

For discussion
13 July 2026

Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services
Impact Assessment of Targeted Poverty Alleviation Schemes

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the outcomes of the impact assessment of targeted poverty alleviation schemes.

Background

2. The Chief Executive announced in the 2022 Policy Address that the current-term Government would adopt the targeted poverty alleviation strategy. In light of the needs of the three target groups identified by the Commission on Poverty (CoP) for targeted poverty alleviation, namely households residing in subdivided units (SDUs¹), single-parent households² and all-elderly households, the Government has rolled out, through tripartite collaboration among the Government, the business sector and the community, four targeted poverty alleviation schemes, including the Strive and Rise Programme, the Pilot Programme on Community Living Room, the School-based After School Care Service Scheme, and the District Services and Community Care Teams - Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers.

3. The schemes have received support from all sectors of society since their launch. The Government also commissioned a university research team to examine whether the schemes have positively enhanced citizens' living standard and well-being. In addition, the research findings help the Government monitor and assess the effectiveness of its poverty alleviation efforts at the micro-level,

¹ In this document, "SDUs" refer to those, as defined by the Census and Statistics Department, formed by splitting a unit of quarters into two or more "internally connected" and "externally accessible" units commonly for rental purposes.

² Single-parent households refer to domestic households with at least one widowed, divorced, separated or never married member living with child(ren) aged below 18.

while providing systematic and credible references for determining the way forward for the respective schemes.

Methods for assessing the effectiveness of targeted poverty alleviation schemes

4. Assessment methods adopted by the research team include a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative research to compare changes in beneficiaries before and after their participation in the schemes, alongside analyses based on the key performance indicators (KPIs) established by the Government for the Strive and Rise Programme, the Pilot Programme on Community Living Room and the School-based After School Care Service Scheme. The KPIs for these three schemes are as follows:

- I. Strive and Rise Programme: no less than 70% of mentees who completed the Strive and Rise Programme to achieve improvement in terms of personal development and positive thinking.
- II. Pilot Programme on Community Living Room: no less than 70% of service users to experience an enhancement in their living space, sense of belonging to the community and interpersonal networks after using the Community Living Room.
- III. School-based After School Care Service Scheme: (1) no less than 70% of the beneficiary students to indicate that the School-based After School Care Service Scheme provides them with more appropriate care and learning support; and (2) no less than 70% of parent/guardian beneficiaries to indicate that the School-based After School Care Service Scheme helps reduce their child care pressure and allows them to consider seeking/taking up jobs.

Outcomes of Impact Assessment of Targeted Poverty Alleviation Schemes

(1) Strive and Rise Programme

5. The Strive and Rise Programme (S&RP), launched in 2022, is the first initiative adopted for targeted poverty alleviation. It is implemented through tripartite collaboration among the Government, the business sector and the community, with mentors recruited and donations made by enterprises and organisations, administrative expenses borne by the Government, and non-

governmental organisations (NGOs) engaged to operate the programme. Focusing on supporting secondary school students from underprivileged families, particularly those living in SDUs, the S&RP helps mentees broaden their horizons, reinforce self-confidence, develop a positive outlook on life, set goals for their future and strive for upward mobility, thereby lifting them out of intergenerational poverty. Four cohorts have been launched under the S&RP so far, benefitting over 14 000 mentees.

6. The research team asked mentees to complete self-assessment questionnaires before and after participating in the S&RP, and arranged mentors and parents to assess mentees' performance across eight impact indicators, namely goal-setting ability, financial-planning ability, interpersonal skills and social network building, self-confidence, self-esteem, resilience, sense of responsibility and empathy, and sense of belonging to the community.

7. The findings from all three cohorts indicate that mentees perceived improvements across all the indicators, with parents and mentors concurring that mentees made progress in every indicator. Specifically, mentees rated themselves as showing the most significant improvement in four indicators, namely financial planning ability, goal-setting ability, interpersonal skills and social network building, and sense of belonging to the community while parents considered that mentees improved most notably in financial planning ability, interpersonal skills and social network building, sense of belonging to the community, and resilience. Mentors observed marked progress in mentees across all eight indicators.

8. As shown by the assessments for each of the three cohorts of the S&RP, over 70% of mentees made positive changes in three or more indicators. Furthermore, as the programme progressed, the research team found that mentees in the third cohort demonstrated greater improvement across all eight indicators than those in the earlier cohorts, reflecting the positive impact of the enhancement measures (such as introducing mentorship groups and enriching the variety of group activities).

(2) Pilot Programme on Community Living Room

9. In 2023, the Government launched the Pilot Programme on Community Living Room (CLR) through tripartite collaboration among the Government, the business sector and the community, with the business sector providing venues and the Community Care Fund (CCF) allocating funding to commission NGOs to

operate the CLRs. The CLRs provide SDU households with additional living space and help them establish interpersonal networks, thereby enhancing their living standard and sense of belonging to the community. The CLRs are equipped with essential facilities such as shared living room, cooking and dining area, study room for students, and self-service washing machines and dryers. Most CLRs also offer additional facilities such as children's play/reading corner, sports facilities, bathroom, group activities space, health monitoring facilities, music/multi-media room, etc. Besides, homework guidance services are provided in the CLRs, and referrals to appropriate community services (e.g. Integrated Family Service Centres, Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres, and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres) will be made by social workers according to the needs of individual SDU households. Other supporting services include provision of information and talks on diet and nutrition, health and sports, home safety, hygiene, community resources, etc. Service operators will also approach the business sector and local organisations about providing in-kind donations (e.g. food and food coupons) and volunteer services. As at the end of June, 14 CLRs have officially commenced operation, with four more expected to be in place by the end of 2026. Together, they are expected to benefit about 10 000 SDU households with over 1.4 million attendances.

10. The research team collected the required data from active registered household members of the first six CLRs (i.e. Sham Shui Po, Hung Hom, Nam Cheong, To Kwa Wan, Shau Kei Wan and Ko Shan Road) through questionnaires and interviews. The findings showed that almost all interviewed members reported improvements in three indicators, i.e. living space, sense of belonging to the community and interpersonal networks. In terms of living space, members indicated that the CLR services were highly effective in alleviating the stress of cramped living environments and improving living comfort. As for sense of belonging, members reported positive changes in their sense of social connectedness and community belonging, reflecting that CLRs were gradually becoming the “second home” for residents. On the interpersonal front, members benefitted from much strengthened interpersonal networks and social support. Additionally, the CLRs have become a platform for fostering parent-child relationships, intergenerational harmony and cultural inclusion.

11. The research team also found that the more frequently members visited the CLRs, the higher they scored across various assessment objectives. Such a correlation was particularly pronounced in data related to extended living space, sense of belonging and interpersonal relationships (social support), reflecting the significant and direct positive impact of the programme on SDU households.

(3) School-based After School Care Service Scheme

12. The Government has been implementing the School-based After School Care Service Scheme (SBA) since the 2023/24 school year, with schools providing venues and the CCF offering funding to engage NGOs as service operators. The SBA Scheme enables primary students in need (particularly those from single-parent families) to stay at school in a safe and familiar environment outside school hours for care and learning support, thus allowing their parents to take up employment. In the 2023/24 school year, the SBA Scheme recruited 59 primary schools in seven districts³ with a larger population of target students, and provided nearly 3 000 service places. In light of positive feedback after its launch, the SBA Scheme was expanded in the 2024/25 school year to cover all 18 districts in Hong Kong, recruiting 126 primary schools and providing around 5 900 service places in total. In the 2025/26 school year, the Government uncapped the number of places to further expand support for primary students and parents in need. As of the present, a total of 207 primary schools have participated in the SBA Scheme, offering over 10 600 service places. The number of service places will remain uncapped in the 2026/27 school year. All government, aided and Direct Subsidy Scheme (DSS) primary schools across the territory are encouraged to participate in the SBA Scheme to support more families in need of care services.

13. The impact assessment of the SBA Scheme focused on two areas: (i) the impact of the SBA Scheme on students' learning support, whole-person development and parent-child interaction; and (ii) whether the SBA Scheme alleviated caregiving pressure on parents/guardians, and the effect of any such alleviation on their employment participation and family roles.

14. The quantitative findings of the assessment revealed a high degree of consistency across different stakeholders. They showed that the SBA Scheme had a notably positive effect on learning support, with 99% of parents reporting that the SBA Scheme had effectively reduced the time their children spent on homework at home. In terms of whole-person development, 91% of students indicated that participating in the SBA Scheme helped them make new friends and 88% noted that it helped them discover personal interests. This reflects the

³ Kowloon City, Yau Tsim Mong, Sham Shui Po, Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing, Tsuen Wan and Yuen Long Districts.

effectiveness of the SBA Scheme in providing learning support and fostering students' mental well-being.

15. The SBA Scheme has also achieved a notable impact in support of parental employment. A total of 97% of parents/guardians reported that the scheme had mitigated the impact of personal and family responsibilities on their work performance. According to the data, families saw an increase of approximately \$3,500 in their average monthly income after participating in the SBA Scheme. Among parents/guardians who were previously unemployed, 55% secured employment. The SBA Scheme has also been particularly effective in relieving parents' caregiving stress, with over 97% of parents reporting reduced conflicts with their children and improved parent-child relationships, alongside notable improvements in financial pressure, physical burden, emotional stress and time-management.

District Services and Community Care Teams - Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers

16. As all-elderly households are one of the target groups for targeted poverty alleviation, the Government has been harnessing the district governance network in recent years to strengthen the support for these households. The Social Welfare Department launched the District Services and Community Care Teams (Care Teams) - Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers on a pilot basis in Tsuen Wan and Southern District in March 2024, and extended it to all 18 districts of Hong Kong in April 2025. Care Teams in each district help identify through visits or contacts singleton and doubleton elderly households, carers of elderly persons and carers of persons with disabilities in need.

17. As at end-May 2026, Care Teams had visited or contacted over 118 000 households in need under the scheme, made over 13 700 welfare service referrals and assisted over 3 900 households in obtaining subsidies for the installation of the emergency alarm system (Safety Bell).

Way Forward

18. The Government and the CoP are pleased to note that the S&RP, the CLR and the SBA Scheme have delivered encouraging results, not only meeting the requirements of all their KPIs but also exceeding expectations on some indicators. In addition, Care Teams have provided support for many elderly people through visits or contacts. Such outcomes reflect the schemes' positive impact on

service beneficiaries' living standard and personal development, and further affirm the direction of the targeted poverty alleviation strategy and its effectiveness.

19. The Government plans to launch the Fifth Cohort of the S&RP in 2026. It will also make sustained efforts to encourage the business sector to actively engage in the CLR while identifying suitable sites for the benefit of more SDU households. The first four CLRs that came into operation (i.e. Sham Shui Po, Hung Hom, Nam Cheong and To Kwa Wan CLRs) will have completed their three-year implementation period between 2026 and 2027, and their respective sponsors have already indicated their willingness to extend the sponsorships. As for the SBA Scheme, the number of service places will remain uncapped in the 2026/27 school year. The Government will strive to encourage all government, aided, and DSS primary schools in Hong Kong to participate in the scheme with a view to supporting more families in need of care services. In parallel, to further enhance the support for the elderly, the Government has continued to implement the District Services and Community Care Teams – Scheme on Supporting Elderly and Carers from April 2026 for a period of three years.

Advice Sought

20. Members are invited to note the content of this paper and comment on the schemes implemented by the Government under the targeted poverty alleviation strategy.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Social Welfare Department
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