

DIRECTORS' INSIGHTS



Dr Patrick Cheung
*Chairperson of Executive Committee,
 Against Child Abuse*

“ The members of our Executive Committee come from different professions and this facilitates us to operate under the principles of transparency, accountability and compliance. The Committee bears great responsibility in making decisions. When we planned the expansion of our service centers, we had made thorough discussion on issues including financial condition, needs of service users and organizational development to fulfill our commitment to the society. ”

“ There are discrepancies among board members of social welfare organizations in the understanding of their roles and responsibilities. In view of this, organizations could benefit from guidance on governance and opportunities of exchange provided by the Council. In particular, some organizations face difficulties in recruiting new board members. We suggest that the Council network with various professional bodies, to construct a talent pool of people who are interested in joining the boards of social welfare organizations, assisting organizations to look for suitable directors. ”



Mr Peter Wan
*Vice-Chairman of Executive Committee,
 Heep Hong Society*

“ The Executive Committee has been tasked with greater responsibilities in governance since the launch of Lump Sum Grant Subvention System. Our new challenges include the setting of organization-wide strategic directions as well as sustainable financial planning. We are lucky to have long serving committee members who know well the Association operations. The Executive Committee has a steep learning curve on good governance hence to be accountable to the public expectations on our Association. Furthermore, we have engaged external professional consultants and have invited senior management team to join our Annual Board Retreat over the past years, striving our best to formulate and to implement strategies on organizational development. ”



Dr T. L. Lo
*Chairman of Executive Committee,
 The Mental Health Association of
 Hong Kong*

“ There are very few public reports on governance in the social welfare sector which cover accountability risks, loopholes and failures. I look forward to a more open attitude in transparency in the governance and accountability. Cases should be documented for lessons learnt. It can be a driving force for improvement both within and outside of the organization. There is a cost to maintaining governance and accountability systems and practices. For example, as the governing Board of our organization, we receive positive comments as well as complaints from our members. Substantial resources are incurred in handling complaints. I hope that the Government and professional bodies can provide more resources, expertise and support for the sector in improving governance and accountability. ”



Mr Chong Chan Yau
*President,
 Hong Kong Blind Union*



Mr. Christopher Law
*Chairman,
 Hong Kong Family Welfare Society*

“ I believe the role of the third sector will be more and more important in the society and the sector should even enhance its governance capacity. The trust-based social welfare sector, with a different culture from the commercial sector, could hardly fully adopt the governance mode prevailing in commercial organizations. To us, governance does not mean to control our staff, it is the strategic way to support staff for quality service delivery through job allocation, operation and structure, to accomplish the agency's mission. ”

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Mrs Gillian Lo
 Chairperson,
 The Hong Kong Joint
 Council of Parents of the
 Mentally Handicapped

“ This is the 30th anniversary of the Joint Council. We started as a self-help organization solely run by a volunteer group of parents of people with intellectual disability and now we have grown to have six full time staff. As a governance body, we value the importance of setting directions, financial governance and the change and succession of board members. We believe effective governance could enhance our support to people with intellectual disability and their families. Hence, we are pleased to learn humbly and equip ourselves to meet greater challenges ahead. ”

“ The Society has been established for over 55 years. To optimize board composition, the Executive Committee endeavors to absorb talents from all walks of life, providing channels for different people including service users to join our Committees, and eventually the Executive Committee. This aims for delivering apt governance responding to changing needs over time, so that the Society can realize its potential and capacity to the fullness with limited resource, providing appropriate services for people with disabilities. ”



Prof Cecilia Chan
 Chairperson,
 The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation



Dr Gary Ng
 Chairperson,
 Hong Kong Federation
 of Handicapped Youth

“ Being a self-help organization, the Federation’s Board must only comprise of handicapped people, the limitation of which makes recruitment a persisting challenge. With regard to this, the Federation has been organizing different programs which enable us to recruit members into our committees who share the mission of mutual help. Starting from volunteer work, they have the chance to become organizers of our activities and later become part of the governing team, devoted to encouraging disabled persons to fully integrate into, participate in and contribute to the society. ”

“ NGOs’ operation is heavily affected by local laws. The new Companies Ordinance, for instance, has introduced changes in companies’ financial reporting, annual general meeting and appointment of proxy, etc. NGO boards have to ensure that their organizations are in compliance with these regulatory requirements. Our Agency has recently amended the Memorandum and Articles of Association. We were asked by the Companies Registry to incorporate additional clauses pertinent to the new Companies Ordinance, making the amendment process more complicated. ”



Mr Wilfred Lee
 Honorary Secretary,
 Agency for Volunteer
 Service