



THE
FRENCH
CHAMBER
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

CONTENTS

The Road to Recovery	3
Honorary President's Note	4
Make It Work HK	5
Beneficiaries Case Studies	10
Main Yearly Activities & Events	12
Corporate Governance	19
Financials	20
Partners	22

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

Dear Friends and partners of the French Chamber Foundation,

It has been a dramatic year in Hong Kong, first with the social events and demonstrations that unfolded in 2019, then with the COVID-19 pandemic that appeared in Hong Kong in early 2020 and is still endangering the lives and the livelihood of people in Hong Kong and around the world.

As you may have read, the most in-need of our community have been hardest hit, impacted by massive jobs losses and grave difficulties in finding virus protection materials. The three "MAKE IT WORK HK" community centers operated by the French Chamber Foundation, in which the working poor can obtain basic services and assistance to find jobs with a salary above poverty-level, had to be temporarily shut down to enforce social distancing measures. In addition the Gala of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry had to be cancelled, with potentially serious financial consequences for our operations, given that it is our largest fundraising event.

However, Hong Kong has always shown resilience in difficult times and so has the French Chamber Foundation:

- our partners managing the operations of the centers, BOKKS, managed to maintain services, setting-up outdoor locations to distribute basic cold food, and Covid-19 protection materials, as well as creating online support tools,

- French companies gave back to the Hong Kong community by providing financial and in-kind donations,
- generous individuals donated financial support and implemented innovative fundraising solutions,
- rigorous management and expenses optimization allowed us to keep our financial situation under control.

In the year 2020-2021 we will continue to adapt our services to the environment and to improve their efficiency, in close coordination with the French Chamber and within the framework of what our financial structure allows us, to maximize the results of our actions to help the working poor of our community escape poverty.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who did what they could to help make all this happen and keep our operations going. Without you we would not be able to pursue this good and efficient action.

The road to recovery will be a long one, but it will be an interesting and rewarding journey together.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Neveux', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Thierry Neveux
President
The French Chamber Foundation

HONORARY PRESIDENT'S NOTE

The world faces a serious attack from the coronavirus pandemic, and even under this grim situation, we still remain positive in our fight against this unprecedented challenge. And while it has been devastating, it has also put on full display the generosity of the human spirit. Our initiative MAKE IT WORK, by the French Chamber Foundation remains committed to supporting the community despite the plight of the pandemic and has continued to reach out to those in need amidst these trying times.

The crisis hit Hong Kong hard in early February and March, when there was a shortage and huge price hike of masks. Our volunteers and staff took action to ensure the health and safety of everyone; they worked actively to collect masks, hand sanitizers, and cleaning supplies and distributed them to members who had no means of acquiring protective equipment and did not have the choice of working from home. And although we had to temporarily close doors to all three of our centers due to the Hong Kong Government's regulation on group gatherings, MAKE IT WORK continued its mission by delivering dry goods such as rice, Chinese sausages, and food stamps to members, allowing them to have steady food supply under social-distancing measures. These seemingly ordinary actions, in distressing times, have brought out the best in humanity and highlighted the mutual friendship between Hong Kong and French people.

Daily activities have begun to resume as the containment efforts take hold and as the pandemic slows down. As the situation continues to improve locally, MAKE IT WORK will keep making an impact on those in need and provide practical assistance as well as hot meals to community members. It is our privilege to step up and help community members who are motivated to work hard when there is so much at stake. This year, we will take the time to reexamine past programs, plan updated schemes, and execute forward-looking strategies to ensure MAKE IT WORK will continue to serve the needs of the community in new ways.

Our hearts go out to everyone who has been impacted by this global crisis, and we hope that you will join us in crafting the future of MAKE IT WORK.

Thank you so much for your patience and partnership.



Cecilia Cheung

Cecilia Cheung
Honorary President
The French Chamber Foundation

MAKE IT WORK HK

The French Chamber Foundation is an IRD Section 88 registered charitable organization launched in 2015 by the French Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, aiming to give back to the Hong Kong community.

It is mainly involved in the fight against poverty, assisting the working poor to find better employment.

In Hong Kong, after factoring in government aid, over 1 million people, 15% of the population, live in poverty, defined as living on less than 50% of the median household income: HKD4,000 per month for a single household or HKD10,000 for a 2-persons household.

480,000 of them are employed but earn less than that amount, constantly trying to pay for survival-level lodging, food and basic necessities by working in 1 or more very low-paying jobs. They are called the working poor.

The program set-up by the French Chamber Foundation, Make it Work HK, has organized and manages 3 community centres in which the working poor can access a social community, obtain affordable meals, career assessments, jobs training and employment services, with the ultimate goal to help them find better paid jobs and sustainably improve their lives.



OUR 3 CENTRES

OUR OPERATIONS TEAM

2 Management officers



3 Program officers



6 Professionals



Volunteers



OUR WORK

During the fiscal year from 01 July 2019 to 30 June 2020 the operations of Make It Work HK reached the following scale and results:

3,497

registered members
("beneficiaries")

79

successful cases of
beneficiaries finding
better jobs allowing
them to escape poverty

89

training sessions
organized, including
offline and online
support sessions

31,901

hot meals served

500

free fast-food coupons
distributed

458

cook-chill food served

300

mindfulness booklets

32,800

Covid-19 protection
masks, including during
the difficult months of
February- March

830

food packs and
antibacterial kits

The operations of Make It Work HK combine 3 core services together to maximize assistance efficiency:

1. ACCESS TO THREE COMMUNITY CENTRES

In our society, the working poor are often ostracised and alone. This loneliness contributes to increasing their hardship by making it harder for them to socialize positively, a useful skill to work in companies. In the 3 Make It Work HK centres, located in Wanchai, Mongkok and Tsuen Wan, beneficiaries can share their experiences, and exchange with social workers and potential new friends, feeling part of a welcome community and often helping to run it. As witnessed by many successful cases, such social re-integration into society greatly helps beneficiaries improve their self-esteem and their capacity to apply for new jobs.



Volunteer distributing hot meals to beneficiaries.



Mong Kok members volunteered to build dividers to avoid COVID-19 transmission





2. ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE MEALS

Food Angel, our generous partners, provided Make It Work HK centres with a healthy and affordable lunch for beneficiaries, ensuring that they could cover their basic nutrition needs. A total of 31,901 hot meals were served during the fiscal year 2019-2020.

In addition, during the period when Food Angels kitchens could not operate and our centres had to be closed, 458 cooked-chill food meals were sourced and provided to beneficiaries in open street locations arranged with our partners BOKKS.





3. CAREER ASSISTANCE, TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Foundation provides personalised employment support to beneficiaries, from individual counselling and career advice to shared jobs knowledge, training and placement opportunities provided by French Chamber and other companies.

The ultimate aim is to help them secure better paid jobs and improve their long term financial prospects.



Promoting services to potential beneficiaries: counseling, jobs training and employment assistance.

Make It Work HK partners, volunteers, social workers and staff design and organize job skills training workshops which enable members to enhance their employability. These included workshops on themes such as: "Smart Phone Utility", "Workplace English Lesson", "Overcome Fear and Anxiety -Mental Health Talks" etc.



We would like to give special thanks to the corporate partners and individual volunteers who wholeheartedly organized such valuable forums and provided useful career and jobs information to beneficiaries.

BENEFICIARIES CASE STUDIES

Ar Ho, a third year university student, had been raised by his grandmother ever since his parents divorced when he was young. Growing up, the two were extremely close and developed a deep relationship with one another. A few years ago, his grandmother passed away and he has since lived alone, working hard at his studies and part-time jobs to make ends meet.



Ah Ho
Wan Chai Centre Beneficiary

He had been working in the catering industry but with the COVID-19 pandemic, he has been out of work since the New Year. He now lives in a capsule room; his life, studies, and mental wellbeing have all been hit hard by his circumstances.

Facing the weight of his situation, Ar Ho sought help from our Wan Chai Make It Work HK Centre. There, he was able to get free hot meals, reducing some of his living expenses. His self-esteem is also gradually improving; he feels that he has the ability to face any challenge and overcome this difficult time. Through the Centre, Ar Ho has also befriended other beneficiaries, and the Make It Work HK staff and volunteers. He himself also volunteers now from time to time. He is very thankful to have come across Make It Work HK and he hopes that he can also do his part to uplift others in the community.

"I was a helper at the Queen Elisabeth Hospital until I turned 61. It was exhausting for me to workdays and nights and I claimed my right for retirement. I wanted to find a less tiring job, that would still allow me to be independent. I don't want to be a burden for my two sons who are working aboard. Thank you to the French Chamber Foundation and the staff at the Make It Work HK Centre who helped me to apply for a job as a security guard. I got hired and have started to work for months. Thank you so much. "

Lam Tam-chu
Kwun-Tong Centre Beneficiary





Ms Lou

Mong Kok Centre Beneficiary

Ms. Lou's husband passed away many years ago due to illness. Since then, she has taken care of their two children on her own. Looking for more support from the community, her proactive and positive character led her to join Make It Work HK in 2017. With the help of the centre's staff, Ms. Lou has joined many vocational training courses to pave her future career, including post-natal care, Chinese medicine, dietetic assistant and Chinese clinic assistant courses. She is grateful to Make It Work HK as she has learnt a lot, which has helped her build up her confidence again. The affordable HK\$8 lunch set also helped her save a lot of money.

To give back, she decided to become a volunteer at the Mongkok Centre and help the frontline staff. She wants to inspire her peers not to give up, even when facing difficult situations. Right now, she wants to find a part-time job to partially support her daughter's University tuition. We are extremely grateful for Ms. Lou's contribution and hope that she will soon find what she is looking for!

Ah Shun, now in his thirties, has to work to support his mother, whom he lives with, as well as his wife, who lives in Mainland China. He was able to do so previously, working as a chef in a Japanese restaurant in Central, however the restaurant he worked in closed several months ago, cutting off his only source of stable income. Although he was able to find a new job shortly after, that job only lasted for a month. Feeling discouraged by the consecutive setbacks, he had lost motivation to try and look for another job again.

His mother, a member at the Tsuen Wan Make It Work HK Center, encouraged him to join the centre as well, as she knew that apart from affordable lunches, he would also have access to free career assistance, training and job matchup opportunities which he needed. In the centre, Make It Work HK staff were able to help him set up a short-term plan so that he no longer felt lost and helpless; he has since rekindled his motivation to try and look for a new job, applying for positions other than a chef. He is now back on his feet, with the love and support that he received from everyone he met at the Make It Work HK Center. He wanted to share this story to encourage other people who might be in the same situation as he was once in to come to the Make It Work HK Centers.



Ah Shun

Tsuen Wan Centre Beneficiary

MAIN YEARLY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2019 -

Introduction to the Employment Ordinance



This workshop covered a range of employment protection and benefits for employees including unlawful dismissal, severance payment and long service payment etc. In these times of massive layoffs, members found the information useful and wanted to learn more about labour law and regulations to protect their rights.



JULY 2019 -

Social media developments on the French Chamber Foundation's Make It Work HK actions

In order to develop the public's awareness of the operations of Make It Work HK, social media were set up on Facebook and Instagram, so potential volunteers and donors could follow our actions, and its website was revamped to include a donations page to facilitate direct donations.

 [FrenchChamberFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/FrenchChamberFoundation)

 [@frenchchamberfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/frenchchamberfoundation)

 <https://makeitwork.hk>

Ever since, volunteers have been providing assistance to grow the community of people following the French Chamber Foundation.

DECEMBER 2019 -

Christmas and Farewell Party
at the Kwun Tong Lunch Club



Christmas is a precious time of the year but often a lonely one for the working poor. The French Chamber Foundation, Kwun Tong Staff and volunteers celebrated a joyful Christmas with beneficiaries, while bidding farewell to our previous Lunch Club partners: Kwun Tong Swatow Association.



OCTOBER 2019 -

Yi Jin Bang
(Chinese Health Exercise)

Coaches were invited to encourage members to do more exercise. Through such exercises, postures and physical well-being of members were improved and it also increased their motivation to exercise by enhancing their awareness of keeping their physical health.



JANUARY 2020 -

Night of Ideas

The "Night of Ideas" is a global French government initiative aimed at developing positive social interactions in communities.

This year, it was focused on "The Revolution of Sharing" organized by the French Consulate on the theme of innovative social enterprises in Hong Kong.

Mr. Thierry Neveux, President of the French Chamber Foundation, was invited to join this seminar as guest speaker to present the Foundation Charity Programme: Make It Work HK. He spread the message of this innovative social approach to help the working poor to get better jobs to improve their living conditions. In addition, he shared the Foundation's vision with the assembled socially active and interested people, and interactive exchanges ensued, generating a lot of interest among participants interested in contributing to the community.



JANUARY 2020 -

Volunteers Welcome Meeting



A Make It Work HK Volunteers welcome meeting was held in Jan 2020. During the meeting, volunteers shared different thoughts and ideas to offer the warmest and most efficient services to the people in need.

Make It Work HK volunteers value commitment, empathy, and respect. Each volunteer is focused on a specific scope of service and action based on his/her area of expertise and gives his time to help the programme grow and empower more working poor in Hong Kong to escape poverty by finding a better-paid employment.

FEBRUARY 2020 -

COVID-19 contingency plan and assistance measures



Due to the coronavirus situation, the working poor and low-income families faced unprecedented difficulties.

Because of containment restrictions, our centres had to stop providing hot meal services, and two even had to be closed and relocated to alternative public locations in order to be able to keep providing basic services.

With the kindness of volunteers, food packs including rice, noodles, dried food, free fast-food coupons were sourced and given to the most needy, protective masks and hygiene kits were sourced and distributed to beneficiaries who were unable to afford these at very high prices due to increased demand for these.



MARCH 2020 -

Make It Work actions Video Recording

In order to enhance the public's awareness of the actions of the French Chamber Foundation, to support fundraising to maintain our operations, a video was recorded in the Centres in March to demonstrate the actions developed by the Foundation during the outbreak of COVID-19.

It describes how the Foundation and the volunteers helped beneficiaries under such a severe situation with rapid and efficient actions, and how the beneficiaries were thankful for the services and in-kind donations provided.

<https://www.facebook.com/FrenchChamberFoundation/>



APRIL 2020 -

Code Red Fundraising Campaign



Following the economic recession, unemployment increased to the highest level in decades. In addition, some daily products and protective masks were in shortage or with highly inflated prices, so the working poor were unable to afford them any longer and the services offered by Make It Work HK were ever more in need.

The Hong Kong Baptist University and the French Chamber Foundation jointly organized a "Code Red" online fundraising campaign, aimed at raising donations from the public to help fund the actions of Make It Work HK to assist the working poor in these dire times.

MAY 2020 -

Care packs distribution sponsored by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust (HKJCCT)

The COVID-19 economic consequences generated massive layoffs, and a survey of our past beneficiaries who had found a job revealed that 60% of them were now unemployed again. In view of this, the French Chamber Foundation, with kind sponsorship from HKJCCT, purchased and distributed to single-parent, low-income families and single elderlies care packs including rice, noodles, dry food, hygiene kits and protective masks to help them weather this difficult situation.

The programme was perceived as very helpful and a total of 1,841 beneficiaries were serviced.



MAY 2020 -

New Tsuen Wan Centre and basic food providing



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic social distancing restrictions, our Tsuen Wan Centre was temporarily closed since February 2020 and beneficiaries were no longer able to obtain hot meals. To alleviate negative consequences, we found a location in Nan Fung Centre to continue offering basic food services to members, providing them each 4 boxes of cook-chill food per week.

Heartfelt thanks to our partner Food Angel for managing to provide this food even though their kitchens were closed.



JUNE 2020 -

Hair styling training

Lok Chan, a young hairstylist offered a free training on the job of hair styling. He showed to members the technique to wash hair in a salon, inspiring members to contemplate it as a new career once COVID-19 measures are lifted.

Lok Chan shared his story with beneficiaries, explaining how he became a hair stylist, starting with a monthly income of HKD2,000 until winning the Goldwell Colour Zoom Challenge. His story was encouraging and inspiring to all members.

Specials thanks to the Red Hill Salon and the Wisdom Centre for organizing this training and sharing their valuable knowledge after office-hours.



JUNE 2020 -

New Mong Kok Centre



Following the reopening of the new Tsuen Wan Centre in May, the new Mongkok Centre started operating in June, after implementing preventative measures to reduce chances of COVID-19 infection.

Volunteers and beneficiaries prepared cardboard separations to maintain a safe distance between seats, so that members might sit and enjoy hot meals during lunch hour. Such semi-private spaces allow members to socialize with their peers, as well as frontline staff and social workers, which benefits both their mental health and sense of belonging.



JUNE 2020 -

MIW Staff Training

A training was held in June for the Make It Work staff by an experienced Social Work professional.

The content of the training was to instruct frontline staff and social workers on how to deal with the evaluation of members' cases and how best to help beneficiaries plan their career path and search for jobs. The training helped all staff to enhance their skills when handling new and existing members.



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Board is the French Chamber Foundation's main governance body.

Its members are professionals, business owners, and executives from the business sector, strongly committed to its mission of poverty alleviation.

All Board Members are members of the Council of the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Hong Kong, and are elected for a two-year term at its Annual General Meeting.

BOARD COMPOSITION

President
Mr. Thierry NEVEUX

Honorary President
Mrs. Cecilia CHEUNG

Directors
Mrs. Mary CHIU
Mr. Emmanuel FARCIS
Mr. Thomas FELD
Mr. Hans-Gunther HERRMANN
Mrs. Céline HEULS-VIDAL
Mrs. Marie-Hélène PREVOT
Mr. Gilles-Alexandre SALANSY

STAFF

General Manager
Ms. Anita LEUNG

Administrative Officer
Ms. Jeany CHAU

FINANCIALS

The French Chamber Foundation believes that transparency is essential in establishing public confidence in the way its finances are managed. Its financial statements are audited by Baker Tilly Hong Kong Limited and comply with the Hong Kong Financial Reporting Standards.

The following is an extract from the French Chamber Foundation's annual audited accounts for the year ended 30th June 2020, as audited by Baker Tilly Hong Kong Limited. The French Chamber Foundation is open to disclose its audited financial statements to interested parties upon request.

The French Chamber Foundation Limited
Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2020
(Expressed in Hong Kong Dollars)

	Note	2020 HKD	2019 HKD
Revenue	3	1,081,917	1,955,647
Direct cost		<u>(1,764,146)</u>	<u>(1,821,239)</u>
Gross (deficit)/surplus		(682,229)	134,408
Other income	4	2,230	5,807
Administrative and other operating expenses		<u>(1,097,265)</u>	<u>(913,251)</u>
Deficit before taxation	5	(1,777,264)	(773,036)
Income tax	6	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Deficit and total comprehensive loss for the year		<u>(1,777,264)</u>	<u>(773,036)</u>

The French Chamber Foundation Limited
Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020
(Expressed in Hong Kong Dollars)

	Note	2020 HKD	2019 HKD
Current assets			
Deposits and other receivables	7	104,920	108,350
Cash and cash equivalents	8	<u>3,839,583</u>	<u>5,718,303</u>
		<u>3,944,503</u>	<u>5,826,653</u>
Current liabilities			
Other payables and accrued expenses		304,781	261,814
Amount due to a related company	9	<u>-</u>	<u>147,853</u>
		<u>304,781</u>	<u>409,667</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>3,639,722</u>	<u>5,416,986</u>
FUNDS EMPLOYED	10		
Accumulated surplus		<u>3,639,722</u>	<u>5,416,986</u>

The financial information relating to the year ended 30th June 2020 and the period ended 30th June 2019 does not constitute the French Chamber Foundation's specified financial statements for these periods as defined in section 436 of the Hong Kong Companies Ordinance ("HKCO") but is derived therefrom.

The French Chamber Foundation has delivered the specified financial statements for the period ended 30th June 2019 to the Registrar of Companies and will deliver the specified financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2020 in due course.

Auditor's reports have been prepared on the specified financial statements both for the period ended 30th June 2019 and the year ended 30th June 2020. The auditor's reports for both period: were not qualified or otherwise modified; did not refer to any matter to which the auditor drew attention by way of emphasis without qualifying the reports; and did not contain a statement under section 406(2) or 407(2) or (3) of the HKCO.

PARTNERS

The French Chamber Foundation would like to extend its sincere gratitude and warmest thanks to all donors, partners and volunteers for their efforts and generosity. Make it Work HK actions and achievements in 2019-2020 would not have been possible without:

- The French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Hong Kong, who provided continuous help to liaise and network with their members, especially following the cancellation of its yearly gala.
- Corporates and individual benefactors who made donations, offered in-kind support, set up special events or programs, and employ our members.
- Volunteers, whose contribution and dedication are ever so helpful in supporting our operations.

Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service



Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service ("BOKSS") was founded in 1978 and has been constantly innovating to respond to community needs. The French Chamber Foundation has been partnering with BOKSS since 2015 to provide diverse services to the working poor, first via the Lunch Club initiative then via the Make It Work HK project, providing operational support, front-line staff, job matching, placement services, counselling and job referrals.

Food Angel



Food Angel is a food assistance program launched in 2011 by Bo Charity Foundation with the mission of "WASTE NOT, HUNGER NOT". The program gathers edible surplus food from different sectors of the food industry that would otherwise be disposed of as waste. Following strict safety protocols, donated food items are then prepared as nutritious hot meals and cook-chill food in their central kitchen and are redistributed to serve the underprivileged communities in Hong Kong. The Foundation is grateful that the Make It Work HK programme has been receiving their free meals service since 2015.

WILD



WILD is a digital marketing agency focusing on a holistic approach to developing its clients' businesses, by boosting traffic, increasing social engagement and creating efficient web experiences via SEO, social media, web development, online sales, content creation, and web analytics. The WILD team have been volunteering for the French Chamber Foundation since 2018 and have been providing professional services since June 2020.

Intothehole



Intothehole Productions is a video and photography production company that provides innovative, goal-achieving, creative content packages at an affordable cost to fit one's unique marketing strategy. The French Chamber Foundation has used its services at reduced rates to produce videos in order to boost public awareness of its actions.



Annual Report 2019/2020

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