

WOMEN'S COMMISSION
Notes of the 73rd Meeting held on 5 June 2013

<u>Present:</u>	Mrs Stella LAU	(Chairperson)
	Miss Annie TAM	(Vice-chairperson)
	Ms Doris CHEUNG	
	Ms Teresa AU	
	Ms AU YEUNG Po-chun	
	Dr Polly CHEUNG	
	Dr Maggie KOONG	
	Prof LAM Ching-man	
	Ms Leona LAM	
	Ms LAM Yuk-chun	
	Dr Trisha LEAHY	
	Dr LEUNG Lai-ching	
	Mrs Miranda LEUNG	
	Mr Philip TSAI	
	Ms Catherine WONG	
	Mr Robert WONG	
	Ms Sandy WONG	
	Miss Rabi YIM	
	Ms Constance YUE	
	Mr Patrick NIP	Director for Social Welfare
	Miss LI Wan-in	Assistant Secretary 5B, Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
<u>Absent with</u>	Ms Aruna GURUNG	
<u>Apologies:</u>	Dr Ronnie HUI	
	Ms Ally LEE	
	Ms WONG Shu-ming	
<u>In</u>	Mrs Alison LAU	PAS (Welfare)2
<u>attendance:</u>	Miss Fiona LI	PAS (Welfare)2 (Des)
	Mr Louis LO	AS (Welfare)2A (Secretary)
	Miss Jeanne FUNG	AS (Welfare)2B
	Miss Noel NG	AS (Welfare)2C
	Ms Cheryl TSANG	SEO (Welfare)2
	Miss Ida TSE	PPO (Welfare)2

For Agenda	<u>Census and Statistics</u>	
Item 1:	<u>Department</u>	
	Mr Stephen LEUNG	Assistant Commissioner (Social)
	Mr Kenneth LAM	Senior Statistician (Social)2

Opening Remarks by the Chairperson

1.1 The Chairperson welcomed two new colleagues of the Secretariat, namely Miss Fiona LI, who would replace Mrs Alison LAU, and Miss Noel NG, who had already replaced Mr Andrew FAN. She also thanked Alison and Andrew for their support to WoC over the past years.

1.2 The Chairperson informed the meeting that Mr Patrick NIP would be posted out on 7 June. She thanked Patrick for his support and contributions to WoC over the past years.

1.3 The Chairperson said that the Steering Committee on Population Policy noted from Manpower Projection 2018 that the workforce in Hong Kong would begin to shrink after 2018 and considered that manpower shortage would be an imminent problem facing our society. The Steering Committee had suggested that the Government should motivate and facilitate more women, among others, to join the labour market. She opined that WoC was in a good position to complement the Government's work on the relevant issues and offer advice where appropriate.

1.4 The Chairperson said that the four working groups

would focus their work on promoting women employment in the next few years. She noted the work plans of the Working Groups which had already incorporated the theme, i.e. the Working Group on Enabling Environment would gather statistics on women employment through the Time-use Survey; the Working Group on Empowerment had contemplated launching a charter to promote women employment; the Working Group on Public Education had considered launching a website to promote employment-related information for women; and the Working Group on Collaboration had considered promoting women employment in collaboration with women's groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) via the Funding Scheme for Women's Development.

Item 1: Time-use Survey 2013

2.1 The Chairperson welcomed Mr LEUNG and Mr LAM from the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) to brief members on Time-use Survey 2013 and some statistics related to women employment.

2.2 The Administration introduced the findings of the survey "desire of economically inactive persons for taking up jobs if being offered suitable employment in 2011" conducted by C&SD.

2.3 Some Members noted that the labour force participation rate (LFPR) of women was on average much lower than that of men and the gap widened as women entered the child bearing

age. They were concerned about the reasons for the gap and whether any Government policies, like the introduction of Statutory Minimum Wage (SMW), had helped to raise the LFPR of women.

2.4 The Administration said that the LFPR of women had been increasing over the past years and the gap between the LFPR of men and women had been diminishing. This could be explained by the improving education level of women. In addition, statistics showed that the LFPR had generally increased after the introduction of SMW and the increase was more significant for women.

2.5 Some Members opined that the rise in LFPR of women might be attributed to the increase in the number of unmarried women who were not bounded by family responsibilities and they believed that the LFPR of married women remained low. To further increase the LFPR of women, a Member suggested that the Government should further strengthen the childcare services to relieve women of their family responsibilities.

2.6 The Administration said that the Steering Committee on Population Policy was planning to conduct a public consultation on population policy. The promotion of women employment would be covered in the public consultation and WoC would have the opportunity to contribute to the subject matter.

2.7 In response to Members' enquiries about the major

occupations of female employees in Hong Kong, the Administration said that C&SD had collected statistics on the occupations of the general Hong Kong population through the Population Census and other regular surveys. Such statistics were uploaded in C&SD's website for perusal by the public.

2.8 The Co-convenors of Working Group on Enabling Environment briefed members on the Time-use Survey 2013 which would be conducted in the third quarter of 2013.

2.9 The following suggestions on the Time-use Survey were discussed at the meeting -

- Time spent on parenting, personal growth, physical exercises and taking care of family members should be included in the survey;
- C&SD should take necessary measures to encourage the respondents to complete the questionnaire which might be lengthy;
- Privacy of the respondents should be protected; and
- The pattern of women's unpaid activities should be identified to facilitate WoC's planning of its future work.

2.10 The Administration said that the Time-use Survey should be able to provide useful statistics to facilitate bureaux

to formulate policies in relation to women and WoC to plan its future work. Nevertheless, before the results of the time-use survey were available, WoC might continue to refer to relevant statistics that had already been captured by C&SD when planning for its work.

2.11 The Chairperson thanked Members for their useful comments and advice. She asked the Working Group on Enabling Environment to further develop the survey questionnaire in consultation with C&SD, taking into account Members' views.

Item 2: Progress Report on Women's Development Goals (WoC 06/13)

3.1 The Administration introduced the paper WoC 06/13.

3.2 Members expressed the following views during the discussion –

- While many short term strategies of the Women Development Goals (WDG) had been completed or on which good progress had been made, WoC might start to give some thought to implementing the long-term goals. For the tasks that were on-going and completed, WoC might also consider whether any new tasks were required to fulfill the goal;
- In view of resource constraints, instead of keeping

track of and working on all the goals and strategies at the same time, WoC should prioritise its work and focus on a few strategies that could bring more significant impact. In identifying the strategies to be pursued, priority should be given to issues which were of concern to WoC and the general community. In addition, WoC should avoid duplicating the efforts of NGOs;

- WoC should maintain good communication with the women's groups and NGOs on the WDG as they played a part in the formulation of the goals and were concerned about its progress. While WoC should consider consulting the women's groups and NGOs before selecting a few strategies to work on, WoC should also be more proactive in keeping them informed of the achievements made by WoC as well as Government bureaux and departments;
- Consideration might be given to reviewing the promotional strategies for gender mainstreaming (GM) and whether the GM checklist was a suitable tool to promote the concept;
- WoC should leave the organisation of activities and the provision of front-line services to women's groups and NGOs which had good local networks. WoC should focus on addressing a few key issues which were of concern to women; and

- WoC should continue to work on health issues. At the proposed meeting with the Department of Health (DH), WoC might suggest some collaborative efforts for WoC and DH to jointly promote women's health.

3.3 The Chairperson thanked the Secretariat for compiling the progress report which provided a good stock take of the implementation of WDG. She agreed that while WoC might continue to conduct similar progress reviews from time to time in future, it should also reconsider how the WDG should be followed up. She said that WDG was an all-embracing development strategy that had provided a good guidance to WoC's work. Nevertheless, she opined that in planning for its future work WoC needed not be bounded by WDG. She suggested that WoC should focus on selected issues having regard to women's groups' concerns, social sentiments, social needs, etc. She reiterated that the Working Groups should work on measures that would help to promote women's employment as mentioned earlier at the meeting.

Item 3: Confirmation of Minutes of the 72nd Meeting (WoC 07/13)

4.1 The Minutes were confirmed without any amendment.

Item 4: Verbal Report by Working Groups

5.1 The Meeting noted the verbal reports made by the

respective working groups.

5.2 The Meeting noted that the next International Women's Day would fall on a Saturday. It was agreed that the Working Group on Public Education would give further thought on the arrangements of the celebration event to be held by WoC on that day.

Item 5: Secretary's Report (WoC 08/13)

6.1 The Meeting noted the Secretary's report.

Item 6: Any Other Business

7.1 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Women's Commission Secretariat

August 2013