

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)531/13-14

Ref : CB2/HS/1/12

**Report of the Subcommittee on Poverty
on working poverty**

Purpose

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Poverty ("the Subcommittee") regarding working poverty.

Background

2. The Government established the Commission on Poverty ("CoP") for the first time in February 2005 to examine issues relating to poverty in Hong Kong. The major tasks of CoP were to study and identify the needs of the poor and make policy recommendations on poverty alleviation and promotion of self-reliance. Prior to its dissolution on 30 June 2007, CoP submitted a report to the Government summarizing its work and making recommendations on the direction for future work to prevent and alleviate poverty. The Government subsequently set up an inter-bureau/departmental Task Force on Poverty to coordinate the cross-departmental efforts on poverty alleviation.

3. The Panel on Welfare Services appointed the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation ("SCPA") in January 2009 to study policies and measures relating to poverty alleviation. SCPA concluded its work in June 2010 and drew up 15 recommendations for the Administration's consideration. A summary of the recommendations is in **Appendix I**.

4. In his Election Manifesto, the Chief Executive pledged to reinstate CoP to undertake an overall review of the forms and manners by which poverty is manifested and their underlying causes. In October 2012, the House Committee set up the Subcommittee to study relevant policies and measures for easing the disparity between the rich and the poor as well as alleviating poverty, and follow up the work of the Government's CoP to be reinstated. The membership list of the Subcommittee is in **Appendix II**.

5. CoP was reinstated in December 2012, with the setting of a poverty line as its main task for the first ten months. Having completed the afore-mentioned task, CoP is currently studying the issue of working poverty.

6. The Subcommittee conducted a duty visit to Taiwan and Japan from 20 to 29 August 2013 to study their experience in alleviating poverty. The Subcommittee's findings on the experience of these two places in tackling working poverty and the comparison with Hong Kong are in **Appendix III**.

7. In addition, the Subcommittee met with 49 deputations/individuals and the Administration regarding support for low-income working households which are not on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") and working poverty on 8 July and 22 November 2013 respectively. A list of the deputations/individuals which have given views to the Subcommittee is in **Appendix IV**.

Deliberations of the Subcommittee

Existing Government assistance available to low-income working households

8. The Administration points out that, apart from CSSA, it has also put in place a variety of assistance and measures, including cash or non-cash and recurrent or non-recurrent assistance, which benefit many low-income working households. They are provided in many different areas including education, healthcare, housing, transport and social welfare. In addition, the Community Care Fund ("CCF") has launched a number of assistance programmes for the disadvantaged, including non-CSSA low-income households.

9. The Administration advises that the above-mentioned Government assistance does not include those universal subsidies and services, such as the Pre-Primary Education Voucher Scheme, 12-year free education, public in-patient or out-patient services or relief measures announced in the past budgets, etc. While these are not designed solely for low-income households, they can render relief to the working poor households.

10. Deputations generally consider that the Government's current support for low-income working households is inadequate. They request the Government to alleviate the poverty of these households by providing them with cash subsidies. The Subcommittee shares their views and has requested the Government to expeditiously draw up a proposal to provide a territory-wide low-income family supplement with household income and household size as major factors to be taken into account.

Supplement for low-income working households

11. The Administration points out that it has received a number of proposals to provide further financial assistance to non-CSSA low-income working households ("low-income supplement"). CoP discussed this subject at its meetings on 24 May and 11 November 2013.

Target beneficiaries

12. The Administration points out that among the proposals on the low-income supplement received, most of them urge the Administration to focus financial assistance on children in poverty. However, some suggest that the low-income supplement should also cover working households without children.

13. Some deputations consider that the Government should provide additional assistance to low-income working households with disabled members, including children with special learning needs. Some members of the Subcommittee are of the view that the additional assistance should also benefit families with chronically ill or elderly members. They also state that the low-income supplement cannot benefit single working people and full-time carers, and hope that the Administration will provide financial assistance for these people.

14. According to the Administration, it is studying the feasibility of providing low-income working households with a supplement. It considers that the low-income supplement is intended to encourage employment and address intergenerational poverty. Therefore, the target beneficiaries should be families with children and those with at least one member engaging in full-time work. The Administration expects to give an account of the issue of low-income supplement in the 2014 Policy Address. As regards single working people, the Administration advises that they can benefit from the existing Work Incentive Transport Subsidy ("WITS") Scheme. For full-time carers, the Administration will provide them with specific financial assistance. For example, the CCF Task Force under CoP will study the feasibility of introducing a pilot scheme on elderly carer allowance for low-income families. Provision of allowance for other carers will be explored having regard to the outcome of the pilot scheme.

15. The Administration also points out that among the proposals on the low-income supplement received, there are suggestions that the low-income supplement scheme be converted from or built on the existing WITS Scheme.

16. Some deputations oppose the conversion of WITS to low-income supplement. They consider that the original intent of WITS is to reduce the transport cost of low-income working people and encourage employment, which is different from the policy objective of the low-income supplement. The

low-income supplement should be the second safety net specifically designed for working poor households. It should be a financial assistance catering for the daily living needs of working poor households.

Setting the amount of supplement

17. According to the Administration, some of the proposals on the low-income supplement suggest that the income threshold for the supplement should be based on 50% of the monthly median domestic household income ("MMDHI"), whilst others suggest multiple thresholds between 40% and 70% of MMDHI.

18. Some deputations consider that, for the purpose of poverty alleviation, the low-income supplement must be given to families living below the poverty line, i.e. 50% or less of the median household income. In addition, support should also be given to low-income working households living on the verge of the poverty line. Therefore, for the purpose of poverty prevention, the Administration should provide supplement to families whose income is above 50% but below 70% of the median household income, so that those living on the verge of the poverty line will not fall below it even in case of unemployment or insufficient work arising from such situations as economic downturn or for health reasons. Some deputations also suggest that the amount of supplement be set at different levels according to the number of children in a family or working hours.

19. According to the Administration, it is necessary to set an income threshold for the low-income supplement, so as to make proper use of the limited public funds to help the most needy. The Administration does not rule out the possibility of considering the provision of appropriate assistance for those families whose income exceeds 50% of the median household income.

20. The majority of the members of the Subcommittee agree that the amount of supplement should be based on income level. They suggest that full supplement should be payable on the basis of a household income equivalent to 50% or less of the median household income, and progressively reduced with the increase of household income from 50% until it reaches 75% of the median household income.

21. In addition, they also agree that, in addition to the above-mentioned basic supplement, extra support should be given to the following family members -

- (a) school children under the age of 21;
- (b) people with disabilities;
- (c) people with chronic illness;

- (d) elderly people with special needs; and
- (e) school children with learning disorders.

Working hours requirement

22. The Administration points out that all proposals received by the Government require at least one working member within a household as a qualifying criterion for the new scheme. The working member should work a reasonable number of working hours, say at least 72 or 140 hours a month, though many proposals suggest a lower working hours requirement for single parents. There are also proposals suggesting that a higher level of supplement be provided for those who work longer hours to recognize the hard work of the low-income working households.

23. Regarding the ways to increase income from work, some deputations and members of the Subcommittee consider that the Statutory Minimum Wage ("SMW") rate should be reviewed once a year, so that wages can be increased with inflation, thereby relieving the financial burden on working poor people arising from inflation.

24. The Administration agrees that for the purpose of encouraging employment, there should be at least one working member within any household benefiting from the low-income supplement, and the requirement on working hours should also be set. As for SMW, the objective is to forestall excessively low wages so as to provide wage protection for low-income employees. SMW and poverty alleviation are two different concepts. SMW alone cannot solve the problem of poverty. Regarding review of the SMW rate, legislation provides that the Minimum Wage Commission ("MWC") should report on the SMW rate at least once in every two years. Therefore, in the event that there is evidence supporting the need for a review of the SMW rate, such as changes in the socio-economic situation, MWC can conduct a review in less than two years' time.

Asset test

25. Some deputations suggest that there should be no asset test for the low-income supplement, but some others consider it necessary. Among them, most suggest an asset limit identical to that for public rental housing ("PRH"). Some members of the Subcommittee consider that should there be any asset test, a cumbersome mechanism should be avoided. Given that PRH tenants and households currently waiting for PRH allocation have already met the asset test when applying for PRH, they should be exempted.

26. According to the Administration, to ensure proper use of limited public funds, it is necessary to conduct an asset test on applicants of the low-income supplement. The Administration will consider adopting lax and simple criteria and procedures to conduct an asset test.

27. The majority of the members of the Subcommittee stress that the Administration should simplify the application procedure for the low-income supplement and abolish an asset test.

Motion

28. In the light of the aforesaid discussion, the Subcommittee has passed the following motion in relation to the low-income supplement scheme -

"That this Subcommittee calls on the Administration to observe the following principles in introducing the low-income family supplement -

- (1) supplement at 100% should be payable on the basis of a household income equivalent to 50% of the median household income in the territory and progressively reduced with the increase of household income until it reaches 75% of the median household income;
- (2) in addition to the basic supplement, extra support should be given to individual family members in need of support, including school children under the age of 21, people with disabilities, people with chronic illness, elderly people with special needs and school children with learning disorders; and
- (3) the application procedure should be simplified and the asset test should be abolished."

29. The Subcommittee agrees that the report should be forwarded to the Administration for consideration and response.

Recommendations of the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation under the Panel on Welfare Services of the Fourth Legislative Council

The Subcommittee recommends that the Administration should -

- (a) conduct a comprehensive review of the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme expeditiously, including -
 - (i) the items which should be classified as basic needs for the purpose of inclusion in the CSSA standard rates; and
 - (ii) recognising access to the computer facilities and the Internet is basic needs of students in receipt of CSSA;with a view to ensuring that the different standard CSSA rates are adequate to meet the essential needs of different categories of recipients;
- (b) review the requirement for the elderly to apply for CSSA on a household basis;
- (c) start the review on the Computer Recycling Programme ("CRP") before the end of the two-year programme so that CRP will be provided for needy students without interruption;
- (d) expedite the review of the disregarded earnings ("DE") arrangements, and further relax the DE arrangements so as to encourage those who can work to find and remain in employment;
- (e) consider removing the seven-year and one-year-continuous residence requirement under the CSSA Scheme;
- (f) extend the Transport Support Scheme to low-income workers in all districts;
- (g) consider providing tax credit for the working-poor households;
- (h) formulate a long-term plan and provide policy support to foster the development of the social enterprises ("SEs") and advice on the operation of SEs;
- (i) stipulate in the government service contracts the requirement of employing a certain percentage of socially disadvantaged and local residents;

- (j) encourage SE operators to accord priority to employ local residents;
- (k) raise the amount of seed grants under the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme to facilitate the development of larger-sized SEs;
- (l) encourage the respective district officers to take a more proactive role in collaborating with the district councils concerned, district organisations and government departments to identify the needs of disadvantaged having regard to the unique situation and district profile, formulate targeted poverty alleviation initiatives as well as monitor the performance and effectiveness of the measures;
- (m) inject economic activities at the district level so as to create job opportunities for the low-income and low-skilled workers in the district concerned;
- (n) set performance targets for reducing poverty and evaluate the effectiveness of the poverty alleviation measures in achieving the targets; and
- (o) re-establish the Commission on Poverty to actively study and formulate long-term policies to alleviate the poverty problem.

Source: Extract from the Report of the Subcommittee on Poverty Alleviation of the Panel on Welfare Services (LC Paper No. CB(2)1760/09-10)

Subcommittee on Poverty

Membership list

Chairman	Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, SBS, JP
Deputy Chairman	Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Members	Hon Albert HO Chun-yan Hon LEE Cheuk-yan Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung (since 11 December 2012) Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP Hon Ronny TONG Ka-wah, SC Hon CHAN Kin-por, BBS, JP Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-ye, GBS, JP (up to 23 January 2013) Hon Alan LEONG Kah-kit, SC Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung Hon WONG Yuk-man Hon Frankie YICK Chi-ming Hon Charles Peter MOK (since 11 December 2012) Hon CHAN Chi-chuen (since 11 December 2012) Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki Hon KWOK Wai-keung Hon TANG Ka-piu (Total : 22 Members)
Clerk	Mr Colin CHUI
Legal adviser	Mr YICK Wing-kin
Date	2 July 2013

FACT SHEET

Poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan and Japan

1. Introduction

1.1 The Subcommittee on Poverty conducted a duty visit to Taiwan and Japan in August 2013 with the objectives to: (a) study the experience of these two places in alleviating poverty; (b) obtain first-hand information on their policies and initiatives put in place to alleviate poverty; and (c) exchange views with the relevant parties involved in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of poverty alleviation strategies. This fact sheet provides a summary of the findings on poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan and Japan obtained from the duty visit. **Tables 1 and 2** below respectively set out socio-economic profiles and tax rate structure of Taiwan and Japan, while **Table 3** summarizes the findings from the duty visit. Relevant information on Hong Kong is also provided in **Tables 1–3** for comparison.

Table 1 — Socio-economic profiles of Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
Total population	• 23.4 million (September 2013).	• 127.3 million (October 2013).	• 7.18 million (mid-2013).
Population aged 65 and above	• 2.7 million or 11.4% of the total population as at September 2013.	• 31.9 million or 25.1% of the total population as at October 2013.	• 1.0 million or 14.3% of the total population as at mid-2013.
Elderly dependency ratio ¹	• 154 (September 2013).	• 404 (October 2013).	• 191 (mid-2013).
Employed population	• 11.0 million (September 2013).	• 63.6 million (September 2013).	• 3.75 million (Q3 2013).
Unemployment rate	• 4.2% (September 2013).	• 4.0% (September 2013).	• 3.3% (Q3 2013).
Gross domestic product ("GDP") per capita in 2012	• NT\$603,593 (HK\$161,763).	• ¥3.7 million (HK\$362,613).	• HK\$285,403.
Real GDP growth in 2012	• 1.3%.	• 2.0%.	• 1.5%.

¹ Elderly dependency ratio refers to the number of persons aged 65 and above per 1 000 persons aged between 15 and 64.

Table 2 — Tax rate structure of Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
Individual income tax rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The progressive income tax rates are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> NT\$520,000 (HK\$140,000) or below: 5%; NT\$520,001–NT\$1,170,000 (HK\$140,000–HK\$315,000): 12%; NT\$1,170,001–NT\$2,350,000 (HK\$315,000–HK\$632,000): 20%; NT\$2,350,001–NT\$4,400,000 (HK\$632,000–HK\$1,184,000): 30%; and NT\$4,400,001 (HK\$1,184,000) or above: 40%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The progressive income tax rates are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ¥1,950,000 (HK\$155,000) or below: 5%; ¥1,950,001–¥3,300,000 (HK\$155,000–HK\$262,000): 10%; ¥3,300,001–¥6,950,000 (HK\$262,000–HK\$551,000): 20%; ¥6,950,001–¥9,000,000 (HK\$551,000–HK\$714,000): 23%; ¥9,000,001–¥18,000,000 (HK\$714,000–HK\$1,427,000): 33%; and ¥18,000,001 (HK\$1,427,000) or above: 40%. A special income tax at a rate of 2.1% of the amount of national income tax is levied from 2013 to 2037 for reconstruction with respect to the Great East Japan Earthquake. The prefectural and municipal taxes on individual income comprise a flat-rate component (i.e. ¥4,000 (HK\$317)) and an income-related component (i.e. 10% of income). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lower of (a) standard tax rate on net income (without deducting allowances) or (b) progressive tax rates on net chargeable income (less both deductions and allowances) where applicable. The standard rate is 15% while the progressive rates are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> HK\$40,000 or below: 2%; HK\$40,001–HK\$80,000: 7%; HK\$80,001–HK\$120,000: 12%; and HK\$120,001 or above: 17%.
Corporate income tax rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The corporate income tax rates are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> NT\$120,000 (HK\$32,000) or below: nil; and over NT\$120,000 (HK\$32,000): 17%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate income taxes comprise corporate tax (a national tax), special local corporate tax (a national tax), enterprise tax (a local tax), and prefectural and municipal inhabitant taxes (local taxes). The effective tax rate for corporations located in Tokyo with share capital more than ¥100 million (HK\$7.9 million) is 38.01%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The corporate income tax rates are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> corporations: 16.5%; and unincorporated businesses: 15%.

Table 3 — Poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
(a) Measurement of poverty			
Official poverty threshold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolute poverty: average monthly income per person in a family falling below the lowest living cost (defined as 60% of the median of disposable income² per capita in a region in the previous year). In 2013, the lowest living cost ranges from NT\$8,798 (HK\$2,367) to NT\$14,794 (HK\$3,980) per person per month among the regions in Taiwan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative poverty: 50% of the median household disposable income of the population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative poverty: 50% of the median monthly household income. For example, the poverty thresholds for a two-person household and a four-person household in 2012 were HK\$7,700 and HK\$14,300 respectively.
Objective(s) of setting the poverty threshold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining eligibility for assistance under the Public Assistance System. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gauging poverty status of the population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measuring and analysing the overall poverty situation; facilitating policy-making; and assessing the effectiveness of policy intervention.
Population below the poverty threshold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.5% of the total population as at June 2013³. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16% of the total population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-intervention: 19.6% of the total population in 2012 (of which 53.5% were from working poor households). Post-intervention (including recurrent cash benefits provided by the Government): 15.2% of the total population in 2012 (of which 52.8% were from working poor households).

² Disposable income is measured by adding all income from work, investment and property, and social security cash benefits, and deducting taxes and social security contributions.

³ These were individuals from low-income families whose average monthly income per person fell below the lowest living cost and their total family assets were below the levels specified by the local authorities.

Table 3 — Poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong (cont'd)

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
(b) Major poverty alleviation strategies			
Providing financial assistance and welfare services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the Public Assistance System, eligible low-income families are provided with financial assistance, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) basic living support – between NT\$5,900 (HK\$1,587) and NT\$14,794 (HK\$3,980) per person per month⁴; (b) living subsidy for children aged under 15 – between NT\$1,900 (HK\$511) and NT\$7,300 (HK\$1,964) per person per month; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the Public Assistance System, financial assistance is provided to low-income households with sick persons or persons with disabilities, single-mother households and elderly households in need⁵. The standard amount of assistance provided for a three-person family and a single-mother family with one child in Tokyo in 2013 are about ¥236,610 (HK\$18,763) and ¥216,660 (HK\$17,181) respectively⁶. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing financial assistance to eligible low-income households under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance ("CSSA") Scheme. The standard rates for eligible able-bodied adults aged below 60 range from HK\$1,485 to HK\$2,250. Supporting low-income families through assistance programmes under the Community Care Fund⁷.

⁴ The amount of assistance is calculated based on the number of work-capable family members, and income level and amount of assets of the recipient family.

⁵ Under the Public Assistance System, eight categories of assistance are provided to the low-income families, namely livelihood assistance, education assistance, housing assistance, medical assistance, long-term care assistance, maternity assistance, occupational assistance and funeral assistance.

⁶ The amount of assistance provided is the difference between the income of the recipient families (including income from employment, assets, social security cash benefits, and support of other family members or relatives) and the minimum cost of living determined by taking into account (a) the major categories of expenses; (b) number and age of members in the families; and (c) differences in living costs among families living in different regions.

⁷ Examples of assistance programmes include: (a) subsidy to meet lunch expenses at schools for students from low-income families; (b) one-off subsidy for CSSA recipients living in rented private housing paying rents which exceed the maximum rent allowance under the CSSA Scheme; (c) one-off subsidy for low-income non-CSSA recipients who are inadequately housed; and (d) after-school care pilot scheme.

Table 3 — Poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong (cont'd)

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
(b) Major poverty alleviation strategies (cont'd)			
Providing financial assistance and welfare services (cont'd)	<p>(c) student living assistance for children attending high school or above – NT\$5,900 (HK\$1,587) per person per month; and</p> <p>(d) medical subsidies and other special assistance such as nursing, education and rent subsidies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing low-interest or interest-free loans for supporting the living, training, home moving and renovation, long-term care, education and other emergency expenses of the low-income families under the Living Welfare Fund Loan System implemented at the prefectural level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing other assistance or welfare services to eligible low-income families such as medical fee waiver, public rental housing, child care service fee waiver, and financial assistance for primary and secondary students.

Table 3 — Poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong (cont'd)

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
(b) Major poverty alleviation strategies (cont'd)			
Promoting employment and self-reliance of low-income families and working poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Taipei City Government has implemented measures to boost the capabilities and enhance self-reliance of low-income families such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) low-cost housing (平價住宅) – providing free or low-cost housing and intensive social support services; (b) work relief and employment support programme – engaging work-capable unemployed persons in short-term jobs and assisting them to take up long-term employment; (c) child development fund account programme (兒童希望發展帳戶) – helping children in low-income families accumulate fund for future education; and (d) "holding hands" programme (大手牽小手方案) – recruiting youngsters from low-income families to provide after-school care services for children from other low-income families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has supported low-income workers and the unemployed by providing services such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) consultation to help resolve daily living issues; (b) outreach visits; (c) temporary accommodation and support on renting houses; (d) interest-free loans for housing and living expenses; (e) employment services; and (f) assistance to acquire nursing care qualifications for those interested in long-term care jobs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting able-bodied CSSA recipients to enhance their employability and secure employment under the Support for Self-reliance Scheme. • Providing transport subsidy for low-income individuals to relieve their burden of transport costs and encourage them to secure a job and stay in employment under the Work Incentive Transport Subsidy Scheme.

Table 3 — Poverty alleviation strategies for low-income families and working poor in Taiwan, Japan and Hong Kong (cont'd)

	Taiwan	Japan	Hong Kong
(b) Major poverty alleviation strategies (cont'd)			
Promoting employment and self-reliance of low-income families and working poor (cont'd)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bureau of Employment and Vocational Training of the Council of Labour Affairs has introduced the following measures to promote employment opportunities among the unemployed and low-income individuals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) vocational training – subsidizing low-income individuals to participate in training subject to a maximum amount of NT\$70,000 (HK\$18,830) in three years; (b) job creation programmes (多元就業開發方案) – subsidizing social and economic development plans implemented by government departments, regional governments and not-for-profit organizations to create new jobs for the disadvantaged; (c) business start-up loan (微型創業鳳凰貸款) – offering free seminars and consultations, and low-interest loan for starting up small businesses, with the maximum loan amount capped at NT\$1 million (HK\$269,000); (d) skills certification (技術士技能檢定) – subsidizing job seekers to participate in skills tests and obtain certification for a maximum of three times; and (e) case management and personalized employment services (個案管理個別化專業服務) – assisting job seekers to improve their capabilities and attain employment. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing employability of the unemployed and low-income individuals by offering training and retraining courses through the Employees Retraining Board. • Providing employment services for the unemployed and low-income individuals through the Labour Department.

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Research Office
Information Services Division
20 November 2013
Tel: 3919 3114

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Subcommittee on Poverty

List of deputations/individuals which/who have given written and/or oral views to the Subcommittee

1. Alliance for Universal Pension
2. Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (New Territories)
3. Civic Party
4. Cleaning Workers' Union
5. Community Development Alliance
6. Concerning CSSA & Low-income Alliance
7. Hong Kong Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood
8. Hong Kong Federation of Women Centre
9. Industrial Relations Institute
10. Kwai Chung Estate Striving For the Transportation Subsidy Concern Group
11. Labour Party
12. Liberal Party
13. Miss Evangeline LAU Chung-ki
14. Miss KWAN Cho-yi
15. Miss KWOK Hong-lee
16. Miss LAM Yan-pui
17. Miss Mabel LAU
18. Miss TSOI Chung-wai
19. Mr Anthony YIU
20. Mr LAU Ka-cheong
21. Mr LIU Man-king
22. Mr WONG Yat-tak
23. Mr WONG Yun-tat, Member of Kwai Ching District Council
24. Mr WU Ho-chi
25. Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre
26. New People's Party
27. New Territories Evangelical Ambassador
28. North District Employment Concert Group
29. Oxfam Hong Kong
30. People Power
31. Smart and Beauty House
32. Social Affairs Committee of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
33. The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions
34. Tin Shui Wai Community Development Network
35. Tung Chung Community Development Alliance
36. Tung Chung Parent Right Group
37. Women Workers' Cooperative

38. 天水圍社區發展陣線
39. 天水圍爭取尊嚴生活權益會
40. 天水圍爭取低收入家庭權益會
41. 爭取低收入保障聯席
42. 爭取低收入家庭保障聯席
43. 關注低收入小組
44. 關注幾時上公屋小組
45. 葵涌劏房住客聯盟
46. 葵涌劏房低收入關注組
47. 葵涌新來港低收入家庭關注組
48. 富昌邨居民服務中心
49. 中港低收入家庭互助網絡

Written submissions only

1. Academic for Universal Pension
2. Kwun Tong Methodist Social Service, Agape Community Care Centre
3. The Hong Kong Council of Social Service
4. 東涌基層家長權益組