Social Capital as Participation and Networking toward Social Mobility

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INTRODUCTION

Given the presumed close association between social capital and socio-economic mobility, this study focuses on exploring the mechanisms underlying that relationship. It draws on evidence from the behavioral science literature – anthropological, sociological, social psychological and political science – featuring national and international case studies representing the Philippines, developing and developed countries. The findings highlight the interaction between group participation and social networks embedded in social capital, and social mobility. Through these illustrative cases, the role of group membership, participatory processes, reciprocity, trust-building and collective action is systematically assessed.

Social Capital as a Multi-Disciplinary Concept

Economists have generally defined social capital as a form of capital that produces public goods for a common good. Behavioral scientists and practitioners, however, have adopted a much broader perspective. Although discussions of networks, reciprocity and trust-building have long existed in the behavioral science literature, the concept of social capital gained prominence in those circles toward the end of the 20th century as a human behavior alternative to the solely economic framework then favored by policy makers. Behavioral scientists emphasized the value of going beyond economic indicators to study also the role that organizations and networks play in people's everyday lives. Their arguments cited trust as a crucial variable in shared values, norms, and reciprocity inherent in social networks along with group cooperation and collective action capable of producing outcomes benefitting a broader community.

Various studies in rural and urban settings illustrate the point that in addition to economic resources and income, what generates group actions encompasses wide ranging social capital representations. Consider, for example, farm families helping a neighbor with the harvest, confident that when their own field is ready, they can expect similar assistance (Racelis Hollnsteiner 1963). Reciprocity also figures when friends temporarily mind another family's children while the mother is at the market or enrolling her older children in school. The implicit expectation is that an equivalent favor will be forthcoming in future. The same unstated norm defining mutual obligations perseveres in, for example, family members or friends borrowing or lending money at no interest, helping others affected by disasters, voting for network partners' preferred political candidates, and many more such informal understandings (Racelis 2016).

Although largely intangible, these reciprocal acts figure prominently in social accounting systems as exchange partners assess their non-material assets. The creation of social capital does not require expending scarce material resources. Rather, it is free and "requires no natural resources, no machines, no brick and mortar, no advance degree, no paid labor" (Wilson 1997). It accumulates with use instead of depreciating in value (Evans 1996). Indeed the more that social capital is used, the more it generates (Bowen 2009) and the greater it becomes (Lyon 2008). In effect, local groups handle public goods that are beyond individual capabilities to manage or that governments have not addressed or are unable to finance. The organization of the local fiesta or groups clearing the debris blocking the drainage pipes or canals after the last typhoon are cases in point. Social capital thus becomes a substitute or alternative to formal institutions for addressing basic needs. It helps the poor cope with the difficulties in their everyday lives through collective actions for mutual benefit. Accordingly, it has been referred to as "the capital of the poor" (Gertler , Levine and Moretti 2004, quoting Woolcock and Narayan 2000). Positive correlations between levels of social capital and household incomes have been amply demonstrated globally (Narayan and Pritchett 1997b).

Local associations, in particular, create social capital through sharing information among their members and facilitating collective decision making. The accompanying goodwill that recognizes the needs of others serves to reduce opportunistic behavior (Grootaert, 1997; Collier, 1998). Effective participation in associations thus becomes an important generator of social capital for the acquisition of enhanced resources, information and ideas. Evidence from Bolivia, Burkina Faso and Indonesia have shown that memberships in local associations lead to higher incomes and reduced household poverty, with the poor more likely to benefit than the better off. This situation came about through membership in associations promoting asset accumulation in the form of material resources, savings, access to credit and, at the community level, members who organized to assert their interests through collective action (Grootaert 2001).

Types of Social Capital

Three types of social capital have been identified at community level: bonding (close horizontal ties), bridging (looser horizontal ties) and linking (institutional external vertical ties) capital (Woolcock 2001).

Bonding social capital embodies close horizontal and personal ties within the family (*pamilya*), extended family (*kamag-anak*), neighbors (*kapitbahay*), ritual kin (*kumpare, kumare*), and close friends (*matalik na kaibigan, barkada*). These links facilitate access, for example, to money gifts and loans; food, clothing, and shelter; information about jobs, impending eviction threats, overseas migration openings, and cheap rooms for rent in the community; protection from gangs, special benefits from the barangay captain, and many other valued favors. Informal economy groups meet to peel garlic together, form burial societies, informal credit groups (*paluwagan*), gather in Bible or Qu'ran prayer groups, mothers' clubs, youth basketball teams, and street corner gangs; and organize electric " jumper" groups to tap illegally into Meralco circuits,. The family or household often serves as the basic unit that encourages its members to engage with other kin and non-kin in collective action. Its norms favor solidarity, loyalty,

pooling of resources, sharing risks and gains enhanced by productive relationships over time. Bonding social capital addresses the need for "getting by" on a day by day basis.

Bridging social capital features looser horizontal ties usually cemented by memberships in formal or semi-formal associations. These bring together around common interests more distant friends, associates, colleagues, partner NGOs, religious groups, community associations, the barangay captain and barangay councilors. Included in poor neighborhoods of cities are associations of market stall vendors with whom one can bargain, sari-sari store proprietors who provide credit and sell household items in small affordable lots, workers who render paid services like barbering, hairdressing, massages and hauling water; jeepney and motorized tricycle drivers associations; artisans who manufacture pots and pans or doors and windows, sell second-hand roofing and wood for construction, and manage used-clothing (*ukay-ukay)* stalls or home-cooked food outlets (*carinderia*). Also figuring in this category are community-based NGOs engaged in organizing local people for their empowerment; People's Organizations demanding secure tenure, housing and basic services; registered homeowners' associations; micro-enterprise units; ethnic minority groupings; and religious social action groups. In rural communities, associational ties cover farmer or fisher federations, women's livelihood organizations, 4-H youth clubs, chapel sodalities, farmers organized around agrarian reform issues or indigenous people grouped to pursue ancestral domain claims. Bridging social capital is oriented to "getting ahead."

Linking social capital describes institutional external vertical ties connecting with others able to leverage resources, information and ideas. Key institutions are schools and parent-teachers associations, which provide scholarships, knowledge and skills training; exposure to outside activities; and alternative learning systems. Police personnel embody security or avenues for corruption; government clinics and hospitals offer health services, faith–based institutions foster religious gatherings and spiritual enlightenment; and private sector entities offer employment. National government entities introduce programs like the conditional cash transfer or 4Ps, agrarian reform, environmental and disaster risk management, and security oriented military operations. In Bukidnon, links with groups that facilitate overseas work brings significant rewards in future remittances to less poor families (Echavez and Burton 2007). The thrust fosters synergy in leveraging contacts in hierarchical relationships reflecting unequal power relations that can nonetheless be harnessed for resource redistribution benefiting the more disadvantaged network members (Coleman 1998, quoted in Grootaert 2001).

Substantial evidence from a range of development projects undertaken at community level shows that unless people's awakening capacities are matched substantially by government programs and economic opportunities, their social mobility will remain limited. It is thus incumbent on local government officials especially to encourage the formation of community associations growing out of people's interests and concerns and to listen to their collective voices. However, all too often local officials feel threatened by poor groups making demands of them. The need to establish intersectoral networks between government communities through collaborative programs that enhance the credibility of government and foster trust relations is crucial from the start (Fox and Gershman 2000).

The poor for their part can utilize social capital for improved social mobility by tapping into the various modes opened up by external programs. If local groups are not already organized to seize such opportunities, trained organizers from outside the community, usually NGOs or experienced People's Organizations, can be invited to enter the scene and remedy the gaps. These intermediate organizations have enabled local groups to tap into external resources and make productive contacts with outside power holders (Bebington and Carroll, quoted in Grootaert and Bastelaer 2001). In this regard, trust between the organized community groups and government authorities or other external agents again emerges as crucial for success.

Further, local associations with wholly or almost all women members represent a powerful force in communities. Whether the dominant issues are tenure security, livelihood opportunities or access to basic services in rural and urban settings, it is women who readily organize to make demands of those in power. It is also women who show the greatest interest in enlarging their social capital through savings schemes and forming microfinance institutions (MFIs). These enterprises not only augment household incomes but also reinforce their social cohesion for expanded action (Quinones and Seibe 2000). In rural Benguet, women were most effective in social capital formation through active membership in community associations, displaying their commitment to building up local social relations. However, when it came to obtaining effective information on prices and markets, social networks, whether men or women, were not able to address the issue since data systems were not organized for that kind of immediate feedback (Milagrosa and Silangen 2006).

SOME COMMUNITY CASE STUDIES

Rural Palawan. Eder (1999) followed three sets of rural households over decades in Palawan whose second generation members experienced different social mobility outcomes. The first set stayed in the community, followed traditional practices and stayed poor. The second set likewise remained in the community but its members improved their household's economic standing and social mobility through intensified technology and income diversification via vegetable cropping, off-farm work, and tricycle driving. Some of these second generation members took advantage of higher education opportunities that transformed them into teachers and other professionals. The third offspring generation members left the community, bought land, diversified their businesses and pursued higher education, all the while maintaining inks with their parental families. In the two more economically successful households, the members spoke of the importance of having a plan that gave direction to their lives. Although building social capital as an avenue to social mobility is not expressly raised in the study, the strategies utilized suggest the first family's continuing poverty stemmed from its apparent failure to participate in networks that would have introduced new ideas or working partnerships to their everyday lives. The second two would necessarily have engaged in bonding, bridging and linking capital networks to promote their rising socio-economic trajectory.

Sustainable Initiative in Agriculture of Taguibo Association (SINAGTAA), Taguibo, Butuan City. In 2014, Luntiaw Mindanaw, an NGO supported by two international organizations (included Barangay Taguibo in its efforts to expand agricultural productivity in watershed surroundings. Upland residents were encouraged to shift from mining and logging

activities to raising farm crops and livestock. The aims were to raise household incomes and nutritional levels, enable families to meet their basic needs, and create sustainable employability through on-farm/off-farm income generating projects. Moreover, selecting community partners in sites adjacent to the original project area in the Agusan del Norte watershed would reduce pressure on the Taguibo watershed. Butuan City would therefore benefit not only from the anticipated rise in social mobility of its agricultural barangay populace but also from avoiding the destructive consequences of irresponsible mining and logging. Of particular interest to the City was the realization that its water comes from the Taguibo watershed and thus needed to be protected (Labastilla 2016).

Luntiaw Mindanaw included100 Taguibo households in its watershed network, which subsequently named themselves SINAGTAA. The members attended seminars on hog-raising prior to receiving a pair of piglets for raising. Success there enabled them to pool their profits to set up a feed mill and train neighboring communities in successful hog-raising techniques. The social cohesion record made them obvious participants in 2016 for the government's Bottom Up Budgeting program. Subsequently, their fish cultivation project proposal was selected as one of the BUB projects to receive funds for project implementation the following year. Further, their forward-looking vision led the group to allocate Php 50,000 of its funds to plant falcata (*Paraserianthes falcataria*) trees for harvest and sale in 2020. With the assistance of Luntiaw Mindanaw as a bridging social capital partner, SINAGTAA enhanced its linking social capital when it negotiated with the Department of Trade and Industry to obtain agricultural machinery. The equipment received (rice gluer, dryer, bagger, scale, etc.) allowed it to expand its production and marketing efficiency. Since it is geographically and administratively located in a city, SINAGTAA is additionally well placed to make contact with national and local government agencies in promoting its environmental and development outcomes as a rural barangay lodged in an urban local government unit.

Indigenous people: Sakaki Mangyan, Mindoro. A group posing special issues are indigenous people, many of whom traditionally responded to outsiders entering their domain by withdrawing farther into the forest. Groups like the Sakaki Mangyan, however, realized that retreat was no longer possible because of the scarcity of available forest land. They thus began to remain onsite upon the entry of mining companies, building up their social capital by bargaining for higher cash incomes, jobs and basic services while striving as much as possible not to compromise their Mangyan culture (Sakara Alvaro 2011) .

Twelve indigenous communities. Ways to promote bridging and linking social capital is described in the modified ethnographic study of 12 indigenous communities, six of them *katutubo* or non- Muslim indigenous people, and six Muslim groups (Austria and Racelis 2014). Focusing on education, the research was facilitated through the Department of Education's PRIME (Philippines Response to Indigenous Peoples' and Muslim Education) program. The sampled IP groups in the Cordillera, who were engaged in terraced rice cultivation and upland farming, had pursued formal education from the early days of the American colonial administration, often in missionary schools. As more and more of their teachers came from their own or nearby Cordillera ethnic groups, and as their cultural traditions remained substantially intact under the continuing authority of tribal elders, the trust between the parents and the school system increased correspondingly. Motivations for sending children to school and on to higher

education emerged around the desire to participate equitably in and gain better access to resources and knowledge in the larger society. With this came the challenge of dealing with inevitable changes while sustaining the most valued parts of their indigenous heritage.

Another set of indigenous people, those *katutubo* still largely engaged in hunting, gathering and upland swidden or *kaingin* farming, avoided formal education. To them it appeared incompatible or even useless in relation to their ongoing ways of life. Moreover, the demeaning discrimination experienced by their few school-going children at the hands of their fellow non-IP classmates and some teachers added to the resistance and dropouts. When they did send some of their children to school, the rationale was so that they would learn to read and write well enough to defend the community against exploiters. Included here were outsiders who took advantage of IP groups by presenting apparently legal papers affirming the strangers' right to claim the land and force the IPs out. They were also apprehensive about mining or logging company officials tricking them into agreeing to the former's proposals, often to the detriment of the IPs' own wellbeing. The dearth of bridging and linking social capital in these IP communities, then, actually undermined their situations through displacement and depletion of the natural resources that had long sustained them. Worsened lives, or downward mobility, were the result.

The third set of IPs in the PRIME study represented Muslim ethnic groups in Palawan and Mindanao who mostly viewed the public school system with apprehension or even suspicion. The religious leader-elders in particular deplored the kind of cultural exposure and values their children were learning through regular contact with the broader non-Muslim community. They criticized the dress styles and television-inspired sexy dances and suggestive songs of the dominant majority culture and asked why their own traditional dances and songs were not taught in school. Parents were reluctant to send their daughter to the high school in town where she would board at a local dormitory, fearful that a boyfriend might emerge and get her pregnant. All too often the preventive response would be an arranged marriage for a 13 year girl, thereby ensuring the retention of family honor. Limited bridging and linking social capital reinforced the ethno-religious separation.

The situation began to change when the Department of Education gave increased attention to a more culturally sensitive educational system. Bridging mechanisms came with revitalized Parent Teacher Community Associations. Parents commented with appreciation about schools that released the children earlier on Friday afternoons so that they could attend religious services at the mosque. Greater rapport also came with the implementation of the Alternative Learning System (ALS), where the teachers belonged to local ethnic groups knowledgeable in the local language and ready to teach children in their homes and neighborhoods. Similarly, ALIVE, the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education program, elicited significant approval in the community by embedding Muslim precepts in the more informal context of community learning. In terms of social capital, the building of trust through bridging and linking mechanisms resulted in more Muslim children going to school. This opened up venues for upward social mobility in both the traditional and outside worlds. It included a capacity to deal with the dominant culture while establishing modes of remaining true to their ethno-religious heritage.

Southville 1 resettlement site, Cabuyao, Laguna. Downward mobility is also a consequence when once thriving social capital is lost as urban poor informal settlers are pressured or forced to move from their incity locations to distant offcity sites. Left with a house and lot which most are not sure they can afford to pay off, and given the consequences of no employment, inadequate basic services (water, electricity, schools, communications, protection and transport), and discrimination from the townspeople, relocatees suffer intensely the negative consequences of disrupted social networks. The anthropologist researcher recorded at least two suicides during the months he spent living in the settlement.

Having lived in their former urban informal settlements for decades, they had built up bonding, bridging and even linking social capital ties that had enhanced survival and even fostered some upward mobility. All that was shattered by the eviction and offcity resettlement. Thousands of households summarily transferred to Laguna faced the reality of disorganized lives and unpredictable futures. The social bonds that had sustained them internally in their former neighborhoods along with the networking with people outside their neighborhoods for informal jobs or personal benefits had disappeared in the move. Demoralized, they found it difficult to work out some kind of household plan for the future in such disruptive and unpredictable surroundings. Only when their former community organizers returned to help revitalize their People's Organization did they once again get the energy and courage to assert their interests and rights .

BASECO and Estero de San Miguel, Manila. These two urban informal settlement communities enhanced their social capital enormously when they invited Urban Poor Associates (UPA) to help them organize resistance to eviction and demand onsite security of tenure and upgraded housing (Murphy 2015; Esponilla Asuncion 2015). In less than a decade they built on their bonding capital to create powerful people's organizations, Kabalikat and Nagkakaisang Mamayan ng Legarda (NML), respectively. These people's organizations (POs) forged effective links with government shelter-related agencies and civil society groups to gain rights to land and housing.

Kabalikat collaborated with key groups on several fronts: Gawad Kalinga and Habitat for Humanity to generate housing units onsite, with the City of Manila supporting BASECO fire victims to reconstruct their housing, with technical specialists for disaster risk management and coastal protection through mangrove planting, with Shoemart and Kultura designers for women to produce and sell attractive bags using local plastic and newsprint weaves, to lobby for the Urban Development Housing Act and its 2016 revision, and to resolve land titling claims and land development through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Congress of the Philippines.

NML's struggle to acquire land both onsite and nearby to accommodate all its member households drew on the assistance of UPA for negotiating with shelter agencies in a demand and rights mode. These government institutions included the Social Housing Finance Corporation, National Housing Authority, Department of Interior and Local Government, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Technical support from the World Bank and professional architect-planners working largely pro-bono or at low rates helped enormously. NML has just

finished constructing three blocks row housing set back from the estero and accommodating a portion of its families. At the same time with the assistance of the Department of Budget and Management, it identified and negotiated for a vacant parcel of land nearby owned by the Department of Finance which was large enough to accommodate the overflow families. During the years of countless meetings and negotiation, NML arranged for its members to undergo training in estate management, livelihood programs, and urban gardening. It formed community brigades of young people to keep their environment clean and participate in local events along with the adults. Strong organizing and cohesive leadership largely by women bound together in social networks made all the difference.

Gulod Urban Poor Alliance, Quezon City (Prondosa 2015). GUPA evolved from its initial project on sanitation into disaster risk management planning after the devastation of Tropical Storm Ondoy in 2009. It constructed socio-economic profiles of vulnerable families, location maps of hazards and high-risk areas, and early warning systems, while also compiling a list of idle properties in the barangay as possible relocation sites for the affected storm victims. In its drive to develop housing for its displaced families, GUPA invited the Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor (FDUP) to help organize its members to engaged with the Community Mortgage Program and negotiate funding support from the local government and the Social Housing Finance Corporation. In coordination with GUPA, the barangay government agreed to handle those displaced families willing to resettle to offcity sites prepared by the National Housing Authority.

Given its extensive social capital ties, GUPA convinced the Quezon City mayor to purchase a 0.5 hectare piece of land within the barangay for flood victim resettlement. In preparation for the design and construction phase, GUPA organized technical planning sessions and community consultations. These included site visits and community meetings on the building design conducted by the FDUP technical staff with the assistance of professional and student architects from Task Force Arki of the University of the Philippines College of Architecture, TAO –Pilipina, a community-based NGO of young architect-planners, a World Bank engineer and others. The dynamic participatory planning mode carried out by Homeowner Association member-beneficiaries culminated in revisions to the project design, propelled mainly by the need to lower costs while still giving residents the satisfaction of creating their own distinctive housing units. These prospective home owners were also trained in the building skills and later hired to work in site and building construction.

With additional Quezon City funding of P14.5 million successfully negotiated by GUPA for site development and a shelter loan from the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC), some 212 former estero dwellers built Ernestville, named after their energetic community leader. By mid-2016 they had moved into their two-story core house units linked in row apartment style, each with a mezzanine on a uniform lot size of 26 square meters. No longer "squatters" or "informal settlers," the 212 families proudly attribute their upward social mobility to achieving the status of Homeowners. That could not have happened without the extensive bonding, bridging and linking social capital they generated and have sustained.

Resettlement sites, Rodriguez, Rizal: Kasiglahan Village 1-B Action Group, San Jose; and PSHAI. San Isidro. These cases illustrate how already organized community groups

removed from riverside and dump sites previously, retain their social cohesion even after they have been relocated to offcity sites. The accumulated social capital was further expanded in Kasiglahan through collective action to confront threats from NHA to their already precarious wellbeing and likely downward mobility.   In the case of PSHAI, the long-sought voluntary move to its purchased land in San Isidro built on its existing social cohesion to deal with problems of adjustment as they arose. In both cases , active mobilizing confronted initial problems and in the course of resolving them, increased community capacities to handle more complex problems.

Kasiglahan Village 1-B Action Group transferred from various Metro Manila informal settlement areas to the NHA resettlement site in San Jose, Rodriguez, Rizal. The strong women leaders from the Pasig River banks, who had long been organized, reconstituted themselves into the K-V 1B Action Group. Its membership soon mobilized to protest the non-readiness of their units and the entire settlement. They accused NHA of allocating to them unfinished and substandard housing units, of failing to make potable water available and forcing them to line up for hours at the few hand pumps. Electricity came on only a few hours in the evening, schools classrooms were crowded with 100 or more students, transport back to Manila was scarce and expensive, and local drug and criminals gangs roamed the dark and dangerous streets.

Through continuing community protests, many of these shortcomings were gradually esolved over the following decade. A festering issue, however, concerned the affordability of the housing units. With monthly payments initially set at Php 1,437, the residents feeling ranging from consternation and to outright anger were high. NHA later reduced these to Php 400 per month after many meetings with the Action Group and other local associations. Later negotiations accepted the formula recommended by the organized residents: the monthly installment would be reduced from Php 400 to Php 300 for the first four years, to Php 500 from the 5th to 10th year, and Php 800 from the final 11th to 25th year. This reorganized scheme would still allow the full payment of the Php 160,000 charge to the unit owner by the 25th year.

The onset of another strong typhoon in 2012 raised yet another issue: many KV- 1 housing units were completely flooded, leaving some of their residents perched shivering and afraid on their roofs for long periods of time. To make matters worse, it was learned that Kasiglahan Village was situated near the Marikina earthquake fault line. This gave the community members further cause to attack the NHA in particular for forcing them out of " danger zones" in Manila to "death zones" in Kasiglahan. Not long after, the government tried to restore its credibility by allocating Php 1.2 million for three projects: sewing training for 30 mothers for work and increased incomes, and projects enabling two sets of youth to run an internet shop and a printmaking establishment. It was hoped those innovations would contribute to stamping out the underground sale of kidneys that could bring the donor anywhere from Php 110,000 to Php 225,000, in addition to a P1,500 finder's fee.

Payatas Scavengers Homeowners Association, Inc. PSHAI originally consisted of 150 saver-participants on the Payatas, Quezon City dumpsite. They resided in shacks constructed from recycled building materials scavenged from the dumpsite and drew their income largely from the trash mountain. In 1998 an expanded PSHAI bought 3-hectares of titled land in San

Isidro for resettlement. Their self-relocation took place after years of preparation featuring programs for family and community improvement. Organized initially as volunteers by a Vincentian priest with the Vincentian Missionaries Social Development Foundation, Inc. (VMSDFI), the Scavengers group focused on savings schemes. These would generate the down payment for land purchase, capital for small businesses, loans for emergencies and funds for general needs. Using their three-year savings total of Php 600,000, PSHAI, Inc. then obtained a low-interest loan of Php 3.9 million from Domus-Mariae of the Diocese of Manila to complete the Php 4.5 million down payment. The Payatas trash slide of 2000 which buried hundreds of waste-pickers brought additional help came from President Joseph Estrada to construct row houses and a daycare center as incentives for moving to San Isidro (Aguirre and Racelis 2016). Their social capital was lodged in the multiple networks they had built up in Payatas with the VMSDFI, Homeless People's Federation in the Philippines, Inc (HPFPI), and the latter's NGO technical support arm, Philippine Action for Community-Led Shelter Initiatives, Inc (PACSII. (Yu and Karaos 2004). PSHAI also forms part of the powerful global south Shack/Slumdwellers International. The former's effective organizing of ex-scavengers and informal settlers for legitimate housing settlement and community development attracted further support from another internationally based program, Community-Led Infrastructure Financing Facility (CLIFF).

The problem of managing a complex array of internal and external support networks generating large amounts of social capital for PSHAI members may explain in part why although site development began in 2004 with the municipal approval of the development permit, only 66 houses have been built so far, with 44 families actually moving in. Some member households explain that they cannot afford the monthly installments. Others have opted to maintain two residences – one in San Isidro inhabited by the family or rented out, and other in Payatas where their main source of livelihood prevails. Family members commute back and forth. Their response to upward social mobility aspirations apparently lies in maintaining both assets with the accompanying networks to leverage maximum benefits.

Alliance of People's Organizations Along Manggahan Floodway (APOAMF)

The 10 km Manggahan Floodway extends from the Marikina River to Laguna de Bay, passing through three local government areas – Pasig City, Cainta and Taytay, Rizal. Constructed in 1986 to control flooding, by 2009 its embankment and berms sheltered some 30,000 informal settler families. Although government proposals to make housing available to the low-income communities onsite were announced off and on in line with Presidential Proclamations granting the residents onsite land rights, no housing appeared. Then came a heavy blow: Executive Order 854, which revoked the two Presidential Proclamations . It was a reaction to the devastating Metro Manila flooding generated by Tropical Storm Ondoy in 2009. Revoking the Presidential Proclamations, it announced the mandatory resettlement of informal settlers along waterways to offcity sites. Manggahan Floodway families were no exception.

Some households accepted the government offers to resettle offcity in outer Rizal and Laguna, believing they had no real choice given government pressures to implement EO 854. The majority of households, however, incensed at the arbitrary revocation of the Presidential Proclamations that had earlier assured them of their secure tenure status, defied the eviction

orders and remained onsite. To help them with strategies for furthering their determination, they invited Community Organizers Multiversity (COM), an NGO active in housing and settlement issues, to help them tackle the problem.

From this bridging relationship came training sessions around their rights under the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 and in established resettlement policies. Soon 11 people's organizations had been set up across the triple-LGU expanse. Not long after, these 11 POs decided to join forces by federating through APOAMF. People learned to develop tactics and strategies for talking confidently to national and local officials in new linking-capital relationships. Improved communication convinced the authorities that the people's perspectives had some value. Members pointed out, for example, that blaming them for the flooding was inaccurate and unjust since the burden of guilt lay in factory discharges into the waterways, water hyacinth build-ups on the river, esteros constricted by upland silt run-off and clogged city drains. Their lobbying efforts paid off when APOAMF managed to gain a seat on the Local Inter Agency Committee (LIAC). While this enabled APOAMF to make its voice heard, in reality being regularly outnumbered by government agency participants meant that they were consistently outvoted in demolition decisions. However, they did take advantage of being in a position to negotiate delays or other solutions.

Their ultimate success came in the implementation of their People's Plan to find land onsite. In the process, they identified a parcel of the land across the river used as a transport depot by the Metro Manila DevelopmentAdministration. Through intense lobbying with NHA, several government agencies and the President himself, six medium rise social housing blocks of 120 units each are under construction. Those member households who have already moved into the newly opened units now proudly call themselves homeowners. APOAMF continues its efforts to promote savings, micro-enterprises, and skills training for employment. Through the heady successes of successful community organizing and enhancing their social capital in multiple ways, they have achieved gains never previously imagined. In expanding their social capital assets, many are moving up in the world rather than down.

Summary: These cases illustrate that communities which organize around common and urgent concerns and non-violently confront those in positions of power, participate in decisions affecting themselves, and tap into larger institutional frameworks to address complex issues interactively, necessarily relying on expanding social networks to achieve sustainable benefits. The sense of threat felt by poor people in already precarious situations becomes a major incentive to change the status quo by taking action. The ensuring participatory processes foster social cohesion and collective action. The many ties generated by reciprocal actions to achieve common goals reinforce network links for sustainable processes of self-management.

However, given situations of unequal power relations, beleaguered communities may often feel it necessary to seek outside help for support and guidance. These can come from NGOs and associations, more experienced POs, religiously linked partners, other civil society groups, private foundations, or sympathetic government personnel. Starting from small victories around limited ends, empowered groups move on to address more complex situations whose solutions often lie in effective bridging and linking social capital modes.

In the absence of material resources, building up as much social capital as possible becomes a form of security for the present and a savings account for the future. While for poor people substantial upward social mobility remains more of an aspiration than a reality, they strive for incremental gains and struggle against a downward trajectory. When outside forces pose threats to the minimal levels of wellbeing for which they have struggled, some may withdraw but many will fight.

MEASUR ING SOCIAL CAPITAL

While the extent to which social capital leads to enhanced social mobility remains contentious, case studies using both quantitative and qualitative evidence assert that the two variables are in fact related. Attempts to measure social capital in relation to poverty reduction at local levels necessarily include the following proxy variables (Grootaert and Bastelaer 2001; Groottaert, Oh , Swamy 1999):

- Levels of trust and adherence to norms and explicit or implicit agreements
- Social cohesion and collective action
- Membership and their density in local associations and networks
- Active participation in decision-making
- Internal heterogeneity as in gender, age, education, religion, ethnicity, etc
- Payment of dues in cash or kind as in work
- Type of organization – formal or informal

Rural proxy indicators include increased agricultural productivity, management of common resources, more profitable rural trading, energized farmer or fisherfolk federations, access to water, sanitation, information dissemination, credit, recovery from ethnic conflict and environmental disasters (Grootaert and Bastelaer 20001). Urban informal settler proxy indicators feature the ability to resist threatened eviction, facilitate orderly relocation, obtain land and housing rights, organize sustainable enterprise development schemes, recognize women and youth leadership, enhance school attendance, establish health and sanitation mechanisms in the community, organize safety and security brigades, set up disaster risk management systems and the like (Racelis 2016).

At the same time since social capital operates in a context-specific manner underpinned by supportive socio-economic and political elements, consistent schemes for monitoring it remain elusive. One set that has figured prominently in evaluation exercises uses the measurement of three types of proxy variables, namely, membership in local associations and networks, indicators of trust and adherence to norms, and indicators of collective action (Groottaert and Bastelaer 2001). Poor households adopt their own strategies for social mobility as suggested in studies among the chronic or bottom poor. While moving out of poverty or no longer being poor, may represent a general aspiration (often through a windfall like winning the national lottery), the greater reality facing them necessitates a more modest framework. Daily earning and mobility strategies of struggling and striving households aim to move up a few notches in the neighborhood hierarchy. The hope is not to drop down owing to an unexpected health crisis or application costs for overseas work. For the poorest, the criterion for not being poor is "Basta makakain ng tatlong beses isang araw at araw araw," or " So long as we can eat

regularly three times a day, every day." This implies that they have achieved regular survival status (Guevara 2007, Reyes et al 2011).

For the transient or transitional poor, moving up the scale from being poor to less poor means enabling their children to complete high school or even college. Parents will sacrifice their own immediate well-being to longer-terms strategies for their children. Education forms an important component in drawing on a range of social networks "para makatapos sila " or "so that they can finish their education " – usually meaning through college. Locating scholarships, getting tuition support through an overseas daughter's remittances or a friendly politician's willingness to fund tuition costs represent key approaches. The assumption is that the newly graduated beneficiary will find a permanent salaried job with benefits in the formal economy and in turn support to completion the education of one or more younger siblings.

This responsibility for one's siblings is more strongly imposed on daughters in the family than sons. Since women manage household money, a married daughter is more likely to allocate funds to the education of her younger sibling. Parents exert stronger claims on the assets of their daughters, single or married, than on their married sons (Reed   ). For the latter must contend with a wife who will likely prefer to support her own children, siblings or other needy family members before allocating substantial amounts to her in-laws. The sibling bond thus represents a key strategy in the family's upward mobility drive. Similarly, the child-parent bond affords old age security to their elders.

The cross-generational education approach ultimately, therefore, addresses both the continuing social mobility of younger siblings as well as the future wellbeing of aging parents. That is what needs to be included in measurements of social mobility. Building social capital through associational ties and effective networks is crucial for sustaining these family-centered approaches to generating assets toward improved well-being. At the same time, case studies show that the validity and sustainability of social capital components especially those in the public sphere e are best left to the affected communities themselves. They can judge whether they are gaining greater access to resources, information, participation, and power through particular networking strategies.

CRITIQUES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AS A MEANS TO SOCIAL MOBILITY

Skeptics of social capital as a key form of asset formation among the poor reiterate that social capital is not easily measured or quantifiable into models. Economists and policy analysts in particular question its eligibility for consideration as a new conceptual framework for international development. Behavioral science researchers and practitioners, however, affirm the value of social capital in improving people's lives as evidenced in close contacts over time with scenarios promoting upward or downward social mobility. Even practitioners, however, will agree that social capital takes long to build up and is often incompatible with development project timelines. Addressing this discrepancy would call for consciously adjusting project timelines to the period needed for communities to develop social capital. One way is to involve affected communities from the time a project is first conceived so that the people-project trajectories may run more in parallel.

Other critics argue that the social capital literature tends to highlight its positive effects on poor groups while downplaying or ignoring its negative aspects. A review of case studies worldwide suggests that the poorest households, or the chronic poor, are less likely to participate in bridging or linking social capital networks than the transient or better off poor. The Philippine case studies presented above exemplify the same pattern in that the effects on the poorest or most vulnerable are largely set aside if not actually ignored. Yuichiro's (2007) rural northern Luzon study revealed that less-poor local groups participated in social capital networks that helped them cope with everyday hardships and advance their socio-economic conditions. Several households did move up the scale in small increments all the while striving not to fall back below the poverty line. The poorest in the community, however, had difficulty maintaining their membership in local groups and were thus inactive or would drop out. Accounts do emphasize the gains but fail to give equivalent attention to the implications for those left out.

It is evident, for example, in Philippine resettlement programs whether self-managed or government-run that inevitably the problems of the poorest who do not fit government prescriptions will surface. Homeowners associations recognize the need to deal with their poorest member households who are not earning enough or regularly to pay the required group installments. Often community associations will allow their defaulting members to draw on group savings funds for a limited time in hopes they will eventual earn something and catch up. Or, the non-paying members are encouraged to enroll in skills training programs leading to possible, if elusive, income generating schemes. Obtaining scholarships for the children so as to free up household earnings for community savings funds or installment payments is another option. Appeals can also be made to government or faith-based welfare programs for indigent persons. Nonetheless, at some point these stopgap measures falter and the poorest households drop out of associational networks – if they ever joined. They may, however, locate other networks catering more closely to their needs through welfare assistance. In being forced by circumstances to drop out or not join, the poorest are deprived of or deprive themselves of potential opportunities to benefit in future from social capital opportunities set up in ways more compatible with their life situations. Conditional cash grants like the 4Ps unabashedly allocate funds to the poorest on the assumption that they will respond favorably to incentives like education and health for their children.

One cannot simply dismiss social capital if it does not work, as currently understood, for the poorest households. After all the transitional or "less poor" still fall below the poverty line but do respond to social mobility opportunities through organized participation, networking and collective action. While worrying about the need to reach the poorest is a valid concern, it need not distract from examining the benefits of social capital for those numerous poor families located slightly above the "poorest of the poor." Different levels of poverty and vulnerability demand different strategies and solutions.

Perhaps the most serious criticism of social capital is that the concept does not challenge the underlying political and economic arrangements that affect asset distribution and power relations. While extolling participation, access to information, inclusive decision making, accountability to people, and the capacity to organize at local level has some merit, relying on social capital to foster upward social mobility overstates the possibilities for local collective

organization and action. When in play, collective actions among the poor may simply strengthen coping and survival approaches without leading to upward mobility. Set aside is the notion of the social embeddedness of institutions, vested interests, and the structural basis of social power that permits only modest gains upward for some. In identifying areas for intervention, social capital overstates possibilities for local collective action, ignoring class differences and the workings of the political economy. Its impact on poverty reduction, therefore, is incremental, not transformational (Bebington et al 2004)

Claims about the efficacy of social capital appear to gain strength in those still rare instances when inclusive structural changes take place in the social and political environment, including fairer returns and distribution in market economies or government and markets held accountable for their actions (Narayan , Pritchett and Kapoor 2005) . Meanwhile, even incremental change through organizing, participation and collective action that sustains the upward movement of many poor families without their sliding back can bring a reassuring sense of progress to poor people relative to their past experiences. Social mobility may require a generational leap but the expectation that it will happen sustains poor people's capacities to aspire and and join networks for a happier future.

CONCLUSION

This review of social capital as related to social mobility has underscored the role and importance of institutions and communities in the development process. Movement up and down by people in poverty in terms of class, status and economic hierarchies has been linked to the horizontal and vertical ties they create and sustain within and across communities and into the larger society. Trust is a key element in the social cohesion that underpins participation, reciprocity, collective action and sustained networking. The bonding ties that operate in virtually all communities are bolstered by bridging networks emphasizing associational ties and significantly enhanced in the broader world by vertical networks that connect outside institutions with local groups. Social capital helps form and reinforce these networks.

Highlighted also is the need for community organization and people's empowerment where marginalized groups examine their situations and challenge the status quo or resist added threats levied against them by powerful forces. Instrumental here are NGOs or other social development partners working with them on the ground, enabling them to have the experience of participating in decision- and claim-making. While social capital is "free," it is most effectively utilized by the less poor who can rise incrementally in the social hierarchy. For the poorest groups, bonding ties are helpful; but other mechanisms or frameworks are needed if they are to connect with the bridging and linking networks needed for upward mobility. A key concern for the poor is to avoid downward mobility and not lose whatever limited gains they have already made. Government or power structures that actively promote downward spirals are likely to be challenged –violently at times. Enabling large numbers of the poor to move up through social capital networks works and should thus be fostered. Other mechanisms have to be worked out, however, to reach the poorest through inclusive approaches generated by significant transformations in societal structures of power.