



扶貧委員會  
COMMISSION ON POVERTY

扶貧委員會秘書處 Secretariat to the Commission on Poverty (CoP)  
香港中環西區街11號中國政府會堂底座1樓 電話 2810 2090 傳真 2530 5052 www.cop.gov.hk  
1/F West Wing Central Government Office 11 Ice House Street Central Hong Kong  
Tel 2810 2090 Fax 2530 5052 www.cop.gov.hk

Our Ref: COP/ADM/150/802(C)

6 May 2005

**By Fax: 2801 7134**

The Honourable Margaret Ng  
Member of Legislative Council  
Room 116, New Henry House  
10 Ice House Street  
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Miss Ng,

**Staffing proposal of the Commission on Poverty**

Thank you for your letter of 29 April 2005 to the Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Poverty alleviation and related work has been an established part of the work of the relevant bureaux for a long time. Yet, the Government wishes to do more and it is this commitment that leads to the announcement in this year's Policy Address of the establishment of a new Commission on Poverty. The Commission has been tasked to -

- (a) study and identify the needs of the poor;
- (b) make policy recommendations to prevent and alleviate poverty and promote self reliance; and
- (c) encourage community engagement; delineate responsibility between the government, social welfare sector and community organisations; foster public-private partnerships and mobilise social capital in alleviating poverty.

- 2 -

In respect of (a), a set of objective indicators is indeed necessary to help study and identify the needs of the poor. The Commission has already commenced work in developing a set of indicators reflecting the poverty situation of three key social groups (*viz.* children and youth, working adults and the elderly) and the community in overall terms. The Commission fully recognizes that to enable the indicators to track and monitor the poverty situation as well as to facilitate broad strategy planning and evaluation, they have to be reviewed and refined from time to time taking into account new policy initiatives. In this connection, the Commission would continue to engage relevant experts, academics and NGOs in compiling and refining the indicators. We envisage that a more refined set of indicators should be available by end-2005

Understanding and reviewing existing policies and measures relevant to poverty alleviation is a prerequisite to the formulation of policy recommendations to prevent and alleviate poverty and promote self-reliance. And this is one of the reasons why four Principal Officials whose portfolios have a wide interface with poverty alleviation also sit on the Commission, *viz.* the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food, the Secretary for Education and Manpower, the Secretary for Economic Development and Labour, and the Secretary for Home Affairs. In fact, the Commission has started reviewing policies and measures relevant to reducing the risks of intergenerational poverty. To facilitate a more focused study, a task force on children would be established. In the next six to nine months, the Commission would also look into policies relating to employment of able-bodied adults, and to consider ways to help those who have ability to work to be meaningfully and gainfully engaged. The Commission would review progress of work in respect of these two priority target groups in a year's time.

In reviewing existing policies and measures, the Commission is mindful that its work should not duplicate or undermine that of the bureaux including their extensive network of advisory bodies/committees. Hence, the Commission has agreed to focus on key areas where multi-disciplinary/cross-sector cooperation and greater policy integration is called for. As you would appreciate, reviewing and analyzing policies and measures would require time. This is especially so when the work involved straddles policy bureaux as well as advisory and non-governmental bodies of very different nature.

The Administration attaches great importance to the work of the Commission. Noting the cross-sector, cross-policy and multi-disciplinary nature of the Commission's task, the Administration considers that absorbing the extra work by existing staff in one of the bureaux may not be the best way to provide the Commission with the necessary support. We look forward to your support of the staffing proposal and would be happy to further elaborate on any of the above points.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,



(Mrs. Cherry Tse)  
Secretary to the Commission on Poverty