

**Intensive Employment Assistance Projects (IEAPs) run by
The Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association
Tin Shui Wai Integrated Social Service Centre (YWCA)**

YWCA has rich experience in collaborating with different government department to provide employment assistance programmes to help unemployed individuals to secure gainful employment, such as the Special Job Attachment Programme, Youth Pre-employment Training Programme, Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme.

2. In 2003, SWD has secured funding of \$200 million from the Lotteries Fund and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust to commission non-governmental organization (NGOs) to run IEAPs by three batches in four years from October 2003 to September 2007 to help the employable CSSA recipients and other disadvantaged groups to secure employment. YWCA has been commissioned to run the first and the second batches of IEAPs in Tin Shui Wai since October 2003 and October 2004 respectively.

YWCA's IEAPs - '生命的栽培'

3. YWCA's project, '生命的栽培' are to assist participants to secure employment as early as possible. The target participants are unemployed persons including ethnic minorities, new arrivals, single parent families and low income persons in Tin Shui Wai area.

Service Centre

4. YWCA's service centre is situated at 1-4/F & 4/F, Tin Shui Community Centre, Tin Shui Estate, Tin Shui Wai to facilitate participants living in Tin Shui Wai to participate the employment activities organised by them.

Provision of Services

5. A series of employment-related services are tailor-made for individual participants including job matching, employment training and support services, employment counselling and post-placement services.

6. For job matching services, YWCA emphasise participants' responsibilities and encourage them to find jobs by themselves in addition to job interviews arranged by them. Customised work plans and training programmes are designed to help individual participants enhance their employability and self-confidence. Post-placement service will also be provided to individual participants who could successfully secure employment to give them support.

Performance Attainment

The first implementation year from October 2003 to September 2004

7. YWCA had recruited 170 participants [including 150 (88%) CSSA and 20 (12%) 'near-CSSA participants]. Among them, 84 [including 68 CSSA participants (45% of total CSSA participants) and 16 'near-CSSA' participants (80% of total 'near-CSSA' participants)] had secured full-time employment. Of the 68 CSSA participants who could secure employment, 16 (11% of total CSSA participants) had left the CSSA net and 39 (26% of total CSSA participants) had change their status from unemployment to CSSA 'low-earnings' category.

Current status of the two projects (from October 2004 to January 2005)

Project one

8. YWCA had recruited 82 participants [including 68 (83%) CSSA and 14 (17%) 'near-CSSA participants]. Among them, 22 [including 17 CSSA participants (25% of total CSSA participants) and 5 'near-CSSA' participants (36% of total 'near-CSSA' participants)] had secured full-time employment. Of the 17 CSSA participants who could secure employment, 2 (3% of total CSSA participants) had left the CSSA net and 12 (18% of total CSSA participants) had change their status from unemployment to CSSA 'low-earnings' category.

Project two

9. YWCA had recruited 75 participants [including 60 (80%) CSSA and 15 (20%) 'near-CSSA participants]. Among them, 19 [including 17 CSSA participants (28% of total CSSA participants) and 2 'near-CSSA' participants (13% of total 'near-CSSA' participants)] had secured full-time employment. Of the 17 CSSA participants who could secure employment, 11 (18% of total CSSA participants) had change their status from unemployment to CSSA 'low-earnings' category.

Strategies to overcome difficulties and constitute the projects success

10. According to YWCA's observation, whether there are job vacancies and whether participants are motivated to work are key factors to help the unemployed back to the labour market. Nevertheless, YWCA's good strategies, capability to understand participants' characteristics, and strong employment network have contributed to the success of the projects:

- YWCA found that economic activities are less developed in Tin Shui Wai and most of job opportunities concentrate on the retailing or security services. Therefore, participants are encouraged to attend training courses such as 'Safety Guard' or skills on retailing service.
- The majority of private companies in Tin Shui Wai are in small scale and job openings are limited. Nevertheless, YWCA has established a strong employer network in the area to give participants most support.
- In general, participants are aged over 40. Owing to various reasons such as low job skills, age discrimination or unwilling to change, these participants have difficulties in securing employment, especially those male participants who used to work as 'san-hong' workers. YWCA consider it important to help them change their mindset.
- Some of the participants are less motivated and refuse to achieve self-sufficiency. YWCA will help them understand the importance of work and assist them to face the reality regarding job expectation and job market. They will help them understand the employment impact on their families.
- YWCA make good use of the Temporary Financial Aid to assist participants to meet employment-related expenses e.g. transport cost for attending job interviews or travelling to work, so as to increase their chances to secure employment.