

WOMEN'S COMMISSION
Development of an Action Plan for 2001-02

INTRODUCTION

This paper :-

- (a) presents for Members' information the Policy Objective booklet - "Promote the Well-Being and Interests of Women in Hong Kong"; and
- (b) seeks Members' advice on a proposed Action Plan for the Women's Commission for 2001-02 and other related arrangements.

POLICY OBJECTIVE BOOKLET

2. The Government is committed to promoting the advancement of women in Hong Kong. In October 2000, a Policy Objective (PO) booklet was published for the first time as part of the Policy Address documents. The PO booklet presents a comprehensive picture of what Government is seeking to achieve in respect of this policy area and outlines policy commitments for the coming year. The key components to deliver the overall policy objective are :

- develop a long-term vision and strategies related to the development and advancement of women;
- identify women's needs and improve women's services;
- facilitate women to participate more fully in the community; and
- raise public awareness on women and gender-related issues and reduce gender stereotyping.

A copy of the booklet is at [Annex A](#).

PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2001-02

3. New measures would need to be initiated to deliver results in the above areas. Taking into account the overall policy objective and the above various key components, it is proposed for Members' consideration that the Action Plan for the Women's Commission for 2001-02 should include the following aspects : -

- (a) identify and review existing women services;
- (b) development of a holistic strategy to promote women well-being;
- (c) public education to reduce gender stereotyping;
- (d) training for civil servants to enhance understanding of women's issues;
- (e) facilitate women participation in the community; and
- (f) collection of sex-disaggregated statistics.

Review of Women's Services

4. The Secretariat has received many representations from women's groups suggesting a wide range of issues and women's service areas that should be tackled by the Women's Commission. A full list of the concerns raised are at Annex B (not attached). The Government is committed to improving the delivery of services to women to better cater for their needs. Obviously it would not be possible for the Commission to tackle all issues and review all women's services at one time. It is therefore proposed that Members should identify priority service areas for action at the initial stage. The following are suggested for consideration : -

- (a) services for victims of various forms of violence;
- (b) retraining for women;
- (c) services for new arrival women; and
- (d) provision of childcare facilities.

Review of women's services in the selected areas would allow the Commission to identify service gaps and consider whether some of the existing services should be re-organised, or how resources should be redeployed to areas with

greater need.

Strategic Development

5. The Women's Commission is a central body to oversee women's needs and to specifically address matters of concern to women in a comprehensive, systematic and holistic manner. The Commission is tasked by the Government to draw up longer term strategies and plans to promote the well-being and interests of women in Hong Kong. This is therefore one important element to be included in the Action Plan.

6. In developing the long-term strategy, Members may wish to take into consideration the following : -

- (a) the overall direction of promoting women's advancement;
- (b) targets to be achieved in the medium and long term;
- (c) key messages to be delivered to the public; and
- (d) initial areas for action.

Given the complexity of the matter, Members may wish to consider the need to set a "strategy and planning sub-committee" to map out the overall strategy for handling women issues.

Gender-sensitive Educational Activities

7. Members will wish to note that the Government has already launched various promotional activities to raise public awareness on gender related issues and to reduce gender stereotyping in recent years. Notwithstanding these efforts, the community at large is still not sufficiently sensitive to women's issues. As such, it is proposed that the Commission should devise, as part of its Action Plan, a gender-sensitive educational programme, which may include the following :-

- (a) publicity activities : publicity campaign on television, radio and the print media, production of TV APIs and docu-drama, exhibitions etc;
- (b) educational activities for teachers and students : workshops, school talks and seminars; and
- (c) reaching out to the community : to co-organise with non-governmental organisations community educational

programmes.

8. It is envisaged that discussions will need to be carried out with local women's groups and relevant organisations. Given the scope of work and coverage of the gender-sensitive educational programme, Members may wish to consider setting up a "community education and publicity sub-committee" to help to devise and monitor the programme.

Gender-sensitive Training to Civil Servants

9. The Secretariat has sought proposals from the Gender Research Centre of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The Commission will be asked to advise on the detailed proposals before introduction.

Facilitate Women Participation

10. As one of the key result areas in promoting the well-being of women, the Government is committed to facilitating women to participate more fully in the community. It is intended that specific programmes / measures should be initiated in 2001. These would include facilitating women to participate more fully in the labour market and serving on Government advisory and statutory bodies. On the latter, we intend to seek Members' advice shortly.

Statistics

11. To better understand women's situation in Hong Kong, their contribution to society and to assist policy makers to take account of women's perspectives in policy formulation, it is necessary to collate and collect women-related statistics and sex-disaggregated data¹ in Hong Kong. We understand that some information in this respect has already been collected by Census & Statistics Department, and the Department is preparing a report on this subject for presentation at the next meeting. In this connection, the Government is committed to establish a sex-disaggregated database and will seek advice from the Commission.

¹ Sex-disaggregated data means any data that is cross-classified by sex, presenting information separately for women and men, girls and boys. Sex disaggregated data is collected on the basis of concepts and methods that take into account women's and men's roles, realities, conditions and situations in all spheres and aspects of society, such as literacy, education levels, business ownership, loans and credit, debts.

ADVICE SOUGHT

12. Members are invited to : -

- (a) note the Policy Objective booklet to promote the well-being and interest of women in Hong Kong;
- (b) consider the suitability of adopting the elements suggested in paragraph 3(a)-(f) to form the Action Plan for Women's Commission for 2001-02;
- (c) identify priority service areas for review;
- (d) comment on the approach of setting up a sub-committee to develop a holistic strategy to promote the well-being of women in Hong Kong; and
- (e) comment on the approach of setting up a sub-committee to devise a gender-sensitive educational programme.

Women's Commission Secretariat

13 January 2001