Research in Brief

A Perception Survey of the Operations and Performance of Community Social Security Councils and Its Implications for Policy

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Introduction

Social security councils that operate at the community level (districts of *eup, myeon,* and *dong*) are an institutional mechanism that enables community participation and public-private cooperation in welfare provision. Community welfare governance via community social security councils (CSSCs) acquires considerable significance when looked in light of welfare pluralism and from the perspective of public administration process that embraces co-production of policies.

The fact that community residents can participate in social welfare provision by means of CSSCs means the community has become an institutionalized source of social welfare provision, along with the government, for-profit and family sectors[1][2] . The involvement of residents in welfare provision means that they, by working in partnership with local authorities in the process of planning, shaping, delivering and evaluating welfare services, complement the municipal

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1) Billis, D., & Glennerster, H. (1998). Human services and the voluntary sector: towards a theory of comparative advantage. Journal of social policy, 27(1), 79–98.

2) Evers, A. (2005). Mixed welfare systems and hybrid organizations: Changes in the governance and provision of social services. Intl Journal of Public Administration, 28(9–10), 737–748.

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government's limited problem-solving capabilities.

CSSCs have begun to be established in 2015. As of 2020, there were 65,708 community residents participating in CSSCs. Pursuant to the Enforcement Decree of the Act on the Use and Provision of Social Security Benefits and Search for Eligible Beneficiaries, CSSCs work to identify those in the community who are in need, identify and link community social security resources, establish and run community social security programs, and undertake various other tasks aimed at promoting the welfare of community residents. With the legislation in July 2015 of the Act on the Use and Provision of Social Security Benefits and Search for Eligible Beneficiaries, it was made mandatory for *eup's, myeon's* and *dong's* to have in place CSSCs, which trace their roots to the Pilot Project on Private-Public Partnership Promotion of 2014. In 2016 and 2017, the Ministry Health and Welfare launched the "Make Your Community a Social Welfare Hub" project. Also, since 2018 the Ministry of Interior and Safety has led the Project on Community-Governed Public Services with the goal of promoting autonomous community living and community-based care.

The significance of the progress made so far as regards CSSCs lies in that, with private-public partnership institutionalized in local administrative settings, community residents have become more able to act on their own initiative in public administration concerning welfare production. The scope of participation by residents in community welfare production has extended of late beyond identifying, sharing and linking community resources to planning and making decisions on public services.

This brief examines the governance side of CSSCs, drawing on the findings of a perception survey about the operations and performance of, and support provided to CSSCs. The significance of the survey is that it is the first of its kind and scale that was conducted of private members, of whom CSSCs are predominantly made up.

Survey overview

The survey on which this study is based was conducted of private members of CSSCs from 242 lower-tier communities in 14 municipalities across the country. A total of 2,304 people of those asked to respond to the survey did so (a response rate of 57.4 percent). For statistical analysis, the survey data were weighted for differences that might occur due to nonresponse, with cell weights that reflect the distribution of the 7 types of private-sector CSSC participants in the population from which they are drawn. The 14 municipalities took part in the survey on a voluntary basis with the coordination of the Secretariat Coalition for Community Social Security Councils. As such, the 7 types of private CSSC participant were used as stratification criteria to ensure the sample's representativeness with respect to population size and the level of urbanization. It should be noted, however, that, as the sampling could well have been biased because the respondents with their willingness to participate in the survey could have been more positive about the operations of CSSCs than those who chose not to respond, any

generalization of the findings should be made with due caution.

[Table 1] Characteristics of the survey sample

	Number of *si's*, *gun's* and *gu's*	Number of *eup's*, *myeon's*, and *dong's*	Number of private members of CSSC
Population	229	3,490	58,013
Sample	14	242	4,013
Response sample	14	242	2,304 (57.4%)

Source: Kim, Hey–sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 19. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

[Table 2] Characteristics of the survey respondents

		Frequency	%			Frequency	%
Si's, gun's, and gu's	*Si's*	1,039	45.1	**Eup's, myeon's and dong's**	*Eup's*	241	10.5
	Gun's	466	20.2		*Myeon's*	697	30.3
	Gu's	799	34.7		*Dong's*	1,366	59.3
Sex	Men	977	42.4	**Position (multiple)**	Executive member	554	23.4
	Women	1,327	57.6		General member	1,813	76.6
Age	20~29	9	0.4	**Affiliation (multiple response)**	Member of a volunteer group	831	36.0
	30~39	62	2.7		Member of community residents' council	722	31.3
	40~49	329	14.3		Regular resident	692	30.0
	50~59	937	40.7		Village head	578	25.1
	60~69	827	35.9		Worker in the social welfare, education or health care sector	504	21.9

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Age	70+	140	6.1	Affiliation (multiple response)	Self-employed worker	392	17.0

Source: Kim, Hey−sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). pp. 104~105. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

The survey asked the respondents about activities they carry out as private members of CSSCs and about their perception of the way CSSCs are operated, support allocated to CSSCs, and CSSCs' operational intent, activities, performance, etc.

[Table 3] Do you agree, disagree or neither agree nor disagree with the intent of CSSCs? (in %)

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
CSSC activities target those disadvantaged in the community.	90	8.0	2.0
CSSC activities are carried out voluntarily in the interest of public good.	93.7	5.4	0.9
CSSC activities should maintain political neutrality.	91.0	4.8	4.2
CSSC members should not prioritize seeking economic gains from their CSSC activities.	90.6	5.2	4.2
CSSC activities need to be carried out in close collaboration with local authorities.	94.5	3.8	1.7

Note: On a 7−point scale. Scores of 5~7 points are interpreted as "agree", 4 points as "neither" and 1~3 points as "disagree".

Source: Kim, Hey−sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 121. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

Perception about the way local social security councils are run

This study examined perceptions those surveyed had of the directions and objectives of CSSCs, of the role of CSSC members, and of the way CSSC members communicate among themselves and reach decisions together. Respondent perceptions were relatively positive toward the way CSSCs shape their operational directions and objectives and the level of support CSSC members give to those directions and goals. However, perceptions were less positive about the level of understanding CSSC members have about their council's operational directions and priority tasks (Table 4). These findings suggest that efforts should be directed on a continued and repeated basis toward promoting understanding and awareness of CSSC members about their council's course of action and objectives.

The way CSSC members' activities was valued was perceived highly positively by the respondents, as was how the members take on their role on a voluntary basis and with commitment. When it came

to how well the members understood the roles they were expected to fulfill, however, responses were less positive (Table 5). This is much in line with what was found from the case of CSSCs' operational directions and objective. This is to say that the fact that CSSC members lack a clear understanding of the roles that are expected of them can be attributed to a lack of understanding among the members of their council's operational directions and objectives.

When asked about the communication and decision-making among CSSC members, the respondents highly rated the way the members communicate with respect for each other and the democratic manner in which CSSCs reach decision. Perceptions were less positive with respect to whether CSSC members actively put forward their suggestions and whether they get provided with expert information regarding community social security (Table 6). This points to a need for various discussion and support channels through which private members of CSSCs can actively put forth and advance their suggestions.

This study divided into quintiles the data concerning respondent perceptions about CSSCs, and then examined the inter-quintile differences. There were considerable gaps between the top-quintile communities and the bottom-quintile ones with respect to all the subitems querying perceptions about CSSCs' operational directions and objectives, the roles of CSSC members, and communication and decision-making among CSSC members. The findings show that the way and the extent to which CSSCs operate may vary even across lower-tier communities belonging to the same municipal district, pointing to a need to provide intensive support to those communities with CSSCs whose operational process is deemed under-functioning.

[Table 4] Perceptions about CSSC direction and objectives, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.87	6.03	5.88	5.84	6.38	5.33	1.05
There are in the CSSC specific directions and objectives toward which we orient our activities.	5.96	6.11	6.00	5.91	6.44	5.42	1.02
The members have a clear grasp of their council's direction and objectives.	5.76	5.90	5.76	5.73	6.30	5.22	1.08
The members are in active support of the council's direction and objectives.	5.99	6.17	6.00	5.95	6.48	5.47	1.01
The members know precisely what needs to be done urgently to achieve the council's mission and objectives.	5.77	5.95	5.74	5.75	6.30	5.22	1.08

Source: Kim, Hey−sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 130. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

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[Table 5] Perceptions about the roles of CSSC members, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.74	5.92	5.74	5.70	6.28	5.21	1.07
The members have a clear grasp of the roles they are expected to play.	5.59	5.81	5.60	5.54	6.14	5.02	1.12
The members participate in the council activities on a voluntary basis.	5.71	5.88	5.69	5.68	6.23	5.19	1.04
The members have a sense of responsibility for their council's activities.	5.79	5.95	5.83	5.74	6.36	5.30	1.06
Each of the council members feels that his or her contribution is appreciated.	5.85	6.03	5.83	5.83	6.39	5.34	1.05

Source: Kim, Hey-sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 136. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

[Table 6] Perceptions about communication and decision-making among CSSC members, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.70	5.94	5.76	5.63	6.26	5.11	1.15
Each of the council members listens with attention and respect to what other members have to say.	5.82	6.03	5.87	5.76	6.37	5.28	1.09
The members actively put forward their ideas and views.	5.65	5.86	5.69	5.59	6.22	5.15	1.07
The members are provided with expert information about local social security in the process of CSSC deliberation.	5.55	5.79	5.57	5.50	6.18	4.85	1.33
The members are capable of reaching an agreement in a democratic manner.	5.79	6.00	5.88	5.70	6.26	5.31	0.95

Source: Kim, Hey-sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 139. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

Perception of the support provided to CSSCs

Respondent perceptions of the support provided to CSSCs were about the interest and support CSSCs receive from relevant public officials and the support provided for specific CSSC activities, including capacity building.

Perceptions were largely positive about the interest and support CSSCs received from civil servants.

Officials affiliated with lower-tier localities were perceived as most supportive, followed by heads of lower-tier administrative entities (co-chairs of CSSCs), and heads of municipal governments. The fact that civil servants who provide administrative services at the sub-municipal level were perceived as most supportive suggests that the foundation is well laid for private-public partnership in welfare provision in community settings.

As for the support provided to specific areas of activity, respondent perceptions were mostly positive about the support allocated to basic education (about CSSC's intent and objectives, the role of the members, and things to be mindful of when undertaking CSSC activities) and in-depth education (about techniques of counseling, identifying those in need who have been left out of services, linking and building on resources, and setting up community social welfare plans). Perceptions were not as positive as to the extent to which support given to promote communication and cooperation among CSSC members (by means of workshops, sharing best practices, and going on field trips) and the funding support provided for the operation of CSSCs (Table 8).

As in perceptions of the operations of CSSCs, there were inter-quintile gaps in perceptions of support provided for the operations of CSSCs. Gaps in perceptions of support from officials were most salient with respect to the interest of relevant municipal heads in CSSCs. As to perceptions about support provided for CSSC capacity building and operations, there were considerable inter-quintile gaps in all the subitems.

[Table 7] Perceptions about the interest and support CSSCs get from municipal and community officials, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.84	6.03	5.89	5.78	6.39	5.19	1.20
Municipal heads are interested in and in active support of the activities of CSSCs.	5.62	5.79	5.63	5.58	6.22	4.89	1.33
CSSC chairpersons work actively to promote the operation of their councils.	5.86	6.00	5.92	5.80	6.37	5.22	1.15
Local public officials concerned participate and take lead actively in CSSC activities.	6.04	6.29	6.13	5.95	6.58	5.46	1.12
The members are capable of reaching an agreement in a democratic manner.	5.79	6.00	5.88	5.70	6.26	5.31	0.95

Source: Kim, Hey-sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 142. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

[Table 8] Perceptions about support provided for CSSC capacity building and operations, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.14	5.11	4.96	5.23	5.85	3.92	1.93
CSSC members get well-educated as to basic topics that concern them.	5.43	5.43	5.29	5.49	6.08	4.35	1.73
CSSC members get educated in depth about their council activities.	5.38	5.34	5.22	5.46	6.09	4.27	1.82
Support is provided through various channels to promote communication and collaboration between CSSC members.	5.07	4.99	4.89	5.19	5.83	3.73	2.1
Sufficient budgets and endowments are offered for the operation of CSSCs.	4.59	4.61	4.35	4.70	5.34	3.34	2.00

Source: Kim, Hey-sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 145. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

Perceptions of the operational outcomes of CSSCs

Perception ratings of the operational outcomes of CSSCs were examined with respect to the outcomes of deliberation and decision-making, development of CSSC-specific projects (concerning the promotion of community participation in CSSC activities), and cooperative relationship with community professional associations (social groups).

Perceptions were largely positive about the way CSSCs consider, in their deliberation and decision-making, the circumstances and issues unique to their community. However, respondent perceptions were not as positive of the extent to which CSSCs come to acquire expert-level information and knowledge as a way to address welfare problems confronting their community (Table 9). The findings suggest that there is a need for support mechanisms by which to enable CSSC members, in the course of planning and shaping of CSSC activities, to become of their own accord more informed of and knowledgeable about their community and to enhance their understanding of the needs of those disadvantaged in the community.

The respondents' perceptions of the outcomes of efforts to develop and improve CSSC-specific projects were largely positive, as suggested by the scores given to the subitems (Table 10). However, the findings also indicate that there is a need for interventions to facilitate efforts toward creative, innovative CSSC programs unfettered by the bounds of conventional social services.

CSSCs were less positively perceived as regards the work they do in partnership with community professional associations (Table 11). CSSCs as mandatory governance entities should work toward firming up the institutional foundation on which to strengthen cooperative relationships with social

security councils operating in upper-tier municipalities, while committing themselves to restoring and invigorating community resources purposed to create public value.

[Table 9] Perceptions about the outcomes of CSSC deliberation and decision-making, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.54	5.67	5.56	5.50	6.11	4.98	1.13
In their deliberation and decision-making, CSSCs consider in depth the history, circumstantial conditions and resident issues peculiar to their community.	5.61	5.77	5.64	5.56	6.15	5.06	1.09
In their deliberation and decision-making, CSSCs come to acquire expert-level information and knowledge as a way to address welfare problems confronting their community.	5.27	5.39	5.28	5.24	5.90	4.63	1.27
CSSC members act, with a sense of responsibility, to put in practice things that decided by the council.	5.74	5.86	5.75	5.71	6.27	5.25	1.02
Sufficient budgets and endowments are offered for the operation of CSSCs.	4.59	4.61	4.35	4.70	5.34	3.34	2.00

Source: Kim, Hey−sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 152. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

[Table 10] Perceptions about the outcomes of efforts to develop and improve CSSC-specific projects, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.56	5.72	5.58	5.52	6.16	4.88	1.28
CSSC activities involve continued efforts to objectively assess and improve on projects implemented.	5.55	5.65	5.52	5.54	6.11	4.94	1.17
CSSCs exert efforts to increase the diversity of groups to whom their projects are intended to provide support.	5.64	5.82	5.67	5.59	6.21	4.99	1.22
CSSCs emerge out of routine projects and make attempts at novel, experimental ones.	5.50	5.68	5.55	5.44	6.15	4.71	1.44
Sufficient budgets and endowments are offered for the operation of CSSCs.	4.59	4.61	4.35	4.70	5.34	3.34	2.00

Source: Kim, Hey−sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 155. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

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[Table 11] Perceptions about the outcomes CSSCs deliver through cooperation with community professional associations, in 7-point scale

	Overall	Administrative units			Quintiles, by *eup, myeon, dong*		
		Eup	*Myeon*	*Dong*	Top 20%	Bottom 20%	Difference
Overall	5.23	5.40	5.22	5.21	5.82	4.48	1.34
Cooperation with community professional associations (social groups) is growing with CSSC activities.	5.29	5.47	5.28	5.27	5.87	4.50	1.37
Community professional associations, now with their participation in CSSC activities, have become more active in public-interest activities.	5.23	5.42	5.22	5.20	5.82	4.51	1.31
Interest in and support for public-interest activities among the community residents have grown by way of CSSC activities.	5.17	5.30	5.17	5.15	5.77	4.44	1.33
Sufficient budgets and endowments are offered for the operation of CSSCs.	4.59	4.61	4.35	4.70	5.34	3.34	2.00

Source: Kim, Hey-sung; Kim, JinHee; Oh, Ukchan; Chae, Hyuntak; Hwang, Joungyoon. Analysis of Neighborhood Governance Systems for Social Welfare: Implications for Eup, Myeon and Dong Areas in Korea (2021). p. 158. Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

Concluding remarks: implications for policy

How well CSSCs execute their operational activities overall and to what extent they can narrow the gaps they have between them in their operational process have closely to do with their funding. However, the funding of CSSCs cannot be fully covered by the budgeting capacity of respective municipalities alone. There is a need for the central government and metropolitan cities and provinces to provide supplementary budget support for CSSCs to cover their project expenditures and operational costs. The findings also suggest that respective municipal governments should increase staff tasked with supporting capacity building for CSSCs. A further improvement in the operational performance of CSSCs requires an increase, at the municipal level, in social welfare officials and additional support from municipal authorities and community heads.

To empower community residents to take the initiative in CSSC activities requires support by various means in education and consulting for them. For example, policymakers may consider supporting programs aimed at fostering community social welfare leaders—coordinators and designers of social welfare services.

Support is also needed for CSSCs to form and run a formal coalition as a way to facilitate communication and cooperation between them. An institutionalized link between municipal social security councils and CSSCs may be considered as a means to improve the operations of the latter. Measures that can be considered in this regard include formalizing the participation of CSSC members

in the activities of municipal social security councils and forming a "CSSC working group" in each municipal social security council.