

## **Commission on Poverty (CoP)**

**Meeting held on 11 April 2005**

### **Gist of Discussions**

The Commission on Poverty held its second meeting on 11 April 2005.

#### **Item (2) Follow-up to Tin Shui Wai District Visit (CoP Paper 9/2005)**

The meeting discussed various follow-up actions after the district visit to Tin Shui Wai (TSW) on 7 March 2005. The meeting agreed that the TSW visit was useful in enhancing understanding of poverty and in facilitating deliberation on measures to tackle it, including how a district-based approach might be taken forward. The meeting welcomed the efforts of the Yuen Long district poverty alleviation task force, while noting that different districts might have different models in enhancing district coordination and in tackling local issues. The meeting agreed that further visits to Kwun Tong (29 April) and Sham Shui Po (5 May) be conducted.

#### **Item (3) Indicators of Poverty (CoP Paper 10/2005)**

The meeting agreed that it was useful to adopt a multi-dimensional approach in defining poverty, and in developing indicators reflecting the poverty situation of four key social groups in an affluent society like Hong Kong. Members noted that the paper represented the first step in putting together a set of indicators, and appreciated that the compilation of relevant indicators was necessarily developmental and involved continuous refinement. The meeting agreed that the indicators could be used in the future to (a) track and monitor poverty situation in Hong Kong over time; (b) facilitate broad strategy planning. In monitoring the poverty situation in Hong Kong, the indicators could be supplemented, where appropriate, by more detailed analysis and other district-specific information and statistics. Meanwhile, work on poverty alleviation and prevention would commence in parallel with work on the compilation of the indicators.

**Item (4) Work Programme of CoP (CoP Paper 11/2005)**

The meeting discussed the framework behind the draft work programme of the Commission, and agreed to focus the Commission's work on four key areas, namely children/youth (preventing and tackling inter-generational poverty), working people (covering employment and welfare-to-work initiatives), the elderly (provision and delivery of various services) and the community (district-based approach and community engagement).

In terms of timetable, the Commission would first focus on children/youth and employment in the next six to nine months. The Commission would continue to conduct district visits and encourage community engagement. The experience in implementing the district-based approach in alleviating poverty would be reviewed later in the year.

Besides the short-term work programme above, Members also agreed that the Commission should not ignore longer-term review of the architecture of key services/support programmes, and an examination of the delivery of various services to see if greater streamlining, rationalisation and efficiency was possible. While agreeing to refrain from creating new implementation agencies, Members considered there was scope to review whether there was duplication of resources of different bureaux delivering similar services.

Members also expressed their appreciation of the keen interest of the private sector in supporting the cause of poverty alleviation. Members agreed to continue to explore ways to encourage private sector participation and to build sustainable partnerships with the private sector at district level.

**Item (5) Intergenerational Poverty (CoP Paper 12/2005)**

Though embedded in the discussion on the Commission's work programme, how to reduce the risk of intergenerational poverty was an issue to which Members accorded priority. Members agreed that a task force on children should be formed under the Commission given the multifaceted nature of the issue which called for inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral cooperation.