

## **WOMEN'S COMMISSION**

### **Publicity and Public Education Strategy of Women's Commission**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper seeks Members' advice and agreement on a publicity and public education strategy for the Women's Commission and an action plan developed by the Public Education Task Force (hereafter referred to as the Task Force). Members' views are also sought on the strategy proposed by the Task Force in launching a large-scale media programme and the way forward.

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. The Women's Commission held a special session on 12 June 2001 to discuss two of the three identified priority areas of work, i.e. gender-mainstreaming and public education. In the area of public education, Members agreed that the Commission should map out a public education strategy, lay down its priorities and determine the most important messages to be conveyed. It was further considered that the programmes to be developed should take into account the mission of the Commission, the purpose of the programme, the target audience/clients, and the type of language to be used for communicating with different sectors. In view of the extent of work involved, the Commission agreed that a Public Education Task Force be set up to take forward the specific area on public education.

3. The Public Education Task Force was set up in July 2001. Its terms of reference, as adopted by the Commission at its meeting on 10 July 2001, is "to take on specific tasks related to public education and publicity as requested by the Women's Commission, including devising a PR and publicity strategy for the Commission, an action plan for public education programmes, and overseeing the implementation of such programmes". The two co-convenors are Ms. Ophelia Cheung and Mrs. Peggy Lam. A membership list is at Annex A. The Task Force has so far held five meetings. Matters such as the guiding principles and areas of work, a strategy and action plan for PR and public education programmes, possible messages to be developed and

activities to be conducted were discussed. Members of the Task Force also participate in the Organising Committee of the Women's Commission Convention 2002 and Budget Coordinating Group to discuss and take forward matters related to publicity and public education.

## **PUBLICITY AND PUBLIC EDUCATION STRATEGY**

4. The Public Education Task Force considers that the publicity and public education efforts of the Women's Commission should aim to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) to raise public awareness and sensitivity on gender issues;
- (b) to enhance public interest in women-related issues;
- (c) to tackle gender misconceptions with a view to changing mindset and behaviour and fostering new perspectives; and
- (d) to introduce the work of the Women's Commission.

5. In developing the strategy, the Task Force considers that the Women's Commission's visibility in all publicity and public education efforts should be maximized. In order to enhance public knowledge of the Women's Commission, it is reckoned that top priority should be accorded to publicity activities which can produce eye-catching and positive impact and help create the public image of the Women's Commission. On the other hand, on-going, steady and persistent efforts have to be made to achieve the objective of promoting greater gender sensitivity within the community and raising general awareness about women-related issues.

6. It is recognized that the PR and public education programmes to be developed should target at the general public, and specific groups such as women, the media, or the educational sector. On the latter, educational programmes like educational kits, seminars for families and schools and leaders training programmes may be organised at a later stage to tie in with the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Task Force and Empowerment Task Force.

7. In developing messages for the target audience/clients, the Task Force has also taken note of the comments made at an earlier Commission meeting that the number of messages to be delivered at any one time should not be too many or too diverse, and that different approaches and means of

communication may have to be adopted having regard to the diverse background and needs of different social sectors. It was agreed that the following guiding principles should be adopted:-

- messages should be simple, precise, easy to understand and communicate;
- messages should be consistent;
- bilingualism (and use of sign language as appropriate) for external communication;
- outcome of efforts should, as far as possible, be measurable or assessable; and
- the positioning of the Women's Commission, which should be worked out further.

8. With regard to the above considerations, the Task Force identified the following messages for each group of target audience/clients:-

- (a) Women's Commission : to convey ideas like - "Caring for your status, rights and opportunities", "Promote the well-being and interests of women in Hong Kong", "Working for a better future for all" or "To build a smarter Hong Kong", and to stress the willingness to work with NGOs;
- (b) community : to emphasise the need to respect individual needs, equal responsibilities and opportunities for women and men; to address stereotyping as well as gender misconception; and that a society that allows both sexes to fully develop their potentials is a better society;
- (c) women themselves : to emphasise the need for self-esteem, independence, self-empowerment, making independent choices, self-confidence (自尊、自立、自強、自主、自信); and
- (d) specific issues: violence against women; women in crisis; women and health, etc; and other messages related to the work of the other two Task Forces.

9. The Task Force has noted the earlier suggestion from Members that PR or advertising experts could be commissioned to translate the ideas into messages which would be widely accepted by the target audience/clients and different publicity methods and vehicles would be used effectively. Activities

may include a high profile media campaign targeting at the general public, comprising a large TV show, TV and radio APIs and programmes, one-minute segments in TV programmes, interviews, drama series, advertisements, posters, roving exhibitions, CD production, competitions including a translation competition on “empowerment”, seminars, educational projects, community activities and other components to be delivered in stages as considered appropriate.

10. It is proposed that a soft-selling approach appealing to reason and bringing about resonance would be more effective in conveying the messages and easier to win popular acceptance and support.

11. As for on-going efforts to disseminate messages for women themselves or on specific issues, it was agreed that activities may include organizing award schemes, sharing sessions, forums and seminars, and working with the educational sector including parent-teacher associations, associations of school principals and teacher associations, as well as organizing joint functions with NGOs.

12. The Task Force reckons that since many NGOs would be organising functions to promote women’s causes, there should be ample opportunities of co-operation with them. Besides, it is considered that opportunities could be explored to maximize the resources of willing sponsors or strategic partners like Government bureaux and departments through collaboration.

13. Moreover, the Task Force considers it desirable to establish a Women Resources Centre in a public library, preferably at the Hong Kong Central Library, to promote public understanding of women-related issues. Discussion on this has already been initiated with the Central Library and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

## **ACTION PLAN**

14. To realize its objectives as set out in paragraph 4 above, the Task Force has developed an action plan for the publicity and public education programmes. It is proposed that a large scale media programme comprising promotional activities and other public education programmes be carried out within a broad time-frame from now until mid-2003. As mentioned above, it

is envisaged that the series of programmes should start off with a high profile media campaign to be launched in early 2002 to promote the work of the Women's Commission and create a positive public image of the Commission. Other activities will be rolled out in stages in the coming one and a half years. A schedule showing details of the programme is at Annex B (*not attached hereto*).

## **LARGE SCALE MEDIA PROGRAMME**

15. To take forward the large scale media programme, the Task Force is of the view that advertising agencies should be approached for package proposals. In this regard, the Information Services Department (ISD) has assisted the Task Force in preparing a brief for potential advertising agencies to invite their proposals. A copy is at Annex C (*not attached hereto*). The selected advertising firm will be required to render professional service in strategy development, creative development, media consultancy and event management.

16. Apart from publicizing the Women's Commission itself, the activities need to drive home the important message that a society that allows both genders to fully develop their potential is a better society. In general, ideas to be conveyed in the campaign and other related activities will include:

- Women's Commission - Working for a better future for all (introducing the role and work of the Commission)
- Mutual respect between the genders
- Equal responsibilities and opportunities for women and men in the family and at work
- The need for self-esteem, independence, self-empowerment, making independent choices, and self-confidence among women
- Women's angle should be duly taken into account in all aspects of life (gender mainstreaming)

17. The Task Force is of the view that the above messages should be conveyed to the community at large, or separately for women themselves, as appropriate, and be focused on specific themes or on issues related to the work of the Gender Mainstreaming Task Force and Empowerment Task Force. In promoting the above ideas, the aim is to change commonly held gender-related misconceptions on the roles, values and images, as well as the ability of different genders. The advertising agency would be tasked to work out the

actual wording of the messages which should be simple, precise, easy to understand and communicate, and consistent.

## **BUDGET**

18. The proposed budget for the media campaign, including API production, and other community events including publicity and organization of a translation competition on “empowerment” is estimated to be \$3.6 million, to be spread over two years up to mid-2003, inclusive of agency fee, production costs for publicity materials and placement charges for advertisements.

## **WAY FORWARD**

19. A project brief was issued to advertising agencies on 22 October 2001 inviting proposals to develop a strategy, create publicity materials, advise on the budgetary allocation of funds and on the placement schedules, and help implement publicity and public education programmes. Interested companies attended a briefing given by the Task Force on 31 October 2001. They were invited to submit their proposals by 16 November 2001.

20. As there are likely to be many proposals from the advertising firms, it is **suggested** that an initial screening and shortlisting exercise be conducted by the Secretariat with the assistance of Information Services Department. The shortlisted firms would be invited to make presentations on 20 November 2001 to the Women’s Commission, which would serve as the selection panel. It is also **recommended** that the selection criteria at Annex D (*not attached hereto*), which are based on those used for major Government publicity campaigns, be adopted by the Women’s Commission for use at the selection exercise. A working schedule on this is at Annex E (*not attached hereto*).

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

21. Members are invited to:-

- (a) consider and comment on the publicity and public education

strategy and the related action plan as developed by the Public Education Task Force (paragraphs 4-14);

- (b) consider and comment on the proposed large scale media programme and related budget (paragraphs 15-18); and
- (c) consider and endorse the selection criteria to be adopted in appointing an advertising agency for the conduct of the large scale media programme (Annex D).

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Women's Commission Secretariat  
November 2001

**Public Education Task Force**  
**List of Members hip**

Co-convenors: Ms Ophelia Cheung

Mrs Peggy Lam

Members: Mr Wellington Cheng

Mr Maurice Lee

Mr Yeung Ka-sing

Dr Agnes Yeung