

**Brief Notes of the Meeting of the  
Steering Committee on Child Development Fund  
held on 7 February 2013 (Thursday)  
in Room 1019, 10/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, Tamar**

**Attendance**

Miss Annie TAM	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare	(Chairperson)
Miss Jasmine CHAN		
Dr Timothy CHAN		
Dr Philemon CHOI		
Mr Frederick LAI		
Ms LAM Pik-chu		
Ms Evelyn LAM		
Dr LAW Chi-kwong		
Dr LEUNG Nai-kong		
Mr Ivan TING		
Ms Sandy WONG		
Mr Michael WONG		
Mr FUNG Man-lok	Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth and Corrections)	
Ms Jane LEE	Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty)	(Secretary)

**In Attendance**

Mr Donald CHEN	Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 2
Mr CT MAK	Chief Executive Officer (Special Duties)

## **Absent with Apologies**

Mr Francis MAK

Dr Grace POON

## **Enhancement Measures for Child Development Fund (CDF) Projects**

Members were briefed on the proposed enhancement measures for future batches of CDF projects and noted that the Consultancy Team (CT) had reaffirmed positive impact of the three key components (i.e. personal development plans (PDP), mentorship programme and targeted savings) on the CDF project participating children. Members agreed that all the three key components be preserved for future batches of CDF projects, and given the positive feedback of CDF, they generally considered that CDF projects should be continued to benefit more underprivileged children.

### *Training and Mentorship*

2. On training and mentorship, Members noted the CT's comments that mentor talent development was very important to the development of CDF projects, that promotion could help NGOs in recruiting mentors and that more training should be provided to parents and mentors. Members generally welcomed the proposal to:

- (a) providing an additional programme in the third year for mentors and parents respectively to help them guide and support the participating children to implement their PDPs. Having regard to such enhanced training requirements and the 17% inflation rate since 2008, the training provision would be increased from \$15,000 by one-third to \$20,000 per participating child; and
- (b) enhancing the publicity efforts in reaching out the target groups of mentors.

3. Members agreed that the increased provision could help strengthen mentorship training and quality of mentors. They also noted that it might be helpful if due recognition was given to the NGOs, mentors and other partners of CDF projects for their contribution.

### *Resource for Operating NGOs*

4. Members noted that operating a CDF project was rather labour-intensive. Apart from planning and administering the projects, recruiting mentors and matching donations, NGOs also had to maintain close liaison with the participating children,

their parents and mentors, guide and monitor the implementation of PDP and ensure timely contribution to targeted savings. As recommended by the CT, resource would also be required to providing training to the NGO staff and facilitate NGOs (especially those operating CDF projects for the first time) to acquire appropriate IT facilities / systems to help manage the projects. Having regard to these comments and the 17% inflation rate since 2008, Members generally welcomed the proposal to increase the administrative fee for NGOs from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per participating child.

### *Targeted Savings*

5. Members noted that about 95% of the participating children of the first and second batch projects could save \$200 per month and completed the two-year targeted savings. According to the findings of the CT, only 16.3% of first batch participating children covered by its survey had used up all the targeted savings. In the light of the above, Members noted that the monthly savings target of \$200, the current matching ratio of at least 1:1 and the Administration's special financial incentive of \$3,000 could remain unchanged.

6. Some Members commented that \$200 would be the maximum amount which a child from low-income family could save every month. They remarked that the objective of targeted savings was to help the child build up a savings habit, and it might not be necessary to increase the savings amount for the time being. After discussion, Members generally considered the monthly savings target of \$200 appropriate for the time being. Since both the training provision and administrative fee would be increased by one-third, some Members suggested the Administration's special financial incentive might also be adjusted upwards by the same extent. Members noted that the Administration would keep the issue under review.

### *Facilitate NGO's Planning*

7. Some Members were of the view that the lack of certainty of being able to run CDF projects for a longer period made it difficult for some NGOs to do long-term planning and commit resource in running CDF projects. To address this issue, Members were briefed on the proposed one-plus-one approach and multi-project approach. Members noted that under the one-plus-one approach, a selected NGO would be automatically awarded a second project if it wished to undertake such a second project subject to the NGO had delivered satisfactory performance in administering the first project. As such, NGOs would have the incentive to maintain their good performance and could have better long-term planning. Under the multi-project approach, the selected NGOs could have a five-year time span with secured resource to operate three projects, but their workload would be uneven over the five-year period. Members also noted that under the multi-project approach, NGOs would not need to go through a bidding exercise every year. In fact, under the existing approach of awarding one batch of project in each bidding exercise, NGOs were allowed to bid in consecutive years and some NGOs were already

operating more than one project in parallel.

8. Members generally favoured the one-plus-one approach. They considered that the continuity given by the one-plus-one approach would be helpful for NGOs to plan their resource in operating CDF projects. A Member was concerned that having a single NGO to operate three CDF projects at the same time under the multi-project approach might hamper the project quality. A few other Members were concerned that the multi-project approach might not be conducive to the small NGOs. They commented that the one-plus-one approach would be more flexible as the selected NGOs could “exit” and choose not to run the second project, if they so wish. Under the one-plus-one approach, the Administration might also have better control over the quality of CDF projects. It would however be important to set out clearly how the NGOs’ performance would be assessed under the one-plus-one approach. Some Members commented that by running three CDF projects at the same time, it might also be difficult for the NGOs to recruit mentors for all three projects. From the manpower and resource perspectives, it would also be a challenge for the NGOs to serve 300 cases at the same time. Another Member said that by operating multiple projects at the same time, NGOs might however be able to achieve economies of scale. Members generally agreed to adopt the one-plus-one approach. The Administration would listen to NGOs’ views on the two proposed approaches.

*[Post-meeting notes: The Chairperson and colleagues of the Labour and Welfare Bureau and Social Welfare Department met the NGOs participating in CDF projects and some other interested NGOs on 14 March 2013. The NGOs generally favoured the one-plus-one approach.]*

#### *School-based Approach*

9. Having regard to CT’s previous recommendation that the community’s capability in supporting CDF projects should be strengthened and further explored, and Members’ previous suggestion for experimenting a school-based approach in operating CDF projects, Members generally agreed that a working group be set up to consider the arrangements for piloting the school-based approach. Members agreed that the working group be chaired by Dr Philemon Choi. Other members of the working group would be Mr Frederick Lai, Ms Lam Pik-chu, Ms Evelyn Lam and Mr Michael Wong.

10. A Member considered that schools could leverage on its existing resource (e.g. venue) to operate CDF projects. Since schools could source mentors from their alumni and it would be easier for them to recruit participants from their students, he considered that the operating cost for schools to run CDF projects might be less than that of NGOs. He commented that teachers were already fully occupied and it might be necessary for the schools to engage a designated staff to operate CDF projects. Another Member said that nowadays, schools were already providing a lot of programmes for the students. Having schools to operate CDF projects might achieve synergy with other programmes (e.g. after-school care programme) but it might also

over-burden the schools. He also commented that the mentoring programme provided by schools usually focussed on students' academic development, rather than personal development as in CDF projects. Whether and how the schools should collaborate with NGOs should also be further considered. Another Member said that the age range of the participating children for school-based projects should be considered, since some primary children might have to move on to an unrelated secondary school in the middle of a three-year CDF project. While noting that the detailed arrangements for piloting the school-based approach would have to be worked out, some Members would like to target rolling out the pilots in the 2013-14 academic year.

11. The Chairperson summed up the discussion and concluded that -
- (a) the administrative fee for operating CDF projects would be increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per participating child;
  - (b) the minimum number of training sessions for both mentors and parents would be increased from four to five;
  - (c) the training fee would be increased from \$15,000 to \$20,000 per participating child;
  - (d) the existing monthly savings target of \$200 and matching ratio of at least 1:1 would be retained;
  - (e) the Administration would review the amount of its special financial incentive of \$3,000;
  - (f) the Administration would listen to the views of NGOs on the two different proposed approaches in rolling out CDF projects. Since this would take some time, the Administration would roll out the 4<sup>th</sup> batch of CDF projects in 2013 under the existing approach (together with other enhancement measures), and to adopt the new approach from the 5<sup>th</sup> batch in 2014 onwards;
  - (g) a working group would be set up to consider the arrangements for piloting the school-based approach.