

Legislative Council Panel on Home Affairs

Policy Statement on Community Development

Purpose

This note sets out the Home Affairs Bureau's Policy Statement on Community Development for Members' information.

The NGO Forum on Community Development

2. The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is responsible for the policy on community development. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the resource provisions and performance of the existing community development projects. These existing projects include 13 Community Centres, 21 Neighbourhood Level Community Development Projects (NLCDPs) and one Care and Support Networking Team, which are run by different non-governmental organizations on the basis of the relevant Funding and Service agreements with the Government. The annual recurrent expenditure for the provision of these community development services is as follows:

Financial year	Annual recurrent expenditure (\$million)	
2003-04	272.4	(Actual)
2004-05	141.9	(Actual)*
2005-06	126.4	(Estimate)*

* these figures exclude provisions for Family Service Resource Centres and Family Service Network Teams which has been transferred to other Programme area of SWD starting from 2004 – 05

3. In December 2004, HAB set up an NGO Forum on Community Development (the Forum). The objective is to provide a standing forum for all the community development service providers and other relevant interested parties to regularly exchange views with the Government (mainly HAB and SWD) on issues related to community development. Meetings would be held on a quarterly basis. Two meetings have been

held so far. The membership of the Forum is at **Annex A**.

The Policy Statement

4. The Policy Statement on Community Development (at **Annex B**) sets out the Government's policy on community development and the general development direction of community development services. The contents of the Policy Statement have been drawn up on the basis of a broad consensus reached through a series of discussions in the Forum during the past few months.

The Way Forward

5. The Statement would be reviewed once every five years or on a need basis in consultation with members of the Forum. We shall keep the LegCo Panel on Home Affairs informed of any amendments to the Statement in future.

Home Affairs Bureau
June 2005

Annex A

Membership of the NGO Forum on Community Development

1. Aberdeen Kaifong Welfare Association Social Service Centre
2. Caritas – Hong Kong
3. Christian Family Service Centre
4. Community Development Fronts
5. Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service – Hong Kong
6. Hong Kong Christian Service
7. Hong Kong Lutheran Social Service
8. Hong Kong Council of Social Service
9. Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council
10. Hong Kong Social Workers' General Union
11. Hong Kong Young Women Christian Association
12. Mong Kok Kaifong Welfare Association Chan Hing Social Service Centre
13. Neighborhood Advice-Action Council
14. The Salvation Army
15. Society for Community Organization
16. St James' Settlement
17. SKH Lady Macle hose Centre
18. Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service
19. Yan Oi Tong
20. Yuen Long Town Hall
21. Legislative Council member representing the social welfare functional constituency

Home Affairs Bureau
Policy Statement on Community Development

1. Purpose of the Policy Statement

1 This policy statement sets out:

- (a) the Government's policy on community development; and
- (b) the general direction of the development of community development services.

2. What is Community Development?

- 2.1 Community development is primarily concerned about encouraging people to participate in issues that affect their lives with a view to developing vibrant and sustainable communities. This is a process of enhancing civic awareness and social consciousness.
- 2.2 Community development services seek to mobilize community resources and encourage people to interact with one another through participation in a series of activities and networking groups. They aim at promoting self-help and mutual help in solving community problems, and building up social support networks. The services should ultimately strengthen community capacity and facilitate social integration, which contribute to a caring, just and harmonious society. The services should be provided in a flexible and non-partisan manner.
- 2.3 The priority of community development services should be accorded to disadvantaged communities and groups.

3. Objectives of Community Development Services

3(a) *To build up the capacity of the community*

Community development services should strive to build up the capacity of individuals and groups in the communities to participate in actions based on community interest. It should seek to enable people within the communities to understand, upgrade and use their capacity to improve their lives. They should be able to assume active roles in actions that are conducive to the benefits of the community.

(b) *To foster the spirit of mutual help in the community*

Community development services should assist members of the community to develop support and communication networks both within and outside the community, so as to foster a sense of mutual help among members of the community.

(c) *To address the needs of and to empower disadvantaged communities*

Community development services should motivate members of disadvantaged communities to seek appropriate social services to solve their own problems; and provide services to disadvantaged communities through active involvement of members of such communities. Such services should serve to complement existing social services.

(d) *To enhance community cohesion and harmony*

Community development services should promote integration of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities with the mainstream society, as well as to foster better understanding and cooperation among people from diverse backgrounds. The purpose is to foster community harmony, as well as respect for human rights and equal opportunities for all.

(e) *To motivate community participation*

To encourage and provide opportunities for members of the community to participate actively in community activities to improve their quality of life.

4. Existing Service Provisions on Community Development

4.1 The Government's resource provisions for community development services started in 1970s. At present, there are 13 Community Centres (CCs) operated by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), 21 Neighbourhood Level Community Development Projects (NLCDPs), and 1 Care and Support Networking Team (CSNT) under subvention by the Government.

CCs

4.2 CCs were set up in a number of districts to serve as a focal point for all ages in a locality to promote social relationship and mutual support; to develop a sense of self-reliance, social responsibility and cohesion within the community; build up the capacity of individuals and families in solving community problems, and to improve the quality of community life.

NLCDPs

4.3 NLCDPs provide a flexible range of services to the people living in deprived and transient communities where the provision of welfare services and community facilities was inadequate or non-existent. The projects address service needs and foster a spirit of mutual help and a sense of belonging to the community among the residents.

CSNT

4.4. With resources redeployed from a NLCDP which was terminated in 2003, the Government commissioned an NGO to operate a care and support networking team for a period of three years to assist ex-offenders, ex-mentally ill persons and street sleepers to reintegrate into the community through provision of outreaching, support, casework and group work services.

5. Policy Monitoring and Service Management

5.1 Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) is responsible for the policy on community development. The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is

responsible for managing the resource provisions and performance of community development services, which include CCs operated by NGOs, NLCDPs and CSNT under its Programme (6) Community Development. The other community development services would be managed by HAB.

6. Resource Management and Planning

- 6.1 To achieve the policy objectives of community development, a critical mass of community service resources has to be sustained if the programme is to be viable.
- 6.2 Existing NLCDPs will be terminated when the project area is cleared or when the target population of their serving areas falls below 1,800. However, the termination of NLCDPs with target population below 1,800 will be examined on a case-to-case basis. The resources released from terminated NLCDPs would be redeployed to finance other community development projects, having regard to community needs. Such projects would come under HAB's policy programme on District and Community Relations while meeting the policy objectives of community development. HAB would also be responsible for the administration of such new projects.

7. Communication

- 7.1 The NGO community development service operators, the SWD and the HAB would be working in close partnership in achieving the agreed policy objectives on community development.
- 7.2 The NGO Forum on Community Development (the Forum) is a platform for discussing issues relating to community development among service operators, SWD, HAB and related interested parties. It facilitates regular communication and consultations on matters relating to the overall planning and management of resources, development and direction of new services, rationalization of existing services, community concerns and service needs.
- 7.3 The Forum will meet on a quarterly basis. Interested parties may sit in at the meetings of the Forum and relevant parties could be invited

to participate on a need basis.

7.4 Members of the Forum may discuss issues, problems and proposals relating to the development of existing and future services. Separate working groups can be convened to discuss specific issues on a need basis.

8. Review

8.1 This policy statement on community development will be reviewed once every 5 years or on a need basis in consultation with members of the NGO Forum on Community Development.

8.2 HAB will inform Home Affairs Panel of the Legislative Council of the policy statement, its subsequent changes and implementation of community development services, so as to keep the Panel and the general public abreast of the latest developments in the subject area.

Home Affairs Bureau
June 2005