

**WOMEN'S
COMMISSION**

Notes of the 110th meeting held on 8 May 2024

Date : 8 May 2024 (Wednesday)
Time : 10:00 am
Venue : Conference Room 4, G/F, The Central Government Offices

Present: Dr Eliza CHAN (Chairperson)
Ms Shirley LAM Permanent Secretary for Home and
Youth Affairs (Vice-Chairperson)
Professor LUI Yu-hon
Dr Kitty WU
Ms Winnie NG
Mr Adrian TAM
Ms Melissa PANG
Mr Walter TSUI
Mrs Jennifer CHENG YU
Ms Lily CHING
Ms Rita GURUNG
Ms Mary HUEN
Ms JIN Ling
Ms LU Hai
Mrs Katherine NGAN NG
Ms Cindy PUN
Professor SHAM Mai-har
Dr SO Wing-yee
Ms Ashley TSE (Video conference)
Ms Vivian TSUI
Ms Vivian WONG
Mr Niki KWOK Principal Assistant Secretary
(Constitutional and Mainland
Affairs)5/ Constitutional and

Ms Wendy CHAU

Mainland Affairs Bureau
Assistant Director (Family & Child
Welfare)/Social Welfare
Department (SWD)

Absent with Ms LAM Wai-ling

Apologies: Ms Juanita MOK

In Mr Nick AU YEUNG
attendance:

Ms Joyce CHAN

Ms Jody HUEN

Mr Kelvin CHEUNG

Ms Janice YUEN

Mr Toby LEUNG

Deputy Secretary for Home and
Youth Affairs (Home
Affairs)/Home and Youth Affairs
Bureau (HYAB)

Commissioner for Women
Affairs/HYAB (Secretary)

Chief Executive Officer/HYAB

Assistant Secretary (Women and
Family Affairs)2/HYAB

Senior Executive Manager (Women
and Family Affairs)1/HYAB

Executive Officer (Women and
Family Affairs)1/HYAB

For Agenda Ms Grace LAW
Item 2:

Ms Isabella SO

Principal Education Officer
(Curriculum
Development)2/Education Bureau
(EDB)

Chief Curriculum Development
Officer (Moral, Civic and National
Education)1/ EDB

1.1 The Chairperson welcomed all Members to the first plenary meeting of the current-term Women's Commission (WoC) and introduced its three new Members, namely Ms Vivian TSUI, Ms Juanita MOK and Ms Lily CHING. Mentioning that the HYAB had set up the Women Affairs Team and designated the post of Commissioner for Women Affairs on 1 April 2024 to focus on the promotion of women's development, the Chairperson expressed her wish to collaborate with all Members in fostering the all-round development of women in Hong Kong. The Chairperson also reported on the WoC's work over the past few months,

which included co-organising the International Women's Day Reception 2024 and a luncheon meeting with women business leaders with the HYAB.

Agenda Item 1: Notes of Meeting for the Women's Commission Meeting on 3 January 2024 (WoC 05/24)

1.2 The Chairperson and Members confirmed the draft notes of the last meeting without any amendment.

Agenda Item 2: Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version) – Optimisation of “Priority Values and Attitudes” (WoC 06/24)

2.1 Ms Grace LAW, Principal Education Officer, and Ms Isabella SO, Chief Curriculum Development Officer, of the EDB briefed Members on values education at the primary and secondary levels:

- a) since the curriculum reform in 2001, the EDB had been recommending a set of “Priority Values and Attitudes” (PVAs) as the emphasis and directions of values education at schools. Subsequently in 2017, the EDB further strengthened values education by consolidating various cross-curricular domains (including Constitution, Basic Law and national security education, anti-drug education, etc.) under “Values Education”. In 2021, the Standing Committee on Values Education under the Curriculum Development Council (the Standing Committee) promulgated the Values Education Curriculum Framework (Pilot Version) (the Framework), which was an instructional document for schools to develop school-based values education, enabling them to plan school-based curricula and activities flexibly;
- b) in tandem with the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address on rolling out patriotic education, the Standing Committee proposed in December 2023 to enrich the content of the Framework, including further emphasising the role of Chinese culture as the backbone of values education and optimising PVAs by extending the original “Care for Others” to “Benevolence” and adding “Filial Piety” and “Unity”; and
- c) values education was an important and ongoing task. It necessitates the concerted efforts of school education, family education, public education and a favourable social environment. As such, it was incumbent upon different stakeholders of our

society to create hand-in-hand a conducive and positive social atmosphere in order to nurture our next generation into citizens who would live out proper values and attitudes.

2.2 Members' views and concerns about the content and implementation of the Framework were as follows:

- a) a Member would like to know whether the Framework, apart from being implemented in primary schools, would be extended to kindergartens and secondary schools and whether or not the Framework would be adjusted to suit students with different levels of learning;
- b) a Member enquired whether all secondary and primary schools (including international schools) in Hong Kong were required to plan their school-based values education curricula in accordance with the Framework. The Member was also concerned about how the Framework would fit in with the religious backgrounds and education philosophies of different schools;
- c) a Member enquired whether the EDB has put in place objective performance indicators for evaluating the implementation of values education in schools so as to assess their effectiveness and ensure that the content taught in schools was in line with the Framework;
- d) a Member enquired whether promotion of gender equality would be a focus of the EDB's work on values education;
- e) a Member pointed out that family influence on students was particularly important and suggested that the EDB should encourage schools to conduct parent-child activities and promote home-school co-operation, as well as foster inter-generational harmony;
- f) a Member recommended that the EDB should provide schools with a list of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and district organisations with a view to encouraging schools to collaborate with them in organising activities related to values education for students and parents; and

- g) a Member recommended that the EDB should provide schools with standardised and interesting teaching resources, as well as disseminate the resources on platforms which were more popular among young people to encourage browsing by students and parents.

2.3 The consolidated response to Members' views and questions from the representatives of the EDB was as follows:

- a) the Framework already contained recommendations on the learning expectations for students at different learning stages (Primary 1 to Secondary 6) based on their characteristics and developmental needs, so as to facilitate primary and secondary schools in planning their school-based curricula of values education. Besides, through updating the relevant curriculum guide and providing grants for kindergartens to promote Chinese culture, EDB encouraged kindergartens to implement values education so that young children could learn Chinese culture and traditional virtues, as well as proper values and attitudes at an early stage;
- b) values education was an integral part of the school curriculum. Although international schools differed from schools offering local curricula in curriculum design, they still bore the responsibility of nurturing proper values and attitudes among students (regardless of their ethnicity and nationality). Schools were advised to amalgamate their school-based advocated values and attitudes with PVAs, taking into account their school vision and mission, school characteristics, school context, religious background, students' developmental needs, etc., with a view to planning and enriching their values education curriculum in different grade levels holistically;
- c) through channels such as inspections, sharing sessions, focus group interviews, school visits and questionnaire surveys, the EDB continuously monitored and kept track of the progress on implementation of values education in schools and provided support as necessary. The school sector generally included values education as one of the major concerns and focused on its promotion. The Task Force on Review of School Curriculum, established in 2017, comprehensively reviewed the primary and secondary curricula (including values education) and agreed that the holistic and integrated approach for promoting values education

was appropriate;

- d) under the School Development and Accountability Framework, school self-evaluation (SSE) had been a core element of schools for their perpetual improvement and schools had sought self-improvement by putting in place a systematic Planning-Implementation-Evaluation cycle. The SSE tools provided by the EDB enabled schools to thoroughly understand students' learning effectiveness and needs so as to inform curriculum design;
- e) sex education was a key component of values education at the primary and secondary levels, but it was not delivered as an independent subject. Rather, values education was the main axle connecting relevant learning elements in different subjects and cross-curricular domains. Such elements, including gender equality, were included in General Studies/Humanities and Science at the primary level; Life and Society/the Citizenship, Economics and Society curriculum at the junior secondary level; and Ethics and Religious Studies and Technology Education Key Learning Area at the senior secondary level;
- f) treating parents as important partners in implementing values education, the EDB attached great importance to parent education and would regularly organise parent education activities. The EDB also undertook to refer Members' views to the Committee on Home-School Co-operation for follow-up;
- g) in fact, schools in general were able to locate and make use of community resources for promoting values education. Apart from organising teacher training activities in conjunction with NGOs from time to time, the EDB also regularly disseminated to schools information on relevant resources and activities provided for teachers and students by NGOs, so as to support their implementation of values education; and
- h) the EDB continuously updated and developed learning and teaching resources on different topics based on students' daily life and developmental needs, which were presented in diverse formats including comics, animations and music videos.

Agenda Item 3: Progress of Women Empowerment Fund (WoC 07/24)

3.1 Ms Jody HUEN, Chief Executive Officer of the HYAB, briefed Members on the progress of work for the Women Empowerment Fund (WEF) as follows:

- a) the WEF received altogether 240 eligible applications in two rounds of applications in 2023-24. After assessment, 145 projects were approved and the funding involved was about \$21.38 million. Over 1 800 activities would be delivered under these funded projects. In 2024-25, the WEF would continue to launch general projects with themes largely similar to those of the previous year, and the funding cap for each one-year project was \$400,000 while that for each two-year project was \$800,000;
- b) as regards thematic projects, apart from the regularisation of the “Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Exchange Programme” (Exchange Programme), the “Programme on Women’s Participation in Community Services” (Community Services Programme) would be added to encourage women to jointly plan and implement community service projects by riding on their own strengths, thereby promoting care and inclusion. The duration of each Community Services Programme would be one year and the funding cap would be \$400,000. Ms Shirley LAM, Permanent Secretary of the HYAB, supplemented that the new Community Services Programme had drawn on the Mainland’s experience in the implementation of the “Loving Mother” Project and sought to encourage more local women to give full play to their strengths in the community and to participate in community affairs and voluntary work in their spare time; and
- c) the WEF would open for applications twice each year. The first round of applications for 2024-25 was expected to start in June 2024 and would last for around one month. The Secretariat would consult the Working Group on Enabling Environment and Facilitating Women Development on the detailed arrangements of the WEF. Promotion of the WEF would continue to be conducted through its thematic website and social media channels, and a briefing session on WEF application would be organised by the Secretariat.

3.2 Members' views and concerns on the topic were as follows:

- a) a Member enquired whether a mechanism was in place to assess the effectiveness of individual projects and whether such assessment would affect the chance of success of the organisation in its future applications;
- b) a Member suggested the setting up of a database and uploading of approved proposals as good examples for reference by applicant organisations. Another Member suggested that examples of unsuccessful applications should be shared in the briefing sessions to help applicant organisations grasp the proposal writing skills;
- c) regarding vetting and approval of applications, a Member noticed the relatively low average funding amount for each project which might make activities under the WEF scattered. Another Member suggested modifying the assessment mechanism to take into account whether the application submitted by an organisation was able to meet a specific standard in each of the assessment criteria, instead of using the total score alone to determine the organisation's eligibility for funding approval;
- d) regarding the Exchange Programme, a Member suggested that the Secretariat should encourage more professional bodies (including young professional bodies) to apply for the WEF, especially the Exchange Programme. Another Member enquired whether women who had received government subsidies under other programmes before could join the Exchange Programme;
- e) a Member was concerned about the issue of youth suicide and suggested that social workers should be trained to provide services under the new Community Services Programme to alleviate the problem; and
- f) a Member enquired whether the Secretariat would compile statistics on the particulars of participants under the WEF, such as the number of ethnic minorities, the age distribution, etc.;

3.3 The consolidated response to Members' views and questions from the representatives of the HYAB and the Secretariat was as follows:

- a) on monitoring project implementation and effectiveness, the Secretariat would send its staff to observe the activities and the funded organisations were required to submit final report upon completion of each project, which should contain a financial report, participants' feedback and an evaluation of project effectiveness. If the funded project was implemented unsatisfactorily, the Secretariat had the right to reduce the funding in accordance with the funding rules. The matter would be recorded and might have an impact on the future applications made by the organisation concerned;
- b) lists of the funded organisations and projects had been uploaded onto the WEF website for public inspection. In addition, the Secretariat would organise briefing session for each round of application to explain in detail the application requirements, assessment criteria and proposal writing skills. Taking on board Members' views, the Secretariat would continue with relevant explanatory work at briefing sessions and encourage professional bodies to apply for the WEF;
- c) on vetting applications, the Working Group on Enabling Environment and Facilitating Women Development would assess applications in accordance with the earlier endorsed assessment mechanism, taking into account factors such as the relevant experience of applicant organisations, the project content and nature as detailed in their proposals, the amount of funding requested, the number of beneficiaries and the scale of activities. In consultation with members of the working group, the Secretariat would closely examine whether the assessment mechanism needed to be adjusted for the next round of applications under the WEF;
- d) regarding the funding amount, the current funding cap for each project was \$400,000 (for one-year projects) or \$800,000 (for two-year projects), and the actual funding would depend on the project content and the amount sought by applicant organisations in their project proposals. Under the current practice, the WEF would be able to provide funding support to more organisations and the funded projects would benefit more women from different communities;

- e) the Community Services Programme aimed to encourage women to jointly plan and implement community service projects by riding on their own strengths, thereby promoting care and inclusion. It would provide funding support to eligible organisations for conducting community service projects by utilising women's strengths so as to help the needy in the community. Regarding the support for young people with mental health needs, professional support services were currently provided by relevant government departments (e.g. the Social Welfare Department);
- f) regarding data collection, as the funded projects were being rolled out successively, the Secretariat had not yet gathered any relevant data. The Secretariat would compile and analyse relevant information after the funded organisations had completed their projects and submitted their final reports; and
- g) currently, women participants of the WEF's exchange projects should not have participated in any project under the Exchange Programme before, while those who had participated in other government-sponsored exchange activities in the Greater Bay Area were not barred. Regarding the eligibility criteria for the Exchange Programme, the Secretariat would later consult the Working Group on Enabling Environment and Facilitating Women Development to consider whether any amendment was needed.

Agenda Item 4: Progress Report of Working Groups of Women's Commission (WoC 08/24) and Secretary's Report (WoC 09/24)

4.1 Ms Joyce CHAN, Commissioner for Women Affairs of the HYAB, briefed Members on the progress report of the working groups under the WoC. In order to straighten out the areas of concern of the working groups so that their functions would be clearer and more focused, and would duly reflect the three-pronged strategy of the WoC, the Secretariat had revamped the working groups in February 2024 after consultation with members. The current-term working groups under the WoC were: (i) Working Group on Enabling Environment and Facilitating Women Development; (ii) Working Group on Empowerment and Training; and (iii) Working Group on Public Education and Promotion.

(1) Working Group on Public Education and Promotion

4.1.1 To enhance the promotion of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to younger students, the Secretariat had appointed a service provider to organise school talks for promoting the CEDAW since September 2022. After reviewing their implementation and effectiveness, the former Working Group on Enabling Environment decided that these school talks should continue to be conducted for kindergarten and primary students. School talks for the 2023/24 school year commenced in January 2024. As of early May 2024, 27 school talks were conducted for kindergarten and primary students.

(2) Working Group on Enabling Environment and Facilitating Women Development

4.2.1 The second round of applications for the WEF in 2023-24 was closed on 20 November 2023. A total of 97 eligible applications (including 81 applications for general projects and 16 applications for thematic projects) were received. At its meeting held on 8 January 2024, the former Working Group on Collaboration and Promotion vetted the above applications and approved 60 projects (including 47 general projects and 13 thematic projects), involving about \$8.55 million of funding. The funded projects had commenced successively from March 2024 onwards.

4.2.2 The Funding Scheme for Women's Development would come to an end upon completion of all approved projects. The Secretariat would continue to process the reimbursement applications for the approved projects.

(3) Working Group on Empowerment and Training (WGET)

4.3.1 The third programme year of the Capacity Building Mileage Programme (CBMP) in the contract period (from the November semester in 2021 to the July semester in 2025) covered the three semesters of November 2023, March 2024 and July 2024. As of March 2024, there were over 2 650 enrolments for the March 2024 semester.

4.3.2 At its meeting held on 22 March 2024, the WGET endorsed the proposal made by the Hong Kong Metropolitan University (HKMU) to introduce five new courses (including two face-to-face courses under the domain of Health and Care, namely "Skin Health and Care" and

“Introduction to Aromatherapy”; two face-to-face courses under the domain of Applied Science and Technology, namely “Personal Branding on Social Media” and “Smart City and a New Way of Life”; and one Qualifications Framework Level 2 Course, namely “Decision-making Skills”) and their blueprints for the July 2024 semester, and adopted “Health Unlocks the Joyful Life” as the publicity theme of the semester. The HKMU’s proposed publicity strategy to be implemented from the July 2024 semester onwards had also been endorsed by the WGET. The Secretariat would continue to follow up with the HKMU on the arrangements for the CBMP.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

5.1 Ms CHAN further said that the HYAB would set up a “one-stop family and women information portal” (the information portal) in the second half of 2024. The HYAB held an online briefing session to introduce the framework and coverage of the portal to the WoC and the Family Council in late April. The HYAB would consider the views expressed by Members in the briefing session when developing the information portal. She also said the WoC Secretariat would soon set up a dedicated editorial team under the WoC and would welcome interested Members to join and give their views on the content of the information portal.

5.2 The Chairperson said that the HYAB would organise a Family and Women Development Summit on 9 October 2024 and appealed for Members’ active participation.

5.3 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Women’s Commission Secretariat
July 2024