



Converging
PROFESSIONAL WISDOM
FOR Family Well-Being

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Message from Mrs. Patricia CHU, Chairperson, CIFA



Despite the continuing threat of the pandemic, work of CIFA proceeded as usual thanks to development of new technology, and enthusiasm of all Council and committee members. The quarter has been a busy one with various committees meeting mostly via zoom to take follow up actions on issues and work out plans for forthcoming events. These include for example work involved in developing an archive of papers, reports and projects in the CIFA website for a more systematic knowledge management to facilitate sharing and learning. To tie in with this and to improve the functions and user-friendliness of the CIFA website, actions have been taken to revamp the CIFA website. Moreover, follow up actions have been made to wrap up the 6th CIFA Regional Symposium by getting submissions for the International Journal of Social Welfare for a special issue on "Family First: Supporting Asian Families in the Era of Inclusive Growth", and to file a full report to Wofoo Social Enterprises, the Title Sponsor of the 3A Project 2020.

In this issue, we are pleased to report preparatory work on planning the CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social and Family Development and the National University of Singapore, scheduled to be held in early November 2022. At the same time, action has been put in place to plan for the Wofoo 3A Project 2022. We look forward to active participation from countries/regions in Asia in these exciting activities.

To continue the series on how CIFA member organisations cope with challenges posed by COVID-19, I am pleased to share the experience of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals by adopting innovative mode of service delivery to meet the special needs of service recipients.

Following the successful completion of Wofoo 3A Project 2020, it is time for us to share the project on "Community Housing Movement" of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service which has received the Gold Award and Most Collaborative Award in meeting the housing needs in Hong Kong. We are so excited to see the 'think out of the box' approach to address a very challenging issue with the input from so many stakeholders.

The Mid-Autumn Festival is a time for family gathering. May I wish you all a Happy and Peaceful Mid-Autumn, enjoying the blessing of togetherness with your loved ones!

Wofoo 3A Project 2020

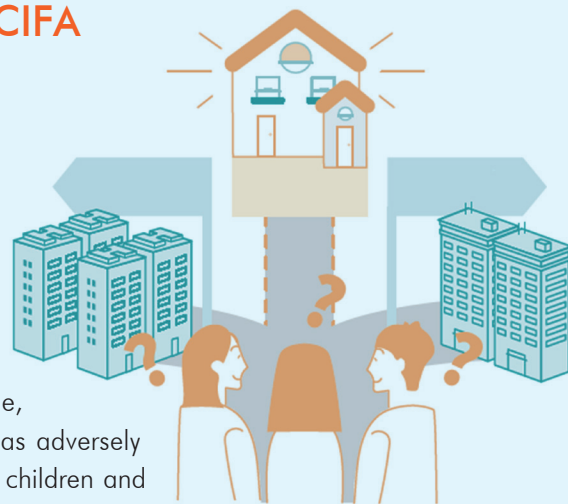
Gold Award & Best Collaborative Award

Community Housing Movement

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
Member Organisation of CIFA

Hong Kong Housing Challenge

Hong Kong housing issue has been notorious in the past decades, high property price and free market have made private home ownership out of reach for the general public. Subsidised public housing becomes the only option for lower income families, singletons, the elderly, etc. Nevertheless, the severe shortage of public housing has resulted in a long waiting list and waiting time for the Public Rental Housing.¹ Many poor households have to turn to subdivided flats, which are plagued by over-crowdedness, poor hygiene, poor ventilation and insufficient lighting. The undesirable living environment has adversely affected the physical and mental well-being of families, especially for the young children and the elderly. Inevitably tensions and conflicts among family members are more likely to happen, yet they lack social support to cope with their problems.



In meeting this housing challenge, a transitional social housing intermediary entitled Community Housing Movement (CHM) has been launched to address the housing and social needs of the grassroots households and persons since September 2017.

The grassroots families and persons who have waitlisted for public housing for no less than 3 years or have a strong need for transitional housing on an emergency basis are eligible. The CHM Project is a joint venture among private funds, private developers, various professionals and the Government. Its objectives include the following:

1. To provide affordable, decent living place for the grassroots
2. To help the disadvantaged households develop a small community through the social intervention of NGOs/SEs
3. To strengthen their familial relationship and identify problems earlier if family crisis and psychological breakdown arise
4. To develop their capacity to overcome living challenge.

This Project has carried a very important social mission of social inclusion in Hong Kong. Until April 2021, a total of 506 units have made available across different districts in Hong Kong, serving a total of 678 households (up to 1893 persons). Different housing projects offer different housing-related social services, serving a variety of beneficiaries.



CHM book



Annual Tenant Gathering

¹ According to Hong Kong Housing Authority, the total number of applications of public housing went up to 254,600 as end-June of 2021. Average waiting time for family applicants increased from 4.6 years in 2017 to 5.8 years in 2021.



Young resident teaches kids



Female residents learn knitting

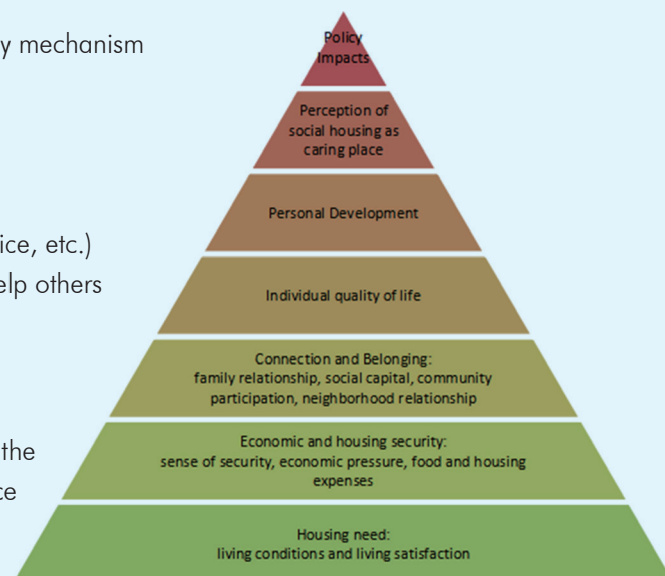
CHM in Advancing Family Well-Being

Transitional social housing (as a kind of social service) has served as a key mechanism to advance family well-being of grassroots families/persons by:

- Connecting the isolated grassroots families/persons in the community
- Providing decent and affordable housing for families to live and to play
- Facilitating the neighborhood to create a caring place for the poor
- Bridging them with community resources (e.g. social worker, social service, etc.)
- Strengthening their capacity by empowering some family members to help others
- Improving the family quality of life, particularly their family relationship

Impacts of CHM

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) has commissioned the Centre of Social Policy Studies of the Department of Applied Social Science of Hong Kong Polytechnic University ("the Centre") to conduct the social impact assessment on CHM. The impact results were shown below:



Housing need: living conditions and satisfaction	Economic and housing security	Connection and Belonging
Individual quality of life	Personal Development	Perception of social housing
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due to improved living conditions, the mean value of psychological pressure of the households drops by 21.5%; 2. Around 60% of households report they are optimistic and happy after living in social housing; 3. 53.8% report that their psychological pressure is relieved; 4. 44.2% report that their sleeping quality is improved. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 48.4% of households think an opportunity for developing talent is improved; 2. 56% think their self-confidence and self-esteem is improved; 3. 57.0% think the problem-solving ability is improved; 4. 48.8% think a skill of handling human relationship is improved. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 90% of households think social housing is alternative affordable housing, a caring place, and a place with human support; 2. 95% of households are satisfied with Community Housing Movement.

Policy Impacts

1. CHM has turned the public scepticism about transitional housing to wide public receptivity. Our projects and the entire Movement have been widely and positively covered in the media.
2. The Project has demonstrated to the Government that transitional social housing can benefit the grassroots families while gaining public acceptance. The Government has hereby set up 8.3 billion funds for development of transitional social housing, and committed a policy target of providing 15,000 units in three years.
3. The Government also released more idle properties and lands at nominal rate to NGOs for the provision of transitional social housing.

Sustainability and Scalability of the CHM Project

CHM, as a movement in advocating transitional social housing in Hong Kong, has successfully created an alternative way to provide affordable housing under the existing binary structure of housing provision (i.e. either from the Government or private developers). Apparently the civil society sector has regained a role to provide affordable housing in alleviating the housing crisis. The Government has recognised its role to provide transitional housing and is willing to release the idle lands to the NGOs for transitional housing purpose. Other than residential premises, the Project has also opened up possibilities in turning suitable non-residential premises into transitional social housing, such as renovating idle schools or factories. The new ecology of social housing provision hereby has scaled up the production of usable land, and its Tripartite Collaborate Model will become a reference for tackling other territory wide issues in future.



CIFA is granted Special Consultative Status by the United Nations, a formal recognition of our efforts in enhancing FAMILY WELL-BEING in Asia!

Wofoo 3A Project 2022

After the success of Wofoo 3A Project 2020 with its Final Round Adjudication held in the 6th CIFA Regional Symposium on 10 June, 2021 online, we would like to announce the next round of Wofoo 3A Projectis about to kick off!

The Wofoo 3A Project 2022 will be launched on 10 December, 2021, together with the Sharing Session of Wofoo 3A Project 2020. During the session, the 8 finalist teams of Wofoo 3A Project 2020 and Gold, Silver and Bronze award winning teams of 2018 will be invited to present their projects and show how they have furthered their work with families, as well as to explore possibilities for replication and adaptation in other organisations and regions.

Please watch out for further details of the event in the CIFA website at www.cifa-net.org. Meanwhile, please mark your diary and try to join this very exciting and informative programme!

CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022

After having co-organised successful CIFA Regional Symposiums with member organisations in Japan, Singapore, China, Korea and Taiwan in the past twelve years, we are pleased to announce you that the upcoming one will be held in Singapore, for the second time, in the 2nd week of November, 2022 with exact dates to be confirmed in due course.

You may like to note that preparatory work has begun with a fruitful meeting held on 1st September with representatives from CIFA, Ministry of Social & Family Development and National University of Singapore to work out details of the event. These include the formation of Organising and Scientific Committee, main theme and sub-themes to be adopted, scientific and hospitality programmes, invitation of speakers, registration fees and development of website etc as well as setting out the timeline for these. Council members may pay a site visit to Singapore depending on the development of the pandemic.

We will keep you posted of the latest development of the Symposium. Meanwhile, please mark your diary and watch out for details in the Symposium website. We look forward to your active participation on this exciting event!

Care from the Community: There is Love along the way

Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
Member Organisation of CIFA



Unprecedented Challenges Arisen from COVID-19 in Hong Kong

Over the past two years, all the social services in Hong Kong have been seriously disrupted due to the outbreak of COVID-19. TWGHs, established in 1870, is a renowned Non-Governmental Organisation operating 5 hospitals and 350 social service units in Hong Kong. It has reacted to the pandemic with great commitment, resilience and innovative ideas that it has adapted and modified its usual mode of services to meet these unprecedented challenges.

Under the pandemic, many young children and adolescents have manifested disrupted sleeping and eating patterns, dramatically decreased outdoor activities and prolonged time playing video games to relieve boredom which in turn have worsen their physical, psychological and social interactions. Overweight, developmental delay and abuse of internet were commonly observed. In consequence, parents have become increasingly stressful, they were left with less free and rest time at home. Even worse, they often lacked the needed skills in coping with the rising learning and behavioral problems of their children.

「因為在家工作，與兒童相處時間比以往多，兒童的行為問題及情緒失控情況亦增加。自己的情緒容易被牽動，管教壓力增加。」

「疫情期間兒子的作息及日常規律開始混亂，亦是讓我們感到困難的部分。同時，因疫情而避免外出，故沒有足夠空間讓兒童「放電」及與他人互動，變相行為、情緒、社交及專注等問題陸續浮現。」



Innovative Mode of Social Services

1. Timely Assistance to Needy Families

Under the pandemic situation, both social stability and economic growth have been adversely affected that many families have encountered financial difficulties due to sudden unemployment/underemployment of their parents. Inevitably, the pandemic has also hampered the family relationship and increased the risk of child maltreatment. To meet the rising family needs, both Integrated Children and Youth Services Centre (ICYSC) and Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) have tried to identified families in need and render timely assistance to them, including emergency fund, such as "TWGHs Short Term Financial Aid for the COVID-19 families" to ride over the difficult time.

2. From Drop-in to Deliverable Service

TWGHs has changed its centre-based service mode to a proactive and reaching out mode by delivering Care Bags containing healthy food and anti-pandemic gears to service users.

3. From Face-to-Face to Reach-out-via-Internet Services

Through employing technology and social platforms, TWGHs has continued to provide connection, support and care to needy families of ICYSC as well as the elderly in the community. To spread love and concern to the elderly, Nagomi Pastel Drawing Campaign has been launched, which had delivered 1,000 cards collected with care messages to the residents of the Home for the Elderly.

A "Class Resumption 321" e-booklet has been developed for parents, teaching skills in maintaining healthy emotions, good sleeping habits and healthy meals etc. It has been published and shared with over 6,000 families in Hong Kong. Many youth workers have turned into a "KOL" to produce and edit videos on various topics with the mission to serve the young people, who have been socially isolated due to the COVID-19. Career programs, health talks, and exercises were taped and promoted to young members via internet platforms.

Through "Busy Bag" Program, parents were taught how to engage their young children in interactive play at home, thus increasing involvement in the development of their children.

4. Web-based Counselling

During the pandemic crisis, many face-to-face services have to be suspended. In response, TWGHs has employed web-based counselling with high privacy protection device in the casework counselling services, supporting individuals as well as families with their parenting, personal, relational and financial problems.

5. Continuous Training via Online

Home-base parenting coaching/ training via internet have been rendered to families with intense parent-child relationship problems and/or with special needs children. Extra follow-up calls and web-based revitalisation programs have been organised to release their stresses and allow stressful parents to enjoy more "ME Time" in the COVID era.

Survey on Needs of Families under Pandemic Crisis

The ICYSC had conducted an online survey to understand the needs of the families during the pandemic. Findings revealed that most respondents were having worries and anxiety due to shortage of protection gears, the possibility of losing job or underemployment, lacking child care support and rest time due to tiring child care and household chores.

Building a Caring Community

To meet the needs of the families, resources in community were mobilised. Donation appeals to the corporates, community leaders and local residents have been made. The result was amazingly positive. Donation of protection materials were generous, such as face masks, hand sanitisers, cleaning materials etc. while many volunteers actively participated in the training and helped in the delivery of the care bags to homes of needy families. Indeed, a caring community has been successfully built under the pandemic in Hong Kong.

Way Forward

Over the past two years with the horrible pandemic attack, all of us were suffering from the health risk as well as various family problems. TWGHs, as one of the major NGOs in Hong Kong, has shouldered its responsibility and succeeded in helping families to ride through all these unprecedented challenges with innovative and creative mode of social services.



along the way