

HONG KONG BLIND UNION 2020 – 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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1. **OUR MISSION**

Hong Kong Blind Union

Hong Kong Blind Union was established in 1964. It is the first self-help group organised and managed by people with visual impairment. It aims at promoting the spirit of self-help and mutual-help as well as striving for equality, opportunities and independence for visually impaired persons.

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2. **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT Mr Chong Chan-yau**

Since early 2020, the coronavirus has infected and killed hundreds of millions of people around the world with many families losing their livelihoods and falling below the poverty line. In Hong Kong, things have gotten even tougher for the visually impaired, from dealing with a supply shortage of protective gears and hygiene products at the beginning of the outbreak to facing the loss of livelihood for those working at massage parlours and social enterprises.

However, thanks to the acts of kindness of Hong Kong people, risks are turned into opportunities for showing empathy and compassion in a time of so much disruption. Many responded actively to our call for care of the visually impaired in need and donated face masks and personal protective equipment not only enough for about 1,200 people with visual impairment but also to share with other organisations.

Amid the pandemic, Blind Union launched two out-of-the-box initiatives to help its members. One was the sale of massage vouchers under the "Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme" operating on a prepaid model with the service being redeemed later, offering a timely relief to the hard-hit visually impaired masseurs to cover their short-term financial needs. Over a thousand of massage vouchers were sold shortly after the launch which could not have happened without the generous support of the public.

With the suspension of face-to-face activities during the pandemic, we continue to spread our message by means of virtual meetings through the application of technology. We held the WBUAP Regional Webinar: Web Accessibility Adoption Level in the Asia Pacific Region, an international conference themed around communication accessibility, and discussed with participants from dozens of countries on issues of common concern. Adopting the use of new technology, we manage to put together an international conference efficiently without the need to plan a few years ahead and to make a lot of logistical arrangements as compared to holding one in a physical setting.

No matter the pandemic is here to stay or not, we believe we can find our way out with concerted efforts and a palpable spirit of mutual-help that embraces different sectors, communities, races and countries.

As in the past, Hong Kong Blind Union will stride forward with you in the days to come.

(The election for the new term of the Executive Committee will be held on 29 August 2021. That is to say, this is my last term of my presidentship. I look forward to passing the baton to the next generation with them fuelling our self-help organisation with creativity, vitality and more exciting ideas.)

3. Executive Director's Report Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy

In last year's report, I wrote about the impact of the social movement and the pandemic on our organisation. I am grateful for the unwavering devotion of our staff over the past year, exploring all sorts of opportunities in times of change and making good progress in many projects. As change is the only real constant under the new normal, we have to learn to live with uncertainty, make something good out of even what seems bad and get a new perspective on every aspect of life.

New ways of working

Many organisations might find it challenging when putting in place work-from-home arrangement at the beginning. We are fortunate that technology has always been a key focus for Blind Union, with file-sharing software being installed for all staff members before the pandemic. We also managed to provide adequate internal IT support for conducting online Executive Committee meetings and team discussions, making it possible for our colleagues to adapt this new way of working seamlessly without hindering everyday operations. Such arrangement is widely welcomed by our committee members and staff with enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and engagement.

Need for new services

From making prior arrangements, managing process flows to adding audio description to visual information, our team has made great improvements since the launch of virtual events more than a year ago and is now on the right track. New ideas and concepts are being incorporated into our events, which many members enjoyed and expressed their interest to join such online activities going forward.

The needs of the elderly members are also being taken care of amid the pandemic with the continued provision of escort services for out-patient visits. Funded by the Jockey Club "COVID-19 Emergency Fund", we launched the "Visually Impaired People's Anti-epidemic Support Programme" in 2020, offering assistance with household cleaning for the visually impaired who live alone or who are not living with any sighted family members. The programme was very well received and hence Blind Union started to provide household cleaning service regularly in 2021 with funding support from the Social Welfare Department. Blind Union also kick-started the collaboration with local organisations in Tsing Yi to put on a trial basis a small community network in mid-2021 to connect up members with their neighbourhood, with the aim of developing a community support service network in the long run through the provision of various services.

Social enterprise development and employment support

The coronavirus outbreak has posed widespread employment challenges with the disabled taking the biggest hit. Operated on a prepaid model, the "Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme" was launched in April 2020, offering a financial relief to the visually impaired masseurs in need. In early 2021, we marked the opening of YAU CAFE, the first social enterprise playing a crossover of massage and coffee, with funding from the Social Welfare Department.

With the donations from kind-hearted individuals, we launched Blind Union Ambassador Scheme, providing visually impaired persons a chance for short-term placement and an allowance so that they could acquire work experience and some income. In addition, we launched the one-year Hong Kong Jockey Club "Empathy, Empowerment & Employment" Project in early 2021 with the funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust Fund to provide more vocational training and social enterprise placement opportunities for people with disabilities.

We played it by ear as we pushed forward the above two projects born out of Covid-19 and kept them running with funding support. It was not easy for us to make decisions facing an unpredictable future, however everything turned out well in the end with seamless implementation and execution. If someone asks me what is the key to success, I would say it's the relentless commitment of the Executive Committee and staff members to make and execute on decisions powered by their wisdom, experience and positive energy.

4. Work Highlights in the new normal

Although the pandemic has affected our regular, ongoing tasks, it offers us with opportunities to spark new ideas and creativity for our usual work while developing new projects and services.

Concern for communication accessibility

Web and mobile app accessibility is more important than ever because of the outbreak of COVID-19. In the past year, Blind Union conducted accessibility tests on web and mobile apps to check whether they were up to standard for the use of the visually impaired. Bearing in mind the importance of accessing information online, we carried out accessibility tests on 10 news related apps (iOS version) in April 2020 and announced the results to raise the public awareness on information accessibility. As more people with visual impairment use food delivery apps amid the pandemic, tests were also conducted on 10 most commonly used food delivery and chain restaurant apps (iOS version) with many failing to meet the accessibility standard.

Blind Union was also concerned about the relatively low accessibility of various government online platforms for citizens to register for face masks and to apply for the Employment Support Scheme among others, requiring the assistance of the sighted for the visually impaired to use these services. We raised the issue through social media platforms and to the authorities concerned.

To promote web and mobile app accessibility on the international level, we held the WBUAP Regional Webinar: Web Accessibility Adoption Level in the Asia Pacific Region with many countries participating in the survey concerned and over a hundred participants joining the webinar.

With the aim of facilitating people with visual impairment to gain access to coronavirus related information and tips anytime of the day or night, Blind Union set up an anti-epidemic information hotline with the visually impaired responsible for content writing, interviews and programming editing.

Employment support

With the downturn in economy and the surge in unemployment rate, the disabled have been among the hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic. In April 2020, Blind Union launched the "Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme" which operated on a prepaid model, offering a short-term financial relief to the visually impaired masseurs in need.

Moreover, Blind Union launched two rounds of "Employment Programme for Visually Impaired Persons" and recruited 18 visually impaired persons as Blind Union Ambassadors, enabling them to gain work experience and some income through this short-term placement with allowance.

Concern for the household cleanliness of members

In order to raise the awareness of personal hygiene and household cleanliness amid the pandemic, Blind Union launched the "Visually Impaired People's Anti-epidemic Support Programme" in mid-2020 with funding support from the Jockey Club "COVID-19 Emergency Fund", providing members who lived alone or without a sighted family member in their household with cleaning service and passing on knowledge about household hygiene. A total of 100 families benefited from the programme.

Recreational and emotional support services

With the suspension of all face-to-face activities, Blind Union thinks out of the box and keeps up with times by providing various programme like online cooking classes and family-friendly handicraft lessons. We also organised an online Chinese New Year party that allowed real-time interaction and partnered with overseas volunteers to host virtual tours to the National Palace Museum in Taiwan for our members to enjoy in the comfort of their own home, helping to alleviate feelings of social isolation and loneliness.

We are aware that the visually impaired suffer from different levels of anxiety and even emotional distress as they have to stay home more often and to reduce social contact, and so as their caregivers. Backed by the Lee Hysan Foundation, Blind Union and other organisations for the visually impaired offer hotline services to members manned by social workers, picking up calls, proactively contacting members and offering emotional relief, psychological support or community resources referral services to the visually impaired and their caregivers in need.

5. ORGANISATION CHART

ASM/EGM

Executive Committee

- Personnel Committee
- Finance and Fundraising Strategy Committee
- SC Consultative Committee
- VERC Consultative Committee
- Employment Committee
- Information Technology Advisory Committee
- Equal Opportunities in Social Participation Committee
- Communication Committee
- Social Enterprise Development Steering Committee
- Music Service Advisory Committee
- Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project Advisory Committee
- Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service Advisory Committee
- Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China Committee
- Li Chu Shuk-Kwan Education Fund & Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund

Executive Director

- Head Office
- Services Centre
- Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre
- Accessible Digital Technology Centre
- Accessibility Services Office

6. LIST OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

An Executive Committee releasing the spirit of self-help and independence

Being a self-help group organised and managed by visually impaired people, we select our Executive Committee Members every two years at the Annual General Meeting through a democratic election. Our Executive Committee Members supervise, manage and promote the development of Blind Union. All Executive Committee members must be our full members, i.e. visually impaired persons. The list of the Executive Committee Members for the current year is as below:

2020 – 2021 Executive Committee Member

President	Mr Chong Chan-yau
Vice – President	Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Financial Secretary	Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin
General Secretary	Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess

Committee Members Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick
 Mr Lau Chung-wai (since 28 July 2019)
 Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael
 Mr Wong Sung-keung, Leo
 Mr Yuen Kin-ming

7. LIST OF SUB - COMMITTEE MEMBERS (As at 31 March 2021)

Personnel Committee
Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)
Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)

Financial and Fund Raising Strategy Committee
Mr Chow Kin-chun, Jason (Chairperson)
Mr Chong Chan-yau
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick
Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Ms Choi Tsui-ping, Bessie (Senior Accounting Officer)

Services Centre Consultative Committee
Mr Yuen Kin-ming (Chairperson)
Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick (Vice Chairperson)
Mr Ching Shui-yen
Ms Fung Po-wah
Mr Ma Pak-ling
Mr Sin Yee-ho
Ms So Kam-mui
Mr Zhu Min, Julian
Mr Chow Siu-man (Centre Manager)

Jockey Club Vocational & Educational Resources Centre Consultative Committee
Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (Chairperson)
Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick (Vice Chairperson)
Ms Choi Lok -sze
Mr Ho Ho-yuen
Mr Kong Chi-kwan, Ken
Ms Tang Lai-ming, Eli
Mr Tse Yun-hang
Ms Wong Tsz-sin, Joby
Ms Kwong Man-yi, Mandy (Centre Supervisor)

Information Technology Advisory Committee
Mr Wong Sung-keung, Leo (Chairperson)
Mr Lau Chung-wai (Vice Chairperson)
Mr Cheung-yau, Joe
Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin
Mr Chu Chung-yin
Mr Fan Chun-hung, Carter
Mr Yuen Kin-ming
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Wong Sze-fung, Terry (Project Manager)

Equal Opportunities in Social Participation Committee
Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)
Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex
Mr Chung Chi-ming
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick
Mr Lau Man-fai, Michael
Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael
Mr Sze Yan-kit
Mr Sung Tat-wah, Sam
Mr Tam Sai-kit, Perry
Ms Tang Lai-ming, Eli
Mr Yam Pok-fai
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Li Wai-kuen, Jonas (Project Officer)

Communication Committee

Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess (Chairperson)
Mr Chou Chun-cheong, Daniel
Mr Lau Chung-wai
Ms Lee Mei-king
Ms Leung Wai-chi, Maggie
Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael
Ms Wu Pui-sze, Soso (Communications Officer)

Employment Committee

Mr Chong Chan-yau(Chairperson)
Ms Chan Yuen-mui, Monica
Ms Chiu Chi-wun
Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael
Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess
Prof Wong King-shui, Phyllis
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Ms Kwong Man-yi, Mandy (Centre Supervisor)

Social Enterprise Development Steering Committee

Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)
Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Mr Leung Tsau-tin, Fred
Mr Ling Ho-wan, Howard
Ms Wong Ming-wai, Jennifer
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Ms Cheuk Ming-wai, Adelaide (Senior Project Officer)

Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project Advisory Committee

Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)
Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin
Mr Fong Po-kiu, Francis
Mr Charles Mok
Mr Fred Sheu
Mr Wong Sung-keung, Leo
Dr Alice Yuk
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Wong Sze-fung, Terry (Project Manager)

Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service Advisory Committee

Mr Chong Chan-yau (Chairperson)
Mr Chan Chi-kong, Alex
Mr Chow Kin-chun, Kevin
Mr Lau Chung-wai
Mr Li Tak-nang
Dr Louie Hung-tak, Lobo
Mr Keyman Ma
Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael
Mr Yim Chun-on
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China Committee

Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (Chairperson)
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Ms Ho Man-wai, Amy
Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess
Mr Zhu Min, Julian
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

Music Service Advisory Committee

Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason(Chairperson)
Ms Shek Kin-chong, Jess
Mr Ho Yui-chi, Merrick
Mr Leung Tsau-tin
Mr Lee Hin
Ms Lun Mei-ling
Ms Li Sze-lai
Mr Wong Wing-hong, Stanley
Ms Ko Pik-kei, Peggy (Executive Director)
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)

Li Chu Shuk-Kwan Education Fund & Li Bing Vocal Music Development Fund Committee
Mr Ng Ping-tung, Michael (Chairperson)
Mr Ronald Cheung
Mr Kong Chi-kwan
Ms Leung Chung-yan
Mr Ho Ka-leung, Jason
Ms Li Sze-lai
Mr Eric Yip
Dr Alice Yuk
Mr Lau Shing-kwan (Project Manager)
Ms Kwong Man-yi, Mandy (Centre Supervisor)

8. OUR SERVICES

Head Office

1. Promoting correct concepts of visual impairment through publications, seminars, exhibition, and so on;
2. Participating in advisory committees of the government and other concerned organisations;
3. Following up on social policies, promoting equal opportunities and social inclusion;
4. Keeping in touch with relevant international and Mainland organisations to learn about the latest service development;
5. Building relationship with the public and organising fundraising projects; and
6. Publishing newsletters and audio magazines to report on the lives of visually impaired persons and the work of Blind Union.

Services Centre

1. Organising different kinds of social and recreational activities;
2. Providing support services to persons with visual impairment and the newly blind as well as their families, including counselling, life adaptation training and service referrals, so as to help them overcome obstacles arising from visual impairment;
3. Organising activities for visually impaired elderly, and contacting them regularly by phone calls and home visits; and
4. Providing daily living support services, such as case referral, purchasing of aids, and helping to build district support network among our members.

Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre

1. Striving for equal opportunities in education by advocating for proper implementation of integrated education;
2. Supporting visually impaired students studying in mainstream schools by providing aids and support services to them;
3. Organising adult education courses;
4. Arranging services, such as recording, text-reading, Braille transcription and tutoring for members;
5. Organising personal development and leadership training programmes;
6. Providing supported employment services for visually impaired job seekers; and
7. Arranging freelance jobs to provide working opportunities for those members who are unemployed.

Accessible Digital Technology Centre

1. Conducting research and development of assistive aids suitable for visually impaired persons;
2. Providing visually impaired persons with technical support and training in using digital devices;
3. Promoting the adoption of accessible digital technology design and application; and
4. Providing related advisory services to individuals, schools, employers and organisations.

Accessibility Services Office

1. Implementing social enterprise and projects related to e-learning, sports and music development; improving community accessibilities as well as providing various kinds of supportive services for people in need ;
2. Promoting barrier-free community facilities, as well as creating employment opportunities for visually impaired persons; and
3. Providing various kinds of supportive services for print disabled students so that they can make the best use of e-learning and break down barriers to learning ;
4. Providing visually impaired persons with professional audio description for sports programmes and assisting visually impaired persons to receive professional music training to fully develop their talents.

9. Our Team

Nearly half of the staff members of Hong Kong Blind Union are visually impaired persons. We have adopted a preferential recruitment policy for people with visual impairment, enabling them to develop to their full potential. Visually impaired candidates who meet the basic entry requirements for a post will automatically be invited to attend the selection interview/test. Candidates with visual impairment found suitable for employment will be given preference for an appointment over other applicants.

As at 31 March 2021

Number of employees with disabilities (Full time and part time)
Number of employees with disabilities: 35
Total number of employees: 76

10. SERVICE SNAPSHOTS

There are five units in Blind Union to provide comprehensive services to visually impaired persons in Hong Kong. They are the Head Office, Services Centre, Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre, Accessible Digital Technology Centre, and Accessible Service Office.

10.1 Head Office

The work of the Head Office includes member affairs, rights advocacy, human resources, financial management, external relations and communications. Its aim is to carry out the mission of Hong Kong Blind Union and strive for the rights of visually impaired persons (VIPs).

10.1.1 Member affairs

Any Hong Kong resident with visual impairment is eligible to become our Full Member. Any VIP living outside Hong Kong or anyone who supports our mission can apply to be an Associate Member.

123 Full Members and 15 Associate Members joined Blind Union in 2020/21. As at 31 March 2020, we had a total of 1,670 Full Members and 356 Associate Members. The 56th Annual General Meeting was held on 28 October 2020. 143 members participated. Amid the pandemic, members may choose to attend the meetings in person or through online platforms.

One virtual meeting was held in the year consulting members' views on the 2020/21 annual plan with a total of 15 participants. No welcoming activities were organised because of COVID-19.

10.1.2 Rights advocacy

Fighting for equal opportunities and basic rights of VIPs is the aim that Blind Union has been striving for years.

Striving for Health Care Vouchers for the disabled

Since the consultation on the Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan kicked off in 2017, Blind Union has been pushing for the implementation of the Health Care Voucher Scheme for the disabled with proposals submitted to the authorities concerned. A survey was conducted in June 2020 on Health Care Vouchers for the disabled, with a total of 300 questionnaires returned. Blind Union held a press conference to announce the survey results gaining coverage from top-tier media outlets.

Accessibility tests conducted on restaurant and delivery mobile apps

In December 2020, Blind Union conducted accessibility tests on mobile apps of 10 chain restaurants and food delivery platforms. The results were announced via social media channels together with a derivative video named "Barrier-free Food Delivery", with the aim of deepening the public's understanding on the use of mobile apps by the visually impaired.

Raising members' awareness of rights advocacy

Blind Union has always urged its members to know their rights and to put more focus on rights advocacy. From November 2020 to April 2021, we held programmes on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to help members learn more about the rights of the disabled with a total of 13 participants joining.

Attending external meetings

Representatives of Blind Union met with the Transport Department, MTR Corporation, Housing Department and the Network on Services for Persons with Visual Impairment of The Hong Kong Council of Social Service and conducted site visits to facilities concerned on a regular basis, following up on many facilities and services closely related to the visually impaired from touchless panels for lifts of the Hong Kong Productivity Council, electronic audible traffic signals to the new bus models of Kowloon Motor Bus. In addition, we participated in consultation meetings concerning barrier-free facilities at different venues, including the Hong Kong Palace Museum, reconstruction of the Cheung Chau Ferry Pier and the New Territories East Cultural Centre. We also shared our views on various issues in meetings with the Hong Kong Association of Banks, Octopus Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Police Force.

Eradicating the barriers to living an inclusive life in the community

This year, we handled a total of 43 cases where members were not able to live independently in their communities. These included 10 cases of inadequate barrier-free facilities in the community, eight cases related to transport services, eight cases on public services such as medical services and housing, nine cases regarding the use of accessible information technology, and eight cases concerning the service quality of private organisations, personal affairs and other matters.

10.1.3. Public education and communications

We believe that increasing public awareness and acceptance of VIPs is very important for our full integration into the community. Therefore, Blind Union has always endeavoured to promote public education so that the public can have a correct understanding of the life and ability of VIPs and become aware of our needs, making Hong Kong an inclusive society.

Public education seminars and activities

Composed of visually impaired members of Blind Union, the Public Education Subcommittee delivered 32 public education seminars in the year. Participating organisations and individuals included kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools, universities, elderly people and volunteers with a total of some 1,100 participants. We also collaborated with the Labour and Welfare Bureau to provide training on public education to various government departments.

Public education event

With the funding support from the Labour and Welfare Bureau this year, a range of public education events was launched from public education seminars, experiential learning activities to braille promotion roving vehicle, attracting close to 2,000 participants. For the first time ever, we produced three animated films featuring our mascots Mr White Cane, Miss White Cane and Braille Soldiers to introduce braille, sighted guide techniques and guide dogs with the clips uploaded to Blind Union's webpage, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

Communication work

Blind Union communicates with the public through various channels on topics relating to the visually impaired and promotes their self-help and mutual-help spirit to fulfil its mission.

To provide our members and the public with the latest updates of Blind Union, we upload relevant information and news regularly to our official Facebook page and Instagram account. We also share more videos via our YouTube channel and even try our hand at live streaming amid the pandemic for more interaction with our members and the public.

On top of online platforms, Blind Union also makes use of periodical publications to share updates. Three issues of newsletter “Better Tomorrow for All” were published and 61 episodes of “The Voice” were produced. Backed by the Jockey Club COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund, 15 programmes were produced for the visually impaired to access anti-epidemic information easily. Members of “The Voice” were responsible for the interviews, recording and editing of the programmes, which were uploaded to the hotline system, YouTube and Facebook page with a listenership of about 2,000.

10.1.4 Fundraising activities

About 50% of the funding for our service development comes from public donations each year. The remaining less than 50% is from the government’s annual recurrent grant. The donations received are mainly used to support VIPs in education, employment, welfare, social participation and accessible information technology services and to encourage their full integration into society.

Flag Day 2020

This year's Flag Day was held in the Hong Kong Island on 8 July 2020. Around 300 volunteers were involved, raising about HK\$360,000 in total.

The Same Song Charity Concert

The Same Song Charity Concert was held at Concert Hall of the Hong Kong City Hall on 25 November 2020 with people with visual impairment performing. A total of HK\$280,000 was raised after deducting the necessary expenses.

10.1.5 中國內地及海外交流 Exchanges in Mainland China and overseas

Attending conferences and exchanges overseas

Despite that many international and Mainland China conferences were cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic, Blind Union continued to keep abreast of various international affairs. One of the events our representatives supposed to attend was the World Blind Union General Assembly scheduled to be held in Madrid, Spain in May 2020, which was postponed to June 2021 and conducted online.

10.2 Services Centre

The scope of work of the Services Centre (the Centre) is closely related to the life of visually impaired persons (VIPs), including recreational, sports and cultural activities, life adaptation and services for the newly blind. The objectives are to help them live independently and enable them to integrate into the community.

Social and recreational activities / continuing learning courses

With the ongoing pandemic, the Centre was unable to organise face-to-face social and recreational activities and continuing learning courses. Only three activities were held when the situation was stabilised, including music appreciation, ball games and the Hydro Fitness Training course co-organised with the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, with 32 visually impaired and seven sighted persons participated. Starting with sharing and exchanging thoughts on topics themed around everyday life via mobile apps or land line, online activities were newly launched this year and were well received by members. Activities on much larger scale were organised with a wider variety, ranging from cooking activities, health talks, music programmes to virtual sightseeing and exhibitions that incorporated audio description. A total of 42 online activities were organised, attracting 1,080 visually impaired and 85 sighted persons. The above new activities successfully attracted some members who rarely participated in the activities organised by the Centre in the past.

Group activities and volunteer training

Regular interest groups of the Centre included Chinese music, Karaoke, card game and a pop band called The Jumpers. The groups had a total of 22 gatherings throughout the year with a VIP attendance of 143. No community services or performances were organised due to the pandemic. On training for volunteers, the Centre conducted four training sessions with 59 participants, including university students, primary students and members of the public.

Services for the elderly

The Centre uses various approaches to reach out to the visually impaired elderly, in particular those who are relatively inactive and seldom join the Centre’s activities, with the aim of understanding their current status and support network better and introducing the services offered by Blind Union and other available resources in the community to provide them with adequate support. The Centre continues to care for the visually impaired elderly amid the pandemic as they need even more support services to get through challenging times.

This year, highlights of our elderly services included telecare calls, visits and case follow-ups. 240 calls were made by the members of our care group, expressing their care and concern and serving as a check-in to see how the visually impaired seniors were doing. The Centre continued to work with the Hong Kong Red Cross in the year to arrange volunteers from both parties to visit the elderly who rarely left their home and participated in the activities organised by the Centre. Although the number of visits were reduced tremendously due to the pandemic, the Centre kept on arranging regular home visits by social workers to ensure the elderly were in stable health condition and the provision of adequate community support services. Between July and August, the Centre made calls to 208 individual members who lived in east Kowloon where relatively more COVID-19 cases were identified, finding out whether they were worried and offering support services to members in needs, for example buying food and daily necessities. During the Mid-Autumn Festival and Lunar New Year, the Centre arranged social workers to visit members who seldom made connections with the Centre and also the elderly ones. Apart from bringing them festive gifts, we also sent our regards to them. A total of 100 festival related visits were conducted.

Support service for caregivers

With the new funding from the Social Welfare Department, we have started providing caregiver support services since November 2020. Through the provision of comprehensive support services for the visually impaired and their caregivers, a more harmonious relationship among family members could be established. To relieve the stress of the caregivers, we offered counselling services and organised different types of group and social recreational activities. Throughout the year, 15 cases were opened for the visually impaired or caregivers. There were 21 home visits and six social recreational activities with 119 and five visually impaired and sighted persons participating respectively. A mutual help group for the

visually impaired and caregivers was set up.

Individual funding programmes

Community Support Service for VIPs and their Families

Funding from the Social Welfare Department for this programme was renewed for three years from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2020. In addition to the counselling service for the newly blind and their caregivers, as well as customised life skills training and district support services for the visually impaired, the Living Environment Adaptation Service was also included in the programme, showcasing the importance of such services to the visually impaired and the recognition by the Social Welfare Department. The programme featured a peer-to-peer model that offered support to the newly blind and their family members through case and group work to enhance their caregiving and communication skills.

The Centre followed up 32 newly blind and caregiver cases between January and December 2020 assisting them to cope with difficulties in life, along with two support and mutual help groups and one workshop for them to establish a peer support network. Still available amid the pandemic, escort service was offered for 210 times. From counselling, individual or group training, escort services for medical appointments and personal matters to community education, the programme aims to facilitate the newly blind to integrate into the community and to live with dignity.

The Living Environment Adaptation Programme mainly assists the VIPs who experience challenges due to neighbourhood redevelopment, relocation and changes in job, family, vision or other aspects to adapt to new travelling routes or get to know other people with visual impairment in the community. The Centre followed up five cases helping VIPs to learn their new routes and to strengthen their knowledge about their community for them to live independently.

Counselling and support services

With the support from The Community Chest of Hong Kong, a total of 30 cases were handled during the year. Workers catered to the needs of individual members by means of emotional support and resource referrals.

10.3 Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre

The scope of work of the Jockey Club Vocational and Educational Resources Centre (VERC) includes advocating equal opportunities in education and employment for VIPs, helping them cope with problems in study and work, and enhancing their personal growth and development.

10.3.1. Supportive Services for Visually Impaired Students

With funding from The Community Chest of Hong Kong, we continued to run the Supportive Services for Visually Impaired Students. A total of 479 sessions of services were provided, with more than 2,052 participants. The services provided are as follows:

Counselling and support services

This year, VERC handled over 38 counselling and support cases. With the use of casework approach, our staff had an in-depth understanding of the needs of individual visually impaired students and provided services for them, including support for their learning, emotional support and resource referrals.

One-on-one district-based homework tutoring support services

This year, a total of three phases of "district-based" homework tutoring support services for visually impaired students were organised. We arranged volunteer tutors to have one-on-one homework tutoring for visually impaired students based on their districts of residence and learning needs. 13 tutors served 14 visually impaired students from 13 schools, providing a total of 139 hours of services with 116 participants.

Personal growth experiential activities

A total of 47 personal growth experiential activities were held this year. 702 VIPs and sighted persons participated in the 90 sessions of these activities and among them, 440 were visually impaired students and their parents. Activities ranged from music, sports, arts, culture, volunteering, craftsmanship, community services and so on. Through these activities, we hoped to facilitate visually impaired students' personal growth. Due to the pandemic, some activities were changed to online activities.

Talks on "Inclusive Campus" / online radio programme "Integrators' Zone"

The VERC regularly imparts the message of equality and inclusion in schools. During the year, we visited 19 secondary schools, held 19 talks on "Inclusive Campus" (some were supported by the Head Office) for 450 teachers, students and the staff of Education Bureau.

In addition, we produced 12 episodes of the online radio programme "Integrators' Zone" for the year, which enabled the public to know more about the situation of inclusive education for students with visual impairment. Close to 1,700 people listened to the programmes online from April 2020 to March 2021 while about 4,733 people accessed the programmes through the hotline system. The programme allows the public to understand the inclusive education of visually impaired students.

Support for parents

This year, we continued to promote parents and parent-child work with the support of The Community Chest. A total of five activities themed around family education, parenting and parent-child relationship were organised. We stayed in touch with 53 families with visually impaired children through two WhatsApp groups and showed our care and concern for the needs of the parents and their visually impaired children through face-to-face and group meetings. We also invited representatives of the Education Bureau to visit Blind Union to exchange views with the visually impaired students and their parents on education policies and the progress on promoting inclusive education.

Other education-related activities

Group work

The VERC organised six groups providing 32 sessions of activities, including Nonviolent Communication Workshop, VIPs Civil Society Concern Group, Move Your Little Fingers - Kalimba Music Class, Reading Club, Go!Goal!Goal! Life Planning Group and Master Your Emotions. The total number of group members was 51 and the total attendance of the sessions was 223, with an average turn-up rate of 86%.

Continuing education

The education courses for adults for the year September 2019 to August 2020 were all cancelled because of the pandemic. Funded by the Labour and Welfare Bureau for the school year from September 2020 to August 2021, the six adult education programmes covered a range of topics

from the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the use of smartphone and mobile apps, basic applications of computer, the application of assistive tools for work and study using smartphone, communication at work and job interview skills to general and business English tailored for the visually impaired. Some of the courses were postponed due to the pandemic and two courses were successfully conducted during the year. We also organised Wing Chun and nonviolent communication courses to encourage diversified development.

Scholarships

Four visually impaired young people were awarded the Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund with a maximum grant up to HK\$80,000 for the year while seven were awarded the Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund (four for the academic group and three for the non-academic group) with a total grant of HK\$21,000. Both the award presentation ceremonies were held online because of COVID-19.

10.3.2 Career development Services

Supported employment services

The VERC continued to offer Supported Employment Services funded by the Social Welfare Department, serving over 40 users per month and a total of 53 users throughout the year. Among them, 12 service users secured employment (i.e. being employed continuously for six months and receiving a monthly salary of more than HK\$1,500). Two members were offered job attachment or job trial opportunities. Other than the above, we applied to the Support Programme for Employees with Disabilities run by the Social Welfare Department for procuring assistive tools and computer for four visually impaired employees.

Employment related programmes and activities

Blind Union continued to take part in the work of the e-Connect Network, including internship planning, job referral and the joint announcement of the results of the 2020 Research on the Current Employment Situation of the Disabled. Visually impaired masseurs were invited to share their difficulties in work during the pandemic. For details, please refer to Research on the Current Employment Situation report on the following page.

Support programme for employment of the visually impaired

Thanks to the support of donors, Blind Union launched two rounds of support programme for employment of the visually impaired and recruited 18 Blind Union Ambassadors on a temporary basis. They were responsible for promoting to members Blind Union's affairs and understanding their needs, along with assisting Blind Union in raising funds and performing general clerical duties. The programme ran for one month and offered the visually impaired who encountered employment or financial issues with some income and work opportunities in the face of COVID-19.

Supported employment sharing sessions

Coronavirus outbreak makes job hunting even tougher for the visually impaired and many members seek help from Blind Union. We conducted two employment sharing sessions inviting the visually impaired who succeeded in landing a job to talk about their work and life challenges, solutions, and experiences to offer peer support. The two sessions were well received with a total of 28 members participated.

"Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme"

The massage industry, which relatively more people with visual impairment are working in, has a difficult time amid the pandemic. In April 2020, Blind Union launched the "Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme" which operated on a prepaid model, giving half of the sold vouchers' value as salary to those visually impaired masseurs participating in the scheme to meet their immediate financial needs. The remaining half of the salary will be paid when customers redeem the service.

Ran from April 2020 to June 2021, the scheme was well received and generated better-than-expected sales, with more than 20 visually impaired masseurs benefited from it. To carry on the spirit of the "Better Tomorrow For All Massage Voucher Scheme", we successfully applied for "Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities through Small Enterprise" project under the Social Welfare Department in early 2021 that funded the launch of YAU CAFE in July 2021, the first social enterprise playing a crossover of massage and coffee. It offers employment opportunities for the visually impaired and a platform to promote disability.

10.3.3. Advocacy and research

Advocacy on education policies

Support services for DSE students

From June to July 2020, the Centre collected and sorted out the suggestions of the DSE candidates of the past year and met with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority on 12 August 2020. We followed up with their representatives our suggestions made in the past and shared the difficulties our members faced this year. Examination arrangements were also discussed so that improvements could be made for the visually impaired candidates in the next examination.

Follow-up on education policies

After collecting opinions from parents for follow-up actions on education policies, we met with representatives of the Education Bureau on 30 October. We expressed the learning challenges and conditions of the visually impaired students and discussed the arrangements for online teaching amid the pandemic, transition support for Ebenezer School, arrangements for learning differences and classroom efficiency among others. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the Resource Support Programme (RSP) for students of Ebenezer School were also reviewed. The Bureau responded positively with some of the suggestions being considered and accepted. The suggestions could help provide a more ideal learning environment for the visually impaired students. The parents found the meeting an effective channel to communicate with the Education Bureau.

Advocacy on Advocacy on employment policies

Concerns on the arrangements of the redevelopment of Factory for the Blind, founded by The Hong Kong Society for the Blind

We continued to follow up the arrangements for the removal of the Factory for the Blind and to take part in the communication platform of the Factory, supporting workers of the Factory, trainees and parents participated in the transit arrangements for its redevelopment. Site visits were made with members of the platform to the temporary site for them to express their views on the barrier-free and ancillary facilities of the factory. The platform also followed up issues regarding the well-being of workers and trainees, including striving for flexible arrangements to allow workers and trainees to enter the factory before its opening time during rainy days or when needed, alongside other issues such as the retirement age for workers.

Other employment related initiatives

Representatives of the Centre continued to participate in the work of the “Alliance of Quota System for Disabled Persons” to follow up various issues on the employment of the disabled, covering the statutory minimum wage, Anti-epidemic Fund and employment of people with disabilities in the civil service, coupled with writing proposals, participating in consultation meetings and conducting employment surveys on a regular basis.

Research on the current employment situation

Blind Union participated in the “2020 Research on the Current Employment Situation of the Disabled” with the results announced in the press conference held on 26 February 2021. Reflecting the plight of the working poor, the report pointed out that 41% of the respondents were unemployed or seeking employment, which the figures were much higher than those published by the Government. Representatives of the “e-Connect Employment Network” suggested adopting the “Hire-First-Then-Train” approach, enhancing the support services offered by the community and NGOs, improving the work environment and drawing up policies to improve the current situation, such as pointers for hiring of the disabled.

10.3.4 Education of VIPs in China

Support for visually impaired students in China

Financial assistance under the Education Fund For People with Visually Impairment in China was provided in the form of grants to support visually impaired students in Meizhou Special Education School, Zhenjiang Special Education School and Shandong Binzhou Medical school. As at 31 March 2021, 50 students benefited from the grants, amounting to RMB179,040.

In addition, two rounds of online sharing forum were co-organised with Meizhou Special Education School and Zhenjiang Special Education School, keeping the Fund Committee members informed about the updates of students receiving assistance and sharing the education and employment situation of visually impaired students in Hong Kong.

10.4 Accessible Digital Technology Centre

The Accessible Digital Technology Centre aims at improving daily lives of visually impaired persons (VIPs) with the use of technology. Our work scope includes the development of assistive aids, technical support and training, promotion of accessible technology design and application, and provision of support and consultancy services to organisations and needy individuals.

10.4.1 The 10th anniversary activity of Accessible Digital Technology Centre

As 2020 marked the 10th anniversary of Accessible Digital Technology Centre, we organised a quiz contest with prizes in three rounds on 5 December. The questions are related to our technology projects to enhance the members’ sense of belongings to Blind Union.

10.4.2 Jockey Club Smart City Walk Project

Under the Jockey Club Smart City Walk project funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, we developed an indoor navigation mobile app Smart City Walk with the integration of different navigation technologies. The app uses audio and text outputs to guide the visually impaired and other people in need, such as the elderly, to go out independently and reach their destinations easily. Under the project, training was provided to the visually impaired and the elderly to strengthen their abilities to harness the power of information technology and get connected with the world. In addition, seminars and sharing sessions were held to raise public awareness on the needs of the visually impaired.

The Smart City Walk mobile app are now available on iOS and Android. Up to March 2021, there were 3,000 downloads and 88 indoor venue partners supporting the Smart City Walk mobile app, mainly including venues under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, large-scale shopping malls, tertiary institutions and transport facilities among others.

In order to gain the support of more venues, Blind Union continued to meet with the management teams of different venues and government departments, introducing to them the details of the project and inviting them to join as venue partners, including the Housing Authority, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Lands Department, Airport Authority, MTR Corporation, KMB, tertiary institutions and developers of other shopping malls.

Blind Union also displayed digital posters of Smart City Walk in shopping malls, launched promotions on social media platforms and participated in the “Gerontech and Innovation Expo cum Summit 2020” to introduce to the public the Smart City Walk app. On public education, two virtual meetings were held for the Chinese University of Hong Kong with a total of 35 participants, sharing updates about the use of smartphones by the visually impaired, the basic concepts of barrier-free information and the application of the Smart City Walk mobile app.

Under the project, Blind Union organised seven training sessions on the use of Smart City Walk mobile app with 43 participants, including people with visual impairment and the elderly.

10.4.3 Promoting accessible information technology

Blind Union spares no effort in the promotion and concern on the design and application of accessible digital technology. The “Press Conference on the Difficulties of Visually Impaired Persons Accessing to Anti-epidemic Information” was held on 27 April 2020, reporting on test results regarding 10 local news related mobile apps. It was found that most of the news mobile apps had some kind of accessibility issues. Blind Union followed up in writing to the media outlets concerned and the Government, requesting them to examine the problems critically.

Tests were also conducted on the accessibility of online application systems for “Government Face Masks”, “Employment Support Scheme” and “Cash Payout Scheme” and the issues concerned on accessibility design were reflected to the Government for follow-up actions.

The WBUAP Regional Webinar: Web Accessibility Adoption Level in the Asia Pacific Region was held on 22 October 2020 through Zoom to share results of the survey. President Fredric Schroder of WBU and Regional President Michiko Tabata of WBUAP were invited to deliver the opening speeches. Ms Judy Brewer, Director of the Web Accessibility Initiatives of W3C accessibility technology, shared with the audience the latest design trends for web accessibility, with Mr Chong Chan-yau, President of Hong Kong Blind Union, announcing the results of the survey and the representative of HSBC sharing the bank’s experience in promoting design in accessibility. About 130 participants from different countries took part in the webinar.

10.4.4 Organising IT interest groups

IT interest groups of various themes, such as the iOS Smartphone Group, organised regular online meetings and activities to strengthen the bond among members and foster mutual aid. Throughout the year, 11 meetings were held with an attendance of 118. Seven IT skills and knowledge enhancement exchange meetings were held in the year with a total of 79 attendees.

10.4.4 IT training and support

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, two IT technology courses were run online during the year with 20 participants. The Centre also offered helpdesk service for handling enquiries on computer software and hardware application and assistive tools, receiving 2,469 phone-in enquiries and 194 face-to-face enquiries during the year. For members to easily access information using different types of software and applications, we archived more than 70 information technology related audio files and uploaded them to Blind Union's webpage. Members may browse our webpage and listen to the related content.

In addition, Blind Union published 11 issues of the Accessible Digital Technology Newsletter, including six issues of "E-Learning for All Newsletter", with a total of 440 subscribers.

10.4.5 Development of internal IT management system

Funded by the Social Welfare Development Fund of the Social Welfare Department, Blind Union continued the development of two IT projects. One of them is a new hotline system, covering a phone system, an app and a webpage version. On completion, the visually impaired may receive information about activities of the Centre through the webpage and the new hotline system. The development of the internal IT management system is close to completion and is expected to go live in May 2021.

With the funding under the Wi-Fi Pilot Programme launched by the Social Welfare Department, Blind Union installed brand new Wi-Fi systems for both the Service Centre and the Vocational and Educational Resources Centre, providing staff and members with a better coverage and more comprehensive Wi-Fi service. We also offered to staff IT support and related training such as guidelines on secure online meetings and activities.

10.5 Accessibility Services Office

The scope of work of the Accessibility Services Office includes implementing social enterprise services, the Jockey Club E-Learning For All project and Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service to improve community accessibilities as well as provide various kinds of supportive services for people in need.

10.5.1 Jockey Club E-Learning for All Project (ELFA)

Funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the project continued to provide supportive service to students with print disabilities from primary to tertiary level. The service coverage has been extended to non-students since 2019. As at March 2021, a total of 377 students, 126 adults (non-students) and 133 schools (4,644 students with print disabilities) enrolled as service users. This year, 1,269 sets of electronic training materials, text books and examination papers (76,601 pages) were transcribed and 235 sets of tactile materials were produced for students in need. The training workshops had an attendance of 161 and 2,373 complimentary copies of software and mobile apps developed by Blind Union were distributed.

As part of the project, an online platform was set up to provide a variety of services such as free online optical character recognition (OCR) service, accessible e-book library, tactile material library and regular bi-monthly e-learning newsletter among others. To promote e-learning and reading, a batch of books were collected and converted into electronic version for users to borrow, in addition to conversion of text to braille of books for personal use. Reading machines were also introduced alongside training for those who were not familiar with the use of smartphones to learn reading e-books. This year, we released the guidelines for the use of Traditional Chinese e-bookstores for user's reference.

10.5.2 Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service

The service has been funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for three years, offering audio-description for sports events in Hong Kong to the visually impaired for them to enjoy live sports events with audio and tactile assistive tools.

As the local sports events were put on hold due to the pandemic with the service greatly affected, our working team turbocharged the shift to virtual activities and hosted 10 live online sports talk shows during the year, inviting well-known local sports commentators, athletes and members to participate online or through Blind Union's social media platform with a total VIP attendance of 118. Five experiential sports activities were organised and had a VIP attendance of 41. Participants got to learn more about the basics of football through tactile assistive tools and common sports equipment, coupled with the explanation by the guest speakers.

With the return of the football games at the end of 2020 with spectators allowed, we provided audio-description service for three times, which all were for Hong Kong Premier League football matches, drawing a VIP attendance of 24 and a total attendance of 92 including volunteers and sighted people. The audio-description service arranged on 14 March 2021 was also one of the activities in support of the annual Week of Action organised by the Centre for Access to Football in Europe, marking Hong Kong as the first Asian participating place.

Under the programme, a YouTube channel was started to release audio and video programmes of past activities and those about sports news and updates. There were 38 related programmes released with a click-through rate of 2,894 and 75 cumulative subscribers. An online platform will go live soon, hoping to bring in more live sports events and informative programmes with audio-description for the visually impaired and the public.

10.5.3 Seeing Joy in Music Learning - The one-stop support service for music development for the visually impaired

With funding from the Arts Development Fund for Persons with Disabilities of Social Welfare Department, the "Seeing Joy in Music" project was launched in January 2021 for a period of three years. The project is to assist the visually impaired to receive professional training in music so that their talents in music may be fully developed. The objectives include:

1. To build a professional music consultancy team and to provide 12 visually impaired participants with professional training and music consultancy services through a mentorship programme;

2. To promote the use of braille music scores, including training programmes and the setup of a braille music score database; and
3. To let the public know about the music talent of the visually impaired with the aim of promoting disability inclusion.

The key focus of the project is to support the learning of vocal music, piano and music theory, including arranging participants to receive professional training in music, mentoring and lining up performances, alongside collaboration with other departments of Blind Union to promote the use of braille music scores and access to music for all.

During the first quarter of 2021, the initial preparatory work was kick-started including the appointment of two project officers. Other than developing the training programmes, we assisted in the production of braille music scores under the Jockey Club e-Learning for All Project with eight pieces of music scores completed in the first quarter. Events to promote braille music scores were also held, attracting 14 members and members of the public to attend.

10.5.4 Social enterprise services

Operating on a social enterprise model, Blind Union strives to promote barrier-free community facilities, acquire suitable daily necessities, as well as create employment opportunities for visually impaired persons. Our social enterprise business responds to the HKSAR Government's target of promoting barrier-free facilities and services, playing a leading role in building an inclusive society.

Web Accessibility For All (WAFA)

The social enterprise Web Accessibility for All (WAFA) provides accessible website training and consultancy service. It not only promotes accessible digital technology, but also creates employment opportunity for visually impaired persons. As of this year, WAFA provided testing and consultancy services to more than 70 web pages and mobile apps.

Production of tactile maps and consultancy for audio systems

In response to the Government's policy of promoting accessibility, the enterprise continued to produce and provide consultancy services for tactile maps and audio systems as well as engage in the production and sales of tactile signage. To cater for the needs of different people, our services were provided with references to the standard in the Buildings Department's "Design Manual: Barrier-free Access 2008", and also views given by our staff and members with different levels of visual impairment.

EasyBuy

To ensure the products selected met more of our members' needs and to tap the self-help spirit, we invited several members to form a group to help source more suitable products and widen the choices of economical and quality goods for other members. Since 2016, we have also started adopting group-purchase so that members could acquire high quality products with a low price tag.

Braille / text transcription services

Our social enterprise provides the service of adding names, phone numbers and other information in braille on ordinary name cards. Our services also include converting printed materials, Braille and audio files (such as interview recordings) into text or braille format. Target customers include government departments, private companies, social welfare agencies and tertiary institutions. Our business not only provides job opportunities for visually impaired people but also makes information accessible among the visually impaired, the public and related organisations.

Employing VIPs to work at social enterprise as assistants

To promote the employment of the visually impaired, Blind Union strives to hire VIPs and conduct on-the-job training, enabling them to give full play to their strengths, gain different work experience and provide professional services to clients. At present, our social enterprise employs 20 visually impaired persons with duties ranging from testing accessibility of websites and mobile apps, offering barrier-free facility inspection consultation services and Braille and voice transcription.

11. SERVICES STATISTICS

MEMBERS

Full Members (1,670 Members)

Gender	
Male	51.88%
Female	48.12%

Age	
17 years old or below	2.49%
18 - 59 years old	47.21%
60 years old or above	50.30%

Associate Members (356 Members)

Gender	
Male	39.17%
Female	60.83%

Age	
17 years old or below	0.30%
18 - 59 years old	44.81%
60 years old or above	54.89%

Rights advocacy

This year, we handled a total of 43 cases where members were not able to live independently in their communities. These include:

Case Category	No. of Case
Inadequate barrier-free facilities in the communities	10
Transportation and transport services	8
Public services, e.g. medical treatment and housing	8
The use of accessible information technology	9
Service quality of private organisations, personal and other affairs	8
Total	43

Public Education

Target	No. of Participant (No. of School/ Organisation)
School	1,069 (22)
Organisation	55 (2)
Total	1,124(24)

SERVICES CENTRE

Social & recreational activities / Continuous learning courses

Activity Category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (VI / S)
Music show	1	22/2
Recreation & sports programme	1	5/1
Water fitness course	1	5/4
Online Programme	42	1,080/85
Total	45	1,112/92

Group activities

Activity Category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (VI)
Chinese music group	12	73
Karaoke group	6	36
Leisure band	3	18
Card games group	1	16
Total	22	143

Elderly services

Service Category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (VI)
Caring group telephone caring condolence	N/A	448
Regular visit	N/A	112
Total	N/A	560

Carers Support Service

Service Category	No. of Service
Case counselling	15 families
Home visit	21 families
Social and recreational activity	6 sessions (124 attendance)
互助小組	1 group

Community Support Service for VIPs and Their Families

Service Category	No. of Service
Case counselling	28 newly blind / 4 carer cases
Support group	4 sessions (32 attendance)
Workshop	1 session (11 attendance)
Escort service	210 attendance
Life environment adaptation programme	5 cases

VI: visually impaired persons S: sighted persons

N/A : Not Applicable 不適用

JOCKEY CLUB VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES CENTRE**Education & development programmes**

Programme category	No. of Session/hr.	No. of Attendance (VI)
Support & development group	32	223
Personal growth activity	90	702
Continuing education	5	201
One-on-one district-based homework tutoring support service	139(hrs.)	116

Inclusive talks

Programme category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (S)
Inclusive campus talk	13	344
“Get to know the visually impaired” workshop	6	117
Total	19	450

Profile of supported employment services users

(Total number of services users : 53)

Gender	No. of people
Male	31
Female	22

Education level	No. of people
Primary	1
Secondary	27
Tertiary or above	25

Age	No. of people
15 -35 years old	28
36 - 50 years old	18
50 years old or above	7

無障礙服務辦事處**Jockey Club E-Learning For All Project (ELFA)**

Profile of services users

377 students (16 students graduated this year and have withdrawn from the programme) , 133 schools (4,644 print disabled students) and 126 adult users.

Type of disability	No. of Student (graduated)
Visually impaired	87 (8)
Physical challenged	37 (0)
Dyslexia	216 (1)
Multiple disabilities	37 (7)
Total	377 (16)

Adult (not the student) services user	人數 No. of people
Visually impaired	126

Type of School / Institute	No.
Primary school	23
Secondary school	69
Primary school and Secondary school	3
Special school	23
Tertiary institute	8
NGO	7
總數 Total	133

Services Numbers

Service	Statistics
E-books production	362 e-books , 177 e-notes and 730 e-test paper, 127,626 printed pages in total
Tactile teaching material	235 copies
Software distribution	2,304 software & 69 App
E-Learning For All e-newsletter	769 subscribers

Activity Category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance
Training workshop	27	161

Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service

活動類別 Activity Category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (VI)
Online programme	10	118
Experiential activity	5	41
Audio description service	3	24
YouTube Channel	N/A	2,894
Total	18	3,077

Social Enterprise Services

Total number of part-time assistant(VI) : 20

Gender

Male 10

Female 10

Age

15-35 years old 9

36-50 years old 6

50 years old or above 5

ACCESSIBLE DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY CENTRE

資訊科技興趣小組 IT groups

Event & groups Category	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (VI)
Apple Products Application Group	11	118
IT Knowledge Exchange Group	7	79
Total	18	197

IT training and support

Service	Total
Hotline service	2,469
Face-to-face consultation	194
Total	2,663

Group	No. of Session	No. of Attendance (VI)
IT application workshop	2	20

12. Financial Highlights

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020

(ALL AMOUNTS IN HONG KONG DOLLARS)

	2021 HK\$	2020 HK\$
INCOME		
Donation and fund raising income	1,851,398.57	1,797,543.66
Project income	2,193,462.57	1,747,640.11
Programme income	2,684,470.70	1,790,379.38
Flag day income	370,192.86	688,333.40
Social Welfare Department subvention	5,740,951.00	5,229,774.00
Social Welfare Development Fund grant	14,170.00	32,245.00
Block Grant from Lotteries Fund	78,000.00	64,000.00
Labour and Welfare Bureau subvention	37,752.35	11,698.58
Community Chest Allocations	687,610.00	606,800.00
Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust grant	9,502,230.50	8,368,099.37
Receipts from Public Subscription Permit No. 2019/136/1	-	14,414.50
Other income	228,136.22	303,360.81
	23,388,374.77	20,654,288.81
LESS: EXPENDITURE		
Personal emoluments	981,755.74	1,083,314.93
Programme and project expenses	19,192,930.90	17,804,372.49
Flag day expenses	36,493.52	65,698.90
Administrative expenses	413,856.78	375,626.23
Rent and rates	360,208.00	377,458.00
Audit fee	15,000.00	15,000.00
Utilities	108,868.54	175,967.90
Depreciation	4,980.00	2,590.00
	21,114,093.48	19,900,028.45
	2,274,281.29	754,260.36
Net transfer to Project funds not yet utilized	(126,260.94)	(12,487.77)
	2,148,020.35	741,772.59
APPROPRIATIONS		
Transfer (to)/from Labour and Welfare Bureau Surplus Account	(31,852.35)	20,970.54
Transfer from/(to) Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund	24,597.30	(11,890.00)
Transfer from Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund	113,386.30	100,805.34
Transfer to Social Welfare Subvention Surpluses Account	(11,112.00)	(53,966.00)
Transfer to Lump Sum Grant Reserve	(692,439.72)	(243,961.23)
Transfer to Provident Fund Reserve	(52,307.11)	(32,908.41)
Transfer to Block Grant Reserve	(6,275.00)	-
Transfer from Social Welfare Development Fund	88,115.15	79,880.03
Transfer to Social Enterprise Development Fund	(243,374.00)	(76,706.00)
	(811,261.43)	(217,775.73)
Surplus for the year	1,336,758.92	523,996.86

The annexed notes form part of the financial statements.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2020
(ALL AMOUNTS IN HONG KONG DOLLARS)

	2021 HK\$	2020 HK\$
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	16,249.00	919.00
Investment in securities	363,745.39	186,123.79
	379,994.39	187,042.79
Current assets		
Stocks	14,148.52	20,350.73
Accounts receivable	3,472,762.18	3,197,339.14
Deposits and prepayments	564,065.87	80,189.20
Fixed deposits	11,874,201.52	9,889,232.15
Cash and bank balances	1,672,651.79	2,176,326.18
	17,597,829.88	15,363,437.40
Less: Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued charges	368,015.58	414,599.73
Project funds not yet utilized	993,977.60	867,716.66
Deposits repayable and receipts in advance	2,587,930.08	2,333,214.41
	3,949,923.26	3,615,530.80
Net current assets	13,647,906.62	11,747,906.60
Net assets	14,027,901.01	11,934,949.39
RESERVES AND FUND BALANCES		
General Fund	4,252,242.34	2,915,483.42
Other Funds and Reserves		
Development Fund	5,713,268.75	5,516,610.31
Sister Moira Education Fund	150,911.39	149,867.19
Education Fund for People with Visual Impairment in China	389,641.90	620,963.15
Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund	344,707.11	369,304.41
Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund	31,832.32	75,180.02
Labour and Welfare Bureau Surplus Account	31,852.35	6,469.96
Social Welfare Subvention Surpluses Account	122,362.00	115,216.00
Lump Sum Grant Reserve	1,556,525.17	861,490.66
Provident Fund Reserve	540,703.65	488,396.54
Block Grant Reserve	6,766.43	491.43
Social Welfare Department Community-based Support Projects		
for Persons with Disabilities and their Families Grant	0.00	83,671.34
Social Welfare Development Fund	172,052.49	260,143.85
Social Enterprise Development Fund	715,035.11	471,661.11
	14,027,901.01	11,934,949.39

以上帳目不是關於公司的指明財務報表，本會帳目本要涵蓋的財政年度的指明財務報表，將於會員大會後交付公司註冊處處長，並已就關乎該財政年度的指明財務報表擬備核數師報告，在會計師報告中：i)沒有保留或以其他方式修改；ii)沒有提述該核數師在不就該報告作保留的情況下以強調的方式促請有關的人注意的任何事宜；iii)沒有載有根據第 406(2)或 407(2)或(3)條作出的陳述。

The above accounts are not specified financial statements in relation to the company. The specified financial statements for the financial year with which those accounts purport to deal will be delivered to the Companies Registrar after the Annual General Meeting. An auditor's report has been prepared on the specified financial statements for the financial year. The auditor's report i) was neither qualified nor modified; ii) did not refer to any matter to which the auditor drew attention by way of emphasis without qualifying the report; iii) did not contain a statement under section 406(2) or 407(2) or (3).

Source of Income

2021	
INCOME	%
Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust grant	42.3%
Social Welfare Department	22.7%
Programme income	10.9%
Project income	9.8%
Donation and fund raising income	8.2%
Community Chest Allocations	3.1%

Flag day income	1.7%
Other income	1.0%
Block Grant from Lotteries Fund	0.3%
	100.0%

Expenditure Analysis (Pie Chart)

EXPENDITURE	%
Programme and project expenses	90.9%
Personal emoluments	4.6%
Administrative expenses	2.1%
Rent and rates	1.7%
Utilities	0.5%
Flag day expenses	0.2%
	100.0%

13. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

政府部門及法定機構 Government Departments & Statutory Bodies	
公司註冊處	Companies Registry
教育局	Education Bureau
平等機會委員會	Equal Opportunities Commission
民政事務總署	Home Affairs Department
香港考試及評核局	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority
香港文化博物館	Hong Kong Heritage Museum
香港房屋委員會	Hong Kong Housing Authority
入境事務處	Immigration Department
勞工及福利局	Labour and Welfare Bureau
地政總署	Lands Department
康樂及文化事務處	Leisure and Cultural Services Department
政府資訊科技總監辦公室	Office of Government Chief Information Officer
勞工處展能就業科	Selective Placement Division of the Labour Department
社會福利署	Social Welfare Department
基金 Funds	
陳楊福和基金有限公司	Chen Yang Foo Oi Foundation Limited
李錦記家族基金	Lee Kum Kee Family Foundation
蔡榮森慈善基金有限公司	PL Choy Wing Sum Charitable Foundation Limited

香港公益金	The Community Chest of Hong Kong
香港賽馬會慈善信託基金	The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust
	Ng Teng Fong Charitable Foundation Limited
	The International Blind Football Foundation
利希慎基金	Lee Hysan Foundation
香港東區崇德社	Zonta Club of Hong Kong East Charitable Trust
學校 Schools	
心光盲人院暨學校	Ebenezer School & Home for the Visually Impaired
非牟利團體 Non-profit Organisations	
香港展能藝術會	Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong
香港護士協會	Association of Hong Kong Nursing Staff
	Centre for Access to Football in Europe
基督教家庭服務中心	Christian Family Service Centre
賽馬會青少年體育記者培訓計劃	HKJC Junior Sports Reporters Programme
香港足球總會	Hong Kong Football Association
香港導盲犬協會	Hong Kong Guide Dogs Association
香港紅十字會支心行動	Hong Kong Red Cross Act of Care Project

香港導盲犬服務中心	Hong Kong Seeing Eye Dog Services
愛烘焙餐廳	iBakery
賽馬會青少年足球發展計劃	Jockey Club Youth Football Development Programme
國立故宮博物院	National Palace Museum
新生精神康復會	New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
無限亮	No Limits
陳校長免費補習天地	Principal Chan Free Tutorial World
金鐘扶輪社	Rotary Club of Admiralty
義工團體 Volunteer Groups	
香港海關義工隊	Hong Kong Customs and Excise Department Volunteer Team
企業 Corporates	
	AD+RG architecture design and research group Limited
	Alan March Sport Limited
	Appleby (Hong Kong)
	Apple Inc.
雅集出版社有限公司	Aristo Education Press Limited
	Asia Minerals Limited
柏基亞洲(香港)有限公司	Baillie Gifford Asia (Hong Kong) Limited

	BLUENOCC
一拳書館	Book Punch
突破出版社	Breakthrough Limited
	Centre for Access to Football in Europe
基督教文藝出版社有限公司	Chinese Christian Literature Council Limited
周大福珠寶集團有限公司	Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Limited
顧張文菊、葉成慶律師事務所	Christine M. Koo & Ip, Solicitors & Notaries
換幣龍有限公司	Coin Dragon Limited
商台製作有限公司	Commercial Radio Productions Limited
天地圖書有限公司	Cosmos Books Limited
迪圖工程(亞洲)有限公司	DDL Contracting (Asia) Limited
	Deutsche Borse AG
東方龍獅足球隊	Eastern Long Lion Football Team
教育出版社有限公司	Educational Publishing House Limited
基督教香港信義會社會服務部	Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service - Hong Kong
卓思出版社有限公司	Excellence Publication Company Limited
恒隆(行政)有限公司	Hang Lung (Administration) Limited

香港 01	HK01
香港教育圖書公司	Hong Kong Educational Publishing Company Limited
香港流浪足球會	Hong Kong Rangers Football Club
強生(香港)有限公司	Johnson and Johnson (Hong Kong) Limited
聚愛中西醫結合醫療中心	JoyLove Integrated Medical Centre
躍思教育出版社	JumpStart Publishers
瓊華有限公司	King Wah Company Limited
帝景珠寶有限公司	King's View Jewellery Limited
傑志體育會	Kitchee Sports Club
光華集團控股有限公司	Kwong Wah Group Holdings Limited
萬達髮品製造有限公司	Man Tat Wigs Manufacturing Limited
會計稅務有限公司	MBA Accounting & Taxation Services Limited
明途聯繫有限公司	MentalCare Connect Company Limited
宏力保安服務有限公司	Megastrength Security Services Company Limited
微軟香港有限公司	Microsoft Hong Kong Limited
現代教育研究社有限公司	Modern Educational Research Society Limited
香港鐵路有限公司	MTR Corporation Limited
	Nike Hong Kong Limited
牛津大學出版社	Oxford University Press (China) Limited
	Pak Fah Yeow Investment (HK) Company Limited
培生教育出版亞洲有限公	Pearson Education Asia Limited

司	
寶匙有限公司	Prosimex Company Limited
大眾銀行集團(香港)	Public Bank (Hong Kong) Limited
	Real Glory x Super Fans 球衣專門店
紅出版集團	Red Corporation Limited
舒緩領域按摩工作坊	Relax Zone
策馬文創有限公司	Riding Cultural and Creative Limited
新鴻基地產代理有限公司	Sun Hung Kai Real Estate Agency Limited
	The Coffee Pro Limited
香港上海滙豐銀行有限公司	The HongKong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited
香港歌劇社	The Opera Society of Hong Kong
身心型造所	The Wellness Hub
慧妍雅集	Wai Yin Association
	Walgreens Boots Alliance HR Team
仙足林	
留住花開最美時	
琳琳美集	
個人 Individuals	
歐陽耀冲	Au Yeung Yiu-chung
李科和	Anson Lee

	Cha Liu Bie Ju
陳恩能	Daniel Chan
	Chan Mei-wan
	Chan Ming-shan
	Chan Tak-sin
	Chan Ting-bong
	Chan Wai-chiu
陳葦如	Chan Wai-yue
	Chan Wing-ming
鄭兆聰	Cheng Siu-chung
張頌欣	Ronald Cheung
	Samuel Cheng
	Cheung Chi-Shing
	Cheung Lai-hung, Theonna
	Chow Man-hong
	Chow Wai-ming
陳祉俊	Christopher Chan
	Chu Yee-lit
	Zint Erna
方保僑	Francis Fong
方力申	Fong Lik-sun, Alex
	Fong On-wah

	Fong Ting-man
扈國強	Fu Kwok-Keung, Edwin
	Fung Ha-man
	Fung Yat-wah
	Ip Tai-ho, Becky
	Kan Lai-kwan, Kay
	Kwan Ying-kit
	Lam Ding-fung
劉舜文	Lau Shun-man
	Law Man-ting, Albert
	Lee Chan-hung
李志堅	Lee Chi-kin
	Lee Chun-yin, Terence
	Lee Kar-bik
李景雄牧師	Rev Lee King-hung
	Lee Kwan-kit, Eddie
	Lee Shun-cheung
	Lee Sun-wood & Tam Fung-ha
梁頌恩	Leung Chung-yan, Joanna
	Leung Kwok-chor, David
	Leung Lai-ping
	Leung Yuk-ying

	Li Chi-fong
李詩禮	Li Si-lai
李德能	Li Tak-nang
	Li Wong On-ni, Annie
	Lim Gee-chung, Godfrey
	Lok Chi-yeung
	Lok Wai-ming
雷雄德博士	Dr Lobo Louie
	Luk Siu-ming
馬啟仁	Keyman Ma
	Mak Kam-chan
	Mak Lai-ching
文浩正	Jonathan Man
莫乃光, JP	Charles Mok, JP
	Ng Pui-fong, Iris
吳詠希	Ng Wing-hei, Nicole
辛祖	Jadon Malik Sancho
許遵發	Fred Sheu
	Shirley Tsang
	Tam Yue-man
	Tang Yu-ching, Calvin
	Tang Yuk-mei

	Tin Kwong-ping
	Tong Pak-chuen
	Tong Wai-oi, Wanda
	Tse Pui-lan, Bonnie
	Wong Kam-ling, Anna
	Wong Lok-quan
	Wong Man-kit
	Wong Ping-hung
	Wong Wai-yin, Kenneth
黃永康	Stanley W. H. Wong
	Wong Yan-hin
	Woo Ming-lau
葉鴻輝	Yapp Hung-fai
	Yick Yiu-ho
姚錦成	Yiu Kam-shing, Salom
姚潔貞	Yiu Kit-ching, Christy
	Yuen Wai-key
郁德芬博士 BBS, JP	Dr Alice Yuk, BBS, JP
	Yung Siu-shan
孔德培	彭晴
甘珮瑤	楊曉維
馬丁	劉文輝

張茗棋	談鳳霞
梁顯燊 (已故)	鄭德惠
陳秋梅	鍾嘉敏
陳桂蓮	蘇鈺瑩
陳詩賢	

全體義工 All Volunteers