About CLAP@JC

Created and funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, CLAP@JC is a ten-year Trust-initiated Project and a cross-sectoral support platform on career and life development (CLD), aiming to foster a sustainable ecosystem by bringing together the education, community and business sectors to smoothen the transition from school to work for all youth. The project encourages youth to "LIVE DIFFERENT, LIVE FULL" and maximise their endless potential through setting sail to a unique life journey.

Created and Funded by

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

Co-created by

香港中文大學 The Chinese University of Hong Kong

香港教育大學 The Education University of Hong Kong

Strategic Partners

BGCA 香港小童群益會

香港明愛 Caritas HONG KONG

香港基督教服務處 HONG KONG CHRISTIAN SERVICE

香港青少年服務處

善導會 SideBySide

YWCA 女青

Generation HONG KONG 港

CLAP@JC CAREER.LIFE. ADVENTURE.PATHWAYS

The Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)

Case Study

Created and Funded by

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust

Co-created by

香港中文大學 The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)

CASE STUDY

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Building a sustainable ecosystem

The Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community) (HKBM) is a systematic self-improvement framework that helps youth service units promote high-quality career and life development (CLD) measures that meet international standards. The framework aims to encourage social workers to use strategic vision to inject CLD elements into existing youth services. Based on the experience of implementing related standards in local secondary schools under CLAP@JC, HKBM in community brings together practical wisdom from the Chinese University of Hong Kong and six NGO partners, as well as Sir John Holman (the original author of the Gatsby Benchmarks), the global adviser for CLAP@JC, to jointly develop a set of ten CLD self-assessment standards that are tailored to local community services.

During the development period, the team invited eleven youth service units to participate in a pilot program. In addition to documenting the results of the self-assessment standards implementation in different service units, they also jointly explored the opportunities and challenges faced in promoting the mainstreaming of CLD, in order to continuously optimize the support and development of CLAP@JC, enabling youth service units to systematically, comprehensively, and sustainably assist young people in transitioning from school to the community and workplace in a constantly changing society, and encouraging young people to "LIVE DIFFERENT, LIVE FULL" and maximize their endless potential through setting sail to a unique life journey.

The Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community) - Good Practices

Benchmark	What "good" looks like?
1. A Stable and Visible Career and Life Development Policy	A stable and visible policy on career and life development should be formulated within the youth service unit to govern its action plan and program development. Such policy and program should be regularly evaluated and should be known and understood by youth, social workers and youth service practitioners, parents, corporate partners and relevant stakeholders.
2. Professional Competencies and Leadership	Leader of CLD team with the youth service unit should be equipped with core competences in leadership, management, coordination and networking to lead trained workers to implement the full spectrum of CLD related programs.
3. Learning from Multiple Pathways Information	Youth beneficiaries should have access to the latest information about multiple pathways to support their career and life decisions and act accordingly.
4. Address the Needs of Each Individual	Career and life development programs should be customized based on the needs of every youth, especially the needs of Special Target Groups, with addressing diversity and equality throughout.
5. Youth Engagement and Co-creation	Youth beneficiaries should be the protagonists of their own CLD journey, and NGOs should encourage and assist young people to become co-creators, actively participate in and promote CLD activities, and be pioneers in exploring their own CLD paths.
6. Career and Life Guidance for Developing Career Roadmaps	Every youth should receive personal guidance for identifying life goals, making their career roadmaps whenever significant education or career choices are being made.
7. Linking Youth Service Plans to Career and Life Development	Youth service practitioners should link regular activities and service plans to career and life development. Youth service practitioners should highlight the relevance of personal growth and development for a wide range of future career and life pursuits.
8. Meaningful Encounters with the Workplace	Youth could have multiple opportunities to learn from employers and employees about work, employment and the Values, Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge that are valued in the workplace. Youth could also have first-hand experiences of the workplace to help them gain job opportunities and expand their networks.
9. Meaningful Encounters with Further and Higher Education	Youths could understand the full range of progression opportunities available to them, including local and overseas academic and vocational pathways, such as higher education, Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET), working holiday and further education opportunities.
10. Parent Engagement and Support	Youth service unit should engage parents through various forms of formal and informal interaction so that parents have access to quality information on multiple pathways and become positive agents and collaborative partners in providing support to youth's career and life development.

Co-creating the benchmarks for CLD provisions Mastering a common language to optimize services

CLAP@JC connects with strategic partners in the social welfare sector, including the Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong (BGCA), Caritas Hong Kong (Caritas), Hong Kong Christian Service (HKCS), Hong Kong Children & Youth Services (HKCYS), SideBySide (SBS), and Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association (HKYWCA), to jointly promote the mainstreaming of career and life development (CLD). The six strategic partners have worked closely with the team from the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) to build the "Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)" (HKBM) over the past year and a half. Through pilot programs, the framework has been introduced to the service units under the organizations, injecting CLD elements into youth services and continuously reviewing and optimizing services.

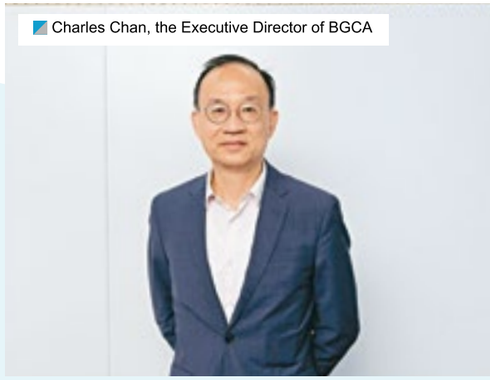
The significance of career and life development amidst evolving societal contexts

Gaining hands-on experience in the workplace to broaden future possibilities

As young people leave school and transition into the community and eventually the workforce, they face many challenges. CLD is not just about "finding a job", but also about helping them to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the world. Yvonne Yeung, the Chief Executive of HKYWCA, emphasizes the importance of CLD, noting that the world is constantly changing, technology is advancing rapidly, and the types of jobs available are constantly evolving. She believes that simply relying on the knowledge taught in textbooks may not be enough to give young people sufficient understanding of the business world. In a conversation with some young people in Form 4 and Form 5, she found that they did not know much about some subjects and related careers when preparing to choose their university courses. CLD can help students understand the real situation in the workplace and get to know some emerging industries.

Similarly, Charles Chan, the Executive Director of BGCA, also believes that in a rapidly changing world, helping young people understand and comprehend their environment is crucial. "Today, even some high school teachers have limited knowledge about certain university subjects," he says. CLD services can allow young people to experience the world of work firsthand, broaden their experiences and perspectives, and provide them with a more concrete understanding of different industries. He cites the example of some Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) candidates who, upon learning that they cannot enter their desired medical school and are instead assigned to other medical-related subjects, feel devastated. This may be due to their lack of understanding of some subjects and industries, as well as a lack of understanding of their own values. Charles believes that today's CLD work is not about "forcing young people to follow a fixed script," but rather about expanding their imagination of their career and their understanding of themselves.

Yvonne Yeung, the Chief Executive of HKYWCA

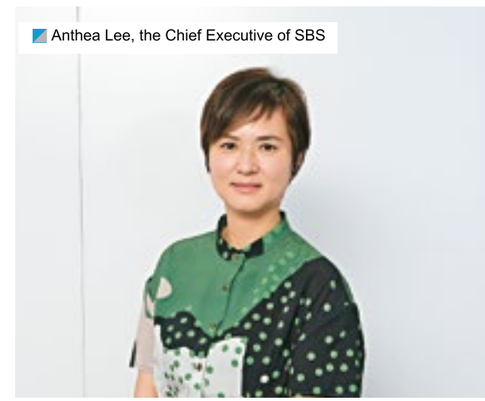

Charles Chan, the Executive Director of BGCA

Evolving from a "problem-based" approach to a "youth-based" approach

When it comes to the benefits of CLD for community youth, Yvonne Chak, the Director of HKCS, has noticed that many young people her organization has come into contact with are in a state of confusion. Traditional career planning aimed to train them for the job market, but the emergence of CLAP@JC represents a "paradigm shift" in social services that advocates for more personalized support for young people, particularly for non-engaged and low-motivation service targets. Assistance should be provided based on different situations to help them find their own direction, rather than just finding a job. Starting with their interests, young people can begin with unpaid work experience and gradually find their way. "This CLD model may be more suitable for grassroots and young people who are in a period of confusion." said Yvonne.

Anthea Lee is the Chief Executive of SBS. The young people her organization has come into contact with are mainly "institutionalized youth", who have generally left school or dropped out and have fewer opportunities to access CLD services. Due to the limitations brought about by personal backgrounds and social environments, these young people may feel that they "have no choice." For these young people, "finding a job is a 'responsibility' to society or those around them," and CLD is no longer relevant to them. Through CLAP@JC, the organization promotes CLD services that are no longer solely focused on finding jobs for young people, but rather on helping them find what they want, focusing on their overall development, and providing services that are not only "problem-focused". "CLD allows them to realize their dreams, and young people feel that society cares about them and is willing to invest resources in them." said Anthea.

Yvonne Chak, the Director of HKCS


Anthea Lee, the Chief Executive of SBS

Providing personalized services to support youth in shaping their future development

As for the service targets of HKCYS, there are many different groups of young people, and social workers in schools often come into contact with HKDSE candidates who are confused about their future, students on the verge of dropping out, and even young people with mental health problems. Joyce Lee, the Agency Director of the organization, said that if social workers can recognize the need for students to plan their future early on in the school setting and provide community resources and CLD services, they can help them find their goals, values, and direction, reduce their confusion, and prevent crises from arising.

Joyce Lee, the Agency Director of HKCYS

When Charlie Chan, the Service Head of Youth & Community Service cum Community Development Service of Caritas, shared his views on CLD, he pointed out that in the past, career planning was seen as "vocational training," and young people were "molded" during the process. They were "not seen" and it was difficult for them to recognize their own abilities. However, the CLD model promoted by CLAP@JC and strategic partners allows young people to take control of their own ideas and bring out different abilities and values. "Young people feel respected and gradually see their own abilities." He believes that personalized CLD allows young people to develop their own dreams and talents, without having to follow mainstream values. "The whole thing is a 'paradigm shift,' from a 'training factory' to a personal development program."

Charlie Chan, the Service Head of Youth & Community Service cum Community Development Service of Caritas

Introducing the "Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)" to enhance services

All six strategic partners recognize the importance of CLD and agree that it should be promoted as a mainstream service for young people. Therefore, the "Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)" (HKBM) was introduced and implemented in service units from the end of 2021.

Providing a "common language" for local youth services

Yvonne Yeung believes that although CLD is increasingly being discussed, the services provided by different units vary greatly. HKBM consolidates the achievements of the first phase of CLAP@JC. Over the years, various organizations have accumulated a lot of practical experience, and CLAP@JC has also collected feedback from various sectors, including parents and young people's personal experiences, making the service more mature. The framework is gradually becoming clearer with the integration of research from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The emergence of HKBM can become a standard in the industry and incorporated into the policy direction of organizations. "With this set of tools, we can make CLD mainstream and use it to formulate policies in all services that come into contact with young people," said Yvonne.

Yvonne Chak, expressed her gratitude to the team that developed HKBM, believing that it was not easy to integrate international perspectives and vision with local needs into a systematic framework. She also believes that the benchmarks can become a "common language" in the industry, bringing together workers from different units. As a result, HKCS has established an internal working group to connect with all service units that come into contact with young people and facilitate mutual exchange.

Supporting colleagues to understand the concepts behind

Charles pointed out that in order to implement HKBM, large-scale training must be conducted in organizations or the social welfare sector to help workers become familiar with the framework of HKBM and the tools provided by CLAP@JC. This can help more young people master self-assessment methods so that they can know clearly what steps to take in the face of any life changes and benefit for life. "After all, young people are the protagonists of their own CLD journey."

However, Joyce admitted that when the organization implemented HKBM, both management and middle-level workers felt confused and worried that their workload would increase. "But when we carefully studied each item in HKBM, we also recognized that these can provide direction for the organization's youth work policy and staff training." She was particularly impressed by BM7, "Linking Youth Service Plans to Career and Life Development", believing that it can help organizations think about how to connect services from different units to achieve synergy.

Emphasizing youth co-creation and addressing individual needs

Charlie emphasized that even before HKBM was introduced, workers had been providing CLD services and achieved good results. However, they might not have the opportunity to organize their experiences and achievements. The purpose of HKBM is not to standardize everything through an evaluation mechanism like a factory system. The benchmarks can be tailored to the conditions of each region or unit to develop individual unit development plans. Workers can adjust which benchmark to prioritize according to the needs of young people in their unit to improve youth services. "Each organization and unit has different characteristics, and even for the same benchmark, the methods of promotion are different."

Anthea also felt that the influence of HKBM is not limited to the industry. It also has the effect of "paradigm transfer" on how other partners define youth work. "It is also a good way to connect internally and externally." For example, SBS often collaborates with the Correctional Services Department (CSD), and HKBM can serve as a "common language" between the two to help organizations convey the concept and practice of CLD and bring about change for young people. "Previously, we only focused on helping young people find jobs, and their voices were not heard." In fact, young people in general institutions believe that their future is full of constraints under the system. "But after promoting career and life development, they have 'Say'." As with BM5 "Youth Engagement and Co-creation", young people should have a say in their own future.

Charlie also added that sometimes, workers may unconsciously follow social standards or external demands and rush to help young people "find any job." However, HKBM emphasizes youth co-creation, which can serve as a reminder and encourage different stakeholders to take an extra step with young people to help them navigate their own path.

Overcoming pain points to implement HKBM

Allowing flexibility in prioritizing areas for improvement

Although HKBM has many benefits for youth CLD, it is not easy to implement. As a leadership team, introducing 10 benchmarks into the organization for colleagues to understand and implement will inevitably encounter difficulties and resistance. How to overcome them? Charles believes that in order to achieve the best results with limited resources and time, it is necessary to select the most relevant benchmarks, including those that are relevant to service targets and colleagues, for development. "At the same time, we can refer to university research to understand which benchmarks are most critical and prioritize their promotion based on past experimental projects." He also pointed out that in the future, it is necessary to continue seeking simple entry plans to promote HKBM to more organizations and service units.

Yvonne Chak also agrees that allowing colleagues to choose based on the needs of the service unit and decide which items to prioritize is the key to successfully promoting the framework. "Communication is also very important, instead of mechanically implementing it!" The institution's management should lead colleagues to carefully understand the concept and content of HKBM, and think about how to implement them more creatively. In practical operations, it is possible to continuously contact and communicate with frontline colleagues through middle-level colleagues or by establishing HKBM ambassadors within the organization. She also suggests that by sharing the data obtained from self-improvement tools and analyzing it, colleagues can be informed of the effectiveness of the implementation, which can be encouraging.

Sharing achievements and encouraging continuous learning

Speaking of sharing results, Yvonne Yeung pointed out that each organization has different strengths and rich service experience for different youth groups. If each organization can share good practices with the industry, they can encourage each other and promote the effectiveness of HKBM even more significantly. Furthermore, organizations can even share resources and networks to maximize the services.

Regarding colleagues' reactions to HKBM, Joyce emphasized the importance of colleague training. "The whole spirit of CLAP@JC places great emphasis on social workers' ability to absorb the CLD model, as well as their buy-in to the vision and mission, hoping that colleagues can internalize the concept of CLD and thereby change the institutional culture." Therefore, professional training is crucial in the promotion process, and colleagues can equip themselves to become CLD experts through the training provided by CUHK. Institutional support for colleagues' continuous learning is also a driving force for promoting HKBM. Joyce also believes that colleagues' ability to make their own choices is the key to successful promotion. "They can enhance the elements of CLD in their current services."

Starting small and expanding from within to the outside

Anthea shared that the process of promoting HKBM in their organization can be divided into two phases. The first phase involves internal adjustments, where the organization chose to start with existing youth entrepreneurship and employment services, and added partner colleagues to work with unit colleagues, and expanded to other youth services, such as mental health services and ethnic minority youth services, after collecting successful cases. The second phase involves external coordination and communication, such as cooperating with CSD to promote CLD. "Sometimes colleagues find that partners also have requirements for CLD services, and they realize that the organization's services must also develop in this direction."

Charlie said that when promoting HKBM, they constantly remind colleagues that they can embed their personal service plans into the benchmarks. "In addition, we do not require all colleagues to participate immediately." The organization will select suitable colleagues as pioneers and simplify the self-improvement process as much as possible, starting with small-scale implementation.

*The leaders of the six NGOs have worked closely with Professor Steven Ngai (middle) from the Department of Social Work at CUHK to promote HKBM and share the achievements of their respective organizations.

Looking forward to the future and creating a ripple effect

Redefining the notion of 'talent' in the minds of employers

After a difficult but inspiring promotion process, looking to the future, leaders of various organizations believe that HKBM will have a significant impact on society as a whole. Yvonne Chak gave an example of some service units in their organization that have tried using CV360® as a reference for hiring young colleagues. "Some young people may not have high education, but after evaluation, it was found that they have great patience with the elderly." A large chain fast food restaurant also used CV360® as a reference for hiring employees. She hopes that through the promotion of CLAP@JC and the framework, the entire society's views on young people will change.

"We often talk about changing employers, but in fact, the social welfare sector is also one of them." Anthea pointed out that their organization has also hired young colleagues using CV360® and VASK as references in a project with CLAP@JC. In addition to changing the thinking of defining talents, Anthea also hopes that HKBM can shift the service goals and policy planning of the entire organization, from emphasizing "rehabilitation and recovery" to further assisting service targets in their continuous development.

Promoting experience inheritance in the social welfare sector

Joyce added that the organization can not only use CV360® and VASK to hire talents but also use these tools to affirm the professional development of young volunteers in "unpaid work," making it a win-win situation for both young people and the organization's voluntary work development.

Meanwhile, Charles looked at the impact of HKBM on the social welfare sector from another perspective. In recent years, the industry has faced the problem of talent loss, and HKBM provides a clear framework that is conducive to experience inheritance. "In fact, anyone who is familiar with this framework can apply it to different social welfare positions at any time or even to their own personal life development." He believes that constructing the framework's concepts and content to be "easy to learn and understand" and enabling colleagues to master it in a short period is the direction that must be explored for long-term development in the future.

Creating an enabling environment for young people

Yvonne Yeung pointed out from a macro perspective that today, all sectors of Hong Kong society are concerned about the future of young people, and CLD is the best entry point, allowing all sectors to contribute to young people. She believes that the concept of CLD can be expanded beyond the social welfare sector. If the entire society embraces the diverse paths, youth participation, and pursuit of dreams emphasized by CLD, employers and other stakeholders can create a more "friendly" work environment for young people and provide them with a network to achieve their life goals.

Regarding employers' attitudes towards young people, Charlie observed that some young people often "job hop," and he believes the reason is that young people cannot find the value that can engage them in the world of work. "In the past, some companies' human resources departments focused on how employees could bring profits to the company but didn't think about how the company could make young employees feel heard." He hopes that the promotion of CLD can help young people find their personal direction and, after entering the world of work from the community, make more employers and all sectors of society see the value of young people.

*Note: CV360® provides young people with different perspectives to showcase their strengths, emphasizing not only academic qualifications but also various "paid" and "unpaid" work experiences, exploring personal unique VASK (values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge), particularly suitable for youth in the exploration stage to understand and express themselves.

Ongoing evaluation and assessment against the established standards Collecting feedback closely tied to industry development

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) serves as one of the co-creators of CLAP@ JC, working together with six NGOs to consolidate frontline social workers' experiences and establish professional training courses related to Career and Life Development (CLD) services. CUHK also designs and promotes the "Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)" (HKBM), which helps organizations continuously review their service strategies and inject CLD elements into their existing services for youth. The program aims to promote the mainstreaming of CLD in the social sector.

Gathering experiences from local schools and consulting with international experts

As one of the strategic leaders of CLAP@JC, Professor Steven Ngai from the Department of Social Work at CUHK is also the Principal Investigator of CLAP@JC. His team collaborates closely with the six strategic partners to introduce HKBM to different levels of the industry and collect feedback from frontline social workers and management. Through research, the team seeks to further understand the progress and effectiveness of the self-improvement framework and continuously improve and promote the framework to enhance community youth services.

Professor Ngai pointed out that the design of HKBM in community is based on the experience of CLAP@JC in promoting HKBM in local secondary schools. The framework was jointly developed by CUHK and the six NGOs, summarizing their practical wisdom. "During the process, Sir John Holman, the Global Adviser for CLAP@JC and the creator of the Gatsby Benchmarks, also provided valuable insights." The design of the HKBM is tailored to local community services, with its ten benchmarks providing a framework for service self-improvement. "With this framework, local youth service units can promote high-quality CLD services that meet international standards."

"Only in Hong Kong can NGOs develop a CLD self-improvement framework worldwide." Due to the different operating nature of schools and communities and the diversity of stakeholders and youth groups in the community, promoting the CLD self-improvement framework in the community is more complex than promoting it in schools. Professor Ngai emphasized that the spirit behind HKBM promoted by CLAP@JC in schools and communities is consistent, with adjustments made according to different environments. "For example, in schools, we hope to connect CLD with the curriculum, while in community services, we hope to integrate CLD into youth service planning."

Professor Ngai from the Department of Social Work at CUHK pointed out that before the launch of HKBM, social workers in different positions were working hard independently. With the introduction of the framework, standards can be integrated for easier sharing of experiences and resources.

From drafting to training and execution of pilot program

In December 2020, Professor Ngai's team, together with six NGOs, began drafting HKBM and completed the initial draft within eight months. They consulted with various stakeholders, including colleagues from different organizations and international consultants, and continuously revised the content of the framework. "Sir John Holman gave us a lot of valuable advice, especially reminding us not to make the framework too complicated and to ensure that frontline workers can easily understand it." In August 2021, HKBM was officially launched, completing the first phase of the promotion work. The Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community) Committee was also established to develop promotion strategies and steps to implement the pilot program.

The committee believes that the key to promoting HKBM is to provide training for social workers. Therefore, from August to October 2021, the committee launched the second phase of promoting the framework, training the first batch of HKBM Facilitators. "These facilitators are the key to the pilot program. They establish small groups in their respective organizations, including organizational leaders and colleagues."

The pilot program is the third phase of the framework's implementation. From September 2021 to March 2022, 11 service units in six NGOs began self-assessment based on the checklist provided by the committee. At the same time, the committee's core members provided guidance and feedback to each service unit, co-building action plans and implementing them one by one.

Sharing good practices to engage more organizations

"During the process, we found that even though HKBM is only in its initial stage, the workers themselves have valuable experience and good examples to share, and different organizations have different characteristics, which are crucial for further comprehensive implementation of the framework," said Professor Ngai. "Different units face different service targets, and their approaches vary. For example, among community youth, there are young mothers and institutionalized youth, with different ways of contact. Therefore, CLAP@JC's tools and resources need continuous innovation and change." Therefore, the committee will integrate the experience and examples collected in the pilot program and continue to share them with the industry in the future.

Professor Ngai believes that cultivating workers' understanding of the concept of HKBM is the most important step in continuous promotion. Therefore, the committee plans to launch a larger-scale training in the industry by the end of 2022. Looking ahead to 2023, he hopes that the framework can be introduced to more different organizations in the industry, further mainstreaming CLD for local youth services.

Professor Ngai (fourth from left) and leaders of six NGOs held a seminar on HKBM.

Mindset change in social sector by creating a positive atmosphere

Looking back on the development of HKBM in the local social welfare and service industry over the past two years, Professor Ngai admits that there was indeed anxiety and concern among colleagues at the beginning of its implementation. "In the past, the local social welfare sector often had to face 'external evaluation,' and colleagues often felt that their workload was increasing, which caused them stress." However, after training facilitators and sharing the HKBM's principles and related practical wisdom within their organizations, colleagues' views on HKBM gradually changed. "My team and I visited colleagues in organizations, and they were happy to communicate with us, indicating that they felt like equal partners in building the 'self-improvement' process, not just accepting evaluation from experts on high."

In fact, HKBM does not have a mandatory requirement that service units must implement all ten benchmarks simultaneously, but they can prioritize which ones to execute based on individual circumstances. "When they knew that they had a high degree of autonomy, their response became more positive." Professor Ngai emphasized that during the implementation of self-assessment, they would try to reduce colleagues' burden, such as allowing them to use their existing service plans and activity photos as self-improvement basis. "We also give encouragement and affirmation to colleagues, such as inviting them to share good examples with other units." Professor Ngai said, "Establishing a positive atmosphere is crucial for promoting HKBM."

Another reason for colleagues' increased acceptance of "self-assessment" is that they see the benefits of HKBM. "Some colleagues directly told me that they were initially very resistant to the self-assessment framework, but later saw its relevance to their work and the results it brought. For example, the framework reminded them that collaborating with business partners could involve some preparation work to help employers better understand young people, such as using the Values, Attitudes, Skills, and Knowledge (VASK) test, which also allows employers to consider more perspectives, not just academic qualifications." Professor Ngai added that some employers may initially be enthusiastic about helping young people, but may later be disappointed with their job performance. However, if social workers can use more tools from CLAP@JC, they can help employers better understand young people's characteristics and more effectively coordinate and match them.

Exciting the industry and relevant stakeholders with positive progress and research findings

To understand the effectiveness of HKBM, Professor Ngai's team conducted quantitative research during the pilot program period, comparing data from colleagues' self-assessments with CLAP@JC's collected data on young people's situations, including different indicators, such as social integration and career development. The research results were encouraging, with one finding showing that young people who received CLD services during the pilot program had a significant increase in social integration compared to those who did not receive such services. On the other hand, young people who did not receive CLD services showed a trend of decreasing social integration during the pandemic.

In addition, during the pilot program period, Professor Ngai's team also conducted qualitative research through focus groups with five different sectors, including organization leaders, frontline workers, young people, employers, and parents, to understand the implementation and effectiveness of HKBM. "Organization leaders feel that HKBM is a good framework that allows them to know which services are performing well and which ones need improvement."

"Colleagues believe that HKBM can remind them to evaluate whether young people are 'successful,' not just based on whether they have a job, but using the concept of 'expanded notion of work' to help young people understand their VASK and move towards multiple pathways." Professor Ngai pointed out that in the past, social workers tended to focus on crisis intervention when serving young people in the community, putting the emphasis on "problem-based" work. "After colleagues were exposed to the framework, they felt that they could take a step forward and use a holistic approach and vision to understand their work from an ecological perspective, connect more with different stakeholders, including business people and parents, and do more 'preventive' or even 'developmental' work."

Redefining the roles of social workers and working together to support youth development

HKBM broadens the horizons of social workers and helps them redefine their roles. They no longer feel that they are working alone, but rather can become bridges between different partners to help stakeholders play their roles and gain value, such as talent that is beneficial to the development of their companies. "In this era, to do a good job with young people, we must have such insights," said Professor Ngai. Connecting different stakeholders can truly change the ecosystem and help young people have better career and life development. "Our goal is to connect with policy makers, and we are currently collaborating with government departments," he added. He hopes that the influence of the framework will be like "throwing a stone into the water, generating many "ripples."

Professor Ngai summarized that HKBM can not only establish industry standards for local youth services, but also help NGOs review their service development progress and plan for future development. HKBM provides clear guidance, helps colleagues set goals and pursue progress, and also helps the industry pass on their experience, connect stakeholders, and bring about social ecological changes. In a rapidly changing world, it can sustainably help young people grow, fully unleash their talents, and live out various possibilities.

Professor Ngai specially thanked the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for initiating CLAP@JC and connecting international consultants to develop HKBM in Hong Kong

Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association

Strengthening the CLD initiatives through community of practice to promote communication

CLAP@JC aims to promote mainstreaming of career and life development (CLD) services and encourage youth service units to establish stable and clear policies for CLD provisions through the "Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)" (HKBM), providing guidance for relevant action plans and projects. At the same time, the program expects the leadership teams of participating organizations to have core competencies in leadership, management, networking, and coordination, and to be able to lead trained social workers to promote CLD-related activities. To this end, YWCA as a strategic partner of CLAP@JC, has established a cross-unit "Career and Life Development Service Coordination Meeting" to develop a comprehensive and sustainable CLD policy for the organization, as well as arrange social work training programs, enhance overall youth services, and facilitate communication and cooperation among different units.

The establishment of a cross-unit communication platform to promote mainstreaming of CLD services

Ko Po Lun, the convenor of the YWCA's "Career and Life Development Service Coordination Meeting" and the captain of the "Career and Life Development Service Team" said, "The core direction of our organization is to mainstream CLD services. We hope to promote overall services of the organization to help youth groups in special need with their CLD journey. Regardless of the overall service design, colleague training, service development, how to view the cases we are supporting, and even connecting with community stakeholders, we refer to the HKBM and continue to improve at all levels."

The idea behind the "Career and Life Development Service Coordination Meeting" is to establish a constant communication platform across units to promote mainstreaming of CLD services. At the same time, the meeting serves as a symbolic role of demonstrating the organization's emphasis on applying CLD frameworks to youth services to social workers. Ko Po Lun pointed out that the organization has already formulate a strategy for CLD services, divided into two phases. The first phase focuses on collaborating with CLAP@JC to establish the organization's youth CLD service model and infrastructure, while the second phase continues to apply CLD concepts to sustain service development.

CLAP@JC team provides training and support for service development to various units. The "Career and Life Development Service Coordination Meeting" is a cross-unit platform that helps service units establish consensus and set goals for promoting CLD services through coordination and communication. For example, the organization plans to strengthen CLD services for school social workers in the coming year. The effectiveness of the coordination meeting is not only to mobilize social workers in schools to apply CLD frameworks and concepts to intervene in cases in over thirty schools but also to assist in promoting CLD activities at the inter-school level.

BENCHMARK 1
A STABLE AND VISIBLE CAREER AND LIFE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Sharing the effectiveness of CLD work and consolidating good practices

During the quarterly meetings, the organization shares the progress of CLAP@JC's promotion of CLD services in the industry, allowing social workers to embrace the common goal of mainstreaming CLD.

On the other hand, attendees are also encouraged to exchange ideas. Different departments and service units, including youth outreaching teams (YOT), school social workers, integrated children and youth services centres (ICYSC), career development and continuing education, and young mother services, share their work progress and situations, observe and learn from each other, and promote discussions on the possibility of cross-unit connections.

For example, school social workers can connect with more youth service units through this platform, strengthen the collaborations between schools and community services, and enhance the transition mechanism from schools to community or workplaces. During the pandemic, DSE students lacked different experiential activities, and youth service units responded to this need by designing a vocational trial program to help graduates increase internship opportunities.

"At the meeting, the various service units within the organization can learn about effective practices from one another and apply them to their own services."

The meeting also integrates and consolidates good examples of practice consolidation. CLAP@JC team has designed service models in different units, whether it is in activities or case interventions, which may also be applicable in other units. For example, the youth outreaching teams in the Central and Western districts and the Islands district once co-created a set of six sessions of 'Career Construction Interview' (CCI) as a case intervention framework with the support of CLAP@JC. "The youth outreaching teams have tried it out, and in fact, this framework is also suitable for other counselling services." The coordination meeting continues to share good practices, extending them to different service units in the organization.

In addition to connecting different service units, departments can also collaborate across departments through the coordination meeting. In the organization, "Youth Employment" and "Vocational Training" were originally two different departments, but they identified and developed commonalities through the coordination meeting. "If we can use a common language, infrastructure, and model to provide CLD support for young people, we can maximize the outcomes."

BENCHMARK 2
PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AND LEADERSHIP

The involvement of management highlights its importance and encourages individual units to communicate with each other

"The meeting is not about assigning tasks to colleagues like a working group, but rather giving direction and coordination to allow individual units to try to implement them after hearing the sharing." Ko Po Lun emphasized that the organization hopes to mainstream CLD services and promote youth service that emphasizes the strengths and VASK (values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge) of young people under the implementation of CLAP@JC. This approach guides young people to gradually establish core CLD competencies from a "strength-based" perspective, which helps them cope with different challenges in their CLD journey. The meeting involved colleagues at different levels, including management, and aimed to send a message to colleagues that mainstreaming CLD is important to the organization.

He understands that colleagues have different types of services to attend to on a daily basis, but with the support from the upper management, it will help prioritize CLD services. "In this case, to promote colleagues to value and implement CLD services, colleagues at different levels must participate and establish an icon within the organization." Ko Po Lun was appointed as the convener of the "CLD Service Coordination Council" and invited colleagues to participate in related work, which received support from colleagues. "Colleagues from all departments and service units who want to work on CLD can contact me or my team, supervisor, to discuss how to implement it. We will coordinate through the CLD team level, department level, or organizational level to help colleagues solve their doubts and needs," said Ko Po Lun.

Experiential Learning Activities about Barista

Ko Po Lun acknowledges that the meetings have been effective in promoting communication within the organization. In addition to reporting on service promotion, the meetings also provide opportunities for ongoing communication and knowledge sharing after the meetings. For instance, during coordination meetings, the youth outreaching team may introduce the CCI counselling framework. If social workers from other units are interested in learning more, they can exchange experiences in individual service unit meetings. The organization emphasizes the importance of promoting CLD, and encourages social workers to share progress updates in meetings at different levels. Units are also encouraged to connect with each other on relevant services and promote cross-unit collaboration. Through these communication channels, the organization aims to reinforce teams' work beliefs and improve the quality of intervention work.

The establishment of a CLD service brand aims to address the needs of young people's growth

Ko Po Lun is also responsible for allocating resources provided by CLAP@JC and opening them up for interested units to apply for in the form of a fund. "We are not just giving resources, but inviting social workers to actively apply and understand what they want to get involved in during the process, and then providing support. Through resource provision, we establish an incentive for social workers to implement CLD services." In addition to the resources provided by CLAP@JC, social workers can also use the organization's name to write project proposals and apply for other CLD-related services or resources in the industry.

Ko Po Lun believes that HKBM is helpful for organizations to establish service brands, which is crucial for the overall sustainable development of the organization. Establishing a common language and service model helps social workers communicate with each other, exchange the needs of young people, and use an evidence-based framework for evaluation and service provision. "Why do we encourage everyone to support CLD services? The purpose behind it is to connect the ideas, share the needs of service targets, resources, and other aspects of the organization together, and to more effectively respond to the real needs of young people's growth at the service level."

Social workers participate in training related to CLD services.

HKBM 1 and 2 emphasize the importance of cross-unit collaboration to achieve benefits

Industry level		Organizational level
Design and optimize intervention frameworks and tools for youth for the industry/unit	Resource sharing	Social workers utilize evidence-based frameworks and tools to ensure the effectiveness of the services provided
Inject a CLD perspective into different youth service units	Training arrangements	Help the organization to develop talents and build a professional social workers' team
Inspire the industry/unit to refer to good practices and promote more innovative CLD projects	Consolidation of good practices	Help the organization to establish a service brand and improve service effectiveness
Provide empirical evidence for CLD intervention frameworks, methods, and tools	Participation in research projects	Professional research helps to validate social work interventions, affirming the team's service quality and enhancing their ability to meet
Establish a transition mechanism from school to community services to provide youth with more comprehensive CLD support	Promote cross-unit collaboration	Different units can communicate with a common language and access more information and resources through collaborative platforms

The youth outreaching teams in Central and Western District and Islands District co-create a CLD counselling framework and promote cross-unit collaboration through sharing experiences and exchanging ideas

YWCA has selected the youth outreaching teams in Central and Western District and Islands District as the first phase trial units for HKBM. According to Ms. Li Yuen Ming, the Unit in charge (service), with the training and support of CLAP@JC team, social workers have learned to apply the CCI, using five questions as a starting point to assist young people in understanding themselves from a new perspective and thereby imagining more diverse development paths. "Using this framework, social workers can have a more systematic conversation with young people to help them revisit their personalities and past stories."

Career Construction Interview, CCI

Introduction question

How can I help you with your career and life development?

- **Q1** What are your favourite magazines, TV shows, websites, or YouTube channels?
- **Q2** Can you share three people you admired during childhood?
- **Q3** What is your favourite book, movie, or story currently?
- **Q4** What is your favourite quote or motto?
- **Q5** Can you share three vivid childhood memories from before the age of six?

BENCHMARK 6
CAREER AND LIFE GUIDANCE FOR DEVELOPING CAREER ROADMAPS

She gave an example of a youth who dropped out of school because of her passion for dancing, which caused a rift in their family relationships. Through the CCI questions proposed by the social worker, the youth discovered that the real reason she loved dancing was because she enjoyed teamwork. This inspired her to explore other CLD possibilities and be willing to return to school and continue her studies, also improve the relationship with her family.

Ms. Lee also stated that the Central and Western District and Islands District are vast in size and have always valued the connection and communication between the various units within the organization. They regularly discuss the progress of individual cases at meetings to seek the most appropriate intervention methods for the service targets. With the concept and framework of CLD, social workers can assess the needs of young people at the development stage and have a clearer idea of the direction in which they should lead them. "For example, in the past, we encouraged youth to participate in volunteer services to build relationships and showcase their strengths. Now, we hope to help youth establish 'unpaid work' experiences."

"Unpaid work" includes work exposure, voluntary work, domestic/neighbourhood provisioning, serious leisure and more.

Using the same language and concepts to design and conduct services, and evaluating and discussing individual cases not only facilitates the process but also helps establish a mutual understanding. Experience sharing also helps social workers apply tools learned from CLAP@JC training, such as VASK cards and CV360®, to achieve better results.

Hong Kong Christian Service

Adopting an evidence-based framework to enhance counselling and inspire multiple pathways

Hong Kong Christian Service (HKCS) is a strategic partner of CLAP@JC and is committed to injecting career and life development (CLD) elements into different youth service units and deepening the training content of social work teams. The organization refers to the 'Youth Development and Intervention Framework' (YDIF) to formulate counselling and service priorities and content, and uses the "Expanded Notion of Work" (ENOW) concept to broaden the CLD vision for youth. Meanwhile, social workers from different youth service units within the organization employ a variety of intervention tools learned from training in a flexible manner, making individual counselling services more in-depth and effective, and successfully helping young people set CLD goals.

The idea of Expanded Notion of Work (ENOW) aimed at broadening the definition of work and encourage young people participation in various paid and unpaid work experiences that reflect their interests, as well as the exploration of pathways at their own pace."Paid Work" includes employment, entrepreneurship, or trial work programs, "Unpaid Work" includes work exposure, volunteer work, neighbourhood care, or serious leisure, reflecting their interests, as well as the exploration of pathways at their own pace.

CV360® focuses on youths' "paid" and "unpaid" experience which allows them to showcase their strengths from different angles. By exploring their own VASK (Values, Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge) with this tool, youths would understand more about themselves and present to the others.

Understanding the individual developmental stages of young people helps to continuously enrich their CLD journey

Front-line outreach social workers, Kitkat Lam, Wong Kam Wai, and Homer Choi, engage with young people from different backgrounds on the streets, including school dropouts, ethnic minorities, and young mothers. The three social workers have learned about YDIF and intervention concepts and tools such as VASK and CV360® from the training provided by CLAP@JC and the sharing sessions of different units, and have applied them in planning and conducting activities and counselling.

Kitkat Lam pointed out that CLD intervention framework and tools that the organization has adopted through CLAP@JC have become a "common language" among social workers. Clear understanding of the framework's concepts among social workers has facilitated smoother collaboration and communication, as well as resource sharing to provide diversified services for young people, such as various career experiences. The framework, also known as the "4 pillars" divides youth's CLD journey into four stages: "Engagement", "Self-understanding", "Career and Pathway Exploration" and "Planning and Career Management". Social workers can analyse which stage the target youth are in and provide corresponding services and design appropriate activities accordingly.

Kitkat Lam mentioned that YDIF provides directional intervention, which helps social workers consider the sustainability of activities. For example, encouraging young people to participate in experiential learning activities to enhance their self-understanding and then arranging job tasting to support their exploration of future expectations and career paths. Even in the same activity, such as a "barista training program", individual youth may have different participation goals, and the role of the social worker is to assist them in identifying their expectations and directions. Sometimes, youth may not follow the "Four Pillars" in a linear progressive manner, or their CLD may be influenced by personal or environmental factors, and social workers must adjust their assessments accordingly.

Wong Kam Wai also stated that YDIF helps assess the growth stages of individual cases to assist in the career planning and counselling process. As most of the cases he handles are in the "Engagement" or "Self-understanding" stage, he mainly invests time and resources in organizing interesting activities to enhance their participation.

Homer Choi believes that YDIF can help social workers understand the motivations behind youth's behaviour, thus enabling them to plan services more systematically and prioritize them accordingly. Furthermore, YDIF also allows for the integration of various resources and strengths of young people, thus enhancing the counselling process.

Effective tools serve as conversation entry points, and personalized counselling helps young people think about their career paths

When young people begin to participate in experiential activities and discover themselves and their interests, social workers can apply some intervention tools, such as CV360® and ENOW Mapping. Social workers can also incorporate the concept of ENOW into counselling and guidance to broaden young people's vision and imagination of CLD. The application of intervention tools can assist young people in more effectively expressing and understanding their VASK (Values, Attitudes, Skills and Knowledge)

At the same time, it allows social workers to have a deeper understanding of young people and provide appropriate follow-up and counselling. For example, young people may not always know how to use appropriate vocabulary to describe their feelings, experiences, and personality, and tools like VASK cards can serve as an entry point for both parties to engage in dialogue.

Wong Kam Wai explained, "Most of them (young people) have a limited understanding of themselves, such as 'I have many friends and my life is good,' but they seldom reflect on deeper self-awareness, such as their values in life." He believes that the more young people are able to describe themselves as "what kind of person they are," the more advantageous it is for their CLD. "For example, at first, he (the young person) simply felt that 'being good to family members is necessary,' but it turned out to be rooted in his strong family values. By understanding themselves, young people will appreciate their ideas and abilities more and gradually be able to integrate their abilities and interests and develop towards a certain direction."

Social workers use tools like VASK and ENOW Mapping to provide individual counselling and consultation, which also helps deepen young people's pursuit of their interests and develop them into relevant skills or experiences, which can be included in their own CLD blueprint. For example, Wong Kam Wai cited a case in which a young person who suspected he had social anxiety joined the centre's basketball team and found that he could communicate effectively with teammates from different ethnic backgrounds. He thought basketball could only be viewed as a hobby or after-school activity, and that not being able to become a basketball player meant he could not develop his interest into a career. However, through ENOW Mapping, his basketball-related skills and experiences were recognized, and he began to think about becoming an assistant coach, coach, or even running a basketball club. He collaborated with other team members to write a proposal and apply for funding to organize the club. "The concept of ENOW enriched his vision and transformed his thinking."

ENOW Mapping
Please scan the QR code for more details

VASK
Please scan the QR code for more details

The staff of HKCS are undergoing CLD training.

Tailored experiential learning activities to help individuals explore multiple pathways for development

Through different experiential activities, social workers can inspire young people to think about diverse pathways and encourage them to set short-term or long-term goals, try to plan and practice their personal career paths.

The service unit has set up booths at Lunar New Year fairs and markets, and Lam Ka Kei has invited some young mothers to become volunteers. Some of the participants were inspired and later started their own online stores. Before setting up the market, the staff would "purposefully" invite some suitable young mothers to help prepare. Most of these young mothers are interested in starting their own businesses or are skilled in handicrafts: "They may not be able to juggle a 'job', but in fact, there are many ways to 'work', and being a mother does not necessarily mean having only one job of 'taking care of children'."

Young mothers can personally experience "work" and not only gain a sense of fulfilment but also integrate their own experiences, consider possible future developments, and set goals with the guidance of social workers, such as continuing their education. Work brings self-worth to people. For young mothers, discovering possibilities beyond full-time work, whether it is volunteering, starting a business, or other development opportunities, can help them explore themselves. This highlights the importance of diverse pathways for them. Kitkat Lam admits that the concept of "multiple pathways" is also a good reminder for her on how to guide young people to explore CLD. "Young people do not necessarily have to return to a job, they can have multiple developments, and even become slashers."

Through basketball activities, young people can develop related skills and experiences, thus broadening their imagination for career and life development.

BENCHMARK 3
LEARNING FROM MULTIPLE PATHWAYS INFORMATION

Wong Kam Wai also believes that inspiring young people to develop "multiple pathways" is related to enriching life experiences. He pointed out that the young people he encounters in outreaching services often drop out of school early and lack opportunities to consider career development. They only take it step by step when facing future issues. The organization provides diverse vocational experience activities, such as baristas, hairdressers, etc., allowing young people to access different industries and find their interests and reflect on their career paths. "Many students only study to graduate from high school and then find a job, but some students want to start a business, do catering, etc., because they have 'tried' some experiential activities and come into contact with industries that are difficult to access in daily life, such as bartenders, and have more imagination for CLD."

Assisting the organization in setting up booths at markets is also a form of unpaid work experivence for young mothers.
Some of the photos were taken before the pandemic.

New experiences provide opportunities for young people to challenge their existing mindset and reflect on their personal growth

In fact, some young people have clear dreams, but through the process of self-understanding, they realize that their abilities and personalities may not fully match the requirements of related professions. Some young people may also discover, through real experiences or exploring their VASK, that they can better utilize their personal characteristics when playing other roles. Homer Choi appreciates the new experiences for the young people. Young people have established impressions of certain professions, but they may have different experiences when they actually try them out. Last year, his centre rented gaming racing equipment to provide young people with a different experience. As a result, participants found that professional e-sports players require time, money, and determination. Some participants then considered exploring other jobs in the automotive industry. The centre also contacted local e-sports or small racing tracks to provide some job opportunities for young people to establish networks and gain experience related to the racing industry. "Sometimes, there is a gap between ideals and reality. How do we connect them? We want to give them a sense of 'hope' while also helping them manage their expectations and shape their own future through each experiential activity."

Regarding "multiple pathways", Homer Choi believes that in the past, everyone's understanding was that the goal of seeking career paths must be a full-time job, and a "good job" with favourable prospects. However, in recent years, the vision of social workers has widened, and they agree that "pathways" can be multiple and concurrent. The young people he encounters in outreach work may have lower motivation for change, and even in the face of the pressure to join social groups, it may be difficult for them to fully commit to work at once. However, developing interests and experiencing slash jobs is also a feasible intervention direction that can help them regain self-affirmation.

From another perspective, the CLD situation for each case is different when entering the "closure" stage. Homer Choi pointed out that Chinese boys generally start to have a vision for life and expect to pursue goals through work when their relationship with their family improves or they have a stable partner. As their work ability improves, their self-confidence will also increase over time, and eventually they can embark on their own career path. At the same time, he also observed another lifestyle choice in society: ethnic minority young people tend to pursue a simple, relaxed, and present-oriented life, and may not have too many expectations for material and achievements like the mainstream local society, which is also another "pathway". The significance of helping young people develop "multiple pathways" is to help them affirm themselves through experiences and experiences and to reaffirm that the social system is open to them, allowing them to become the protagonists of their personal career and life development.

BENCHMARK 4
ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL

Regarding how social workers can use tools to support youth's CLD, please scan the QR code for more information.

After experiencing e-sports racing, young people discovered that becoming a professional player is not easy and began to alternative pathways that maximize their talents.

The Boys' & Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong

Adopting a youth-centric approach and addressing individual needs to enhance youth services

The Boys' and Girls' Clubs Association of Hong Kong (BGCA) is a strategic partner of CLAP@JC. The staff makes good use of the resources provided by the program to design youth-centric activities to serve different service targets with different needs. In the process of promoting youth career and life development (CLD), the staff specifically focuses on the status, background, and personal growth stage of the service targets to gradually help them establish values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge (VASK) related to CLD. At the same time, they encourage young people to co-create the activities, becoming the protagonists of their own CLD journey.

Fostering a growth mindset by providing youth with the necessary support to overcome obstacles and develop resilience

The "Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community)" (HKBM) emphasizes the correlation between young people's personal growth and their future life pursuits. BGCA's outreach social worker, Fong Ka Long, uses CLAP@JC resources to promote a fitness program called "Let's Struggle". Through fitness as an intervention method, the staff helps service targets deal with obstacles and prepares them for further CLD exploration in the future. The young people who participate in the program come from different backgrounds, including hidden youth, high risk school dropout, and non-engaged youth who graduated from Form 6.

Three young people had felt pressure in making choices for their future due to their lack of past successful experiences. They had even believed that they had no choice, which led them to prefer hiding at home or engaging in unrecognized jobs, and just getting by in life. They had refused to participate in any activities when invited, which was a common experience for outreach social workers. Fong Ka Long observed that "career planning" is generally a burden for outreach youth. "Young people from different backgrounds have varying starting points, with some having lower academic and growth backgrounds. These individuals often lack the necessary resources and networks to effectively navigate the challenges of the school system, which can hinder their ability to achieve success and develop the skills needed to support their future choices and CLD."

Fong Ka Long believes that the three young people must first try to update their self-image from new experiences and complete some "difficult but achievable" tasks to understand that hard work is required for anything they do and to establish an attitude of overcoming difficulties, in order to further explore CLD. In fact, this is related to the values advocated and hoped to be cultivated in young people in the program. "In the past, most career planning activities helped young people find development directions, but this fitness program is to deal with challenges." he explained. Even if they are provided with many experiential activities to choose from and try different occupations and interests, if they do not know how to overcome challenges and do not try seriously, it is also difficult for them to determine whether they really like to do it.

Supporting the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of young individuals and cultivating their attitudes through exercise

The program not only addresses the growth needs of the three young people but also addresses their health needs. "One of school dropout had serious skin problems due to not drinking enough water, staying at home without sunlight and exercise for a long time, affecting his appearance." Fong Ka Long invited them to participate in a three-month fitness training program for the "superficial" reason. "I asked them, do you want to change your appearance? Do you want to meet a girlfriend?" As a result, the three finally agreed to join the fitness program and began rigorous training for three months, including two to three fitness exercises per week and daily dietary and lifestyle regulation.

Fong Ka Long emphasized that unlike regular interest classes, this training is very strict and often pushes them to an 'uncomfortable' state. The purpose of the fitness training is not to change the three individuals' body shape, but to change their mind set so that they can face the challenges of life with courage. Therefore, the training must have a certain level of hardship, allowing them to experience the process of "paying a little more" to overcome challenges. "At the beginning, they were unwilling to continue training after sweating a little, but later they would ask me how to train at home." Through the program, they began to become "demanding of themselves," understanding that to achieve any goal, they must face uncertainties and difficulties. By accompanying young people to step out of their comfort zone and overcome different challenges, each small step of success injects confidence, skills, and a sense of self-control for their future career and life development.

Through fitness training, it helps young people establish a serious attitude towards things. Some of the photos were taken before the pandemic.

Having the first experience as mentors, gaining valuable experience and building their personal resumes

On the other hand, the fitness program instructor is also a young person, only one or two years older than the three "students". Through this program, he also took a new step in his CLD. He used to wander the streets but later got in touch with social workers from organizations. After graduating from university, he intended to become a fitness coach but had no opportunity to gain work experience and did not know where to start. Therefore, he accepted the invitation of social workers to design a fitness program for the three young people, guide them in training, build personal experience and resumes, and obtain a fitness coach license. "During the process, he had to constantly refer to books and further his education, adjust the program according to the situation of each student, and learn how to interact with and guide the students."

BENCHMARK 5
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND CO-CREATION

"The three students are in a preparatory stage for their future CLD, while the young instructor is ready but lacks opportunities to try and practice." Fong Ka Long said that. He assessed the status of the young instructor mainly through the "CLAP@JC Youth Development Index" evaluation tool. The same program meets the needs of both students and instructors, helping four young people at different stages of their CLD. It not only considers the unique needs of each student and connects personal growth to their future pursuits, but also allows young people to participate in co-creation activities, gain work experience, and plan and advance their careers. This kind of "inheritance" also shows young people who participate in the program how to plan their future lives, making them feel the possibility of realizing their dreams.

CLAP@JC Youth Development Index

Pursuing a career in tattooing by harnessing a natural talent for drawing, and attaining the goal of becoming a professional artist

The case of Yau, a girl who was on the verge of dropping out of school, also demonstrates that utilizing resources to respond to the individual interests and needs of young people, and matching them with suitable activities, training, and internship programs, can greatly help their personal growth and even advance their CLD. Yau used to frequently skip classes and come home late at night. Through her mother's referral, she met social worker Jade and during their conversation, the social worker discovered that Yau loved drawing and dreamed of becoming a tattoo artist, but had never had the opportunity to pursue it. "Coincidentally, a colleague knew a tattoo artist who was organizing a tattoo workshop, so I invited Yau to participate and she readily agreed!" said Jade.

When the tattoo workshop class was first offered, there were many participants, but after two sessions, only Yau and one other student continued to participate in the advanced class. Yau recounted, "After getting to know the teacher, I realized that a tattoo artist is different from what I imagined." In addition to learning about tattoo techniques and methods, Yau observed that a "good" tattoo artist should have certain qualities: "They should have patience to talk with the customer, ask about their background, understand their story, and hope to express their feelings through the tattoo." Yau said, "Words like happiness and sadness can be expressed through drawings."

Discovering potential through "Serious Leisure" and reconnecting family relationships

After completing the advanced course, Yau applied for "CLAP@JC Youth-led Funding Scheme" with the assistance of a social worker to continue studying tattooing. She also actively contacted the teacher on her own initiative and arranged to attend classes regularly. Not only did she become more responsible, but she also received an unexpected benefit through learning tattooing, which was an improvement in her relationship with her mother. It turned out that her mother not only fully supported her learning tattooing, but also became her first real tattoo subject. During the process, the mother and daughter not only felt closeness, but also had the opportunity for deep communication.

Yau tattooed a design on her mother.

BENCHMARK 10
PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Through learning tattooing, Yau also discovered her own personality traits. "I am a sensitive person, who easily understands the feelings of others and enjoys creating." Tattoo practice also trained her patience. "Drawing a straight line requires a lot of practice and patience." She also found that she values the meaning and value of things, and cherishes the opportunity to help others express their feelings through drawing. "I don't mind spending more time communicating with clients until we are both satisfied with the design." Having found her "perseverance and interest," Yau is preparing to use the fund to intern for a year at her teacher's workshop and embark on the journey to become a tattoo artist.

Promoting cultural integration and expanding community connections for ethnic minority youth

BGCA Yau Tong Children & Youth Integrated Services promotes another CLD program called "Project CQ" (CQ stands for Cultural Intelligence). This program mainly serves Form 6, tertiary and recent graduates, including both Chinese and ethnic minority youth. Vincent Chan, the social worker in charge, pointed out that ethnic minority youth have different needs in terms of CLD compared to their peers, as they tend to obtain job information through informal channels, such as referrals from friends and relatives. "We collaborate with CLAP@JC to provide resources, opportunities and networks for ethnic minority youth, allowing them to access different information and contacts, and break through their original career development patterns."

BENCHMARK 4
ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL

Last summer, Project CQ arranged internship opportunities for youth and conducted a series of pre-training, including introduction to the internship positions and the use of CLAP@JC tools such as CV360® for resume preparation. A total of 15 youths from different ethnic backgrounds participated in the program, divided into groups of three to four, with members of different ethnicities in each group, getting to know each other through games and activities. "The goal is to allow them to interact with people from different cultures in the future and have confidence in communicating with them," explained Vincent. "Cultural intelligence" refers to the ability to adapt and communicate with others in different cultural backgrounds.

Chinese and ethnic minority youth participated in the training activities together, enhancing communication among themselves

Solid internship experiences help build confidence in career and life development

The social worker had previously promoted CLD workshops at schools and had already collected the personal goals and interests of these youth from different ethnic backgrounds, trying to arrange relevant internship opportunities for them. "We hope that each internship site can accommodate two to three youths from different ethnic backgrounds, allowing them to experience how to interact with people from different cultures, while giving industry stakeholders an opportunity to understand the characteristics of different youths from multiple perspectives."

Last summer's internship opportunities included community service, bookstore operations, and e-sports. Vincent believes that during the internship process, employers or stakeholders can better understand the characteristics of ethnic minority youth, changing their attitudes and acceptance towards them. For example, one of the ethnic minority youth who participated in the program last year was always actively developing his e-sports career and got to know industry stakeholders through the internship program. He showed considerable familiarity with the industry during the internship and was praised by the trainers, who invited him to be a commentator for an e-sports program. "He hesitated at first, wondering if he was capable, but decided to try it out as the opportunity was rare. In the end, it gave him more confidence in his abilities and his future CLD."

Broadening career imagination and balancing family needs with personal aspirations

Furthermore, after completing the program, both ethnic minority and Chinese interns expressed that they cherished the friendships they made with friends from different ethnic backgrounds, breaking down cultural barriers between them. From a CLD perspective, cross-cultural connections not only allow ethnic minority youth to gain more information, contacts, and resources, but also broaden their imagination of future development through cultural exchange. "Their cultural characteristics tend towards collectivism, and family responsibilities are more important. They often listen to their family's opinions in terms of personal career development, but we believe that young people should also have independence at times." Vincent gave an example of a case where an ethnic minority parent wanted their daughter to study for a diploma in early childhood education, thinking it was a more suitable career for girls, but the girl herself had other dreams, hoping to obtain a bachelor's degree.

"If we could have more opportunities to reach out to parents and let them understand the education and employment situation in Hong Kong, it would also be helpful for the development of young people." Social workers understand that the family situation of ethnic minority youth may create tension in their CLD. They may need to consider their family's economic needs or take care of younger siblings, which may prevent them from participating in career development activities or internship programs. Therefore, the use of social resources is important. Social workers can provide internship allowances according to the family situation and needs of ethnic minority youth, allowing them to reduce economic pressure while gaining learning and practical work experience.

Intervention strategies to respond to individual needs

Service targets	Hidden youths	School dropouts	Ethnic Minorities	College students
Assessment of individual needs	Considering the status, background, stages and experience in personal growth of the service targets, CLAP@JC "Youth Development Index" can be used to assess needs and points of initiation for engagement.			
Points of initiation for engagement	1. Health needs 2. Growth needs	1. Interest development 2. Resource network	1. Economic needs 2. Family expectations	1. Practical experience 2. Enriched resume
Development strategy	Engaging youth by supporting them to develop CLD competences continuously	Enhancing self-understanding and mastering resources to develop personal interests	Expanding horizons, stepping out of the box to explore multiple pathways	Enriching practical experiences to construct career identity

The "Youth Development Index" provides a preliminary assessment tool for youth workers to systematically observe and understand the real-time CLD status of young people and their ability to explore multiple pathways.

Hong Kong Children & Youth Services

Strengthening the connection between schools and the community and deepening support for high-risk youth

When teenagers drop out of school or complete their public examinations and have not yet entered the workforce, they may be stuck in a career and life development (CLD) gap. At this point, various experiential activities and continuing education opportunities become important and can help promote personal growth. As a strategic partner of CLAP@JC, Hong Kong Children & Youth Services (HKCYS) is committed to providing support for young people in transition. One of the projects is the "Workplace Training Program", which mainly targets outreaching youth. Some of the participants have just left school, and they are invited to participate in the training by social workers. Through this program, they can broaden their imagination of CLD and have meaningful encounters with the workplace.

Enhancing the "Workplace Training Program" and initiating meaningful encounters with the workplace

Margaret Mar, a social work supervisor from HKCYS, explained that the "Workplace Training Program" is one of the short-term pre-employment training courses under the "Youth Employment and Training Programme" of the Labour Department. All District Youth Outreaching Social Work Teams can apply for funding from the Labour Department to hold the program, mainly targeting outreaching youth aged 15 to 24. The "Workplace Training Program" is designed for outreaching youth, with a duration of about two months, and classes are held only one day a week, mainly in the afternoon and evening. "There are three types of young people in society who have a need for continuing education, including school dropouts, graduates who have completed the DSE but have not entered the workforce, and some who are already working but have only been able to take on low-paying positions and hope to change careers," said Margaret. The "Workplace Training Program" serves all of these three groups of young people.

HKCYS has intentionally integrated CLD frameworks into the "Workplace Training Program" to train young people in transition in CLD skills, broaden their resource network, and expand their career aspirations.

BENCHMARK 9
MEANINGFUL ENCOUNTERS WITH FURTHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The "Workplace Training Program" covers courses for various non-mainstream professions, including dancing, fitness, and mountaineering, which not only train participants' vocational skills but also provide training in interpersonal and workplace skills. Through the coordination of social workers, the organization invites community and business stakeholders to become partners of the "Workplace Training Program" and serve as course instructors while providing internship opportunities.

BENCHMARK 8
MEANINGFUL ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WORKPLACE

Widely acknowledged within the industry by effectively connecting young people to the workforce

Margaret said that the organization tries to partner with well-known companies, groups or experts in the industry, aiming to help participants' experiences become widely recognized, and have more diverse opportunities in the future. "For example, we have partnered with the Eating Establishment Employees General Union and the Asian Beauty Professionals Association, both of which issue course certificates jointly with our organization. After completing the course, participants can not only obtain the "Workplace Training Program" certificate but also obtain certificates from different trade unions. This helps them gain industry recognition and contributes to their CLD" she said.

Margaret gave an example that the "Workplace Training Program" has partnered with a professional dance company, and the young leader of the company taught young people dance-related skills during the course, helping them enter the industry. He once assisted a participant in joining a TV competition and made it to the top ten. Later, the participant became a "Workplace Training Program" instructor, inheriting the spirit of his mentor and providing CLD guidance to young people. "The 'Workplace Training Program' can be a turning point for young people's CLD, highlighting the importance of training platforms. These success stories motivate social workers to implement the program" she said.

BENCHMARK 7
LINKING YOUTH SERVICE PLANS TO CAREER AND LIFE DEVELOPMENT

Diverse experiences enrich personal resumes and broaden career aspirations

Unlike general interest classes, the "Workplace Training Program" is like a ticket that allows young people to extend their personal interests to workplace experiences and learn practical skills from industry professionals. For young people who have not yet entered the workforce or have temporarily left the workplace, the program prepares them for the next stage of their career development.

"Even if young people are not immediately entering the workforce, we can still prepare them," said Crystal Tsoi, a frontline outreach social worker. "There was a young mother who left the workforce to take care of her children, and she always wanted to be a pet groomer. The 'Workplace Training Program' happened to offer relevant training courses, so we invited her to participate. After the course ended, although she still needed to take care of her children and did not immediately enter the industry, she successfully got support from "CLAP@JC Youth-led Funding Scheme" to purchase tools and began grooming pets for her friends, building her resume and accumulating relevant experience. The 'Workplace Training Program' has allowed this young mother to have more imagination and plans for her future, hoping to develop her own business after her children go to school."

In fact, Crystal often works with young people who are neither in school nor employed, and they do need more service support, with continuing education being one of the effective ways of support.

Discussion between social workers and business partners

Starting with dance
Exploring diverse career paths in the performing arts industry

Yanna Wong, who had been troubled by emotional and interpersonal problems, dropped out and took a break from school during Form 4. In Form 3, she met outreach social worker Crystal on the street. "She would remind me of dangerous places and I could call her to talk when I was unhappy," Shan Yan said. She was very grateful to have met Crystal, whom she believed had helped her a lot. "Social workers are a good channel for young people to express their emotions and thoughts. Without knowing Crystal, I would have been more lost and didn't know what to do."

As someone who loves dancing, Yanna attended the dancer training course of the "Workplace Training Program" at the recommendation of Crystal. The course content not only included dance techniques and industry-related knowledge but also included resume writing and self-awareness. The instructor also arranged for each student to have dance modelling photos taken. "Compared to general dance classes, the 'Workplace Training Program' not only teaches me how to dance but also helps me unleash my potential and think about my future direction." she said. When she was troubled by negative emotions and took a break from school, she wasn't planning to enter the workforce yet. "But I don't want to completely relax and put aside my interests. I don't like a dull life and desire more colours. This will also make me happier."

Yanna was open about how she often cried at home before attending the "Workplace Training Program" and was unwilling to interact with others. However, after attending the program, she had more opportunities to communicate with people, and her emotions improved significantly. She enjoyed working with her classmates and building new social networks through the course. "The most impressive thing is that before the course ended, we made an MV together. Everyone worked very hard and left behind beautiful memories and conclusions." she said. She also discovered that making an MV required cooperation from many people in different positions, such as lighting and photography. She realized that there are many career paths related to dancing, which gave her more imagination for her future CLD.

The experience of making a dance MV was unforgettable for Yanna

Connecting schools and community services to create opportunities for young people

Reflecting on her past experiences, Yanna believes that school social workers and various community services for young people should be closely connected to work together in helping young people. "Some of my friends had the assistance of social workers at school, but they didn't know who to turn to when they encountered emotional problems or difficulties after leaving school."

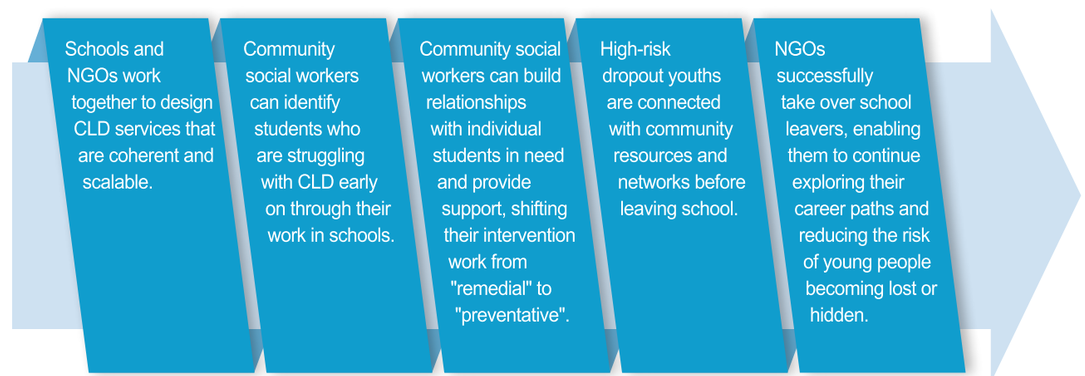
Yanna's opinions led Margaret and Crystal to reflect on the connection between schools and community. They believe that school social workers have a better understanding of which students are on the brink of dropping out, enabling youth centres or outreach social workers to get to know them earlier and provide support to prevent crises from occurring. On the other hand, social workers from youth centres can establish relationships with young people through in-school activities, provide customized extended support based on individual needs, and help young people continue to develop and receive support in community services.

Both school social workers and community social workers care about the growth of young people. School social workers mainly deal with situations that occur within the school system, while community social workers primarily deal with young people's participation in the community, such as interest development and industry exploration. However, "outreaching service models are often remedial work, and outreach social workers may not necessarily get to know young people if they do not encounter a crisis after leaving school." Margaret said. She believes that if the connection between schools and community is closer, community social workers can better support the growth of young people, which can prevent crises from occurring and help young people continue to explore their CLD after leaving school, while also building on their interests and self-awareness established during their school years.

Margaret further pointed out that if young people do not have the opportunity to meet social workers after leaving school, they may gradually become hidden youths. The interests and identities they established in school may also gradually disappear. "We see many examples of hidden youths who become withdrawn, have a low self-image, and feel anxious about entering society. Social workers also need to put in a lot of effort to pull them out." If a bridge can be built between schools and community, it can reduce the chances of young people going 'goblin mode' at home.

Crystal added that social workers hope that young people can gain exposure to different networks and resources through early intervention from organizations, allowing them to have more imagination for their CLD and understanding that the distance to their dreams is not as far as they imagine, which can give them more motivation.

Mechanism for supporting young people's transition from schools to community



SideBySide, HK

Connecting the resource network between community and business sectors to build a sustainable ecosystem

SideBySide, HK (SBS) is a strategic partner of CLAP@JC. Its "Youth Training and Entrepreneurship" service effectively integrates with career and life development (CLD), providing young people with resources and platforms for entrepreneurial endeavours. Through mentorship and practical opportunities, it allows them to have first-hand contact with the commercial and workplace spheres, while cultivating the values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge (VASK) needed in the workplace.

Reformulation of youth services with an injection of CLD elements

The social worker in charge of the "Youth Training and Entrepreneurship" service, Chan Wing Chi (Gi Gi), stated that the service not only focuses on assisting young people in starting their own businesses, but also provides CLD-related activities, including counselling and training, to meet the needs of young people at different stages of their CLD. Since 2014, SBS has been sponsored by the Hang Seng Bank to launch the "Hang Seng Youth Career Planning Scheme" which includes a start-up fund. Young people who submit their business plans and are approved can receive start-up funds to launch their personal businesses.

BENCHMARK 7
LINKING YOUTH SERVICE PLANS TO CAREER AND LIFE DEVELOPMENT

After joining the CLAP@JC, SBS further integrated its service concept within the framework of the Hong Kong Benchmarks for Career and Life Development (Community) (HKBM), combining various resources, opportunities, networks, and platforms to make the service content more diverse, comprehensive, and layered, taking into account the cultivation and development of young people in the early stages of entrepreneurship. By incorporating CLAP@JC elements into their original services, SBS made CLD the main focus. "Young people may not necessarily come to us for help with their problems, and they may not respond well to traditional methods, so we need to approach them in a different way, such as setting challenges for them." Gi Gi explained.

According to Gi Gi, the challenges in young people's CLD can be divided into two types: the first type is that young people themselves do not have goals, and they study and work only to fulfil their responsibilities, without considering their interests and expertise or having any idea about their future development. The second type is that young people know what they want, but lack the resources and platforms to develop themselves. Most of the young people that SBS has contacted have a history of imprisonment or rehabilitation needs, or have had their academic and CLD interrupted. Some young people originally had a certain level of education and career goals, but lost the opportunity to obtain professional qualifications due to their criminal records. Therefore, "matching suitable and corresponding resources allows them to start anew, which just meets their needs." Gi Gi said.

Connecting resource networks to equip young people to take the lead in their personal development

The "Weekend Bazaar: Customize Your Future" organized by SBS takes about half a year from training and preparation to the actual bazaar, providing a practical platform for those who have received startup funds while also recruiting young people who have not applied for the fund to participate. Young people interested in setting up stalls at the bazaar must first attend three training workshops.

The workshops are conducted by three mentors with experience in bazaars, teaching knowledge and soft skills related to running a bazaar and entrepreneurship. Young people who complete the three workshops and decide to become a stall owner at the bazaar need to fill out an application form to describe their entrepreneurial ideas and product features, and to explain their expectations for the bazaar, such as hoping to establish connections or gaining experience in running a bazaar stall.

In addition, there is also about half a month for participants to prepare for their stalls, from stocking up, pricing, setting up their stalls, to conducting sales on the day of the bazaar, where participants must be hands-on in their work.

The 'Weekend Bazaar: Customize Your Future' held in November 2021 at the Mills, Tsuen Wan, had over twenty young participants. Regarding the role of social workers in the bazaar, Gi Gi said, "Our main role is to promote the bazaar, attract more people to visit, conduct pre-event training, and follow up on progress."

The social workers provide support and promotion for the bazaar, contact suitable mentors to arrange training, and hire design companies to tailor brand stories and design exclusive logos for each participant, as well as arranging publicity activities. Three weeks before the bazaar, the social workers even facilitated one of the participants to collaborate with a famous KOL to shoot a promotional video. "The video was released three days before the bazaar, and the organizers even reserved a stall for several KOLs to attract more visitors."

Starting from defining the service needs of young people, coordinating resources from various aspects to organizing the bazaar, and promoting young people to gradually succeed in running their stalls, the intervention of social workers has played a leading role in a group of young people who have ideas but are unsure how to execute them.

The Weekend Bazaar: Customize Your Future held in November last year at the Mills in Tsuen Wan had the theme of Tailor Made Your Future.

Balancing expectations from different sectors, social-business collaboration continues to promote youth employment

In CLD services, it is essential to promote meaningful contact between young people and the workplace, and social-business collaboration plays an indispensable role. Reflecting on the experience of promoting the bazaar, Gi Gi acknowledged that social workers need to balance the expectations of the business sector, service effectiveness, and the well-being of young people in communication and collaboration with the business sector.

"Just sitting around the table with social workers is not enough. We need to communicate with the outside world and understand what they want to hear and what aspects attract them. At the same time, social workers may know the stories behind young people, but how much can be shared with others? All aspects need to be considered." She pointed out that the business sector often cares about three major issues: first, how the activity can help the enterprise; second, how they can support young people; and third, whether there is sustainability. "The social welfare sector values the meaning of the activity for young people, which cannot be quantified. Social workers need to communicate with the business sector skilfully to achieve a win-win situation."

BENCHMARK 8
MEANINGFUL ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WORKPLACE

Gi Gi emphasized that the bazaar is only a part of the entire service, and after the bazaar, social workers will continue to follow up on the needs of young people. "Through arranging young people to run stalls at the bazaar, social workers have the opportunity to see how they do business, witness how they interact with customers, which is a good entry point to continue reviewing and guiding them." Through the bazaar, social workers have a more comprehensive understanding of the youth participants, which helps to design services from multiple perspectives in the future. It even further provides resources and networking assistance to continue supporting young entrepreneurship and help them move towards a more mature stage of CLD. Additionally, for a group of young people who are still exploring their personal CLD, various participation opportunities also help improve self-awareness and establish development direction. Furthermore, as a communication bridge between different partners and young people, social workers not only let partners recognize the creativity and enthusiasm of young people but also enhance the young participants' understanding of the market.

Through a mutually beneficial relationship, business mentors and young people can learn from each other and introduce innovative ideas, leading to a win-win situation

In fact, one of the workshop trainers at the bazaar, Leung Ka Yun (Eleven) was a previous service user of SBS. She established a business selling handmade earrings through a start-up fund, which later developed into an online store. The ups and downs of her entrepreneurial journey drove her to share her experiences with young people. "Youth is an important stage for building one's future life. There are many feelings or experiences. I have also encountered them. At that time, I didn't know what to do, and afterwards, I thought that if someone had guided me, it might have been better." She admitted that she had experienced setbacks and paid "tuition fees" before understanding the nature of doing business. As a mentor, she would only advise young people to be cautious in certain situations and would not try to tell them what to do.

As she has been there before, Eleven believes that 'acceptance' is a key need for young people's career development, so she particularly emphasizes listening to the workshop participants' sharing. "If their ideas are accepted, they can naturally put them into practice, which can help them." She emphasized that young people should have autonomy and understand that their career and life choices are not just to fulfil the expectations of society, parents, or schools, and that there are many possibilities for their CLD. The reason why CLD can guide young people is to tell them about many different possibilities. "Give them resources, an enabling environment, support them to appreciate themselves, and they will change and believe in themselves more."

Eleven exchanged with young people in the workshop.

Not only from helping young people, but she also found it beneficial to herself as a mentor for the bazaar. "Sometimes, I learn things from them that I haven't thought of before. For example, when I asked them what 'running a business' meant, they said that being a KOL was also a business. Business is no longer just about products, anything can be a business, and any idea can become a way to make money." said Eleven.

She encourages companies to participate in similar programs, to understand the new generation's thinking, and inject new elements into their business through personal interaction with young people. "Face-to-face communication is a precious opportunity because young people got many new ideas, and what they come into contact with is completely different."

Companies can provide young people with experiences, resources, networks, and training, while also viewing them as potential customers, partners, or even employees of the company. By gaining a deeper understanding of them, companies can acquire new information and new ideas that are beneficial to their sustainable development.

Participant of the bazaar - Yip Cheuk Shing shares that the practical platform helps explore diverse paths

Known as "Master" ,Yip Cheuk Shing (Master Yip) participated in the bazaar" for the first time, selling his handmade cement crafts. He was originally a painter and admitted that he only worked on construction sites after graduating from Form 5 because there weren't many choices. "Painting work is rigid and the process is constantly repeated, but I have an active personality and am not satisfied with monotony, so I researched on my own and discovered that my skills could evolve and create other things." He began using cement technology to make pots, incense burners, and home decor, while also applying for start-up funds and trying to sell his products online.

Last year, Master Yip participated in the bazaar program and training with the encouragement and assistance of mentors and social workers, gaining a lot of new experiences, including being a market stall owner for the first time, collaborating with KOLs to shoot promotional videos, selling his products in person, and serving as a cement workshop trainer. "In the past, working on construction sites was just routine work, and I would do whatever my boss assigned me to do. I had few opportunities to communicate with others and was afraid of talking to strangers. However, participating in three workshops required me to express myself and slowly train myself to be less afraid of facing unfamiliar people. I can also successfully share my experiences and products with customers, which is a great gain."

BENCHMARK 5
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND CO-CREATION

Through the bazaar, Master Yip not only learned a lot of knowledge and skills in business management but also understood and corrected his own shortcomings. "Even though I used to have many ideas, but I was not motivated to follow through with them. Sometimes, I hesitated to make decisions. When I realized this shortcoming, I could start looking for ways to improve and gradually change myself." His changes also infected those around him, as his younger sister volunteered to help with design work and sold her paintings at the market, taking the first step in trying something new.

Through the resources and practical opportunities gained from the program, Master Yip has developed positive thoughts about his career development. "In class, I learned a term called "Slash" which means a person can have many identities. In the past, when I worked on construction sites, I was a technician, but today I have transformed my skills into creations and become a creator. I also have the opportunity to share my experiences with others and even become a trainer."

Through the event, he realized that everyone can have multiple identities and possibilities. "One does not have to be stuck as a technician just because they did not pursue higher education. There are many possibilities and opportunities available."

Master Yip participated in the bazaar and received support and help from those around him, including his friend (far right) and girlfriend (second from the right). His younger sister (far left) was also encouraged to sell her paintings at the market.

Caritas Hong Kong

Mobilizing working professionals to participate in programme

Exposing young people to real-world work experience

Caritas Hong Kong (Caritas) is a strategic partner of CLAP@JC. Its Caritas Jockey Club Integrated Service for Young People - Stanley serves children, families, and young people. The centre also has an overnight outreaching team. Frontline social workers proactively reach out and get to know street youth, providing counselling and intervention, as well as inviting them to participate in interest experiential activities. One of these activities is a western culinary workshop, led by a professional chef, which has been extended into a long-term career and life development program. Over the past two years, it has effectively helped many young people understand the working world, learn the values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge (VASK) valued in the workplace, and establish confidence in their CLD journey.

Establishing a safe learning environment to grow from setbacks

Lo Chun Tat, an overnight outreach social worker, is the initiator of the Western culinary workshop. He observed that street youth generally have lower self-image and often face many doubts, criticisms, and even blame in school or work. Most of them believe that they have limited abilities and lack confidence, resulting in confusion about their future. Some even wander the streets frequently. "They don't even know where their interests lie, so we often organize different experiential activities, such as dancing and makeup, which are one or two workshop sessions," said Lo Chun Tat. He admitted that if the interest classes are too long, students may give up midway. "So we will first hold short-term workshops, and if they are interested in continuing to learn, we will continue."

Lo Chun Tat recruited interest class instructors through social media and was noticed by Yu Man Hin (Hin Sir), who has been working in the food and beverage industry for many years and offered to become a mentor. Hin Sir has been a chef for over ten years and is skilled in various Chinese and Western cuisine dishes. He not only teaches cooking techniques to students but also shares industry information such as kitchen division of labour and salary arrangements. Prior to the collaboration, Lo Chun Tat clearly conveyed the organization's expectations and goals to Hin Sir to ensure that both parties have a common vision, allowing young people to learn from mistakes and failures in a safe environment, build confidence, and develop the necessary attitudes and skills for the workplace.

BENCHMARK 7
LINKING YOUTH SERVICE PLAN TO CAREER AND LIFE DEVELOPMENT

Many young people initially joined the Western culinary learning group with a "let's try" mentality, but later developed a sense of belonging to the group.

Young people participating in entrepreneurial classes to develop necessary attitudes for career development

After the Western culinary workshop ended, the youth established relationships with the mentor and other classmates and still had an interest in cooking. This led to the formation of a western culinary learning group, which has been taught by Hin Sir on a weekly basis, teaching different dishes, and has been maintained for nearly two years. Unlike typical interest classes, the learning content of the group is not solely designed by the mentor but also involves youth in co-creation."We constantly discuss and encourage them to suggest what they want to cook. When they are clear about the group's development, they naturally become more invested and look forward to the next class, attending punctually," said Lo Chun Tat.

The goal of the group is to support young people's growth step by step, learning from mistakes and errors. When young people participate in creating activities, they become more engaged, proactive, and increase their practical and execution skills. Lo Chun Tat admits that the process requires a combination of carrot and stick to encourage young people, based on tolerance, but occasionally reminding them of their responsibility and attitude towards work. "As they gradually become more involved, they will become more and more responsible."

BENCHMARK 5
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND CO-CREATION

Lo Chun Tat explained that the biggest challenge of young people face in CLD is often the fear of trying due to past experiences of failure. "Making mistakes in the workplace can easily lead to being scolded, especially in the catering industry. Newcomers are always easily scared." In fact, a safe environment can support young people to try and not be afraid of failure. "As social demands become higher, young people's sense of frustration is also relatively stronger." Recruiting suitable mentors from the workplace world can not only help young people understand the industry's reality but also learn the necessary VASK for work comprehensively, and help young people regain confidence in themselves. Lo Chun Tat particularly appreciates mentor Hin Sir. "He is very supportive for young people and can accept where they are not doing well. He does not blindly adhere to the demands of the outside kitchen and allows young people to make mistakes and work slowly here."

Youth centre has been transformed into a restaurant and it better engaged young people

To further allow young people to apply what they have learned and strengthen their sense of achievement, while also deepening the community's understanding of outreaching youth and breaking down barriers between them, social workers collaborated with mentors and young people to transform the centre into a high-end restaurant called 'Nam Tat Hin' and held a fine dining event, serving a 6 course western meal to low-income families.

Lo Chun Tat explained: "There are two groups that frequently come in and out of the centre, which are outreaching youth and ordinary families. In each other's eyes, the other group is not very friendly. Some parents think that young people are bad, and young people feel that parents are not very welcoming. The 'Nam Tat Hin' project is very interesting because it connects the two groups and allows everyone to see the other side." This has promoted mutual understanding, and invisibly promoted community integration.

During the preparation of 'Nam Tat Hin', the young people handled everything from selecting and designing the dishes to decorating the restaurant, as well as cooking, serving, and other positions during the event, with mentors and social workers providing encouragement and guidance. After the event, social workers invited participating parents to share feedback, and most of them praised the food and service. "Young people have never been 'seen' before, but here they are 'seen' by mentors, social workers, peers, and service recipients, which enhances their self-image and makes it easier for them to overcome difficulties in the outside world," said Lo Chun Tat.

BENCHMARK 8
MEANINGFUL ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WORKPLACE

Regarding the changes in young people after participating in 'Nam Tat Hin', Lo Chun Tat said, "They become more resilient. In the past, if they were scolded at work, they would easily change jobs, or even hide at home and stop looking for work. Now they may realize that as long as they perform well in 'Nam Tat Hin', they will be scolded less outside. Or even if they are scolded, they know the reasons and understand the demands of the outside world." This kind of work experience also helps to enhance young people's stability and resilience when entering the real working world.

The dishes at 'Nam Tat Hin' were designed jointly by the participants and mentor Hin Sir.

Felt confused about CLD before, hoping to become a mentor to help young people get started

Yu Man Hin (Hin Sir) has been working in the food and beverage industry for over ten years. He is a chef who is proficient in Chinese, Western, and Japanese cuisine. He was invited by Lo Chun Tat to become a culinary instructor. He describes himself have been down this road before and has also been lost in direction when he was young. "Knowing that I wasn't suitable for studying, I planned to work and earn money as soon as possible. I had already dropped out of school in Form 3 and worked part-time in a fast-food restaurant. After graduating from Form 5, I officially entered the food and beverage industry and have been doing it for eleven or twelve years." At that time, he did not consider whether he liked working in the kitchen. He just tried it out when a friend introduced him to it.

As a "blank slate" entering the kitchen, Hin Sir could only learn from trial and error. Bumps and scolding were unavoidable, and he struggled for more than ten years before becoming a "big shot" in the kitchen. "Looking back, if I knew what I wanted from the beginning and found a direction first, it would have been easier to persevere if I was interested. Otherwise, it is really easy to give up halfway." For this reason, he hopes to help young people find their direction and avoid going down the wrong path by teaching them culinary skills. "After taking my classes and entering the industry, they will not be completely clueless about what to do in the kitchen. Otherwise, not knowing anything but being afraid to ask the chef will result in being scolded, fired, and constantly changing jobs...these were all experiences I had in the past."

Sharing industry insights while imparting culinary skills and instilling values of good character

In addition to teaching cooking techniques, Hin Sir also shares industry knowledge with young people in his classes, such as salary and benefits for chefs, the differences between Chinese and Western cuisine, kitchen hierarchy and terminology. "I often tell them that I'm not just here to teach cooking, but also to teach them how to be a good person, what to pay attention to, because knowing how to do things does not mean knowing how to be a good person." He believes that young people should learn responsibility, time management, and empathy. "For example, if your boss asks you to do something you may not want to do, you can try to imagine yourself in your boss's shoes. Someone always has to take responsibility for the work."

Over the past two years, Hin Sir has observed significant improvements in his students' sense of responsibility, time management, and motivation. "At the beginning, when I asked them to do something, they seemed reluctant. Now, they urge me to give them more tasks." He feels that becoming a mentor to these young people has helped him rediscover his passion for work and life. "As a mentor, I cannot be less motivated than them." For young people, the mentor's real-life experiences often make it easier for them to reflect deeply and make changes.

Mentors empower their mentees to broaden their horizons in CLD by fostering their imagination and cultivating self-help skills

Hin Sir has also noticed a change in his perception and attitude towards young people. "In the past, when I encountered young people without a sense of responsibility in the workplace, I didn't have the heart to teach them. I just felt that it was not necessary to change them." His current thinking is, "As long as you are willing to listen, I am willing to teach!" He has also begun to appreciate the strengths of young people, such as their ability to grasp new trends better than himself. Even in cooking, young people have limitless creativity and often come up with new ideas that inspire him.

Becoming a culinary instructor has also allowed Hin Sir to broaden his own skillset. "I never thought I could teach young people and gain their respect." In addition to the satisfaction he gains from teaching, he now has more imagination for his own future development and is considering pursuing a teaching license. He also hopes to invite more industry friends in the future to share industry information and experiences with young people.

The students greatly enjoyed the process of co-creation for 'Nam Tat Hin'.

Participants of 'Nam Tat Hin' share their experiences

Developing transitional VASK to different positions and enhancing career adaptability

In 'Nam Tat Hin', young people are responsible for different positions. For example, Ho Cheuk Hin was in charge of serving, bartending, and expediting. He described the experience as unique compared to the dance, e-sports, and volunteer activities he had participated in before. He was able to participate in creating a restaurant, which made him feel more invested and able to focus on learning and working. "Hin Sir's teaching method is comfortable. He doesn't criticize easily and starts teaching from scratch. As long as we are willing to learn, he is willing to teach." Ho Cheuk Hin, who had never thought of developing in the food and beverage industry before and had no cooking knowledge, believes that the biggest gain from learning culinary skills is being able to serve single-parent families in the fine dining event, which allowed both parties to understand and appreciate each other.

Lo Sum Yuen, who worked as waitress in 'Nam Tat Hin', learned how to introduce the ingredients and cooking methods of each dish to customers in a high-end restaurant setting. "At first, I was very nervous, but gradually found that customers were also easy to talk to, so I became less nervous." She believes that 'Nam Tat Hin' gave her the opportunity to learn how to communicate confidently with others.

Enhancing industry knowledge and developing interests into careers

Kwan Chung Yin and Lo Ka Po, who have now entered the food and beverage industry, both expressed their previous resistance towards the industry, thinking that it was too physically demanding and involved long hours. However, they developed an interest in culinary arts and learned many kitchen skills and industry knowledge in class. With the introduction of their family members, they decided to give it a try. "After trying it out, we found that we could handle it, and it wasn't too difficult." They both believe that participating in the establishment of 'Nam Tat Hin' gave them a sense of accomplishment and made them more committed to their work. They also learned from Hin Sir's work ethic of "not afraid of hard work, get more pay for more work done" which was very helpful for them in entering the workforce.

Recognizing personal qualities and broadening thinking for talent matching

On the other hand, Kwan Ka Yi was in charge of making appetizers and desserts in 'Nam Tat Hin', and her goal is to become a pastry chef. She admitted that during the learning process, she realized that interests and work cannot be compared. "To be a pastry chef, you need to satisfy customers, while interests only need to satisfy yourself." She understands that working in the food and beverage industry is not just about cooking, but also involves designing, decorating, seasoning, and other aspects. "This makes me more serious about my work!" In Hin Sir's culinary class, she was able to constantly experiment and improve, and exchange ideas with her classmates, which made her both happy and fulfilled. She also has more confidence in her future development. "I hope to try opening an online shop to sell homemade cakes!"

Participants not only learned cooking skills, but also soft skills for interpersonal communication.

Success factors for workplace learning

1 Igniting passion: Starting from short-term activities for "Interest-Based", igniting the motivation of young people and guiding them to continue participating.	**2** Mentor selection: Arranging experienced mentors who maintain high standards with an understanding attitude, offering industry information and encouraging young people to overcome difficulties.
3 Empowering youth: Allowing young people to take charge of the experiential learning process and create an open and friendly atmosphere for them to propose learning topics that interest them.	**4** Feedback mechanism: Social workers, mentors, peers, parents, and other stakeholders provide constructive feedback to help young people progress on a regular basis.

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