

**Subject : Neighbourhood Level Community Development Projects (NLCDPs)
Policy and NLCDP Team in Tai O (discussed on 12 July 1999)**

Follow-up Action Required	Response from the Administration
<p>Administration was requested to exercise flexibility in using the population criteria for nominating priority areas for NLCDPs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The set of criteria (including population criterion) for nomination of priority areas for NLCDPs has been agreed by parties concerned and has been in use for a long period of time. As the funding for NLCDP service involves public money, the Audit Commission, in order to ensure that public funds are spent in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with established policy, conducted a review in October 1997 to examine the management of the service and to ascertain whether there was scope for improvement. On the basis of the findings of the review, the Audit Commission had made a number of recommendations, including the recommendation for the Administration to take appropriate measures to maximize the use of NLCDP resources, especially in cases where the service population had fallen below 3,000. The Government is currently discussing with parties concerned, including the operating agencies, on how the recommendations of the Audit Commission's should be followed up.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since there is a wide margin between the upper population threshold and the lower population threshold in the population criterion for nomination of priority areas for NLCDPs, the Government considers that sufficient flexibility has already been provided in the population criterion. (Position remained unchanged)
<p>Administration was requested to provide written response to the Report on "A Study on Needs and Services Utilization in Rural Area" provided by the Hong Kong Council of Social Service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both HAB and SWD have not been given a copy of the study report in question by the HKCSS prior to the LegCo Welfare Services Panel meeting on 12 July 1999. At the request of the Panel for the Administration to provide views on the report, a copy of the said report has been obtained since then. • The Administration's comments on the study report are as follows - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Given the sample size of the survey which is relatively small and restrictive, it is considered more appropriate to treat the survey findings as illustrative only. – The Administration has the following comments on the "Conclusion and Recommendations" of the Report -

– Community Development Services

(i) The Administration has been keeping in view the need to provide community development services to remote areas. For example, in 1998-99, the Administration has embarked upon 478 rural environmental improvement projects involving a total of \$290 million. For 1999/2000 the Administration has planned to spend about \$610 million on some 570 projects to further improve the rural environment. The resources used in the provision of welfare and community services in 1999-2000 would amount to \$28.9 billion, representing a 70-fold increase as compared with 1976-77 when NLCDP services were introduced.

Provision of Welfare Services in Rural Areas

(ii) Residents in rural areas are entitled to all major welfare service provision according to planning standards. These include family services centers, social security field units, children & youth centres, outreaching social work teams, multi-centres for the elderly, home help teams and family life education units.

	<p>(iii) To achieve the goal of bringing services to remote areas, SWD together with the subvented NGOs, will continue to place emphasis on adopting an active outreaching approach to provide residents in remote villages with various services such as group activities, visits and recreational activities;</p> <p>(iv) SWD also mobilises volunteers from all walks of life in reaching out to the residents. In particular, under the scheme of the social networking for the elderly, volunteers would pay regular visits to the elderly living alone in rural areas to understand their needs and to provide them with care and concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (v) SWD will keep on reviewing the relevant planning standards so as to improve the welfare provision to the residents in the community, including those living in rural areas. <p>(Position remained unchanged)</p>
<p>Administration was requested to consider not to suspend the NLCDP team in Tai O</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWD had met with representatives from the HKCSS and the operating agencies concerned since October 1999 to further discuss how Audit Commission's recommendations on effective management of NLCDP

	<p>should be pursued. Having carefully examined the relevant factors, including geographic location of the priority areas, availability of welfare services in vicinity, service needs of the residents, cost-effectiveness in continuation of service or otherwise, <i>the Administration agreed to adopt a flexible approach in handling the NLCDP team in Tai O and consider to allowing the team to provide service with the same staffing level.</i></p> <p><i>(amendments made in italic)</i></p>
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Subject : Review of the immigration policy to facilitate family reunion (discussed on 14 October 1999)

Follow-up Action Required	Response from the Administration
<p>Members considered that the immigration policy should allow women whose children were allowed to stay in Hong Kong to be given priority in obtaining one-way permits to facilitate family reunion in Hong Kong. They requested SHW to pursue such a policy in collaboration with the Security Bureau. SHW agreed to consider the suggestion.</p>	<p>According to the recent statistical surveys conducted by Home Affairs Department, the majority of one-way permit holders arrived since mid 1999 are female between the age 20 to 49 (65% in 1999 Q3, 54% in 1999 Q4 and 61% in 2000 Q1) and almost all of them are coming for family reunion purpose. As such, we believe the issue of split families should be improved.</p>