

Legislative Council Panel on Constitutional Affairs
Proposed Implementation Plan for the Establishment
of Regional Support Service Centres for Ethnic Minorities

Purpose

This paper outlines the proposal for the establishment of the regional service centres for ethnic minorities and seeks Members' views on the implementation plan.

Background

2. In order to strengthen existing services for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, the Government has proposed to set up four regional support service centres. The objectives of these centres are:

- (a) to provide telephone interpretation service to those members of the ethnic minorities who have difficulties communicating in English and/or Chinese, in order to facilitate their access to public services and essential non-government services which are crucial to them; and
- (b) to organise activities generally to facilitate integration of the ethnic minorities into the community.

3. The Government has earmarked a total of \$16 million as the operating expenses of these centres in their first year of operation and an additional \$8 million to subsidise their start-up costs.

4. Following consultation with relevant Bureaux and Departments and with representatives of the ethnic minorities and related organizations at the Committee on Promotion of Racial Harmony and the Ethnic Minorities Forum, the Constitutional and Mainlands Affairs Bureau (CMAB) has drawn up a detailed implementation plan for the establishment of the service centres. This is set out in the following paragraphs for Members' consideration and views.

The Project

5. Broadly speaking, we aim at making the most effective use of the resources in meeting the needs of the ethnic minorities. We also aim to encourage participation of the non-government sector in order to take advantage of their experience and expertise in serving the ethnic minorities. Thus, instead of the Government operating the centres, non-government organizations (NGOs) will be invited to establish and operate the support service centres. The Government will provide funding and will be responsible for monitoring the performance of the centres.

6. Since interpretation service will be provided mainly through telephone, we consider that, in order to avoid duplication, this should be centralised and be provided by one of the four centres. In addition, each of the four centres will offer the following services for ethnic minority groups:

- (i) language training to improve their proficiency in both Chinese and English; and
- (ii) other support services which would facilitate their integration into society.

Eligibility for funding application

7. Eligible applicants should be bona fide non-profit making organizations which are:

- (a) statutory organizations or organizations registered under the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (e.g. the Companies Ordinance (Cap. 32), the Societies Ordinance (Cap. 151)); and
- (b) charitable institutions and trusts of a public character granted tax-exemption under section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112).

8. For proper accountability for the use of the funds provided, each application should be made by one eligible applicant. To promote synergies but at the same time ensure competition among the operators, each applicant may apply for operating not more than two centres.

Location of the support service centres

9. Of the four support service centres, two will be set up in the New Territories, one in Kowloon and one on the Hong Kong Island. To allow flexibility for applications, applicants would be allowed to propose appropriate locations and venues within the regions for the setting up of the centres. They would need to provide justifications to explain how the proposed location would best serve the needs of the ethnic minorities, taking into account the geographic spread of the ethnic minority populations in Hong Kong, which is available from the Census and Statistics Department's thematic report on ethnic minorities under the 2006 Population By-census. Relevant extract of the report is at Annex.

10. An applicant may propose a number of alternative locations for establishing a centre. In that case, the applicant should clearly set out the priority of the locations in its proposal.

Scope of services

Centralized telephone interpretation

11. As mentioned in paragraph 6, interpretation service will be centralized and provided through one of the four support service centres. Such service would be provided primarily through telephone and, subject to pre-booking and availability of resources, may be provided on site. The interpretation service provided by the centre is not intended to replace existing provision by government departments and public authorities. Hence, under normal circumstances, public/private organizations which provide interpretation support on their own are outside the centre's scope of service.

12. Having regard to the needs of the ethnic minorities in Hong Kong, the centre will, initially, provide interpretation into English or Chinese for seven languages for which there are greater demands. Specifically, these languages are Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Nepalese, Tagalog, Bahasa Indonesia and Thai. In recognition of the possible difficulties and the lead time involved in recruitment of interpreters in some languages, applicants may propose if they wish to commence providing interpretation for the full spectrum of languages in phases, together with an implementation schedule. They may also propose, with justifications, to provide interpretation services for other languages. They would be required to suggest and implement a practical mechanism for handling

requests for interpretation of other ethnic minority languages which are outside the scope of the service, such as by referral to other organizations.

13. To ensure the quality of service, the interpreters employed should be fluent in at least one of the prescribed ethnic minority languages (preferably a native speaker) and be proficient in English and/or Chinese. They should also have completed Form 5 education or equivalent qualification.

Chinese and English language programmes

14. Each of the four centres will organise Chinese and English language programmes. The objective of the language programmes is to improve the proficiency of the ethnic minorities in written and spoken Chinese / English in order to meet their daily needs and to foster their integration into the society. These programmes would be organised at different levels to serve ethnic minorities of varying language proficiency. The programmes will be delivered primarily by classroom teaching, supplemented by a range of outside-classroom activities as may be proposed by the applicant.

15. The centre should recruit teachers who are proficient in English or Cantonese, with a bachelor degree from a Hong Kong university or equivalent and preferably with relevant experience of teaching English / Chinese.

Integration activities

16. Each of the four centres will provide ethnic minorities with a comprehensive range of integration programmes including:

- (a) orientation and familiarization programmes tailored to the needs of ethnic minorities;
- (b) general enquiry service and assistance including referral services and sight translation (i.e. oral translation of short written text) to facilitate their access to and use of various community services; and
- (c) support groups and counseling services to assist the ethnic minorities to adapt to living in a new environment.

Applicants would also be encouraged to suggest other value-added or innovative programmes which are conducive to the integration of ethnic minorities into the community.

Coverage and fee-charging

17. The services provided by the centres would be open to members of the ethnic minorities on a territory-wide basis. In other words, they would not restrict their services to only ethnic minority groups in the locality of the centre.

18. In general, most services of the centres including especially the interpretation service would be provided free of charge. If for other considerations, such as to ensure the commitment of attendees at the language classes, an applicant proposes to charge fees for any particular service, such proposal will have to be justified in the application.

Opening hours

19. Bearing in mind the normal operating hours of the public services involved, the interpretation service centre should be manned from 0800 hours to 2200 hours, seven days a week, except on general holidays stipulated in sections (b) to (r) in the Schedule to General Holidays Ordinance (Cap. 149). Successful applicants would be required to set up an arrangement, such as on-call service, for meeting emergency requirements for interpretation outside these hours and during general holidays. The detailed arrangement should be described in the application.

20. The centres for provision of language training and other support services would be open for at least 12 hours a day and for six days a week. The support service centres are not required to be open on general holidays. The successful applicants will have discretion in determining the actual opening hours of the respective service centres.

Assessment of proposals

21. A vetting committee with representatives of relevant Bureaux and Departments will be formed to assess the applications and select the operators for the regional support service centres. The key criteria for assessment will include:

- (a) viability and merits of the proposals;
- (b) experience, past performance and capability of the applicant NGOs in providing support services to ethnic communities;
- (c) qualification and expertise of the personnel involved in the programmes;
- (d) capability to network and cooperate with other organizations to deliver the supportive services and to make appropriate referrals; and
- (e) attainment levels for the output indicators (and other performance assessment tools, if any, proposed by the applicant NGOs).

Performance monitoring and evaluation

22. The Government will monitor and evaluate the performance of the operators. Detailed output indicators will be drawn up having regard to the proposals set out in the applications. Apart from regular reports from the operators, the Government will conduct on-site inspections and unannounced visits to observe and evaluate the activities of the centres. If and where necessary, the Government may also conduct user surveys and/or commission an independent organization to monitor and assess the performance of the centres.

23. The centre operators will also be required to implement their own in-house on-going monitoring and review mechanism in line with the contract to ensure that the programme objectives are met and the intended output and outcome level and service quality could be achieved.

Advice sought and way forward

24. Members are invited to comment on the proposed plan. In light of Members' views and suggestions, we will finalise the plan and issue an open invitation to relevant NGOs before the end of the year. Our target is to roll out the service before mid-2009.

Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau
November 2008

8. 地區特徵

8. Geographical Characteristics

地區分布

8.1 在二零零六年，35.2%的少數族裔人士居於香港島，而居於九龍及新界（包括水上）的分別佔 27.0%及 37.8%。在全港人口中，居於香港島、九龍及新界（包括水上）的相應比例分別為 18.5%、29.4%及 52.1%。（表 8.1）

8.2 在十八個區議會分區中，居於中西區的少數族裔人士佔全港所有少數族裔人士的比例最大（10.5%）。其次是東區（9.9%）及九龍城區（8.2%）。（表 8.1）

8.3 不同種族羣的居住地區亦有差異。由於約 89%的菲律賓人是家庭傭工，而相對較大比例的有外籍家庭傭工的住戶是居住在香港島，故此約 41%的菲律賓人是居住在香港島的。此外，約五成或以上的日本人、韓國人及白人是居住在香港島。相反地，大部分印度人、尼泊爾人、印尼人、泰國人及巴基斯坦人居住在九龍或新界。（表 8.1）

8.4 在二零零六年，在香港島的居民中，9.5%為少數族裔人士，較九龍（4.6%）和新界（包括水上）（3.6%）的比例為高。在十八個區議會分區中，按少數族裔人士與該區人口總數的比例作比較，灣仔在眾區議會分區中排列首位（16.1%），而黃大仙則排列最後，只佔 2.0%。（表 8.1及圖 8.1）

Geographical Distribution

8.1 In 2006, some 35.2% of ethnic minorities resided on Hong Kong Island, while 27.0% and 37.8% in Kowloon and the New Territories (including Marine) respectively. The corresponding proportions of the whole population living on Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and New Territories (including Marine) were 18.5%, 29.4% and 52.1% respectively. (Table 8.1)

8.2 Among the 18 District Council Districts, the proportion of ethnic minorities residing in Central and Western among all ethnic minorities in Hong Kong was the largest at 10.5%, followed by Eastern (9.9%) and Kowloon City (8.2%). (Table 8.1)

8.3 Differences among different ethnic groups in the area of residence were observed. As around 89% of the Filipinos were domestic helpers and a relatively larger proportion of domestic households with foreign domestic helpers resided on Hong Kong Island, around 41% of Filipinos in Hong Kong resided on Hong Kong Island. Besides, about 50% or over of the Japanese, Koreans and Whites resided on Hong Kong Island. In contrast, most of the Indians, Nepalese, Indonesians, Thais, and Pakistanis resided in Kowloon or the New Territories. (Table 8.1)

8.4 In 2006, ethnic minorities constituted 9.5% of the population on Hong Kong Island. This proportion was higher than that in Kowloon (4.6%) and the New Territories (including Marine) (3.6%). Among the 18 District Council Districts, Wan Chai ranked first in terms of the relative proportion of its population being ethnic minorities (16.1%), while Wong Tai Sin ranked last with only 2.0%. (Table 8.1 and Chart 8.1)

表 8.1 二零零六年按區議會分區及種族劃分的少數族裔人士比例
Table 8.1 Proportion of Ethnic Minorities by District Council District and Ethnicity, 2006

區議會分區 District Council District	人口比例 (百分比) Proportion of Population (%)									
	種族 Ethnicity									
	亞洲人 (非華人) Asian (Other Than Chinese)									
	菲律賓人 Filipino	印尼人 Indonesian	印度人 Indian	尼泊爾人 Nepalese	日本人 Japanese	泰國人 Thai	巴基斯坦人 Pakistani	韓國人 Korean	其他 亞洲人 Other Asian	小計 Sub-total
香港島 Hong Kong Island										
中西區 Central and Western	11.8	5.5	16.3	3.1	6.4	5.9	3.6	11.0	8.1	8.8
灣仔 Wan Chai	9.2	4.0	4.5	10.8	11.8	5.3	3.7	4.4	6.6	6.9
東區 Eastern	11.7	11.0	7.3	1.2	27.8	7.7	9.1	18.4	4.3	11.0
南區 Southern	8.7	4.3	8.7	0.8	2.3	4.7	1.1	13.6	7.6	6.2
小計 Sub-total	41.4	24.7	36.8	15.9	48.4	23.6	17.6	47.4	26.6	32.9
九龍 Kowloon										
油蔴地 Yau Tsim Mong	4.8	4.6	22.6	39.8	12.4	8.0	10.6	8.1	7.8	8.8
深水埗 Sham Shui Po	3.7	4.5	1.8	4.6	1.4	7.0	6.9	2.9	5.2	4.0
九龍城 Kowloon City	9.3	7.5	12.7	3.2	24.9	7.6	7.3	14.3	3.2	9.1
黃大仙 Wong Tai Sin	2.1	4.2	1.5	0.1	0.5	5.1	3.6	0.4	2.9	2.7
觀塘 Kwun Tong	3.9	6.5	3.3	0.2	2.2	8.7	10.1	4.5	5.3	4.9
小計 Sub-total	23.7	27.2	41.9	47.8	41.3	36.5	38.5	30.2	24.5	29.5
新界 New Territories										
葵青 Kwai Tsing	2.9	4.7	2.6	0.6	0.8	6.7	14.9	1.5	2.5	3.8
荃灣 Tsuen Wan	4.0	4.9	1.3	4.6	0.8	3.9	2.2	4.2	3.5	3.9
屯門 Tuen Mun	2.5	5.3	2.3	1.3	0.3	5.4	8.0	1.2	8.8	3.6
元朗 Yuen Long	3.7	7.5	1.9	27.4	0.6	5.5	8.2	1.0	6.7	6.2
北區 North	1.7	3.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	2.1	1.0	1.0	2.2	2.0
大埔 Tai Po	3.5	4.7	0.7	0.1	0.8	2.0	0.6	0.1	1.7	3.1
沙田 Sha Tin	7.4	8.8	3.1	0.2	3.0	4.7	1.9	6.0	7.0	6.6
西貢 Sai Kung	5.8	7.3	3.1	0.4	1.6	3.6	2.9	1.3	6.0	5.3
離島 ⁽¹⁾ Islands ⁽¹⁾	3.3	1.5	5.8	1.8	2.4	6.1	4.1	6.2	10.6	3.2
小計 Sub-total	34.9	48.1	21.3	36.3	10.3	39.9	43.9	22.4	49.0	37.7
全港 Whole territory	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

表 8.1 二零零六年按區議會分區及種族劃分的少數族裔人士比例 (續)
Table 8.1 Proportion of Ethnic Minorities by District Council District and Ethnicity, 2006 (Cont'd.)

區議會分區 District Council District	人口比例 (百分比) Proportion of Population (%)			全港人口 Whole Population	少數族裔人士佔該區 人口的比例 (百分比) Proportion of Ethnic Minorities among Whole Population in the district (%)
	種族 Ethnicity				
	白人 White	混血兒及其他 ⁽¹⁾ Mixed and Others	合計 Overall		
香港 Hong Kong					
中西區 Central and Western	23.8	11.5	10.5	3.6	14.4
灣仔 Wan Chai	10.2	6.8	7.3	2.3	16.1
東區 Eastern	3.4	6.6	9.9	8.6	5.8
南區 Southern	18.1	6.9	7.5	4.0	9.3
小計 Sub-total	55.4	31.9	35.2	18.5	9.5
九龍 Kowloon					
油蔴地 Yau Tsim Mong	4.1	4.4	8.0	4.1	9.8
深水埗 Sham Shui Po	1.5	4.7	3.8	5.3	3.6
九龍城 Kowloon City	2.7	4.4	8.2	5.3	7.7
黃大仙 Wong Tai Sin	0.5	3.5	2.5	6.2	2.0
觀塘 Kwan Tong	1.1	5.2	4.5	8.6	2.6
小計 Sub-total	10.0	22.2	27.0	29.4	4.6
新界 New Territories					
葵青 Kwai Tsing	0.7	5.0	3.5	7.6	2.3
荃灣 Tsuen Wan	1.1	3.4	3.6	4.2	4.2
屯門 Tuen Mun	1.6	4.0	3.4	7.3	2.4
元朗 Yuen Long	1.1	6.0	5.6	7.8	3.6
北區 North	0.4	3.0	1.9	4.1	2.3
大埔 Tai Po	2.5	2.7	3.0	4.3	3.5
沙田 Sha Tin	3.2	7.4	6.3	8.9	3.5
西貢 Sai Kung	9.0	6.3	5.7	5.9	4.8
離島 ⁽¹⁾ Islands ⁽¹⁾	15.0	8.3	4.8	2.0	11.6
小計 Sub-total	34.6	45.9	37.8	52.1	3.6
全港 Whole territory	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	5.0

註釋：(1) 這些數字包括所有住在船艇上的人士。
(2) 這些數字包括「黑人」、「拉丁美洲人」等。

Notes: (1) The figures include all persons living on board vessels.
(2) The figures include "Black", "Latin American", etc.