

**For discussion on
8 April 2002**

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Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services

Review on Integrated Neighbourhood Projects in Targeted Old Urban Areas

Purpose

This paper informs Members of a review on the Integrated Neighbourhood Projects (INPs) (the Review) in targeted old urban areas commissioned by the Social Welfare Department (SWD). Since the Review is under way, any views or comments of Members will be taken into account in the Review.

Background

2. Neighbourhood Level Community Development Projects (NLCDP) were first conceived and implemented to serve residents in isolated or socially deprived areas such as squatter areas and cottage housing. As and when these areas were cleared, NLCDPs should cease. However, in response to a strong request from the welfare sector, NLCDPs no longer serving those isolated areas were relocated to serve in old urban areas on a pilot basis. Two such pilot projects were implemented in Mong Kok and Nam Cheong. Following a review of these pilot NLCDPs by the Review Group on Pilot NLCDPs chaired by Professor Felice Lih Mak, the Administration agreed to redeploy resources released from discontinuation of NLCDPs to set up INPs to be operated by Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in targeted old urban areas to strengthen outreaching efforts for new arrivals, elderly and low income families. Those targeted old urban areas were identified with the help of a Working Group headed by Professor Anthony Yeh Gar On of the University of Hong Kong (HKU). A total of 12 targeted old urban areas in Sham Shui Po (SSP), Yau Tsim Mong (YTM) and Kowloon City (KC) Districts as shown as **Annex I** were identified as deprived neighbourhoods for operating INPs. The understanding is these INPs would operate for a period of three years; thereafter the need for such service would be critically reviewed in the light of continuing need of such outreaching service for the target groups in the given area.

3. Services provided by INPs include -

- (a) outreaching to the target vulnerable groups of new arrivals, the elderly

and low income families in the targeted areas:

- (b) providing necessary information on social or welfare services;
- (c) making referrals for social or welfare services;
- (d) attracting and bringing the target vulnerable groups to join the available centre-based services and activities such as the supportive groups, educational programmes and life skill training etc. for integration with the mainstream services, and
- (e) promoting participation in voluntary community services and self-help programmes.

4. The timeframe of the 12 INPs being operated by NGOs on resources deployed from the phasing out of NLCDPs is as follows -

Date of Operation	No. of INPs	Date of Completion
1.1.1999	6	31.12.2001
16.3.2000	2	15.3.2003
15.3.2001	4	14.3.2004
-	Total: 12	-

Each INP is provided with \$1.46 million per year and the total provision for the 12 INPs is **\$17.4 million** in 2002-03.

SWD and NGOs' Enhanced Efforts to Meet Changing Welfare Needs

5. The social welfare sector has undergone some significant changes in recent years. In light of rising social and family problems and the flexibility now available for service providers to deploy resources to better meet changing needs, welfare services are now moving in the following directions -

- from fragmentation to integration;
- from centre-based, institutional to outreaching, home and community support;
- from compartmentalization to cross-sector collaboration.

Coupled with the Enhanced Productivity Programme and the fiscal constraint we now face, there is a greater need for critically reviewing existing services to ensure no service duplication or overlap, better use of resources and more co-ordinated support

to clients.

6. In recent years, SWD has received strong support from NGOs to implement a series of initiatives in line with the above directions, with particular emphasis on identifying family or personal problems for early intervention through outreaching efforts. These include -

- (a) accelerated formation of Integrated Teams in youth services comprising outreaching, school-based and centre-based social work services. The number of ITs increased from 35 in 1999-2000 to 64 in 2001-02. At least another 12 ITs will be formed in 2002-03;
- (b) support teams for elderly attached to Multi-services Centres for the Elderly to reach out to singleton elders residing at home. At present, there are 36 STEs with over 57,000 elders brought within the support network. An extra 3 STEs will be set up in 2002-03;
- (c) Post Migration Centres for new arrivals with the number of such centres increased from four to eight in 2000-01;
- (d) 20 Family Support and Resource Centres transformed from the then Group Work Units of SWD in community centres and estate community centres underpinned by 14 Family Support Networking Teams spreading all over the territory providing outreaching, support and counselling services for the vulnerable groups,
- (e) 15 pilot Integrated Family Services Centre projects as recommended by the consultancy study on the Review of Family Services; and
- (f) closer liaison between social workers and local residents groups, property management staff in public housing estates, etc. in identifying vulnerable groups or individuals who may need help.

It should be noted that the coverage of the above initiatives are more universal and the services more wide-ranging. Some of them are located in districts that are targeted service areas of the existing INPs.

7. In view of the extensive and enhanced efforts to reach out to underprivileged groups under the new initiatives jointly implemented by SWD and NGOs, the Administration's initial view is that the continued existence of INP as a separate and distinct mode of service has to be reviewed vis-à-vis the new endeavours stated above. The Administration is also of the view that phasing out of INPs or

subsuming/re-engineering them under existing outreaching network would perhaps be a more cost-effective deployment of public resources. In the circumstances, an independent review of the subject matter is necessary to bring all parties on side to shed light on the way forward of this unique service.

The Review

8. Upon the approval of the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) which is the policy bureau overseeing SWD's community development programme including INP, SWD has commissioned a consultant team headed by Dr Joe Leung of HKU to conduct a review of INP. Dr Leung and his team members have assisted the Administration to conduct the Review of Family Services in Hong Kong successfully. Basing on the recommendation of the review report, SWD and NGOs are now jointly pioneering the new service model of Integrated Family Services Centres (IFSC). The process involves a conscious re-engineering and integration of existing family services centres with other service units on a cost-neutral basis, with a view to meeting the needs of targeted families in a more focused and holistic manner. INP, being a community-based service, can be one of the allied services of IFSC. Given the extensive experience of Dr Leung's consultancy team in review of family services, they are entrusted the responsibility to conduct the review on INP.

9. Pending the Review, the service of the first batch of six pilot INPs, which were scheduled for completion by end of December 2001 has been extended for another 12 months, i.e. from January 2002 to December 2002. NGOs can thus have sufficient time to follow up the recommendations of the Review.

10. A summary of the Technical Proposal of the consultant team is given at **Annex II**. Apart from the tasks as summarised in the Technical Proposal, the consultant team will also review the needs and welfare services provision of the targeted areas by using the updated data from the 2001 Hong Kong Population Census and other relevant sources, e.g. geographic information (GIS). Reference will also be made to the indicators selected by Professor Yeh's Working Group for identifying deprived neighbourhood in the 12 targeted areas.

Steering Group on Progress of Review

11. A Steering Group has been formed to monitor the progress of the Review, and to give directions to the consultant and to receive reports from them. The Steering Group comprises representatives from the HAB, SWD, Hong Kong Council of Social Service, NGOs operating INPs and lay member. Professor Yeh has

also been invited to join the Steering Group as Resource Person on the updating of needs of the three targeted groups of the 12 targeted areas. At its second meeting held in March 2002, the consultancy submitted their first progress report, a copy of which is at **Annex III**.

Way Forward

12. SWD will work closely with stakeholders concerned in conducting the Review in light of the updated needs and provision of services in the targeted districts of INPs and how public resources can be utilized most cost-effectively. SWD will follow up the recommendations of the Review with HAB and all NGOs concerned. As the Review is expected to be completed by end of July 2002, there will be sufficient time for introducing changes to the operation of the first batch of six INPs before their expiry in December 2002. Consideration will be given to the timing for making changes to the second and third batches of pilot INPs taking account of the Review recommendations.

Social Welfare Department
March 2002

**List of 12 Integrated Neighbourhood Projects
in Targeted Old Urban Areas**

District	Boundary	NGO Operator
Sham Shui Po	Nam Cheong Street Lai Chi Kok Road Yen Chow Street Cheung Sha Wan Road	1. The Salvation Army
	Nam Cheong Street Cheung Sha Wan Road Kweilin Street Fuk Wing Street Yen Chow Street Barwick Street	2. The Neighbourhood Advice- Action Council
	Wong Chuk Street Tai Po Road Popular Street Cheung Sha Wan Road Nam Cheong Street Barwick Street	3. Caritas-Hong Kong
Yau Tsim Mong	Tai Kok Tsui Road Cherry Street Wong Tai Street Fuk Lee Street (including Tai Tung Sun Chuen)	4. The Mong Kok Kai Fong Association Limited Chan Hing Social Service Centre
	Tong Mi Road Cherry Street Tai Kok Tsui Road Tung Chau Street Boundary Street	5. The Mong Kok Kai Fong Association Limited Chan Hing Social Service Centre
	Nathan Road Dundas Street Ferry Street Argyle Street	6. The Mong Kok Kai Fong Association Limited Chan Hing Social Service Centre
	Nathan Road Cherry Street Tong Mi Road Prince Edward Road West	7. Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service

District	Boundary	NGO Operator
	Nathan Road Waterloo Road Ferry Street Dundas Street	8. Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service
Sham Shui Po (Cont'd)	Nathan Road Prince Edward Road East Tong Mi Road Lai Chi Kok Road Boundary Street	9. Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service
Kowloon City	Ma Tau Chung Road Sung Wong Toi Road Pai Tai Street Ma Tau Wai Road Tam Kung Road Ma Tau Kok Road Mok Cheung Street Kowloon City Road To Kwa Wan Road	10. Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
	Sa Po Road Prince Edward Road East Grampian Road Carpenter Road	11. Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
	Yuk Yat Street Sung Chi Street Hok Yuen Street Ma Tau Wai Road Kwai Chow Street	12. Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service

**Technical Proposal on Consultancy Service on
the Review of Integrated Neighbourhood Projects in targeted Old Urban Areas**

(a) *Objective*

The consultancy is to conduct an overall review on INPs and the need for such service for the target groups in the given areas.

(b) *Main Approach*

The consultant team will employ an evidence-based summative evaluative study and recommends on the overall develop of the service. In the review process, the study will be kept open and transparent, with maximum participation and input from relevant stakeholders. The following approaches will be employed by the team –

- documentary review
- focus group discussion
- compilation of service statistics
- review of individual projects/service

(c) *Major Tasks of the Consultancy Study*

- i) to identify and prioritize needs of the three target groups and recommend appropriate level of intervention corresponding to the level of needs of service users;
- ii) to examine the provision of different services and their interfacing in meeting needs of the three target groups in the locality;
- iii) to review the roles and functions, mode of service delivery, service standards, staffing structure and funding mode of INP and its effectiveness in meeting the changing needs of the community;
- iv) to consider the role and interfacing work of INPs with mainstream services and other new services;

- v) to propose termination or continuation of projects and the service in the twelve targeted areas, with necessary changes to the current mode of service delivery and illustrated by detailed options, service standards, staffing structure and funding mode; and
- vi) to draw up implementation plan for the final recommendations or any transitional arrangement needed.

(d) *Work Schedule*

The consultant study starts in February 2002. An interim report is to be produced by 12th week after commencement of the consultancy to report on the progress. A draft final report is to be produced within 24 weeks from the commencement of the study and the final report be produced at the end of the consultancy study i.e. around end of July 2002.

(e) *Financial Provision for the Review*

A Lotteries Fund grant of \$250,000 has been allocated to the SWD for engaging the consultancy team for the review.

(f) *Membership of the Consultancy Team*

The Consultancy Team comprises three staff members of the Department of Social Work and Social Administration of the University of Hong Kong led by Dr Joe Leung.

**First Progress Report on the Evaluation of Integrated Neighborhood Projects
March 2002**

HKU Consultant Team

Tasks Carried out and to be Carried out

Major tasks carried out in February and March 2002 included the review of policy documents; compilation and review of service statistics; review of business plans of projects; focus groups with academics (March 4, 2002), policy makers (March 13, 2002), and NGO representatives (March 14, 2002); and orientation to all INP staff on the evaluation approach (March 7, 2002). Furthermore, consultants have begun to meet with INP staff in the three districts (Kowloon City, Sham Shui Po, and Yau Ma Tei/Mong Kok) to work out the detailed arrangements on district-based study, including focus groups with stakeholders and visits to projects (From mid-March to end of April). The team will also proceed with the following –

- A meeting with the three SWD District Officers would be arranged before the end of March.
- Similar outreaching service information has to be compiled and studied through visits (family support networking team, family resource and support unit, pilot projects of integrated family service center, support team for the elderly, urban renewal social service team, outreaching work of community center, and new arrival projects).

Service statistics

2. According to service statistics provided by SWD, INPs showed initially a “relatively” low performance in the first year of their operation. Performance included the numbers of vulnerable individuals identified, attendance, referrals and programs provided. But after the projects had been stabilized, these figures showed general improvements. Overall, statistics showed that their performance according to the FSA requirement varies. The FSA requirements include –

- total number of vulnerable individuals reached in a year (1,000 persons)
- total number of contacts with vulnerable individuals and group and program attendance in a year (8,000 contacts)

- total number of service referrals in a year (300 referrals)
- number of active groups organized in a month (4 groups)
- total number of community programs organized in a year (80 programs)

3. In the first year, only two projects could meet the FSA requirement of identifying 1,000 target populations. However, it was known that the FSA requirement was only benchmarked in 2000. Again 3 out of the 8 INPs in the second year of implementation and 3 of the 12 INPs in the third year of implementation failed to meet the requirement. These figures implied that in some districts, there is evidence of increased number of target population identified, while in other districts, there may be difficulties in identifying new target populations. On the other hand, the requirement levels of FSA have to be reviewed in the context of the changing community situation. In terms of the distribution of the types of vulnerable population identified, on average, low-income families constituted almost 50% of the total, new arrivals, 20% and older persons, 30%. The relatively high proportion of low-income families identified may reflect the impact of the declining economy. Over the years, there is a slight increase in the proportion of low-income families (from 45% in 1999 to 50% in 2001) and the new arrivals (18% in 1999 to 23% in 2001), with the corresponding decline in the proportion of the older persons (from 36% in 1999 to 27% in 2001). It is interesting to note that 2 INPs in Sham Shui Po had much lower proportion of new arrivals contacted, even though it has the highest concentration of new arrivals.

4. Meanwhile, INPs can identify other individuals with needs other than the 3 defined target groups. They include older persons (aged 60-64), new arrivals (1-3 years of residence), low-income families (133% of the CSSA payments) and others (people living outside the target boundaries, the chronically ill, and the disabled). They constituted some 36.4% of the total number of vulnerable individuals contacted over the three years.

5. Taking into the consideration of the differences in the abilities among INPs to identifying new target populations, those INPs with already 3 years of operations, are, on the whole, still able to identify the required number of new vulnerable targets living inside the target neighbourhoods. Yet there is evidently no “over-supply” of the target populations, since most of the projects can only barely meet the requirements. In general, rapid resident turnover (incoming of vulnerable groups, such as new arrivals), aging population and economic recession are factors contributing to the steady “supply” of the targeted vulnerable populations.¹

¹ A suggested reason was that rents were comparatively cheap in these old urban areas. The research assistant visited to a family living in cubicle of about 50 square feet, cost only \$700 a month. Meanwhile, low-income families, new arrivals and older persons can apply for public housing while living in old urban areas.

6. In terms of contacts, group attendance and program attendance, the total numbers of contacts and attendance, except in the first year, were well above the level prescribed by the FSA. Program attendance constituted the majority of the attendance (52%), as compared to 34% for individual contacts and 14% for group attendance.

7. In terms of the number of service referrals made, there were only on average 187 referrals for each project in 1999, well below the required level of 300. On average, the projects made one referral for every five contacts made. The number of referrals increased steadily in the following years, meeting the expected requirements. In 2001, the projects made one referral for every 2.4 contacts made. The increase in the number of referrals is due to the fact that the projects, over the three years, have already built up a substantial pool of users who may have referral needs from time to time.

8. In terms of active groups and programs organized, their numbers showed significant increases over the years too, and were well above the required level. Groups include support groups, volunteer groups, educational groups and developmental groups, whereas programs include those recreational activities.

9. In terms of vulnerable individuals recruited as volunteers, the figures showed slight increases over the years. In 2001, each project could recruit on average 14 volunteers each month.

Key Issues to be explored

10. The consultant team will explore the following key issues-

- Are social needs of vulnerable populations in the target areas continued to be justified for special intervention? What are their needs? Why can't their needs be tackled by mainstream services? What are the unique contributions from INPs?
- What is the nature of INP programs provided (the intervention process of INP)? How can INPs assist vulnerable individuals to obtain needed social services? How can they cope with vulnerable populations "not aware of social and welfare services and not motivated to become users of such services?"
- What are their relationships with other mainstream services, in particularly their relationship with the program they attached to? Can the relationship between the users and INPs be terminated or completed

after INPs have referred them to mainstream services?

- What are the impacts of INPs on users? How effective is the referral system? What are some of the good practices of INPs?
- Are there possible overlaps between INP and similar newly developed outreaching services and target-specific services? What is the existing mechanism of coordination among these programs serving similar users or using similar outreaching approach?