

CE chairs Commission on Poverty Summit 2019 (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, chaired the Commission on Poverty Summit 2019 (Summit) today (May 11). The theme for the Summit this year was "Building Coalition to Tackle Poverty Through Innovative Means". Representatives from the business and social welfare sectors who have participated in poverty alleviation projects involving cross-sector collaboration were invited to share their views and experience at a panel discussion.

Over 400 guests attended the Summit. In addition to members of the Commission on Poverty (CoP) and its Task Forces, stakeholders from political, business and academic sectors as well as think tanks, non-governmental organisations and concern groups were present. Relevant Principal Officials and Heads of Departments also attended the Summit.

In her opening remarks, Mrs Lam said that broad participation is needed to address social issues effectively by making good use of the resources from corporations and the market. Through collaboration in the community in using new ideas and new service models, sustainable solutions could be identified. In terms of poverty alleviation, the Government will actively promote cross-sector collaboration to pool adequate resources to address various livelihood issues, thereby building a harmonious society. She hoped that the Summit could help raise the awareness and concerns about poverty alleviation work, and to inspire more new ideas to take the poverty alleviation work to a new stage.

At the ensuing panel discussion moderated by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, Mr Chua Hoi-wai, representatives from the business and social welfare sectors participating in cross-sector poverty alleviation projects exchanged views and experience on how to implement and promote innovative poverty alleviation initiatives through cross-sector collaboration. The speakers were the Convenor of the Our Hong Kong Foundation's Business for Social Good platform, Mr Bernard Chan; the President of the Lee Hysan Foundation, Ms Cecilia Ho; the Managing Director of Hip Shing Hong (Holdings) Company Limited, Mr David Fong; and the Chief Executive Officer of St James' Settlement, Ms Josephine Lee, together with the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong. There were lively exchanges amongst the speakers and Summit participants and many useful comments were raised on how to further promote and expand the cross-sector collaboration among the community, business and the Government in poverty alleviation.

After the panel discussion session, the Chief Secretary for Administration and Chairperson of the CoP, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, together with the Chairperson of the Community Care Fund Task Force, Dr Law Chi-kwong, and the Chairperson of the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund Task Force, Dr Jane Lee, gave an account of the achievements

of the CoP and the Task Forces in the past year. These included the key poverty alleviation measures, the implementation of youth societal engagement programmes such as the "Be a Government Official for a Day" Programme and the "Future Stars" Programme, filling the gaps of existing assistance programmes through the Community Care Fund and promoting social innovation through the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund.

In the second half of the Summit, Mrs Lam and Mr Cheung, together with Dr Law; the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung; and the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, exchanged views with the participants on the policies, measures and directions of poverty alleviation. Participants from various sectors were enthusiastic on giving views on the CoP's work and the way forward on alleviating poverty in Hong Kong.

The "Commission on Poverty Progress Report 2019" and publications on the "Future Stars" Programme, the "Life Buddies" Mentoring Scheme, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund and the Community Care Fund distributed at the Summit have been uploaded to the CoP's dedicated website (www.povertyrelief.gov.hk).

