

**Brief Notes of the Meeting of the  
Steering Committee on the Child Development Fund  
held on 2 December 2014 (Tuesday)  
in Room 1018, 10/F, West Wing, Central Government Offices, Tamar**

**Attendance**

Miss Annie TAM	Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare	(Chairperson)
Dr Philemon CHOI		
Mr Frederick LAI		
Ms LAM Pik-chu		
Ms Evelyn LAM		
Dr LAW Chi-kwong		
Dr LEUNG Nai-kong		
Mr Francis MAK		
Dr Grace POON		
Mr Michael WONG		
Mr Peter NG	Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth and Corrections)	
Ms Jane LEE	Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Poverty)	(Secretary)

**In Attendance**

Ms Doris CHEUNG	Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) <sup>1</sup>
Mr Joseph YU	Senior Executive Officer (Poverty)

**Absent with Apologies**

Miss Jasmine CHAN  
Mr Ivan TING  
Ms Sandy WONG

## **Progress and Preliminary Review of the School-based Pilots [SCCDF Paper 4/2014]**

Members were briefed on the progress of the school-based pilots. Having previously discussed with Members, seven pilot school-based projects were launched in the 2013-14 academic year to experiment the school-based approach in implementing CDF projects. The objectives were to widen the reach of CDF projects and improve the community's capacity in supporting CDF projects, particularly in the areas of participant recruitment and mentor recruitment. It was also envisaged that schools could leverage on available resource unique to the schools in the project operation so as to achieve synergy. A Working Group on School-based Approach was established on 7 February 2013 to draw up the detailed arrangements for the school-based approach. The projects had been examined, with particular regard to the mode of operation, participant recruitment, mentor recruitment, targeted savings, training programmes/activities and personal development plan (PDP), administrative arrangements and the schools' preliminary evaluation of the expected outcome of the pilots.

2. Members were briefed that based on the gathered information and observation, the school-based pilots had provided positive contribution to CDF in extending its reach and enhancing community support for the projects. The advantage in facilitating participant recruitment had generally been demonstrated. However, schools might need to be further encouraged to fully utilise their school-based network in mentor recruitment. In terms of synergy, while the schools had mostly been making use of its available resource in venue provision to facilitate the project operation, other synergy with, say, school-based counselling and lift planning programmes had yet to be established.

3. While the seven pilots were still at a very early stage, Members noted that there were several key issues regarding the school-based approach which would require more time for review -

- (a) the extent to which participants could sustain and complete the targeted savings programme;
- (b) schools' performance in guiding the mentors throughout the three-year project period and mentors' participation throughout the project period;
- (c) schools' performance in guiding the participants in drawing up their PDPs in the first two years and in implementing the PDPs in the third year; and
- (d) effectiveness of the bridging arrangements in case a participant were to leave the school before completing the three-year project period.

4. Members agreed to roll out more school-based pilots in the 2015-16 academic year to further experiment the school-based approach. To address the schools' request for being notified of the bidding results before summer vacation, the invitation exercise would start in February 2015, in order that the results could be announced before the 2015 summer vacation.

5. A Member said that pursuant to the 2014 Policy Address, the Home Affairs Bureau had launched the Funding Scheme for Youth Life Planning Activities to support NGOs, in collaboration with secondary schools, to organise projects which aimed at enhancing students' as well as their parents' and teachers' knowledge and awareness of life planning and multiple pathways. There could be further synergy achieved between this and CDF school-based projects in the years to come.

6. Members were informed that Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) and Social Welfare Department (SWD) had met with NGOs interested in operating future batches of CDF projects on 1 December 2014 to listen to their views on CDF. The NGOs, in addition to the schools operating the school-based pilots had been consulted on the appropriate age range of CDF projects. Generally, they considered the prevailing age range of 10 – 16 appropriate as children even younger might not be mature enough to draw up their PDPs. Noting that not many Primary 4 students would have reached 10 years old, Members, after discussion, agreed that for the upcoming school-based pilots, the entry requirement should be fine-tuned to include eligible children from Primary 4 to Secondary 4 (irrespective of age), so as to cater for the circumstances of the schools.

7. Members noted that certain flexibility had been given to the school-based pilots in that the minimum number of participants per project had been lowered from 100 to 50. Noting that a number of operating schools considered the minimum project size of 50 appropriate and that further lowering the minimum number would make it difficult to achieve economies of scale, Members agreed that the minimum project size should be kept at 50 for the new batch of school-based pilots.

8. Members noted that an NGO had raised concern as to whether it was fair to pitch the private sector matching donation to participant's own savings at a ratio of "at least 1:1". It would create difficulty to NGOs in participant recruitment if there were other NGOs in the same district offering more generous ratios than 1:1. Members agreed that a fixed ratio of 1:1 should be adopted and be implemented with effect from the coming batch of school-based pilots. The fixed ratio could also be applicable to future batches of NGO-run projects.

#### **Additional Funding of \$300 million - Enhancement Measures of Child Development Fund Projects [SCCDF Paper 5/2014]**

9. Noting that the 2014 Policy Address announced that an additional \$300 million had been earmarked for CDF, Members considered whether the enhancement

measures as set out in SCCDF paper 5/2014 should be pursued, including –

- (a) the training provision be increased by 10% from \$20,000 to \$22,000 per participant;
- (b) the administrative fee be increased by 10% from \$2,000 to \$2,200 per participant; and
- (c) the Government special financial incentive be increased from \$3,000 to \$4,000 or \$5,000 per participant.

10. Members agreed to increase both the training provision and administrative fee per participant by 10%.

11. As for the Government special financial incentive, Members noted that it was not a financial subsidy to the participant or his/her family. It was meant to serve the purpose of recognising the efforts of the participants in building up a savings habit. Members further noted that there would be trade-off between increasing the amount to a larger extent vis-à-vis benefiting more disadvantaged children out of the additional allocation of \$300 million and the pace for depleting the additional \$300 million would depend on the time interval between different batches of projects, among other factors. The preliminary assessment was that increasing the Government special financial incentive to either \$4,000 or \$5,000 would not make a big difference in terms of the timing of exhausting the additional allocation. After discussion, Members agreed to adjusting the incentive payment from a fixed amount of \$3,000 to a matching contribution of 1:1 – i.e. a maximum of \$4,800 (\$200 x 24 months) per participant. Coupled with fixing the private sector matching donation to a 1:1 ratio (see paragraph 8 above), the whole targeted savings would have 1:1:1 tripartite contribution from the participant himself/herself, private sector matching donation and Government's special financial incentive.

12. Members noted that under the existing arrangement, the unspent targeted savings would be disregarded in the asset test under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) Scheme for a period of 12 months after the three-year project period. Members noted that at the 1 December 2014 meeting with NGOs, there was a request for applying such disregard arrangement to the asset tests of the relevant student financial assistance schemes administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) and the waiting list of public rental housing (PRH). Members noted that SWD would follow up the extension suggestion and similar disregard arrangement could be made applicable to the forthcoming Low-income Working Family Allowance Scheme, and that LWB would follow up with the SFAA and Housing Department with regard to the suggestions on student financial assistance schemes and PRH.

13. Members were informed that LWB had, on an ad hoc basis, helped lined up some extra activities for CDF participants, such as company visits and a movie show,

etc. These extra activities were arranged in addition to the activities/programmes that the operators were required to provide. LWB would continue to line up more extra activities and do so in a more structured manner to add value to the CDF projects, without jeopardising the requirements on the CDF project operators. Members generally welcomed adding such extra activities for CDF participants.

14. Members noted that the CDF kick-off cum certificate presentation ceremony held in May 2014 had been well received by NGOs. LWB would organise a similar ceremony in around May 2015.

### **Any Other Business**

15. Members were briefed that an invitation of proposals was issued on 24 November 2014 for NGOs to bid for the fifth batch projects. The application deadline was 5 January 2015. The target was to award 20 projects by March 2015, benefiting 2 000 to 2 300 underprivileged children. Since this batch would be implemented under the new “one-plus-one” approach, the selected NGOs could commence 20 other projects in the third quarter of 2018, benefiting another 2 000 – 2 300 children, without going through another bidding exercise, subject to their satisfactory performance in taking forward the projects in 2015.

Labour and Welfare Bureau  
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