

## **AGENDA 6**

### **Holistic Development of the Younger Generation – Chances and Choices**

In any society, how to cultivate and develop the younger generation must be taken into consideration to ensure the continuous social development. How to provide chances and choices to them so that they can enjoy an opportunity for holistic development is an important agenda of local social development.

#### **Trends**

1. Hong Kong is faced with the problem of ageing population, widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, ineffectiveness of education and global competition. The younger generation in Hong Kong is therefore facing plenty of challenges as well as chances. They also have a heavier burden compared with their previous generation.
2. Under the influence of globalization and the risks in the society, the chances and resources for the young people from lower social strata are greatly varied and the government should address this unfair phenomenon.

#### **Concerns and Challenges**

- 1 Chances and choices for the younger generation:
  - 1.1 Education nowadays has put too much emphasis on traditional subjects and rigid assessment mechanism. Young people from lower social strata have been deprived of the rights to speak. We should create and provide chances and career prospects these young people and develop diverse paths of development for them.
  - 1.2 In areas of health care, education, science and technology application (enlightenment), vocational training, employment opportunities and career prospects, people from different social strata should share a reasonable and fair starting point. This is to protect the rights to holistic development for the new generation.
- 2 Young people’s rights to speak and chances to participate:
  - 2.1 Together with the issue of holistic growth of the younger generation, young people should be given full rights to speak and chances to participate. (For example, we suggest organizing members of the younger generation to hold youth parallel meetings during (or before) the Joint World Conference, giving them opportunities to select/put forward their own topics which can afford the end users the chance to speak.)
- 3 Diversified development:
  - 3.1 Now the SAR Government has proposed four pillars and six industries. But are they pertinent to the diversified development of the young people? Can they provide chances so that those with slightly poor qualifications and competence can contribute to the society?
  - 3.2 The younger generation has a variety of talents. We should encourage the society to provide more free space for the young people to dabble in

different interests so that Hong Kong can have more diversified development apart from six industries.

- 3.3 Sustainable development of alternative activities: some institutions and schools provide alternative activities to give young people chances to discover their own interests and positively influence themselves and the environments around them. But the question is how we can sustain the effect of growth and extend the influence onto others. The society needs a sustainable model of young people development.
  - 3.4 Conduct research on sustainable effects and operation mode of young people’s leisure activities: every leisure activity for young people has its own unique value of development. For example, in hip-hop dance, young people can experience the delight and sense of achievement from things as basic as skills, training, resource allocation, audience interaction, competition and its incentive effect and etc.. Each of these phenomena is worth researching so that we can understand how young people start “happy loop” and invest in the improvement of their knowledge and skills in their leisure activities.
  - 3.5 Developing interests into careers: for some young people, how to manage to transform their interests such as arts, sports, creative media and the application of new media into skills and careers has become the direction of their sustainable development.
- 4 Development objectives:
    - 4.1 We cannot help asking: why the government is not keen to support young people’s alternative development chances? Are the officials’ attitudes too conservative and paternalist? They are only concerned about how to control young people but fail to enter young people’s world to hear their voices to foster and develop their multiple interests.
    - 4.2 Sometimes parents agree too much on the mainstream model of development of the young people, such as good academic performance, admission to university and so on. They do not encourage, if not discourage, young people to develop their interests, let alone transforming their interests into career opportunities.

**Possible Actions:**

1. In order to promote fairness, we should base our thinking on the starting point, diversified interests and talents of the young people in formulating policies, mechanisms, trainings and employment support measures.
2. We should advocate multiple entrances (or broader entrances), multiple exits and diversified career paths so that young people’s potentials can be realized and promoted.
3. We believe that the development of leisure activities and vocational skills is not to control young people’s energy and rebellion tendency, but rather a process of exploring and promoting one’s potentials. The society should dispense with its singular approach which assesses individual success or failure by academic performance. The government, schools and parents should work together to

provide multiple choices for the young people.

4. To achieve the goal of multiple choices and career development, the government needs to explore policies in the areas of culture, arts, recreation and sports, while carefully consider the issue of cultivation of talent and qualification system and invest resources regularly. Only by doing so can the goal be achieved.
5. Schools and the society should have a mechanism and conditions for the young people with different talents to develop rather than focusing on star individuals like what commercial institutions are doing in touting a new idol. Young inventor Chan Yik Hei is an example of alternative cultivation. The schools can reform the campus culture with the most scrupulous care, fighting for community resources and recognition so that individual students can develop their potentials. We should explore and study these successful cases, and advocate the coordination of policies and flexible investment of resources, enabling more schools and communities to create conditions for more successful cases of alternative development.

How do you think about the themes/topics above? Are there any other themes left out that you would like to raise? What are other issues or problems related to this Agenda that you think should be explored and discussed?

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