

Women's Commission

Secretary's Report

Introduction

This paper informs Members of the women-related activities and meetings held or participated by the Women's Commission (WoC) since the 88th meeting held on 6 September 2017. This paper also attaches a summary of views raised by Members in the WoC Retreat 2017 held on 15 November 2017, and list out the proposed follow-up actions for Members' information.

Meetings and Activities held by WoC since 6 September 2017

2. Meetings and activities held by WoC since 6 September 2017 are as follows -

- Meeting of Working Group on Collaboration
- Meeting of Steering Committee on Capacity Building Mileage Programme
- Lunch-time Talk for Gender Focal Point Network among Listed Companies
- WoC Retreat

Meetings and Activities participated by WoC since 6 September 2017

3. Women-related activities participated by WoC since 6 September 2017 are as follows –

Conferences and Seminars

- 2017-18 Policy Address Consultation Session
- Meeting with Guizhou Women's Federation

Functions and Liaison

- 慶祝祖國建國68周年暨2017-2020賢毅中央聯會第12屆委員就職典禮 organised by Yin Ngai Central Council
- 妍亮精彩人生婦女就業計劃嘉年華會暨招聘會 organised by Kowloon Federation of Associations (Women Affairs Committee)
- 2017 International Day of Peace jointly presented by the St John's Anglican Cathedral & the St John's Cathedral HIV Education Centre
- “塔冷通—婦女展才能” organised by Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (Hong Kong Island)
- 穿越華服文化之旅 organised by Kowloon Women's Organisations Federation Limited
- 2017 Outstanding Women Professionals and Entrepreneurs Awards organised by Hong Kong Women Professionals & Entrepreneurs Association Limited
- Opening Ceremony of the Equal Opportunity Festival 2017 organised by the University of Hong Kong
- 妍活姿彩招聘會 organised by Tai Po District Federation of Women
- 油尖旺區新來港婦女就業交流會 organised by Yau Tsim Mong District Council Working Group on Women's Affairs
- 大埔區婦女聯會第二屆執行委員會就職典禮 organised by Tai Po District Federation of Women
- The 46th National Day of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) organised by the Consulate General of UAE
- VTC 35th Anniversary Tribute Dinner organised by Vocational Training Council

WoC Retreat 2017

4. The WoC Retreat 2017 was held on 15 November 2017 at Hotel Stage in Jordan. The views raised by Members in the Retreat and the proposed follow-up actions are summarised in the table at the **Annex**.

Advice Sought

5. Members are invited to note the activities and meetings as listed in paragraphs 2 and 3 above and the summary table at the Annex.

Women's Commission Secretariat December 2017

Women's Commission (WoC) Retreat Session 2017
Summary of Members' Views and Proposed Follow-up Actions

<u>Members' proposals</u>	<u>Labour and Welfare Bureau's (LWB) response / Proposed follow up actions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Conducting research. Possible subjects include-<ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Reasons why women professionals do not stay in the labour force after starting their families;ii) Women's role under the "Belt and Road" initiative;iii) Different needs of 18 Districts in support services/facilities for women, e.g. child care facilities;iv) Gender pay gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The last survey conducted by WoC in collaboration with Census and Statistics Department was on "Time Use Patterns and Women's Employment" in 2015.● Research could be conducted and the subject of the research could be further deliberated in the Working Group on Enabling Environment (WGEE).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Promoting the appointment of women to the board of private companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● This is in line with the Government's policy of promoting the advancement of women. In her speech at Women Corporate Directors 2017 Asia and Pacific Council Institute Conference held in September 2017, the Chief Executive expressed that women's share (12%) of the board directors of Hong Kong Hang Seng Index companies was not encouraging. Promoting appointment of women to the board would require concerted efforts from the private sector to create a more enabling corporate environment in Hong Kong. For the public sector, a target gender benchmark of 35% for women's participation in Advisory and Statutory Bodies

<u>Members' proposals</u>	<u>Labour and Welfare Bureau's (LWB) response / Proposed follow up actions</u>
	<p>(ASBs) has been set and the rate as at June 2017 stands at 31.8%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Working Group on Empowerment (WGEmp) may wish to discuss the issue of how to promote the appointment of women to the boards of private companies by tapping into the expertise of Members who are in the business sector.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disclosing information to WoC Members on the situation of Bureaux/Departments in meeting the 35% gender benchmark for women's participation in ASBs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Secretariat would seek the information from the Bureaux/Departments and upon receipt, disseminate to Members in the next WGEmp meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewing the guidelines of the Funding Scheme for Women Development as some appear to be more stringent than those of the Districts Councils in funding similar projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The guidelines of the Funding Scheme as approved by the Working Group on Collaboration (WGC) are set having regard to those of similar funding schemes of the Government and have made reference to the practices of the District Councils. ● WGC may wish to take a look of the guidelines and follow up on Members' suggestions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organising activities that enhance cross sector interaction of the Gender Focal Points(GFP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Secretariat will make a proposal as suggested for WGEE's consideration while in the meantime, it is planning a cross-sector seminar/activity for GFP in the first half of 2018. ● Meanwhile, the GFPs of the District Councils, social welfare sector and the listed companies have been invited to the public engagement forum on the establishment of a Commission on Children to be held on 12 December 2017.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stocktaking the progress of the schemes and policies on which WoC have been consulted, and whether the advice given by WoC Members has been taken on board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Secretariat would annually stocktake such progress in consultation with the relevant Bureaux/Departments.

<u>Members' proposals</u>	<u>Labour and Welfare Bureau's (LWB) response / Proposed follow up actions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proposing for Capacity Building Mileage Programme (CBMP) to organise courses on financial literacy. Other views include better progression paths, clearer articulation of the core competencies to be developed in participants, enhanced evaluation of effectiveness, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As similar views were expressed at previous meetings of the Steering Committee on Capacity Building Mileage Programme (Steering Committee), the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) has undertaken to examine the relevant issues raised by Members and report back to the Steering Committee at its next meeting on 13 December 2017. The Secretariat will also follow up with OUHK on the suggestion of offering more courses on financial literacy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appointing more WoC members ● Having greater representation of ethnic minorities in WoC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is no cap on the number of WoC Members to be appointed. ● LWB will keep in view suitable candidates, including those from ethnic minorities, for consideration of future appointment exercises.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repositioning and restructuring WoC to become a higher level advisory body, for instance, by placing it under the Central Policy Unit and setting up an independent secretariat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WoC was established as a high level central mechanism to advise the Government on issues related to women. Under the current terms of reference, WoC may advise the Government on the integration of policies and initiatives which are of concern to women, which fall under the purview of different Policy Bureaux. It is not uncommon for an advisory body to be placed under a subject policy bureau such as the Elderly Commission which is under LWB and the Family Council under HAB. Adequate resources and manpower have been provided to the WoC Secretariat.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finding areas of focus for the future work of WoC, for instance, by setting up task forces to follow up the issues raised by Members at the Retreat and to identify work focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are currently four working groups and a steering committee on CBMP to deliberate on specific areas of work of WoC. The working groups can follow up on issues raised at the Retreat as well as consider and formulate strategies on future areas of focus for WoC. ● The Secretariat will propose follow up actions to the relevant working groups/steering committee to deliberate as appropriate.

<u>Members' proposals</u>	<u>Labour and Welfare Bureau's (LWB) response / Proposed follow up actions</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enhancing collaboration with other women's groups, including local as well as Mainland and overseas groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The WGC has been set up to deliberate on how to enhance communication with the non-governmental sector, as well as to create synergy with women's groups and non-governmental organisations. ● Members are welcome to raise suggestions regarding collaboration to the WGC.

Women's Commission Secretariat
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