

Commission on Poverty (CoP)
Task Force on Children and Youth
Meeting held on 7 October 2005
Gist of Discussion

The CoP Task Force on Children and Youth held its third meeting on 7 October 2005.

Item (1) “From Welfare to Self-Reliance” – Proposed District Pilot “My STEP” (CoP/TFCY Paper 3/2005)

2. The Meeting followed up on the discussion of the district pilot – “My STEP”, a new tailor made programme which sought to strengthen the assistance to youths who had been on Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) for a long period and failed to be motivated by the existing employment programmes, such as Intensive Employment Assistance Projects (IEAPs).

3. Members were briefed on the details of My STEP and its interface with other existing employment programmes for non-engaged youths (NEYs), namely the pilots sponsored by the Youth Sustainable and Development Fund administrated by the Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth (TFCDETY), the Youth Pre-employment Training Programmes and the Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme under the Labour Department (LD) and the IEAPs under the Social Welfare Department (SWD). The Meeting confirmed that there should be no duplication between My STEP and the existing programmes in terms of clientele and focus.

4. After discussion, the Meeting agreed that as a first step, 50 CSSA youths would be selected by the SWD from Tin Shui Wai, one of the pilot districts, to take part in the pilot project. An NGO experienced in handling youth motivation/unemployment programme would be selected to follow up on the subsequent job placement of the participants. The Meeting also considered it useful to study the causes for the long-term unemployment of the CSSA youths who had undergone the IEAPs.

5. In addition, Members agreed to continue to explore how to improve measures in tackling the hardcore cases of unemployed youths who failed to be motivated after joining different youth programmes. They supported the idea to explore the establishment of a database keeping track

of the youths that had participated in various employment-related programmes and the impact on them so that more targeted intervention could be effected. This would also better ensure more effective use of resources.

Item (2) Tackling Intergenerational Poverty – Concept Paper (CoP/TFCY Paper 4/2005)

6. Members were briefed on the correlation of the social economic status (SES) of students in Hong Kong and their academic performance by EMB. They noted such correlation in Hong Kong was not strong compared with other OECD countries. Hong Kong students generally performed well regardless of their SES.

7. Members also discussed the policy framework, the approaches and the strategies in tackling intergenerational poverty. The Meeting agreed that material well-being was but one of the many variables affecting the development of the younger generation, and parenting quality, availability of role models and value education had a crucial impact on children and youth in developing a positive attitude and a sense of self-responsibility and self-worth. Hence, an intervention strategy should tackle both environmental and personal variables. The Meeting agreed to further consider policies and measures which supported development in this direction.

8. Members also took note of the Government's strong commitment to ensuring a balanced and healthy development of the next generation, and reducing the risk of intergenerational poverty through providing additional support to those children and youth from disadvantaged background.

Item (3) Projects in Building Social Capital for Children and Youth (CoP/TFCY Paper 5/2005)

9. The Meeting was updated on the progress of the projects, which aimed to build social capital and inculcate a positive attitude among the younger generation, namely the "Mentorship Fun" Project and the "Adopt-A-School" Project. Members were also informed of the progress made in opening school premises for community use, and that a secondary school in Tin Shui Wai had agreed to open its covered playground for students in the district after school hours. The scheme would start from end- October this year.

Commission Secretariat
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