

Report of The Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres
Initial Report on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region under the Convention
on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CDEAW)

November 1998

I. Background information of HKFWC

HKFWC is the set up in 1985 with the aims of promoting women's rights and providing supportive service to women with special needs. Services provided to women include hotline service, counselling, health awareness education and Legal Advice Clinic. The Federation has two women's centres, serving around 20,000 local women every year. As a women's NGO aiming at promoting gender equality in Hong Kong as well as providing supportive services to women, the Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres has the following comments regarding the implementation of CEDAW in Hong Kong.

II. Summary of Recommendations

Article 12 - Equality in Access to Health Care

- States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.
- Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Hong Kong Government had adopted a narrow policy and programmes focus on women's health. This meant an exclusion of girls, unmarried and other women. Hong Kong Government needs to widen the philosophy of services so they are not primarily targeted at women as childbearers, but women's health needs should be examined along a spectrum of overall needs throughout their lives.

III. Existing situation

- 1. Service gaps in view of the increasing trend of breast and cervical cancer for younger women**
- 2. Low public awareness on women's health education**
- 3. Increasing cases of mental breakdown for women**
- 4. The poor accessibility of women's health services**

IV. Suggestion and recommendations

- 1. Promote women health education and research**
- 2. Improve the accessibility of health services to women**
- 3. Conduct gender sensitive training to health professionals**