

# Hong Kong NGO Governance Health Survey

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: Will other respondents know the agency head or board members' responses?**

**A:** All data collected will be treated in strict confidence. Questionnaires will be distributed through HKU's online platform, where participating board members and agency head will receive individual hyperlinks with pre-assigned login name and password to complete the questionnaire. All login names and passwords are distinctive. Respondents will not have access to the other respondents' answers, even within the same organization. HKU will provide anonymous data to GAME for the compilation of individual agency reports. Such reports will only include overall analysis and individual responses will not be identifiable.

**Q: Can non-HKCSS agency members participate in this survey?**

**A:** Yes, an NGO can participate as long as the organization is a charitable institution or trust of a public character, which is exempted from tax under Section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance, and has actual operation locally in Hong Kong.

**Q: How will the data be handled upon completion of the questionnaire?**

**A:** HKU will treat all data collected in strict confidence. Unless with agency's permission, all third-parties (including HKCSS and GAME) will not have access to any information revealing the identity of individual respondents. All data and questionnaires collected will be destroyed within six months upon announcement of the final report.

**Q: Will the list of participating NGOs of the Governance Health Survey be disclosed?**

**A:** No, information of participating NGOs will remain confidential. The survey report will not disclose the list of participating NGOs.

**Q: What does the questionnaire cover?**

**A:** The questionnaire design examines three aspects, namely 1) board design and processes, 2) board role execution and 3) board dynamics and behavior, based on references from overseas studies. The questionnaire consists of two forms: Form A includes 25 questions on the agency's background information, to be filled out by the agency head; Form B includes 73 questions to be filled out by agency head and participating board members. The questionnaire takes around 30 minutes to complete (if necessary, respondents can save and complete the questions later).

**Q: Who should fill in the questionnaire?**

**A:** Respondents should include:

- Agency Head,
- Board Chair,
- Office Bearer and
- 1 Member who has served on the board for more than 1 year

**Q: Can more than 3 board members fill in the questionnaire?**

**A:** Yes, please specify the requested number of board members when confirming the participating directors with HKU. Please note that HKU will email the questionnaire to responding board members, but will not be responsible for following up once the required number of responses is reached.

**Q: If the NGO does not have any staff and the Chair acts as agency head, which version of the questionnaire should be filled in?**

**A:** If the Chair acts as the agency head, he/she should fill in both Form A and Form B. In this case, the NGO should arrange at least 1 more board member to complete the questionnaire.

**Q: Besides agency heads, can senior management participate and fill in the questionnaire?**

**A:** Agency head should represent the NGO's staff in responding to the questionnaire. The head may also delegate other related staff to respond, as long as the designated staff has thorough understanding of the operations with the board.

**Q: Do I have to respond to the questionnaire online?**

**A:** We encourage all respondents to complete the questionnaire online, but also understand that there may be different needs. HKU can make special arrangements upon requests to provide pdf files, plain text, or printed questionnaire. Please specify the requests of individual respondents and provide emails or mailing addresses accordingly in the confirmation with HKU.

**Q: How will the NGO know which areas of governance to pay attention to or improve after completing the questionnaire?**

**A:** Each participating NGO will receive a "Health Check Report" analyzed by GAME. The report will include an overall data analysis as provided by the organization, a side-by-side comparison with similar organizations and the sector's aggregate data, as well as consultants' comments and advice. Representatives of agencies can also attend group debriefing sessions to facilitate better understanding of their governance health reflected on the individual report and the comprehensive data analysis of the sector. Moreover, agencies may also apply for the In-depth Debriefing Service provided by GAME for a more thorough understanding of agency's governance health status and explore improvement plans. The quota is limited to 15 NGOs.

**Q: How do I participate in the In-depth Debriefing Service?**

**A:** Agency should indicate their interest in the reply slip. If the number of applications exceeds the quota, the beneficiaries will be chosen by drawing lots.

**Q: What does the In-depth Debriefing Service include?**

**A:** The GAME consultant will discuss in detail with the board and agency head on the individual report results, help the agency understand its current governance health status and the challenges and difficulties encountered, and analyze its strengths and opportunities ahead. The consultation will also guide the agency to explore improvement plans. The professional consultation will be a confidential process.

**Q: If the agency has various operational entities that are also charities, do all the operational units have to complete the questionnaire separately?**

**A:** It depends on which governance unit the agency wants to examine. It could be the entire organization, or a social service or other unit that has an individual governance and operational structure. Please specify the participating unit in the reply slip. Organizations can also decide based on their membership at HKCSS.

**Q: Why should I participate in this survey?**

**A:** This study aims to provide a self-assessment tool for NGOs to reference on good governance practices and to examine and reflect on its own governance. Through comprehensive data analysis of the sector, the study will help raise awareness and understanding of good governance practices locally in Hong Kong, and promote continuous improvement and sustainable development of NGOs.

**Q: What can I do when I encounter difficulties in filling out the questionnaire?**

**A:** For any technical difficulties or queries about the questionnaire, please contact Dr Ruby Lo, ExCEL3, HKU, during office hours. (Tel: 2511-1800 / Email: [excel3@hku.hk](mailto:excel3@hku.hk))