

Chapter 10

Social Welfare

The Government is committed to assisting the needy through the provision of preventive, supportive and remedial welfare services. Alongside providing a social security safety net, it also helps the needy progress 'from welfare to self-reliance'.

The Labour and Welfare Bureau is responsible for formulating social welfare policies and overseeing their implementation by the Social Welfare Department (SWD). The Social Welfare Advisory Committee, the Elderly Commission, the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, and the Women's Commission advise the Government on welfare policies.

In 2010, the total recurrent expenditure of the SWD was \$37.3 billion, of which \$25.7 billion (68.9 per cent) was for financial assistance payments, \$8.5 billion (22.8 per cent) for recurrent subventions to non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and the remaining \$3.1 billion (8.3 per cent) for departmental expenditure, including \$0.8 billion for hire of services.

Major Achievements

Strengthened Support for Families in Need

In 2010, the Government implemented a series of measures to strengthen its services and support for families in need, including victims of domestic violence.

SWD launched a three-year pilot 'Neighbourhood Support Child Care Project' (NSCCP) in October 2008 with a view to providing more flexible forms of day care services for children aged under 6 to meet the needs of parents at the neighbourhood level. A total of 11 projects, one in each SWD administrative district, were launched. Subsidy is also available for families in need of financial assistance. In view of the positive feedback from service users, SWD will regularise the NSCCP and extend its service coverage from 11 districts to all 18 districts.

The SWD released a report entitled 'Building Effective Family Services: Review on the Implementation of the Integrated Family Service Centre (IFSC) Service Mode'

in May 2010. The report recommended that the IFSC service mode should continue to be adopted for publicly-funded family services. The SWD has accepted all 26 recommendations of the report and is working closely with stakeholders to take them forward for the continuous improvement of IFSC services.

On combating domestic violence, the SWD launched the Victim Support Programme for Victims of Family Violence (VSP) in June 2010. The programme, run by an NGO with funding provided by the SWD, aims to enhance support services to victims of domestic violence, including those undergoing the judicial process. Through the VSP, the victims will be provided with information on the legal proceedings and community resources (such as legal aid service, accommodation, treatment and childcare support, etc.) that are available to them. They will also be provided with emotional support and company while going through the judicial process to alleviate their fear and sense of helplessness. It is expected that through close collaboration with case workers, the victims will be empowered and supported to resume normal life and functioning.

A Pilot Project on Child Fatality Review was launched in February 2008 aiming to identify good practices and areas of improvements in the system and service provision as well as to identify patterns and trends of child deaths, with a view to formulating prevention strategies and promoting multi-disciplinary and inter-agency co-operation in the prevention of child death. The first report of the Review Panel was issued in January 2010. By the end of 2010, the Review Panel had completed the review of child death cases that occurred in 2006 and 2007 as well as the evaluation of the pilot project.

In 2010, the SWD also developed the Batterer Intervention Programme further and continued to strengthen public education on combating domestic violence.

Relief Measures

To alleviate the burden of social security recipients who have not yet benefited from the economic recovery, the SWD provided in June one additional month of the standard rate of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) payment for CSSA recipients and one additional month of allowance for recipients of Disability Allowance and Old Age Allowance; and in August a one-off grant of \$1,000 each for students in kindergarten to secondary education who were eligible for the flat-rate grant for school-related expenses under the CSSA Scheme in the 2010-11 school year.

Enhanced Support for the Elderly and their Carers

In 2007, the Government launched the District-based Scheme on Carer Training to enhance support for needy elders and carers. Elderly centres were invited to collaborate with community organisations in running elderly-care training courses and to develop carer services. Each participating centre was provided with seed money of \$50,000 to run carer training courses and engage those who had completed training to offer carer services in the neighbourhood. A total of 114 elderly centres have participated in the scheme since 2007.

Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly

The SWD implemented a Home Environment Improvement Scheme for the Elderly in 2008 to improve the home conditions of elderly people lacking family support and financial means. Eligible elderly households can benefit from home improvement works and/or fittings up to \$5,000 per household. The SWD has earmarked \$200 million to implement this scheme over five years. A total of 40 000 elderly households are expected to benefit.

Integrated Discharge Support Trial Programme for Elderly Patients

In collaboration with the Hospital Authority, the Government launched the Integrated Discharge Support Trial Programme for Elderly Patients in 2008 to provide pre-discharge planning and post-discharge rehabilitation and home support services to elderly patients discharged from hospitals and also to their carers, thereby reducing the chance of hospital re-admission and enabling the elders to continue to age in the community. The trial programme was launched in Kwun Tong, Kwai Tsing and Tuen Mun. It is expected that a total of about 20 000 elderly people and 7 000 carers will be served during the three-year programme period.

District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities

In January 2009, the SWD set up 16 District Support Centres for Persons with Disabilities by re-engineering home-based training and support service and community support services. The aim is to provide one-stop community support services to persons with disabilities for their better integration into the community. These centres also provide training and support to the families or carers of persons with disabilities, with a view to strengthening their caring capacities and relieving their stress.

Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness

The first Integrated Community Centre for Mental Wellness (ICCMW) in Tin Shui Wai started operation in March 2009 to provide one-stop, accessible and integrated community mental health support services to discharged mental patients, persons with suspected mental health problems, their families and carers and residents living in the district. Given the success of the integrated mode of the ICCMW, the Government set up ICCMWs across the territory in October 2010 by revamping the existing community mental health support services and injection of new resources.

District Caring and Support Trial Scheme

The SWD launched a District Caring and Support Trial Scheme in 2009-10 to support district-based initiatives aimed at enhancing support for disadvantaged groups in individual districts, as well as strengthening the resilience and capacities of individual districts amidst the financial tsunami. By year-end, some 50 projects had been launched throughout the 18 districts.

Lump Sum Grant Subvention System

The Government, in concert with the welfare sector, has taken forward all the recommendations made by the Lump Sum Grant (LSG) Independent Review

Committee to support the implementation of the LSG Subvention System and to enhance stakeholders' capacity as key players of the system. The Government will continue to work closely with the reconstituted LSG Steering Committee to ensure smooth and effective implementation of the recommendations.

Social Welfare Programmes

Family and Child Welfare

A variety of family and child welfare services is provided by the SWD and NGOs.

Family Services

The SWD adopts a three-pronged approach to providing services to families in need.

At the primary level, attempts are made through early detection, public education, publicity and empowerment to prevent family problems from occurring. The SWD continued its territory-wide publicity campaign 'Strengthening Families and Combating Violence' and its operation of a departmental hotline to provide service information, counselling and other forms of assistance.

At the secondary level, support services, ranging from developmental programmes to intensive counselling, are provided by 61 IFSCs across all districts in Hong Kong and two Integrated Services Centres located in Tung Chung.

At the tertiary level, specialised services, including crisis intervention, are provided in cases of domestic violence, family crisis or custody dispute.

Services for Children

The SWD provides a wide range of welfare services to children and young people who need care or protection owing to serious family, behavioural or emotional problems. There were 3 532 residential places in 2010 for these children, of which 970 were in foster homes, 864 in small group homes, 207 in residential child care centres and 1 491 in boys' and girls' homes and hostels.

The SWD also arranges adoption for children abandoned by their parents or whose parents are unable to support them. Three welfare NGOs are 'accredited bodies' in accordance with the Adoption Ordinance for making arrangements for local adoption and inter-country adoption of Hong Kong children by suitable overseas parents.

There were 12 aided stand-alone child care centres providing 690 places in the year. In addition, 209 child care centres and kindergarten-cum-child care centres continued to provide full-day care services and support for families through the provision of 494 places in occasional child care service and 1 230 places in extended hours service.

Social Security

The CSSA Scheme and the Social Security Allowance (SSA) Scheme form the mainstay of Hong Kong's social security system. They are supplemented by three

accident compensation schemes: the Criminal and Law Enforcement Injuries Compensation (CLEIC) Scheme, the Traffic Accident Victims Assistance (TAVA) Scheme and Emergency Relief. These schemes are administered by 37 Social Security Field Units and two centralised offices.

The CSSA Scheme

The CSSA Scheme is non-contributory but means-tested. It provides cash assistance to people suffering from financial hardship to enable them to meet basic needs. Applicants must satisfy the stipulated residence requirement. At year-end, there were 283 176 CSSA cases involving 466 006 beneficiaries. The scheme's total expenditure in 2010 amounted to \$18.48 billion, representing a decrease of 2.4 per cent over the previous year.

Elderly people who have received CSSA continuously for at least one year are allowed under the Portable CSSA Scheme to continue receiving assistance in Guangdong Province or Fujian Province if they choose to retire there.

Employment Assistance Programmes

The SWD provides personalised employment assistance through various programmes to help able-bodied unemployed CSSA recipients and single parents move towards paid employment and become self-reliant.

The SWD commissioned NGOs to operate a three-year Integrated Employment Assistance Scheme (IEAS) from October 2008 to help able-bodied unemployed CSSA recipients aged between 15 and 59 secure full-time paid employment and become self-reliant. The scheme provides ordinary and intensive employment assistance services. At year-end, 84 268 people had participated in the IEAS.

To help long-term CSSA able-bodied unemployed youth aged between 15 and 29 return to the workforce, the SWD commissioned NGOs to operate the third phase of the Special Training and Enhancement Programme (My STEP) from October 2009 to September 2011. Participants are provided with counselling and structured motivational or disciplinary training to enhance their self-image, self-confidence and sense of responsibility. Participants aged between 15 and 24 are also provided with opportunities to participate in the Youth Pre-employment Training Programme and Youth Work Experience and Training Scheme (YPTP&YWETS) administered by the Labour Department, enabling them to gain work experience through job attachment. At year-end, 820 young people had participated in the third phase of My STEP.

The SWD commissioned NGOs to operate an 18-month third phase of the New Dawn Project from April 2010. This was designed to help single parents and child carers on the CSSA Scheme, whose youngest child was aged between 12 and 14, move towards self-reliance by engagement in paid employment. The NGOs provide employment assistance services to project participants to enhance their employability. At year-end, 3 495 people had participated in the project.

The SSA Scheme

The non-contributory SSA Scheme provides cash allowance to meet the special needs of elderly people and persons with severe disabilities. It comprises Normal

Disability Allowance, Higher Disability Allowance, Normal Old Age Allowance and Higher Old Age Allowance. At year-end, 638 930 people were receiving SSA. The scheme's total expenditure in the year was \$8.97 billion, an increase of 2.9 per cent over the previous year.

Accident Compensation Schemes

The CLEIC Scheme offers financial assistance on a non-means-tested basis to people (or to their dependants in case of death) who are injured as a result of a crime of violence, or by a law enforcement officer using a weapon in the execution of his duty. In 2010, \$6.06 million was paid out under the scheme. The TAVA Scheme provides financial assistance to people injured (or to their dependants in case of death) in road traffic accidents on a non-means-tested basis regardless of who is responsible for the accident. During the year, \$192.9 million was paid out under the scheme.

Emergency Relief

Emergency relief in the form of meals or cash-in-lieu of meals and other necessities is given to victims of natural or other disasters. Grants from the Emergency Relief Fund are paid to eligible victims or to their dependants in case of death. Emergency relief was given to 768 victims of 20 disasters during the year.

Social Security Appeal Board

The Social Security Appeal Board considers appeals against SWD's decisions on CSSA, SSA and TAVA issues. The board ruled on 324 appeals during the year.

Prevention of Fraud and Abuse

To preserve the integrity of the social security system and ensure the proper use of public funds, the SWD's Special Investigation Section continues to prevent and combat fraud and abuse of social security assistance. A special hotline is in place for the public to make reports. In addition, to promote community education and the law-abiding spirit, anti-fraud information panels displaying fraud-related prosecution figures and court news have been installed in the SWD's frontline offices. At year-end, 257 abusers had been jailed, bound over, ordered to perform community service, fined, or given warnings.

Services for the Elderly

The Government encourages and assists the elderly to lead active and healthy lives. It provides various community care and support services for them to continue living in their homes or familiar surroundings. For elderly persons who have long-term care needs but cannot be adequately taken care of at home, the Government provides subsidised residential care services.

The SWD continues to subsidise the Opportunities for the Elderly Project run by community organisations to make life more meaningful for elderly people. During the year, 247 programmes were subsidised by government grants amounting to \$3 million.

Over the years, more than 1.2 million Senior Citizen Cards have been issued to elderly persons in Hong Kong with which they may enjoy concessions, discounts and priority service provided by various companies, organisations and government departments.

Community Care and Support Services

At year-end, the Government was supporting 211 elderly centres (including District Elderly Community Centres, Neighbourhood Elderly Centres and social centres for the elderly), 126 service teams (including integrated home care services teams, enhanced home and community care services teams, support teams for the elderly and a home help team), 59 day care centres or units for the elderly and a holiday centre for elderly persons. Support is also provided for their carers.

Residential Care Services

At year-end, there was a total of 25 861 subsidised residential care places in Hong Kong, including 2 400 self-care hostel places and home-for-the-aged places, 21 227 care-and-attention (C&A) places (of which 7 184 were purchased from private residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs)), and 2 234 nursing home places (of which 43 were purchased from self-financing nursing homes).

To meet the growing care needs of the elderly, the SWD launched a phased conversion programme in 2005 to convert subsidised places with no long-term-care element into C&A places which could provide a continuum of care. By year-end, a total of 4 750 C&A places had been created through the conversion programme.

The Government is committed to enhancing the quality of RCHEs. The Residential Care Homes (Elderly Persons) Ordinance and its subsidiary legislation regulate these homes through a licensing system. The SWD also helps RCHEs to improve their capability, ensuring that elderly residents will receive proper care. In a continuing effort to improve drug management in residential homes, the Government launched a three-year pilot scheme in June 2010 to provide RCHEs with visiting pharmacist services. The objectives are to strengthen further the knowledge and capability of RCHEs and their staff in drug management, thereby enhancing their quality of care for elders. It is estimated that about 70 to 80 RCHEs will benefit from the scheme. In addition, the SWD jointly organised a series of talks with the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority in 2010 to enhance the drug management skills and knowledge of staff in the homes, in addition to forming a Working Group on Drug Safety in RCHEs involving all relevant stakeholders.

Rehabilitation Services

With the aim of integrating persons with disabilities into society and helping them to develop their capabilities fully, government departments and NGOs provide a variety of rehabilitation services to meet their different needs. These services are co-ordinated by the Commissioner for Rehabilitation on the advice of the Rehabilitation Advisory Committee.

Services for Children with Disabilities

At year-end, there were 1 860 integrated programme places in kindergarten-cum-child care centres, 1 622 places in special child care centres (including 110 residential places), and 2 363 places in early education and training centres for children with disabilities. In addition, 64 places in small group homes were provided for mildly mentally handicapped children who could not be adequately cared for by their families.

Services for Adults with Disabilities

To develop the potential of persons with disabilities, 1 645 supported employment places were made available for them to work in open settings with support and assistance. In addition, 432 places for persons with disabilities created under the On the Job Training Programme for People with Disabilities and 311 places for young persons with disabilities or early signs of mental illness under the Sunnyway — On the Job Training Programme for Young People with Disabilities were made available to assist them in securing jobs. Those not yet ready to compete for work in the open market were accommodated in sheltered workshops where 5 133 places were provided. There was also a total of 453 places in integrated vocational training centres and 4 023 places in integrated vocational rehabilitation services centres.

To improve employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, a funding of about \$38 million was allocated to 23 NGOs to enable them to set up 63 small businesses providing over 500 job opportunities for persons with disabilities under a project called 'Enhancing Employment of People with Disabilities Through Small Enterprise'. In tandem, the Marketing Consultancy Office (Rehabilitation) assisted vocational rehabilitation services units in developing their marketing and business strategies and employment-aided services.

Day activity centres provided 4 632 places where persons with intellectual disability were trained to live independently.

There were 7 769 places in hostels and care homes providing residential care services for persons with disabilities who were unable to live independently in the community, or whose families could not care for them adequately. Elderly blind persons were provided with 825 places in care homes. For discharged mental patients, 1 509 places were provided in halfway houses and 1 507 in long stay care homes.

Professional Back-up and Support Services

Support services provided by clinical psychologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists are available to persons with disabilities in rehabilitation day centres and hostels. A speech therapy service is also available to children attending pre-school rehabilitation centres.

A range of community support services is available for persons with disabilities and their families/carers including those ex-mentally ill patients, living in the community. These included district support centres for persons with disabilities,

community rehabilitation day centres, integrated community centres for mental wellness, and rehabilitation services for persons with visceral disability or chronic illnesses.

Residential respite services for persons with disabilities, occasional childcare service for pre-schoolers with disabilities and six resource centres for parents/relatives are also available. In addition, there are 16 social and recreational centres for persons with disabilities to encourage them to participate in community leisure activities.

Preparation Work for New Legislation to Regulate Residential Care Homes for Persons with Disabilities (RCHDs)

The Government introduced the Residential Care Homes (Persons with Disabilities) Bill into the Legislative Council on June 30, 2010 to regulate the operation of residential care homes for persons with disabilities (RCHDs) through a statutory licensing scheme.

Complementary to the proposed statutory licensing regime, the Government introduced in October 2010 a pilot Bought Place Scheme for private RCHDs to encourage the operators to upgrade service standards, increase the supply of subsidised residential care places and help the market provide more service options for persons with disabilities.

Financial Assistance for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Patients

The SWD administers the trust fund for SARS patients or families affected by this disease. The trust fund for SARS stopped accepting new applications on January 1, 2006. A total of 890 applications were approved, the cumulative payments for which amounted to over \$180.14 million by the end of the year.

Medical Social Services

Medical social workers are stationed in public hospitals and some specialist clinics to help patients and their families with welfare needs. Such patients are given counselling, financial and other tangible assistance, as well as referrals to rehabilitation and support services to help them recover and reintegrate into society. The SWD strengthened the manpower of psychiatric medical social workers. Medical social workers dealt with around 181 600 cases in 2010.

Services for Offenders

The SWD discharges a number of statutory functions and provides community-based and residential services to help people who have committed crimes reintegrate into the community and become law-abiding citizens.

The probation service helped 6 690 offenders during the year. Probation officers assess and report to the courts on an offender's suitability for probation orders, and render supervision to those under the orders. The officers also prepare reports on long-term prisoners and petitioners for consideration for early release.

Based on the recommendation of the Task Force on Youth Drug Abuse, a two-year Pilot Project on Enhanced Probation Service was introduced at the two probation offices serving Kowloon City and Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts in October 2009 to provide more focused, structured and intensive treatment programmes for convicted young drug offenders aged below 21.

During 2010, a total of 3 086 people aged 14 or above who were convicted of offences punishable by imprisonment were placed on Community Service Orders. They were required to perform unpaid community work arranged and supervised by SWD officers. The Tuen Mun Children and Juvenile Home, with 388 places, provides educational, pre-vocational and character training to juvenile offenders as well as children and young people with behavioural and/or family problems.

The Young Offender Assessment Panel, run jointly by the Correctional Services Department (CSD) and the SWD, provides the courts with professional views on sentencing options for offenders aged 14 to below 25. The Post-Release Supervision of Prisoners Scheme, another joint service of the SWD and the CSD, assisted 341 discharged prisoners during their rehabilitation and reintegration into the community in 2010. The SWD provides funding to an NGO to offer hostel and supportive services to ex-offenders.

Services for Young People

The objective of welfare services for young people is to help those aged between 6 and 24 become mature, responsible and contributing members of society. A range of preventive, supportive and remedial services are provided by NGOs to achieve this goal.

Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres

At year-end, there were 137 Integrated Children and Youth Services Centres (ICYSCs). These centres provide centre-based services, outreach social work services and school social work services to address the developmental needs of young people in an integrated and holistic manner. Under a modernisation package funded by the Lotteries Fund, a total of 74 youth service units and community centres were provided with funding to upgrade their premises and facilities.

Outreaching Services

Sixteen District Youth Outreaching Social Work Teams provide services to high-risk youths and deal with juvenile gang issues. Eighteen designated ICYSCs also provide overnight outreaching service to help young night drifters get back on the right track.

Services for Juvenile Delinquents

The Community Support Service Scheme (CSSS) assists young people who have broken the law, or are under the Police Superintendent's Discretion Scheme. Six CSSS teams, one operated by the SWD and five by NGOs, provide services to these young people.

The Family Conference Scheme, run jointly by the SWD and the Hong Kong Police Force, assists juveniles cautioned under the Police Superintendent's Discretion Scheme for the second time or who are in need of the services of three or more parties. Social workers, police officers, teachers and the parents of these young people work together to decide which treatment is best for them.

Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Services

At year-end, the SWD was subventing 14 residential Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres and Halfway Houses, 11 Counselling Centres for Psychotropic Substance Abusers and two social clubs for drug abusers, ex-drug abusers and their family members. Under the Drug Dependent Persons Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres (Licensing) Ordinance, 21 certificates of exemption and 19 licences for Drug Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres were issued or renewed in 2010.

School Social Work Service

At year-end, 482 secondary schools were each provided with a stationing school social worker to help students with academic, social and emotional problems and to maximise their educational opportunities.

P.A.T.H.S. to Adulthood: A Jockey Club Youth Enhancement Scheme

In the 2010-11 school year, a total of 236 secondary schools joined the Positive Adolescent Training through Holistic Social Programmes (PATHS) to Adulthood project. This time-limited project funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust was launched in the 2005-06 school year. It aims to promote the holistic development of junior secondary students into responsible young adults.

District Support Scheme for Children and Youth Development

Since the 2005-06 financial year, the SWD has received a recurrent annual provision of \$15 million to provide direct cash assistance and implement projects under the District Support Scheme for Children and Youth Development. The Scheme was launched to address the developmental needs of disadvantaged children and young people, which cannot be met by their families or the mainstream education systems.

Support Service to Youth Employment

In 2010, subvented welfare NGOs continued to make use of the 3 000 time-limited programme worker posts allocated to them to employ needy young people to assist social workers in delivering service-related programmes in order to gain working experience.

Child Development Fund

In 2008, the Government set up the \$300 million Child Development Fund (CDF) to provide children from a disadvantaged background with more personal development opportunities, so as to reduce inter-generational poverty. CDF projects help participants draw up and implement their own development plans as well as develop an asset-building habit, thus preparing them for long-term development.

Since its establishment, CDF has received overwhelming support from the community and its projects have been running smoothly. So far, two batches of 22 projects have been rolled out, benefiting 2 270 children aged between 10 and 16. More projects will come on stream to meet our target of benefiting at least 13 600 children.

The Government has commissioned a consultant to evaluate the pioneer projects and make recommendations on how to develop the CDF further into a longer-term model to promote child development in Hong Kong.

Clinical Psychological Services

Working under the SWD and NGOs, 73 clinical psychologists provide a range of services to welfare units handling family casework, rehabilitation and correctional matters. The services include psychological assessment, treatment, consultation, staff training and public education. During the year, 3 816 clients were treated, and 3 251 psychological assessments and 18 927 treatment sessions were conducted.

Voluntary Work

The Steering Committee on Promotion of Volunteer Service ran a series of promotional and publicity programmes during the year under the theme 'One Family One Heart' to encourage cross-sector collaboration and family participation in voluntary work. The revamped Volunteer Movement website www.volunteering-hk.org was launched in August 2010. The official Facebook Page of Volunteer Movement (www.facebook.com/Volunteer.Movement), hosted by the Director of Social Welfare, was launched in September 2010, to appeal to the public to support the Volunteer Movement. By year-end, more than 2 110 organisations and 930 000 individuals had registered for voluntary service.

Subventions and Service Monitoring

Recurrent subventions and capital grants were given to 171 NGOs to provide social welfare services in accordance with government policies. Capital grants from the Lotteries Fund were allocated to NGOs on the advice of the Lotteries Fund Advisory Committee. The Service Performance Monitoring System (SPMS) keeps track of the output, outcome and service quality of subvented units according to 16 well-defined service quality standards and specific funding and service agreements for the service units concerned. Under the SPMS, the performance of subvented service units is also monitored through regular self-assessment reports submitted by NGOs, review and surprise visits conducted by the SWD and systematic collection of feedback from service users on the service delivery.

A Help Desk set up for small NGOs on a time-limited basis aims at rendering advice to small NGOs on subvention matters and helping them enhance their competence in corporate governance and achieve sustainability in the LSG subvention environment.

The LSG Independent Complaints Handling Committee handles complaints related to the use of subventions and the service quality that cannot be satisfactorily addressed at the NGO level.

Social Welfare Development Fund

A \$1 billion Social Welfare Development Fund was launched in January 2010 for implementation in three three-year phases from 2010-11 to 2018-19 to support all subvented NGOs in carrying out training and professional development programmes, business system upgrading projects and service delivery enhancement studies. By year-end, about \$184 million was approved for 121 NGOs' applications.

Information Technology

In June 2010, the SWD had succeeded in launching a workflow-based client information system to facilitate case management and service planning.

By year-end, about \$70 million under the Social Welfare Development Fund set up by the Lotteries Fund had been approved for 92 subvented NGOs to implement 187 Information Technology projects.

Tripartite Co-operation: The Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged

A \$200 million SWD-administered Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged was set up in 2005 to promote tripartite partnership among the welfare sector, the business community and the Government in helping the disadvantaged. Donations in money and in kind from the business sector are matched dollar-for-dollar by the Government to enable NGOs to carry out social welfare projects. In view of the positive response from the business sector and NGOs, additional funding of \$200 million was injected into the Fund in May 2010 to encourage further cross-sector collaboration to help the disadvantaged.

By year-end, 112 NGOs had obtained matching grants totalling over \$131 million to implement 327 welfare projects, benefiting over 800 000 disadvantaged persons. Many of the business partners also participated in service planning and served as volunteers.

Social Capital: Building social networks and community cohesiveness – Community Investment and Inclusion Fund

The \$300 million Community Investment and Inclusion Fund (CIIF) was set up in 2002 as a seed fund to promote social capital development by cultivating mutual support networks in the neighbourhood, community participation and cross-sectoral partnerships. By year-end, the CIIF had processed 16 batches of applications, with funding allocation of over \$210 million to the 213 approved projects in all 18 districts.

The CIIF is keen to engage stakeholders from various sectors and successfully mobilised over 5 000 collaboration partners, including NGOs, schools, businesses, professional groups, residents' associations, hospitals, district councils and

government departments with over 560 000 people participating in these initiatives. To enhance the promotion work in the districts, the CIIF held the first district summit in December 2010 in Wong Tai Sin. The district summit served as a sharing platform for local stakeholders to exchange views and experience in the development of social capital and explore opportunities for collaboration.

A second evaluation study on CIIF was launched in end-2010 which aims to identify critical success factors to guide the future development of social capital in Hong Kong.

Elderly Commission

The Elderly Commission (EC) was set up in 1997 to advise the Government on policy and services for the elderly. Recently, emphasis has been placed on promoting 'active ageing' and advising on the means to enhance further long-term care services for the elderly.

The total number of elder academies under the Elder Academy Scheme jointly launched by the EC and the Government has increased to 108, 105 of which are operating in primary and secondary schools and the rest in tertiary education institutions. The Elder Academy Development Foundation was formed in 2009 to fund new projects and to ensure the sustainable development of the scheme.

At the community level, the Neighbourhood Active Ageing Project makes use of neighbourhood support networks to reach out to hidden elders and promote the message of care and love for elders. A total of 75 district projects have been carried out across the territory since the inception of the project in 2008, engaging about 200 000 elders and their family members.

Women's Commission

The Women's Commission (WoC) was set up in January 2001 to promote the well-being and interests of women in Hong Kong. The WoC identifies women's needs and addresses their concerns in a holistic and systematic manner. It advises the Government on policies concerning women and seeks to ensure that their perspectives are taken into account in the formulation of government policies.

The WoC comprises 23 members including the chairperson who is a non-official member. Its mission is 'to enable women in Hong Kong to fully realise their due status, rights and opportunities in all aspects of life'. In line with this goal, the WoC has adopted a three-pronged strategy, that is, provision of an enabling environment, empowerment of women and public education.

On the advice of the WoC, since 2002 the Government has gradually introduced gender mainstreaming in different policy areas to provide an enabling environment. A Gender Mainstreaming Checklist was drawn up in 2002 and then updated in 2009 to help officers take a systematic approach in assessing women's needs and perspectives when formulating government policies. In addition, gender-related training has been provided to over 4 900 civil servants of different grades

since 2001. All bureaux and departments now have their own Gender Focal Points through which matters concerning women's interest and status can be channelled.

With regard to the empowerment of women, the WoC strives to promote development of new service models and good empowerment practices. The introduction in March 2004 of an innovative and flexible learning mode, called the Capacity Building Mileage Programme, was a major step towards helping women develop their full potential.

This programme seeks to enhance women's all-round abilities and promote life skills. It is carried out in collaboration with the Open University of Hong Kong, a radio station and nearly 70 women's groups and NGOs. By year-end, the cumulative number of enrolments exceeded 44 000, a figure that did not include the large audience reached through radio programmes. The programme was first introduced on a trial basis for three years with funding from the Lotteries Fund. Since March 2007 the Government has been providing funds for the programme. In February 2009, the Financial Secretary announced that a total of \$20 million would be allocated in the next three years to expand the programme and provide fee remissions to women with financial difficulties.

Continuous efforts were made to raise public awareness of women-related issues and reduce gender stereotyping. The WoC attaches great importance to the promotion of gender awareness in school education to reduce gender stereotyping of students in their early stages of life and to make a sustainable impact. In 2010, the WoC organised a short video filming competition on gender awareness for secondary students to enhance contestants' gender awareness and sense of gender equality, as well as to arouse the community's concern over these topics and inflection on how gender prejudice and gender stereotyping impact society nowadays.

Rehabilitation Advisory Committee

The Rehabilitation Advisory Committee (RAC) was set up in 1977. It serves as the principal advisory body to the Government on matters pertaining to the well-being of persons with disabilities and the development and implementation of rehabilitation policies and services in Hong Kong. Sub-committees were set up to look into specific areas of concern, such as access, employment and public education.

The RAC and its sub-committees are chaired by non-officials, and all their members are appointed in their personal capacities by the Chief Executive. To ensure that the interests of persons with disabilities are represented, the membership of the RAC includes persons with different disabilities, parents of persons with disabilities, representatives of self-help organisations for persons with disabilities and NGOs providing rehabilitation services, as well as academics, community and business leaders, professionals and other persons who have a keen interest in the well-being of persons with disabilities. Representatives of relevant government bureaux and departments also serve as ex-officio members to provide the necessary support to the RAC and follow up on issues it raises.

Through its sub-committee on public education the RAC co-ordinates the implementation of various public education programmes on rehabilitation. In 2010, 38 public education programmes were organised by various government and NGOs under the theme 'All-round promotion of the spirit of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and cross sectoral collaboration towards building an equal and inclusive society'. Territory-wide publicity activities were also launched to support World Mental Health Day and the International Day of Disabled Persons.

Since 2008, the RAC has also reached out to different sectors, including the 18 District Councils, the business and the welfare sectors to promote the working capabilities of persons with disabilities and the employment support services provided by Government departments and rehabilitation organisations for persons with disabilities as well as solicit support for tripartite partnerships. These efforts received positive responses from the welfare organisations, the District Councils and the business sector.

With the application to Hong Kong since August 31, 2008 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the RAC has also taken on the new role of assisting the Government in promoting and monitoring the implementation of the convention in Hong Kong.

Community Care Fund

The Chief Executive announced in his 2010-11 Policy Address the establishment of the Community Care Fund (CCF), to which the Government and the business sector will each contribute \$5 billion. The CCF's main objective is to provide assistance to people facing economic difficulties, especially those who fall outside the social safety net or who are within the safety net but have special needs that are not covered. The CCF would take forward measures on a pilot basis to help the Government identify steps that could be incorporated in the Government's regular assistance and service programmes. The CCF is a trust fund established under the Secretary for Home Affairs (SHA) Incorporation Ordinance with the SHA Incorporated as its trustee.

The Chief Executive has appointed a Steering Committee to oversee and co-ordinate the CCF's work. The committee is composed of 20 non-official members drawn from various fields including business, welfare, education, health, labour, political and district sectors, as well as four official members.

The committee convened its first meeting in December and set up an Executive Committee and four Sub-committees (Education, Home Affairs, Medical and Welfare). The Executive Committee makes recommendations to the Steering Committee concerning the target beneficiaries, the programmes to be funded, the amount to be disbursed and other administrative and financial matters. The sub-committees will consider the types of programmes to be funded and their relative priorities, implement the programmes endorsed by the Steering Committee, and evaluate the programmes' effectiveness. The Steering Committee has been collecting

public views on the CCF since its establishment to introduce the assistance programmes in the first half of 2011.

Websites

Labour and Welfare Bureau: www.lwb.gov.hk

Social Welfare Department: www.swd.gov.hk

Community Investment and Inclusion Fund: www.ciif.gov.hk

Elderly Commission: www.elderlycommission.gov.hk

Women's Commission: www.women.gov.hk

Child Development Fund: www.cdf.gov.hk

Community Care Fund: www.communitycarefund.gov.hk