

**Summary of Discussion of the Meeting of
Steering Committee on the Child Development Fund
held on 14 August 2024 (Wednesday)
in Conference Room 2, G/F,
Central Government Offices, Tamar**

Attendance

Ms LAU Yim, Alice Permanent Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Chairperson)

Ms Clara CHAN

Ms Maria CHU

Mr Andy KWOK

Dr Tony LAU

Mr TSE Tsz-fung

Mr John WONG

Miss Koby WONG

Miss Joe CHAN Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Youth and
Corrections)

Ms Veronica WONG Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare
(Welfare) 2 (Secretary)

In Attendance

Labour and Welfare Bureau

Mr David LEUNG Deputy Secretary for Labour and Welfare (Welfare) 1

Ms Shirley HO Chief Executive Officer (Welfare) 2

Ms Janice WONG Senior Executive Officer (Welfare) 2A

Ms Catherine CHEN Executive Officer (Welfare) 2A

Social Welfare Department

Miss Mina CHOW Chief Social Work Officer (Youth)

Mrs Fanny CHEUNG Senior Social Work Officer (Youth) 2

Members absent with Apologies

Ms Kathy CHUNG

Professor Angela CUI

Ms Joyce LEE

Dr Angela SIU

Ms Judith YU

Mr Victor PANG

Agenda Item (1): Implementation Progress of the Enhanced Child Development Fund Programme

Members noted the implementation progress of the enhancement measures arising from the overall review of the Child Development Fund (CDF). The enhanced CDF Programme was announced in February 2024 for implementation beginning with the 10th batch of recruits. Invitation for applications for the 10th batch of NGO-led and school-based projects was issued in March 2024 and vetting of applications was completed in July 2024. A total of 33 NGO-led projects and 10 school-based projects were selected to provide service places for children attending Primary 3 to Primary 6 over a three-year project period from November 2024 to October 2027. Responses and feedbacks from project operators to the enhancements were positive.

2. In light of the experience gained from the 10th batch, members supported further enhancements to the application cycle and categorisation of applications under the CDF Programme as follows:

Application Cycle

3. Members agreed to combine the application cycles for both NGO-led and school-based projects and conduct them on a biennial basis (i.e. every 24 months) from the 11th batch onwards, so as to streamline the procedures and facilitate operators' long-term project planning and staff management.

4. Regarding the application timetable of the combined cycle, members noted that before the review, NGO-led projects were launched at an interval of every 20 to 21 months while school-based projects on a yearly basis. In view of the aligned parameters of NGO-led and school-based projects as a result of the review, members agreed that it was opportune to combine the two application cycles from the 11th batch. Accordingly, invitation for applications for both school-based and NGO-led projects under the 11th batch would be issued in March 2026, with results announced in July 2026, and recruitment of student participants to commence at the beginning of the school year in September 2026. The proposed application timetable had taken into account the work plan of schools for formulating next year's extra-curriculum programmes during the summer months.

5. Members further noted that applications were assessed on their merits and service places were allocated depending on the number of needy children, and thus whether an application was NGO-led or school-based would not affect the assessment outcome or allocation of service spaces. In respect of the question on whether CDF participants would be allowed to join other similar mentorship programmes with financial incentives being offered by different organisations across the territory, members were glad to note that the Government would not refrain CDF participants from joining other programmes introduced for different objectives to broaden their horizon. However, CDF student participants would not be allowed to join the Strive and Rise Programme simultaneously for the sake of prudent use of public funds.

School-based projects vs. NGO-led projects

6. To strengthen the management and monitoring of CDF projects, members agreed that applications submitted by schools under the category of school-based projects should be operated and administered by the applicant schools directly, though they might engage external service providers (including NGOs) to provide services for certain programmes and activities. In the same spirit, applications for CDF projects submitted in the category of NGO-led projects should be operated and administered by NGO operators, although they might be implemented in a school setting.

7. Members noted that in the past, school-based projects were operated by school personnel directly, though some schools might engage external service providers (including NGOs) to provide certain services or organise activities for student participants. The overall management and administration of school-based projects remained in the hands of the schools concerned. However, it was observed that in recent years, some schools that run school-based projects entrusted the whole CDF projects to NGOs. Since the agreement relating to the grant of school-based projects was signed between the Government and the applicant school, members considered it reasonable and important for the schools to be responsible for the overall project administration, performance outcome and achievement of output targets.

8. Members noted that operators of both NGO-led and school-based projects might engage external parties to provide certain services for CDF projects. In such cases, the responsible school/NGO operators should define clear division of work with their service providers and continue to shoulder the overall responsibility for the CDF projects concerned. The Government would provide clear guidelines in relevant application documents of CDF projects to assist applicant schools/NGOs in selecting the appropriate category (i.e. school-based or NGO-led projects) for their funding applications, taking into account the operational plans for their CDF projects and the division of work with their service providers (if any).

9. The Government would follow up on the preparatory work in accordance with the advice of the Steering Committee, and announce timely the two enhancement measures mentioned above.

Agenda Item (2): Progress Update of the Child Development Fund

10. Members were briefed on the performance of the 8th batch of NGO-led projects and the 7th batch of school-based projects completed in February 2024 and November 2023 respectively, followed by the latest progress of the ongoing CDF projects.

**Labour and Welfare Bureau
August 2024**