

**For discussion on
13 June 2011**

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**Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
Progress of the Child Development Fund**

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the latest progress of the Child Development Fund (CDF).

Background

2. The Government accepted the recommendation of the former Commission on Poverty and set up the \$300 million CDF in April 2008. CDF funds projects which promote the longer-term development of children aged between 10 and 16 from a disadvantaged background¹ and encourage them to develop an asset-building habit, with a view to reducing inter-generational poverty. CDF projects are implemented with the joint efforts of the family, the private sector, the community and the Government. **Annex I** describes their content and mode of operation. So far, two batches of 22 projects have been rolled out, benefiting a total of 2 270 children. The latest progress of these CDF projects is set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Progress of the First and Second Batches of Projects

First Batch Pioneer Projects

3. The seven pioneer projects in the first batch (see **Annex II**) were rolled out in December 2008 and formally commenced in April 2009. A total of 750 children were recruited initially. By the end of the second

¹ Children aged 10 to 16 may participate in CDF projects if:

- (i) their family is receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance or full grant under the student finance schemes administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency, or their household income is less than 75% of the Median Monthly Domestic Household Income; and
- (ii) they have not participated in any CDF project before.

year, 732 children (97.6%) were still in the projects and 723 children (96.4%) had successfully completed the targeted savings programme². Disbursement of the matching contribution from private donors and the financial incentive from the Government to the participating children will be arranged by the non-governmental organisations operating the projects (the operating NGOs).

4. Altogether, the operating NGOs have recruited about 700 volunteers to serve as mentors of the participating children. Although 96 mentors have dropped out owing to work or study commitments, health or other personal reasons, the mentorship programme is not adversely affected as the operating NGOs have recruited other mentors to replace them and made suitable transitional arrangements. In the third year of the pioneer projects, mentors will continue to provide guidance to the participating children and help them implement their personal development plans (PDPs) in particular.

5. Over the past two years, the operating NGOs had organised 185 training programmes for the participating children, their parents and mentors. The average attendance rates were satisfactory and met the prescribed minimum requirement of 70%. The operating NGOs will continue to provide training for the participating children in the third year of the project.

6. Under the guidance of the operating NGOs and mentors, the participating children have already drawn up their PDPs. According to the initial findings of our evaluation study (please refer to paragraph 7 below), most of the short-term development targets of the participating children are related to academic achievements and personal qualities, whereas the long-term development targets are mainly related to career development and tertiary studies. Details are given at **Annex III**.

7. We have commissioned the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (the Consultant) to conduct a longitudinal study to evaluate the first batch pioneer projects and make recommendations to the Government on how to further develop CDF. The study is on-going and is expected to be completed by mid-2012. Initially, the Consultant has observed that the CDF pioneer projects are bringing about positive changes to the participating children, for example:

² Including 16 children who had difficulty meeting the savings target of \$200 per month and had agreed to a lower target with the operating NGOs.

- many children, as well as their parents, have developed a saving habit and are now able to make better saving plans;
- the training programmes/activities provided by the operating NGOs have effectively broadened the children's horizon and social networks;
- under the guidance of the mentors, the children have made significant improvements in various aspects such as their behaviours, studies, family and interpersonal relations; and
- the children have become more confident in expressing themselves and have developed a more positive and forward-looking attitude.

Second Batch Projects

8. The second batch of 15 projects, which were rolled out in 13 districts/areas in June 2010 and came into operation in October 2010, have recruited a total of 1 520 children including 79 ethnic minorities and 53 children with disabilities. Of these, 71.8% are aged between 14 and 16; the remaining 28.2% aged between 10 and 13. By the end of March 2011, there were still 1 503 children (98.9%) participating in the projects. In addition, more than 1 300 volunteers from all walks of life have been recruited by the operating NGOs to serve as mentors of the participating children.

9. The participating children started their two-year targeted savings programme in October 2010. All except 20 of them have set a savings target of \$200 per month. The operating NGOs have also set up emergency funds to assist those who have difficulty meeting their savings target owing to temporary financial hardship.

10. Up to the end of March 2011, more than 40 orientation activities and training programmes have been organised by the operating NGOs. Topics included financial management, time management, life planning, emotion management, self-awareness, parenting skills, communication skills with young people, etc. More training programmes will come on stream to help the children develop their own PDPs.

11. The second batch projects are well received and supported by the

community. The operating NGOs have successfully solicited support from more than 140 companies/organisations which provide funding for the matching contribution and/or mobilise their members/staff to serve as mentors of the participating children.

Third and Fourth Batches Projects

12. In response to the community's call for helping more children from a disadvantaged background, the Administration plans to roll out two more batches of CDF projects in September 2011 and March 2012 respectively, benefiting a total of 5 000 children. These two batches will each comprise 21 projects to be rolled out in 12 districts/areas for at least 2 500 children. Some districts will have more than one project given their relatively large pool of potential candidates (see **Annex IV** for details). The Social Welfare Department (SWD) is inviting NGOs to submit proposals for operating the third batch projects. We expect the recruitment of participating children and mentors to commence in September 2011.

13. In general, the third and fourth batch projects will be similar to those in the first two batches in terms of eligibility criteria and project contents. The three key components of the CDF projects will be maintained. Priority will continue to be given to children aged between 14 and 16 as some of them may be about to leave school and therefore have a more imminent need to plan for their future. However, in view of over-subscription of places for the younger children aged 10 to 13 in the first two batches of projects, the minimum percentage of children aged between 14 and 16 for the third and fourth batches of CDF projects will be suitably reduced from 70% to 50%. The operating NGOs may provide more than 50% of places for children aged 14 to 16 as they see fit. We will also encourage the operating NGOs to recruit ethnic minorities, children with disabilities and children living in cubicle apartments.

Monitoring

14. SWD is responsible for monitoring the CDF projects. In addition, the Labour and Welfare Bureau has set up the Steering Committee on Child Development Fund (SCCDF), comprising members from different sectors of the community, to oversee the CDF initiative in overall terms. The operating NGOs are required to report progress to

the SCCDF regularly.

Way Forward

15. Our target is to benefit some 13 600 children eventually. To this end, we will roll out more CDF projects in phases and continue to closely monitor the implementation of the CDF projects. Taking into account the results of our evaluation study and practical experience in implementing the projects, we will consider further developing the CDF into the longer-term model to promote child development in Hong Kong.

Advice Sought

16. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
June 2011

**Content and Mode of Operation of
Child Development Fund (CDF) Projects**

CDF provides funds to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to operate projects which last three years each. All projects have three key components, namely, personal development plan (PDP), mentorship programme and targeted savings. Each participating child is assigned a volunteer personal mentor.

2. In the first two years of the project, the participating children benefit from the friendship and guidance of their mentors. They also attend training programmes organised by the operating NGOs. These training programmes cover topics such as self-awareness, personal development and financial management, etc. The Government has set aside \$15,000 for the provision of relevant training programmes for each participating child. With the help of mentors and the operating NGOs, the participating children formulate PDPs by the end of the second year and set specific short-term and long-term development targets for themselves.

3. Also in the first two years, the participating children take part in a targeted savings programme to save up to \$200 per month. At the same time, the operating NGOs solicit donations of the business sector and individual donors to match the children's savings. In addition, the Government provides a special financial incentive of \$3,000 for each participating child who has completed the targeted savings programme.

4. In the third year of the project, the participating children use the savings (including the matching contribution and the special financial incentive) to implement their PDPs under the guidance and supervision of the operating NGOs and mentors. Training will continue to be provided for them as appropriate.

**Operating Non-governmental Organisations of the
Child Development Fund Projects**

(1) First Batch Pioneer Projects

Region/ District	Operating NGO	No. of Participating Children
Hong Kong Island	Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service	100
Kowloon East	Christian Action	100
Kowloon West	Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship	120
New Territories East	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	110
New Territories West	Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	120
Tin Shui Wai	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	100
Tung Chung	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council	100
Total		750

(2) **Second Batch Projects**

Region/ District	Operating NGO	No. of Participating Children
Hong Kong Island	Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service	100
Tung Chung	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council	100
Kwun Tong	The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong	100
	Christian Action	100
Wong Tai Sin	Lok Kwan Social Service	100
Sai Kung (including Tseung Kwan O)	Urban Peacemaker Evangelistic Fellowship	100
Kowloon City & Yau Tsim Mong	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service	100
Sham Shui Po	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	110
Sha Tin	The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong	100
Tai Po & North District	Hong Kong Children & Youth Services	100
Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing	Caritas – Hong Kong	100
	Urban Peacemaker Evangelistic Fellowship	100
Tuen Mun	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals	110
Yuen Long	Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship	100
Tin Shui Wai	Christian Action	100
Total		1 520

**Short-term and Long-term Development Targets
of the Participating Children of the First Batch CDF Pioneer Projects**

(1) Short Term Development Targets

Short-term Targets	Frequency
1. Admission to university/tertiary institutions	236
2. Attainment of specific examination results	169
3. Pass in Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education	127
4. Enhancement of knowledge	123
5. Enhancement of personal capacity	101
6. Promotion to higher grade	81
7. Improvement of personal habits	79
8. Participation in overseas exchange programme	72
9. Pass in professional examination or acquisition of professional skills	55
10. Employment	43
11. Others	165

Note: So far, 410 participating children have provided information on their personal development plans (PDPs). They can set no more than three short-term development targets for themselves.

(2) Long Term Development Targets

Long-term Targets	Frequency
1. Joining specific industry/profession	294
2. Continuing education and academic study	284
3. Enhancement of language abilities	253
4. Enhancement of personal skills	207
5. Acquisition of qualifications, licenses or certificates	112
6. Starting one's own business	37
7. Others	61

Note: So far, 410 participating children have provided information on their PDPs. They can set no more than three long-term development targets for themselves.

**Districts and Number of Participants for the
Third and Fourth Batches of Child Development Fund Projects**

District		Number of Projects		Number of Participants for 3 rd and 4 th batches # (each batch)
		2 nd Batch	3 rd and 4 th Batches (each batch)	
1.	Hong Kong Island	1	2	240
2.	Tung Chung	1	1	100
3.	Kwun Tong	2	2	240
4.	Wong Tai Sin	1	2	240
5.	Sai Kung (including Tseung Kwan O)	1	1	120
6.	Kowloon City & Yau Tsim Mong	1	1	120
7.	Sham Shui Po	1	2	240
8.	Sha Tin	1	1	120
9.	Tai Po & North District	1	2	240
10.	Tsuen Wan/Kwai Tsing	2	3	360
11.	Tuen Mun	1	1	120
12.	Yuen Long	1	3	360
	Tin Shui Wai	1		
Total		15	21	2 500

Each project will offer not less than 120 places, except for the Tung Chung project which will offer 100 places.