

**WOMEN'S
COMMISSION**

Notes of the 111th meeting held on 26 July 2024

Date : 26 July 2024 (Friday)
Time : 09:00 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)

Ms Winnie NG
Ms Melissa PANG
Mr Adrian TAM
Mr Walter TSUI
Ms CHING Ngon-lai
Ms Rita GURUNG
Ms LAM Wai-ling
Ms LU Hai
Ms Juanita MOK (Video conference)
Mrs Katherine NGAN NG
Dr SO Wing-yee
Ms Ashley TSE
Ms Vivian WONG
Mr Niki KWOK Principal Assistant Secretary
(Constitutional and Mainland
Affairs)5/ Constitutional and
Mainland Affairs Bureau
(CMAB)

Ms Maggie LEUNG Assistant Director
(Services)/Social Welfare
Department

Absent with
Apologies:

Professor LUI Yu-hon
Dr Kitty WU
Mrs Jennifer CHENG YU
Ms Mary HUEN
Ms JIN Ling
Ms Cindy PUN
Professor SHAM Mai-har
Ms Vivian TSUI

In attendance:

Mr Nick AU YEUNG	Deputy Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs (Home Affairs)/Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB)
Ms Joyce CHAN	Commissioner for Women Affairs/HYAB
Ms Jody HUEN	Chief Executive Officer/HYAB
Miss Abby MA	Assistant Secretary (Women and Family Affairs)2/HYAB
Ms Jennifer HO	Senior Executive Manager (Women and Family Affairs)1/HYAB
Mr Toby LEUNG	Executive Officer (Women and Family Affairs)1/HYAB

For Agenda
Item 2:

Miss Cathy LI

Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

1.1 The Chairperson welcomed all government representatives and Members to the meeting.

Agenda Item 1: Notes of Meeting for the Women’s Commission Meeting on 8 May 2024 (WoC 10/24)

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

Agenda Item 2: Taking Forward the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (WoC 11/24)

2.1 Miss Cathy LI, Acting Deputy Commissioner for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, briefed Members on the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) as follows:

- a) The GBA development was a key national strategy personally devised, personally planned and personally driven by President Xi Jinping. As the best gateway for local and overseas enterprises to enter the GBA and the Mainland market, Hong Kong played dual roles in “going global and attracting foreign investment”. The GBA generated one-ninth of the country’s total economic output last year, and was the best entry point for Hong Kong to better integrate into the overall national development.
- b) Set up by the HKSAR Government, the Steering Group on Integration into National Development had achieved fruitful results and introduced a number of policy initiatives in relation to areas such as finance, technology and professional services to promote the high-quality development of the GBA and to reinforce and enhance Hong Kong’s competitive edge. In addition to having the institutional advantage of “One Country, Two Systems”, a simple tax regime with low tax rates and a first-class business environment, Hong Kong was the only common law jurisdiction in the world where both Chinese and English were official languages. On the economic front, Hong Kong had been ranked among the top 10 cities in terms of global competitiveness for more than 20 consecutive years, attracting huge investment from Mainland and overseas enterprises. Moreover, the HKSAR Government had further enhanced the overall co-operation in the GBA through measures to facilitate the flow of people, goods, capital and

information, along with facilitating the exchange of talents to further enhance the mutual access between cities within the GBA.

- c) The development opportunities in the GBA were unlimited. The HKSAR Government would continue to capitalise on Hong Kong's strengths to serve the country's needs, help the country deepen its reform and opening up, and make new contributions to the country's development into a great nation and advancement towards national rejuvenation and to the city's sustainable development, with a view to achieving the goal of "capitalising on Hong Kong's strengths and building a first-class GBA".

2.2 Members' views and concerns about the GBA development were as follows:

- (a) Members expressed support for the GBA development and agreed that Hong Kong should continue to capitalise on its strengths. A member specifically pointed out that Hong Kong's logistics industry used to be world-leading, but it faced fierce competition from neighbouring areas in recent years, and the situation warranted attention;
- (b) a Member opined that there were quite a number of quality and famous brands with unique characteristics in Hong Kong, and that the Government should provide more support for promoting Hong Kong brands so as to fully capitalise on the city's strengths;
- (c) a Member enquired how women in Hong Kong could contribute to the GBA development; and
- d) a Member reflected that many persons who arrived in Hong Kong through the "Top Talent Pass Scheme", especially women who came to look after their family members, faced challenges in adapting to living in Hong Kong, such as difficulty in deploying funds in the Mainland due to the foreign exchange control on Renminbi, difficulty in integrating into the community, etc. The Member suggested that the Government should modify relevant policies with a view to attracting Mainland talents to Hong Kong.

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

- a) concerning the logistics industry, Hong Kong would continue to work with other cities in the GBA by complementing each other's strengths, and develop in the direction of high value-addedness;
- b) the relevant work on promoting Hong Kong brands would continue. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Office, the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Brand Development Council would organise a luncheon seminar on branding in Guangzhou on 23 August this year, where invited Hong Kong enterprises would promote their brands to Mainland youths and share their experience in brand building;
- c) any individual, regardless of gender, could contribute to the GBA development, especially in one's own area of expertise. Apart from women, the HKSAR Government was also actively promoting the GBA to students by, for example, organising the "Dreams to GBA Come True" Itinerary Design Competition and encouraging participating secondary students to enhance their understanding of the GBA through hands-on research for relevant information; and
- d) the CMAB representative would relay the Member's views to the relevant bureaux for follow-up.

Agenda Item 3: Latest Progress of the Family and Women-related Policy Initiatives of the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau as Announced in the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address (WoC 12/24)

3.1 Ms Joyce CHAN, Commissioner for Women Affairs of the HYAB, briefed Members on the latest progress of the family and women-related policy initiatives of the HYAB as follows:

- a) the HYAB and the Family Council would launch the Funding Scheme on the Promotion of Family Education (the New Scheme) in the fourth quarter of 2024 with an annual funding of \$8 million to subsidise non-profit-making community projects in promoting family education. The scope of funding would also be expanded, covering various family-related topics such as education for new parents, parent-child education, maintenance of family relationship and other marriage-related subjects, with a view to meeting the needs of different families. The HYAB had consulted members on the framework of the New Scheme during the meeting of the Subcommittee on Family Support in June this year. The HYAB would

consider members' views during the meeting and implement the relevant operational details;

- b) the Maintenance Mediation Pilot Scheme (the Pilot Scheme) would be launched through the Community Care Fund (CCF) in the second half of 2024 to subsidise a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in providing mediation services on maintenance to eligible people in need, thereby assisting the parties concerned to resolve disputes on related matters in a more time-saving manner through mediation. The Pilot Scheme would run for three years. The Commission on Poverty had endorsed the recommendation to allocate around \$36 million from CCF to implement the Pilot Scheme, which was expected to process a total of 1 200 cases, benefitting 2 400 separating or divorcing persons;
- c) the first Family and Women Development Summit (the Summit) would be held on 9 October this year. With the theme of "Women's Strengths in Action, Family Values Across Generations", the Summit was expected to bring together some 500 representatives from local women's organisations, the business sector and service organisations. The HYAB hoped to take the opportunity to exchange views with those who were concerned about family and women development in Hong Kong, establish close partnerships with them and publicise through the Summit the continuous progress of family and women development in Hong Kong; and
- d) a one-stop family and women information portal (the information portal) would be launched, which would cover six major areas and relevant legal information, namely (i) women's employment and entrepreneurship, (ii) women's health, (iii) women's interests and relevant statutory rights, (iv) family education and family services, (v) information on marriage and (vi) activities related to women's development and family education. The information portal would also be a hub of useful links to other relevant government departments so as to provide one-stop information for people of different backgrounds. It would support personalised search via, among others, categorising articles with different hashtags and providing an exclusive search function, thereby facilitating users in filtering information or articles which they found interesting. The information portal was tentatively named "Family and Women Portal", with the domain name "www.familyandwomen.gov.hk". The HYAB introduced the content and format of the information

portal to members of the WoC and the Family Council in April this year and members' views were adopted. The HYAB would set up dedicated editorial teams for the information portal under the WoC and the Family Council respectively to provide editorial advice for contents related to women affairs and family education.

3.2 Members' views and concerns about the agenda item were as follows:

- a) regarding the Pilot Scheme, a Member enquired apart from subsidising the services provided by NGO, whether subsidy would be provided to other mediation services provided by individuals, and what disputes would be covered by the services;
- b) regarding the information portal, a Member suggested that interactive elements such as games, collaborations with other platforms and organisations, regular concessions or rewards, etc., be included to attract more users;
- c) a Member pointed out that family- and women-related themes were rather wide-ranging and suggested that specific groups be targeted for promotion when the information portal was launched;
- d) a Member enquired about the publicity strategy for the launch of the information portal and whether resources would be allocated to enhance its visibility in various search engines;
- e) a Member asked whether a mobile application would be developed for the information portal with reference to the mobile application "HKYouth+" for youths, so as to cater for mobile device users; and
- f) a Member suggested incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) features into the search function of the information portal so that the portal could push suitable contents to users according to their preferences.

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

- a) regarding the Pilot Scheme, as it was in its pilot stage, so far only the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society (HKFWS) had been appointed to provide mediation services. Should individuals or organisations wish to apply for mediation services, the applications

could be referred to the HKFWS for processing. Before the mediation, the mediator would assess whether the disputes were suitable to be settled by mediation. While the mediators would mainly provide assistance in maintenance-related disputes, they would also attempt to mediate other divorce-related disputes involved in the cases;

- b) Interactive elements would be considered in the design and promotion of the information portal. As for offering rewards or concessions at the portal to attract users, the suggestion would be considered by the HYAB having regard to resources;
- c) at the initial stage of launching the information portal, feature articles on topics that were more likely to draw the attention or interest of the general public, such as family and parenting, would be published with a view to attract more users;
- d) to attract more local users, initially, accounts of the information portal would be set-up on the relatively popular social media platforms in Hong Kong, i.e. Facebook and Instagram, while promotion through other social media channels would be considered at a later stage. The contractor would also conduct search engine optimisation on the contents of the portal so that the general public could search for the information portal in search engines more easily a while after its launch. Moreover, the HYAB would allocate resources to conduct publicity on various online platforms in order to increase the opportunity of the public in gaining access to the portal;
- e) in addition to the web version, a mobile version of the information portal would also be available for users' ease of browsing on their mobile devices. After the portal had been launched for a certain period of time and sufficient user data had been collected, the need and feasibility of launching a mobile application could be explored; and
- f) for the time being, the information portal would mainly assist users in searching for contents that might interest them through hashtags and personalised search functions. On the use of AI technology, the feasibility of adding an AI search function would be explored in the future as time is required to establish the database.

Agenda Item 4: Progress Report of Working Groups of Women's Commission (WoC 13/24) and Secretary's Report (WoC 14/24)

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.

(1) Working Group on Public Education and Promotion (WGPE)

4.1.1 To enhance the promotion of the CEDAW to younger student groups, the Secretariat had, since September 2022, appointed a service provider to organise school talks for promoting the CEDAW. In November 2023, the Secretariat appointed the service provider to continue organising school talks for promoting the CEDAW in the 2023/24 school year. School talks for the 2023/24 school year commenced in January 2024. As at mid-July 2024, the service provider conducted all 60 school talks for kindergarten and primary students as required in the contract. On 30 May 2024, the WGPE inspected one of the school talks to review its implementation, and members' views on the school talks had been conveyed to the service provider.

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

4.2.1 The WGEE convened a meeting on 27 May 2024 and endorsed the operation arrangements of the Women Empowerment Fund (WEF) in 2024-25, including the content, funding limit per project and assessment criteria, of the new thematic project "Programme on Women's Participation in Community Services". The first round application of the WEF in 2024-25 was closed on 15 July 2024, and around 280 applications had been received with a total applied amount of over \$70 million. The Secretariat was examining the applications and would submit them to the WGEE for discussion and approval later.

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 in the contract period of the Capacity Building Mileage Programme (CBMP) covered the three semesters of November 2023, March 2024 and July 2024. As of July 2024, the numbers of students enrolled in the three semesters were 2 614, 2 654 and over 2 770

respectively, i.e. a total enrolment of over 8 000 for the whole programme year, which met the minimum requirement stipulated in the contract.

4.3.2 At its meeting held on 24 July 2024, the WGET endorsed the proposal made by the Hong Kong Metropolitan University (HKMU) to adopt the course theme “Empower Women: Building Self-worth” for the November 2024 semester, introduce five new courses and their blueprints, and conduct related publicity work. The Secretariat would continue to follow up with the HKMU on the operation of the CBMP.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

5.1 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.

**Women’s Commission Secretariat
November 2024**