

**For discussion on  
13 July 2009**

LC Paper No. CB(2)2220/08-09(03)

**Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services  
Task Force on Poverty**

**Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the progress of the work of the Task Force on Poverty.

**Background**

2. With the conclusion of work of the Commission on Poverty (CoP), the Administration set up in October 2007 the Task Force on Poverty, headed by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare and comprising representatives of relevant bureaux/departments as members, to monitor the progress in implementing recommendations made by the then CoP and co-ordinate efforts across the Government in tackling poverty related issues.

**Progress of the Work of the Task Force on Poverty**

3. The Task Force on Poverty has duly followed up on the recommendations of the then CoP. A summary of the latest position of each of the 53 recommendations is at **Annex**. Of the 53 items set out in the summary attached, we would like to highlight in the ensuing paragraphs some notable progress made in some of the major items so as to give a fuller picture of the work of the Task Force on Poverty.

***One-stop Employment Services (Items 11, 12 and 18)***

4. The then CoP recommended the Government to adopt an integrated approach in the delivery of training and employment assistance,

as well as provide more targetted assistance to the “difficult-to-employ”, in order to make the best use of the resources available and enable able-bodied persons to access relevant training and employment assistance easily. In this regard, the Employees Retraining Board (ERB) has set up a pilot Training cum Employment Resource Centre (TERC), which came into full operation in October 2008, to offer multi-faceted training and employment services to people in need. As at end-May 2009, the TERC has served more than 182 000 headcounts of job-seekers and has been actively following up on about 300 cases. The Efficiency Unit (EU) has also been commissioned by the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) to conduct a consultancy study on one-stop employment service to examine how to streamline, integrate and enhance the existing employment and training/retraining services currently provided by LD, Social Welfare Department (SWD) and ERB. The consultant has worked out a business model of the one-stop shop. Under this model, current employment and training/retraining services could be provided at a one-stop centre, and different levels of services/assistance could be made available to different types of job-seekers according to their needs. We are now working with EU and other parties involved on the implementation details of the first full-fledged one stop employment-cum-training/retraining centre taking into account the consultant’s recommendations and the experience of ERB’s TERC. We plan to open such a centre in Tin Shui Wai in 2010/2011.

### ***Child Development Fund (Items 20 and 21)***

5. The then CoP recommended to try out an asset-based model (including a targetted savings element and a mentoring scheme), which encourages longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background. It also proposed to further develop the Child Development Fund (CDF) into a longer-term model to promote child development in Hong Kong after the trial stage, as well as consolidate different resources and funding sources in order to promote a more child-based, asset-based and family-based model. With the approval of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, the Government established a \$300-million CDF in April 2008. CDF has been well received by the private sector and the community. The first

batch of seven pioneer projects, under which a total of 750 children and more than 600 mentors were recruited, was launched in December 2008. The Government has also commissioned a consultancy study to evaluate the implementation of the first batch of pioneer projects with a view to developing the CDF into a longer-term model in Hong Kong. It is expected that CDF will ultimately benefit 13 600 children from a disadvantaged background. The detailed progress of CDF has been provided in the paper “Progress Report on Child Development Fund” [LC Paper No. CB(2)2220/08-09(01)], which is the subject matter of another agenda item at the same Panel meeting on 13 July 2009.

***Provision of intensified assistance to youth on CSSA (Item 30)***

6. The then CoP considered that early intervention might be a more sustainable way to tackle the problem of unengaged youths. To this end, SWD introduced a more intensified employment assistance pilot project, namely Special Training and Enhancement Programme (My STEP) in October 2006, with a view to enhancing assistance for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) able-bodied unemployed youth. The primary objective of My STEP is to help those CSSA unemployed youth with low readiness for employment to rejoin the workforce or return to mainstream schooling. Besides personalised career counselling, non-employment-related counselling and other supportive services, participants of My STEP are also provided with structured motivational/disciplinary training to enhance their self-image, self-confidence and sense of responsibility.

7. The first phase of My STEP was implemented from October 2006 to September 2007 in Tin Shui Wai and Yuen Long. The results were encouraging as about 46.5% of the participants (i.e. 31 out of 68 participants) have successfully secured full-time employment or returned to mainstream schooling for three months or more. In view of the positive outcomes, My STEP was extended for two years to other less well-off districts including Tuen Mun & Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing, Tai Po/North & Sha Tin and Kwun Tong & Wong Tai Sin/Sai Kung after completion of the first phase. Up to end-March 2009, more than 40% of the second phase participants (i.e. 250 out of 611 participants) have

secured full-time employment or returned to mainstream schooling for at least three months. SWD is actively planning to launch another phase of My STEP upon the completion of the current phase in end September 2009.

### ***Reaching out to Hidden and Singleton Elders (Item 34)***

8. In response to the CoP's recommendation of strengthening efforts to reach out and identify hidden and singleton elders, additional funding of \$42 million has been provided to all the 41 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and 115 Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs) across the territory to enhance their outreaching work. With the benefit of the new resources, a total of 156 additional staff has been recruited and about 7 200 active cases of hidden and singleton elders have been reached out by DECCs and NECs. Depending on the need of individual elders, the DECCs/NECs concerned will provide the hidden and singleton elders identified with support services such as counselling and social networking opportunities. If necessary, they will be referred to suitable agencies for assistance, for example, to the Hospital Authority for medical consultations, to the Housing Authority for compassionate housing, and to SWD for application of subsidised long-term care services, etc. It is hoped that by establishing a rapport with the DECCs/NECs, the elders identified will be more willing to participate in social activities, and thus, reintegrate into the community. To cope with the increasing workload arising from the greater demand for services from the elders identified, further funding of \$18 million has also been allocated to all DECCs for recruiting more staff to strengthen their counselling and referral services.

### ***Promoting Active and Healthy Ageing (Item 31)***

9. The then CoP recommended promoting active and healthy ageing to enhance the quality of life of the elderly and to enable them to live with dignity. To this end, LWB and the Elderly Commission jointly launched in early 2008 the Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project (NAAP) which seeks to establish neighbourhood support networks and enable

elders to become a new driving force in the community. Through cross-sectoral collaboration, the NAAP mobilises different organisations and individuals in the community to promote neighbourhood support, inter-generational harmony, as well as respect and care for elders. A total of 75 district projects are being implemented under the Pilot NAAP, Pilot NAAP-Caring for Elders and Pilot NAAP-Prevention of Elderly Suicide throughout the territory. It is expected that these projects will serve more than 200 000 elders and their family members.

10. In addition, the Government launched the Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly in June 2008 to help elderly people lacking family support and financial means to improve their home conditions. Under the scheme, eligible elderly households can benefit from home maintenance and improvement works and/or fittings up to a maximum subsidy of \$5,000 per household. By end March 2009, about 3 000 elderly households have benefited from the scheme, and another 4 000 applications have also been approved. We expect that a total of 40 000 elderly households will benefit upon completion of the scheme.

#### ***Encouraging District-based Initiatives (Item 47)***

11. The then CoP recommended that district-based approach be adopted to alleviate poverty in order to address the unique situation and characteristics of individual districts, especially for those less well-off districts. In response, relevant bureaux and departments have implemented a number of district-based initiatives to meet the specific needs of the residents in respective districts. A good example is the case of Tin Shui Wai. The following district-based measures were carried out with a view to providing more employment/training opportunities, community facilities and social support services to the residents:

- (i) facilitating the Hong Kong Jockey Club to set up a Telebet Centre cum Volunteers and Training Centre (the Centre) in Tin Heng Estate. It is expected that a total of 2 500 workers will be recruited upon its full development;
- (ii) organising nine large-scale job fairs, including three for the

youths, since 2008 to facilitate the job seekers in the district. These job fairs attracted more than 18 000 job seekers;

- (iii) encouraging local employment by requiring service providers of the housing estates to employ a certain percentage of local residents. So far, the Housing Department has introduced such a requirement in four security and cleansing service contracts for seven estates in Tin Shui Wai. Of some 480 job opportunities created by these contracts, more than 83% are taken up by Tin Shui Wai residents;
- (iv) establishing a new training centre by the Construction Industry Council Training Academy by the second half of 2009 to provide 700 full-time training places for new entrants to the industry, as well as a youth college by the Vocational Training Council to provide 2 000 pre-employment training places annually;
- (v) completing the Amenity and Community Building in Tin Shui Wai to accommodate about 20 NGOs for the provision of a wide spectrum of social services and a library-cum-indoor recreation centre in Tin Shui Wai South by 2010 and mid-2011 respectively. The construction works of the sports centre-cum-community hall in Tin Shui Wai North will also commence shortly; and
- (vi) setting up a pilot Housing Advisory Service Team by the Housing Authority to assist new tenants to adjust to the new living environment and advise them of the availability of social and community education services in the districts.

12. The latest statistics suggest that there has been some improvement in the poverty situation of Tin Shui Wai. In particular, the number of low-income households (i.e. households with income below the average CSSA payment) in Tin Shui Wai decreased by about 10 000 in the past two years and the median monthly household income of Tin Shui Wai residents improved gradually from \$13,000 in 2006 to \$14,500 in 2008.

### *Social Enterprises (SEs) (Items 14, 15, 43 and 47)*

13. Supporting the development of social enterprises (SEs)<sup>1</sup> at the district level is one of the recommendations of the then CoP. In June 2006, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) introduced the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme (ESR Programme) to provide seed money for eligible NGOs and district organisations to set up SEs. The ESR Programme aims at increasing the skills and capacities of the employable persons, providing opportunities for the disadvantaged to upgrade themselves and promoting their self-reliance. Since the launch of the ESR Programme, about 90 SE projects have been approved, creating some 1 500 jobs. About 40 of the projects are being/will be carried out in less well-off districts such as Kwun Tong, Sham Shui Po, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, Tin Shui Wai and Tung Chung. In addition, HAD has funded about 10 community projects with an aim to building up social support network for the under-privileged and mutual help for solving community problems.

### *Short-term Food Assistance (Item 48)*

14. The then CoP also recommended that district-based initiatives could serve as necessary supplements to formal services provision. To relieve the inflationary pressure on the low-income groups, the Government has allocated a sum of \$100 million to put in place district-based short-term food assistance projects for those who have difficulties in coping with daily food expenditure. A total of five Short-term Food Assistance Service Projects, which serve five different districts over the territory, were launched on 27 February 2009 by five operating NGOs commissioned by SWD. Under the service projects, each service user will receive food assistance for a maximum of six weeks. Subject to the review of individual merits, provision of further short-term food assistance after six weeks may be considered. As at the end of June 2009, the five service projects have served more than 13 000 people, most of them are unemployed (36.5%) or low-income individuals (29.5%). We expect that at least 50 000 persons will benefit from the

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<sup>1</sup> For more details of the latest development of SEs, Members may wish to refer to the paper submitted by the Home Affairs Bureau to the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation of this Panel (LC Paper No. CB(2)2068/08-09(01)) for discussion at its meeting on 7 July 2009.

projects.

### **Way Forward**

15. The Task Force on Poverty will continue to co-ordinate the Government's efforts and monitor the progress in implementing the then CoP's recommendations, as well as to explore possible new initiatives/measures which can assist the disadvantaged groups and people in need.

### **Advice Sought**

16. Members are invited to note this progress report.

Labour and Welfare Bureau  
July 2009



**Summary of Progress in implementation of  
the recommendations of the then Commission on Poverty**

**(I) Understanding Poverty**

No.	Recommendation	Progress
1	<b>Monitor and track the indicators of poverty</b> , and where appropriate, improve them by taking into account the changing needs of the society.	Ongoing. The <b>indicators of poverty have been uploaded</b> to Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) website and will be updated regularly.
2	Draw reference to the indicators of poverty as well as other relevant data and information during <b>policy formulation and implementation</b> , and consider the impact of public policies on the different disadvantaged groups and communities.	Ongoing. <b>Updated indicators of poverty have been sent to</b> all relevant bureaus and departments regularly for reference.
3	Conduct and encourage relevant institutions to conduct <b>further poverty researches and analysis</b> in order to facilitate a more informed public policy discourse on the subject.	In 2008-09, the Research Grant Council <b>awarded two research projects in the area of “Poverty, Inequality, and Social Disadvantaged in Hong Kong”</b> under the “Strategic Public Policy Research Grants” Scheme.
4	Conduct <b>evaluative studies</b> on poverty alleviation measures.	LWB has <b>commissioned</b> the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to conduct a <b>consultancy study on the first batch of Child Development Fund (CDF) pioneer projects</b> .
5	<b>Track the impact of taxation and social benefits</b> on household income, in particular on the lower-income group.	The then Commission on Poverty (CoP) <b>commissioned</b> the University of Hong Kong (HKU) to conduct a <b>study on earnings mobility and intergenerational earnings mobility</b> in Hong Kong over the period 1996-2005, which was completed in late 2006. The Government has commissioned HKU to update the study which is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2009.
6	<b>Track the situation of social and earnings mobility</b> in Hong Kong, and carry out longitudinal studies on children and other major vulnerable groups.	The “ <b>Conference on Social Inequality and Social Mobility in Hong Kong</b> ”, co-organised by the Central Policy Unit (CPU), the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Centre of Asian Studies at HKU, was held on 14 March 2008.  As stated in item (5) above, the updated study on earnings mobility in Hong Kong is scheduled for completion in the second half of 2009.

No.	Recommendation	Progress
7	Develop indicators or conduct studies to reflect the <b>strength of community</b> networks.	CPU is conducting <b>three studies in Tin Shui Wai (TSW)</b> , including a comparison between TSW and Sham Shui Po (SSP) which aims to examine the social network and communal living in TSW.  <b>Evaluative study on the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF)</b> will commence by phases starting from 2009-10.
8	Facilitate the <b>collection of data and statistics</b> to enhance poverty researches and analysis systematically, e.g. the collection of health data or statistics to be taken into account in the long-term development of a territory-wide health record infrastructure.	The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) will seek the LegCo Finance Committee's approval to set up an <b>eHealth Record (eHR) Office</b> to coordinate the development of a territory-wide eHR sharing infrastructure.  <b>Regular international studies</b> on education performance of Hong Kong students will continue to be conducted to cover, inter alia, correlation between Hong Kong students' social economic status and their achievements.

## (II) The Unemployed and the Working Poor

No.	Recommendation	Progress
9	<b>Review the provision of training, retraining, skills upgrading and life-long learning</b> holistically to ensure that they are market-oriented and have taken into account the needs of the unemployed and the working poor.	The <b>Employees Retraining Board (ERB)</b> completed a <b>strategic review</b> on future directions to enhance and upgrade ERB's training and retraining services for the local labour force in December 2007. Having considered the views collected in the public consultation exercise, ERB finalised the final recommendations. The LegCo Panel on Manpower was briefed in April 2009. <b>ERB has been implementing</b> the recommendations in phases.
10	<b>Further strengthen training and retraining efforts</b> , including making use of the levies collected from the employers of foreign domestic helpers when the resources could be used.	ERB has <b>started drawing down the levy from 1 December 2007</b> to support its existing operation and services. In 2009-10, ERB plans to offer 123 000 training places and has reserved resources for providing an additional 20 000 places in anticipation of an increasing training demand.  ERB has also embarked on provision of <b>part-time skills enhancement courses</b> for in-service workers to upgrade their vocational skills.

No.	Recommendation	Progress
11	Adopt an <b>integrated approach in the delivery of training and employment assistance</b> in order to make the best use of the resources available and provide more targeted assistance to the “difficult-to-employ”.	ERB set up a new pilot <b>Training cum Employment Resource Centre (TERC)</b> to offer multi-faceted training and employment services to people in need in October 2008.  Separately, the Government is finalising the implementation details of a full-fledged one-stop centre.
12	Review holistically how to achieve the target of <b>“one-stop shop”</b> in the provision of employment assistance, so that able-bodied persons, especially those who are “difficult-to-employ”, can access relevant training and employment assistance more easily.	See item (11) above.
13	<b>Promote economic development</b> , with particular attention to sectors which provide job opportunities for low-skilled workers.	<p><u>Major Infrastructure Projects and Minor Works</u></p> <p>The 10 Major Infrastructure Projects introduced in the Policy Address 2007 will create, from commissioning to a mature stage, <b>some 250 000 additional jobs</b>. Among these projects, the construction works of the cruise terminal at Kai Tak is expected to commence by end-2009 and create about 900 jobs, including those for low-skilled workers. Moreover, a sum of \$8.5 billion has been earmarked in 2009-10 for implementing minor works projects, whereby creating <b>over 12 000 jobs</b>.</p> <p><u>Encouraging local employment</u></p> <p>To increase the job opportunities for residents in TSW, the Housing Department has awarded <b>four contracts for the provision of security and cleansing services in seven estates in TSW</b>. These contracts provided job opportunities for 486 workers, out of which 402 (i.e. 83%) were taken up by TSW residents. In addition, staff of Housing Advisory and Service Team in TSW are mainly locally recruited.</p> <p><u>Encouraging employment for persons with disabilities</u></p> <p><b>The LWB, together with the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee</b>, have conducted visits to solicit support and collaboration of different sectors, including business sector, the 18 District Councils (DCs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in <b>promoting the employment of persons with disabilities</b>.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Progress
14	Support the development of <b>social enterprises</b> to assist those who are “difficult-to-employ” to integrate into the job market and capture job opportunities.	<p>The Home Affairs Department (HAD) introduced the <b>Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme (the ESR Programme)</b> in June 2006 to provide seed money for NGOs and district organisations to set up Social Enterprises (SEs) with a view to providing employment opportunities for the socially disadvantaged groups and promoting their self-reliance. So far, some 90 SE projects have been approved under the Programme, and these projects are expected to create some 1 500 jobs for the socially disadvantaged groups.</p> <p>A <b>Summit on Social Enterprises</b> was held on 20 December 2007. It was attended by some 600 participants from the welfare, academic, commercial and other sectors. Participants provided useful views on ways to facilitate further development of SEs.</p> <p>A <b>pilot scheme to facilitate SEs in bidding government cleansing contracts</b> was introduced in early 2008. Under the pilot scheme, 38 government cleansing contracts have been set aside for eligible SEs to bid. As a result, a total of 16 contracts, with a total contract value amounting to some \$6.6 million, have been awarded to SEs. The pilot scheme will be continued in 2009-10, with a total of 53 contracts (including cleansing and gardening services) setting aside for SEs to bid.</p> <p>The HAD launched a <b>dedicated website on SEs</b> in June 2008 to enhance public awareness and understanding of SEs. The website provides information on the Government’s measures to promote the development of SEs, including the SE Directory, SE booklet, leaflet, video, API, the SEs Partnership Programme, and the relevant funding schemes.</p>
15	<b>Strengthen employment support at the district level</b> , particularly in those districts with stronger needs for more targeted support, coupled with local economy and social enterprise development as well as investment in public works and infrastructural projects.	See item (14) above.
16	Give more attention to social and demographic considerations such as population, employment, supporting facilities and other people-based issues <b>during the planning process</b> .	In preparing physical land use plan for a new town/new development area, the <b>Planning Department undertook to duly take into consideration</b> socio-economic needs, infrastructure provision, environmental impacts and urban design.

No.	Recommendation	Progress
17	Monitor and review the implementation of the pilot Transport Support Scheme, and consider the appropriate form of <b>incentives to encourage work</b> .	As approved by the LegCo Finance Committee, the <b>eligibility criteria of applicants and the period of allowance have been relaxed</b> since July 2008. A review will be conducted on the way forward.
18	Consider how to provide <b>suitable support to the able-bodied unemployed and the working poor</b> so that the system will provide the necessary incentives for those who have the ability to work to springboard to employment and achieve self-reliance.	ERB set up a new pilot <b>TERC</b> to offer multi-faceted training and employment services to people in need in October 2008.  Separately, the Government is finalising the implementation details of a full-fledged one-stop centre.

### (III) Children and Youth

No.	Recommendation	Progress
19	Adopt a <b>holistic and family perspective</b> in policies and measures in assisting children and youth, with particular emphasis on early identification and intervention, evidence-based policy making and intersectoral collaboration.	The <b>Family Council</b> was established in December 2007 to provide a high-level platform for discussion of major issues from the family perspective and strategic directions as well as priorities on family-related policies.
20	Implement the <b>Child Development Fund (CDF)</b> and try out an <b>asset-based model</b> (including a targeted savings element and a mentoring scheme) which encourages longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background.	The LegCo Finance Committee approved the allocation of \$300 million to establish the CDF in April 2008. <b>The first batch of seven pioneer projects was rolled out in December 2008.</b>
21	Further develop the CDF into a <b>longer-term model</b> to promote child development in Hong Kong after the trial stage, and consolidate different resources and funding sources in order to promote a more child-based, asset-based and family-based model.	LWB has <b>commissioned a consultancy study on the experience of the first batch of CDF pioneer projects</b> , with a view to considering the longer-term model to promote child development.
22	Improve the <b>impact assessment</b> of existing efforts on the development of children from a disadvantaged background.	LWB is conducting a <b>consultancy study on the first batch of CDF pioneer projects.</b>
23	Make appropriate use of <b>schools as a platform</b> to help address the development needs of the disadvantaged children, particularly for the “hidden cases”, through collaboration between the social services and the education sectors	<u>Opening Up School Premises</u>  Some schools in Yuen Long District have opened up their schools premises for public use. A <b>School Network on the Opening Up School Premises of Yuen Long District</b> has been formed to exchange views on the arrangements of opening up school premises.

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		<p>An <b>education centre in Tung Chung</b>, which offers community-based cultural activities for residents, has been in operation under the 3-year project funded by the Opening Up School Premises for Community Use Scheme.</p> <p><u>Employment Opportunities for Youth</u></p> <p>To enhance the employability of young people, LWB has made available <b>3 000 3-year temporary positions for secondary school leavers</b> starting from 2008-09. All these positions have been allocated to subvented welfare NGOs, some of which would provide support to the social workers stationed in schools.</p>
24	The work of the <b>Family Commission</b> , if set up, should take into account the needs of children and families from a disadvantaged background.	The <b>Family Council</b> was established to, amongst others, bring under one roof family related work being undertaken by various commissions and committees responsible for handling issues regarding different age groups and gender. Through the work of the Family Council, the Government aims to strengthen the family by formulating social policies and services to meet the needs of different members of the family.
25	<b>Extend the Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS)</b> to all districts in phases and strengthen follow-up social services support to children and families at risk.	CCDS has been <b>extended to Kwun Tong, Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing</b> . Further expansion of CCDS is subject to review.
26	<b>Strengthen parent education</b> , with particular focus on the needs of the disadvantaged and hard-to-reach families	<b>Ongoing</b> . Under the CDF pioneer projects, training and guidance are provided to the parents/guardians of the participating children to engage them in the life planning and financial planning for the children.
27	Ensure the <b>education system</b> provides opportunities for children to learn and excel regardless of their socio-economic background, and to provide additional assistance to students with weak family support where appropriate.	<b>Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS)</b> , commenced in 2007-08 school year, provides fee subsidy for parents of children attending local non-profit-making kindergartens regardless of their socio-economic background. Needy families may apply for additional fee assistance through the existing Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme.
28	Promote school-based and community-based <b>after school programmes</b> for primary and secondary students from disadvantaged families, through promoting intersectoral collaboration among schools and non-governmental / local community	Ongoing. The Education Bureau will continue to monitor and review at appropriate time the <b>\$75 million School-based After-school Learning and Support Programme</b> , which aims to provide funding support for schools and NGOs to organise

No.	Recommendation	Progress
	organizations.	suitable programmes for disadvantaged students.
29	Strengthen efforts to tackle the problem of <b>non-engaged youths (NEYs)</b> and take into account the assessment conducted by the Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth.	A paper on how to take forward the recommendations of the Task Force was <b>issued to the LegCo Panel on Manpower and Panel on Home Affairs</b> in July 2008.
30	Provide a <b>more intensified form of assistance to youths</b> who have remained on CSSA for a long period and cannot benefit from existing programmes, and evaluate their needs in order to provide targeted and timely assistance.	<p>The Social Welfare Department (SWD) introduced the <b>Special Training and Enhancement Programme (My STEP)</b> in 2006 to assist hard-core CSSA unemployed youth to rejoin the workforce or return to mainstream schooling.</p> <p>Following the completion of the first phase of My STEP in TSW and Yuen Long in September 2007, SWD launched four 2-year projects under the second phase of My STEP in the districts of Kwun Tong &amp; Wong Tai Sin/Sai Kung; TSW/Yuen Long; Tuen Mun &amp; Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing and Tai Po/North &amp; Sha Tin to help more than 600 long-term able-bodied unemployed CSSA recipients aged between 15 and 29.</p> <p>SWD is actively planning to launch another phase of My STEP upon completion of the current phase in September 2009.</p>

#### (IV) The Elderly

No.	Recommendation	Progress
31	Promote <b>active and healthy ageing</b> as an integral part of the elderly policy to enhance their quality of life and to enable the elderly to live with dignity.	<p><u>Promoting Active Ageing</u></p> <p>LWB and the Elderly Commission (EC) have jointly launched the “<b>Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project</b>” (NAAP) since early 2008 to promote the message of active ageing. There are currently 3 initiatives under the NAAP, with a total of 75 district projects being organized:</p> <p>(a) The 2-year <b>Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project (PNAAP)</b> was launched across the territory in early 2008 to promote the concept of active ageing and enhance neighbourhood support with a view to creating a harmonious society. 19 district projects are in operation;</p>

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		<p>(b) Another 2-year pilot project namely <b>PNAAP – Caring for Elders</b> was carried out in September 2008 to promote the prevention of elder abuse in the community through education, prevention and support, and to foster inter-generational integration and harmonious family life. 29 district projects covering the whole territory are in operation; and</p> <p>(c) A 2-year <b>PNAAP – Prevention of Elderly Suicide</b>, which seeks to enhance community efforts to prevent elderly suicide through establishing neighbourhood support networks, was launched in 2009. 33 district projects are in operation.</p> <p><u>Improving home environment for the elderly</u></p> <p>SWD launched the <b>Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly</b> in June 2008 to help elders lacking family support and financial means to improve their home environment. It is estimated that a total of 40 000 elderly households will benefit from this five-year scheme. As at end March 2009, some 7 000 out of 10 000 applications have been approved. About 3 000 cases were completed with the necessary services provided to the elders.</p> <p><u>Promoting life-long learning for the elders</u></p> <p>LWB and the EC have jointly launched the <b>Elder Academy Scheme</b> since early 2007. At present, there are 78 elder academies in primary and secondary schools, with another 20 elder academies in primary and secondary school coming on stream within 2009. Eight tertiary institutions have also actively participated in the Scheme.</p> <p><u>Setting up a dedicated portal for the elderly</u></p> <p>As a new initiative in the 2009-10 Budget, LWB is co-ordinating with relevant parties the setting up of a <b>dedicated portal for the elderly</b> to provide <b>one-stop information service on elderly services and the silver hair market</b>. Interested parties are invited to submit proposals to the Government by 28 July 2009. Our target is to launch the portal in early 2010.</p>



No.	Recommendation	Progress
32	Further improve our support systems for the elderly based on shared responsibility and financial sustainability, and consider <b>more vigorous targeting in using public resources</b> to take care of the elderly most in need of assistance.	<p><u>Studying the Issues</u></p> <p><b>EC has embarked on a consultancy study</b> on residential care services for the elderly, which is expected to be completed within 2009.</p> <p><u>Strengthening housing support for families with elderly persons</u></p> <p>The Housing Authority <b>streamlined in January 2009 different schemes which aimed to foster harmonious families and encourage family support for elderly.</b> Under the new Harmonious Families Priority Scheme (HFPS), the families concerned may opt to live in one flat or two nearby flats subject to the availability of flats in their chosen district(s). As at April 2009, about 5 000 families have benefited from the HFPS.</p> <p>The <b>eligibility criteria for elderly families under the Rent Assistance Scheme have been relaxed</b> since August 2007. This was well received by public housing tenants. From August 2007 to March 2009, about 7 000 families benefited from the relaxed scheme.</p> <p><u>Strengthening support for private care homes for the elderly</u></p> <p>The Hospital Authority has <b>allocated additional resources to extend the psychogeriatric outreach programme to private care homes for the elderly</b> since July 2008. In 2008-09, some 10 000 outreach attendances were provided. The target is to provide additional 10 000 outreach attendances in 2009-10.</p>
33	<b>Enhance understanding of the problem of the elderly in poverty</b> , including exploring ways to facilitate further poverty researches and analysis, e.g. the collection of health data or statistics to be taken into account in the longer-term development of a territory-wide health record infrastructure.	FHB will seek the LegCo Finance Committee's approval to set up an <b>eHR Office</b> to coordinate the development of a territory-wide eHR sharing infrastructure.
34	Strengthen efforts to <b>reach out and identify "hidden" and singleton elders</b> , bring them out of isolation, and refer those in need to the existing public support network, and better leverage on the existing resources including volunteers to address the needs of the hidden elderly.	Since January 2008, <b>additional recurrent funding of \$42 million</b> has been provided to <b>the 41 District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and the 115 Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs)</b> to recruit a total of 156 additional staff to enhance the outreaching work to hidden and singleton elders.

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		Since June 2008, <b>further recurrent funding of \$18 million</b> has been provided to all <b>DECCs</b> to recruit additional staff to strengthen their counselling and referral services.
35	Encourage <b>social inclusion</b> and participation of the elderly in society, and mobilise healthy retirees who are a valuable pool of human resources to help those who are needy in the community.	The above additional resources have enabled the DECCs and NECs to <b>recruit more staff to mobilise volunteers, including “young-olds”, for the outreaching work.</b>
36	Ensure <b>equitable and affordable access to health care</b> services and provide a safety net for the poor and vulnerable by putting in place sustainable health care financing arrangements as soon as possible.	FHB initiated the first-stage <b>public consultation on health care reform and financing</b> in 2008. FHB will launch the second stage of public consultation after formulating detailed proposals.
37	<b>Strengthen primary healthcare</b> service for the elderly at the community level, including health promotion and preventive care, and make use of the private doctor network at the community level.	FHB launched a 3-year pilot scheme in January 2009 to provide five <b>health care vouchers</b> of \$50 each per year to senior citizens aged 70 or above to partially subsidise them to use primary care services in the private sector. FHB will conduct an interim review of the voucher pilot scheme one year after the launch.  FHB will also launch various 3-year pilot programmes through the Hospital Authority to <b>improve care for chronic disease patients</b> , including the elderly, in the community in 2009-10.
38	Improve the accessibility of subsidised medical service for non-CSSA recipients, in particular the elderly, through further improving the <b>medical fee waiver mechanism</b> , e.g. further simplify the procedures and lengthen the period waivers of the medical fee waiver mechanism.	The <b>coverage of period waiver for the elderly has been extended</b> to include services of the General Out-Patient Clinics without pre-scheduled appointment starting from March 2008.
39	Provide greater relief on <b>medical fees for needy elders</b> , whether they are on CSSA or not.	The question of safety net would be considered in the context of <b>health care reform and financing</b> . FHB initiated the first-stage public consultation in 2008 and will launch the second stage of public consultation after formulating detailed proposals.
40	Facilitate elderly applicants to apply for public rental housing, and <b>assist those living in private old buildings</b> who are owner-occupiers but with low income.	<u>Shortening the waiting time for family applicants with elderly persons</u>  The <b>minimum waiting time</b> for family applications with elderly persons has been <b>shortened from 24 to 18 months</b> with effect

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		<p>from October 2007.</p> <p><u>Providing special arrangement for elderly property owner-occupiers under the Compassionate Rehousing Scheme</u></p> <p>Regarding assistance to elderly property owner-occupiers living in private dilapidated buildings, the Housing Authority has introduced, since 2004, arrangements to assist these elderly owners by <b>granting them licences to stay in Public Rental Housing (PRH) under the Compassionate Rehousing Scheme</b>. The licences will be turned into normal tenancies upon the licences' fulfillment of the General Waiting List eligibility criteria. Since its implementation, 87 applicants have been housed successfully and 34 of them have their licences converted into normal PRH tenancies.</p>
41	<p>Provide better <b>long-term planning</b> on the provision of subsidised residential care places for the elderly as well as community care services in the light of increasing demand from an ageing population.</p>	<p><b>EC has embarked on a consultancy study</b> to explore these issues which is expected to be completed within 2009.</p> <p>LWB will continue to <b>enhance the provision of subsidised elderly services</b>. In 2008-09, an additional 810 places of home-based care services for frail elders, 107 subsidised residential care places and 177 subsidised day care places for the elderly were provided. In 2009-10, LWB will provide an additional 642 subsidised residential care places and an additional 80 day care places in districts that have high service demand.</p>
42	<p><b>Increase the choices</b> of quality residential care places and community care services through a combination of measures –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider whether the subsidised residential care service should be <b>means-tested</b>;</li> <li>• examine means to enable a greater extent of <b>co-payment of fees</b> among the individuals, their families and the Government, including a means-tested voucher system and assistance to the needy in selecting different services; and</li> <li>• encourage a more robust market comprising quality self-financing and private residential care homes for the elderly providing different services, as well as <b>multiple sources of financing</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>EC has embarked on a consultancy study</b> to explore these issues which is expected to be completed within 2009.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Progress
	from the individuals and their families.	
43	Encourage <b>further social enterprise development</b> in the provision of elderly services.	Out of the 90 new <b>SE projects</b> approved under the ESR Programme, <b>10 projects target to provide services to the elderly</b> , such as provision of health care services, sale of elderly products, cleaning and minor repair service for the elderly.  In connection with the Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly launched in June 2008, <b>SWD has provided a list of SEs and community organisations to the delivery agencies</b> of the Scheme, and encouraged the delivery agencies to engage them as service providers in the Scheme.
44	Consider a more <b>relaxed asset limit for elderly CSSA recipients</b> on compassionate grounds, without changing the nature of CSSA as a scheme of last resort for those genuinely in need.	The CSSA asset limit has been <b>upward adjusted</b> by 2.6% with effect from 1 February 2009.
45	Consider how to provide <b>financial security</b> for the future elderly generations as soon as possible, taking into account the outcome of the on-going study on the sustainability of the three pillars of retirement protection for Hong Kong, viz. the publicly funded CSSA and Old Age Allowance, the Mandatory Provident Fund schemes, and voluntary private savings.	Studies in progress.

## (V) District-based Approach

No.	Recommendation	Progress
46	<b>Enhance understanding of characteristics and needs of districts</b> , and take them into account in formulating and implementing policies at the district level.	Ongoing. Updated <b>indicators of poverty</b> , including the community-based indicators, have been sent to all relevant bureaus and departments regularly for reference.
47	Provide <b>more opportunities to less well-off districts</b> , including physical infrastructure (community facilities), economic and employment opportunities, and enhanced measures.	<u>Enhancing medical services in less-well off districts</u>  The Hospital Authority has allocated <b>additional provision to enhance hospital services</b> in the New Territories West and Kowloon East Clusters respectively in 2008-09 and 2009-10. The Hospital Authority also launched the <b>“TSW Primary Care Partnership Project”</b> in 2008 to purchase primary care services for TSW residents.

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		<p><u>Providing more facilities for less well-off districts</u></p> <p><b>Leisure, cultural and community hall facilities have been/will be provided in less well-off districts in the coming years.</b> For example, more open spaces have been developed in Tung Chung and TSW. The construction of the indoor recreation centre, a community hall cum library, and the swimming pool complex in Tung Chung is expected to be completed by late 2009 and late 2010 respectively. The construction of the library cum indoor recreation centre next to TSW MTR Station and the sports centre and community hall in North TSW is expected to be completed by mid-2011 and mid-2012 respectively. In SSP, stage 2 of the SSP Park completed in August 2008, and the construction works of the conversion of the secondary pool of the Lai Chi Kok Park Swimming Pool into an indoor heated pool will commence in early 2010.</p> <p>The Housing Authority will also complete the construction works of the Amenity and Community Building in TSW in late 2010.</p> <p><u>Providing more employment opportunities and training places for less-well districts</u></p> <p>The Housing Authority has let accommodation in a multi-storey car park building in Tin Heng Estate in <b>TSW North</b> to the <b>Hong Kong Jockey Club for setting up a Telebet Centre cum Volunteers and Training Centre</b> (the Centre). Phase 1 of the Centre has commenced its operation with about 900 workers employed. Another 1 500 workers will be recruited in September 2009 upon the commencement of Phase 2 of the Centre.</p> <p><b>The Construction Industry Council Training Academy will establish a training centre in TSW</b> by the second half of 2009. The centre will provide 700 full-time training places for new entrants to various trades including steel-fixing, plumbing and painting. Basic safety training courses will also be provided.</p> <p>HAD introduced <b>the ESR Programme</b> in June 2006 to provide seed money for NGOs and district organisations to set up SEs with a view to providing employment opportunities for the socially disadvantaged groups and</p>

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		<p>promoting their self-reliance. So far, some 90 SE projects have been approved under the Programme, and these projects are expected to create some 1 500 jobs for the socially disadvantaged groups.</p>
48	<p>Encourage <b>district-based initiatives</b> as necessary supplements to formal services provision through providing additional funding sources, better information dissemination of existing funding sources, as well as rationalising and streamlining different funding sources in the longer run.</p>	<p><u>Providing assistance for new tenants of public housing estates</u></p> <p>The Housing Authority <b>set up a pilot Housing Advisory Service Team (the HAST) in TSW</b> in April 2008 to assist local Estate Management Advisory Committees (EMACs) in carrying out community building activities, in particular, assisting new tenants in adjusting to the new living environment. Apart from giving advice to the new tenants on the availability of social/community/educational services in the district and running a hotline, the HAST has maintained close contact with the EMACs, NGOs, Government departments and DC Members. The service has been well received by residents in TSW. The Housing Authority will review this pilot scheme towards the end of 2009.</p> <p><u>Providing Food Assistance to people in need</u></p> <p>SWD commissioned five NGOs in February 2009 to operate five <b>short-term food assistance</b> service projects, covering the whole territory, to help individuals and families in need. The services projects are expected to benefit at least 50 000 persons.</p> <p><u>Enhancing support services for carers</u></p> <p>LWB launched the <b>District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training</b> (the Trial Scheme) in October 2007 and provided seed money of \$50,000 each to 11 DECCs in three SWD administrative districts (i.e. Eastern and Wanchai, Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung, as well as Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong) to <b>organise carer training programmes and provide carer services in collaboration with local organisations</b>. As of December 2008, 765 individuals have completed training under the Trial Scheme and more than 6 100 elders have received services provided by the carer-helpers. In view of the encouraging response, LWB has extended the Trial Scheme to 22 DECCs in other districts. The first round of training commenced in March 2009.</p>

No.	Recommendation	Progress
		<p><u>Strengthening child care services at district level</u></p> <p>In October 2008, SWD launched a <b>3-year pilot Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project</b> with a view to providing more flexible forms of day care services for children aged under 6 to meet the needs of parents at the neighbourhood level. So far, SWD has already awarded 11 projects, one in each SWD administrative district. Subsidy is also available for families in need of financial assistance.</p> <p><u>Encouraging district care and support</u></p> <p>LWB has allocated a sum of \$8.5 million to SWD to launch a <b>District Caring and Support Trial Scheme</b> in 2009-10. The aim of the scheme is to support district-based initiatives which can address the specific needs of individual districts, particularly in the face of the current financial tsunami.</p>
49	Put in place <b>suitable institutional structure</b> for districts to escalate problems which cannot be dealt with at the district level to the Government so that policy barriers could be removed in a timely manner.	Since March 2008, a <b>new mechanism has been in place</b> to raise government capacity to resolve district problems requiring inter-departmental collaboration.
50	Strengthen the <b>role of District Officers</b> to enhance cross-sector collaboration to address district needs; this should be complemented by central policy support.	<p><b>DOs have been provided with additional staffing resources</b> to carry out various community involvement programmes to help strengthen their community network and further promote district administration.</p> <p>Separately, DCs have been given <b>greater flexibility</b> since the new term of 2008-11 <b>to use not more than 10% of its funds for employing contract staff</b> to help the launch of community participation activities. As at mid-May 2009, more than 200 full-time and part-time staff have been employed by the 18 DCs.</p>
51	Give District Officers a <b>clearer mandate</b> to coordinate inter-departmental efforts at the district level on key concern areas relating to poverty alleviation and prevention, in order to better respond to local needs, remove local barriers and achieve greater impact.	With the additional staffing resources for DOs and funding for DCs to carry out <b>community involvement programmes</b> , both DOs and DCs collaborate to put forward various community projects to cater for the district needs, including helping the under-privileged and alleviating local poverty.
52	Encourage districts to <b>strengthen their capacities</b> through taking the essential steps in analysing and identifying genuine and unmet local needs, mapping out clear and	Ongoing. HAD will, through the DC committees and the District Management Committees, continue to <b>work closely with district organisations to provide</b>

No.	Recommendation	Progress
	longer-term directions, engaging stakeholders and encouraging cross-sector collaboration, and evaluating effectiveness of poverty alleviation and prevention programmes.	<b>community projects</b> , with a view to identifying and addressing the local needs, as well as creating a people-oriented network of care and mutual support.
53	Encourage the establishment of <b>district-based platforms</b> or mechanisms to identify district needs and responses, comprising Government officials, NGOs and district leaders.	There are <b>established inter-departmental platforms</b> in the districts to engage stakeholders on poverty issues. The Home Affairs Bureau will continue to make use of the established platforms and networks to provide programmes which cater for the needs of the districts.

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