

## Poverty

### La Salle College

**Narrator:** Linus LEE Lin Tai  
**Researchers:** Francis YEUNG Hei Ming; Jonathan YAN Kar Chun  
**Script Writer:** Francis YEUNG Hei Ming  
**Technical Support:** Linus LEE Lin Tai

Hong Kong – one of the most economically prosperous cities in the world. However, years of economic boom is not without its own side effects. Most significant of all, the widening gap between the rich, super-rich and the poor.

- A million-dollar super car; A scavenger gathering cardboard worth a dollar a pound.
- An elegant living room in a multi-million-dollar house; A somewhat less elegant living room that barely deserves its name, belonging to an indigent woman.
- A 20,000 dollar HDTV; A barely functioning old radio in the possession of yet another poverty-stricken old woman.
- Nice furniture; A cracked cabinet.
- A pleasant view out of the balcony; A somewhat less pleasant view of a kitchen.
- A dog costing thousands of dollars; A woman living on ten dollars a day.

It is these stark contrasts between the rich and the poor that somewhat mark Hong Kong as a city. Ironic it is, right when the wealthier individuals enjoy themselves in amusement parks and indulge in luxury goods costing in the millions, hundreds of thousands of other impoverished citizens have to struggle every day just to survive.

In this city, signs of poverty are basically all around us. On the streets, we see 70-year-old women picking up trash that other people threw out for a small sum of money. In certain impoverished districts such as Sham Shui Po, we see families living in decrepit and derelict buildings. In street markets, we also see inflation and rising food prices taking a heavy toll.

To alleviate the problem of poverty, the SAR government has devised many plans. Among them, the recently proposed legislation setting a minimum wage for certain low-income occupations, for example, janitorial professions.

Will setting a minimum wage be effective, or even be the silver bullet solving the problem of poverty in Hong Kong? Only time will tell.