

Commission on Poverty (CoP)
Meeting held on 13 June 2006
Gist of Discussion

The Commission on Poverty held its ninth meeting on 13 June 2006.

Item (1) Work Incentives for Working Poor – Disregarded Earnings (CoP Paper 10/2006)

2. Members were briefed by the Social Welfare Department on the existing arrangements of DE and how it encouraged CSSA recipients to seek and maintain employment. Members then expressed views on the DE arrangements, including on its objective and value, detailed operation and the broader policy direction and interface with other support to the unemployed and working poor. Members also noted the issues involved were complicated, and the Administration needed to strike a balance to provide work incentives vis-à-vis subsidising/depressing wages. Members welcomed the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB)'s initiative to conduct a more detailed examination of the existing DE arrangements in consultation with Social Welfare Advisory Committee (SWAC). HWFB/SWAC would report progress to the CoP by the end of 2006 to facilitate the CoP's consideration of the broad policy direction and interface issues.

Item (2) Elderly in Poverty (CoP Paper 11/2006)

3. The Meeting noted that the CoP had started discussion with the Elderly Commission (EC) on the issues of elderly poverty and the possible areas of collaboration between the two commissions. Members generally agreed that the CoP should focus on areas which would address the needs of elderly in poverty, rather than needs of the elderly generally. The Meeting also agreed to set up an ad hoc group on elderly poverty under the chairmanship of Mr TIK Chi-yuen to facilitate the liaison work with the EC, and to come up with recommendations on measures to assist elderly in poverty and report progress by end 2006.

Item (3) Promoting Social Entrepreneurship Training (CoP Paper 12/2006)

4. Members were updated on various initiatives to further encourage the development of SE in particular on the next steps in promoting social entrepreneurship training in Hong Kong. An ad hoc group on SE training under the CoP would also be formed and led by Professor Stephen CHEUNG and Professor K C CHAN to facilitate follow-up work on SE training.

Item (4) Progress Updates on the work of the Task Force on District-based Approach and the Task Force on Children and Youth (CoP Paper 13/2006)

5. Members were updated on the preparation in launching the “Enhancing Self-reliance Through District Partnership Programme” by the Home Affairs Department, including the background and objectives of the Programme, collaboration with District Councils (DC), funding criteria, as well as the publicity arrangements etc. Members noted that Professor Stephen CHEUNG was invited to be Chairman of the new Advisory Committee and hoped the Secretariat would explore collaboration with HAD and the new Advisory Committee in providing suitable assistance to SE start-ups through the Programme.

6. Members also took note that the Task Force on District-based Approach was conducting a Study on District-based Support for the Disadvantaged in the three pilot districts, namely Yuen Long, Kwun Tong and Sham Shui Po.

7. Lastly, Members were briefed on the discussion of the Task Force on Children and Youth on the proposed Child Development Fund and noted that the Task Force would organize a Child Development Forum in November to help gauge views on the model that might suit Hong Kong’s circumstances.