

## Commission on Poverty (CoP)

### Training and Employment Opportunities for Youth

#### Purpose

CoP Paper 12/2005 focuses on health, school education, welfare and related services for children and youth, with coverage on the Administration's efforts in addressing the needs of "Non-engaged Youth" (NEY)<sup>1</sup>. This paper focuses on issues relating to training and employment of youth aged 15 – 24, particularly NEY.

2. Members may also wish to share their observations following the visit to the Youth College of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) in Sham Shui Po on 5 May 2005 which provides a "home base" for the training programmes for NEY (please refer to CoP Paper 15/2005).

#### Youth Unemployment in Hong Kong

3. Youth unemployment rate has been relatively high compared to the overall unemployment rate. For the 15 – 19 age group, unemployment rate ranged from 23% to over 30% during the past five years (peaked at 37.6%<sup>2</sup> in June-August 2003). Unemployment rate of the 15 – 24 cohort doubled the overall unemployment rate. While the absolute number of unemployed youth aged 15 – 24 receiving CSSA is not substantial, there were noticeable increases in the past few years which were generally in line with the increasing trend in the total number of unemployed recipients (see *Annex A*).

4. The Hong Kong situation would however be better appreciated if placed in a global perspective. Youth unemployment is a worldwide phenomenon. According to studies of the International Labour Organization, youth unemployment rate could be three times that of the overall unemployment rate. This is the case in Australia, New Zealand, Italy and South Korea (see *Annex B*). For the first quarter of 2005, the ratio of

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<sup>1</sup> NEY generally refers to young people aged 15 to 24 who are unemployed and not pursuing further studies. According to the Census and Statistics Department, the number of NEY was estimated at 56 400 (including the 35 100 unemployed and 21 300 young people who were economically inactive for reasons other than "students", "home-makers" and "health problems") in January – February 2005.

<sup>2</sup> It may be noted that there were 434 300 persons aged 15-19 in the period. Among them, 357 900 (or 82.4%) were economically inactive who were mostly students, and 76 400 (or 17.6%) were economically active (i.e. 47 800 employed and 28 700 unemployed).

unemployment rate in Hong Kong for the 15-24 age group (9.1%) to the overall unemployment rate of 5.9% (all unemployment rate figures are not seasonally adjusted) is 1.54, which is quite a low figure compared to those in developed countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom and United States of America.

5. Like most unemployment statistics, youth unemployment is also affected by economic outlook. With the recovery of the economy, employment for youths improved significantly in 2004. For the age group of 15 – 19, the unemployment rate dropped to 17.8% in January-March 2005. The number of unemployed persons for this age group dropped from its peak of 28 700 in June-August 2003 to 11 300. As for the 15 – 24 cohort, the unemployment rate also decreased markedly from 19.1% in June-August 2003 to 9.1% in January-March 2005. The number of unemployed persons for this age group fell substantially from 76 700 to 35 100.

6. Nevertheless, the improving trend is no cause for complacency as youth especially those with relatively low skill or education remain one of the most vulnerable groups during economic downturn. We should therefore capitalize on the respite to review the effectiveness of our intervention strategies and programmes for adolescents, and in particular NEY, to ensure that they are better equipped to face future challenges.

### **Understanding Youth Unemployment**

7. In the Report entitled “Continuing Development and Employment Opportunities for Youth”<sup>3</sup> submitted to the Chief Executive of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in March 2003, the Commission on Youth (COY) also analyzed the problem of youth unemployment from the education and family perspectives, and assessed the needs of NEY in terms of personal development, skills training, career development and employment opportunities.

8. The provision of universal basic and compulsory education does not change the fact that not all students have the aptitude for traditional academic pursuit. These school leavers in the past provided our industries with low-skilled manufacturing and clerical workers. With globalization and information technology, many such jobs have disappeared either through mechanization or emigration alongside outward investment to places with lower cost of production. These secondary school leavers however do not possess the skills, mindset and adaptability that are readily marketable in a fast-evolving knowledge-based economy.

9. There is thus a high correlation between unemployed youths and those who are either not given the access to, or choose not to continue with, further

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<sup>3</sup>The Report is available at [http://www.info.gov.hk/coy/eng/report/Continuing\\_Dev.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/coy/eng/report/Continuing_Dev.htm).

academic pursuit. The size of youth employment and its nature (how intractable society-wide and how protracted the predicament may be for particular youths) depend largely on two factors and the interplay between them – the affective domains of the adolescents (e.g. their sense of self-worth, purpose, self-efficacy and belonging to a pro-social group) and whether the options open to the adolescents represent personally relevant and meaningful engagement which can provide positive reinforcement to their affective development. In other words, the intervention strategies and programmes should function as both a short term means to provide meaningful/gainful use of time, as well as a long term instrument to facilitate the younger generation to be more adaptable and resilient to future adversities.

### **Existing Policies and Initiatives**

10. The Administration has been proactive in catering for the training and employment needs of youth, including NEY. Policies and initiatives concerning youth training and employment involve a number of policy bureaux, including the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB), Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) and Economic Development and Labour Bureau (EDLB)/Labour Department (LD). There is also close collaboration between Health, Welfare and Food Bureau (HWFB), Social Welfare Department (SWD) and NGOs in counseling and employment assistance. Their efforts are set out in *Annexes C – F* respectively.

11. In sum, the main strategies by the Administration in tackling youth unemployment are as follows -

- (a) provision of quality education to the young generation in schools, with a diversity of options in curriculum, including the recent introduction of vocational element through the pilot Career Oriented Curriculum (COC);
- (b) provision of alternative routes to school leavers and mature students. Such include vocational training of the VTC, and a wide range of programmes organized by the Government (Project Yi Jin), uniformed groups and other youth organisations. An increasing number of such programmes target at the specific needs of NEY;
- (c) provision of information about relevant training and employment opportunities;
- (d) encouraging integration with the labour market through collaboration with the private sector and NGOs and creation of on-job training and practice opportunities, or facilitating youth to be self-employed;
- (e) provision of career counseling/employment assistance e.g. improving job-seeking skills, changing mindset etc. (including for those who have fallen in the social safety net or near CSSA cases); and

- (f) stimulating employment development and opportunities, e.g. tourism and creative industries, or opportunities in the Mainland and overseas.

## Way Forward

12. Catering to the needs of our youth in particular NEY and those from disadvantaged background effectively go a long way to prevent them from falling into poverty and to enable them to contribute meaningfully to the society. In this regard, Members are invited to comment on the efforts and strategies of the Administration in tackling youth unemployment, and share their observations following the visit to the Youth College of the VTC in Sham Shui Po on 5 May 2005.

13. Subject to Members views, it is proposed that the Task Force on Children under the Commission be tasked to, among other things -

- (a) consider policies and measures to address various needs of NEY and students from disadvantaged background with a view to reducing intergenerational poverty;
- (b) consider room for improving the interface and coordination of services to children and youth, in particular NEY and those from disadvantaged background;
- (c) promote social capital in support of the healthy and balanced development of our younger generation, including ways to facilitate further partnership between Government, business sector, NGOs;
- (d) consider if the dissemination of information on training opportunities and assistance for youth can be enhanced (e.g. in communities with higher demand);
- (e) keep in view the relevant work of the Commission on Youth, the Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth, and other advisory and non-governmental bodies with a view to enhancing coordination of closely related areas of work.

14. Noting the nature of youth employment (paragraphs 7 – 9 above), the Task Force may wish to start discussion of the above against the following three considerations -

- (a) to what extent have the affective aspects of youths been enhanced so that they find themselves worthy human beings and members of the society that are in a position to contribute someday?

- (b) to what extent are the education/training/employment assistance/other programmes personally relevant to the adolescent and represent meaningful use of their time?
- (c) to what extent have we, through the various programmes, help the adolescents to reposition themselves so that they become more resilient and resourceful beings?

Commission Secretariat

May 2005

**Table 1 : Unemployment rate (U rate) by age, 2000 - 2004**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Age group	U rate (%)	U rate (%)	U rate (%)	U rate (%)	U rate (%)
15 - 24	10.7	11.3	15.0	15.0	12.2
15 - 19	23.7	23.4	30.7	30.2	26.2
20 - 24	7.8	8.7	11.3	11.6	9.2
25 and above	4.1	4.3	6.3	7	6.2
Overall	4.9	5.1	7.3	7.9	6.8

Source: General Household Survey

**Table 2 : No. of CSSA Unemployed Recipients by Age, 2000 - 2004**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Age group					
15 - 24	1 521	2 626	4 215	4 540	3 750
15 - 19	965	1 632	2 294	2 317	1 999
20 - 24	556	994	1 921	2 223	1 751
25 and above	17 196	22 080	35 098	42 777	39 262
Overall	18 717	24 706	39 313	47 317	43 012

Source: Social Welfare Department

### Comparison of Youth and Overall Unemployment Rates

No.	Country/Region	Unemployment Rate (%)					
		Overall	Youth (15 - 24)	Ratio of youth unemployment rate to overall unemployment rate	Overall	Youth (15 - 24)	Ratio of youth unemployment rate to overall unemployment rate
			2001 *			Jan 2005 **@	
1	Australia	6.70	12.70	1.90	5.50 <sup>(5)</sup>	20.00 <sup>(5)</sup>	3.64
2	New Zealand	5.30	11.80	2.23	4.30 <sup>(1)</sup>	14.30 <sup>(1)</sup>	3.11
3	Germany	7.90	8.40	1.06	9.80 <sup>(5)</sup>	11.20 <sup>(5)#</sup>	1.14
4	France	8.60	18.70	2.17	9.50 <sup>(5)</sup>	21.60 <sup>(5)#</sup>	2.27
5	Italy	9.50	27.00	2.84	8.50 <sup>(2)</sup>	27.10 <sup>(2)#</sup>	3.19
6	United Kingdom	5.00	10.50	2.10	4.80 <sup>(3)</sup>	12.00 <sup>(3)</sup>	2.50
7	United States	4.80	10.60	2.21	5.60 <sup>(5)</sup>	12.00 <sup>(5)</sup>	2.14
8	Japan	5.00	9.70	1.94	4.60 <sup>(5)</sup>	9.20 <sup>(5)</sup>	2.00
9	Korea	3.90	9.70	2.49	3.20 <sup>(5)</sup>	10.30 <sup>(5)</sup>	3.22
10	Singapore	3.80	6.20	1.63	4.50 <sup>(1)</sup>		
11	Hong Kong	5.10	11.30	2.22	5.9 <sup>(4)</sup>	9.1 <sup>(4)</sup>	1.54
12	All OECD countries	6.50	12.40	1.91	6.90 <sup>(3)</sup>	14.80 <sup>(3)</sup>	2.03
13	European Union	7.60	13.90	1.83	8.10 <sup>(5)</sup>	16.00 <sup>(5)#</sup>	1.98

#### Remarks

@ Compiled with latest available data

<sup>(1)</sup> Data as at Q1 2004. Updated information is not available on the unemployment rate for the cohort aged 15-24 in Singapore after 2001.

<sup>(2)</sup> The most up-to-date figures available. Data as at January 2004. Instead of starting from age 15 in calculating both overall and youth unemployment rates, they start from age 16.

<sup>(3)</sup> Data as at May 2004. The latest comparable overall and youth unemployment rates available from OECD are released as of June 2003. OECD defines youth unemployment as unemployment of people aged under 25.

<sup>(4)</sup> Refer to the figures for Jan - Mar 2005.

<sup>(5)</sup> Data as at June 2004.

# These countries define youth unemployment as unemployment of young people under 25.

**\* Sources**

No. 1-9, 12-13 OECD Employment Outlook 2002

No. 10-11 Key Indicators of the Labour Market (3rd edition), ILO

**\*\* Sources**

No. 1-2 Extracted from draft overseas training report on youth training

No. 3, 4, 5, 13 Eurostat News Release (3 August 2004)

No. 6 Office for National Statistics (Labour Force Survey: Unemployment Rates by Age): United Kingdom

No. 7 US Department of Labor (Bureau of Labor Statistics): USA

No. 8 Statistics Bureau, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications: Japan

No. 9 National Statistics Office: Korea

No. 10 Ministry of Manpower: Singapore

No. 11 Census and Statistics Department: Hong Kong

No. 12 Main Economic Indicators, July 2004, OECD



## **Policies and Initiatives of EMB in Tackling Youth Unemployment**

A long-term solution to address the problem of poverty is to enhance the employability and competitiveness of the young generation through provision of quality education and training to them.

### Career-oriented curriculum for senior secondary education

2. It is Government's policy intent that senior secondary education should provide students with a balanced and comprehensive learning experience in the academic, vocational, organizational, social service as well as the arts and sports domains to better prepare them for employment, for learning and for life. The senior secondary curriculum should provide students with a diversity of options so that they can understand their abilities and aptitudes better to plan for their future studies and career development.

3. EMB's observation is that many students feel constrained by the existing academic subjects at the senior secondary level as their individual learning, personal development and needs cannot be fully met by the traditional learning approaches and their achievements outside these subjects are under-recognized. Taking into consideration students' multiple intelligences and talents, there should be a balance of theoretical and applied learning in the design of school curriculum to enable every student to develop their potential.

4. To this end, the Career Oriented Curriculum (COC) has been piloted since the 2003/04 school year for Secondary 4-5 students with the aim of offering choices and diversities in the senior secondary curriculum to cater for the particular needs, aptitudes and interests of students. With a strong orientation in applied learning, COC enables students to learn the practice of a specific vocation as a starting point from which they acquire related theoretical knowledge and concepts. Through the study of COC, students would develop their generic skills, values and attitude, acquire the knowledge and skills as well as understand the workplace requirement of a particular occupational area. They would also be able to obtain recognition for articulation to further studies, work or both.

5. EMB is in the process of establishing a funding model to subsidize needy students and facilitate schools in diversifying their curriculum through implementing COC. The general principle is that no students should be deprived of the opportunity to study COC solely due to financial difficulties.

6. In the future, it is planned that COC would be institutionalized in the new senior secondary curriculum. The qualification acquired through the quality assured COC courses would be of currency similar to that of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination or the proposed Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education for further studies or employment. In the long run, the

COC award would be subsumed under the Qualifications Framework now being developed.

### Project Yi Jin

7. To provide an alternative route and to expand the continuing education opportunities for those secondary school leavers who do not do well in conventional schooling, and mature students aged 21 or above who do not have the opportunity to complete their secondary education, Project Yi Jin (PYJ) was launched in October 2000. A student who has successfully completed 10 modules, including seven core subjects and three electives, will be awarded a full certificate which has been evaluated by the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation as comparable to five passes in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination for the purposes of continuing education and employment.

8. EMB has been allocated a total sum of \$435 million to provide reimbursement of tuition fee to the students, subsidies for student support activities and funding for publicity. Students who have satisfactorily completed each module will be reimbursed 30% of the tuition fee paid for that module. Needy students who are eligible for full-assistance under the means-test for the secondary school sector administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency will be reimbursed the tuition fee in full.

9. Over 20 000 students have benefited from PYJ since 2000. Of these, over 16 000 (80%) are aged below 21. As the PYJ is well received by the parents and students, a pilot school-based Yi Jin/Secondary School Collaboration Project was launched in the 2004/05 school year. A total of 10 secondary schools with 17 classes and 550 students participated in the pilot scheme. The pilot scheme will be extended to 22 secondary schools with a total of 33 classes in the 2005/06 school year.

### Vocational Training Council

10. Through the Vocational Training Council (VTC), Government offers a wide range of training programmes for young people. Members have been briefed on its service vide CoP Paper 15/2005. VTC has collaborated with NGOs and introduced specific programmes targeted at NEY. These are short taster courses at entry-level to arouse the NEY's interest and motivation to pursue education and training for employment or further studies. VTC will continue to keep in view the interest of youth, in particular the NEY, in developing suitable programmes for them. In this connection, it has established a Youth College at So Uk Estate in 2004 to provide a "home base" for the training programmes for NEY.

### The Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth

11. The Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth was established in March 2004 with a mandate to make suitable recommendations to the Government on the issues of NEY. A sum of \$50 million has been allocated for use by the Task Force to pilot various training programmes for suitable NEY. So far, the Task Force has approved 14 projects providing some 4 100 training places.

### Skills Upgrading Scheme/Continuing Education Fund

12. Young people may also benefit from other training initiatives offered by the Government. These include the Skills Upgrading Scheme (SUS) and the Continuing Education Fund (CEF). SUS aims to help low skill and low education employees to adapt to economic restructuring. It provides targeted skills upgrading training to elementary in-service workers. The Government subsidises 70% of the course fees and the remaining 30% is to be borne by the trainees and/or their employers. Since its inception, the Scheme has organised 5 700 classes benefiting over 118 000 in-service workers from 22 industries.

13. CEF aims to encourage people, through financial subsidies, to pursue continuing education so as to better prepare Hong Kong's workforce for the knowledge-based economy. Upon successful completion of a "reimbursable course" in specific sectors (e.g. logistics, financial services, business services, tourism, creative industries, language, design and interpersonal and intrapersonal skills for the workplace), an applicant is eligible for reimbursement of 80 per cent of the course fee up to a cumulative sum of \$10,000. As at end April 2005, there were over 4 100 reimbursable courses and over 170 400 applications have been approved.

Education and Manpower Bureau  
May 2005

## **Policies and Initiatives of HAB Concerning Youth**

### Commission on Youth

HAB has been working closely with the COY in organizing various youth development programmes or funding such programmes organized by non-governmental organizations in each year. These programmes serve to equip all young people (not particularly for disadvantaged youths or those with special needs) with different life skills and attributes which are conducive to preventing unemployment. To encourage youth social participation, HAB is planning to set up under the COY district-based youth forums comprising young people aged 15-24 who are living, studying or working in the relevant districts, on a pilot basis. The forums would also enable young people to learn through deliberations and expression of views on public policies, and enable the Government and other public organizations to tap the views of young people in a more structured manner.

### Uniformed Groups

2. HAB provides recurrent subvention to 11 uniformed groups (UGs) and youth organizations in support of their non-formal education and progressive training programmes/activities for young people aged between 8 and 25. Through squad training, foot drills and multi-skills training, the UGs seek to foster self-confidence, sense of civic responsibility, leadership skills, team spirit and community participation among young people. The total number of UG members in Hong Kong aged between 8 to 25 is around 129,000 as at end of 2004, which represents 10% of the population within that age group.

3. The training and education programme of UGs cater generally for all able-bodied young people regardless of their background. Non-engaged youths would normally be encouraged to integrate into regular units to avoid stigmatization effect. Some UGs have set up special units for young people in correctional institutions and special schools, with adjustments in the training programme to cater for their particular needs. Some of them provide concessionary arrangements for underprivileged youths, such as funding subsidies for uniforms and training courses.

4. With the support of the Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth under EMB, one UG has recently obtained extra one-off funding subsidy for running a special project specifically for helping non-engaged youth to integrate into the community through a series of tailor-made employment-related development and training programme, and job placement arrangements.

## **Policies and Initiatives of LD in Tackling Youth Unemployment**

LD operates the following special training and employment programmes for youths:

### Youth Pre-employment Training Programme (YPTP)

2. The YPTP was launched in September 1999 to enhance the employability of school leavers aged 15 to 19 through a wide range of employment-related training and workplace attachment opportunities which would help them build confidence, and upgrade their interpersonal, communication, computer and job specific skills. Career counseling and support service is also provided to trainees throughout the Programme. Pre-employment training provided free of charge under YPTP comprises the following four modules:

- (a) leadership, discipline and team building training;
- (b) job search and interpersonal skills training;
- (c) computer application; and
- (d) job-specific skills training

3. Over 200 types of job-specific skills training courses are offered. Amongst them are customer services and salesmanship training, clerical training, information technology training, hairdressing training, beauty culture and stylist training, catering industry training, and hospitality industry training. Besides, the majority of courses under computer application training and job-specific skills training have already established linkages to level-1 professional qualifications of the Qualifications Framework. This will facilitate trainees to build up their credentials and encourage them to pursue life-long learning. In the past five years, over 57 000 young persons have been trained under YPTP. Apart from those who have decided to pursue further study on completion of YPTP, about 70% of the trainees have secured employment.

### Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YWETS)

4. The YWETS, launched in July 2002, provides employment through on-the-job training for young people aged 15 to 24, with education attainment below degree level, to enable them to gain practical work experience. The YWETS is built on the principle of social partnership with the support of Non-government organizations (NGOs), employers' associations and trade unions. NGOs are commissioned to be training bodies under the Scheme to provide trainees with induction training and career counselling.

5. Under YWETS, trainees are placed in training vacancies and provided with on-the-job training under the guidance of mentors appointed by employers. Additional support such as counseling service is available from case managers,

who are registered social workers. Trainees are encouraged, during the period of employment and training, to attend suitable courses leading to vocational qualifications. They are also entitled to reimbursement of the related training course and examination fees from YWETS, subject to a maximum of \$4,000 per trainee.

6. Participating employers receive a monthly training subsidy of \$2,000 for each trainee engaged during the employment and training period for six to 12 months as well as full-package support services.

7. As at 29 April 2005, 20 642 trainees have been placed in training vacancies. In addition, another 11 911 trainees were able to find jobs in the open market with the assistance of their case managers.

8. To reach out and cater for the employment needs of youths living in remote areas, the YWETS staged a series of job fairs in March and April 2005 at Kwai Fong, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai with the support of NGOs and employers, offering some 6 000 job vacancies. To sustain the momentum, NGOs will organize more job fairs for youths living in remote areas in the coming months. YWETS will also participate in the job fairs and provide sponsorship where necessary.

9. The YPTP and the YWETS together have the capacity to take on all youths aged 15 to 24 who are interested to join. In the past, we have not turned away any eligible applicant.

10. To evaluate the effectiveness of these two youth programmes, the Labour Department has commissioned the Department of Applied Social Sciences of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to conduct independent reviews. The review results indicate that both programmes have been useful in enhancing the employability of youths.

#### Youth Self-employment Support Scheme

11. The Youth Self-employment Support Scheme was launched on a trial basis for one year in May 2004 to train and assist young people aged 18 to 24 with education attainment below degree level who are assessed to have motivation to become self-employed. A total of 36 projects providing 1 500 training places in areas with business prospects are implemented under the Scheme. The CityU Professional Services Limited, a company of City University of Hong Kong, has been commissioned by the Labour Department to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the Scheme and the result will be available by end of 2005.

Labour Department  
May 2005

**Policies and Initiatives of HWFB/SWD in Assisting Employable  
CSSA/'near-CSSA' Recipients**

Intensive Employment Assistance Projects

SWD has secured \$200 million from the Lotteries Fund and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust to commission NGOs to launch the Intensive Employment Assistance Projects (IEAPs) for employable CSSA recipients and 'near-CSSA' recipients to assist them to remove work barriers, enhanced their employability and get back to work. IEAPs are not specifically designed for non-engaged youths (NEYS) but, being open to people of working age who are currently unemployed, will be expected to include some from this group. Operating NGOs provide a series of tailor-made employment-related services including job matching, job skills training, employment counselling, job placement and post-placement support for the participants. Under these projects, 'Temporary Financial Aid' is also provided to needy participants to tide them over short-term financial hardship or to meet employment-related expenses, e.g. travelling expenses to job interviews. Starting in 2003, a total of 105 projects will be launched over three years in three batches of 40, 30 and 35.

2. According to SWD's statistics, a total of 2 127 NEY aged 15 – 24 have joined various IEAPs (of which 1 824 (86%) being CSSA and 303 (14%) being 'Near-CSSA' participants) since October 2003. As at the end of March 2005, 771 NEY have successfully secured full-time jobs through the IEAP programmes (582 of these NEY come from CSSA families and 189 from 'Near-CSSA' families). All these CSSA NEY have become more self-reliant as a result of paid employment. 99 of the CSSA NEY participants who secured full-time employment left the CSSA net altogether while 483 reduced the level of welfare dependence by change of their unemployment status to 'CSSA Low-earners'.

Enhanced Community Work Programme

3. The Support for Self-reliance (SFS) Scheme also includes the Community Work (CW) Programme as one of the measures to encourage and assist CSSA able-bodied unemployed, including NEY, to move towards paid employment and self-sufficiency. Under the Programme, participants will be arranged to perform different types of unpaid work of benefit to the community, e.g. re-painting public facilities, cleansing public housing estates, up to three days per week. Past experience shows that through participating in CW, unemployed CSSA recipients would regain self-esteem, pay more regard to their social responsibilities and strengthen their motivation to find employment.

4. To date the job nature of CW has been simple and elementary, but SWD has recently sought from the Lotteries Fund funding of \$5.18 million to commission an NGO to run an experimental two-year CW programme, the Community Work Experience and Training Programme for CSSA unemployed

recipients including NEY in Wong Tai Sin/Sai Kung District. This time-limited programme is an extended CW Programme characterised by a combination of CW performance and targeted job skills training, e.g. vocational skills in hotel housekeeping and sales, and was launched in April 2005.

5. Other similar Enhanced CW Programmes, including at least one programme tailor-made for NEY, may be implemented within 2005, subject to the endorsement of the Lotteries Fund Advisory Committee.

Health, Welfare and Food Bureau  
May 2005