

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)2177/08-09
(These minutes have been seen
by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/MP

Panel on Manpower

Minutes of meeting
held on Thursday, 21 May 2009, at 2:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

- Members present** : Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP (Chairman)
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH
Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung
Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, BBS, JP
Hon CHAN Kin-por, JP
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon IP Wai-ming, MH
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon PAN Pey-chyou
- Member attending** : Hon Mrs Sophie LEUNG LAU Yau-fun, GBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon WONG Kwok-kin, BBS (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Dr Hon LEUNG Ka-lau
- Public Officers attending** : Item III

Mrs TSE LING Kit-ching, Cherry, JP
Commissioner for Labour

Mrs HUI LAM Yin-ming, Erika, JP
Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and Health)

Dr LEUNG Lai-man, Raymond, JP
Occupational Health Consultant (1)
Labour Department

Dr HO Mang-yee, Mandy
Occupational Health Consultant (2)
Labour Department

Item IV

Mrs TSE LING Kit-ching, Cherry, JP
Commissioner for Labour

Mr NG Ka-kwong, Stanley, JP
Assistant Commissioner (Employment Services)
Labour Department

Mr CHAN Kwok-keung, Kath
Senior Labour Officer (Youth Employment)
Labour Department

Mrs Grace NG
Project Management Officer
Community Investment and Inclusion Fund Secretariat

Clerk in attendance : Mr Raymond LAM
Chief Council Secretary (2) 1

Staff in attendance : Ms Clara TAM
Assistant Legal Adviser 9

Mrs Eleanor CHOW
Senior Council Secretary (2) 4

Miss Kiwi NG
Legislative Assistant (2) 1

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I. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1566/08-09 and CB(2)1570/08-09)

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 March and 16 April 2009 were confirmed.

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II. Date of next meeting and items for discussion
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1569/08-09(01) & (02))

Agenda items for the next meeting

2. Members agreed that the following items proposed by the Administration would be discussed at the next regular meeting to be held on 18 June 2009 at 2:30 pm -

- (a) Hong Kong's occupational safety performance in 2008; and
- (b) Proposal to expand the scope of the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund to cover untaken annual leave pay under the Employment Ordinance.

(Post-meeting note : At the request of the Administration and with the concurrence of the Chairman, the item in paragraph 2(a) above was subsequently replaced by the item "Proposed injection of further funding into the Continuing Education Fund".)

3. The Chairman enquired whether the Administration would brief the Panel on its legislative proposals to introduce a statutory minimum wage (SMW) bill at the next meeting. Commissioner for Labour (C for L) responded that the Administration had consulted the Panel on issues relevant to the SMW bill at a number of meetings. At present, the Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Labour Department (LD) were working with the Department of Justice (DoJ) to finalize the drafting of the bill for the purpose of introduction into the Legislative Council (LegCo) before its summer recess this year.

List of outstanding items for discussion

4. Mr WONG Kwok-hing enquired whether the Administration would report to the Panel on the outcome of the review of the Transport Support Scheme (TSS) in June 2009. The Chairman enquired whether the extension of the one-year subsidy duration of TSS would be included as one of the additional relief measures to be announced by the Financial Secretary.

5. C for L responded that the Administration would conduct a review on the relaxation measures for TSS one year after its implementation. As the measures were introduced in July 2008, the Administration was now making preparation for the review and was unlikely to be able to report on the outcome of the review in June 2009. She would study the matter and try to revert to the Panel as soon as practicable. She added that she was not in a position to tell whether TSS would be included as one of the additional relief measures.

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(*Post-meeting note* : The Administration subsequently replied that it was not ready for discussion of the review of TSS in June 2009. Members were informed of the Administration's reply vide LC Paper No. CB(2) 1749/08-09 issued on 3 June 2009.)

6. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed concern about the long standing items on the list of outstanding items for discussion (the list). He requested the Administration to report progress of the various items in a paper and to provide a timetable for discussion in the current or the next legislative session. Mr CHAN Kin-por held the view that some items which had been overtaken by event should be removed from the list. Mr IP Wai-ming said that the Panel should be cautious in deleting any items from the list. The Chairman said that she would review progress of the items with the Administration and the Clerk after the meeting with a view to consolidating the list and revert to the Panel.

Clerk

III. A review of occupational diseases in Hong Kong in 2008 and initiatives in promoting prevention of heat stroke at work
(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1569/08-09(03) & (04) and CB(2)1534/08-09(01))

7. C for L briefly introduced the Administration's paper which set out the situation of occupational diseases in Hong Kong in 2008 and the recent initiatives of the Occupational Health Service of LD in promoting occupational health, including the prevention of heat stroke at work and enforcing relevant occupational safety and health laws.

Occupational and work-related diseases

8. Noting that Duty Roster Members had met with Hong Kong Domestic Workers General Union on 23 April 2009 regarding occupational diseases arising from work, Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung expressed concern that musculoskeletal disorders which were common among domestic helpers had not been prescribed as occupational diseases. He asked whether the Administration would consider reviewing the definition of occupational disease. He added that the two Occupational Health Clinics of LD (OHCs) which provided occupational health services for workers in Hong Kong should enhance its medical services for people suffering from musculoskeletal disorders, such as providing acupuncture treatment.

9. C for L and Occupational Health Consultant (1) of LD (OHC(1)) explained that Hong Kong had followed international practices and would make reference to criteria adopted internationally in determining whether a disease should be prescribed as an occupational disease. At present, prescription of a disease as an occupational disease was based on the following criteria -

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- (a) the disease posed a significant and recognized risk to workers engaged in a certain occupation in Hong Kong; and
- (b) the causal relationship between the disease and the occupation could be reasonably presumed or established in individual cases.

The second criterion was especially important in distinguishing occupational diseases from work-related diseases which were multifactorial in origin and in respect of which their causal relationship with occupations had to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

10. OHC(1) supplemented that occupational diseases were defined as diseases having specific or strong relationship with occupations, generally with one causal agent, and recognized as such. While tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm had been prescribed as an occupational disease, most musculoskeletal disorders, such as low back pain and shoulder-neck pain, resulted from the interaction of multiple risk factors, and given that these disorders were common in the general population and not limited to workers engaged in a certain occupation, they could not satisfy the criteria for prescribing occupational diseases.

11. C for L added that musculoskeletal disorders of domestic helpers were often caused by improper working posture, the repetition of which would strain the muscles and joints. LD had requested the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) to ensure provision of sufficient training on occupational safety and health for domestic helper trainees, particularly the proper posture and use of tools in carrying out housework. ERB was currently reviewing the course content with a view to enhancing the occupational safety and health component.

12. Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung said that the definition of occupational disease as adopted internationally might not be suitable for Hong Kong because the long working hours of Hong Kong people implied that laborious work could be the causal agent for occupational diseases. The problem was aggravated by the outsourcing system under which there was no control over the working hours of labourers. Mr LEUNG called for the cessation of the outsourcing system.

13. Referring to paragraph 18 of the Administration's paper which stated that the two OHCs had recorded 12 999 consultations in 2008, Mr IP Wai-ming enquired about the number of patients seeking consultations in OHCs and the number of patients who were confirmed to have suffered from occupational diseases.

14. C for L responded that according to past statistics, about 85% of the patients seeking consultations from OHCs were diagnosed with occupational diseases or injuries caused by, related to or aggravated by work and the remaining suffered from diseases or injuries unrelated to work. OHC(2)

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supplemented that the two OHCs received about 2 500 to 3 000 new patients every year. In 2006, 33 patients were diagnosed with occupational diseases. The Administration would provide statistics for 2007 and 2008 in writing.

15. Mr IP Wai-ming queried whether the small number of confirmed occupational disease cases was due to improved preventive measures or the high threshold adopted in the definition of occupational disease. Mr IP said that some aircraft installation and maintenance workers were suffering from osteoarthritis of knee because of prolonged kneeling and repetitive movement of the knee while working in small aircrafts. He had referred some of these cases to OHCs which had taken a long time to determine whether these workers were suffering from occupational diseases. To his understanding, OHCs had not visited the workplaces to ascertain the cause of the illness, but had referred these patients to public hospitals for medical treatment. According to OHCs, they would consider individual medical reports in deciding whether a patient was suffering from an occupational disease. He considered that the threshold imposed on the prescription of occupational disease was too high.

16. OHC(2) responded that in determining whether a patient was suffering from an occupational disease, a doctor in OHC would examine each case on its own merit, including the past occupations and medical history of the patient, and would conduct inspection to the patient's workplace, when needed. Although osteoarthritis of knee was not prescribed as an occupational disease, a worker suffering from that disease should be given proper medical treatment and hence OHC would refer him to a public hospital.

17. C for L said that while she recognized members' concern, LD had to follow the principle that only diseases that were prescribed as occupational diseases would be considered for employee compensation. A disease should not be prescribed as an occupational disease merely because many workers suffered from it, as the disease might be caused by low awareness of occupational safety and health on the part of employees or inadequate preventive measures taken by employers.

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18. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed concern that many cashiers working in supermarkets were suffering from musculoskeletal disorders because of the poor design of the cashier counters. C for L noted Mr WONG's concern and advised that the Administration would look into the matter.

Prevention of heat stroke at work

19. Mr WONG Kwok-hing expressed concern that the measures to prevent heat stroke at work were not statutory and called into question their effectiveness in enforcement. He said that according to the "Guidelines on Site Safety Measures for Working in Hot Weather" (the Guidelines) issued by the Construction Industry Council (CIC), the provision of drinking water in

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construction sites was essential to preventing heat stroke at work. He enquired whether a monitoring mechanism was in place to ensure compliance, especially under hot weather.

20. C for L said that the important measures to prevent heat stroke at work included the provision of drinking water, sunshade and rest breaks. LD had stepped up inspections at construction sites to ensure that contactors had provided the necessary facilities to protect the safety and health of workers. Between April and September 2009, about 400 inspections would be conducted at workplaces at a higher risk of heat stroke, including construction sites. In April 2009, LD conducted 34 inspections to such workplaces. LD had also handed out promotional leaflets, drinking bottles and towels in health talks to promote heat stroke prevention. As the provision of drinking water was a statutory requirement, if there was no such provision at a particular site, LD would take appropriate enforcement actions and conduct follow-up inspections to ensure compliance by the employer concerned. C for L added that the provision of drinking water at construction sites was required not only under very hot weather, but at anytime during work. The maximum fine for an employer who did not provide drinking water at construction sites was \$10,000.

21. Mr WONG Kwok-hing suggested that the Administration should make it a requirement for the safety officer on-site to monitor compliance with the preventive measures for heat stroke. C for L responded that the Administration was not in a position to do so because the safety officer was employed by a contractor or developer. In accordance with the law, an employer was held accountable for the safety and health of his workers at workplaces. A safety officer who was employed to take care of occupational safety and health matters at workplaces was duty bound to help ensure that effective measures had been implemented to prevent heat stroke at work.

22. Mr WONG Sing-chi expressed concern whether there was sufficient protection for construction workers, given that a breach of the Guidelines was not an offence.

23. C for L said that the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (OSHO) provided that employers should provide safe and healthy workplaces for employees. LD had issued guidelines on heat stroke prevention to provide guidance for employers to protect the safety and health of workers engaged in different trades and working under different environment. As to whether DoJ would institute legal proceedings against an employer, it would depend on the facts of each particular case. Where there was evidence to substantiate charges, legal proceedings would be instituted and the courts would take into account the relevant guidelines in determining individual cases.

24. In response to Mr IP Wai-ming, C for L undertook to provide the guidelines on heat stroke prevention issued by LD. The Administration would

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also provide statistics on enforcement actions taken against employers who had not taken measures to prevent heat stroke at work.

25. Mr WONG Sing-chi raised the following questions -

- (a) whether heat stroke at work was classified as an occupational injury and, if so, whether the case should be reported to LD;
- (b) whether it was the duty of an employer or employee to report such an injury. If the former had not reported the case to LD, whether the employee could do so and how LD would follow up the matter with the employer;
- (c) whether LD had introduced measures to encourage employees to report unfavourable working condition to LD; and
- (d) whether the Administration had kept statistics on occupational injuries caused by heat stroke at work.

26. C for L responded that -

- (a) injury cases arising from work accidents, including those caused by heat stroke at work, should be reported to LD. Occupational injuries and injuries resulting in death should be reported to LD within 14 days and seven days respectively after the accident;
- (b) whether heat stroke was caused by working under hot weather or other factors could only be ascertained after the case concerned had been investigated;
- (c) under the existing law, employers had the responsibility to report occupational injury cases to LD. If an employer had not done so and the case was reported by an employee, LD would follow up the matter with the employer concerned. LD would conduct surprise inspections as and when necessary. Since heat stroke could be caused by a multitude of factors, and an employee might suffer a mild heat-related disease and recover shortly, the case might not be reported to LD;
- (d) LD encouraged employees to report unfavourable working conditions to LD. Although LD had also conducted over a hundred thousand occupational safety and health inspections at workplaces a year, it welcomed referrals from trade unions and employees; and

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- (e) there was one heat stroke case resulting in death at work in the past five years. Whether working under hot weather was hazardous depended on individual circumstances, because the temperature and worksite arrangement could vary according to the specific location of work. The Administration would consider the need for keeping statistics of occupational injury cases caused by heat stroke as suggested by Mr WONG.

27. Mr IP Wai-ming expressed concern about the occupational safety of cleaning workers working in an enclosed area such as the cabins of an aeroplane under very hot weather. As there was virtually no ventilation after passengers got off the plane, the temperature inside the cabin could be over 40°C in the summer. He enquired whether airline operators had been reminded to provide ventilation for cleaning workers working inside the aeroplane, and whether LD had conducted random inspections at such cabins.

28. C for L said that LD would consider contacting airline operators to explore measures to improve the working environment in the cabins. She remarked that Disneyland workers dressed in cartoon figures had encountered similar problems when Disneyland opened in 2005. LD had conducted more than 100 inspections over the past years and worked out improvement measures with Disneyland, such as the provision of cooling vests and more rest breaks to the employees concerned to reduce the risk of heat stroke.

29. The Chairman noted that LD had developed a checklist to assess the risk of heat stroke at workplaces. She enquired about the party who would fill in the checklist, assess the risk level, introduce improvement measures and assess the effectiveness of these measures.

30. C for L and Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and Health) (DC for L (OSH)) responded that employers had a responsibility to understand the environment of their workplaces and provide workers with the necessary protection against safety and health hazards. The risk assessment checklist for heat stroke was developed to provide objective guidelines for employers to assess the risk of heat stroke at workplaces and facilitate the taking of appropriate preventive measures. Since April 2009, a multi-pronged approach had been adopted to promote the prevention of heat stroke. For example, LD had promoted the use of the checklist through health talks and seminars as well as during its inspection at relevant workplaces. LD also planned to enhance publicity for promoting awareness of heat stroke to industries where workers were more prone to suffer from heat stroke through partnership with relevant stakeholders such as the Occupational Safety and Health Council, CIC and trade unions.

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31. Dr PAN Pey-chyou suggested that drinking electrolytes be provided at construction sites to help workers to quench their thirst and to recover from heat stroke. C for L noted the suggestion.

Prevention of human swine influenza A/H1N1

32. Mr WONG Kwok-hing noted that after the Government's mediation, airline operators had agreed to allow their crew members to wear face masks to guard against human swine influenza while on board. In order to protect the health of employees and to prevent the outbreak of human swine influenza in the community, he asked whether LD had encouraged other employers to provide masks to employees whose job nature would expose them to a higher risk of infection.

33. OHC(1) said that LD had set up four inspection teams to step up inspections of 71 workplaces with a higher risk of infection to ensure that adequate infection control measures had been put in place to safeguard the health of employees, which included designated hospitals and clinics of the Hospital Authority and specific elderly homes. LD had also stepped up inspections of pig farms, slaughterhouses, workplaces of cleansing contractors, and restaurants. In the course of inspections, employers and employees were reminded to maintain workplace and personal hygiene, particularly washing hands frequently and wearing face masks when necessary.

34. In response to Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung, C for L clarified that avian influenza A which had been prescribed as an occupational disease in 2005 was a disease different from human swine influenza A/H1N1.

IV. Collaboration between the Labour Department and the "Community Investment and Inclusion Fund" on the promotion of youth employment

(LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1569/08-09(05) & (06))

35. C for L introduced the Administration's paper which set out the collaboration between LD and the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF) on the promotion of youth employment. In gist, with a view to achieving synergy between the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP) and the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS) of LD and CIIF, LD and CIIF would jointly fund the approved projects. YPTP and YWETS would sponsor mainly the cost of pre-employment training courses and the payment of training subsidies to employers offering internship and employment opportunities to participating young people, while CIIF would be responsible for the overall project management and other related programme costs.

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36. Project Management Officer of the CIIF Secretariat (PMO) said that the collaboration between LD and CIIF sought to -

- (a) achieve synergy by bringing together the efforts of non-government organizations (NGOs), community organizations, business partners, and employers in the private sector in the provision of training, development and employment services to young people;
- (b) provide a full continuum of services, customised programmes and employment pathways for young people through pioneering a number of innovative projects; and
- (c) help transform the mindset of young people, expand their vision, enhance their self-esteem, cultivate among them positive work attitudes and increase their exposure.

PMO added that the LD and CIIF-funded projects had brought in new partnerships, including one between a business chamber and a labour union, and brought out new ideas for developing innovative strategies.

37. The Chairman noted that LD had received 25 proposals, among which six were approved and nine required modifications. She asked about the reasons for rejecting the remaining proposals.

38. PMO responded that whilst six projects were approved, nine projects had to be modified before re-submission. She noted that the LD-CIIF joint initiative in the name of "新紮創奇「職」" had received overwhelming support from NGOs and business partners. Two briefing sessions on the concept of "新紮創奇「職」" were attended by about 300 organizations. Their interest to collaborate with LD and CIIF to develop social capital projects would strengthen the community's training and support for and investment in developing young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. As regards the project proposals, the six approved ones had linked up new partners from different strata and sectors and would expand the network of LD and CIIF. The Assessment and Evaluation Sub-committee of CIIF had carefully examined the applications and had provided feedback to applicants so that they could modify their proposals for re-submission. Two applicants had withdrawn their applications as they would like to find more partners to participate in their projects before re-submission. The deadline for the 15th batch of applications was 31 May 2009.

39. Mr WONG Sing-chi expressed concern about the small number of successful applications and the stringent assessment criteria adopted for approving applications. He urged LD and CIIF to expedite the application process so that young people could enjoy the benefits brought about by these

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projects as soon as possible. He suggested that LD and CIIF should allow applicants to submit proposals that were modelled on existing successful projects with slight modification so as to alleviate their difficulty in preparing proposals and enable the proposals to be brought into operation as soon as possible. He also expressed concern that some proposals submitted by NGOs which were pro-democracy had been rejected.

40. PMO responded that -

- (a) whilst it might not be appropriate for successful project models to be replicated without modification, the critical success factors of different project models were widely promulgated during the briefings to prospective applicants so that they could apply such factors with suitable modification. At the two briefing sessions on "新紮創奇「職」", the 300 organizations with varying backgrounds were encouraged to develop new projects to reach out to young people with employment difficulties and prepare them for sustainable development in the employment market;
- (b) CIIF had subvented a total of 209 projects since its inception six years ago. Only five organizations had withdrawn their proposals on their own accord. The CIIF Committee which was responsible for, among others, vetting applications for CIIF and monitoring the progress of funded projects, had been reviewing the effectiveness of CIIF projects from time to time with participating NGOs, with a view to making continuous improvements;
- (c) apart from rendering successful applicants full support to their projects, LD and CIIF had also rendered assistance to help applicants draw up proposals during the application process; and
- (d) CIIF had proactively engaged new partners with diversified background so as to help young people extend their social networks.

41. In response to Mr WONG Sing-chi, C for L said that the political stance of an applicant had never been a consideration for LD and CIIF in approving applications. The major consideration was the content of the proposal, such as whether the proposal would meet the needs of young people and the employment market and the experience and qualification of the service providers. The aim of the collaboration between LD and CIIF was to enrich the existing training and employment programmes for young people, and to enhance the cooperation among NGOs, community organizations and employers.

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42. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung commended the work of PMO who was about to retire. He expressed concern about the low attendance rate of some of the training courses offered by YTPT, YWETS and other NGOs. In order to attract the participation of young people who hopefully would rebuild their confidence after training, Mr LEUNG suggested that these training courses be held in locations which were easily accessible. In addition, consideration should be given to implementing successful programmes in other districts.

43. C for L and Assistant Commissioner (Employment Services) responded that the participation of young people in YPTP and YWETS was largely affected by the economic situation, i.e. the better the economy, the lower the number of trainees and vice versa. To assist young people to enter the job market, LD had also set up the Youth Employment Start (YES), which provided one-stop advisory and support service on employment and self-employment to young people aged 15 to 29. The two YESs were easily accessible and specially furnished to meet the taste of young people. They assisted young people to explore their career interest through career assessment and provided them with guidance to facilitate their job search. In addition, LD had established relations with schools and introduced to students the various youth programmes of LD.

44. PMO said that she had been involved in over 200 social capital development projects in the past seven years and through these projects, both CIIF and its collaborators had gained valuable experiences. CIIF had recently launched the SC.Net which provided a platform for various sectors of the community to exchange ideas and share experience about the development of social capital. In the past, many of the youth programmes were course-based. The joint initiative of LD and CIIF in the name of "新紮創奇「職」", however, would be "youth-based", making use of innovative strategies and social partnership to provide through-train services to help young people take up sustainable employment. The pre-employment training courses to be organized had been designed with reference to the interests and characteristics of young people and job requirements of the subsequent internship or job placements aiming at developing their potential, enhancing their self-esteem and cultivating positive attitude among them.

45. Mrs Sophie Leung expressed concern that although considerable resources had been deployed to strengthen the education system in Hong Kong, the Government still had to plough in substantial resources to introduce programmes such as YPTP and YWETS to help young people enhance their employability. She considered that effective measures, such as organizing forums to enable relevant stakeholders to propose ways to motivate young people, change their mindset and make them aware of their responsibilities, should be put in place.

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46. C for L responded that the Administration had to study whether forums or other means should be pursued to help transform the mindset of young people. She said that young people participating in YPTP and YWETS had different backgrounds. The joint initiative of LD and CIIF sought to link up partners from different strata and sectors to cater for the diverse needs of young people. It was envisaged that with the effort of corporate or professional partners and the counselling support they provided, young people would better understand their professional development and employment needs, regain their self-esteem and develop positive work attitudes in the course of undergoing training and internship.

47. PMO supplemented that SC.Net had constantly organized activities and forums to facilitate the exchange of ideas and experience among stakeholders in the development of social capital. In addition, CIIF would hold a conference in November 2009 at which workshops would be organized for the examination of the development of social capital from different perspectives, such as from the angle of young people, NGOs, community groups, employers, trade unions, and the exchange of views on factors attributed to the success of various social capital projects.

48. Noting that the LD and CIIF-funded projects, which involved a funding of about \$10 million, would provide 2 000 training places and some 1 000 internship or job placements for young people, Mr WONG Kwok-hing questioned their cost-effectiveness. He also asked about the successful rate of these trainees in securing employment after training.

49. PMO responded that the effectiveness of the LD and CIIF joint initiative "新紮創奇「職」" should not be assessed solely on the basis of the number of jobs secured after training, as the programme sought to change the mindset of young people and enhance their self-esteem which was conducive to their personal development, increase their long-term employability and strengthen their resilience and adaptability to the changing environment.

50. C for L responded that as the initiative "新紮創奇「職」" had just been launched, it was too early to assess its effectiveness. According to past experience, about 70% of the trainees of YPTP and YWETS were able to secure employment upon completion of training. She shared the view of PMO that the main objective of the joint projects of LD and CIIF was to enhance young people's positive attitude towards work and life. With their contribution in work being recognized, they would regain self-esteem and change others' perception towards them. For example, project S.A.Y. Harmony, under which young people of ethnic minority background (South Asian) would organize and provide English playgroup services to children of low-income families, had turned the language barriers of the participating young people into skills that could be applied in work situation and benefit children of low-income families, and at the same time enable young people of ethnic minorities to gain respect

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and appreciation for their contribution to the society. The intangible benefits brought about by the project were more far-reaching than the tangible benefits of the number of jobs secured.

51. Mr IP Wai-ming said that it was necessary to change the attitude of some employers who very often looked down upon young people and disliked anything they did. He hoped that by changing their attitude towards young people, employers would provide more opportunities for young people to develop their potential.

52. C for L responded that participating employers of YWETS were required to appoint mentors for the trainees, and LD would provide training on mentoring skills to these mentors. Some employers had established a close relationship with LD because of their frequent participation in youth projects. These employers were enthusiastic in providing training and employment opportunities to young people and also appreciated their intrinsic quality.

53. PMO supplemented that some employers who had been conscientious about the projects from the start had appreciated the merits of these projects in the course of implementation. Some employers who had participated in other pilot schemes had reflected to her that young people who had experienced set backs and gone through a difficult time tended to be more appreciative of the opportunities provided. They became more resourceful and resilient in times of adversity and would become a valuable member of staff in the future.

54. Referring to paragraph 13 of the background brief prepared by the LegCo Secretariat (LC Paper No. CB(2)1569/08-09(06)), Mr LEUNG Kwok-hung enquired whether a review had been conducted on the Co-operative Societies Ordinance with a view to facilitating the formation and operation of cooperative type social enterprises formed under CIIF. C for L responded that as the Ordinance was under the purview of the Food and Health Bureau, she would refer the question to the relevant Bureau.

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55. The meeting ended at 4:30 pm.