

The Outcome of Social Innovation Action Plan in Taiwan

I. Background

In the face of various imbalances arising from global development, social innovation, combining innovation, efficiency, and sustainability, can find new ways to address social issues through innovative applications of technology or business models. In response to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the government of Taiwan announced the “Social Innovation Action Plan 1.0 (2018-2022)” in 2018. The major achievements are summarized as follows:

1. Value Cultivation

Promote university social responsibility (USR) to encourage over 114 college teams to engage in local social innovation services; By establishing information platforms such as the "Social Innovation Taiwan," " Social Economic Development Web Portal," and " Humanity Innovation and Social Practice" to enhance public recognition of the value of social innovation.

2. Fund-Raising

Incorporate "Business-Social innovation organizations Collaboration" and "SDGs Implementation" into Corporate Evaluation System; provide operational funds for Indigenous businesses, with an annual financing amount exceeding 320 million NT Dollars (approximately 9.85 million US Dollars).

3. Innovation Incubation

Implement the “Buying Power” Social Innovation Procurement Incentive Mechanism to encourage government and corporate support for the development of social innovation. The cumulative procurement amount had exceeded 3.12 billion NT Dollars (approximately 96 million US Dollars); Promote diversified development such as cooperative and rural community enterprises, providing relevant training and counseling services.

4. Promotion and Expansion

Encourage social innovation organizations to register and provide them with counseling resources to enhance their social visibility and support. The cumulative number of social innovation organization registration has exceeded 800; Operate the Social Innovation Lab, hosting over 9,000 courses, workshops, advocacy, and other related activities, attracting more than 200,000 participants overall, thus creating an essential hub for the convergence and dissemination of social innovation information.

5. International Linkage

Organize the Asia-Pacific Social Innovation Summit, attracting over 3,000 participants annually. Participate in the Social Enterprise World Forum, forming delegations to engage in information and experience exchanges with international communities and networks.

II. Cases

1. Bettermilk (鮮乳坊):

(1) To improve the ecological environment of dairy farming, Bettermilk promotes the concepts of "on-site veterinary inspection, single farm operation, no ingredient adjustment, and fair trade." They dispatch professional technical teams to assist dairy farmers in scientific management, providing specific indicators for disease prevention, calf rearing rates, milk quality, and more. This enables effective manpower allocation on the farms, allowing for reasonable vacation time. Additionally, Bettermilk facilitates internships for veterinary students, assisting farms in talent acquisition.

(2) Through the "Buying Power" Social Innovation Procurement Incentive Mechanism and industry partnership matching, Bettermilk sells its products in over 100 convenience stores and large shopping malls in Taiwan. It has also been incorporated into the long-term supply chains of many chain restaurant businesses, successfully entering the consumer

market.

2. PackAge+ (配客嘉)

- (1) PackAge+ actively collaborate with various municipal governments in Taiwan to integrate theirs' circular packaging systems into the urban circular economy. They currently have over 4,500 return points and 80+ e-commerce partners participating in their circular packaging initiative.
- (2) Through the “Buying Power” Social Innovation Procurement Incentive Mechanism, industry partnership matching, and guidance provided by the Social Innovation Center, PackAge+ has successfully partnered with multiple convenience stores and large shopping malls. Stores provide space for placing return boxes, offering offline discounts to consumers when they return the packaging. This strategy has attracted a new customer base to the physical stores. Through this recycling system, it drives various sectors to collectively reduce the pollution caused by disposable waste on the environment.

III. Prospect

Building upon the achievements of action plan 1.0, the “Social Innovation Action Plan 2.0 (2023-2026)” is jointly promoted by 17 government agencies. In addition to establishing public-private-people partnerships, it is crucial to engage in discussions on vital issues such as green sustainability, inclusive technology, marine ecosystem conservation. Furthermore, by combining the concept of impact investment, it aims to assist social innovation organizations in achieving autonomous operations, and to progressively position Taiwan as a model for social innovation in the Asia-Pacific region. In the future, we look forward to organizing international events to seek the best solutions for social and environmental issues in collaboration with international partners in social innovation.