

## Volunteer Hours in Hong Kong More Than Double in Eight Years “Volunteering in Hong Kong” Survey Findings Unveiled

### Survey Highlights:

- The total number of volunteer hours contributed in 2009 was **87 million** hours.
- Total economic value of volunteering in Hong Kong was **HK\$5.5 billion**, which was equivalent to **0.34%** of Gross Domestic Product in 2009 or **41,500** full-time jobs.
- Volunteers in Hong Kong were better educated, younger, with higher income and better social status. 41.7% of the volunteers surveyed had post-secondary education; 56% of them aged between 15 to 39 years old; 25.4% had personal income of HK\$15,000 or above; and 49.4% were managers and professionals.
- About two-fifth (**38.9%**) of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) interviewed had provided training programs to their volunteers.
- Over half (**54.2%**) of NGOs surveyed had not provided any personal accidents insurance to their volunteers.

(5<sup>th</sup> May 2010 – Hong Kong) Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS), a leading local NGO that devoted to the promotion of volunteer service for 40 years, today unveiled a survey report on “Volunteering in Hong Kong”. Sponsored by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, the survey was conducted by the Centre for Civil Society and Governance, The University of Hong Kong. It aimed to provide a comprehensive picture of volunteering in Hong Kong and thereby shed lights on the future direction for developing sustainable volunteerism for Hong Kong.

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The survey was comprised of three sections: one on the general public’s perception and participation in volunteering, one on NGOs’ volunteer management and the third one on volunteers currently serving in various NGOs.

**Mr. Tang Kwai Nang**, BBS, JP, Chairman, Task Force on Study Project on Volunteering towards Community Building in Hong Kong, AVS noted, “we are very excited to see that volunteer hours have more than doubled in 8 years from 2001 to 2009. The healthy and steady growth of volunteering has demonstrated that the people of Hong Kong have now progressively realized the value of volunteer service, both in terms of its economic and social contributions to the society. In addition, we are delighted to find increasing diversity of volunteering as more volunteers begin to involve in areas like environmental service, counselling and skill coaching. We are also pleased to note that volunteers now see this as a means for self-actualization and find the experience fulfilling and meaningful.”

#### **Other Survey Findings:**

- Respondents who had participated in organized volunteering before increased from 22.4% in 2001 to 35.9% in 2009. About one-fifth (18.6%) of them had participated in organized volunteering over the past 12 months. In addition, more than half of them (52.3%) contributed over 30 hours of volunteer service in the past year.
- However, Hong Kong still lagged behind other developed countries, like Australia, Canada and the US, in terms of both volunteer rate and volunteer hours.
- School was an excellent source of volunteers. Students comprised one-fifth (20.7%) of current volunteers.
- More than half (53.2%) of the NGOs interviewed had used volunteers over the past 12 months. These organizations were mainly under the categories of Welfare Service (100%), Health Service (89.7%), and Civic and Advocacy (81.9%).
- The main hindrance to volunteering was “no time” for ex- (77.9%) and non- (75.9%) volunteers.

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Professor **Joseph Chan Cho Wai**, Centre for Civil Society and Governance, The University of Hong Kong, noted, “it is encouraging to see that volunteer rate has increased tremendously over the last few years. It is important to sustain this growth momentum as from the survey, we note that the longer the volunteer experience, the more likely these volunteers are to serve longer hours. Moreover, the younger the volunteers start volunteering, the longer they serve as volunteers. More importantly, volunteers generally have a higher level of trust and higher sense of belonging to Hong Kong than the others.”

“As a non-profit organization committed to motivating individuals and organizations to provide volunteer service, we see that this survey report has far reaching implication for development of volunteerism. Volunteering makes good economic contribution but its social contributions are far more important as it promotes and helps to build a caring, trusted and harmonious society. AVS will continue our effort and we call for the support of various sectors in the community, media and school, in particular, to build a volunteering culture for Hong Kong,” concluded Mr. Tang.

- Ends -

**About AVS**

AVS, established in 1970, is a non-profit organization with mission to motivate individuals and organizations to provide volunteer service through partnership with all sectors of the community.