Donations pour in to support 13 major social welfare projects

Recording-breaking 40,000 donors help initiate nearly 600 welfare programs

443 social welfare organizations to help 630,000 people or 460,000 families

As the economy reaches the bottom, social welfare groups have received a surging number of cases in need of guidance but they also face a sharp decrease of income from fundraising. As a result, when United Way Taiwan received record-breaking requests for subsidies at the end of last year, the organizers were very worried about this year’s capital gap. Following the Citi-United Way Fundraising Campaign’s three-month efforts, although the total amount of fund collected was slightly lower than last year, it had attracted enthusiastic participation from 40,000 people, the highest number of donors in the campaign’s history. These benevolent people, who do not hesitate to share their love during the economic downturn, have not only touched the organizers, but also helped initiate nearly 600 welfare programs this year.

Fundraising amount is second-highest in history from record-breaking number of donors following three-month efforts

As the Citi-United Way Fundraising Campaign marches into the 14th year, it has faced unprecedented challenges. With the economic prospect dipping to the bottom due to the global financial crisis, donations greatly shrink and social welfare groups face the risk of layoffs and even closedown as they find it difficult to raise fund for the surging number of people in need. Even before the campaign started, the two organizers not only had to minimize negative impacts brought by the financial crisis, but also faced social welfare groups’ high expectations of subsidies. The pressure was extremely huge.

Considering the grave crisis facing the Taiwanese society, Citi provided corporate resources to sponsor the campaign and called on its employees to make donations. Apart from the first amount of NT$8 million donations Citi made to facilitate the fundraising campaign and meet the need for gift purchases, Citi’s colleagues and clients have also made contributions, resulting in a total amount of NT$22 million fund. This has not only allowed the campaign to smoothly progress, but provided important financial support to those in need as Citi’s donations account for one-fourth of the campaign’s total fundraising amount. United Way Taiwan has also planned the “13 major social welfare projects,” by integrating the nation’s over 400 social welfare groups of various types to jointly propose their specific visions that help donors better understand the effects their
donations can bring to the Taiwanese society. Following three months of efforts, the fundraising campaign that concluded in mid-February collected a total amount of NT$85,63 million. Nearly 600 welfare programs that can benefit children, the elderly, the physically and mentally challenged, employment and families finally can be implemented.

Citi Taiwan Country Officer Morris Li said although corporate operations have faced immense challenges since last year, we are still blessed and capable of giving compared to those disadvantaged groups. Everyone in Citi understands this notion. Many colleagues are willing to join volunteer services, and the fundraising campaign saw a large number of Citi people’s participation. This is Citi’s corporate spirits: to care for local people by sharing and giving. Charitable actions should not shrink amidst the financial tsunami. On the contrary, companies should assume more corporate social responsibilities during the economic slowdown. In Citi’s case, Citi will perform well in the financial sector, take good care of its employees, contribute to help those in need and express gratitude to those who have always supported Citi.

Most donors are female, aged between 30 and 44, live in northern Taiwan and care about all the welfare programs

United Way Chairman Edward Y Way said although the fundraising result and the average amount of fund contributed by donors are slightly lower than last year, the situation is much better than United Way Taiwan had previously estimated. In particular, it is worth noting that this year the campaign attracted record-breaking 40,000 donors, with over 4,600 people (32 %) participating for the first time. They mostly live in northern areas (57.33%) and are aged between 30 and 44 (58.46 %). Women (53.72%) are slightly more than men and they work in various sectors affected by the financial crisis, including the service sector (17%), military personnel, civil servants and teachers (16.53 %), the financial sector (16.08%) and the manufacturing industry (15.98%). Even amidst the financial difficulties, they are still generous to lend a hand to those in need, which deserves encouragement.

As donors attach more and more importance to effectiveness of their donations, which groups do these benevolent people want to help the most? Around 60% of the donors said they would like to help all those in need. The second answer is for children-related cases, accounting for 18.43%, followed by the mentally and physically challenged (7.34%) and the elderly (6.57%). In addition to social welfare needs, donors also highly regard environmental protection. Of them, 21.9 percent chose not to claim the campaign’s free gifts and asked to turn them into the environmental protection fund. In response, Citi will donate an additional amount of over NT$200,000 to the Society of Wilderness to support its environmental protection plans.

Chou Wen-chen, Secretary-General of United Way Taiwan, said these figures indicate donors’
confidence in United Way Taiwan’s capabilities of integrating social resources. They also deliver an important message: during the economic slowdown, donors further demand the maximization of donations’ effectiveness! For United Way Taiwan, which oversees the donations, it is a rigorous demand. As a result, it will be a critical challenge as to how to meet the changing needs under different social environments and diversified problems emerging from different cases, as well as how to integrate social welfare groups’ various specialties to work out solutions with higher effectiveness.

Subsidies focus on three major areas to address changing needs under different social environments

In the face of donors’ trust and expectations, Chou said they really appreciate donors’ recognition of the “13 major social welfare projects” and their trust with United Way Taiwan’s capabilities of making effective use of social resources. This year’s 600 welfare programs have successively started, including helping crisis families deal with their diversified problems, offering professional consultation and life assistance to the sick, preventing and resolving adolescents’ deviation behaviors, offering early treatment to the physically and mentally challenged children, and providing life and schoolwork guidance to the disadvantaged children. The projects are expected to produce considerable results at the year-end, helping around 443 social welfare organizations and 630,000 individuals, or 460,000 families, that are assisted by these organizations.

To address the various social problems produced by the economic slowdown, Chou said, apart from the existing subsidized areas, United Way Taiwan will integrate the service networks to promote employment, assist disadvantaged families and strengthen caring services. It is expected 100,000 families will benefit from the programs. Chou stressed that although the Citi-United Way Fundraising Campaign has concluded, social welfare needs still abound. She hopes the public can continue to support and supervise United Way Taiwan’s works and make concerted efforts for a better tomorrow.

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About Citi United Way Fundraising Campaign 2008
Already in its 14th year, the Citi United Way Fundraising Campaign starts on November 1 every year and lasts till January 31 the following year. It has received warm response from the public every year. Over the past 13 years, it has collected donations worth over NT$790 million, helping United Way Taiwan initiate 4,846 social welfare programs. During the campaign, donors would receive an annual gift of a Santa Claus doll when donating over NT$3,000 through credit cards, or two dolls of Santa Claus and reindeer when donating over NT$5,000.
About Citi
Citi, the leading global financial services company, has some 200 million customer accounts and does business in more than 140 countries, providing consumers, corporations, governments and institutions with a broad range of financial products and services through Citibank and Citiholdings. The services provided include consumer banking and credit, corporate and investment banking, securities brokerage, and wealth management. Additional information may be found at www.citigroup.com or www.citi.com.

About United Way Taiwan
The professional social resources manager you can trust – United Way Taiwan
Established on October 17, 1992, United Way Taiwan is a national non-profit organization specializing in fundraising. Currently it has hundreds of volunteers, including social welfare scholars, lawyers, accountants, practitioners, social celebrities and entrepreneurs. Through diversified participation from professional volunteers, resource collecting and allocation, United Way Taiwan follows the principles of discretion, fairness, carefulness and clarity to assume the role of a “professional manager” who ensures Taiwanese society’s social resources are well used.

* All the donors will receive official receipts issued by United Way Taiwan for tax deduction. Each amount of donations will be listed on United Way Taiwan’s computer system for the relevant authorities and the public’s inspection.

* The implementation progress of the service programs and the usage of subsidies of all the social welfare organizations that receive donations from United Way Taiwan are under close supervision of United Way Taiwan’s examination and auditing members. The information is available for public inspection.

* If the subsidized parties are found failing to properly use the subsidies granted, United Way Taiwan will retrieve the fund or cease paying the remaining fund.

* United Way Taiwan’s annual work report and financial report are submitted to the relevant authorities and fiscal auditing units for inspection after the fiscal year ends.

United Way Taiwan’s credit card donations hotline: (02) 8780-0556 ext. 9