

### **“Lessons from Civil Society’s Response to SARS”**

Investigators:

Dr Joseph C.W. Chan, Department of Politics and Public Administration, and Centre for Civil Society and Governance, The University of Hong Kong

Dr Chan Kin Man, Department of Sociology, Chinese University of Hong Kong

#### **Objectives of the Study**

Response of Hong Kong’s civil society to SARS has been highly praised during the epidemic, and the lessons learnt from the incident would help further strengthen community capacity. The study aims to systematically examine civil society’s responses to the SARS outbreak and identify means to sustain and promote its development after SARS.

#### **Scope of the Study**

This study will consist of the following parts:

- A definition of civil society and civil society groups
- A documentation of civil society’s activities in the SARS outbreak;
- An examination of the strength and weakness of civil society’s response according to the following issues:
  - a) How successful were civil society groups in mobilizing resources (fund raising, knowledge utilization, voluntarism, etc)?
  - b) What are the values or cultural norms that guided the participants and groups?
  - c) How well did civil society groups cooperate among themselves in this public health crisis?
- A comparison of civil society’s response with both state and market responses, and examine the logic of tri-sectoral cooperation
- A critical discussion on the possible means to sustain and promote civil society development after SARS

#### **Method of Study**

The study will combine data collection and documentation with in-depth interviews with key civil society actors, in order to unveil what had happened in the community during the SARS outbreak and understand the dynamics of interactions of actors.