

• The Commission on Poverty (CoP) is a major platform for deliberation on poverty alleviation policies. Together with its two task forces, namely the Community Care Fund Task Force and the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund Task Force, it has fully deliberated issues covering various areas and offered specific advice and proposals to facilitate the implementation of policies and initiatives on poverty alleviation and support for the disadvantaged, benefitting different groups in need in society. This leaflet sets out the CoP's major achievements in the past year.

### Monitoring the poverty situation

- Continued to monitor the poverty situation over time through updating the poverty line analysis annually
- Reviewed the analytical framework of the poverty line on an ongoing basis, adding supplementary analyses to help the public better understand the poverty situation in Hong Kong

2017

Poor population

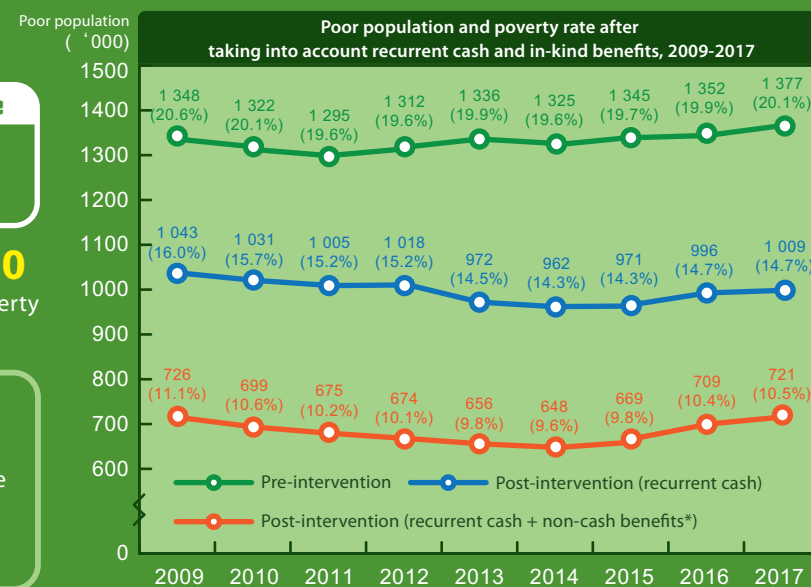
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Poverty rate

14.7%

Recurrent cash benefits lifted **370 000** persons out of poverty and reduced the poverty rate by 5.4 percentage points

Taking into account in-kind benefits (mainly comprising public rental housing), an additional **290 000** persons were lifted out of poverty, and the poverty rate was further reduced to **10.5%**



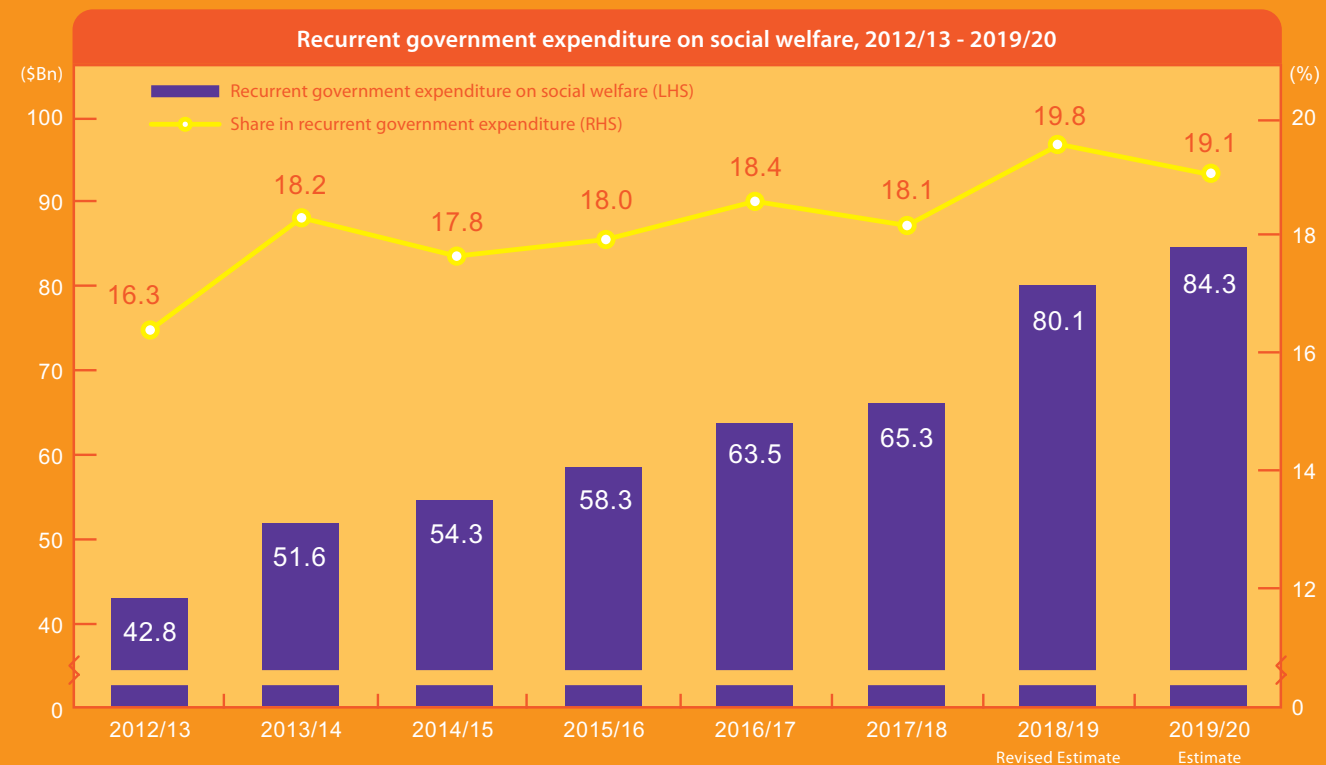
\* Non-cash benefits mainly comprising of public rental housing

### Structure of the CoP

- The third-term CoP commenced on 1 July 2018 and will last until 30 June 2020
- The membership of the CoP is highly representative, which is conducive to the promotion of tripartite collaboration among the community, business and government. The 21 non-official members come from different sectors, including the political, business, social welfare, education and social entrepreneurship sectors. For the first time, an ethnic minority member has been appointed to the CoP

### Continuous increase in government resources for people's livelihood and welfare

- Recurrent government expenditure on social welfare in 2019/20 is estimated to reach \$84.3 billion, almost doubled (97%) than that in 2012/13



### Retirement protection and support for the elderly

- Continued to monitor the poverty situation of the elderly, including a new supplementary analysis on the poverty situation of "income poor, owning property of certain value" elderly persons in the Hong Kong Poverty Situation Report 2017
- Enhanced the healthcare and community care services for the elderly, including the extension of the coverage of the Elderly Dental Assistance Programme under the Community Care Fund (CCF) to include elderly persons who are aged 65 or above and receiving the Old Age Living Allowance, and the extension of the Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Carers of Elderly Persons from Low-income Families
- Advised on arrangements related to the retirement protection system, including HKMC Annuity Plan and the abolition of the "offsetting" arrangement under the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme

### Working Family Allowance Scheme

- Continued to monitor the implementation of the Working Family Allowance (WFA) Scheme. On 1 April 2018, an enhanced Low-income Working Family Allowance (LIFA) Scheme was introduced and renamed the WFA Scheme, which aims at enhancing the poverty alleviation and prevention effectiveness of the Scheme
- As at end-February 2019, the WFA Scheme has benefitted more than 47 000 households (or near 160 000 persons, including 66 000 children or young persons), with more than 19 500 households not having benefitted from LIFA before. A total of about \$1.02 billion has been disbursed

### Strengthening support for ethnic minorities

- Held focus group meetings to invite views from ethnic minorities concern groups and service providers about the Government's setting up of the Steering Committee on Ethnic Minorities Affairs and the work of the committee
- Continued to monitor the poverty situation of the ethnic minorities
- Advised on the provision of support services for non-Chinese speaking students with special educational needs
- Followed up on the progress and effectiveness of the implementation of the Chinese Language Curriculum Second Language Learning Framework in primary and secondary schools

### Promoting youth upward mobility

- Continued to implement societal engagement projects which promote youth upward mobility, including:

#### "Life Buddies" Mentoring Scheme

- Since its implementation in the 2016/17 academic year,
- more than 110 government departments and private organisations have participated
- about 2 200 mentors have participated
- more than 2 700 places for job tasting have been offered
- about 5 200 students have benefitted

#### "Future Stars" Programme

- Since its implementation in 2014, more than 5 400 students from less privileged backgrounds have benefitted from the "Future Stars — Upward Mobility Scholarship", with a total of over \$28.6 million raised
- From July 2019 onwards, a new mentoring scheme under the "Future Stars" Programme will be implemented, under which experienced individuals from all walks of the community will become mentors to awardees of "Future Stars — Upward Mobility Scholarship" to help widen their exposure and plan for their future, such that their capacity of moving upwards socially may be enhanced

#### "Be a Government Official for a Day" programme

- Under the "Be a Government Official for a Day" programme first launched in 2018, 34 students were selected to shadow Secretaries and Bureau Directors to gain on-the-job experience of their work and a better understanding of the Government's operation. The programme offered an invaluable opportunity for officials to exchange views with students, which fully tied in with a key policy theme of the Government — connecting with young people
- A new round of the programme will cover more senior government officials, including the Chief Executive, Principal Officials, Under Secretaries, Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments, benefitting more students

## Support for patients with financial needs

- Continued to review the coverage of the First Phase Programme of the CCF Medical Assistance Programmes and the programme of Subsidy for Eligible Patients of Hospital Authority to Purchase Specified Implantable Medical Devices for Interventional Procedures
- Continued to subsidise eligible patients to purchase ultra-expensive drugs (including those for treating uncommon disorders) through the CCF
- Enhanced the means test mechanism for the CCF Medical Assistance Programmes to alleviate the financial burden on patients' families arising from medical expenditure and prevent potential friction caused by requiring family members to disclose their asset information



## Support for persons with disabilities and their carers

- Strengthened a range of support measures for persons with disabilities and their carers, including the extension of the following CCF assistance programmes

Special Care Subsidy for the Severely Disabled Programme

Pilot Scheme on Living Allowance for Low-income Carers of Persons with Disabilities



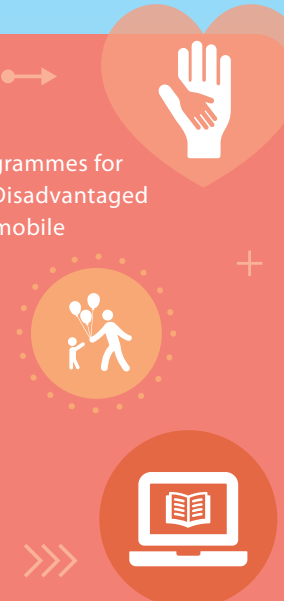
## Support for students

- Followed up on the implementation of the kindergarten education scheme
- Followed up on the progress of the implementation of after-school learning and support programmes for primary and secondary students from grassroots families under the Partnership Fund for the Disadvantaged
- Provided subsidy through the CCF for needy primary and secondary students for purchasing mobile computer devices to facilitate the practice of e-Learning
- Extended the following CCF assistance programmes

Enhancing the Academic Expenses Grant for Students with Special Education Needs and Financial Needs Pursuing Post-Secondary Programmes

Providing Hostel Subsidy for Needy Undergraduate Students

Increasing the Academic Expenses Grant under the Financial Assistance Scheme for Post-secondary Students



## Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund

- Through its three priority areas of work, namely innovative programmes, capacity building and research, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund (SIE Fund) serves as a catalyst for promoting social innovation and creating social benefits, with a view to alleviating and preventing poverty and social exclusion, promoting social integration, as well as enhancing the well-being and cohesion of the society
- Since the establishment of the SIE Fund in 2013, over \$150 million has been allocated to support the following initiatives, benefitting 160 000 persons:

### Funding innovative projects

- more than 1 000 innovative ideas generated
- 147 innovative projects funded
- benefitting about 59 000 persons, including children and youth, elderly, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and low-income families

### Supporting capacity building programmes

- seven projects funded
  - including the Food Support Flagship Project and the Community Housing Movement, benefitting 22 000 low-income persons and 1 000 low-income families respectively
- more than 560 training and promotional events organised
  - more than 140 000 attendances recorded
  - about 3 800 social entrepreneurs nurtured
  - more than 200 innovative ideas generated

### Conducting research

- 23 research projects commissioned and funded
- providing research findings which will help identify social issues and facilitate the formulation of strategies and solutions
- conducting applied research projects benefitting about 78 000 persons, including those with mild neurocognitive disorder, stroke patients, elderly, ethnic minority students and women, the hearing, visual and speech impaired as well as children with autism, through application of research findings in innovative products and services

### Major upcoming initiatives

- Engage a new batch of intermediaries for the three priority areas of work
- Establish a "gerontechnology platform" to link up stakeholders on both the "supply" and "demand" sides and support the healthy development of the gerontechnology ecosystem in Hong Kong
- Promote the pilot development of "pay-for-success" (also known as "social impact bond"), an innovative financing model based on public-private partnership which makes use of private investment funds to provide innovative social services under performance-based contractual arrangements

\* For details, please refer to the brochure published by the SIE Fund



## Community Care Fund

- Implemented the Pilot Scheme on Subsidy to Purchase and Construct Modular Social Housing to Facilitate the Implementation of the Modular Social Housing Scheme - Nam Cheong Street
- The Dementia Community Support Scheme has been incorporated into the government's regular assistance programme since February 2019. The Government has extended the scheme to all 41 District Elderly Community Centres in the territory.

- Since the establishment of the CCF in 2011,
  - 47 assistance programmes have been launched
  - a total commitment of over \$9.5 billion has been made
  - a total of around 1.68 million cases have benefitted
  - 13 assistance programmes have been incorporated into the Government's regular assistance programmes

\* For details, please refer to the CCF booklet



## The way forward

- Explore and implement more initiatives on poverty alleviation and support for the disadvantaged according to the four principles put forward by the Chief Executive, i.e. pro-child, pro-family, pro-work and pro-user
- Promote cross-sector and cross-profession collaboration, as well as public-private partnership, to tackle poverty issues
- Continue to monitor the poverty situation and the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policies



## Contact us

If you have any enquiries or comments on the work of the CoP, please feel free to contact us via the following channels:

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# Commission on Poverty Progress Report

## 2019

