

First-ever Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue Sparks Innovative Conversations in Addressing Social Challenges

A Youth 4.0 initiative to tap youth entrepreneurship for social innovation

(Hong Kong, November 9, 2018) The first-ever Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue is unveiled today, converging over 250 social entrepreneurs, business professionals and youth leaders, NGO representatives and academia in the city to discuss social innovation and cross-sector collaboration in supporting social entrepreneurship leaders with an end to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Hong Kong is the eleventh chapter in Asia to host the Dialogue, one of the 20 Youth Co:Lab dialogues being held around the Asia Pacific region this year. Youth Co:Lab, co-led by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Citi Foundation, drives a shared agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to empower youth in accelerating implementation of SDGs through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship.

Officiating at the opening ceremony of the Hong Kong Dialogue were Professor Rocky S. Tuan, Vice-Chancellor and President, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK); Ms Angel Ng, Chief Executive Officer for Citi Hong Kong and Macau and Mr. Beniam Gebrezghi, Programme Specialist of Youth and Civic Engagement, United Nations Development Programme Bangkok Regional Hub.

"As the centre of knowledge generation, concentration and dissemination, the higher education sector plays a vital role in promoting and communicating the importance of sustainable development. In January this year, CUHK joined hands with the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust to launch the Hong Kong Chapter of the United Nations' Sustainable Solutions Network (SDSN Hong Kong) to mobilize universities, research and knowledge centres, civil society organizations and businesses to focus on practical solutions for sustainable development," said Professor Rocky S. Tuan, Vice-Chancellor and President of CUHK. "I am pleased to announce that SDSN Hong Kong will launch a youth chapter, SDSN Youth Hong Kong, next month to provide young people with an opportunity to exchange ideas with different sectors and empower them to turn their innovative ideas into action to achieve the UN's SDGs."

"The youth of today are a nation's future. The future of cities like Hong Kong is intrinsically tied to the economic success of young people. At Citi, we are committed to preparing young people with career readiness skills and opportunities to thrive in today's economy," remarked Angel Ng, Chief Executive Officer for Citi Hong Kong and Macau. "We are excited to bring to the city Hong Kong Dialogue to engage youth social entrepreneurs and people from different walks of life together in discussing their opportunities as well as the social challenges that the city is facing and address them together."

"Young entrepreneurs are the engine of innovation and change, a key partner in ensuring sustainable growth. We are here to support them." said Beniam Gebrezghi, Programme Specialist of Youth and Civic Engagement, United Nations Development Programme Bangkok Regional Hub. "We would like to accelerate their growth into full stride, by providing them with the access and resources that they need, based on their feedback, during dialogues such as this Youth Co:Lab event. Through trainings, workshops and competitions, we hope this Hong Kong Dialogue experience will help make the next generation of social entrepreneurship more diverse and inclusive, leaving no one behind. "

The three-day Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue between November 9 and 11 at CUHK features a series of sharing sessions with a couple of awardees of 30 Under 30 by Forbes speaking on their own experiences of how to drive a positive impact on the community and achieve SDGs.

Both awardees of 30 Under 30 by Forbes, Bonnie Chiu, Founder of Lensational and Scott Stiles, Co-Founder and CEO of Fair Employment Foundation shared at the panel discussion how young social innovators achieve SDGs and bring a positive impact to the society through social innovation.

An awardee of 30 Under 30 for Europe in 2017, Chiu set up Lensational in Hong Kong, which has now empowered marginalized women in 22 countries by providing them with a camera, training and a platform to sell their works. An awardee for Asia for 2018, Stiles successfully improves the working opportunities of migrant workers from the Philippines by waiving their job placement fees which often resulted them in indebtedness. Stiles has kept some 2,000 Filipino workers employed in Hong Kong from almost three million dollars in recruitment debt.

A highlight of the event is a panel discussion on the first day on how cross-sector partnership between the business community and social entrepreneurs support social enterprises in the city. Teen Future Association and Outblaze as well as HEYCOINS and HKT Payment Limited spoke of their partnership.

Teen Future Association, a professional game testing social enterprise, supports Outblaze, a developer and provider of digital media products and services, in testing their games. The ongoing co-operation between Teen Future and Outblaze has turned out to be a win-win success as Outblaze receives quality testing service from Teen Future on game testing while young people at Teen Future learn new skills, acquire a sense of responsibility and employment opportunities.

The inaugural Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue is part of the Youth 4.0 program, which was launched in Hong Kong in September this year, featuring a strategic partnership between Youth Co:Lab and Hong Kong Social Enterprise Challenge (HKSEC). The former is a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Citi Foundation while the latter is organized by The Center for Entrepreneurship of CUHK and sponsored by the Home Affairs Bureau of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR). Youth 4.0 is also supported by its sustainability partner — SDSN Hong Kong, co-hosted by CUHK and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. The Youth 4.0 aims to promote youth development on social entrepreneurship and to increase awareness of the UN's SDGs amongst young people in Hong Kong.

On the second and third day of the event, this year's Hong Kong Social Enterprise Challenge participants will join a series of training workshops on Social Innovation and Sustainability. Over 400 challengers are eligible to join the session, where they will learn how to craft a creative entrepreneurial approach with innovative design thinking to addressing social issues and come up with social venture plans to achieve sustainability.

-End-

Photo 1



The first-ever Youth Co:Lab Hong Kong Dialogue is unveiled today at the Chinese University of Hong Kong to discuss social innovation and cross-sector collaboration in supporting social entrepreneurship leaders with an end to achieving United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Officiating guests for the opening ceremony were (from right to left):

- Ms. Angel Ng, Chief Executive Officer for Citi Hong Kong and Macau
- Professor Rocky Tuan, Vice Chancellor and President, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Mr. Beniam Gebrezghi, Programme Specialist of Youth and Civic Engagement, United Nations Development Programme Bangkok Regional Hub

Photo 2



The three-day Dialogue at CUHK featured a series of sharing sessions, including those involving two awardees from the Forbes 30 Under 30 list who spoke of their own experiences of having a positive impact on the community by achieving United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP works in about 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. We help countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build resilience in order to sustain development results. This is a critical time for the world. At UNDP, we see this period as a huge opportunity to advance the global sustainable development agenda. In September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. We support countries' efforts to achieve the new Sustainable Development Goals, or Global Goals, which will guide global development priorities through 2030. UNDP focuses on helping countries build and share solutions in three main areas: Sustainable development; Democratic governance and peacebuilding; and Climate and disaster resilience. In all our activities, we encourage the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women, minorities and the poorest and most vulnerable.

Citi Foundation

The Citi Foundation works to promote economic progress and improve the lives of people in low-income communities around the world. We invest in efforts that increase financial inclusion, catalyze job opportunities for youth, and reimagine approaches to building economically vibrant cities. The Citi Foundation's "More than Philanthropy" approach leverages the enormous expertise of Citi and its people to fulfill our mission and drive thought leadership and innovation. For more information, visit www.citifoundation.com

Hong Kong Social Enterprise Challenge (HKSEC)

The Hong Kong Social Enterprise Challenge a social venture startup competition organized by the Center for Entrepreneurship of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, has been at the frontier in educating students and the general public about social enterprises in Hong Kong since 2007. Through a structured competition model, HKSEC encourages students to employ a creative entrepreneurial approach to solve real world social issues.

The Hong Kong Chapter of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN Hong Kong)

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust join hands to co-host the Hong Kong chapter of the SDSN. Under the umbrella of the global SDSN, SDSN Hong Kong seeks to mobilize expertise, information and resources from academic, philanthropy, government, business and nonprofits to address the most pressing environmental, social and economic issues in Hong Kong and advance sustainable development. More details of SDSN Hong Kong can be found at: <http://sdsn-hk.org/en/>