



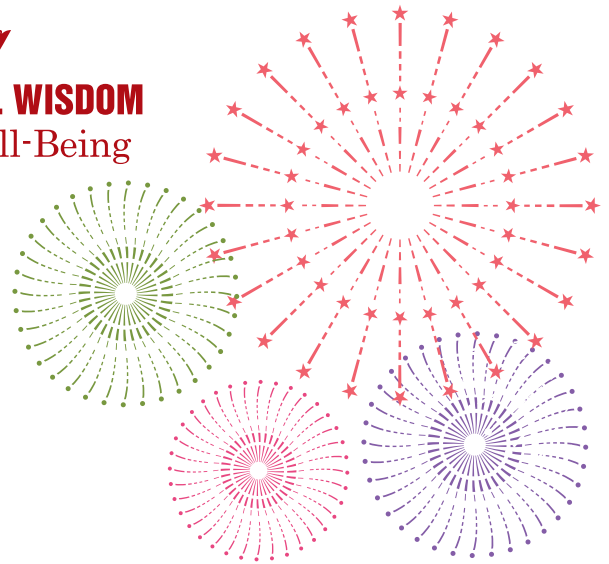
Converging
PROFESSIONAL WISDOM
FOR Family Well-Being

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Message by Chairperson of CIFA



We had a very busy and yet exciting quarter, with everyone working extremely hard to prepare for the Asian Family Summit 2024, trying our best to make it a success to mark and wrap up the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family in Asia, to echo the global efforts as promulgated by the United Nations.

We are most honoured to have high-level recognition and support, with Mr. John LEE, the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, and Mr. Junhua LI, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic & Social Affairs of the United Nations as our Guests of Honour to deliver Opening Address at the Opening Ceremony, sharing their insights on the importance of family well-being in the long term sustainable development of society, against the backdrop of the four megatrends impacting family life. They have set the scene for informative and insightful presentations by distinguished keynote and plenary speakers, stimulating active deliberations for collaboration and action for a Better Tomorrow for Families.

In this issue, we have given a detailed report on the AFS, covering the scientific programme, the Sharing of Best Practices in Asia under the Family Well-Being Project 2024, the Family Well-Being Expo, the social and cultural activities for networking and enjoying the Hong Kong hospitality, as well as the Post Summit workshops and agency visits.

To tie in with the AFS, the Commemorative Publication on IYF+30, with the title of “Towards a Better Tomorrow for Families”, was produced and distributed to all participants attending the AFS. In the Foreword, I share the story of how CIFA, the regional platform with the vision of “Converging Professional Wisdom for Family Well-Being” become associated and recognised by the United Nations, followed by sections on Asia—Along the Megatrends, CIFA in Asia, with Highlights on the work of CIFA, CIFA & IYF+30 and CIFA & I. Enjoy reading it and give continuous support to us!

May I wish everyone a happy, healthy, peaceful and fulfilled 2025!

Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of The International Year of the Family (IYF+30): The Asian Family Summit 2024

In response to the United Nations' call to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF+30) in 2024, the Asian Family Summit (AFS), the key activity to wrap up the celebration, was successfully held from December 27 to 29 at the University of Hong Kong with the theme of Towards a Better Tomorrow for Families: Partnership, Collaboration & Action for Sustainable Development. The focus of deliberation was on the four megatrends promulgated by United Nations, namely New Technologies, Urbanisation and Migration, Climate Change, and Demographic Changes and their impacts on the family.



The Summit was co-organised by the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region (CIFA), the Family Council and the Social Welfare Department of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), Connecting Hearts, the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, with 31 social service organisations, professional associations, and tertiary institutes as supporting organisations.

The Asian Family Summit, along with other programmes of the 'Jockey Club Professional Development Initiatives on Family Services' was sponsored by the Jockey Club SMART Family-Link Project which is initiated and funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. The sponsorship covered the expenses on all the activities of AFS except the VIP Reception Dinner on 27 December and Award Presentation Ceremony of the Wofoo 3A Project 2024 cum Gala Dinner on 29 December.



During the 3-day Summit, we had over 700 participants from 17 countries/regions, including government officials, social workers, counsellors, clinical psychologists, medical and para-medical professionals from the public and NGO sectors, as well as lecturers, researchers and students from tertiary institutes, hitting a record high in attendance. A total of 80 papers had been presented covering the four megatrends and other important family issues.

High Level Recognition from HKSAR and UN

At the Opening Ceremony, all were welcomed by Mrs. Patricia CHU, Chairperson of CIFA and co-chairperson of the Organising Committee and Prof. Richard WONG, Acting President, Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong. We were most honored to have the Honorable Mr. John LEE, Chief Executive of the HKSAR, and Mr. Junhua LI, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations as our Guest of Honour. In addition, Mrs. Renata KACZMARSKA, Social Affairs Officer of the Focal Point on the Family of the Division for Inclusive Social Development, participated in-person in this memorable occasion as representative from the United Nations as well as our Honorary Advisor.

In their pre-recorded opening addresses, Mr. John LEE gave his recognition to the importance of family and shared the efforts of Hong Kong Government in promoting family well-being. He also reminded us that the building of better society for all families required the concerted effort of all stakeholders of the community. This was echoed by Mr. Junhua LI who shared his recommendations in addressing the four megatrends. He also emphasised that effective family policies must be a critical part of a people-centered plan for accelerating achievement of the sustainable development goals. Both also recognised the efforts of CIFA to echo the call of the United Nations to celebrate the IYF+30.



The Scientific Programme

The Scientific Programme featured four keynote speeches, four plenary sessions (comprising 12 presentations), four concurrent sessions (with 40 presentations), and 15 poster presentations.

The four distinguished keynote speakers delivered excellent presentations on the four megatrends and how these were related to family well-being. These included the one by Prof. Jean Wei-Jun YEUNG from the National University of Singapore on the topic of “Impact of Urbanisation & Migration on Family” followed by that presented by Dr. Srinivas TATA from the Economic & Social Commission for Asia & the Pacific (ESCAP) of the United Nations on the topic “Implications of Demographic Changes on Family Structure and Intergenerational Relations in Asia and the Pacific”, bringing out how the two megatrends were interrelated and their impacts on the structure and functioning of the family.

Prof. Kin-Chung HO from the University of Hong Kong presented on “Environmental Sustainability in Asian Families: Striving for a Clean, Healthy, and Carbon-Zero Lifestyle” offering participants a new perspective on environmental management, especially the role of the family in contributing to a sustainable environment. Lastly, Prof. Susan WALKER from the University of Minnesota, United States presented the paper on “Being Good Ancestors: Preparing a Positive Technological Future for the Family” sharing how information and communications technology (ICT) had revolutionised family life, and the need for professionals to understand these implications and equip themselves to cope with these challenges.

In the four plenary sessions, scholars, researchers, government officials, and practitioners from various Asian countries/regions, including China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Philippines and Singapore delivered papers, to share and showcase their experience and how they coped with these mega-trends, stimulating much discussion and exchange of views on the subjects.

Through the call for submissions of abstracts for oral and poster presentation, the Scientific Committee had received very enthusiastic response, including those from developing countries. Eventually 41 papers were selected and presented at concurrent sessions and 15 for poster presentation. We were very pleased that with subsidy to cover travelling and accommodation expenses, 8 participants from India, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam and Yunnan attended the AFS, sharing their experience as well as establishing network for future collaboration.

Best Practice Sharing in Asia under the Family Well-Being Project 2024

The AFS offered an excellent opportunity for eight teams from Hong Kong and Singapore to share their projects under the Family Well-Being Project 2024, covering topics such as empowering SEN families, inter-generational relationship and kinship support, perinatal bereavement support, transforming home spaces through decluttering and customised furniture, and enhancing child and parent mental well-being etc.

With real-life scenario role-play, video clips from case studies, and informative PowerPoint presentation to share details of project, all teams delivered impressive presentations to demonstrate their best practices and outstanding results to actualise the spirit of Aspiration for Sustainability, Innovation and Applicability (ASIA). With the enthusiastic participation of attendees at the session to give ‘LIKE’ through Slido, the project receiving most ‘LIKE’ was awarded as My Favourite Project.

During the Award Presentation Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2024 cum Gala Dinner, the Hong Kong Christian Service received the Gold Award and the Best Collaborative Award for their project “Empowering SEN Families – Paradigm Shift from Traditional SEN Rehabilitation Service towards Trans-disciplinary Collaboration”. Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare





Association Social Service Centre got the Silver Award and the Best “Harmony & Abundance” Award for their “The Jockey Club Kinship Support Project”. Grace Port – Caritas Miscarriage Support Centre received the Bronze Award for their “Caritas Jockey Club Perinatal Bereavement Care Project” while the remaining 5 teams received outstanding awards.

The joint effort of the Urban Renewal Authority and Wofoo Social Enterprises won the Most Innovative Award for their project of “Upcycling Project – Transforming Home Spaces through Decluttering and Customized Furniture”. The collaborative efforts of TWGHs Ho Yuk Ching Educational Psychology Service Centre (Sha Tin), The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong Community and Creative Learning Centre & St. James' Settlement Youth Services titled "Strategic Work in Parent Education in Mental Health Programme at Hong Kong Primary Schools: Enhancing Child and Parent Well-being” was voted My Favourite Project by the audience attending the session.

Family Well-Being Expo

The Family Well-Being Expo was one of the highlights of the Asian Family Summit, involving teams from the Social Welfare Department and NGOs to organise innovative and attractive programmes for the general public. We had the honor to have Dr. Ching-Choi LAM, Executive Council member and chairman of various advisory bodies to the HKSAR government to be the guest of honour at the Opening Ceremony to share his insights on family well-being and give recognition to all for their efforts in organizing the Family Well-Being Expo.

The Expo was a great success bringing more than 1,000 family members, including 3 generational, ethnic minority as well as able/disabled family members from 18 districts in Hong Kong to have a fun-filled day, enjoying games, workshops and performances on the theme related to the four megatrends, with the view to have a better understanding of how these impact their family life.





Hospitality & Sight-seeing Activities

A VIP Reception Dinner was hosted at the Dynasty Club to welcome keynote and plenary speakers and to provide opportunity for mingling with representatives of the co-organisers. All had an enjoyable and relaxing evening, tasting authentic Cantonese food and experiencing Hong Kong hospitality.

A tram-tour had been organised to allow overseas participants to ride through the streets of the island onboard one of oldest means of transportation in Hong Kong. Participants had a wonderful time experiencing the bustling city life, with the tour guide to share stories of the development of different parts of the island as the tram mingled through the streets of the city.

The Award Presentation Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2024 cum Gala Dinner was held at the Regal Hotel after the Closing Ceremony when the results of the competition would be announced. The banquet hall was filled with excitement, anticipation and suspension, all looking forward to the announcement of the results to acknowledge months of hard work to share one's best practice to advance family well-being. We were honoured to have Mr. Eric Kwok-Ki CHAN, the Chief Secretary for Administration of the HKSAR to deliver his pre-recorded message to congratulate the teams for their unfailing efforts in developing and sharing their best practices and encouraged them to continue on this front to benefit families in the region. Mrs. Renata KACZMARSKA, Ms. Christina LEE representative of Wofoo Social Enterprises, the Title Sponsor and Mrs. Patricia CHU presented awards to the winning teams. All had a most enjoyable and memorable evening which marked the completion of the successful AFS 2024.

Post-Summit Workshops and Agency Visits

On 30 December, four Post-Summit Workshops, namely on Multi-site Implementation Research & Practice in Supporting Informal Caregivers: A Comprehensive Workshop, An Integrative Body-Mind-Spirit Approach to Support Families: Finding Balance and Cultivating Compassion in Caregiving, Enhancing Couples Relationship for Family Well-Being and Introducing Traditional Chinese Medicine and its Role in Supporting Family Well-being were organised for participants to join free of charge.

Two routes to visit interesting services were arranged, including KeySteps@JC, Community Living Room, CIC-Zero Carbon Park, GREEN@COMMUNITY and Jockey Club Carer Space in Hong Kong and Kowloon were organised to participants to see services in action on the ground.

Those joining the workshops and agency visits had given positive feedback and appreciated such opportunities. The overseas participants were particularly thankful for such arrangements so that they could fully utilise the opportunity to see innovative projects operating to meet the various needs of families.

CIFA Regional Symposium 2026

As a normal practice, an announcement on the CIFA Regional Symposium to be held in Sarawak, Malaysia in November 2026 was made by Mrs. Patricia CHU at the Closing Ceremony. Ms. Bawany CHINAPAN, Vice-Chairperson of CIFA (Malaysia & Singapore) representing the National Coalition for Mental Well-Being, the co-hosting organisation of the Symposium, was invited onto stage to appeal for support. An attractive short video on Sarawak was shown and she invited all to join the next significant event of CIFA in Malaysia. Everyone was excited and looked forward to another successful symposium in two years' time.

Media coverage and feedback from participants

We are very pleased that there is wide media coverage of the Summit, with over 50 media reporting in TV News, newspapers as well as portals, featuring the highlights of the Summit and interviews with keynote speakers on issues related to the four megatrends. It is encouraging that these have raised public awareness and call for future collaboration and action among concerned stakeholders. A video capturing the highlights of the Summit will be sent to Mrs. Renata KACZMARSKA of the Focal Point on the Family, with a view to upload it onto the UN Portal for wider viewing to share the work in Asia with the rest of the world.

On the other, the feedback from speakers and participants has been overwhelmingly positive and encouraging. A quote from Mrs. Renata KACZMARSKA, "I wanted to reiterate my true admiration for the content and organisation of the Summit and the Expo. I was truly impressed by the quality of presentations, levels of participation and innovative approach of the event" sums up the overall feeling of the participants. All of them truly appreciate this platform to share the knowledge and experience among Asian countries. We believe the Summit had planted the seed for further action leading to a lasting impact in the region. The networking at the Summit among different stakeholders also provided opportunity for future collaboration on policy and service development to achieve the common goal towards a better tomorrow for families. We are so thankful to all for their contribution to make the Summit a GREAT SUCCESS!



IYF+30 Commemorative Publication: Towards a Better Tomorrow for Families

To echo the call of the United Nations to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF+30) 2024 at local, regional and international levels, CIFA has produced a Commemorative Publication, namely “Towards a Better Tomorrow for Families”.

The production of the Commemorative Publication is one of the many IYF+30 activities of CIFA, with contents focusing on the challenges faced by families under the UN megatrends on families, namely demographic changes, urbanisation and migration, climate change and new technologies. Expert academics, researchers in different Asian countries and regions have been invited to be our authors to share their knowledge and insights. Since this is a CIFA publication, there is also a section on the work of CIFA in recent years, which includes a column on “CIFA & I,” for different stakeholders and partners and friends to share with readers their relationships, experiences and passions with CIFA, to add a human touch to the book.

The publication is distributed to the participants of the Asian Family Summit held in Hong Kong in December 2024, as well as to the UN and interested organizations and individuals in at local, regional and international levels.

