

Preparation for Celebration of 30th Anniversary of IYF

Further to the report on the subject in the 37th Issue of CIFA-NET (April to June 2022) we are pleased to provide an update on the preparatory work with the input from the Working Group on IYF+30 which had met twice to work out further details of the various proposed activities. These have been endorsed by the CIFA Council.

Having received very positive response from UN on our preliminary proposals, continuous efforts have been made on different fronts to take the matter forward. Further details of these activities are shown below:

1. Cross country study on Use of IT in Working with Families (TBC) to be conducted by the Research & Training Committee in collaboration with the researchers of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Data collection will take place in 2023, with a view to present the findings at the AFS in 2024.
2. Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Ageing of Population in Asia under the mega trend of Demographic Changes to be organised in the last quarter of 2023 to kick start the celebration. It will be co-hosted with UN and two tertiary institutes in Asia. Concept note and agenda are being worked out with co-organisers.
3. Joint project in the spirit from 3A to 4A(Alliance) to be organised by the 4A Core Group under the 3A Project Committee.
4. Regional wide campaign to promote family well-being with the theme of Family We-Time to raise awareness of spending quality time with the family.
5. Production of a commemorative publication to highlight the challenges faced by families in various parts of Asia, and the efforts of CIFA in advancing family well-being. The publication will be distributed at the AFS in 2024.
6. Asian Family Summit to be organised in Hong Kong in November 2024 to wrap up the IYF.

An announcement on the major regional initiatives to celebrate IYF+30 has been made during the Closing Ceremony of the CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022 in November in Singapore by Mrs. Patricia CHU, Chairperson of CIFA to appeal for support and participation.

CIFA has contributed to the drafting of the Civil Society Declaration in the capacity as an NGO granted Special Consultative Status by UN. We have also completed the form on Commitments to the Preparation of IFY +30 which has been forwarded to the International Federation of Family Development (IFFD) to indicate our support.



Converging
PROFESSIONAL WISDOM
FOR Family Well-Being

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Message from Mrs. Patricia CHU, Chairperson, CIFA



During this quarter, we are pleased to see the improvement in the pandemic situation with activities gradually returning to normal, allowing more freedom for travelling and direct contacts. The CIFA Council has been actively meetings and putting plans into action and it is exciting to witness continuous development in the work of CIFA, not only in Asia but in the international arena. In this issue we will provide update on these activities and look forward to your continuous support!

One of the significant activities is the CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022 (CIFA-AFC 2022) held in Singapore in November. We are particularly thankful for the presence of the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore as Guest of Honor at the Opening Ceremony and the sharing by senior government officials from the ASEAN countries, researchers and practitioners on various family issues, providing an excellent opportunity for sharing and networking.

The Final Round Adjudication and Award Presentation Ceremony of Wofoo 3A Project 2022 is one of the highlights of CIFA-AFC 2022, when 8 finalist teams competed for the various awards. This is the first time using technology to facilitate the voting of "My Favourite Project" by the participants at the event. It is fulfilling to see the 4A Core Group (4ACG) sharing their thoughts on the formation of alliance and discussing plans to actualise the spirit of Alliance of the 3A Project.

Another important exercise is the planning of the activities to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF+30). The Working Group set up for this purpose has been meeting with concerned parties to work out further details and we are thankful for the advice and support from Ms. Renata Kaczmarek of the Focal Point on the Family. We look forward to showcase the efforts made by CIFA to advance family well-being in Asia and contribute to global effort in achieving the sustainable development goals!





CIFA REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM & MSF ASIAN FAMILY CONFERENCE 2022

EMPOWERING ASIAN FAMILIES: EMBRACING CHALLENGES & BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

The CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022 (CIFA-AFC 2022) held from 8 to 10 November 2022 in Singapore with the theme 'Empowering Asian Families: Embracing Challenges and Building A Better Future' was co-hosted by the Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region (CIFA), the Singapore Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), and the Social Work Department of the National University of Singapore (NUS). It provided a platform for over 440 participants from 12 countries/regions across Asia, comprising policymakers, academics, and practitioners from governments, tertiary institutes and social service agencies and non-profit organizations to come together to exchange knowledge and experience on strengthening Asian families. Participants engaged in fruitful discussions on the challenges faced by Asian families amid the COVID-19 pandemic and discussed ways to improve our policies and programs to better support our families.

Opening Ceremony

DPM Heng Swee Keat (Deputy Prime Minister and Coordinating Minister for Economic Policies, Singapore), the Guest of Honor, delivered the opening address, sharing his view on the evolving context of societies and the importance of strengthening families and launched the national plan for families while unveiling the 'Vanchoanthe SG Families' Orchid.

Scientific Program

Mr. Derek McCormack (Director Raising Children Network, Australia) delivered the first keynote speech giving an overview of strong families' characteristics and how they can be recognised and supported by various stakeholders. The second keynote speech was delivered by Professor Daniel Shek (Associate Vice President, Chair Professor of Applied Social Sciences, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong) sharing the need for policies to focus on, not only economic, but also human capital as it functions as protective factors against psychological distress.

Plenary session 1 focused on the Innovations, Inspirations & Sustainability of Asian Family Services. Ms. Noda Seiko (Member of Parliament, House of Representatives, and Chairperson, Research Commission on Info-Communications Strategy, Liberal Democratic Party, Japan) shared on the topic "The Quest for a Society Centered on Children"; Kadi Ustaz Nor Razak Bakar (Registrar and Kadi with the Registry of Muslim Marriages, Singapore) and Naib Kadi Ustaz Muhammad Tarmizi Abdul Wahid (Naib Kadi with the Registry of Muslim Marriages, Founder and CEO of Safinah Holdings Pte Ltd, Singapore) shared on the initiative "Bersamamu: Inspiring Strong and Resilient Muslim Marriages"; Mdm. Rahayu Buang (Chief Executive Officer of KidSTART Singapore Ltd and Director of Child Development in the Early Childhood Development Agency (ECDA)) then shared on the topic "KidSTART: Singapore's Strategy for Enhancing Social Mobility - Innovating Evidence-Informed Practice and Service Delivery".

Plenary Session 2 focused on the Health, Mental Health and Resilience of Families. Dr. Takeshi Tamura (President of Asian Academy of Family Therapy, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, Marriage and Family Therapist, Japan) shared on

the topic "Hikikomori Syndrome and Game Addiction Innovating Family and Social Life in the Pandemic Era"; Professor Kim Yeong-Hee (Professor, Department of Child Welfare, Chungbuk National University, South Korea) shared on the topic "Changes and Challenges in Family: Before, During, and After the COVID-19 Pandemic"; Dr. Esther Goh Chor Leng (Associate Professor, Head of Department of Social Work, National University of Singapore, Singapore) shared on the topic "Covid-19, Economic Hardships and Mental Health: A Mixed-Method Study on Low-Income Mothers and Children".

Six Concurrent Sessions shed light on various topics and themes, first one covering benefits of several innovative family services namely financial management and support for low-income families, multi-disciplinary approach to strengthen family relationships and program on parental involvement in improving their child's school readiness. Session 2 focused on children and adolescents, including Childhood Traumatic Experiences (CTEs), points of intervention based on children and youth's Quality of Life (QOL), impact of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) on family relationships and children's coping, and co-parenting styles of divorced couples and its impact on children wellbeing. Session 3 looked at family practices and its effects, including school attendance among low-income children, parenting stress during COVID-19, support from siblings-in-law of cross-national families, and parental Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Concurrent Session 4 focused on innovations in family services including evolving the Wofoo Asian Award for Advancing Family Well-Being Project (3A Project) from 3A to 4A (Alliance). The session also discussed intervention for youth in Singapore who experience social isolation, and life and death education amongst seniors in the community. Session 5 covered studies on domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, housing stability, the Social Work Professionals' (SWPs) management of hoarding behaviour, and the challenges of elders' death in Japan. Lastly, Session 6 expounded Asian families such of time poverty and its relationship with work-life conflict, Indigenous Teenage Mothers (ITM) in Taiwan, and Brief Mindfulness-Based Family Psychoeducation (MBFPE) to relieve care-givers burden.

One of the highlights of the event was the Final Round Adjudication of Wofoo 3A Project 2022 with 8 finalists out of 24 projects across 5 countries/regions in Asia, presenting their projects at the conference.

At the Gala Dinner & Wofoo 3A Project 2022 Award Presentation Ceremony that evening, the Gold, Silver, Bronze and Outstanding Awards, My Favourite Project, Best Collaborative Award, Most Innovative Award and Bringing Hope Home Award were announced. Details and results of the Wofoo 3A Project 2022 will be covered on p. 6-7.

On the last day, presentations focused on National Perspectives on Strengthening Families and Marriages. Minister Mariam Bint Ali Bin Nasser Al Misnad (Qatar Minister for Social Development and Family) emphasised the importance of building strong families for a strong society and a safe nation. She called for support to preserve and strengthen the family unit.

Ms. Grace Li (Chief Social Work Officer, Social Welfare Department, Hong Kong) highlighted the importance of taking an integrated approach to service delivery to overcome the difficulties created by the compartmentalization of clients' needs and fragmentation of service provision.

Minister of State Zifleena Hassan (Minister of State for Gender, Family and Social Services, Maldives) shared Maldives' experience in strengthening



Group Photo of Wofoo 3A Project 2022 Finalist teams at the Final Round Adjudication (Credits: MSF)

marriages and families, including social safety net programs to provide financial assistance to single parents, foster parents and persons with disabilities; a universal health insurance scheme, and Gender Equality Action Plan to achieve gender equality in leadership, economic development, justice and social well-being.

Minister of State Sun Xueling (Minister of State for Social and Family Development and Home Affairs, Singapore) postulated a virtuous cycle in which strong families raised supportive and contributing members for the community, and the community in turn helped strengthen and enable families to succeed.

Minister Chuti Krairiksh (Minister of Social Development and Human Security, Thailand) also shared his views in the panel discussion on the key challenge we face in supporting families today and his hope for building a better future for Asian families.

At the Closing Ceremony, Minister Masagos Zulkifli (Minister for Social and Family Development and Second Minister for Health, Singapore) shared the various ways Singapore was working towards strengthening families, such as ComLink, which is a key initiative that exemplifies family-centricity as a key feature in social policies in Singapore. He also shared his wishes for deeper regional cooperation towards the common goal of empowering and strengthening families.



*Closing Remarks by Mrs. Patricia Chu
(Credits: MSF)*

To close the conference, Mrs. Patricia Chu (Chairperson of CIFA, Co-chairperson of the Organising Committee of CIFA-AFC 2022) delivered the closing remarks to show full appreciation to all the speakers and participants as well as colleagues from MSF and NUS for their unfailing efforts to make the event a success. She congratulated all Wofoo 3A Project winners for their sharing of innovative projects on promoting family well-being. She also made an announcement on the forthcoming activities in 2023 and 2024 to be coordinated by CIFA to echo

the call from United Nations in celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family (IYF+30), including the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) and Asian Family Summit (AFS) and appealed for support and participation from the various stakeholders in Asia.

The CIFA-AFC 2022 was a memorable one, receiving positive feedback from participants. It provided an excellent platform for policy makers, academics and family service practitioners to network and exchange knowledge. We would like to

thank all for their contribution to make the event a success, generating a lot of exchange and networking amongst like-minded people, and everyone is already looking forward to another opportunity to gather together again in 2024!

Visit the CIFA-AFC conference website (www.cifa-afc2022.sg) for more information.



In Support of



CIFA REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM & MSF ASIAN FAMILY CONFERENCE 2022

Keynote Speech 2

Family Policies in Empowering Families in Meeting Challenges of the COVID-19

Professor Daniel Shek

Associate Vice President

Chair Professor of Applied Social Sciences

**The Hong Kong Polytechnic University,
Hong Kong SAR**



*Keynote Speech 2
From left to right: Mrs. Patricia Chu (Moderator), Professor Daniel Shek (Keynote Speaker) (Credits: MSF)*

Although COVID-19 is primarily a physical disease, it has adverse effects beyond physical health. Impairment in the psychological, social and spiritual domains also takes place, which would further undermine family quality of life. Besides, families are much affected during the pandemic. Because of social distancing measures, people are “forced” to stay in the family, which would generate family conflicts particularly on the use of IT and space resources. Besides, different views of family members on preventive measures would also create family conflict. Furthermore, family financial hardship as a result of the pandemic such as “forced no-pay leave” also creates much stress for families. For policymakers, how to deal with emerging issues generated by COVID-19 (e.g., digital divide, gender inequality, economic strain, and negative family maladjustment) and promote positive individual and family well-being are important questions to be considered.

To empower families to meet the challenges under COVID-19, macro policies have been devised in different societies, such as salary guarantee programs, financial subsidy programs, family-friendly and good workplace practices, and family support programs. While these policies are valuable, it is argued that building up family resilience can help to empower families. With reference to the Family Resilience Framework (Walsh, 2015, 2016), we propose that we should empower families through developing their capabilities in three domains. These include beliefs systems (meaning about adversity, hope, and transcendence and spirituality), structural and organizational patterns (flexibility, connectedness, economic and social resources), and communication processes (clear information, open emotional expression, and collaborative problem solving). Based on this framework, we are implementing a 3-year family resilience project supported by the Hong Kong Jockey Charities Trust. Research findings showed that family resilience protects families from the negative impact of COVID-19 stress on the well-being of family members.

During the Dialogue between Prof. Shek and Mrs. Patricia Chu, questions and comments on family resilience and policy implications had been raised, generating deliberation among speaker, moderator and the participants, stimulating a lot of food for thought for policy-makers, researchers and practitioners.

Wofoo 3A Project 2022



The Final Round Adjudication of Wofoo 3A Project 2022 was one of the highlights at the CIFA Regional Symposium & MSF Asian Family Conference 2022 when 8 finalist teams from Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan competed for the Gold, Silver, Bronze and Outstanding Awards, as well as the Best Collaborative Award, Most Innovative Award, Bringing Hope Home Award and the My Favourite Project.



Wofoo 3A Project 2022 Gold Award and Most Innovative Award Winners from Heep Hong Society (Credits: MSF)

These projects covered a wide variety of topics including pre-school children with Suspected Developmental Needs, children development under a home-bound situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, fathers learning and supporting platform, ADHD students, parent empowerment, low-income family empowerment and support with the challenge of digitalization, school-based mental health literacy programme, and emotion-focused parenting education. (for details of projects, please access the CIFA website at

www.cifa-net.org)



Group Photo of Adjudicators and Finalist teams at the Gala Dinner & Award Presentation Ceremony



Ms. Christina Lee, Executive Director of Wofoo Social Enterprises receiving souvenir from Mrs. Patricia Chu

The climax of the Wofoo 3A Project 2022 was the Award Presentation Ceremony, with Ms. Christina Lee, Executive Director of Wofoo Social Enterprises, the Title Sponsor as the Guest of Honour encouraging the awardees as well as giving recognition to the Wofoo 3A Project in sustaining the momentum in advancing family well-being.

This is the first time the finalist teams of Wofoo 3A Project could present and meet in person after the last online Final Round Presentation in 2021 due to the pandemic and travel restrictions. Apart from competing for the awards at the Final Round Adjudication, the finalist teams were able to share and exchange directly with speakers and participants at the Symposium, involving many distinguished scholars and professionals presenting papers at the keynote, plenary and concurrent sessions.

The results of the Final Round Adjudication is as below:

Award	Country/Region	Organisation	Name of Project
Gold Award	Hong Kong	Heep Hong Society	Brain Challenge Intervention Program for ADHD Secondary School Students in Hong Kong
Silver Award	Hong Kong	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Ho Yuk Ching Educational Psychology Service Centre	Brain-Based Emotion Coaching Parenting Program
Bronze Award	Hong Kong	Caritas Family Service & Hong Kong Christian Service Early Childhood Education Service	Jockey Club Interactive Wonder Box
Outstanding Award	Hong Kong	The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong - "SMILE" Onsite Pre-school Integrated Services	An Attachment-based Parenting Program with Language Facilitation Training for Parents of Pre-Schoolers with Suspected Developmental Needs
Outstanding Award	Hong Kong	Caritas Personal Growth Centre for Men	PAPA Zone
Outstanding Award	Taiwan	Taiwan Fund for Children and Families	An Innovative Practice of Social Work: Parent Empowerment Program in Rural Communities of Nantou County
Outstanding Award	Singapore	TOUCH Cyber Wellness	Digitally Ready Families
Outstanding Award	Singapore	TOUCH Mental Wellness	Do You M.I.N.D.?
Best Collaborative Award	Hong Kong	Caritas Family Service & Hong Kong Christian Service Early Childhood Education Service	Jockey Club Interactive Wonder Box
Most Innovative Award	Hong Kong	Heep Hong Society	Brain Challenge Intervention Program for ADHD Secondary School Students in Hong Kong
Bringing Hope Home Award	Singapore	TOUCH Cyber Wellness	Digitally Ready Families
My Favourite Project	Hong Kong	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Ho Yuk Ching Educational Psychology Service Centre	Brain-Based Emotion Coaching Parenting Program