



### **Smart Neighbourhood & Community: Connecting All Without Boundaries**

“Throughout human history, cities exist for the convenience of defence, governance and economic activities. Arguably, cities were never built for the old. With urbanization and population ageing becoming global trends, we are perhaps at a pivotal point in history where cities need to accommodate an extremely high proportion of elderly population. Population ageing is a result of economic prosperity and social stability as well as improvements in nutrition, living conditions, public health and healthcare. It should not be feared as a destructive ‘ageing tsunami’, but rather a motivation to build a better and more tolerant community,” comments **Mr Ling Kar-Kan**, Director of JCDISI.

To construct a better and tolerant community, public participation is crucial. Stakeholders in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Malaysia and even Myanmar have participated in the co-creation of smart communities, among them are examples such as community kitchens and neighbourhood renewal.

### **Co-design with the elderly encourages active lifestyles**

“In our culture, ‘respect for the elderly’ is often mistook as a contempt of the elderly’s capabilities. The elderly are wrongly seen as weaker than teenagers, the middle-aged and adults, neglecting the fact that everyone becomes old one day. This creates the stereotypical image of the elderly becoming less capable,” said **Ms Debby Cheng**, Project Manager and Leader of Social Team, Jockey Club Design Institute for Social Innovation, PolyU.

To break the stereotype, Ms Cheng believes that one must step in the shoes of the elderly to understand their needs and appreciate their wisdom. In light of this, JCDISI worked with students, elderlies and participants from all walks of life in co-design social projects to develop prototypes for the elderly, such as the waste-recycling trolleys designed for silver-aged waste pickers, the ‘community kitchen’ operated by Third Age Volunteers, and innovative elderly community centres. Ms Cheng hopes that these projects can nurture a tolerant social atmosphere and encourage our elderly friends to live actively.



*JCDISI's Project Manager and Leader of Social Team Ms Debby Cheng with the waste-recycling trolley developed by the co-design team.*



*Based on the needs of the elderly, JCDISI co-design an age-friendly information website for H.K.S.K.H. Lady MacLehose Centre Dr Lam Chik Suen District Elderly Community Center.*

## Myanmar Crowdfunding Platform Facilitates Public Engagement

Have you ever thought that Hong Kongers can help solve social issues in Myanmar? **Mr Justin Chan**, a social entrepreneur with a background in finance, was moved by Myanmar's history and launched the crowdfunding platform **MM Community** to promote social tolerance: "in the rural area of Rangoon is an abandoned pond the size of several basketball courts. We organised communal activities, communicated with local elderlies, and collaborated with local governments, legislators and NGOs to realise elderlies' hopes to 'stay healthy'. In the end, we were able to build an outdoor gym centre for them." Mr Chan hopes to continue leveraging crowdfunding technology to rethink civil participation and minimize the distance between local social issues and government policies.



*MM Community Co-founder Mr Justin Chan*

## Placemaking Through Extensive Engagement of Malaysian Stakeholders

"The participation of stakeholders is the key to the successful implementation of placemaking," says **Ms Nicole Thum** from Malaysia's **Think City**. Ms Thum joined the urban regeneration organisation Think City in 2014 as a programme executive, and is responsible for analysing and understanding communal needs to devise appropriate urban development plans and co-design projects.

Think City's placemaking initiatives for which Ms Thum was responsible targeted the Penang cities Georgetown and Butterworth. The projects aim to create an ideal city in which to live, work, play, and learn. "Besides improving the physical features, placemaking also improves the city's

economy and builds a society that is healthier, more productive and more resilient.” In Ms Thum’s view, the participation of stakeholders is the key to the project’s success. A place can be made more liveable by fully taking into account its history and the needs of its users.



*Senior Programme Executive of Think City, Ms Nicole Thum.*

### **Participatory Planning in Guangzhou Sparks Public Engagement in Community Affairs**

Pan-Tang-Wu-Yue Village in Guangzhou has over 900 years of history and preserves the prototypical architectural layout and aesthetics of the Qing Dynasty. It is an example of rural, multi-clan communal settlement, a rare sight in the city’s historic district. One challenge during its urban renewal was to foster organic connection between communities and encourage a sense of social living among residents. **Ms Guangye Rui** and **Mr Runlin Huang** are co-founders of FAN-WU-QI Institute & Urban-rural Planners of **Urban Elephant**. They proposed a participatory design approach: firstly to investigate through street polling to seek the residents’ opinions, and then to involve them in participatory design workshops. The subsequent construction is monitored and observed by the residents themselves. Their approach successfully allows the new space to better fit into the local context, improving the residents’ living environment while passing on the conservation of local history and culture. Their project encourages citizens to take part in public affairs and create a new communication mechanism between the government and the people.





*Co-founders, FAN-WU-QI Institute & Urban-rural Planners, Urban Elephant, Mr Runlin Huang (left) and Ms Guangye Rui (right)*



*Urban Elephant's participatory design process at Pan-Tang-Wu-Yue Village in Guangzhou*

## Hong Kong's Intergenerational Living In a Vertical City

As a vertical city, can Hong Kong's skyscrapers provide a multi-functional space for intergenerational living? JCDISI's Project Manager and Leader of Spatial Team **Dr Calvin Luk** collaborated with a co-creation team to explore design possibilities for the rooftop of an elderly home in Lai Kok Estate. The co-creation team gathered talents from One Bite Design Studio, elderly home residents, staff and community, and researchers from PolyU's Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and School of Nursing to design a brand new outdoor space equipped with a treatment area, gardening area, quiet area and multi-functional space. The project serves as a future reference for intergenerational spatial design in Hong Kong.



*After considering advice from the co-creation team, the rooftop of an elderly home in Lai Kok Estate is revamped into a brand new outdoor activity space.*



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### **Social Innovation Regional Forum: Smart Housing to Tackle Double Ageing**

Population ageing and building stock ageing are usually tackled as two separate subjects, and each has already received much attention. However, the combined impact of these processes of ageing, i.e. “Double Ageing”, is a much more complex issue to address. The Jockey Club Design Institute for Social Innovation advocates that tackling this acute issue would require an integrated, people-centric “Double Smart” approach which leverages smart aging and smart city efforts holistically in order to enhance the sustainability, liveability and resilience of cities. The Social Innovation Regional Forum (SIRF2020) organized by JCDISI of PolyU under the project PolyU Jockey Club “Operation SoInno”, will invite the aforementioned experts as forum’s speakers. The panel discussion, moderated by **Mr Timothy MA**, Council Member, Hong Kong General Chamber of Social Enterprise will explore smart neighbourhood and community and innovation experience through co-creation.