partnership. Formal and informal communication channels are needed to promote positive communication and relationship building. Open communication channels are needed to allow partners to freely express their opinions before any misunderstandings arise and to develop a close relationship with different partners.

In short, the leading organization like the HKCNP should identify and invite the right people as network leaders to lead the community with love and Kingdom values. The leader in the organization needs to oversee the community at a macro level to ensure that the vision, strategies, and directions are on the right track. All in all, committed Christian leadership is one of the most important, if not the most essential element for an effective parachurch partnership.

## **Effective Poverty Alleviation**

God loves the poor, and they deserve respect and dignity. Parachurches that aim at alleviating poverty must learn to see the poor as God sees them and serve them as He would. Parachurches need to honor God in serving the poor and partner with Christian communities together to lift the poor out of poverty into His freedom. At the same time, Christians genuinely need to know that it is pleasing to God to serve the poor in action because of their love of Christ. If the burden to serve the poor is strong and the compassion is driven by God's love, a Christian will open his or her arms extensively and serve God eagerly by serving the poor in his or her personal, social, professional, and congregational context.

To achieve effective poverty alleviation, parachurches need to establish a community-oriented vision, to motivate partners to take actions towards social betterment—a vision that is focused yet broad enough to attract more partners to join. To develop in the long-term, parachurches need to start with a mission that is measurable, sustainable, and actionable, to expand from a pilot phase into a city-wide program like the CDF program.

Appointing a leader who is reputable in the society and with the general public, for instance, a scholar or an expert in a particular field or sector, contributes to the trustworthiness of the network and the sustainable development of the poverty alleviation ministry. The poverty problem cannot be solved in one day; it is a long-term battle. Therefore, a parachurch leader should build up social, Christian, and tangible capital in the community to facilitate the transformation of society. It is suggested that the parachurch leader should plan and ensure that the partnership can sustain long term

development with sufficient resources and manpower, which is most needed for the partner organizations to be effective.

### **Personal Principles Learned**

The researcher has learned that prayer is the foundation of the partnership, and the partnership needs to be breathed in prayers. Whenever the partnership gathers together, there needs to be a worship and prayer component to connect us with God. Partners can gather and pray together, besides discussing operational and ministerial issues. Taking time to know different partners personally, and spending time having a meal or a prayer with them, helps to build a Christian-based personal relationships centered in Christ.

A good relationship is also significant in building the partnership, and nothing can be done without a good relationship. A committed Christian network leader should take care, not only of the ministerial development of the network, but also of the spiritual development of both the network and partners, since an excellent spiritual life helps partners to devote more in a Kingdom-oriented partnership. As the relationship among the partners grows in trust and sharing, a “Kingdom” partnership will be developed in our city.

The joy of serving the poor with God’s love and seeing the transformation of their lives is priceless. Those who are impoverished due to calamity and exploitation in our society need empowerment from Christ through us. As the researcher cares for the poor individually and corporately in a structured manner, the researcher needs to seek God’s wisdom and guidance. When the researcher journeys with the poor and God, the researcher is blessed too. Discipleship is not just a program in the church; it is a lifestyle.

The privilege of mentoring underprivileged youth to become Christian mentors is genuinely pleasing to God.

### **The Sustainability of Project Outcomes for the Future**

To solve the problem of poverty in Hong Kong, a project needs to have sufficient resources to support its long-term operation and structural development. A poverty alleviation project will not be fully active and sustainable unless the Government adopts it and it is supported by Christian scholars as well as relevant research, since the poverty problem in Hong Kong is a structural problem. It is suggested that a network that aims to alleviate the poverty problem should connect well with the Government and Christian scholars, who can apply Kingdom principles through their professions and become familiar with the rules related to policymaking relevant to poverty alleviation. The visionary leader thus needs to be familiar with the policymaking structure in our Government as well as the Christian culture, in order to leverage the impact of the partnership.

To sustain the healthy development of a network, conflicts and misunderstanding among partners must be resolved at an early stage. It is suggested continuous communication and transparent exchange mechanisms be employed in the network; for instance, regular meetings, frequent teleconferences, and emails, to ensure that partners have sufficient and adequate communication channels to update their needs and latest situations.

Different partners have different agendas to fulfil. The parachurch partnership will be sustainable if partners' agendas are Christ-centered and fulfilled with the help of the network. The researcher needs to create a win-win situation for all. Network leaders

should balance the give and take for each partner and establish a clear division of work to share the responsibility fairly. Partners will leave the network if they contribute much but receive little. The researcher trusts that God has all the resources needed to complete His work. The researcher should not fight or compete with others for existing resources, but continue to rely on Him and seek His provision of new partners or resources. An effective partnership will be able to attract more resources in the city to tackle the program, and a stronger relationship will have a multiplying effect on social and Christian capital.

### **Recommendations to the Government**

The Government has allocated a budget for the CDF program, but lacks qualified operators in some districts to use the funding. The researcher recommends that CDF operators should be encouraged to establish stronger partnerships with the Government and other organizations to motivate the latter in running these community-based projects. This will systematically provide stronger incentives and more social capital in districts that lack operators.

Furthermore, valuable experiences have been accumulated from different parties involved in CDF projects. Sharing of experiences with others in a centralized system is thus a key to enhancing the quality of the program as a whole. Since the CDF program relates to different governmental departments, it will be very helpful if the program is advised by a cross-sectional joint partnership from the Social Service Department, Education Bureau, and Financial Bureau. It is recommended that the sharing of good practices and ideas in running CDF projects among NGO operators, and sharing of experiences among mentors, should be facilitated and encouraged by the Government.

## **Application to Similar Organizations, Ministries, and Communities**

### **Application to Missional Parachurches**

The nature of the Great Commission is similar to that of poverty alleviation, and requires a city-wide transformation and collaboration from different sectors in the society. The mission cannot be achieved alone. An effective network leader is needed in missional parachurches to allocate resources equally and fairly, coordinate different parties properly, avoid redundancy in organizations, leverage the present advantages in organizations, and build synergy together with different partners.

### **Application to Poverty-Relief Parachurches**

Relief work requires a great deal of resources and manpower. Such relief work will become more productive with a proper policy from the Government, monetary assistance from the business sector, love from the Christian community, and the relevant experience and knowledge from the parachurch.

The HKCNP CDF program demonstrates the application of a successful model in transforming not only the lives of underprivileged youth, but also that of the mentors who serve them faithfully during the three-year program and sometimes even beyond. The program also strengthens the partner organization and engagement in the community. Through their community partnership and unity, people see the love of Christ tangibly and visibly. As the Government continues to see the work of our CDF partners, it is more willing to increase the provision of funding and expand the scope of the CDF program to lift more underprivileged youth out of poverty. With the establishment of the HKCNP CDF partnership network, the researcher can effectively and quickly mobilize resources in response to the crisis of the city. Parachurches involved in poverty alleviation need to

understand the potential of collaboration by applying the key elements identified in this research. There are practical benefits of greater ministry effectiveness through deeper relationships that can lead to greater awareness, appreciation, communication, and partnership in witness for Christ by serving the poor together. Parachurches that are interested in forming a partnership may reference the list of critical elements in the research, identify the right partners, take the time to meet, share the vision, and build a relationship before joining the action. A partnership that is seeking new ideas in order to improve can reference to the key elements to identify areas for improvement in their network or the right people to invite to the partnership.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The present study may be regarded as a positive response to the research gap in the literature as noted in Chapter 3. It is suggested the parachurch partnership model also be studied from a longitudinal perspective (i.e., a longitudinal study) to investigate what contributes to a long-term, healthy, and productive parachurch partnership in poverty alleviation. Including more samples in the research would also increase validity and confidence levels. Moreover, the present findings provide insights for further exploration of the role of social capital in effective parachurch partnerships, which may be helpful for researchers and professionals who are concerned about alleviating the problem of poverty by utilizing the power and resources of Christian communities. Studying parachurch partnerships in other ministries or organizations would also help in bridging the knowledge gap.

Future research could also incorporate quantitative research methods, such as surveys and questionnaires, to measure levels of satisfaction and agreement among

different partners. Regular objective assessment of the relationship between parachurch and church, and other stakeholders; and between CDF operators, mentors, and participants, to name just a few, could be used in understanding the impact of elements of partnership on parachurches and poverty alleviation. Regarding poverty alleviation, the researcher suggests collecting indicators from each CDF project to understand the relationship between partnership and the outcomes/effectiveness of poverty alleviation.

The researcher also suggests further investigation of ways to optimize the effectiveness of partnership and mentorship in the CDF program by studying the matching power differences and identities of mentors and mentees in Hong Kong. It is believed that studying the social status differentials between mentors and mentees would lead to more appropriate matching, and better utilization of the social capital aimed at benefiting mentees.

### **Anticipated Future Use of Project**

Through this evidence-based research, HKCNP, as the program's strategic partner, will take measures and apply the principles learnt to deepen and broaden the partnership with parachurches and Christian communities, thereby facilitating and leading the program's growth and development. With the power from the three founding organizations of the HKCNP: the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union, the Hong Kong Christian Council, and the Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement, which together cover a majority of Christian communities in Hong Kong, as well as social capital from inter-disciplinary leaders and executive committee members, the researcher believes that HKCNP will bring structural change and evidence-based amelioration to the problem of poverty.

The researcher suggests parachurches in Hong Kong could apply the partnership principles in this study and explore connections with similar cities that face urban poverty and great wealth disparity. Since the youth poverty problem is global, it requires partnerships from all around the world. Furthermore, the researcher aims to empower the beneficiaries, not just create a mission to underprivileged youth, but empower them through partnership in Christian communities.

### **How the Personal Learning Community was Involved in the Project**

The PLC are the close friends who made this study possible. They have sacrificially spent time helping the researcher to plan the study, assisting in conducting the research, reviewing the draft thesis chapter by chapter, giving honest and critical feedback, encouraging the researcher throughout the research process, praying for the researcher, and meeting with the researcher to render support and advice. The researcher has taken their valuable feedback and advice to revise the draft thesis before submitting it to the supervisor. This allowed the researcher to learn more about the PLC's gifts and working styles, and build closer personal relationships with them. The researcher is grateful for their participation and assistance in this project, and prays that this study will be a blessing to those who carry out their research projects, by sharing the experiences in conducting the research.

### **Conclusions**

The research identified four key elements of effective partnerships in poverty alleviation. From the findings, it is evident that there are many reasons and benefits for Christian collaboration. The challenges are for the Christian community to reconcile with God to grow upward in Christ and outward as one, in order to serve the community

together. Parachurches may adopt the model in theory and in practice to experience the power of partnership in enabling community building and social impact in Hong Kong. Under God's leadership, even if half of all 850 parachurches and 1350 churches in Hong Kong partnered together, we could bring transformation to our city and tackle the poverty in Hong Kong.<sup>30</sup>

Last but not least, one of the essential skills needed for the twenty-first century is an ability to build a strong partnership and networking. A well-connected network enables people to collaborate internally and externally around the same purpose and common goals. The researcher prays that more parachurch leaders will understand the key elements of successful partnership through this research, be open to collaboration, willing to overcome any barriers, develop the right perspectives on poverty alleviation, experience the joy of sharing, become empowered in partnership with Christ, and transform our city together as ONE.

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<sup>30</sup> Research Office, Information Services Division, Legislative Council Secretariat. "Fact Sheet: Religious Facilities in Hong Kong."

## APPENDIX 1. ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CDF PROGRAM

### 1. Overall Effectiveness of CDF program

The February 2020 report of the "Study on the Longer-Term Development of Child Development Fund Project Participants" (the Study) commissioned by the Labour and Welfare Bureau was released. The results indicated that the three key components of the CDF projects, namely Personal Development Plan, Mentorship and Targeted Savings, could effectively enhance underprivileged children's ability in resource management and future planning, expand their personal networks and help them develop a persistent savings habit. These benefits could enhance their academic and career development and are very important for their future success and critical for combating poverty.<sup>1</sup>

The study, conducted by the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong and Policy 21 Limited, aims to assess the benefits that CDF projects have brought to the participants and the longer-term influence on them. It examined the situation of CDF participants one to four years after their completion of the projects, comparing them with non-CDF-participants from similar family and economic backgrounds and of about the same age as the CDF participants ("the Comparison Group"). The researchers also conducted in-depth interviews or focus group discussions with participants who had completed the projects, mentors, parents, and project operators.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. Effectiveness of Personal Development Plan

The Personal Development Plan component of the CDF projects motivates the participants to set their targets and put their goals into actions. This learning process helps them develop a positive future orientation (i.e. a person's motivation and thoughts, plans, and feelings about the future), which encourages them to put a greater value on their future and to improve themselves so that they may accomplish their ambitions actively.<sup>3</sup>

The results of the Study indicated that the CDF participants had greater motivation and pleasure in learning and studying, as compared with the Comparison Group. The results of the questionnaire survey revealed that the CDF participants' self-rated motivation for studying was significantly stronger than that of the Comparison Group, and the level of agreement with the statement "learning can make me happy" reported by the CDF participants was significantly higher than that reported by the Comparison

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<sup>1</sup> Child Development Fund (July 15, 2019), <https://www.cdf.gov.hk/en/index.html>. (accessed January 17, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

Group. Moreover, the CDF participants had higher academic expectations. 80 percent of the CDF participants expected to gain a bachelor's degree or above while only about 65 percent of respondents from the Comparison Group had the same expectation.<sup>4</sup>

People who are hopeful about their future tend to view barriers as challenges to overcome and will give thoughts to use different means to achieve their goals. The future orientations of both the CDF participants and the Comparison Group were assessed using the Hope Scale, and the results showed that the CDF participants had significantly higher levels of hope for their future.

Furthermore, the study found that the CDF participants had a smaller number of problematic behaviors than the Comparison Group. The CDF participants reported less hyperactive behavior, emotional problems, conduct problems, peer problems and truancy. The results of the Study in this respect confirmed that the CDF participants had the greater motivation and better planning for their future on the one hand, and on the other hand, they also indicated that the CDF participants demonstrated greater ability to enhance their competitiveness in the job market in future.

### 3. Effectiveness of Mentorship

Good personal networks and social support help enhance a person's human capital and future career development. The Mentorship component of the CDF projects provides participants with opportunities to develop non-familial relationships with adults and to expand their community networks. The study made a comparison between the CDF participants and the youngsters in the Comparison Group who had not taken part in any mentorship programmes. It was found that the CDF participants reported significantly higher levels of social support from family, friends, and significant others. They also displayed higher levels of positive exploration of and commitment to their future education, jobs, and careers.

### 4. Effectiveness of Target Saving

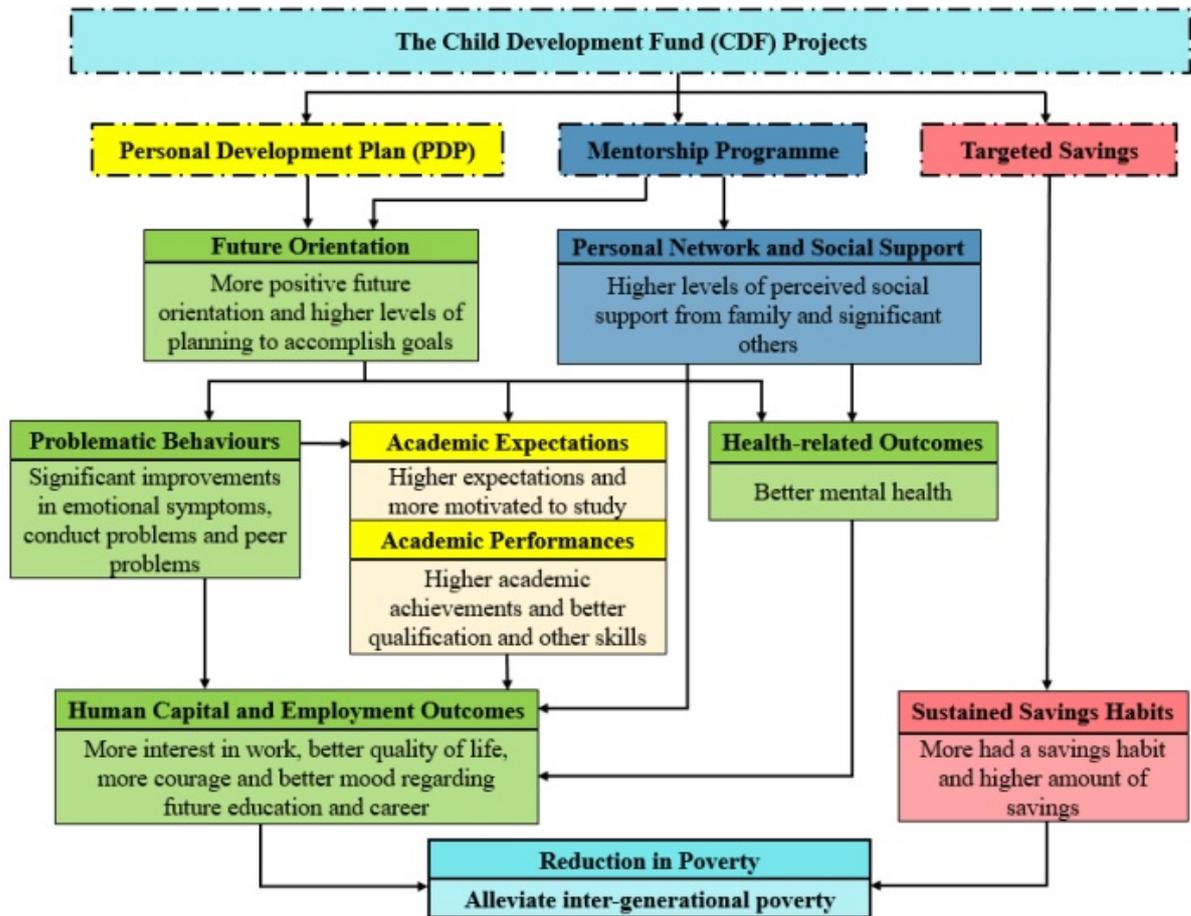
The Targeted Savings component of the CDF projects helps CDF participants accumulate savings in order to be better prepared for implementing their development plans. If they can develop and sustain a long-term savings habit, this will become an important asset, one that may help underprivileged children escape the cycle of poverty and overcome their disadvantaged conditions. 83 percent of the CDF participants indicated that the CDF projects could help them develop a savings habit for their personal development. About three quarters (77.6 percent) of the CDF participants sustained their savings habits after they had completed the CDF projects, and the percentage is greater than that of the Comparison Group (43.6 percent). During the discussions or interviews conducted for the qualitative study, some CDF participants indicated that the Targeted Savings had made them understand the importance of a savings habit because it could help them achieve their long-term goals. Furthermore, some of the project operators reported that through attending various workshops and lectures on financial management,

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

some of the CDF participants' families were able to see the importance of forming a persistent savings habit and obtained a better understanding of financial management.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 1.1 Outcomes of the CDF projects as prescribed by the conceptual



framework<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> K. L. Chan, *Further Study on the Long Term Development of Child Development Fund Project Participants* (Hong Kong: Departments of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, 2020), 92.

**APPENDIX 2: KEY PARTNERSHIP ELEMENTS IN TODD’S MODEL**

	Elements	Description
<b><u>Value</u></b>	A1. Purpose	The purpose should be comprehensive and stated clearly in organizational documents. <sup>7</sup>
	A2. Organization	A successful religious networking organization is well organized with a clear leadership structure and defined roles. <sup>8</sup>
	A3. Structure	An effective religious networking organization set up open role structures, allowing old and new members alike to pursue interests and become involved. <sup>9</sup>  The presence of a core group sustains the progress of the organization and provides a consistent place for linking to occur in the interest of promoting social justice. <sup>10</sup>
<b><u>Behavioural Characters</u></b>	B1. Strong Christian Identity	Religiously homogeneous among partners creates a sense of bonding and mutual trust, as well as gives the common norms, rituals, and language. <sup>11</sup>
	B2. The network provided context for social justice	A religious networking organization that provides an intersection of faith with community betterment attracts more partners involved. <sup>12</sup>
	B3. Religious similarity created	The Christian capital emerged in the religious networking organization as a unique component of bonding capital, where trust was enhanced when people clarify if they share the same religion. <sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Nathan R. Todd, “Religious Networking Organizations and Social Justice: An Ethnographic Case Study,” 235.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 240.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 242.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

		Christian capital is then leveraged in working toward common community betterment goals. <sup>14</sup>
<p><b><u>Social capital</u></b></p> <p>Social capital is discussed in terms of bonding and bridging social capital, where increased opportunities or resources are created for individuals due to their connections within a group (i.e., bonding capital), or for groups due to connections between heterogeneous groups (i.e., bridging capital).<sup>15</sup></p>	C1. Mobilized volunteers and resources from Christian congregations for events	<p>The network creates bridging connections between volunteers and different congregations by mobilizing manpower and resources from congregations to increase bonding in the larger community.<sup>16</sup></p> <p>Religious networking organizations are served as a hub that incubates bridging social capital.<sup>17</sup></p>
	C2. Networked religious congregations with one another and local service agencies	The network attempts to meet local community needs by linking religious congregations.
	C3. Networked members with community experts	Group members of the network present a vast network of expertise. The network meetings provide a space for members to share knowledge from their professional lives or their community activities. <sup>18</sup>
	C4. Share information and knowledge for mutual benefits	Network members also use network meetings to share information. <sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 230.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 241.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 231.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

### APPENDIX 3: MEANING OF THE WORD POOR IN HEBREW

Hebrew [Strong's Concordance] Frequency	Meaning	Occurrence (NIV)
Ani [6041] <sup>20</sup> Frequency: 92	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor, weak, afflicted, humble</li> <li>• The person is suffering from disability or distress.</li> <li>• A person who has been dehumanized, oppressed, or reduced to some form of diminished capacity.</li> <li>• Ani lives a meagre day-to-day existence and is socially defenceless, often being the subject of oppression.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exodus 22.25 If you lend money to one of my people among you who is <i>needy</i>, do not treat it like a business deal; charge no interest.</li> <li>• Leviticus 23.22 When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the <i>poor</i> and the foreigner residing among you. I am the Lord your God.</li> <li>• Deuteronomy 15.11 There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore, I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are <i>poor and needy</i> in your land.</li> <li>• Deuteronomy 24.12 If the neighbour is <i>poor</i>, do not go to sleep with their pledge in your possession.</li> </ul>
Anav [6035] <sup>21</sup> Frequency: 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humble, meek</li> <li>• Bow down, afflicted.</li> <li>• Stresses the resulting moral and spiritual condition of the godly that results from being ani and expresses the intended outcome.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers 12.3 Now, Moses was a very humble man, humbler than anyone else on the face of the earth.</li> <li>• Psalms 10.17 You, Lord, hear the desire of the <i>afflicted</i>; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry,</li> <li>• Psalms 76.9 when God rose to judge, to save all the <i>afflicted</i> of the land.</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order . Together with a Comparative Concordance of the Authorized and Revised Versions, Including the American Variations ; Also, Brief Dictionaries of the Hebrew, and Greek Words of the Original, with References to the English Words* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1890).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<p>Ebyon [34]<sup>22</sup> Frequency: 61</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In want, needy, poor.</li> <li>• Poor in the material sense.</li> <li>• Rung lowest of the social ladder.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Samuels 2.8 He raises the <i>poor</i> from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap;</li> <li>• Esther 9.22 because on those days the Jews rid themselves of their enemies, and it was a month which was turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and rejoicing and sending portions of food to one another and gifts to the <i>poor</i>.</li> <li>• Job 5.15 But He saves from the sword of their mouth, and the <i>poor</i> from the hand of the mighty.</li> <li>• Psalm 9.18 For the <i>needy</i> will not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted perish forever.</li> </ul>
<p>Dal [1800]<sup>23</sup> Frequency: 48</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Languish, weak, little, low</li> <li>• Indigent, indebted peasants</li> <li>• The person who lives in serious economic difficulties without being impoverished or marginalized.</li> <li>• The person who was abused by the debt-slavery system.</li> <li>• The person who was exploited and oppressed in an undefined way.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isaiah 10.2 To deprive the <i>needy</i> of justice, and rob the poor of My people of their rights,</li> <li>• Judges 6.15 He said to Him, “O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is <i>the least</i> in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”</li> <li>• Ruth 3.10 Then he said, “May you be blessed of the LORD, my daughter. You have shown your last kindness to be better than the first by not going after young men, whether <i>poor</i> or rich.</li> </ul>
<p>Rush [7326]<sup>24</sup> Frequency: 32</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be in want or poor.</li> <li>• Destitution</li> <li>• Lower class</li> <li>• Beggars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Samuel 18.23 So Saul’s servants spoke these words to David. But David said, “Is it trivial in your sight to become the king’s son-in-law since I am a <i>poor</i> man and lightly esteemed?”</li> <li>• Proverbs 18.23 The <i>poor</i> man utters supplications, But the rich man answers roughly.</li> </ul>

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<p>Misken [4542]<sup>25</sup> Frequency: 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The person who does not have extensive possessions and must work for his living as opposed to the rich man who can live on his income without working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecclesiastes 4.13 Better a <i>poor</i> but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to heed a warning.</li> <li>• Ecclesiastes 9.15 Now there lived in that city a man <i>poor</i> but wise, and he saved the city by his wisdom. But nobody remembered that poor man.</li> </ul>
<p>Machsor [4270]<sup>26</sup> Frequency: 13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lack of, or need for, material goods</li> <li>• Refers to those who were poor as a result of laziness or excessive living</li> <li>• This is economic poverty brought about by one's actions, not by actions of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proverbs 22.16 One who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and one who gives gifts to the rich—both come to <i>poverty</i>.</li> <li>• Judges 19.20 “You are welcome at my house,” the old man said. “Let me supply whatever you <i>need</i>. Only don't spend the night in the square.”</li> <li>• Deuteronomy 15.8 Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they <i>need</i>.</li> </ul>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

#### APPENDIX 4: INCARNATION OF JESUS AS POOR

The incarnation (Jesus was poor himself)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Came from a low-income family</li> </ul>	The offering that was presented for purification after the birth of Jesus showed that his parents were a poor couple. They could not afford a lamb, so they brought a pair of doves or pigeons (Luke 2.22-24). <sup>27</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was a refugee</li> </ul>	Matthew 2.13-15 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So, he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet. “Out of Egypt, I called my son.” <sup>28</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was an immigrant in the land of Galilee</li> </ul>	Matthew 2.19-23 After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.” So, he got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene. <sup>29</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humbly submitted himself to John the Baptist’s baptism</li> </ul>	Matthew 3.13-15 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.” Then John consented. <sup>30</sup>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warned a potential disciple of the type of lifestyle to expect by saying that He had no home.</li> </ul>	Matthew 8.19-20 Then, a teacher of the law came to him and said, “Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus replied, “Foxes have dens and birds have appendix nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.” <sup>31</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Timothy Jay Black, , “A Biblical Approach to Poverty Alleviation: A Case Study of Pinelands Methodist Church, Phambili NgeThemba's Community Building Efforts through Job Creation In Langa Township,”119.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.,117.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.,118.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.,119.

**APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEWEES' INFORMATION:**

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
#1		Convener	71-80 (M)	30 Aug 2019	7 Sep 2019	Over 10 years	Over 50 years	Over 50 years	yes	yes	57:28
#2		Mentor - volunteers	51-60 (F)	16 Aug 2019 16:00-17:00	21 Aug 2019	Over 10 years	Over 40 years	Over 40 years	yes	yes	56:29
#3		Mentor - volunteers	41-50 (M)	11 Sep 2019 15:00-16:00	17 Sep 2019	NA	Over 40 years	Over 10 years	yes	yes	1:01:48
#4		Partner – fundraising-related	51-60 (F)	16 Sep 2019 16:30-17:45	20 Sep 2019	Over 10 years	Over 30 years	Over 30 years	yes	yes	1:07:10
#5		Youths – beneficiaries/ success stories (Kwun Tong)	11-20 (F)	30 Aug 2019 18:00-19:00	6 Sep 2019	NA	NA	Non-Christian	yes	yes	1:00:45
#6		Youths – beneficiaries/ success stories (Yuen Long)	21-30 (M)	6 Sep 2019 11:00-12:00	10 Sep 2019	NA	NA	3 years	yes	yes	58:50
#7		Youths – beneficiaries/ success stories (Tseung Kwan O)	21-30 (M)	9 Oct 2019 16:00-17:00	18 Oct 2019	NA	NA	1 year	yes	yes	54.81

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
#8		Program staff	51-60 (M)	11 Sept 2019 13:30-15:00	18 Sep 2019	Over 10 years	Over 10 years	Over 40 years	yes	yes	1:00:06
#9		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Tung Chung)	NGO	6 Aug 2019 15:00-16:00	20 Aug 2019	4 years			yes	yes	59:05
	31-40 (F)					Over 10 years	Non-Christian				
	41-50 (F)					Over 10 years	Over 10 years	Less than 1 year			
#10		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Kwai Tsing)	NGO	8 Aug 2019 16:00-17:00	20 Aug 2019	9 years			yes	yes	1:19:12
	51-60 (F)					Over 10 years	Over 10 years	Over 40 years			
	41-50 (F)					Over 10 years	Over 10 years	Over 30 years			

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
#11		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Wong Tai Sin)	NGO	9 Aug 2019 11:00-12:00	26 Aug 2019	12 years			yes	yes	1:01:54
			51-60 (F)				Over 20 years	Over 40 years	yes	yes	
			31-40 (F)				7 years	Over 10 years	yes	yes	
			51-60 (M)				Over 10 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
			51-60 (M)				7	Over 10 years	yes	yes	
#12		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Sha Tin)	Church	16 Aug 2019	20 Aug 2019	2 years			yes	yes	58:49:00
			41-50 (M)	12:00-13:00			Over 10 years	Over 10 years	yes	yes	
			31-40 (F)			Over 5 years	Over 20 years	yes	yes		

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
#13		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Yuen Long)	School	19 Aug 2019	2 Sep 2019	1 year			yes	yes	45:32:00
			51-60 (M)	11:00-12:00			Over 7 years	Over 40 years	yes	yes	
			31-40 (M)				Over 12 years	Over 20 years	yes	yes	
#14		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Kwun Tong)	Church	22 Aug 2019	29 Aug 2019	2 years			yes	yes	1:07:30
			61-70 (M)				Over 35 years	Ove 45 years			
			61-70 (F)				Over 3 years	Over 20 years	yes	yes	
			41-50 (F)				Over 20 years	Over 40 years	yes	yes	
#15		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Kwun Tong)	School	22 Aug 2019	29 Aug 2019	3 years			yes	yes	49:30
			41-50 (M)	16:30-17:30			Over 20 years	Over 20 years	yes	yes	
			41-50 (M)				Over 20 years	Over 20 years	yes	yes	

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
#16		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Ma On Shan)	School	23 Aug 2019	2 Sep 2019	3 years			yes	yes	1:18:48
			51-60 (F)	10:00-11:00		2 years	Over 20 years	Over 40 years	yes	yes	
			31-40 (M)				Over 5 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
			31-40 (M)				Over 5 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
			31-40 (M)				1 year	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
#17		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Tin Sui Wai)	School	26 Aug 2019	2 Sep 2019	3 years			yes	yes	1:02:56
			51-60 (F)	16:00-17:00			Over 9 years	Over 20 years	yes	yes	
			31-40 (M)				Over 10 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
#18		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Tseung Kwan O)	School	27 Aug 2019	2 Sep 2019	3 years			yes	yes	1:03:34
			41-50 (M)	15:30-16:30			Over 20 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
			51-60 (M)				Over 20 years	14 years	yes	yes	
			31-40 (M)				Over 5 years	Over 10 years	yes	yes	
#19		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Chai Wan)	School	29 Aug 2019 14:00-15:00	10 Sep 2019	1 year			yes	yes	58:35
			51-60 (M)				Over 25 years	Over 30 years	yes	yes	
			41-50 (M)				Over 20 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
			41-50 (F)				Over 12 years	Over 30 years	yes	yes	
#20		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Kowloon City)	NGO	29 Aug 2019 16:30-17:30	10 Sep 2019	3 years			yes	yes	1:03:15
			51-60 (M)				Over 20 year	Over 20 year	yes	yes	
			21-30 (F)				1 year	5 year	yes	yes	

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
#21		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Chai Wan)	NGO	30 Aug 2019	3 Sep 2019	Less than 1 year			yes	yes	55:18
			41-50 (F)	16:00-17:00			Over 10 years	Over 10 years	yes	yes	
			41-50 (F)				Over 10 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
			21-30 (M)				Over 5 years	Non-Christian	yes	yes	
#22		Operators- in charge of the program in different districts (Tsuen Wan)	School	4 Sep 2019	10 Sep 2019	2 years			yes	yes	1:02:11
			51-60 (F)	12:00-13:30			Over 20 years	Over 30 years	yes	yes	
			51-60 (M)				Over 20 years	Over 30 years	yes	yes	
		1 convener 2 volunteers- mentors 1 partner 3 beneficiaries 1 Program Staff 14 Operators 5 NGO								Average: 60.92 mins	

Ref No.		Interviewee type/District	Interviewee (Age)	Interview Date	Review transcript date	Years of HKCNP partnership	Years of professional	Years of being a Christian	Form signed	Recording taped	Interview duration
		2 churches 7 schools  Total: 44 interviewees 25 Male 19 Female  33 Christians 11 non-Christians  Total: 22 interviews									

## APPENDIX 6: INTERVIEW GUIDE

### In-depth Interview Script

\_\_\_\_\_ (Interviewee) is Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor's operational partner in Child Development Fund. \_\_\_\_\_ (Interviewee) is invited for this interview as it partners with HKCNP since \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

The interview is held in \_\_\_\_\_ (location) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. (time) We interview \_\_\_\_\_ (position + name) for details on CDF and partnership with HKCNP.

**Start time** \_\_\_\_\_ **End time** \_\_\_\_\_. **Audiotaped** Y / N

Steps:

#### A. Pre-interview

- a. Introduction
- b. Appreciate for the partnership and time for the interview
- c. Exchange business cards
- d. Explain the purpose of the interview and research
- e. Sign consent form
- f. prayer

#### B. Start taking notes and or recording upon approval

The process and questions of the interview are as follow:

“Before we start, I would like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers in this discussion. We are interested in knowing what you think, so please feel free, to be frank, and to share your point of view. It is very important that we hear your opinion. Speaking from organizational operator perspective and viewpoints related to any poverty alleviation partnership. Open-ended questions. The interview is conducted in Cantonese.”

## APPENDIX 7: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### **Q1. Ice-breaker**

Why do you join the CDF program?

你為何參加「兒童發展基金」計劃？

### **Q2. Research question from the approved proposal**

How do the purpose, organization, and structure of HKCNP affect the effectiveness of the parachurch CDF partnership?

教關的宗旨、機構組織及架構如何影響「兒童發展基金」計劃中基督教機構伙伴關係的成效程度？

### **Q3. Research question from the approved proposal**

How does HKCNP parachurch partnership network empower the Christian community through CDF Program in poverty alleviation?

教關與基督教機構的伙伴網絡如何充權基督教群體透過「兒童發展基金」計劃紓緩貧窮？

### **Q4. Research question from the approved proposal**

How does social capital emerging through HKCNP help parachurch organizations enhance the effectiveness of CDF partnership relationship and trust-building?

經教關收集而得的社會資本，如何提高基督教機構在「兒童發展基金」計劃中建立合作伙伴關係及信任的有效程度？

## **APPENDIX 8: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

### **Informed Consent Form for Adult**

*To Determine the Elements of a parachurch partnership model that contribute to Poverty Alleviation in Hong Kong (using Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor's Child Development Fund Program as a case study)*

You are invited to participate in an interview on \_\_\_\_\_  
(date) conducted by Ma Sau Kuen Susanna, the Executive Director of Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor, to fulfil her doctoral thesis requirements in Transformational Leadership of Bethel Bible Seminary.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The study aims at determining the elements of a parachurch partnership model that contribute to poverty alleviation in Hong Kong, using the Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor's Child Development Fund Program as a case study.

#### **PROCEDURES**

This will be an in-depth interview for at least an hour to answer open-ended questions related to the partnership with Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor in the Child Development Fund program.

#### **POTENTIAL RISKS / DISCOMFORTS AND THEIR MINIMIZATION**

There are no anticipated potential risks or discomforts.

#### **COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION**

The participant will not receive any compensation.

#### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS**

Potential benefits to the participant may include a more effective partnership with HKCNP in the CDF program and access to more resources through HKCNP.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

We promise strict confidentiality and that the information obtained in the study will be used for research purposes only. The information will only be viewed by me and my assistant, who will transcribe the interview.

### PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary. This means that you can choose to stop at any time without any negative consequences.

### QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Ms Natalie Chan at Bethel Bible Seminary, 45-47 Grampian Road, Kowloon, HK, 21485577.

### SIGNATURE

I \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Participant)  
understand the procedures described above and agree to participate in this study.

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Signature of Participant

Date

## APPENDIX 9: FOLLOW-UP ON INTERVIEW

Dear interviewee,

Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed during your busy schedule, helping HKCNP to know more about the needs and situations of its partners, serving our Lord together in the CDF program. HKCNP will consider your valuable suggestion for certain, and make every effort in poverty alleviation, making progress hand in hand with our partners.

Please kindly fill in the form below; all materials will be kept confidential and for research purpose only. Thanks for your help.

Demographic information of interviewee	
Age	
Years of baptism	
Years of work in the organization	

Attached please find the copy of the signed consent form and interview transcript.

If a reply cannot be given within the specified period, the above information is deemed to be permitted for research.

For enquiries, feel free to reach me via email or phone. Thanks.

Susanna Ma

## **APPENDIX 10: FOLLOW-UP ON TELECONFERENCE**

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Thank you for taking the time to receive a visit by Susanna, Executive Director of HKCNP, on the cooperation of the Child Development Fund. Your valuable opinions are of great benefit to the research plan. We are convinced that we can optimize the current cooperation model, enhance mutual relations, and show the community that we are One in God.

After researching and analysing the contents of the interview and the literature, we have concluded the preliminary results, and we invite you to review the following abstract. We look forward to speaking with you on the phone and hearing your opinions on the preliminary research results to ensure the validity of the results.

A total of 22 units were visited in this study, including beneficiaries, volunteers, operators, and convener. All parties have put forward different views on the cooperation model in the Child Development Fund. The 9 important elements in parachurch partnership are listed as follows:

### 1. Shared vision, value, and mission

The common vision, value, and mission help partners to cooperate on a common basis and develop long-term cooperative relations. The common religious background is easier to develop a more consistent idea.

### 2. Leader

A reputable and experienced leader can effectively lead the network to establish cooperative relationships. Servant leaders under Christian values can also help empower and listen to each other in partnerships and work humbly with partners.

### 3. Communication

Continuous and regular communication helps partners understand each other, increase awareness, and understand each other's needs to cooperate.

### 4. Trust

Sincere, open communication and listening help build trust, and trust promotes effective partnerships. Leaders with a common religious background and good reputation help partners build trust in each other.

#### 5. Relationship

Relationships are the foundation of all cooperative relationships. Establishing a Christian value-based personal relationship, respecting each other, is easier to develop a healthy and long-term cooperation model. In partnerships, stakeholders also pursue a close and harmonious relationship and increase mutual understanding.

#### 6. Social Capital

A network with rich relationships and social capital, such as connecting experts, the additional resource can attract partners to cooperate.

#### 7. Sense of community

Units enthusiastically engaged in social services are more likely to attract partners to cooperate and connect other interested people into the community.

#### 8. Clear structure

A clear structure of the division of labour prevents partners from competing and helps all parties to determine the division of labour.

#### 9. Sense of sharing

Good partners are willing to give and have a spirit of sharing and altruism.

Thank you for taking the time to read the preliminary results. I wonder when will you be available for a telephone interview of about 20 minutes? Please reply before the date for follow up. Thank you.

For enquiries, feel free to reach me via email or phone. Thanks.

Susanna Ma

## APPENDIX 11: NOMENCLATURE (CODEBOOK)

### A1. Purpose

- The purpose of the Christian Network, as stated in organizational documents, is to bring Christian congregations together to address issues of mercy and justice through information sharing and community service events.<sup>32</sup>

### A2. Organization

- The Christian Network was well organized with a clear leadership structure and defined roles. The co-founders of the group were the explicit leaders.<sup>33</sup>

### A3. Structure

- Open role structures, allowing old and new members alike to pursue interests and become involved.<sup>34</sup>

### B1. Strong Christianity identity

- The Christian Network had a strong focus on Christian tradition and scripture as motivation for working for the poor and for justice.<sup>35</sup>

### B2. Network provided context

- The intersection of Christian faith with community betterment.<sup>36</sup>

### B3. Religious similarity created

- The Christian Capital emerged as a unique component of bonding capital where trust was enhanced when people clarified if they shared similar religious values, and this capital was then leveraged in working toward common community betterment goals.<sup>37</sup>

### C1. Mobilized volunteers and resources from Christian congregations for Event

- This network most prominently used its network structure by mobilizing volunteers and resources (money and school supplies) from local congregations for the annual Resource Event.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 240.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 242.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 236.

C2. Networked religious congregations with one another and local service agencies

- Beyond the Resource Event, the Christian Network attempted to meet local community needs by linking religious congregations.<sup>39</sup>

C3. Networked members with community experts

- Stronger relationships among group members helped them to know whom to ask for types of information or who may be able to provide a bridging link.<sup>40</sup>

C4. Shared information and knowledge for mutual benefit

- Network members also used network meetings to share information.<sup>41</sup>

**APPENDIX 12: PARTNER LIST OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMS**

**CDF Operators (90)**

NGO and churches operators (32)

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.,237.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

### Christians-based operators (17)

1. Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service
2. Caritas - Hong Kong
3. Chai Wan Baptist Church
4. Christian Action
5. Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service
6. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
7. Hong Kong Yan Kwong Bethel Church
8. Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre, Social Welfare
9. Shatin Baptist Church
10. The Boys' Brigade, Hong Kong
11. The Free Methodist Church of Hong Kong
12. The Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship
13. The Praise Assembly
14. The Urban Peacemaker Evangelistic Fellowship
15. Yan Kwong Social Service Centre
16. Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service
17. Young Men's Christian Association of Hong Kong

### Non-Christian-based NGO and churches (15)

1. Hong Kong Children & Youth Services
2. Hong Kong Playground Association
3. Life Workshop
4. Lok Kwan Social Service
5. Neighbourhood and Worker's Education Centre
6. New Home Association
7. Po Leung Kuk
8. Sai Kung District Community Centre
9. The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong
10. The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups
11. The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council
12. Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
13. We Care Social Service Centre
14. Yan Chai Hospital
15. Yan Oi Tong

## **CDF Operator (School) (58)**

### **Christian-based school (30)**

1. Baptist Wing Lung Secondary School
2. Bishop Ford Memorial School
3. Bishop Walsh Primary School
4. Carmel Alison Lam Foundation Secondary School
5. Carmel Bunnan Tong Memorial Secondary School
6. CCC Mong Wong Far Yok Memorial Primary School
7. China Holiness College
8. Chinese Y.M.C.A. College
9. Chinese Y.M.C.A. Primary School
10. Cumberland Presbyterian Church Yao Dao Secondary School
11. Fanling Kau Yan College
12. Hong Kong and Macau Lutheran Church Queen Maud Secondary School
13. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Bishop Hall Secondary School
14. Kowloon Tong Bishop Walsh Catholic School
15. Lingnan Hang Yee Memorial Secondary School
16. Lingnan Secondary School
17. Our Lady of China Catholic Primary School
18. S.K.H. All Saints' Middle School
19. S.K.H. St. Mary's Church Mok Hing Yiu College
20. SKH Bishop Baker Secondary School
21. SKH St. Simon's Lui Ming Choi Secondary School
22. St. Francis Xavier's School, Tsuen Wan
23. St. Patrick's School
24. The Church of Christ in China Heep Woh Primary School (Cheung Sha Wan)
25. The Church of Christ in China Ming Yin College
26. The Methodist Church Asbury Methodist Primary School
27. The Methodist Church Hong Kong Wesley College
28. The Mission Covenant Church Holm Glad No.2 Primary School
29. The Salvation Army Lam Butt Chung Memorial School
30. Tsz Wan Shan St Bonaventure Catholic Primary School

### **Non-Christian-based school (28)**

1. Buddhist Chi King Primary School

2. Buddhist Chung Wah Kornhill Primary School
3. Buddhist Wing Yan School
4. Buddhist Wong Cheuk Um Primary School
5. Cotton Spinners Association Secondary School
6. CUHK Federation of Alumni Associations Thomas Cheung Secondary School
7. Five Districts Business Welfare Association School
8. Islamic Dharwood Pau Memorial Primary School
9. Islamic Kasim Tuet Memorial College
10. Lions Clubs International Ho Tak Sum Primary School
11. Lions College
12. Lok Sin Tong Leung Chik Wai Memorial School
13. Lok Sin Tong Leung Kau Kui Primary School (Branch)
14. Lok Sin Tong Leung Kau Kui Primary School
15. Lok Sin Tong Leung Wong Wai Fong Memorial School
16. Lok Sin Tong Yeung Chung Ming Primary School
17. Mu Kuang English School
18. PLK Fong Wong Kam Chuen Primary School
19. Po Leung Kuk Tin Ka Ping Primary School
20. Queen Elizabeth School Old Students' Association Branch Primary School
21. Queen Elizabeth School Old Students' Association Primary School
22. Salesians of Don Bosco Ng Siu Mui Secondary School
23. San Wui Commercial Society Secondary School
24. Shamshuipo Kaifong Welfare Association Primary School
25. Tin Ka Ping Secondary School
26. Xianggang Putonghua Yanxishe Primary School Of Science And Creativity
27. Yan Chai Hospital Law Chan Chor Si College
28. Yan Oi Tong Tin Ka Ping Secondary School

### **Food Angel Charity Partners (146)**

#### **Christian-based NGO and churches (96)**

1. Ambassador Assembly
2. Apostolic Faith Church of Hong Kong Ltd. - Favour Centre
3. Asbury Methodist Social Service
4. Assemblies of God West Point Church
5. Assembly of God Harland Park Memorial Church

6. Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service
7. Caritas Labour Development Project
8. Caritas Mutual Aid Centre for Single Parent Families
9. Caritas Residents Mutual Help Centre - Sham Shui Po
10. Caritas Women Development Project
11. Chai Wan Baptist Church Social Service
12. Christian Canaan Church
13. Christian & Missionary Alliance Church Union of Hong Kong Grace
14. Chapel- Pasture Family Service Center
15. Christian & Missionary Alliance Aberdeen Church
16. Christian & Missionary Alliance South Horizons Church
17. Christian Concern for the Homeless Association
18. Christian Pun Chek Church
19. Church Assembly Hall (Christian Stewards) Tree of Life Education Centre
20. Church of Everlasting Love
21. Conservative Baptist Bradbury Social Service Centre
22. Crossroad Community Baptist Church - Crossroad Centre
23. ECF Kowloon Canaan Church
24. Eternity Love Foundation Company Ltd.
25. Evangelical Free Church of China Tung Fook Chai Wan Church Ltd.
26. Evangelical Grace Church of Jesus
27. Faith Hope Love Baptist Church
28. Foundation Christian Church Ltd.
29. Grace Community Church
30. HKLSS Harmony Garden Lutheran Centre for the Elderly
31. Hong Kong Baptist Church Good Neighbour Chapel
32. Hong Kong Christian Mutual Improvement Society
33. Hong Kong Christian Mutual Improvement Society
34. Ko Chiu Road Centre of Christ Love for the Aged
35. Hong Kong Christian Service Family Ties Integrated Family Service Centre
36. Hong Kong Christian Shuen Tao Church
37. Hong Kong Church Network for the Poor Company Ltd.
38. Hong Kong Grace Baptist Church
39. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Church of the Good Shepherd
40. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre
41. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
42. Holy Nativity Church Ming Wah Centre
43. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Tung Chung Integrated Services

44. Hong Kong Tsz Kwong Bethel Church
45. Jabez Mission Church
46. J Life Foundation
47. Jubilee Ministries Ltd.
48. Kai Tak Peace Evangelical Centre
49. Kei Yam Alliance Church
50. Kwai Chung New Life Temple
51. Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service Lam Tin Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
52. Ladder Mission Ltd.
53. Ling Liang Worldwide Evangelistic Mission Kowloon Ling Liang Church
54. Lok Sin Tong Chan Lai Jeong Kiu Social Centre for the Elderly
55. Loving Kids Community Service Co. Ltd.
56. Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre
57. Epworth Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
58. Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre
59. Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre Yiu Tung Integrated Team
60. Mission to New Arrivals Ltd.
61. Missionaries of Charity
62. Neighbourhood Care Foundation
63. New Dynamic Church
64. New Home Association (Hong Kong Island Service Centre)
65. New Life Baptist Church
66. Operation Dawn (Trinitarian Therapy Drug Abuse Treatment & Rehab)
67. Perfect Fellowship
68. PHAB Community Limited
69. Rainful Top Church
70. Salvation Army Yee On Hostel
71. San Po Kong Swatow Christian Church
72. Shatin Baptist Church
73. Sheng Kung Hui Holy Carpenter Church Community Centre
74. Sheng Kung Hui Holy Trinity Church
75. St. Luke's Church of United Brethren in Christ
76. St. Stephen's Society
77. The Christ's Evangelical Centre (Church of Love) Ltd.
78. The Church of Christ in China Wanchai Church
79. The Church of Livingstones (Kowloon)
80. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong - Amazing Grace Lutheran Church

81. The Light & Love Home Kwai Fong Social Centre for the Elderly
82. The Pentecostal Holiness Church Hong Kong Conference
83. Gilead Social Service Centre
84. The Salvation Army Centaline Charity Fund School
85. The Salvation Army Integrated Service for Street Sleepers
86. The Salvation Army Urban Renewal Social Service Team
87. The Salvation Army Yee On Hostel
88. The Salvation Army Wan Tsui Home for Boys
89. The Salvation Army Yue Wan Boy's Hoste
90. The Wah Fu Swatow Christian Church
91. Tokwawan Baptist Church
92. Tree of Life Education Centre (Causeway Bay / Shau Kei Wan )
93. Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Full Grace Service Centre
94. Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Whampoa Church
95. Vine Community Services
96. YWCA Sham Shui Po Integrated Social Service Centre

Non-Christian-based Operators (50)

1. Action Care International Ltd.
2. Action Health
3. Banyan Elderly Service Association
4. Care the Visually Impaired
5. Chai Wan Area Kai-Fong Welfare Association
6. CNEC Kei Shek Social Service Centre Limited
7. Giving Love Elderly Charitable Ltd.
8. Hans Andersen Club Diana Boyd Wilson Centre
9. Helping Hand Chuk Yuen (North) Jockey Club Housing for the Elderly
10. Helping Hand Hong Kong Bank Foundation Lok Fu Care Home
11. Helping Hand Po Lam Jockey Club Housing for the Elderly
12. Helping Hand Siu Sai Wan Jockey Club Housing for the Elderly
13. HKEC Tai Hing Neighbourhood Elderly Center
14. Hing Wah Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
15. Hong Kong and Kowloon Kaifong Women's Association
16. Tsang Hui Yuk Wan Social Centre for the Elderly
17. Chuang Chung Wen Social Centre for the Elderly
18. Hong Kong Mutual Encouragement Association Jane Shu Tsao Social Centre for the Elderly

19. Hong Kong Mutual Encouragement Association Ltd. Cheng Yu Tung Social Centre for the Elderly
20. Hong Kong PHAB Association Support Employment Service Centre
21. LCH Charitable Foundation Ltd.
22. New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
23. Pavilion Community
24. People Service Centre-Food Sharing Project
25. Po Leung Kuk Mrs. Maria Cheung Lifelong Learning Institute for the Senior
26. Po Leung Kuk Shek Kip Mei Kindergarten- Cum-Nursery
27. Po Leung Kuk Shek Kip Mei Vocational Services Centre
28. Po Leung Kuk Tin Ka Ping Family Joy Centre
29. Po Leung Kuk Wan Lam May Yin Shirley Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
30. Pok Oi Hospital Jockey Club Hostel for Single Persons
31. Shamshuipo KaiFong Welfare Association Primary School
32. Shatin Women's Association Ltd.
33. Shek Kip Mei Kai-fong Welfare Association Ltd,
34. Shek Kip Mei Mei Yu Estate Residence Association
35. Society for Community Organization
36. Street Sleepers Action Committee Ltd.
37. The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of
38. Hong Kong Shaukeiwan Children Centre
39. The Mental Health Association of Hong Kong
40. Volunteer Space
41. Windshield Charitable Foundation Social Services
42. Women Service Association
43. Women's Welfare Club, Western District H.K. Kwan Kai Ming Memorial Chung Hok Elderly Centre
44. Yan Oi Tong Wu Chung District Elderly Community Centre
45. Yan Oi Tong Tuen Mun Lion Club Integrated Home Care Services
46. Yan Oi Tong Ting Ka Ping Tuen Mun Integrated Home Care Services
47. Yan Oi Tong Rainbow Community Intergrated Development Centre
48. Yan Oi Tong Community Centre
49. Yan Oi Tong Ng Kam Yuk Memorial
50. Yan Oi Tong Tuen San Tsing Rutal Community Service Centre

### **ERB Service Points (39)**

#### Christian-based and churches service points (17)

1. HKSXH Lady MacLehose Centre - Headquarters
2. The Urban Peacemaker Evangelistic Fellowship Ltd
3. C-for-Chinese@JC HKSXH Lady MacLehose Centre Multicultural Learning Club
4. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Jockey Club Tsing Yi Integrated Social Service Centre
5. The Salvation Army Tai Wo Hau Children & Youth Centre
6. Asbury Methodist Social Service (HELP2 Project)
7. HKSXH Lady MacLehose Centre
8. Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service Mongkok Integrated Family Service Centre
9. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Talent Development Centre
10. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Jockey Club Sham Shui Po Integrated Social Service Centre
11. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association
12. Salvation Army Chuk Yuen Children and Youth Centre
13. Kowloon City Baptist Church Neighbourhood Elderly Centre
14. Caritas Jockey Club Integrated Service for Young People - Wong Tai Sin
15. Christian Family Service Centre - YOU CAN - Potential Exploration Unit
16. Caritas Jockey Club Integrated Service for Young People - Tak Tin
17. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association Jockey Club Lok Wah Integrated Social Service Centre

Non-Christian-based service points (22)

1. Kung Yung Koon – The Dost
2. People's Talents Bank Project
3. Windshield Charitable Foundation Kwai Chung Social Services
4. Hong Kong Playground Association Jockey Club Tsing Yi Integrated Service Centre for Children & Youth
5. The Mong Kok Kai Fong Association Chan Hing Social Service Centre
6. Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Jockey Club Tai Kok Tsui Integrated Services Centre
7. Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Yu Mak Yuen Integrated Services Centre
8. People Service Centre
9. Windshield Charitable Foundation Sham Shui Po Social Services
10. YWCA Jockey Club Y Evergreen Learning Centre

11. The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Jockey Club Hung Hom Youth S.P.O.T.
12. The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups Jockey Club Farm Road Youth S.P.O.T.
13. Hong Kong Children & Youth Services Jockey Club Fong Shu Chuen Integrated Children and Youth Services Centre
14. Hong Kong Employment Development Service Limited Human Resources Training Centre
15. The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong Jockey Club Tsz Wan Shan Children & Youth Integrated Services Centre
16. Windshield Charitable Foundation Social Services
17. New Home Association - Kowloon East Service Centre
18. The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong Jockey Club Yau Tong Children & Youth Integrated Services Centre
19. The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups - Felix Wong Youth S.P.O.T.
20. Sai Kung District Community Centre
21. Hong Kong Family Welfare Society Artiste Training Alumni Association Jockey Club Tseung Kwan O Youth Square
22. The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong Jockey Club Tseung Kwan O Children & Youth Integrated Services Centre

### **YETP Service Centres (18)**

#### Christian-based Organization (10)

1. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association
2. Methodist Centre
3. The Salvation Army
4. Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service
5. Caritas - Hong Kong
6. YMCA of Hong Kong
7. Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association
8. H.K.S.K.H. Lady MacLehose Centre
9. Christian Family Service Centre
10. The Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service - Hong Kong

#### Non-Christian-based Organization (8)

1. The Federation of Hong Kong & Kowloon Labour Unions
2. Hong Kong PHAB Association
3. The Hong Kong Federation Of Trade Unions Occupational Retraining Centre
4. Hong Kong Employment Development Service Limited
5. Hong Kong College of Technology
6. New Territories Association Retraining Centre
7. Hong Kong Children and Youth Services
8. Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions

**APPENDIX 13: IMPLEMENTATION TIMETABLE FOR RESEARCH**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Jul-19</b>	<b>Aug-19</b>	<b>Sep-19</b>	<b>Oct-19</b>	<b>Nov-19</b>	<b>Dec-19</b>
Dissertation proposal approved	x					
Review the CDF program	x	x	x	x	x	x
Research on the theme	x	x	x	x	x	x
Draft and revise interview questions	x					
Review with the supervisor on the overall plan	x					
Select key leaders for an interview	x	x				
Schedule in-depth interviews	x	x				
Conduct interviews and take notes	x	x	x	x		
Transcribe notes	x	x	x	x		
Review notes and analyses data			x	x	x	
Incorporate data and write dissertation			x	x	x	x

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