



Project Co-Leads



Citi Foundation



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Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue Sparks Solutions for Youth Mental Health

Annual forum to inspire collaboration and co-creation of innovative solutions to support and empower youth

Hong Kong – Close to 800 educators, community partners and young people gathered at the Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue to explore solutions to address the pressing youth mental health needs in the city. Co-led by Citi Foundation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and organized in partnership with the Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS), the event put a spotlight on the mental well-being of young people in Hong Kong SAR.

The two-part conference, which took place on October 10 and 12, brought together academic experts, mental health professionals and youth organizations to examine diverse and pertinent topics. The discussions centered around common types of mental disorders, the stigma and other challenges faced by individuals with mental illness; perspectives from educators and social workers and holistic approaches to address the mental health needs of youth in Hong Kong.

“Young people are our future. At Citi and the Citi Foundation, we are committed to empowering and investing in youth across the communities we serve. Through initiatives such as the Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue, we strive to help raise awareness of the most pressing challenges faced by youth today, and facilitate collaboration across stakeholders in addressing those issues,” said Aveline San, Hong Kong and Macau CEO for Citi. “The importance of youth mental health has gained significant attention in recent years. Conditions such as anxiety and stress can have long-lasting consequences. It is therefore imperative that we tackle these issues proactively and at the earliest opportunity. By collaborating and pooling our collective knowledge and ideas, we hope to identify actionable solutions to support and uplift our younger generation, bringing a brighter and healthier future for Hong Kong.”

Savinda Ranathunga, Regional Youth Project Manager at UNDP, Asia Pacific, said, “Through Youth Co:Lab initiatives, we have witnessed young people in Asia-Pacific innovating to create impact solutions for mental health, providing purpose and support for the communities they serve. This is why we recognize the importance of championing mental health causes not only in Hong Kong but across Asia-Pacific region. Ensuring the mental well-being of youth is not just a personal endeavour but a shared responsibility. By supporting young people, we secure a sustainable future”. He also shared, “Young entrepreneurs drive economic growth and community well-being through innovation and resilience. Nurturing their entrepreneurial spirit empowers them to uplift communities and support fellow youth, paving the way to achieving Sustainable Development Goals.”

Chua Hoi Wai, Chief Executive of the HKCSS, said, “It is commendable that the Citi Foundation and the UNDP have co-created Youth Co:Lab with dialogue activities which bring together youth and adults to promote social development. This year, the theme of our Hong Kong Dialogue is “Youth Mental Health”. We strongly believe that to effectively

address the immense needs, any solution should involve cross-disciplinary collaboration and youth participation. We hope there can be more exchanges in these two aspects, and together, we can build innovative and youth-friendly support systems, enabling young people to live better lives.”

Youth Co:Lab, co-created in 2017 by Citi Foundation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is the largest youth movement for empowerment, social entrepreneurship, equality, and social inclusion in the Asia-Pacific region and has supported young people in 28 countries and territories. Since its inception, activities supported by Youth Co:Lab such as the Hong Kong Dialogue have reached 255,000 participants across the region.

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Photo 1



Educators, community partners and young people gathered at the Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue to explore solutions to address the pressing youth mental health needs in the city. Officiating at the opening ceremony were (from left to right):

- Chua Hoi Wai, Chief Executive of the HKCSS
- Aveline San, Hong Kong and Macau CEO for Citi
- Savinda Ranathunga, Regional Youth Project Manager at UNDP, Asia Pacific

Photo 2



Aveline San, Hong Kong and Macau CEO for Citi addressed the audience at the Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue opening ceremony

Photo 3



The two-part conference and two workshops throughout October will bring together academic experts, mental health professionals, social workers and youth organizations to explore solutions to address the pressing youth mental health needs in Hong Kong.