

Press release

LCQ12: Surveys conducted by government departments

Wednesday, March 10, 2010

Following is a question by the Hon Emily Lau Wai-hing and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Professor K C Chan, in the Legislative Council today (March 10):

Question:

It has been learnt that various government departments separately conduct relevant surveys in respect of their policies and programme areas, but there is no standardised mechanism and indicators for conducting surveys. Moreover, although statistical figures of men and women are listed under different situations in the "Women and Men in Hong Kong - Key Statistics" published annually by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), quite a number of people have pointed out that the areas covered by the survey are not comprehensive and some government departments have even explained that they had not collected gender-based data because gender was not a factor of consideration in executing their relevant policies. In this connection, will the Executive Authorities inform this Council whether:

- (a) C&SD has adopted the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist to assess the existing concepts and methods for conducting surveys; if it has, of the assessment outcome; if not, the reasons for that;
- (b) they will formulate a standardised mechanism and indicators for conducting surveys, so as to collate and analyse the data collected by various government departments; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (c) they will require various government departments, when collecting information and data, to include information on both genders, so as to grasp more accurately the situations faced by both genders; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;

(d) they will request subvented non-governmental organisations and encourage private organisations to consider analysing the information they have collected from a gender perspective when conducting surveys; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(e) they will collaborate regularly with community groups, women's groups as well as the academia and conduct consultation to collect views on the ways to improve the mechanism currently adopted by the Government for conducting surveys and the use of data; if they will, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

(a) The Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) applies the Gender Mainstreaming concept in various statistical work. For example, in planning and implementing the 2006 Population By-census, the C&SD has applied the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist promoted by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) in various areas of work, including questionnaire design and data processing. The sex-disaggregated statistics compiled, including the annual publication "Women and Men in Hong Kong – Key Statistics", lists out various key statistics by gender to facilitate data users to have a better grasp of the situation of both genders in Hong Kong.

(b) The C&SD follows closely the widely accepted statistical definitions, concepts and methods and classification systems promulgated by international organisation in compiling and disseminating statistics. The relevant international organisations have not promulgated any single mechanism and indicator for the compilation and dissemination of statistics by the Government. In collecting applicable data and carrying out analysis in response to their different policy needs and scope of work, individual government departments would make reference to the relevant statistical mechanisms and indicators of other advanced countries and apply the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist issued by the LWB as appropriate. The C&SD would render professional advice to individual government departments to assist them in collecting and analysing the data concerned if necessary.

(c) The Administration actively encourages bureaux and departments to take into account the perspectives and needs of both genders in devising legislation, policies and programmes. As such, the LWB encourages bureaux and departments to collect and consider gender-related statistics in a systematic manner in order to have a better grasp of the situation of both genders when they conduct analysis. The "Women and Men in Hong Kong – Key Statistics" published by the C&SD lists out various sex-disaggregated data and provides bureaux and departments with objective data as well as important reference. Bureaux and departments may make reference to the gender statistics collected by C&SD for policy analysis or research purposes as necessary.

(d) The LWB encourages non-governmental organisations to take into account the perspectives and needs of both genders. These organisations, including individual subvented non-governmental organisations and private organisations, would conduct surveys according to their scope of work and needs. The C&SD would not require them to analyse the relevant information from specific perspectives (including gender perspective).

On the other hand, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) monitors the work of welfare non-governmental organisations (NGOs) mainly through a Service Performance Monitoring System to ensure that subvented services of NGOs are in compliance with the requirements under the Funding and Service Agreements and the criteria of the Service Quality Standards. Subvented service operators are required to provide statistics relating to the performance of their service units as agreed with SWD on a regular basis. The Administration will encourage welfare NGOs to collect gender statistics to facilitate them review their service.

The Administration welcomes private organisations to conduct gender-related surveys and to take into account the needs of both genders so as to enhance the gender awareness of the concerned officers and the general public alike.

(e) In carrying out various statistical surveys, the C&SD would pay attention to the needs and views of data users and conduct consultations with relevant stakeholders. For example, in compiling the annual publication "Women and Men in Hong Kong – Key Statistics", the C&SD has liaised with the Women's Commission and collected views from the relevant women's groups. Relevant views have been incorporated into the publication as far as possible.

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