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Good Empowerment Practice

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Project: Information Technology Education for Women Homemakers

Organization: The Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centre

Description

The project aimed to encourage grassroot women homemakers to acquire Information Technology (IT) skills and promote IT education subsequently. The first stage of the project promoted public participation in elementary IT education programmes, such as those organized by the District Offices and the Information Technology Services Department. At the same time, the Federation also provided alternative learning activities, which would facilitate easier understanding, such as one-on-one based teaching and exercise-oriented classes, in order to encourage women's participation in IT learning.

In the second stage, the Federation encouraged those women, who had taken part in IT activities organized by the Federation, to become IT Ambassadors. These IT Ambassadors, with diverse backgrounds and levels of IT knowledge, would serve as Peer IT Instructors to promote IT learning among women in the community. Their tasks included course design, promotion, handout production and recruitment. They also helped the Federation to contribute to the course design of the "Unified Internet Training Programme (elementary) for Women" under the "Web Care" campaign.

Benefits

1. Women homemakers used to regard IT as something unreachable. The project successfully brought IT knowledge into their daily life and

stimulated their interests in areas other than traditional feminine pursuits. Through learning Chinese character input, searching for the latest information through Internet and communication through emails, participants boosted their self-confidence and expanded their social network.

2. With the IT knowledge acquired, participants were able to share and discuss with their husband and children on the subject. The knowledge gap among family members was therefore narrowed.
3. The project enabled participants' to become aware of the Digital Divide against women caused by gender stereotyping, as well as, inequalities between the two genders and in the society. Participants were motivated to be more concerned about community affairs, for examples, to discuss and reflect on distribution of community resources, needs of grassroots women and the relationship between IT development and women's status.
4. More women homemakers were encouraged to participate in voluntary work. Not only had they acted as peer trainer on IT for the Federation, they had also engaged in other voluntary projects, such as hair cutting, teaching elderly IT knowledge and paying visits to hospitals. Some IT Ambassadors extended their services to other community centers upon invitation and trained more than 200 volunteers for "Web Care" Campaign and assisted the Internet Professionals' Association in designing the "Unified Internet Training Programme (elementary) for Women". Their contribution gained recognition from professional groups and in turn

advanced their social status. Some volunteers continued to acquire more advanced knowledge and skills, such as webpage and e-document writing.

5. The project imprinted on women IT students the importance of life-long training and the learning capacity of women.
6. The project successfully attracted grassroot women to step out of their homes for self-development and participation in community affairs. For instance, the Federation collaborated with RTHK on the TV series “Computer File” in 2000, which reflected the needs and learning experiences of grassroot women; in 2001, the Federation attended the meeting of the Panel on Information Technology and Broadcasting of Legislative Council to raise the issue of gender-related barriers to IT education and request for a fair allocation of resource in the community; in 2002, the IT Ambassadors served as speakers at “the Symposium on Gender Equality and ICTs Development in Hong Kong” to share their experience in learning and participating in IT, for example, promoting IT in the community, from a women’s prospective.

Success Factors

1. Peer learning, instead of lecture, was found to be more suitable for women homemakers. Course content was developed in accordance with daily life application needs, while jargon-free instruction was adopted during course delivery to facilitate easier comprehension by women homemakers.

2. A friendly and interactive learning environment without time restrictions and qualification requirements could alleviate participants' anxiety and nurture a good atmosphere for learning and application. Within a year, IT Ambassadors trained many women new comers of the Federation and other social institutes by one-to-one teaching mode, therefore enhanced women's interests and confidence in acquire IT knowledge.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified

Since many women homemakers were interested in the programme, there was a shortage of Peer IT Trainers and some participants had to wait for a considerable period of time. To make efficient use of the waiting time, the Federation and IT Ambassadors prepared a simple self-help manual with pictures, signs and minimal words in a question-and-answer format for participants to learn basic skills before formal training was available.

The Federation lacked resources, for example, computers as well as space for placing equipment were in great shortage. Hence, the Federation had to find other venues, like Home Affairs Department's Cyber Centres, or rent equipment from other organizations. Since the Cyber Centres were not conveniently located and borrowing equipment from other groups was difficult, the problem of inadequate resources had yet to be solved.

Sources of Funding

The project required four computers with Internet access and two registered social workers to coordinate among IT Ambassadors as well as other logistic arrangements, such as, production of training manual and handouts. The

Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centre supported all project expenses.

Project: Domestic Helpers and Migrant Workers Programme (DMW)

Organization: Christian Action

Description:

The project aimed to empower women migrant workers to change the conditions that afflicted them. As a result, they developed a sense of individual capacity and the ability to negotiate and change the nature of the relationships with the others, for example, the employers.

The project tasked to explain to the migrant workers their rights, assist them to calculate their claims, prepare written statements for court hearings, assist them with appeals and reviews of court judgments, draft pleas of mitigation and liaise with government departments.

There has been a bar on legal representation in the Labour Tribunal. Domestic helpers, often only attained primary education, had to present their claims to the Presiding Judge by themselves. Most domestic helpers were afraid and had extreme difficulties in putting forward their cases. Many domestic helpers from outlying areas of India and Sri Lanka for example, were completely illiterate and were not familiar with using a telephone or escalator. Workers' inability to articulate the circumstances of their cases in the courts could act as a bar to obtaining justice.

The project aimed to help them overcome that bar by the written submissions, training and mock practice sessions, which ensured that the domestic helpers

understood their cases and how to overcome problems.

The project also empowered the workers by holding workshops and speech trainings and educating them through the para-legal services.

Benefits:

- (i). Through the para-legal services, mock practice sessions and workshops, migrant women become better able to express themselves and assert their rights in order to avoid further exploitation and abuse.
- (ii). As a result of the project, there had been growing solidarity and co-operation among migrants themselves as well as among migrant groups, coalitions, unions and shelters for migrant workers. Migrant workers were encouraged to join unions to further empower themselves. The “Indonesian Migrant Workers Union” was set up by former clients of the DMW.
- (iii). In addition to participating in Women's Commission Conference 2002, DMW also participated in a number of collective actions to improve rights of migrant workers more generally.
- (iv). The DMW was unique as it was the only center that could cater to several nationalities under one roof. DMW conducted 8700 consultations the year before June 2003. Having participated in the programme, these women were empowered to strive for reasonable, fair and just treatment, decide about their future, make plans and organize themselves.

- (v). Women migrant workers gained higher social awareness, including of themselves as migrant workers, their role in Hong Kong, their abilities, strengths and potentials, limitations of their rights and responsibilities under the laws and their contracts.

Success Factors:

The staff were well qualified and from various backgrounds. The Manager had a master's degree in Human Rights and the centre had staff with legal background. Staff received on the job training, regular staff meetings were held and feedback from the beneficiaries were attended to. Statistics were reviewed on a monthly basis. The project was also monitored as per the agency's Quality Assurance and Schedule. Feedback was reviewed on a monthly basis. Quarterly Committee meetings were held to review the staff input.

In addition to the staff's contribution to the success of the project, it was believed that the workers themselves brought their own success. They had a huge capacity to help themselves and frequently they simply needed guidance from the staff to help them through difficulties. On the other hand, most of the clients lacked self-esteem, had a very low opinion of themselves and did not have any idea of their rights. However, through the staff's persistence and patient perseverance, it was witnessed time and again that workers became empowered.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

Funding was the most difficult problem encountered. The demand for the service was great. The center had looked overseas for funding opportunities.

Besides, amendments to the laws affecting migrants would have impact on the services provided under the project. In this regard, Christian Action lobbied the Government on various subjects, for example driving duties of domestic helpers and proposed changes to maternity protection for domestic helpers.

As many local persons were affected by the Asian economic downturn, the Association witnessed larger number of lay-offs of migrant worker as well as non-payment and underpayment of wages. Besides, a large number of Indonesian domestic helpers were requested to receive cheaper wages than their Filipino counterparts, more and more Indonesian workers demanded to leave their jobs after discovering they were being exploited and sought assistance from the centre. This created considerable pressure on the service, the center responded by hiring more staff to serve this group.

Sources of Funding:

For 2002-03, the project required HKD1, 357,840, which was mainly resourced by local and overseas charitable funds, however, the amount of donations received so far could not cover the expenses

Project: Work for all

Organization: Action for REACH OUT (AFRO)

Description:

“Work for all” was a mini-scaled project offering part-time job opportunities to female sex workers with financial difficulties. AFRO also offered job opportunities to some participants so that they could become directly involved in the work of the organization. The remuneration, though limited, could help to relieve their difficulties. The participants were trained to use office equipment, for example, photocopying machine, laminating machine, fax machine, computer and printer, and worked together with AFRO staff in designing, preparing and distributing various education materials and newsletters.

Benefits:

1. Many female sex workers were single mothers who bore full responsibilities for their families. Many of them had not received formal education and training, while some had criminal record, e.g. charged for “Soliciting for an Immoral Purpose”, which made it extremely difficult for them to seek employment outside the sex industry. In addition, the recent economic downturn in Hong Kong seriously affected their income. With the “Work for All” project, their financial condition was improved. Some of them even no longer needed to work in the industry.

2. Some participants were reluctant to join at the beginning. They had no confidence in accomplishing what was required by the project. Later, they were surprised to realize their capability to acquire new skills.
3. The project provided a valuable opportunity for sex workers to make new friends with whom they could share experience and provide mutual support. In addition, they spent a considerable period of time working with staff of AFRO. The participants got invaluable support from these new friends. Working on group projects, those who were more capable would help the others to accomplish the tasks. The spirit of mutual help was nurtured.
4. The tasks of the project enabled the participants to change their role from service users to service providers. With their self-confidence boosted, they become optimistic about seeking other employment in the future.

Success Factors:

1. The sex workers' pressing need for an alternative source of income motivated them to join the project.
2. AFRO's staff assigned different job responsibilities to participants according to their needs and capabilities.
3. Many sex workers felt very lonely, while making contribution to community work gave them a good feeling. Participating in the project, they worked together for several hours everyday. The sense of

togetherness was attractive to them. Besides, they found the sense of achievement from working fresh and enjoyable. It motivated them to make more contribution to the project.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

Sex workers were not accustomed to sticking to a schedule so they were frequently late at the beginning. To overcome this problem and nurture their sense of responsibility, they were remunerated according to the actual number of working hours. Absentees were placed at the end of the work roster. As many of the participants might not have other employment for ages, AFRO staff needed to be patient in building up their senses of responsibility and achievement.

Many of the participants were drug users and it would affect their concentration as well as work quality. Those who were under serious influence of drugs were not allowed to work and because of this regulation, drug users had reduced dosage at least on the days they worked with AFRO.

Since some participants had no basic skills and other working experience, it was difficult at times to find suitable jobs for them. Efforts had been made in identifying jobs in accordance with their capabilities.

Sources of Funding:

The total cost of the three-year project was HKD 296,940, which was funded by three charity organizations: in Hong Kong and from USA.

Project: Women Entrepreneurs Support Scheme

Organization: Hong Kong Women Professional and Entrepreneurs Association

Description:

This project was divided into two stages. In the first stage, a “Women starts-up business guide” was printed in November 2001 and distributed to around 10,000 women who were interested in starting up their own business. The guide provided useful information and contacts for such purpose. Experience and knowledge sharing seminars were also organized.

In the second stage commenced in March 2002, the Association kick-started a pilot scheme to provide prospective women entrepreneurs micro-credit facilities in favourable terms. They were also offered tailor-made professional advice and mentoring for two years. Experienced gained by the participants would be shared with the community.

Benefits:

1. The scheme encouraged women to be self-reliant in looking for a new outlet in midst of the difficult economic climate. Not only had the scheme provided an opportunity for interested women to start their own business, it had also provided support to these new comers in the business arena, and by so doing, increased their chance of success. Participants could therefore extend their potentials to improve their economic conditions. Self-employment also helped creating job opportunities and contributed to the development of community economy.

2. Since every applicant was required to present their business plans and attend interviews, the rigorous selection process itself was already a handsome opportunity for women to sharpen their business sense. Those who had been selected for the pilot scheme could further develop their capacities and skills by running their own businesses.
3. The Support Scheme could serve as a model to stimulate interest of the general public on women entrepreneurship. With reference to the Association's experience, other professional groups could embark on similar initiatives so that lending institutions would be more interested in providing better terms to women to start up their own business. A more favorable business environment for female entrepreneurs would therefore be created.
4. The project was conceived by the Association to encourage the low-income and low skilled women to empower themselves through starting up their own businesses in midst of the unfavourable economics climate. Features of the project, low-interest unsecured loans and the two-year mentoring, could help to solve common difficulties encountered by women entrepreneurs, such as insufficient financial resources and inadequate business experience.
5. At the beginning, the pilot scheme could only benefit a limited number of participants. But the project managed to boost their confidence in finding new ways to overcome economic hardships and cultivate the spirit of

self-empowerment among them. The participants worked hard to establish their own business with the experience and wisdom gained from home-making and daily life. In the course, women stepped out of their home and participated in various economic activities. This facilitated the development of their roles in the business and political arenas.

Success Factors:

1. With support from Liu Chong Hing Bank Limited and contribution made by members of the Association, a charitable fund was established. The scheme therefore managed to offer credit facilities at low interest rate to prospective women entrepreneurs.
2. The Association managed to recruit some well-experienced members from industry, commercial as well as professional sectors as mentors to provide professional advice to the participants for two years. Therefore, the scheme could be successfully implemented.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

While the Association had not encountered specific problems at the planning and execution stage of the scheme, it envisaged there could be unanticipated situations after some participants had started their businesses, especially in the mentoring and follow up parts. Hence, the Association put much effort in devising a mechanism to support the participants as well as deciding the role and responsibilities of mentors. In order to facilitate the smooth running of the scheme, mentors were required to review and evaluate their “cases” and exchange experience among themselves periodically.

Sources of Funding:

The Association met the starting cost of the scheme, i.e. HKD 90,000. In addition, members contributed to a charitable start-up fund. 70% of the secure of the start-up loan were borne by the Association, with the remaining 30% by Liu Chong Hing Bank Limited. The ceiling for each start-up business loan was HKD 100, 000.

Project: Mutual Help Child Care Group

Organization: Integrated Family Service Centre, Social Welfare Department
(SWD) in Tin Shui Wai

Description:

Comparing with other areas in Yuen Long district, Tin Shui Wai new town had the largest number of single-parent families and victims of domestic violence. Many of these vulnerable groups were women with young dependent children living under low-income or comprehensive social security assistance. Not only were they separated from the usual social support network, they were also under stress and with low self-esteem. Owing to the vulnerability of these families, there was a pressing need to help them build up a support network for mutual help and self-reliance.

The Mutual Help Child Care Group (the Group) was carried out in the form of self-help group. The principle was to develop an effective mechanism in accordance with members' potentials so as to encourage them to strengthen co-operation among one another and empower themselves.

The project aimed to empower the members to make joint use of resources of the community as well as of their own to provide voluntary childcare service to families in need. Social workers encouraged the members to run their own group with high degree of autonomy and build up the spirit of mutual help in order to develop a social network among them.

Benefits: -

1. The Group provided the members a good opportunity to develop their own talents and capacity, as well as to improve their living standard. Through sharing sessions among group members, training sessions, as well as provision of voluntary services, members found their vision of life enriched. Many had become more positive in facing challenges in life and were willing to take up the responsibility to solve their problems.
2. The Group was a self-help group managed by members themselves. Therefore, members could apply the knowledge and skills acquired in the training sessions e.g. leadership, financial management, programme planning and interpersonal communication etc., in managing the group. This practice facilitated capacity building and skills enhancement among themselves.
3. Members were encouraged to develop a social network among themselves through some structured programmes, such as production of contact information booklets, parent-child relationship building activities, birthday parties, recreational activities and visits to vulnerable groups. These programmes and activities increased their social capital and enabled them to become more open and proactive in obtaining support from or providing that for family members, friends and neighbours when necessary.

4. In the course of planning, organizing and implementing programme activities, members co-operated among themselves and cultivated the spirit of mutual help. They became more open to accept different views and were able to develop a positive working relationship as well as promote team spirit through their voluntary work.
5. The majority of the members used to be the service users only. They were passive in receiving assistance from others and the Government. Never had they thought about changing their role to be the service providers. The voluntary service enabled them to transform their role. The experience strengthened their self-esteem and widened their social exposure.
6. Members shared their success story with the public through interviews by the media and attendance to seminars and sharings at primary and secondary schools and non-government organizations (NGOs). A positive and encouraging message that one could initiate changes to the current situation and improve living standard was sent to other vulnerable groups.

Success Factors:

1. Members perceived the Group as a place to meet their needs for affiliation, recognition and security.
2. Members enjoyed and cherished the relationship among themselves.

3. Members' participated actively in the Group and were determined to accomplish the goals. They were willing to take on more responsibilities and had built up a sense of belonging towards the Group.
- 4 Members had effectively improved their communication skills with time. They could express themselves more freely, and were more ready to listen to others. They become more open to share with others their views and feelings which in turn nurtured the spirit of mutual support.
- 5 Mutual acceptance and appreciation among members improved their self-esteem and as a result as well as their mental health and psychological well-being.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

1. Limitation of service opportunities bored some members, as they needed to provide similar services repeatedly. To solve the problem, they were encouraged to be more creative in designing service programmes on the one hand, while on the other hand the responsible social worker liaised with other NGOs for different opportunities.
2. Members' knowledge and resources were insufficient to maintain the Group. Further training on group maintenance was provided for members to maintain smooth operation.
3. The support network among members was rather loose and needed to be strengthened. Workshop on "Successful Networking" would be

conducted to help members in this regard.

Sources of Funding:

The project costed around HKD20, 000 and was resourced by Yuen Long District Office, SWD.

Project: Social Adjustment and Support Group for South Asian Ethnic Women

Organization : Yau Tsim Mong Family Support and Resource Centre, Social Welfare Department (SWD)

Description:

The project promoted social integration as well as addressed the needs of the South Asian ethnic women living in Yau Tsim Mong District in Hong Kong.

The 2001 Population Census indicated that Yau Tsim Mong District had a higher percentage of South Asian Ethnic residents as compared with other districts. SWD noted from its working experience that most of the South Asian ethnic women living in the District spoke only their native dialect and could not communicate with local residents in English nor Cantonese. Due to the communication barrier, these ethnic women spent most of their time at home and seldom participated in local community activities.

The project was designed to address the needs of South Asian ethnic women living in the District. It comprised a series of activities, including a Cantonese speaking Training Programme; orientation visits to social, recreational and government services units in the District; sharing sessions with members of the local volunteer women groups, as well as participation in mutual-help group and volunteer activities. The project aimed at helping them overcome various obstacles in adapting to the local environment, increasing contact and communication between them and the local residents, and in turn enhancing

their self-confidence and potentials. Furthermore, having realized the positive effects gained through the group process, the participants were expected to encourage their friends and relatives, with similar needs and background, to join the group to build up a support network and create an integrated community.

Benefits :-

1. The Cantonese Speaking Training Programme enabled South Asian women, who used to speak only native dialects, to understand and speak simple Cantonese with local residents. It empowered them to integrate into the local living environment.
2. The participants become familiarized with community resources available to them through seminars and activities. This in turn enhanced their self-confidence and sense of belonging.
3. The formation of Volunteer cum Mutual Help Group facilitated the development of an informal support network. With different potentials and skills, the participants helped one another to solve problems in daily life. They took a step forward to care about the other people in the District and started voluntary work.

Success Factors:

The programmes and activities were tailor-made to gear to the needs of the South Asian ethnic women in order to enhance participation and sense of belonging. SWD adopted a proactive and outreaching approach to network

with the target participants and introduce the programme so as to ensure that more potential service users could be reached.

South Asian ethnic women in fact had a strong desire to understand local culture and to integrate themselves into the local community. To build up a harmonious community and strengthen the bonding among different ethnic groups, social workers would continue to take a more proactive and outreaching approach to reach and provide services to the minority ethnic groups and address their specific needs.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

Different South Asian ethnic groups could be found in Hong Kong. Many have their own religions, culture and living styles. Responsible social workers should equip themselves with some basic knowledge in this regard so as to avoid conflicts and misunderstanding during service delivery.

As most of the target participants could neither understand English nor Cantonese, voluntary interpretation service by South Asian ethnic groups members was essential in programme implementation.

Sources of Funding : -

The project costed HKD 8,000 to implement and was resourced by Yau Tsim Mong Family Support and Resource Centre.

Project: Lok Fai Club Single Mother Mutual Help Group

Organization: Hong Kong Family Welfare Society

Description:

Since its establishment, more than 80 single parents joined the Lok Fai Club Single Mother Mutual Help Group. They put into practice the mission of “single parents caring single parents”. Currently, more than 30 single parents were actively supporting other families in need, including single parent families, in the Tuen Mun district. The group emphasized co-operation and mutual help among members in rendering practical assistance and expressing concerns for the needy. With the assistance of a social worker, a committee comprising four group members oversaw the group’s planning and operation.

Monthly meetings were held for evaluation on services provided and discussion on topics related to single parenting. To strengthen the connection and support network among group members, those living in the same area formed themselves into smaller groups, which would also organize some gatherings and activities. In addition, the Mutual Help Group also regularly organized training and exchange workshops to reinforce the solidarity and co-operation in place.

In addition to promoting mutual help and support among members, the Group played a vital role in organizing activities for single parents family in the society, the group provided tangible support to single parents and their children, including escort service, child-care services, home visits and children tutorial

courses. To serve other people in need in the community, the Group provided free haircut for the elderly and regularly visited different welfare institutions, such as children's homes and day activity centre for the disabled. Some members shared their experiences with the media, such as the press and TV, and in turn established a more positive image of single parents and expressed their needs for various services and supporting resources.

Benefits:

1. In addition to a wide range of trainings, members were encouraged to participate in various courses, for example, computer, drama and flower arrangement, offered by different organizations to enrich their knowledge and capabilities. Some group members also acted as volunteer instructors in classes such as yoga and hair styling.
2. Single parents could share among themselves experiences and difficulties encountered during the monthly committee meetings and quarterly birthday celebrations. Outdoor activities, like camping and hiking, also provided opportunities to enhance communication among members.
3. Through sharing of experience in overcoming difficulties in daily life during committee meetings and birthday celebrations, members provided emotional support for one another and the spirit of mutual help was nurtured. Different forms of volunteer services also fostered team spirit and co-operation among members.

4. Volunteer trainings equipped group members with the skills and appropriate attitude to serve other people in the community. They learnt to proactively provide different services according to the needs of different targets, for example, single parents and their children, the elderly and the disabled. The process facilitated their personal development and self-fulfillment.
5. During the monthly committee meetings, members could make recommendations to the social workers on the future direction of the group, services provided by the Hong Kong Family Welfare Society as well as other issues of single parents' concern. These recommendations represented the needs of single parent families and facilitated the Society's planning for future groups and activities.
6. Single parents realized their potential and built up self-confidence through participation in various activities. Discussions on topics of their concerns gave them a better understanding of their own rights, resources available to them as well as other relevant information.

Success Factors:

1. Solidarity. The group developed solidarity by a) recruiting new members who brought in new dynamics and facilitated the Group's development; b) providing opportunities for group members to enrich their knowledge about the society and further develop their potentials; and c) promoting care for the needy and the spirit of mutual help.

2. Sharing. Emphasis was placed on experience sharing. The 30 more members of the group had diverse family background and personal characters. Social workers exerted quite some efforts in building up team spirit and enhancing interaction among different members. In addition, Social Workers needed a thorough understanding on the strengths and characters of different members so as to facilitate them to make good use of their potentials when providing assistance to the needy. In this way, members could also acquire new knowledge in the process.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

Some members were over-reliant on others for instructions and support. Social workers had to strive to increase their autonomy and devotion.

The solidarity amongst existing members was crucial in facilitating new members' adaptation to the group. However, it might also hinder the adaptation process and therefore had to be carefully handled. The social workers encouraged as well as provided opportunities for existing members to help new members by sharing their own experience of maintaining an optimistic attitude towards being single parents. Besides, different group activities were organized to enhance understanding, team spirit and solidarity among members.

Costs and Sources of Funding:

A social worker was responsible for the execution and support of the Group. The Hong Kong Community Chest and participants' annual fee supported the group's annual budget of HKD 3,000.

Project : Arming of Women Police of the Hong Kong Police Force

Organization: Working Group on the Role of Women Police of the Hong Kong Police Force

Description:

In 1995, a programme was launched to arm women officers with handguns to enable them to carry out a wider range of constabulary duties and women officers' responsibilities and roles on the Force were also expanded as a result.

In the past, women officers were excluded from some operational tasks on the grounds that they were not armed. Therefore, the arming of women officers had a beneficial effect on the role of women officers as it opened up almost all types of police work to women officers.

Under the programme, women officers who joined the Force since 1 January 1995 understood that they would be required to undergo firearms training and carry firearms on duty. As for women officers who joined the Force prior to that date, they might volunteer to be armed on duty. To this end, they will be given training to use firearms. Once fully qualified, these officers were required to carry a firearm on duty. According to a survey among women officers joined the Force before January 1995 conducted by the Police Force, more than 1,000 officers were willing to receive training and carry a firearm on duty. The Police Force started to give training to these officers from April 1996, around 1,000 of them finally received training.

Benefits : -

In the past, women officers were assigned duties that were traditionally less physically demanding and less potentially dangerous than those of their male colleagues. This had been largely due to disparate levels of arms, equipment and training. Once the women officers were trained and armed, they had a wider choice of postings from which their potential and abilities were enhanced whilst different working experiences could be obtained. The traditional constraints were broken through.

Success Factors : -

1. The issue of the expansion of the role of women officers, particularly their arming, had been the subject of interest for most women officers. The Force management initiated a wide range of consultations throughout the Force. In addition to formal written submissions, discussion groups were held with women officers and their views collated. An effective two-way communication flow was created by the Force in this regard. The Force expressed clearly to the women officers who had the right to choose to be armed or not, that even if they chose not to be armed, their promotion prospect would not be affected. Such thorough consultation and effective communication contributed to the success of this project.
2. With the arming of women officers, several other action areas were identified, including the incorporation of women officers into the Internal Security Structure (i.e. Police Tactical Unit); the change of

women police uniforms, as well as, the legislative amendments in light of the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Sex Discrimination Ordinance and the Bill of Rights etc.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

1. Minor difficulties in training were encountered, mainly concerned with weapon handling. As women officers had smaller hands than male officers, it took them longer to adapt to the handling of revolvers.
2. On the other hand, some women officers experienced difficulties caused by the belts, holsters and bullet resistance vests. All these difficulties had been resolved by introducing new or modified equipment to the Force.

Sources of Funding : -

The programme was supported by the Hong Kong Police Force, with no additional cost.

Project: Promoting Women in the New Territories to Participate in Village Affairs

Organization: Heung Yee Kuk Women and Youth Commission

Description:

Nowadays, it is not uncommon for village women to participate in rural affairs. However, the rate of participation remains low in comparison with their male counterparts. Witnessing the social improvements in Hong Kong, Heung Yee Kuk had all along been concerned about the issue and actively striving to improve the present situation. In particular, its Women and Youth Commission (WYC) encouraged women village or “kaifong” representatives to share with other villagers their experiences of participating in village affairs and overcoming obstacles in the course. In this way, it hoped to enrich villagers’ understanding on village affairs and encourage women to participate in village elections and other decision-making processes so that their status, rights and opportunities could be improved accordingly.

Together with Rural Committees and other district organizations, the WYC organized series of visits and exchange programmes for women, who were interested in participating in rural affairs but lacked the knowledge. Through these activities, they learnt about different avenues to this end and the related responsibilities. They were encouraged to take action in this regard and in turn breakthrough outsiders’ misunderstanding and prejudice concerning the rural sector.

Benefits:

1. Women village representatives held responsibility for village affairs and become members of Rural Committees directly. They could even become members of the Heung Yee Kuk. In performing their duties, they took part various decision-making processes and realized their due rights and social status. Therefore, women in New Territories could gain access to a new arena in addition to their long-standing role to preserve rural traditions. A more balanced gender relationship could in turn be established in their families.
2. In order to carry out their responsibilities competently, women village representatives had to gain a better understanding on village related issues and sometimes they also needed to acquire legal knowledge. On-the-job training was useful in building up their capacity and promoting their personal growth.
3. Taking part in village affairs, women could widen their social network and strengthened their social capital. Having been elected as village representatives, they had to address various problems, which would bring along considerable amount of stress. Such experience instigated them to cooperate with other village representatives and villagers to ensure village affairs being conducted smoothly.
4. Women village representatives, in discharging their responsibilities, had gradually improved their communication skills and built up bonding with their villagers. They were capable of making sympathetic responses to

the needs and concerns of women in the New Territories. These village representatives gained recognition from the society and in turn helped to enhance women's status as well.

Success Factors:

1. The experience of current WYC members as village or "kaifong" representatives was invaluable to the newly elected women village representatives in overcoming societal, familial and individual problems as well as developing self-confidence and awareness of their own status.
2. With the assistance of various Rural Committees, it had become easier to cultivate and reach suitable women candidates for different purposes. A favourable environment was also created for women to participate actively in village matters.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

Social norms and tradition created substantial pressure against women's participation in public affairs. Assurance and protection enshrined in various legislations had to be emphasized, for example, Basic Law Article 26, Sex Discrimination Ordinance and Hong Kong Bills of Rights Article 21. In addition, the Rural Committees could also play a co-ordinating role.

The need for capacity building and the psychological pressure faced by women participating in village affairs were other important issues to deal with. WYC members built up the participant's confidence and faith by illustrating to them different real life cases. They also attached importance to the development of

women's self-worth as well as the rights of any individual to make decision for oneself. Substantial efforts had to be undertaken to widen the participant's social network and provide them with more learning opportunities.

Participants might face pressure from the family. Hence, Heung Yee Kuk exerted efforts in helping them to gain the understanding and support from their families and friends.

Sources of Funding:

Expenses were mainly incurred for public relation, liaison and transportation. Members of Heung Yee Kuk and Women and Youth Commission supported the programme.

Project: Female Counselor Programme

Organization: Harmony House Hong Kong

Description:

Many housewives who suffered from family violence had a wrong perception towards the problem and limited access to relevant information such as social assistance and legal aid services. Suffering from the painful experience and feeling helpless, many of them did not actively seek assistance and the problems were left unsolved. The Female Counselor Programme aimed to introduce to these women the availability of social resources and the correct attitudes towards family violence in six programme modules, namely, introduction to family violence, laws and family violence, medical workers' response, police's response and introduction to social welfare. Through the training, Harmony House hoped to help these women break away from family violence. Participants were also expected to act as counselors who would share what they have learnt during the Harmony House's monthly meetings and participate in the production and distribution of a pamphlet called "Stay Away from Family Violence" with a view to help other women suffering from family violence.

Benefits:

1. The programme strengthened women's ability in handling family violence by introducing the availability of social resources and correcting mis-perceptions, such as, their husbands would be arrested if they reported the cases; their physical and psychological well-being could be scarified

for family solidarity, etc. Upon completion of the program, participants had a better understanding of their own rights, as well as how to handle their family violence problems.

2. The programme successfully helped victims of family violence rebuild their self-image and confidence. Having participated in the programme, these victims no longer felt ashamed of their unhappy experience or restrained from sharing with others. Through group sharing activities with other women with similar problems, they courageously made honest self-reflection. They could appreciate themselves and make contribution to the society with their unpleasant experience by encouraging other women suffering from family violence to stand up and face the problem positively.
3. Victims of family violence transformed from passive participants to become active female counselors through the programme. By acquiring the necessary information about family violence at the very beginning, helping on the production of the pamphlet and then sharing their experience with others at the monthly meeting, participants gradually become active counselors and passed on the knowledge acquired. In other words, they had transformed from passive service users to active service providers.
4. Participants acquired through the programme a better understanding on the issue of family violence and therefore could make better use of the available resources to protect themselves. As they had learnt to seek

necessary assistance when encountering family violence in the future, the chance of suffering from such incident again was therefore reduced.

Success Factors:

1. The programme addressed the greatest concern of victims of family violence. Experts on legal aid services and social welfare services had been invited to clarify their misunderstandings and worries. In addition, medical workers and police attended their meetings and answered questions concerning the problems they had encountered in the course of seeking assistance. These face-to-face interactions encouraged the victims to communicate with the professionals and motivated their participation in the programme.
2. The programme drew on the experience and potentials of the victims of family violence. The experience of every participant was unique and precious. In their sharing with other victims, they could understand and analysis the victims' situations with empathy and give advice in a convincing way. Besides, they could extend their potentials in the course of such sharing and encourage other victims to deal with their problems positively. The spirit of "Help oneself while helping the others" was nurtured.
3. Persistent support and encouragement to the participants were essential to its success. Before joining the programme, victims of family violence were in lack of confidence and were usually passive and indecisive when dealing with problems. Training officers and other group-mates provided

continuous support, encouragement and recognition to the participants in the course. Therefore, they were able take a step forward to acquire new knowledge and finally served as counselors to help other women in need. In short, recognition from the training officers and the solidarity created in the group made significant contribution to the success of the programme.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions:

Many participants were reluctant to jot down the information acquired in workshops. The training officers understood their limitation in language proficiency. The participants were therefore encouraged to use simple sentences to record their feelings, while the officers offered to edit their transcripts for future reference. Another mean to overcome the problem was to encourage the participants to write down some encouraging and affectionate phrases.

Sources of Funding:

Harmony House supported the cost of the programme (HKD 1500 – 2000). In addition, Family and Children Welfare Services Commission of Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing District sponsored the production of pamphlets and booklets.

Project: Support for Women Facing an Unplanned Pregnancy (p. 116)

Organization: Mother's Choice Pregnant Girls' Services Division

Description:

The project aimed to empower women to face and handle crisis pregnancy situations. The project took place from September 2002 to September 2003. Mother's Choice offered diversified classes to pregnant girls. These classes not only supported the pregnant girls through a time of crisis, they were also useful for them in dealing with their own situations in the future. The classes offered include: -

- (a) Computer;
- (b) Languages (English and Putonghua);
- (c) Resume writing;
- (d) Pre-and postnatal classes;
- (e) Parenting support group;
- (f) Post abortion support group; and
- (g) Adoption support group.

No matter what the girls' choices were, Mother's Choice stood ready to help. Therefore, the young girls were empowered to make their own decisions and overcome challenges.

Benefits:

1. The project empowered young pregnant girls to make decisions concerning their pregnancy. The social workers in Mother's Choice explained all the choices they might consider in solving their problems and empowered them to make a decision, which was the best in their situation.
2. The living conditions of the pregnant girls were improved, including better health status and financial condition as well as a proper relationship between the two sexes in the family.
3. The project facilitated them to develop a social network, for example, by strengthening their soliciting ability, they could acquire support from their families and relatives.
4. Mutual help and support among pregnant girls was promoted.
5. Clients were successfully referred to the relevant service agencies.
6. Sensitivity and knowledge about pregnant girls were enhanced among staff members of the Mother's Choice.
7. A considerable number of clients were reached and influenced.

Success Factors:

1. Mother's Choice was the only service agency that provided a hostel, counseling and follow-up services to women facing an unplanned pregnancy. The all-rounded service package was important to the success of the services.
2. In providing services to the young pregnant girls, the Mother's Choice "challenged" them so that they felt empowered to make decisions that were best for themselves. Mother's Choice learnt from experience that these women were seeking love from different sources such as their partners and family members. This echoed Mother's Choice's direction to teach these women to love themselves first, before seeking love from others or even relying on others for love. The slogan used by Mother's Choice was "loving yourself means making smart choices."

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

Inadequate financial support was the major obstacle faced by Mother's Choice.

At the moment, Mother's Choice managed to arrange some volunteers to teach the pregnant girls classes, such as knitting or cross stitching, but these classes were more of an interest nature and not professional development classes. Indeed, relying on volunteers would create inconsistency in the services, since the volunteer could only come when they were free.

Sources of Funding:

The whole project costed HKD 96,000 and was resourced by donations from various people.

Project: Postnatal screening with counseling and supportive service

Organization: Hong Kong University Medical Faculty, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology (O&G)

Description:

People generally regarded giving birth to children a natural duty of women, an action too ordinary. However, how many people managed to notice the difficulties brought by the postnatal emotional problems, which can turn a happy event into a tragedy?

Postnatal women usually failed to adapt to the changes in physical conditions and their role in a short period of time. If they could not receive the understanding and support from their husbands and family members during that period of time, emotional problems would easily arise. Nonetheless, if somebody came forward to care, console and listen to them, the stress they were experiencing could be largely relieved and the incidence of emotional problems could be reduced.

In view of this, Tsau Yuk Hospital and YWCA jointly designed a project called “Postnatal Screening with counseling and supportive service” to relieve the emotional problems of postnatal women, with a background scientific research. Queen Mary Hospital joined the collaboration subsequently as well.

The innovative project represented the collaboration between hospitals and the community which reached out to provide services to postnatal women

proactively. Whenever it was likely that a postnatal woman would suffer from emotional problems, phone follow-up counseling would be provided to her. Supportive social services would also be arranged for her if necessary.

Initially, postnatal women would be screened by the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) questionnaire at three stages, i.e. 1 day before discharge, 1 week and 6 weeks after delivery. Those with emotional problems would be grouped into “high risk” or “low risk” group, with the former followed up by midwives and the latter followed up through phone follow-up counseling by a group of trained volunteer under the leadership of social workers.

The project had not only helped to solve the emotional problems of postnatal women, but it also enhanced the counseling skill and knowledge base of nurses, social workers and volunteers. As a result, they were better capable of helping more women in need. This women-created chain of action was beneficial to both the clients and the service providers, created by women made significant contribution to the society as a whole.

Benefits:

1. According to the findings of the background scientific research, postnatal women receiving proactive counseling and supportive services had significant improvements in the emotional status in comparison with those who had to seek assistance actively. Not only had the project improved postnatal women’s health conditions, but it had also facilitated them to adapt to their new role as a mother and improved their relationship with

other family members. Not to mention a smooth transition to working life.

2. The project relayed to postnatal women the availability of community resources, which could help them strengthen their community support network. They were empowered to seek appropriate assistance proactively whenever in need.
3. The project enabled the social workers and volunteers to understand more about the needs of the postnatal women. They had also acquired through the project knowledge about caring for baby and postnatal women. They had become more self-confident and therefore made better contribution to the effective development of the services for more women in need.
4. The project enhanced the communication skill of nursing staff as they acquired basic knowledge and skills on counseling through training sessions. The project also drew to their attention the availability of community resources which could improve the services to patients / postnatal women.

Success Factors:

1. The positive attitude adopted by the social workers from YWCA & staff from O&G department in the cooperation ensured smooth operation of the project.

2. The soundly structured programme with well-organized training for both volunteers of YWCA and nursing staff was another key to success.
3. The need for such services among postnatal women made the programme very well received.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

At the beginning stage, many postnatal women refused to receive phone follow-up counseling from social workers and volunteers, since they were either not familiar with community resources or had not yet realized their needs. Adjustments were made in this regard to improve the situation. Subsequently postnatal women reflected that they were satisfied with the helpful phone follow-up counseling service.

Project: Great Search for Smoke-free OL Competition

Organization: Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health

Description:

This “Great Search for Smoke-free OL” was a competition targeting at women in Hong Kong, especially those who were working, with an aim to enhance their knowledge of the hazards of active and passive smoking and encourage them to express their request for a smoke-free working and living environment.

To encourage office ladies to refrain from smoking, Hong Kong Council on Smoking and Health (COSH) organized the competition for all office ladies in Hong Kong from March to June 2001. Participants had to be non-smokers or successful quitters, who were concerned about the issue of passive smoking in workplace and supported the principle of a smoke-free workplace.

To participate in the competition, office ladies were requested to submit their entry form with a short essay describing their experience in promoting a smoke-free workplace. Outstanding candidates were invited to attend an interview with a panel of judges comprising renowned personalities Ms Priscilla Koo and Ms Olivia Cheng. Ten finalists were selected for the final contest.

The Final Contest was held in May 2001 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. This event was co-organized with RTHK Radio 2 and was widely covered by various media, including the radio, the TVB “I-Files”

programme and the mass media.

Benefits:

Most women in Hong Kong were non-smoker, however, recent studies showed that the number of young women who smoke had steadily increased. Also, over 35% of working women were exposed to passive smoking at their workplaces. The Campaign:

1. provided opportunities for women to express in public their feelings about involuntary passive smoking at the workplace and public places;
2. empowered working women to request for a smoke-free working and living environment for health protection;
3. helped to enhance women's skills and techniques to intelligently stop others, such as, co-workers at their workplace, family members, from smoking; and
4. provided opportunities for women to encourage their acquaintances at workplace or family members to quit smoking.

This promotion campaign highlighted the importance of women's role in developing and maintaining a smoke-free working and living environment. Through participation in this cause to stop smoking and promote a smoke free environment, participants developed the spirit of co-operation and mutual help among themselves.

While there were only about a hundred women participated in the competition, messages of the campaign were intensively promoted in the media, like radio and television, throughout the campaign period. Therefore, it had a positive effect on the overall health status of women.

Success Factors:

1. It was definitely an advantage to work closely with RTHK, being one of the major media in Hong Kong, in the promotion of the campaign. The highly creative ideas originated from RTHK helped to drive home the messages effectively.
2. With active involvement of well-known female celebrities in the promotion of the campaign, the messages were dispersed effectively among women in Hong Kong.

Difficulties Encountered and Solutions Identified:

The finalists of the competition were invited to attend a series of media functions and appear on electronic and printed media. A few participants expressed anxiety since they felt pressurized by these functions. They even considered withdrawing from the competition.

They were encouraged to share with their colleagues and family members the merits of participating in the event in order to seek their support.

Finally, most of them received support from their companies and family members, some of them even attended the competition in support of the finalists.

Sources of Funding:

The project cost HKD 450,000 and was resourced by COSH.

Project: Women's Health Monitor

Organization: YWCA

Description:

World Health Organization defined health as “total health”, which included physical health, psychological health, environmental health and social health. The issue of women's health had profound social and cultural implication since the issue was closely related with women's role in the family, the community and the society. In fulfilling their different roles, women bore different responsibilities and were subjected to various expectations from different people. Much pressure arose in the course and women might suffer from a negative cycle of psychological and/or emotional downturn and weakening in their physical health.

The objective of the programme was to firstly educate women aged 30 to 50 to pay more attention to their own health, and secondly to engage them in the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. In the end, their families and the society as a whole would reap the benefits. The programme was conducted in six districts with five community workshops and one district educational activity organized in each district. Upon completion of the programme, participants would become “Women's Health Monitors” who would set up “women health mutual groups” in their respective communities to provide a wide range of services for a period of nine months. In addition, 10, 000 copies of “Handbook for Healthy Women” and six issues of “Healthy Women Magazine”(2000 copies per issue) were published.

Benefits:

1. The programme enhanced women's awareness of their psychological and physical well-being. They also learnt about the various restrictions brought about by the social environment on their roles and images. Therefore, participants could understand, experience and reflect on the concept of women's health from various prospective.
2. The programme reminded women not to overlook their inner strength and personal character in the expense of appearance and image. Women were encouraged to make changes in their living environment, including building up social networks, having balanced diet and regular exercise. They were also encouraged to empower themselves, revisit their dependent roles in their families and take action to construct an equitable relationship between the two sexes.
3. To commend the contribution made by "Women's Health Monitors", sharing sessions were organized. The monitors took the opportunities to exchange views on healthy lifestyle and give support to one another. With passage of time, they had successfully influenced their family members and other members of the community to adopt a healthy lifestyle.
4. The programme provided a channel for "Women's Health Monitors" to organize working groups and perform various kinds of voluntary work to promote the healthy lifestyle. They had converted themselves from service users to service providers.

Success Factors:

- (1) Selection of Central Themes: Five distinct themes were selected for the five community workshops, namely, menstrual pain, menopause, sexual health, pregnancy and mental health. Attractive headlines were used to draw women's attentions. For example, "Women's greatest pain – menstrual pain."; "Women's greatest fear – menopause."; "Women's greatest taboo – sexual transmitted diseases."; "Women's greatest fault? – Infertility"; and "Women's greatest wit – mental health." YWCA's women's health magazine, titled "Easy Health", also used interesting headlines for different features to attract target readers.
- (2) Peer Support: The programme was initiated by a group of medical officers and social workers, joined later by women who are concerned about the issue women's health. They voiced out their views and feelings from a women's prospective. The peer groups' influence had greatly helped to proliferate women's health issues.
- (3) Co-operation across Professions: The programme benefited from the joint effort of the medical and social work professions, which had utilized their respective expertise and collaborated harmoniously in promoting healthy lifestyle.
- (4) Network of focus groups: Through joint sessions by women colleagues (with members from different service divisions, including elderly, children, employed adults and youth, etc.), focus group meetings were organized to

collect information about different service users with a view to enrich the service content and facilitate information exchange.

- (5) Diversity of programme activities: In addition to community educational activities and the publication of health pamphlets and magazines, YWCA organized a press briefing to announce findings of its research study on women's health. With the press release distributed, it had attracted wide coverage in both print and electronic media. Besides, in order to enhance popularity of the programme, a celebrity with positive image was invited to act as its Ambassador to promote healthy lifestyle.

Problems Encountered and Solutions:

Matching knowledge with consciousness was essential in improving women's health. In this regard, YWCA designed a series of themes to bring out the relationship between health and consciousness of women, e.g. breast cancer, cervical cancer and women's image, as well as, sexually transmitted disease and women's status.

The pressing demand for human resources to implement the programme was one of the hurdles. To this end, a joint session was formed by representatives from different responsible divisions appointed by the respective officers-in-charge. Service oriented activities, like workshops and community education, were organized at community level to promote the programme. Interested women were recruited and trained to become "Women's Health Monitor" who would plan and implement the programme in their community.

It was also necessary to devise a mechanism to review the programme activities to ensure that they were cost-effective. To this end, questionnaire survey and sharing sessions were conducted with voluntary workers, participants and co-organizers to evaluate different service areas. Evaluation meetings among co-organizers were also organized periodically.

Sources of Funding:

The programme costed approximately HKD 410,000, and was resourced by the “Health and Care Fund” and YWCA’s internal funding.

Project: Well Women Workshop

Organization: Health InfoWorld, Hospital Authority

Description:

Living in a hustling and bustling modern city, women nowadays suffer more from the heavy stress as well as physical and mental health problems caused by the rapid pace of living than any of their predecessors. With the proliferating and de-aging trend of breast cancer and cervical cancer, increasing incidence of osteoporosis, frequent occurrence of mental stress and related health problems etc., women's health becomes a pressing issue that warrants our concerns.

Well Women Workshop was conducted by volunteering health care professionals from Hospital Authority. The programme empowered women with the knowledge on common women health concerns through a simulated home learning environment. The interactive learning approach facilitated the participants to experience the importance of health improvement and disease prevention. The programme covered various areas of women common health needs through the following means:

- * **Thematic exhibits:** a simulated health home environment enabled women to acquire practical tips to a healthy lifestyle, including a health diet and regular exercise.
- * **Interactive talks:** volunteer health care professionals served as speakers to arouse participants' learning initiatives. Topics were all of women's

concerns, for example, breast care, prevention of osteoporosis, coping with menopause and women mental wellness, etc.

- * **Free health screening:** Participants were given tests on blood pressure, bone density, height, weight and proportion of body fat so as to gain an understanding on their health status.
- * **Demonstration and practice of self breast examination on model:** participants acquainted themselves with the examination procedure and skills as well as had a feel of abnormal breast conditions on models.
- * **Questionnaire:** participants filled in a simple questionnaire, which would enrich their knowledge about various diseases. Besides, the information obtained was also useful in course improvement.
- * **Healthy lunch:** participants had the opportunity to experience balanced diet designed by dietician of Hospital Authority.

Benefits:

1. During the first year of implementation, more than 60 workshops were conducted for over 3,000 women from various professions and backgrounds. With the contribution of trained volunteers, the programme could be operated at expected standards.
2. The programme received positive feedback from participants who acquired a better understanding of their own health as well as an

enhanced awareness of health problems and skills to maintain health.

3. Participants could apply the knowledge and skills acquired to practise healthy lifestyle among themselves as well as their families.

Success Factors:

1. A thorough needs assessment regarding women health concerns was carried out to identify themes and prioritize different programme content areas.
2. The interactive approach of programme design facilitated participants' understanding of the subject matter, e.g. use of a simulated home environment, using daily-life healthy foods as examples, exhibiting tips of healthy lifestyle, practising self breast examination and experiencing abnormality breast condition on models had all substantially enhanced the effectiveness of the programme.
3. The provision of a simple health test, on height, weight, blood pressure, proportion of body fat and the bone density, heightened motivation and enhanced understanding on the participants' own health status.
4. Health care materials, i.e. osteoporosis booklet, recipes, and resource list for health tests were distributed to participants for reference and sharing with others. Therefore, not only could they apply what they learnt into action, but they were also able to sustain their actions.

5. Participation and co-operation among multi-disciplinary professionals was another factor leading to success of the Programme.
6. Volunteers and participants from different walks of life were mobilized through the community network.

Sources of Funding:

To a large extent, Well Women Workshop was community funded. The establishment of a simulated home was sponsored by IKEA. Bone density test equipment was sponsored by medical equipment companies. Programme development and exhibition was contributed by the osteoporosis centres of the two universities, Well Women Clinic as well as other experts of Hospital Authority. The production of publications was supported by Health InfoWorld, through donation from the community. The Health InfoWorld also coordinated the volunteering professionals from regular programmes to facilitate the operation as well as publicity of the Well Women Workshop. The optional high-calcium, low-fat health lunch was self-funded by participants. Therefore, no direct financial outlay was involved.
