



WORKABILITY

Newsletter

ASIA

Florence Chan
SE responses to Covid-19 in
Hong Kong



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Helping PWDs During
Covid-19 in Thailand

Join us

August 13th, 2021

2021 International Seminar on Employment Rights of Persons with
Disabilities in the Crisis of COVID-19 Pandemic

hosted by

Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Taiwan & The Redemptorist Foundation for
PWDs, Thailand

FROM THE BOARD

Responses of a Hong Kong Social Enterprise to COVID-19



Ms. Florence Chan
Assistant
Superintendent
Tung Wah Group of
Hospitals Jockey Club
Rehabilitation Complex

In Hong Kong, there are more than 600 social enterprises, 50% of which are operated by non-profit organizations. Our organization is one of these NPOs. We pioneered to set up our first social enterprise in 2002, and we are currently employing over 200 people with disabilities. Same as all other countries in the region, the outbreak of COVID-19 and the corresponding anti-pandemic and social distancing measures did affect the business of our social enterprise tremendously, especially our bakery and cafe business. To cope with this unprecedented challenge to our business sustainability as well as the livelihood of our employees, we kept looking for new opportunities. Below summarised what we have adopted in response to COVID-19 in order to keep ourselves survived.

1. Moving business online

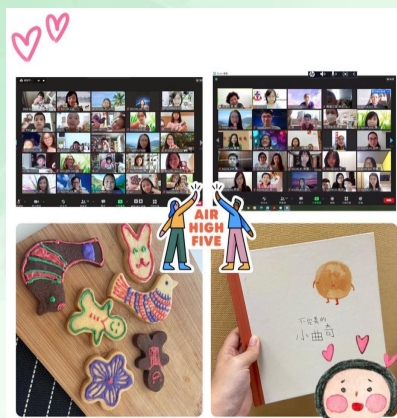
We have an online shop established in 2017 but not until 2020, we still have not yet streamlined every single workflow from order to delivery. While all of us were reminded to stay at home, online business became the only promising business. We put more effort into revamping the flow and the backend logistics so as to increase our competitiveness in the online market. Apart from bakery products orders, we also moved our cafe takeaway orders online by partnering with food delivery platforms. Our efforts meant that not only we could increase 3 times the revenue generated from the online shop compared with previous year, it was also a good learning for the team to understand the importance and possibilities of being flexible while in turmoil.



2. Delivering Caring Message through Our Products

Empathising what is happening and how people feel is the way we chose to connect with the community. With all the uncertainties and fears, we all treasure our beloved families and friends the most. Instead of launching our 10th anniversary campaign reminding people of our existence and achievements, we launched a new series of cookie packaging "Don't forget to ask yourself: how are you today?" coherent to the emotions of people for expressing their care to their beloved ones, including parents, good friends, colleagues and oneself. We then launched another series "This Christmas, we wish you the very best". Both series were well received by our customers and corporate clients so that we could maintain over 90% of our festive revenue compared with previous year.

3. Addressing Social Needs while Keeping Social Distance
Staying at home and keeping social distance became the new norms since last year. Yet, people still have social needs and want to have some fun at home. Therefore, we transformed our social inclusion workshops, which used to be held face-to-face, to an online version. We invited volunteers from our corporate partners to share stories of our little book “Gift of Imperfection” with students via zoom so as to spread our social inclusion message through the story-telling time. Besides, we also prepared some DIY cookie kits and delivered them directly to their doors so that they could DIY some icing cookies together and share the happiness through the zoom platform. So far, we have reached over 400 participants in the first quarter since launching this online version.



4. Making Good Use of the Downtime

Same as other food and beverage operators in Hong Kong, our cafe and catering business has dropped drastically in the past year and our employees' working hours inevitably also dropped significantly. Apart from livelihood, we also have a concern if their working ability would decline without daily practice opportunities and on-the-job-training. Therefore, we have utilized this “downtime” for organising different job-related training, such as coffee workshops and food safety training, to equip our staff team with new skills for future working opportunities.



5. Embracing Agility

With the rapid change of the social situation and market trends, we have been trying our best to make the right balance between “thinking through” and “acting fast” so as to avoid missing any opportunity. During the beginning of the pandemic, we were all facing many unknowns and living under great pressure, especially our medical and nursing personnel. We came up with an idea, “Cheering Cookies”, very quickly with the aim to express our gratitude to the medical and nursing personnel by consolidating genuine blessings from the public and what we are good at, i.e. baking cookies. From developing the idea of making these thumbs-up cookies, rolling out the social campaign, calling for support and delivering the cookies to 10,000 medical staff in Hong Kong, all happened within 2 weeks. After this campaign, we kept hearing feedback and demands from our customers on the product and improving it bit by bit. This thumbs-up cookie turned out to become a new line of products as well as one of our best-sellers of the year.

Innovation and Resilience

All in all, learning to cope with the new business environment and market trend is a never-ending process, especially for a social enterprise which has to address social mission as well as business mission. The most valuable outcome of all our struggles during the past year is the overall enhancement of our team's capability on innovation and resilience. It is a process of empowerment indeed.



About iBakery

<https://ibakery.tungwahcsd.org>

iBakery is a social enterprise under the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals. We train and hire people with disabilities, and feed Hong Kong with a healthy and delicious menu. We have our own baking factory, bakery, cookie shops, restaurant and snack kiosks. We vary in our abilities, but we share the same passion in our hearts. We believe every little bit counts, and we make our little bites of happiness for you to share around, so all of us can help make our society a little bit different, together.

Prepared by

Florence Chan

iBakery, Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
Hong Kong



WHAT'S ON

Helping Persons with Disabilities During Covid-19

Dr.Chusak Janthayanont, as president of the Thai Autism Foundation, has worked hard to create policy proposals with the Disability Network. He coordinates at all policy levels. Social and technological innovations are used to support work and organize assistance as individuals, etc.

The Network of Organizations for Persons with Disabilities in Thailand has presented a policy to the government to help persons with disabilities throughout the country in the situation of Covid as follows:

1.) Propose the government to provide 1000 baht of disability assistance for 1 million persons with disabilities in the amount of 1 billion baht, paid in March 2020. Moratorium on loan payments for occupation Emergency loan 10,000 baht, no interest of the Fund for the Promotion and Development of the Quality of Life of the Disabled Helping 200,000 persons with disabilities.

2.) The Council of Persons with Disabilities of Thailand, Foundation for the Development of Persons with Disabilities, Thai Autism Foundation organized survival bags for 1500 persons with disabilities in the amount of 1,000,000 baht, which has been distributed since May 2021.

3.) Autism Parent Association (Thai) and Autism Thai Social Enterprises Co., Ltd. Organized the "Home to Promote Life Skills" project to support 4,800 sets of learning materials for autistic children's families with online learning system (video clips) through YouTube "Autistic Thai" Channel.

4.) Promoting freelance careers in business under the brand "For All Coffee", available in various channels such as Food Panda, Grab Food.



5.) Attend a meeting to establish a field hospital for the disabled. To Establish a model prototype field hospital to respond to many mobility challenges in high-risk areas in the region and make home detention, support for people with disabilities and their families, and how the role of local health insurance funds will reduce inequality and its success.



On June 1, 2021 "Field Hospital for Persons with Disabilities" was opened by the integration between the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. Helping persons with disabilities infected with COVID-19 to have access to the right to treatment after being found infected.



6.) Pushing for COVID-19 vaccination by the Department of Promotion and Development of the Quality of Life for persons with disabilities; submitting a list of persons with disabilities from the vaccination needs survey; opening the registration system at number 1479; inviting persons with disabilities to register into the system network of persons with disabilities. The multiple networks have gradually received vaccinations such as at the Sirindhorn Institute Rajanukul Institute and in the provinces, and in a unit provided by the state, according to the proposal of the Council of Persons with Disabilities of Thailand.



Dr.Chusak Jantayanont,
Chairperson,
Autistic Thai Foundation

WHAT'S GOING ON

2021 International Seminar on Employment Rights of Persons with Disabilities in a Crisis of COVID-19 Pandemic



Steering Organization : Workability Asia

Host Organization :

Eden Social Welfare Foundation in Taiwan

The Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities in Thailand

Objective : To echo the CRPD (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), through the experience sharing and opinion exchanging among persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the Asia region, to recognize and promote the abilities and contributions of PWDs, advocate their rights and equal opportunities, enhance public's understanding and acceptance towards an inclusive society.

Forum Date : August 13th, 2021 (Thailand Local Time. GMT +7)

Tentative Program

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 08.00 - 08.30 | Opening Ceremony |
| 08.30 - 09.45 | WAsia Promoting Employment for Persons with Disabilities Development Grant Scheme Online Award Ceremony & Project sharing |
| 09.45 - 10.00 | Tea Break |
| 10.00 - 11.30 | The Employment Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities in a Crisis of COVID-19 Pandemic <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Government Relief Policies and Regulations for Currently Employment of Persons with Disabilities Under the COVID-19 Crisis2. The Employment of persons with disabilities and Response Measures Under the COVID-19 Crisis |
| 11.30 - 12.30 | Lunch Break |
| | SELP Promoting Employment for Persons with Disabilities Development in Japan Video Clips playing |
| 12.30 - 14.00 | Guaranteeing the Employment Rights for Persons with Disabilities in a Crisis of COVID-19 Pandemic |
| 14.00 - 14.30 | Closing Ceremony |

Author : Ms.Eileen Lu, Director of Eden Social Welfare Foundation

NEW POLICY FROM WHO

Disability considerations for COVID-19 vaccination: WHO and UNICEF policy brief,

Overview

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, both directly because of infection, and indirectly because of restrictions to reduce the spread of the virus. Persons with disabilities are a diverse group, and the risks, barriers and impacts faced by them will vary in different contexts according to, among other factors, their age, gender identity, type of disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and migration status.

This document presents considerations and actions for the following stakeholders to ensure equity in access to vaccination against COVID-19 for persons with disabilities:

- Persons with disabilities and their support networks
- Governments
- Health service providers delivering vaccinations
- Organizations of persons with disabilities
- Disability service providers
- Residential institutions and long-term care facilities
- Community

More info : <https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/1342793/retrieve>

Workability Asia Newsletter would like to invite you to :

- Share your relevant information, knowledge or experiences with WAsia members and our network.
- Send your articles (1-2 pages) with some photos.
- Send your stories to WAsia Secretariat Team to be part of the next newsletter **by August 15, 2021**.

CONTACT US:

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