

Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region

Chairperson's Report (1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017)

Introduction

Linkage with and recognition from the United Nation continued to be strengthened in the year, with the presence of Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek, Social Affairs Officer of the Focal Point on the Family from the Division for Social Policy & Development, Department of Economic & Social Affairs as Guest of Honor at the Exchange Program of the Wofoo 3A Project 2016 and the Charity Concert For Family Harmony in June in Hong Kong. These provided excellent opportunities for her to see the work of CIFA on the ground and experience the collaborative efforts between concerned stakeholders in the advancement of family well-being in Hong Kong and the Asian Region.

During her visit to HK, the idea of the Asian Family Summit (AFS) was shared with her and to seek her advice on the themes to be adopted to echo the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the Organising Committee had chosen 'Sustainable Development & Family Well-being: Agenda For Action In Asia' as the main theme for the AFS. From then onwards, close dialogue had been maintained to engage the United Nations in the preparation of the Asian Family Summit and to share information on family related activities in the international community, We were very much encouraged by its full support, and recognition from UN, treating CIFA as one of the partners and collaborators in its efforts to promote family well-being. We will continue to build on this solid foundation as we go forward.

Corporate Governance

The Council

In reviewing the organizational structure of the CIFA Council, it was felt that a Membership Committee, apart from the four existing committees (namely Research & Training Committee, Publicity & Fund Raising Committee, WEP Development Committee and 3A Project Committee) should be set up to boost efforts in membership drive and to maintain regular contacts with members. The Membership Committee was formed in May 2017, with Dr. Margaret Wong as the chairman.

Throughout the period covered by this report, the Council had held regular meetings on a quarterly basis to steer the work of CIFA, while the various Committees had been working very hard to take forward the various aspects of work of CIFA.

Financial Management

During the year, CIFA continued to receive funding support from the Wofoo Social Enterprises (WSE), the Title Sponsor of 3A Project, which had been a staunch supporter of the Project since this regional initiative was launched in 2010. We had also received continuing funding support from the Family Council of the HKSAR to organise the Exchange Program on 3A Project.

To sustain the momentum of fund raising in the past years to raise the profile of CIFA and at the same time to raise funds to support our work, actions had been put in place, under the leadership of Mr. Lai Chi Tong of the Publicity & Fund Raising Committee, to organise two fund raising activities, namely the Walk For Family Well-Being and the Charity Concert for Family Harmony held respectively on 26 February and 18 June 2017.

In planning for the AFS, it was felt that there was a need to open a merchant account for the processing credit card payment of registration fees by local and overseas participants. Moreover it would facilitate online donation to CIFA. The idea was endorsed by Council in July and after a lot of discussion with concerned parties by Mr. Lai, the account was successfully opened with the Bank of East Asia in November.

I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Lai Chi Tong, Hon. Treasurer, and Mr. Edwin Chiu, Hon. Auditor for their input in looking after the financial well-being of CIFA. With prudent financial management and continued support from the community, I am pleased to report that we are in a healthy financial position. Mr. Lai will give you a detailed Financial Report for the year, together with that prepared by the Auditor.

Membership

The Membership Committee had come up with suggestions to maintain contacts with members, recruit new members, and to set up a better Membership Registry. Throughout the year, continuous efforts had been made to follow up on the Membership Renewal Exercise for the year 2016-17, to maintain dialogue with existing members by sending questionnaires to them to assess their training needs, circulating electronic CIFA-NET to members and providing Chinese version of membership application forms etc. Membership codes had been provided to paid-up Full/Associate members to enjoy discounted rate on registration fee for the Asian Family Summit.

As at 31 December 2017, there were 82 Full Members and 24 Associate Members, coming from 8 countries/regions in Asia.

Activity Highlights

Wofoo 3A Project

The Wofoo 3A Project continued to be a signature activity of CIFA and continuous efforts had been made by the 3A Project Committee to improve upon the operation of the project so as to achieve the aim of identifying outstanding family work and provide platform for sharing of knowledge, experience and good practice.

Wofoo 3A Project 2016

After the presence and significant acknowledgment made by Ms. Daniela Bas, Director of Division for Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs at the Award Presentation Ceremony of the Wofoo 3A Project 2016 in Seoul, Korea in November 2016, the 3A Project Committee had made much efforts to evaluate the direction of 3A Project in order to further develop, promote and share good practice in family well-being work in the Asia Region. For example, in view of more and more participants coming from China who could hardly participate fully due to language barrier, the Committee decided to provide Simultaneous Interpretation service at the Sharing Session of the Exchange Program of the 3A Project 2016, though it incurred additional cost. It turned out to be very effective as it enabled participants from China to participate actively in the open forum. They had acknowledged their appreciation openly.

The greatest achievement was having Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek from Focal Point on the Family as the Guest of Honor at the Sharing Session of the Exchange Program on 16 June, 2017 in LT1, G/F Yasumoto International Academic Park, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Apart from that she also joined the Agency Visit together with the participants on 17 June and witness social work services in Hong Kong on the ground, providing opportunities for direct contact with front line professionals. It also enhanced the networking among agencies in promoting family well-being.

The Sharing Session attracted over 250 participants from different professions and feedback from them was very encouraging and positive. With the strong connection with the United Nations, our work was further recognized by the Family Council of Hong Kong Government, our Project Title Sponsor, Wofoo Social Enterprises, and collaborators in the Asia Region.



Photos of the Sharing Session and Agency Visits

Wofoo 3A Project 2018

To further promote and sustain the momentum of the Wofoo 3A Project, a Launching Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2018 was held on 16 October, 2017 with attendance of Ms. Virginia Chan representing Wofoo Social Enterprises and representatives from 2 award winning teams from 3A Project 2016. The launching event was very exciting and successful with the presentation made by the winning teams from Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service, Bronze Award & The Best Collaborative Award Winner of Wofoo 3A Project 2016 and Foshan Yixin Social Service Agency, Outstanding Award Winner of Wofoo 3A Project 2016. Their sharing in participating in the competition strongly demonstrated their achievement and valuable experience throughout the processes especially the chance to exchange knowledge and skills in running family well-being project with other teams from different countries in Asia.



Photos of Launching Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2018

In order to further promote our work to local social service agencies, a lunch meeting with agency heads/supervisors had been organized to brief them the Wofoo 3A Project 2018 to encourage them to submit projects and to participate the 3A Project. The meeting was well received by participants and all pledged to give full support to the work of CIFA, especially the 3A Project.

A total of 46 submissions had received from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan, breaking the record of number of submissions over the years. Screening and adjudication processes would take place respectively in February and May/June 2018, when 8 finalist teams would be shortlisted to enter the Final Round Adjudication at the Asian Family Summit in June, to be followed immediately by the Award Presentation Ceremony which will take place at the Gala Dinner of the Summit.

The 3A Project Committee would like to convey special thanks to Prof. Daniel Shek of the Family Council and Dr. Joseph Lee of Wofoo Social Enterprises, for their the staunch and unfailing support, both in terms of providing funding and being present at the events, as well as all the stakeholders who had rendered full support to the Project.

Publicity and Fund-raising

As usual, fund-raising activities had been organized on a bi-yearly basis in 2017. These included the Walk for Family Well-Being 2017 and the Charity Concert For Family Harmony which were successfully organised with the assistance and support from the Committee Members, Council Members, sponsors, member agencies and volunteers.

Walk For Family Well-Being

The “Walk for Family Well-Being 2017” was held on 26 February (Sunday.) attracting over 400 participants and volunteers of different ages from member organisations and corporations (through the network of HKCSS and Family Council. We were honored to have Ms. Carol Yip, JP, Director of Social Welfare to be the officiating guest of the kick off ceremony. During the occasion, volunteers had organised various interesting activities, including face painting, balloon twisting, lion dance, rope skipping and guitar performances as well as conducting an interesting eco-tour of the route, adding much fun and interests to the event. All participants showed their appreciation to CIFA for providing a golden opportunity for enjoying the beauty of nature and sharing happiness with their families and friends. We were very pleased that we had raised around HK\$100,000 through this fund raising event, thanks to the hard work of the Publicity & Fund-raising Committee, volunteers, participants and sponsors.



Walk for Family Well-Being 2017



Charity Concert For Family Harmony 2017

The Charity Concert For Family Harmony 2017, co-organised with the SAR Philharmonic Orchestra for the fourth time, was held on 18 June, 2017 (Sunday) in the Concert Hall of Hong Kong Cultural Centre. The highlight of this fund-raising activity was the presence of Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek from the United Nations as the Guest of Honour to officiate at the Opening Ceremony. It was attended by over 1,500 sponsors, government officials, council members and supporters of CIFA participated in this Concert. Apart from the SAR Philharmonic Orchestra, the audience had a chance to enjoy the wonderful performance by Dr. David Fang, Dr. Michelle Tsui and Colleen Lee, renowned vocalists and pianist.

CIFA was grateful to receive sponsorship from Cathay Pacific and Regal Hotels International for sponsoring the visit of Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek to join the CIFA events in Hong Kong and the generous support of other sponsors and donors. Over HK\$470,000 had been raised in that evening and positive feedback had been received from the audience.

The Publicity and Fund-raising Committee would like to take this opportunity to say a BIG thank you to, particularly the SAR Philharmonic Orchestra, performers, all donors, members and volunteers for their efforts and generous support in making these two fund-raising events successful.

Other than the activities reported above, the Committee had also been working hard to publicise our work and image through the CIFA E-Newsletter, involving in the work of Communication and PR Committee of AFS, uploading the updated information on CIFA WEP and CIFA-NET, liking with other related websites, including one of the UN and promoting the 3A Project, with a view to letting more people in the world to know our services better.

Research & Training

Throughout the year, the Research & Training Committee had been working very hard in the area of training and research as highlighted below.

Training Workshop on Outreaching Youth Service for Mainland Social Workers

The training program for the social workers from Mainland China held on 25-27 February was developed and arranged by Mr. Wong Kwong Sing, Mr. Lai Chi Tong, Mr. Kwok Wai Keung and Mr. Ivan Tam to tie in with the Walk for Family Well-Being 2017. It was attended by 16 social workers from Mainland China. 3 NGOs namely HKCS, Playground Service and YWCA had been invited to organise visits during the evening. The program aimed to encourage professional exchange and learning between social workers from Mainland and Hong Kong.

Training Program on Youth Outreach Service on 14-17 June, 2017

In recognition of the rapid changes in the Chinese society with amazing economic growth and development, the families were facing drastic challenges and encountering tremendous pressure. Family professionals were striving to give timely intervention to help with the deteriorating situations. Many are earnestly seeking to improve their work with different target groups in the family, especially that of the younger generation, who were involved in family disputes, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency and some facing hidden youth issues.

In response to the training need on Youth Outreaching Service as expressed by the Mainland social workers and to tie in with the Exchange Program on Wofoo 3A Project 2016 on 16-17 June, CIFA offered a 4-day "Training Program for Mainland Social Workers on Youth Outreaching Services" on 14-17 June, 2017 in Hong Kong, with the support and assistance of the Guangdong Professional Social Workers' Association (GPSWA) in the recruitment and promotion of the training program.

The trainers were senior social work practitioners from Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association (HKYWCA), a renowned local non-governmental organisation which is providing a wide spectrum of youth and family wellness services in Hong Kong. The course aimed to develop a basic understanding of the characteristics of high risk youths; introduce basic theories and practice of outreaching youth services in Hong Kong; highlight the importance of professional integrity in social work practice and provide inspiration and support through professional exchange and field visits.

As an integral part of the training program, the 19 trainees had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with the winning teams of the Wofoo 3A Project 2014 and 2016 during the Exchange Program on 16 June, 2017 at the Chinese University of Hong Kong followed by agency visits to innovative projects working with families. Indeed, the professional exchange was inspiring and fruitful to the trainees.

The trainees had very positive response towards the training program and were satisfied with the contents, length and logistic arrangements of the training course. They found it stimulating and giving them the energy and support to move forward with their youth service in Mainland China.



Cross-Country Study on Adolescents Perceived Family Functioning & Quality of Life in Asia

The follow up on the exploratory cross-country study on Family Happiness in the Asian Region which was presented at the 5th Regional Symposium in November 2016 in Korea, with the report forwarded to Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek of the United Nations , a second cross country study with focus on children and adolescents was conducted. It is entitled "*Study on Adolescents Perceived Family Functioning & Quality of Life in Asia*". The research team members include Dr. Miranda Chung (Hong Kong), Dr. Herman Lo (Hong Kong), Mr. Moses Mui (Hong Kong), Dr. Machiko Ohara (Japan), Prof. Zhu Meihua (China), Mr. Wong Kwong Sing (China), Ms. Bawany Chinapan (Malaysia), Dr. Lee Ngak Siang (Singapore), Dr. Peace Wong (Singapore) and Prof. Joyce Feng (Taiwan).

The Study is conducted between November 2017 and May 2018, with the enthusiastic support from the research team. The Research & Training Committee aims to present a paper at the Plenary Session at the Asian Family Summit in August, 2018.

CIFA WEP & CIFA-NET

Chinese version of certain pages of the CIFA website, including CIFA's background, mission, slogan, areas for collaboration etc. are provided for easier access of visitors from Asian countries such as Mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore. Information on CIFA and related activities had been uploaded to provide latest development in the work of CIFA and hyperlinked with related websites.

CIFA-NET had been published on quarterly basis to include reports on CIFA activities and its member organisations, abstracts of papers by academics and professionals which had been presented at CIFA regional symposiums. Thanks to the editorial group with Dr. Miranda Chung as chief editor and Dr. Herman Lo as member, working closely with me and the CIFA secretariat to issue the newsletters. The newsletter had been widely distributed among CIFA members, related stakeholders and supporters to keep them abreast of the work of CIFA. W had received very encouraging feedback from readers, finding it to be informative with attractive design.

Celebration of 10th Anniversary of CIFA & Asian Family Summit

To follow up on the decision to organize the Asian Family Summit to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of CIFA, efforts were made to explore the possibility of co-organising the AFS with the Family Council and Social Welfare Department of the HKSAR, the Hong Kong Council of social Service and the Faculty of Social Sciences of the HKU (where the idea of setting up CIFA was conceived in 2008). The response had been overwhelming and an Organising Committee of the AFS was formed in June with representatives from all the 5 organisations. The OC decided to adopt Sustainable Development & Family Well-Being – Agenda for Action in Asia as the main theme of the AFS to echo the international efforts on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to invite representative from the United Nations. To be one of the officiating guests at the Opening Ceremony and to present the first keynote speech on Sustainable Development 2030- an Agenda for World Action.

During the visit of Mrs. Renata Maczmarska, the initial idea of the AFS was shared with her to seek her advice. Her response was very positive, giving advice on the sub-themes to be adopted, and pledging full support by sending a representative from UN and assisting to spread the news of the AFS among her contacts.

The Organising Committee and the four committees, namely the Scientific Committee, the Communication & PR Committee, the Family Well-Being Expo Committee and the Hospitality Committee as well as the AFS Secretariat (with representatives from CIFA, FC, FOSS/HKU) had been working very hard to map out the details of the AFS. Everyone is very excited and looking forward to a very successful and memorable occasion to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of CIFA.

Strengthening network with the United Nations

With the presence of Ms. Daniela Bass, Director of the Division of Social Policy and Development, Department of Economic & social Affairs at the 5th CIFA Regional Symposium in November 2016 at the National Museum of Korea, Seoul, the linkage and recognition from the United Nations had been further strengthened. We were

honoured to have Mrs. Renata Kaczmarek from the United Nations to visit Hong Kong in June to officiate at two important events, namely the Opening Ceremony of the Exchange Program of Wofoo 3A Project 2016 and the Charity Concert For Family Harmony, details of which had been reported above.

A Dinner Reception hosted by Ms. Elsie Leung, our Advisor provided an excellent opportunity to exchange information on family related policies and work in HK and that of the United Nations, and the initial idea of organising the Asian Family Summit as spelt out above. On all the occasions, she had the chance to meet CIFA Council members and officials from government (Home Affairs Bureau, chairman of Family Council, and Social Welfare Department) and representatives from the tertiary institutes and CIFA member organisations. She was deeply impressed by the work of CIFA and gave very encouraging and positive remarks. She also gave advice on how to strengthen and sustain the relationship with United Nations and encouraged CIFA to apply for Consultative Status at the UN, giving advice and support in the process.

Conclusion

The recognition and linkage with the United Nations is of significance to CIFA, alleviating our profile as a regional platform to advance family well-being. With strengthened ties, support and cooperation between various sub-regions, and hard work and dedication of Council and Committee members, we will continue our efforts to progress further at all fronts, to receive further support and recognition at local, regional and international levels.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all for your unfailing support and advice throughout the year. In the past 10 years, we have encountered difficulties and faced challenges and hard times in sustaining CIFA as a regional platform. However, with dedication and shared vision, we have survived and flourished. Without your commitment, patience, perseverance and strong believe in our mission, our dream would not have been realised. I will continue to count on all of you for your support and contribution as we move proudly into the next 10 year of CIFA!

Patricia CHU
Chairperson
CIFA

18 May 2018