

**WOMEN'S COMMISSION**  
**Capacity Building Mileage Programme**

**PURPOSE**

This paper informs Members of progress made by the Working Group on Planning (WGP) in developing a capacity building framework.

**BACKGROUND**

2. At the Planning Workshop of the Women's Commission (WoC) held on 1 June 2002, Members reviewed the work and experience of WoC and explored its roles and long-term goals. The meeting identified three topics<sup>1</sup> that the WoC should focus on in the immediate term, and agreed that a working group should be formed to work out an action plan for these topics. In this connection, a Working Group on Planning (WGP) convened by the Chairperson, WoC was set up on 16 July 2002, and. Members from each Task Force and the Working Group on Collaboration were nominated to sit on this group. So far, WGP has had six meetings.

3. The WGP recommended, inter alia, that "human capacity building" should be the overarching theme of the WoC for the immediate term. This was endorsed by the Commission at its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 10 September 2002. The WGP considers that human capacity building comprises a number of elements, including mobilising one's own initiative, identifying one's potential, enabling achievement, providing a suitable environment, supporting as well as providing opportunities for development of potential. Development of a capacity building framework was considered necessary to promote these objectives for women in Hong Kong.

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<sup>1</sup> the topics are: economic well-being, education and training, and participation and decision-making

## **THE CAPACITY BUILDING FRAMEWORK**

### **Need for a framework**

4. An essential aspect of capacity building among women is the provision of adequate and relevant education and training programmes. However, the WGP observes that existing education/training programmes provided by various training institutions and NGOs are mainly offering vocational related training/retraining programmes for women. These programmes do not fully address the needs or interests of women, i.e. in terms of location, timing of classes, pre-requisite academic requirements, and choice of subjects, etc.

5. The WGP feels that women should be encouraged to develop an interest in learning and a desire for self-development and transformation, so that they can be better equipped to face life's challenges and to deal with adverse circumstances.

6. Furthermore, the WGP recognises many of the programmes currently offered by the training/retraining authorities are inadequate in passing on skills and knowledge to enable women to develop their potential and participate more fully in the community. WGP sees a need to develop women's capacity in the following aspects: creativity, curiosity, personal judgement, self-reliance, self-confidence and sense of humour/optimism.

7. Taking into account the above, the WGP is of the view that a capacity building framework should be developed to:-

- (a) improve the all round ability of women as individuals;
- (b) encourage/facilitate women to widen their perspectives and to develop / realise their potential so that they can pursue their interests and goals, contribute to one's own self-development, to the family and society, and participate more fully in the community;
- (c) encourage women to develop their learning interest and ability, so that in due course, some of them can participate in the mainstream studies; and

- (d) help remove environmental barriers and promoting opportunities for women to build up their capacities.

Key features of the “Capacity Building Mileage Programme”

8. Based on the above objectives, the WGP considers that WoC should play a catalytic role and mobilise different institutions (including NGOs, training/tertiary institutions, Government, etc) in developing a programme (which was given the title of “Capacity Building Mileage Programme” (CBMP)) under the framework. WGP members have had several exchanges of views with a local university. Following such exchanges, the university has developed a CBMP proposal. The programme has the following key features as suggested by WGP:-

- (a) flexibility – the CBMP will be flexible enough to allow participants to take up courses at any time (“multiple entry points”) and accumulate “points”, which enable them to proceed to other formal or more advanced courses (hence “mileage”), or to exit the programme at any time (“multiple exit points”);
- (b) mode of delivery – unlike conventional programmes, classes will be minimised as courses will mainly be broadcast through radio and supplemented by mass seminars, so as to allow more flexibility in learning. Telephone tutorials or group discussions, etc, may be provided by NGOs;
- (c) contents – the courses conducted through the CBMP need not all be vocation-oriented or leading to the award of formal qualifications. Courses provided under the CBMP will be tailor-made to meet the needs of women, and the intention is that at the pilot stage, most of the courses should target at women at grassroot level and they should be able to associate learning with their daily activities (e.g. family dynamics, child development and care, interpersonal relationships, time management, problem-solving skills, and stress management, etc);

- (d) assessment – unlike conventional programmes where course providers prescribe one type of assessment method (usually tests), the CBMP would allow (i) self assessment (reflective writing); (ii) a combination of assessment methods (e.g. tests, course work, self-reflective writing); or (iii) peer/family reflection (e.g. the changes observed by peers and family members) or a combination of these;
- (e) recognition – there will be several levels in the CBMP (which may be characterised by a colour code). To attain a certain level of learning, participants will need to accumulate a certain number of “points” as determined by the number of hours of learning completed for each course. A participant could move on to the next level if she has accumulated a certain number of points. Participants might choose not to complete the course with assessment, and in such cases, no “points” would be awarded;
- (f) registration – a participant who wishes to obtain course materials, accumulate “points”, and take an “assessment” at the end of the course would need to register. Otherwise, no need to register;
- (g) fees – a registration fee may be charged by the CBMP provider from each participant. The fee should be set at a level to recover the expenditure incurred for registration of participants and production of course material. The fee for assessment should be charged separately and the cost of supplementary learning activities (organised by NGOs) would be settled by the organisations and individuals involved; and
- (h) programme evaluation – the effectiveness of the CBMP would be kept under constant assessment. Evaluation should be made on the basis of participants’ performance.

9. While the CBMP would be designed with a women focus, all interested members in the community would be welcome to participate in the programme.

10. As regards the role of WoC, the WGP **recommends** that WoC should be an inspirer and champion, i.e. inputting new ideas, securing support from the relevant authorities and identifying the necessary resources. At the pilot stage of the CBMP, the WGP **suggests** that WoC members should participate in a Steering Committee to be set up for the pilot CBMP; help promote the CBMP in WoC website and through its contacts and public education activities, etc.

11. WGP considers that academic or training institutions, NGOs, as well as radio station(s) should be involved in the CBMP and **recommends** that they play the following roles:-

- (a) academic or training institution – to be responsible for project administration, course development and coordination, course standards, assessment, award of points and promotion of the CBMP;
- (b) NGOs – they could be involved (voluntarily) in one or more of the following ways:-
  - publicise the CBMP to members of community;
  - recapitulate key messages of the courses to programme participants;
  - provide support to programme participants in the form of telephone tutorials, or peer sharing sessions (and in these cases, participants should settle the relevant cost involved with the NGOs); and
  - initiate case studies;
- (c) Radio station(s) – act as media partner to provide professional input for production of radio-based courses, as well as making available suitable airtime for broadcasting the courses.

## **WAY FORWARD**

12. To assess whether the concept of CBMP would be well-received and to further refine the objectives, format and key features of the capacity building framework, it may be useful for some focus group studies to be conducted. It is therefore **recommended** for WoC's consideration that WGP be invited to look into the issues relating to tendering and focus group studies. It is also **recommended** that WGP be invited to work out a detailed timeframe for development and implementation of the programme.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

13. Members are invited to:-
- (a) note and give comments on the objectives and key features of the capacity building framework (paragraphs 4 – 11); and
  - (b) consider the recommendations at para 12 to invite WGP to work further on issues relating to the capacity building framework and development of a detailed timeframe.

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Women's Division  
2 April 2003