ABSTRACT
From practical development schemes to meta-analysis
This article presents the process of meta-evaluation where four individual case studies were re-analysed. Here the ontological issues of formation and change of social reality come forth as cogent matters. Three methodological and theoretical issues of evaluation research are put forth: namely context, social actors and change. The conclusions are threefold. Firstly, the contexts of all the case studies are similar in relation to administrative objectives, but they are time-bound as the administrative context changes from the beginning of 2000 as coming towards to the 2010s. Secondly, due to the lack of data in the case evaluations the actors could not be analysed as carefully as they should have. Some consideration about the importance of actors is made. Thirdly, co-operation (for example multi-professional co-operation, partnerships and networking) proved to be the key mechanism of change in development projects. Co-operation suits analytically to the definition of mechanism. The theoretical picture created is inherently coherent and logical, but it needs more testing in real-life situations. For the future it is emphasised that this kind of meta-evaluation approach targeted to create cumulative knowledge could be very beneficial in fulfilling the potential of evaluation as a scientific discipline.