

Social Capital - Better Together

The purpose of this paper is to strongly motivate Community Groups to Network together with the objective of sharing Information and Databases to advance their activities more effectively yet at the same time maintaining their own identities

It is therefore dedicated to 436,500 people who volunteer their time as mentors to administer the 97,000 community and volunteer groups, social service councils, not-for-profit and tangata whenua organizations

Collectively they contribute Social Capital to fabricate vibrant and effective Communities that are so essential for social and economic development

Sadly many are going it alone within their own perimeters instead of networking with other groups to share their knowledge and resources and thus proclaim solutions for societies problems with One Voice

As the Saguaro seminar at Harvard University, proclaimed, it is;

“ Better Together” Civic Engagement

It is to be hoped that attitudes which are prevalent in Britain will not prevail here and detract from the importance of Social Capital

It is reported that the traditional Britain of community groups is disappearing because people are too busy or just do not care enough to become involved

The following subjective scenario illustrates that a greater priority should be accorded to the investment of Social Capital over Marketplace Capital and Public Capital

Social Capital – The First Sector

Social Capital is the investment expended by people so they can contribute to their own communities through a multitude of social and cultural tangata whenua, community and voluntary groups – human energy extended to others to create a common social good. Being Better Together in the power of team work serving their local communities

Marketplace Capital is generated through investments in corporate entities – The Second Sector

Public Capital is derived by the government from taxes and by local authorities from rates – The Third Sector

This Social Capital enjoys this priority because it engenders Trust (the key word) which is not present in Marketplace Capital or Public Capital where caveat emptor – let the buyer beware - is still very prevalent

The importance and emphasis of these Community Civic Groups far exceed both the Business and Public sectors, touching and affecting the lives of people more profoundly than the forces of the Marketplace or the agencies and bureaucracies of the Government and City or District Councils

These concepts of the priority of Social Capital

(Community Sector) are endorsed by research.

In a global survey of Trust in Institutions conducted for the World Economic Forum by research organization, Environics, Companies (Marketplace Capital) ranked almost at the bottom, just above Politicians (Public Capital) and below lawyers.

In the same survey, Community Groups and NGOs ranked at the top alongside the armed forces, academic and educational institutions

Source; Ecos E- News, September/October 2003

www.ecoscorporation.com/contact

“Strong communities – a vibrant culture – are a prerequisite for social and economic development and not just beneficiaries of it ” (Jeremy Rifkin, the president of the Foundation on Economic Trends)

The World Bank has now shifted their priorities to funding social development projects first instead of economic ones, understanding that strong communities are a prerequisite for development and social cohesion.

Social Capital, they say, is critical for sustainable human and economic Development

Professor Kevin Roberts, Professor of Sustainable Enterprise (University of Waikato) and global CEO of Saachi and Saachi says; “ What New Zealand really needs to fulfill its social and economic potential is a fourth and hardest style of leadership. This is one not driven from the Top but one that springs from the communities in which people live and work ”

Harvard University thought the concept of community participation was so important they conducted the Saguaro Seminar with the encapsulation “ Better Together”

They state “ scores of academic studies confirm that trust and personal civic engagement in Community Civic Groups lubricate Society`s institutions

New Zealanders spend more time on unpaid work than on paid work according to figures from a time-use survey by the Department of Statistics

Source; “ Unpaid and Underestimated” The Press – August 27/28 2005

This means more Social Capital is expended than that from both the Marketplace Capital and Public Capital as far as people are concerned.

However, this dissertation strongly indicates that it is the Community Sector which should have the power to be taking some of the initiative in assisting with Society`s growth and economic development. Let these people be heard with a collective voice.

Social Capital is the greater Investment and has the label of the First Sector

As Peter Druker said “ Everyone agrees that social transformation must empower people to become independent rather than encourage dependence.

What supports people is to help them access their own power, otherwise one is not changing the world but mounting a relief effort ”

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