

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
Policy Initiatives of Home Affairs Bureau

Introduction

This note highlights the work of Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) concerning the Family Council and promoting the development of social enterprises (SEs).

Family Council

2. The Family Council was set up in December 2007 to advise the Government on the formulation of policies and strategies for supporting and strengthening the family and on the development of related programmes/activities, and to monitor their implementation. Since its establishment, the Family Council has had in-depth discussions about the family core values; ways to achieve a pro-family environment and family friendly employment practices; better enhancement and co-ordination of family and parental education; and recommendations on better synergy between the Family Council and other stakeholders and advisory bodies. To advocate for cherishing the family as a main driver for social harmony, the Family Council also launched activities across the territory to promote family core values.

3. The main tasks to be carried out by the Family Council in the coming year to continue to promote the family core values have been set out in the Chief Executive's 2009-10 Policy Address. They are highlighted in the ensuing paragraphs.

Happy family campaign

4. The Family Council will continue to actively promote the family core values with the emphasis on building "Happy Families". A territory-wide "Happy Family Campaign" will be launched to appeal to the public to build families that Hong Kong people treasure (which include essential values like

Happiness, Kindness, Supportiveness, Appreciativeness, and a sense of sharing of Responsibilities). The campaign seeks to engage as many stakeholders/partners as possible to disseminate the family core values and messages through, for instance, publication of books on family themes, production of TV mini-series, etc. Putting into practice these values could help foster greater harmony amongst family members and the community and provide strength for happy and healthy development of individuals and their families.

5. The secretariat will liaise with the relevant stakeholders in setting up a multi-sectoral and cross-disciplinary “Happy Family Info Hub”, and build an e-platform collating family-related reference and educational materials, as well as disseminating information on family related activities, promoting family core values, introducing family education and support services. Besides, we shall also engage professionals from different fields to conduct researches, organize workshops and seminars to consider how to build up good family relationship to help alleviate the social problems of juvenile drug abuse, prostitution, as well as neglect of the elderly and children, and suggest new policy options to alleviate these problems.

6. To continue to create a pro-family environment, we will, together with other stakeholders, continue to promote family education, strengthen support for the family and enhance the role of the family as a main driver for social harmony.

Social Enterprises

Enhance public understanding

7. In collaboration with organizations of SEs established by the community on their own initiative, the Administration will continue to adopt a four-pronged approach to promote the development of SEs, namely, to enhance public understanding of SEs; to promote cross-sector collaboration; to nurture more social entrepreneurs; and to strengthen support for SEs.

8. In the coming year, we will continue with the publicity and promotional efforts to enhance public understanding of SEs and encourage members of the public to use the products and services provided by SEs. We will organize promotional activities at the district level and publish a new SE

booklet. We will continue to arrange for press interviews with SEs and publicize their success stories, especially the social objectives achieved and the business models adopted, in order to enable individuals/institutions interested in operating, assisting or patronizing SEs to better understand SEs. We will arrange for SEs to showcase their products/services at appropriate occasions for promotion or sales purposes.

Promote cross-sector collaboration

9. We will continue to implement the Social Enterprises Partnership Programme (the Programme) which provides a platform to enhance and facilitate partnership among different sectors of the community through a matching forum and the mentorship scheme. Thus far, about 20 new SE projects involving cross-sector collaboration have been launched through the matching forum and over 15 mentor/mentee partnerships have been formed through the mentorship scheme for the volunteers from the business/professional sector to offer business/professional advisory services to SEs.

Nurture Social Entrepreneurs

10. The business plan writing competitions organized in 2007 and 2008 aimed at strengthening students' understanding of SEs and encourage them to employ entrepreneurial approaches to solve real world problems. To sustain our effort in promoting social entrepreneurship in the younger generation and to catch a wider net of potential social entrepreneurs, the competition will be open to people who have graduated from local post-secondary institutions within the past three years.

Strengthen support for SE

11. The Administration will continue to provide seed grants for eligible SEs to subsidize their initial operations. The "Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme" has approved under the first five phases of applications a total grant of about \$88 million to about 90 new SE projects, creating some 1 500 jobs for the socially disadvantaged.

12. As regards the pilot scheme introduced in 2008 under which 38 government cleansing services contracts were reserved for priority bidding by SEs, 16 contracts were awarded to SEs. In the light of the positive feedback

from participating SEs and departments, as well as to sustain our effort in promoting SE development in particular amidst the current economic situation, we have continued with the scheme in 2009-10. There are 54 contracts (involving 23 government departments) for priority bidding by SEs this year.

13. We are preparing for the establishment of a new “Social Enterprise Advisory Committee”. We will invite SE operators, members of the business sector, academics and persons aspired to promote SE development to join the advisory committee with a view to developing measures for the further promotion of SE development. We hope that the participation of various sectors will bring synergy effect, instill business mindset in SEs suitably, and enhance business participation in SE development for a win-win situation.

Home Affairs Bureau
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