

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(2) 2824/05-06

Ref : CB2/HS/1/04

**Subcommittee to Study the Subject of Combating Poverty**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 30 May 2006 at 4:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room B of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members Present** : Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, JP (Chairman)  
Hon James TIEN Pei-chun, GBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon Margaret NG  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP  
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP  
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC

**Members absent** : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-yee, GBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP  
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon Albert Jinghan CHENG

**Clerk in attendance** : Mrs Constance LI  
Chief Council Secretary (2)5

**Staff in attendance** : Miss Betty MA  
Senior Council Secretary (2)1

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Action

**I. Draft report on “Women in poverty”**  
[LC Paper No. CB(2)2006/05-06(01)]

The Chairman said that the Legislative Council (LegCo) Secretariat had made some revisions to the draft report on women in poverty and provided the draft recommendations in Chapter 5, based on members’ views and suggestions made at the last meeting on 18 May 2006.

2. The Chairman took members through the revised paragraphs 3.1(c), 3.12 to 3.14 and paragraphs 4.4 to 4.9 of the draft report.

3. Ms Emily LAU suggested to delete “of some women” in paragraph 3.1(c) and the heading of paragraph 3.12. Members agreed.

4. Members raised no further questions on Chapters 1 to 4 of the revised version of the draft report.

Chapter 5 - Recommendations

*Provision of insurance cover to local domestic helpers*

5. Referring to paragraph 5.1(m), the Chairman said that Mr LEE Cheuk-yan, who was unable to attend the meeting, had proposed to amend the recommendation to read as “consider providing central insurance cover for about 10 000 local domestic helpers currently registered with the Employees Retraining Board (ERB), and extending the definition of occupational diseases to include muscle injury caused by prolonged domestic housing keeping work”. The Chairman sought members’ views on Mr LEE’s proposed amendments.

6. Mr James TIEN said that domestic helpers usually worked for more than one employer concurrently. He considered that there would be technical difficulties in the sharing of responsibilities among the present and previous employers of a domestic helper when there were claims for compensation in respect of occupational diseases. The Chairman advised that Mr LEE Cheuk-yan had not provided elaboration on his proposal.

7. The Clerk advised that the original recommendation in paragraph 5.1(m) was put forward by Mr TAM Yiu-chung at the meeting on 18 May 2006 that some local domestic helpers could not get employment because some prospective employers were reluctant to take out employee insurance for them. Mr TAM had suggested that the Government should remove this obstacle by providing insurance cover for all domestic helpers registered with ERB.

Action

8. Mr Ronny TONG considered that the drafting of paragraph 5.1(m) provided flexibility for the relevant authorities to implement the proposal and therefore no amendment was needed. Ms Margaret NG concurred with Mr TONG. Ms NG said that the method of providing insurance cover (and its coverage) for local domestic helpers could be worked out when the proposal was to be implemented.

9. Members agreed not to proceed with Mr LEE's proposed amendments to paragraph 5.1(m).

*Relaxation of the seven-year residence rule for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) payments*

10. On paragraph 5.1(n), Mr Ronny TONG said that according to the 2004 statistics, there were 40 000 new arrivals from the Mainland. However, there were only 1 600 applications for CSSA from new arrival women, and 200 of such applications were approved. He believed that many new arrivals who were in need did not apply for CSSA because of the seven-year residence rule. He considered that the seven-year residence rule for CSSA payments should be abolished to provide practical assistance to new arrival women who were in need.

11. Mr James TIEN preferred the term "relaxing", rather than "abolishing", the seven-year residence requirement, as the former would be more acceptable to the Government.

12. Ms Margaret NG supported Mr Ronny TONG's suggestion. Ms NG considered that the seven-year residence requirement deviated from the principle of providing a safety net to the needy. However, she had no objection to "relaxing" the requirement as this represented the majority view of members.

13. Ms Emily LAU considered that no amendment should be made to those recommendations which were already agreed to by members.

14. The Chairman concluded that no amendment would be made to paragraph 5.1(n).

*Women's participation in Government's advisory and decision-making bodies*

15. Referring to paragraph 5.1(r), Ms Emily LAU said that to enhance women's participation in advisory and decision-making bodies, the Subcommittee should raise the gender benchmark from the proposed 30% to 40%. Members agreed.

16. Members raised no further questions on the other recommendations in Chapter 5.

Action

Way forward

17. Members agreed that the amendments to the draft report would be circulated to members for comments. Unless members proposed substantial amendments to the draft report, no further meeting would be held.

18. The Chairman said that the Subcommittee would present the report on women in poverty to the House Committee on 9 June 2006. The Chairman further said that he would seek the agreement of the House Committee for allocating a debate slot to him under House Rule 14A(h) for moving a motion on the Subcommittee’s report at the Council meeting on 28 June 2006. Members agreed.

*(Post-meeting note : As the House Committee meeting on 9 June 2006 was not held due to the Rainstorm Black Warning, the Subcommittee’s report was provided to the House Committee on 16 June 2006. The motion on the Subcommittee’s report was moved at the Council meeting on 5 July 2006.)*

**II. Any other business**

19. The Chairman reminded members that the Subcommittee would hold its next meeting on 22 June 2006 at 4:30 pm to discuss with the Commission on Poverty and the Administration the implementation of the Subcommittee’s Report on Working Poverty, and also the progress of school-based after-school learning and support programmes.

20. The Chairman proposed to add a new discussion item on “Updated indicators of poverty” to the agenda of the meeting on 22 June 2006, as the Administration had indicated that the set of updated indicators of poverty would be available in the latter part of April 2006. Members agreed.

21. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:05 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
26 July 2006