

**Progress on implementation of  
the recommendations of the former Commission on Poverty**

**(I) Understanding Poverty**

No.	Recommendation	Progress
1	Monitor and track the indicators of poverty, and where appropriate, improve them by taking into account the changing needs of the society.	The updated indicators of poverty for 2007 have already been uploaded onto the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB)'s website.
2	Draw reference to the indicators of poverty as well as other relevant data and information during policy formulation and implementation, and consider the impact of public policies on the different disadvantaged groups and communities.	Ongoing.
3	Conduct and encourage relevant institutions to conduct further poverty researches and analysis in order to facilitate a more informed public policy discourse on the subject.	The Research Grants Council had issued invitations to higher education institutions inviting them to come forward with proposals in application for the 'Strategic Public Policy Research Grants' in the area of 'Poverty, Inequality, and Social Disadvantages in Hong Kong'. The closing date of application was 27 June 2008.
4	Conduct evaluative studies on poverty alleviation measures.	A Consultancy study on the Child Development Fund (CDF) pioneer projects will be conducted.
5	Track the impact of taxation and social benefits on household income, in particular on the lower-income group.	The next update to be conducted in 2009.
6	Track the situation of social and earnings mobility in Hong Kong, and carry out longitudinal studies on children and other major vulnerable groups.	<p>The "Conference on Social Inequality and Social Mobility in Hong Kong", co-organised by the Central Policy Unit (CPU), the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong, was held on 14 March 2008.</p> <p>An updated study on earnings mobility in Hong Kong will be conducted in late 2008.</p>
7	Develop indicators or conduct studies to reflect the strength of community networks.	<p>CPU is conducting three studies in Tin Shui Wai (TSW). One of these compares TSW with Sham Shui Po (SSP).</p> <p>Evaluative study on the Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF) to be commissioned in 2008-09.</p>
8	Facilitate the collection of data and statistics to enhance poverty researches and analysis systematically, e.g. the collection of health data or statistics to be taken into account in the long-term development of a territory-wide health record infrastructure.	A Steering Committee on eHealth Record Sharing has been set up. It is the current plan of the Steering Committee to formulate its initial recommendations in 2008.

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		Regular international studies on education performance of Hong Kong students to cover, inter alia, correlations between Hong Kong students' social economic status and their achievements.

## (II) The Unemployed and the Working Poor

No.	Recommendation	Progress
9	Review the provision of training, retraining, skills upgrading and life-long learning holistically to ensure that they are market-oriented and have taken into account the needs of the unemployed and the working poor.	The Employees Retraining Board (ERB)'s strategic review was completed in December 2007. A consultation document was released on 24 January 2008 and the consultation period ended in 31 March 2008. ERB is consolidating the views collected on the review proposals and plans to submit its final recommendations to LWB within Q3 2008.
10	Further strengthen training and retraining efforts, including making use of the levies collected from employers of foreign domestic helpers when the resources could be used.	ERB has started drawing down the levy from 1 December 2007 to support its existing operation and services.  ERB has increased the number of training places provided in 2007-08 by 10 000. ERB plans to further increase the number of training places in 2008-09.
11	Adopt an integrated approach in the delivery of training and employment assistance in order to make the best use of the resources available and provide more targeted assistance to the "difficult-to-employ".	Study on how to streamline and integrate existing training and employment related services has commenced.
12	Review holistically how to achieve the target of "one-stop shop" in the provision of employment assistance, so that able-bodied persons, especially those who are "difficult-to-employ", can access relevant training and employment assistance more easily.	ERB to launch the first pilot centre in late 2008.
13	Promote economic development, with particular attention to sectors which provide job opportunities for low-skilled workers.	To increase the job opportunities for residents in TSW, the Housing Department has incorporated a clause into 2 new Housing Authority's property service contracts in TSW requiring contractors to employ a specified percentage of local residents.  Staff of the pilot Housing Advisory and Service Team in TSW was also mainly recruited locally.

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14	Support the development of social enterprises to assist those who are “difficult-to-employ” to integrate into the job market and capture job opportunities.	<p>A Summit on Social Enterprises was held on 20 December 2007, which was attended by some 600 guests from the welfare, academic, commercial and other sectors. They provided useful views on ways to facilitate further development of Social Enterprises (SEs).</p> <p>A pilot scheme to facilitate SEs in bidding government cleansing contracts was introduced in early 2008. Under the pilot scheme, 38 government cleansing contracts have been set aside for eligible SEs to bid. These contracts, totalling some \$17 million, cover all 18 districts and will make available more than 300 jobs opportunities.</p>
15	Strengthen employment support at the district level, particularly in those districts with stronger needs for more targeted support, coupled with local economy and social enterprise development as well as investment in public works and infrastructural projects.	<p>A pilot scheme to facilitate SEs in bidding government cleansing contracts was introduced in early 2008. Under the pilot scheme, 38 government cleansing contracts have been set aside for eligible SEs to bid. These contracts, totalling some \$17 million, cover all 18 districts and will make available more than 300 jobs opportunities.</p> <p>The Home Affairs Department established the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme in June 2006 to provide seed money for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and district organisations to set up SEs with a view to providing employment opportunities for the socially disadvantaged groups and help promote their self-reliance. So far, the Programme has approved under the first three phases of applications a total grant of about \$67 million to some 70 new SE projects that would create some 1,300 jobs for the socially disadvantaged groups. 36 of these SE projects are being/will be carried out in less well-off districts such as Kwun Tong, SSP, Tuen Mun, Yuen Long, TSW and Tung Chung. About \$83 million remains available for application.</p>
16	Give more attention to social and demographic considerations such as population, employment, supporting facilities and other people-based issues during the planning process.	Ongoing.
17	Monitor and review the implementation of the pilot Transport Support Scheme, and consider the appropriate form of incentives to encourage work.	<p>The review on the Scheme has been advanced and completed in February 2008.</p> <p>On 25 April 2008, the Finance Committee approved the following relaxation measures: (1) raising the monthly income ceiling from \$5,600 to \$6,500; (2) allowing eligible people working and living in the same district to</p>

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		<p>apply for the allowance; and (3) extending the duration of subsidy period from six months to 12 months.</p> <p>These relaxation measures were launched on 2 July 2008.</p> <p>The Labour Department will closely monitor the progress of the relaxed Scheme and conduct a review at least one year after the relaxation measures have been implemented.</p>
18	<p>Consider how to provide suitable support to the able-bodied unemployed and the working poor so that the system will provide the necessary incentives for those who have the ability to work to springboard to employment and achieve self-reliance.</p>	<p>A one-stop centre will be launched by ERB in 2008.</p>

### (III) Children and Youth

No.	Recommendation	Progress
19	<p>Adopt a holistic and family perspective in policies and measures in assisting children and youth, with particular emphasis on early identification and intervention, evidence-based policy making and intersectoral collaboration.</p>	<p>The Family Council was established in December 2007. One of the priority issues to be considered by the Family Council is to foster a family perspective among policy-makers, for example, by introducing family impact assessment in policy formulation in the long run. This matter will be considered by the Family Council at its coming meetings.</p>
20	<p>Implement the Child Development Fund (CDF) and try out an asset-based model (including a targeted savings element and a mentoring scheme) which encourages longer-term personal development of children from a disadvantaged background.</p>	<p>The Finance Committee has already approved the allocation of \$300 million to establish the CDF. The first batch of pioneer projects is expected to be rolled out in Q4 2008.</p>
21	<p>Further develop the CDF into a longer-term model to promote child development in Hong Kong after the trial stage, and consolidate different resources and funding sources in order to promote a more child-based, asset-based and family-based model.</p>	<p>To conduct a review on completion of the first batch of CDF pioneer projects.</p>
22	<p>Improve the impact assessment of existing efforts on the development of children from a disadvantaged background.</p>	<p>Consultancy Study on the first batch of CDF pioneer projects will be conducted.</p>
23	<p>Make appropriate use of schools as a platform to help address the development needs of the disadvantaged children, particularly for the "hidden cases", through collaboration between the social services and the education sectors</p>	<p>Some of the 3 000 three-year positions for secondary school leavers have been employed as Programme Workers to support social workers stationed in schools since 1 April 2008.</p>

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24	The work of the Family Commission, if set up, should take into account the needs of children and families from a disadvantaged background.	The Family Council was established to, amongst others, bring under one roof the various commissions and committees currently responsible for handling issues regarding different age groups and gender. Through the work of the Family Council, the Government should be able to strengthen the family by formulating social policy and providing welfare services relating to the family that meet the needs of different members of the family.
25	Extend the Comprehensive Child Development Service (CCDS) to all districts in phases and strengthen follow-up social services support to children and families at risk.	CCDS has been extended to Kwun Tong in 2007-08, and will be extended to Tsuen Wan and Kwai Tsing in 2008-09.
26	Strengthen parent education, with particular focus on the needs of the disadvantaged and hard-to-reach families	Ongoing.
27	Ensure the education system provides opportunities for children to learn and excel regardless of their socio-economic background, and to provide additional assistance to students with weak family support where appropriate.	Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS), commenced in 2007-08 school year, provides fee subsidy for parents of children attending nursery, lower and upper classes in eligible local non-profit-making kindergartens regardless of their socio-economic background. Needy families may apply for additional fee assistance through the existing Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme.
28	Promote school-based and community-based after school programmes for primary and secondary students from disadvantaged families, through promoting intersectoral collaboration among schools and non-governmental/local community organizations.	Ongoing.
29	Strengthen efforts to tackle the problem of non-engaged youths and take into account the assessment conducted by the Task Force on Continuing Development and Employment-related Training for Youth.	The Task Force has submitted a report with recommendations to the Government in May 2008. An information paper on the report has been issued to the Legislative Council Panel on Manpower and Panel on Home Affairs on 16 July 2008.
30	Provide a more intensified form of assistance to youths who have remained on CSSA for a long period and cannot benefit from existing programmes, and evaluate their needs in order to provide targeted and timely assistance.	The second phase of My STEP commenced in October 2007.

#### (IV) The Elderly

No.	Recommendation	Progress
31	<p>Promote active and healthy ageing as an integral part of the elderly policy to enhance their quality of life and to enable the elderly to live with dignity.</p>	<p>With the allocation of additional funding of \$200 million, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) has implemented a scheme in June 2008 to help improve the home environment of elderly people without family support. It is estimated that a total of 40 000 elderly households will benefit from this scheme in the coming five years.</p> <p>Further to the current 32 Elder Academies, the Elderly Commission (EC) and LWB are inviting a new round of applications for setting up more Elder Academies at primary and secondary schools, and seeking to extend the concept of Elder Academies to tertiary institutions.</p> <p>The two-year Pilot Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project (PNAAP) has been launched in 19 areas across the territory in 2008. It is expected to cover about 32 000 elders.</p> <p>Another two-year pilot project namely PNAAP – Caring for Elders will also be carried out in 2008-09 to tackle elder abuse through neighbourhood platforms.</p>
32	<p>Further improve our support systems for the elderly based on shared responsibility and financial sustainability, and consider more vigorous targeting in using public resources to take care of the elderly most in need of assistance.</p>	<p>EC has commissioned a study in mid-2008 to explore these issues.</p> <p>Since October 2007, the Housing Authority has implemented a package of enhanced housing measures to foster harmonious family relationship and encourage family support for the elderly. Further review will be conducted to streamline the existing schemes aiming at promoting greater cohesion of families and support amongst family members. The relaxation of the eligibility criteria for elderly families under the Rent Assistance Scheme in August 2007 has been well received by public housing tenants.</p> <p>The Hospital Authority has allocated additional resources to extend the psychogeriatric outreach programme to private residential care homes for the elderly. The target is to provide around 10 000 outreach attendances in 2008-09.</p>
33	<p>Enhance understanding of the problem of the elderly in poverty, including exploring ways to facilitate further poverty researches and analysis, e.g. the collection of health data or statistics to be taken into account in the longer-term development of a territory-wide health record infrastructure.</p>	<p>A Steering Committee on eHealth Record Sharing has been set up. It is the current plan of the Steering Committee to formulate its initial recommendations in 2008.</p>

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34	Strengthen efforts to reach out and identify “hidden” and singleton elders, bring them out of isolation, and refer those in need to the existing public support network, and better leverage on the existing resources including volunteers to address the needs of the hidden elderly.	From January 2008, additional recurrent funding of \$42 million has been provided to District Elderly Community Centres (DECCs) and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres (NECs) to recruit more staff to enhance the outreaching work to hidden and singleton elders. From June 2008, additional recurrent funding of \$18 million has been provided to DECCs to strengthen their counselling and referral services and their processing of applications for subsidised long-term care services for the elderly.
35	Encourage social inclusion and participation of the elderly in society, and mobilise healthy retirees who are a valuable pool of human resources to help those who are needy in the community.	The above additional resources have enabled the DECCs and NECs to recruit more staff to mobilise volunteers, including “young-olds”, for the outreaching work.
36	Ensure equitable and affordable access to health care services and provide a safety net for the poor and vulnerable by putting in place sustainable health care financing arrangements as soon as possible.	Initiated first-stage public consultation on health care reform and financing in 2008. Second stage to be launched in 2009.
37	Strengthen primary healthcare service for the elderly at the community level, including health promotion and preventive care, and make use of the private doctor network at the community level.	Initiated first-stage public consultation on health care reform and financing in 2008. Second stage to be launched in 2009.  To launch a three-year pilot scheme in 2008-09 to provide five health care vouchers of \$50 each per year to senior citizens aged 70 or above to partially subsidise their use of primary care services in the private sector.
38	Improve the accessibility of subsidised medical service for non-CSSA recipients, in particular the elderly, through further improving the medical fee waiver mechanism, e.g. further simplify the procedures and lengthen the period waivers of the medical fee waiver mechanism.	The coverage of period waiver for the elderly has been extended to include services of the General Out-Patient Clinics without pre-scheduled appointment starting from March 2008.
39	Provide greater relief on medical fees for needy elders, whether they are on CSSA or not.	Initiated first-stage public consultation on health care reform and financing in 2008. Second stage to be launched in 2009. The question of safety net would be considered in the context of health care reform and financing.
40	Facilitate elderly applicants to apply for public rental housing, and assist those living in private old buildings who are owner-occupiers but with low income.	The minimum waiting time for family applicants with elderly persons under the Housing Authority Families with Elderly Persons Priority Scheme and the Special Scheme for Families with Elderly Persons has been shortened from 24 to 18 months with effect from October 2007. Further review will be carried out to streamline the above schemes. Regarding assistance to elderly property owner-occupiers who live in private dilapidated buildings, the Housing Authority has introduced, since 2004, arrangements to

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		assist these elderly owners by granting them licences to stay in Public Rental Housing under the Compassionate Rehousing Scheme. The licences will be turned into normal tenancies upon the licensees' fulfilment of the General Waiting List eligibility criteria. Since its implementation, 83 households have been assisted.
41	Provide better long-term planning on the provision of subsidised residential care places for the elderly as well as community care services in the light of increasing demand from an ageing population.	EC has commissioned a study in mid-2008 to explore these issues.
42	<p>Increase the choices of quality residential care places and community care services through a combination of measures –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consider whether the subsidised residential care service should be means-tested;</li> <li>• examine means to enable a greater extent of co-payment of fees among individuals, their families and the Government, including a means-tested voucher system and assistance to the needy in selecting different services; and</li> <li>• encourage a more robust market comprising quality self-financing and private residential care homes for the elderly providing different services, as well as multiple sources of financing from the individuals and their families.</li> </ul>	EC has commissioned a study in mid-2008 to explore these issues.
43	Encourage further social enterprise development in the provision of elderly services.	<p>Of the 70 new SE projects approved under the Enhancing Self-Reliance Through District Partnership Programme (the Programme) so far, eight provide/will provide services that target at the elderly, such as health care services, sale of elderly products, cleaning and minor repair service for the elderly.</p> <p>In connection with the Home Improvement Scheme for the Elderly launched in June 2008, SWD has provided a list of SEs and community organizations funded by the Programme and the CIIF to the delivery agencies of the Scheme, and encouraged the delivery agencies to engage them as service providers in the Scheme.</p>
44	Consider a more relaxed asset limit for elderly CSSA recipients on compassionate grounds, without changing the nature of CSSA as a scheme of last resort for those genuinely in need.	To study this issue further in 2008-09

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45	Consider how to provide financial security for the future elderly generations as soon as possible, taking into account the outcome of the on-going study on the sustainability of the three pillars of retirement protection for Hong Kong, viz. the publicly funded CSSA and Old Age Allowance, the Mandatory Provident Fund schemes, and voluntary private savings.	Studies in progress.

### (V) District-based Approach

No.	Recommendation	Progress
46	Enhance understanding of characteristics and needs of districts, and take them into account in formulating and implementing policies at the district level.	Ongoing.
47	Provide more opportunities to less well-off districts, including physical infrastructure (community facilities), economic and employment opportunities, and enhanced measures.	<p>The Hospital Authority has been allocated additional provision to enhance hospital services in the New Territories West and Kowloon East Clusters in 2008-09.</p> <p>Leisure, cultural and community hall facilities will be provided in less well-off districts in the coming years. For example, open spaces will be developed in Tung Chung and TSW. An indoor recreation centre, a community hall cum library, and a swimming pool complex will be developed in Tung Chung. A library cum indoor recreation centre will be developed in TSW south while a sports centre-cum-community hall in TSW north is under active planning. In SSP, stage 2 of the SSP Park will be completed and the secondary pool of the Lai Chi Kok Park Swimming Pool will be converted into an indoor heated pool.</p> <p>The Housing Authority has let accommodation in a multi-storey car park building in Tin Heng Estate in TSW north to the Hong Kong Jockey Club for setting up a Telebet Centre cum Volunteers and Training Centre. Conversion work is now in progress and the 1/F area has already been handed over to the Hong Kong Jockey Club for internal fitting out in July 2008.</p>
48	Encourage district-based initiatives as necessary supplements to formal services provision through providing additional funding sources, better information dissemination of existing funding sources, as well as rationalising and streamlining different funding sources in the longer run.	The Housing Authority has set up a pilot Housing Advisory Service Team (the Team) in TSW in April 2008 to assist local Estate Management Advisory Committees (EMACs) in carrying out community building activities, in particular, assisting new tenants in adjusting to the new living environment. Apart from giving advice to new tenants on the availability of social/community/

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		<p>educational services in the district and running a hotline, the Team has maintained close contact with the EMACs, NGOs, Government Departments and District Council Members. The service of the Team has so far been well received by residents in TSW.</p> <p>In October 2007, EC, LWB and SWD launched a District-based Trial Scheme on Carer Training in three regions (Eastern and Wanchai, Wong Tai Sin and Sai Kung, and Kowloon City and Yau Tsim Mong) by providing seed money of \$50,000 each to 11 DECCs to organise elderly care training programmes and provide temporary stand-in services to carers in need.</p>
49	Put in place suitable institutional structure for districts to escalate problems which cannot be dealt with at the district level to the Government so that policy barriers could be removed in a timely manner.	A new mechanism has been in place since March 2008.
50	Strengthen the role of District Officers to enhance cross-sector collaboration to address district needs; this should be complemented by central policy support.	District Officers (DOs) have been provided with additional staffing resources to carry out various community involvement programmes to help strengthen their community network and further promote district administration.
51	Give District Officers a clearer mandate to coordinate inter-departmental efforts at the district level on key concern areas relating to poverty alleviation and prevention, in order to better respond to local needs, remove local barriers and achieve greater impact.	DOs have been provided with additional staffing resources to carry out various community involvement programmes to help strengthen their community network and further promote district administration.
52	Encourage districts to strengthen their capacities through taking the essential steps in analysing and identifying genuine and unmet local needs, mapping out clear and longer-term directions, engaging stakeholders and encouraging cross-sector collaboration, and evaluating effectiveness of poverty alleviation and prevention programmes.	Ongoing.
53	Encourage the establishment of district-based platforms or mechanisms to identify district needs and responses, comprising Government officials, NGOs and district leaders.	Ongoing.

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