

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Panel on Welfare Services**

**Subcommittee on Strategy and Measures to  
Tackle Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 6 October 2015, at 10:45 am**  
**in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, SBS, JP (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Hon LEUNG Che-cheung, BBS, MH, JP  
Dr Hon KWOK Ka-ki  
Hon TANG Ka-piu, JP

**Member attending** : Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP

**Member absent** : Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan

**Public Officers attending** : Item I  
Mr Stephen SUI Wai-keung, JP  
Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare

Mr FUNG Man-chung  
Assistant Director (Family & Child Welfare)  
Social Welfare Department

Ms Annisa MA Sau-ching  
Chief Social Work Officer (Domestic Violence)  
Social Welfare Department

Mr Donnie CHOY Yuk-kwong  
Chief Superintendent (Crime Support) (Crime Wing)  
Hong Kong Police Force

Ms Frances LEE King-hei  
Chief Inspector (Family Conflict and Sexual  
Violence Policy Unit) (Crime Wing)  
Hong Kong Police Force

Dr Simon Y H TANG  
Member of Co-ordinating Committee in Accident &  
Emergency, Hospital Authority / Deputy Hospital  
Chief Executive, Tuen Mun Hospital /  
Chief of Service, Accident & Emergency Department,  
Tuen Mun Hospital / Pok Oi Hospital

**Attendance** : Item I  
**by invitation**

The Hong Kong Council of Social Service

Miss Lynn LAW  
Officer (Family & Community Service)

HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre

Miss Farah Begum  
Senior Activity Worker

Hong Kong Christian Service

Ms Karrie CHAN Chung-ho  
Chief Supervisor (Ethnic Minority Services)

Catholic Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (Kowloon)

Mr LI Ka-shu  
Program Officer

Equal Opportunities Commission

Mr Raymond HO  
Senior Equal Opportunities Officer (Ethnic Minorities Unit)

Association Concerning Sexual Violence Against Women

Ms Linda WONG  
Executive Director

Individual

Ms Puja Kapai Paryani  
Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of  
Hong Kong

Individual

Ms Phyllis CHEUNG

Hong Kong Unison

Miss Mandy CHEUK  
Project Officer

RainLily

Ms Janice CHAN  
Project Officer

Nepali Social Service Hong Kong

Mr M.B. Thapa  
Chairperson

**Clerk in attendance** : Miss Betty MA  
Chief Council Secretary (2) 1

**Staff in attendance** : Ms Mina CHAN  
Council Secretary (2) 1

Ms Kiwi NG  
Legislative Assistant (2) 1

Miss Lulu YEUNG  
Clerical Assistant (2) 1

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**I. Support services for ethnic minorities facing domestic violence and sexual violence**

The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

2. A total of 11 deputations/individuals attended the meeting to give views on the subject. The major views and concerns expressed by them are summarised as follows -

- (a) front-line personnel, including social workers, police officers, healthcare professionals and staff of non-government organisations ("NGOs") serving ethnic minorities ("EMs") were generally lacking of sensitivity towards the cultural attributes of EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence. As a result, most of their cases had not been dealt with properly and not given appropriate assistance having regard to their cultural and religious background. As the mishandling of cases of domestic violence and sexual violence would render the victims more vulnerable to risks of future violence, adequate and professional training should be provided for front-line officers to raise their cultural awareness of EM communities. It was suggested that the Administration should draw up procedural guidelines specifically for handling cases of domestic violence and sexual violence involving EMs to ensure consistency in rendering services to EM victims among different service providers;
- (b) language barrier was one of the primary obstacles deterring EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence from seeking help. As such, reliable interpretation and translation

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services should be arranged for EM victims seeking assistance. It was inappropriate and undesirable for front-line officers (including social workers, police officers and healthcare personnel) serving EMs to rely on the victims' spouses who were the batterers in most cases, their children, relatives or friends to serve as interpreters. Instead, the victims should be provided with professional and impartial interpreters. In view of the severe shortage of professional interpreters in EM languages in Hong Kong, it was suggested that the Administration should allocate more resources to strengthen interpretation support for EMs by, for example, enhancing professional training for interpreters;

- (c) while a variety of interpretation and translation services, such as telephone interpretation, face-to-face interpretation and tripartite video conferencing, could be arranged by the Social Welfare Department ("SWD") for needy EMs, such services were under-utilised and not readily accessible. To facilitate the EM communities and service providers to use the existing interpretation and translation services for EMs, it was suggested that the Administrative Guidelines on Promotion of Racial Equality promulgated by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau ("CMAB") should provide clear guidance for concerned bureaux, departments and other public authorities on the provision of translation and interpretation services for EM communities. There was a strong call for a protocol requiring interpretation service as standard procedure, particularly during Police's statement-taking process, instead of being provided upon request by victims;
- (d) visa sponsorship posed a further barrier to EM women who were permitted to stay in Hong Kong on dependant visas to seek help against domestic violence for fear of losing spousal sponsorship for their visa applications. It was suggested that the Administration should, by making reference to the relevant measures adopted by the Government of the United Kingdom, consider the dependant visa applications from EM women faced with domestic violence through discretionary arrangement;

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- (e) having regard to the unique cultural characteristics of EMs, which included language, religion and dietary habits, there should be shelter service dedicated to EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence to better cater for their specific needs and circumstances; and
- (f) promotional and publicity materials produced by the Government on the issues relating to domestic violence and sexual violence should be made available to EM communities in their languages and media channels. The information should be provided in complete and unabridged version to enhance their awareness of the help-seeking avenues and support services available for victims of domestic violence and sexual violence. It was also suggested that regular out-reaching activities should be conducted to disseminate the above information to EM communities, who were often excluded from access to public services due to language barrier.

3. Members shared the concerns raised by the deputations attending the meeting, and called on the Administration, having regard to the unique cultural characteristics of EMs, to formulate specific guidelines for handling cases of domestic violence and sexual violence involving EMs, enhance interpretation service and provide dedicated refuge centres for EM victims, as well as review the existing immigration arrangements to facilitate those EM women faced with domestic violence to continue to stay in Hong Kong without visa sponsorship from their spouses. Members also expressed dissatisfaction at the lack of representatives from CMAB, Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") and Home Affairs Department ("HAD"), which had key roles to play in EM-related issues, at the meeting.

4. In response to the views and concerns raised by members and deputations at the meeting, the Administration made the following points -

Staff training on EM-related issues

- (a) having regard to the differences in culture and lifestyle of EMs, SWD had all along been providing training courses on EM-related issues for front-line personnel from various disciplines in addition to social workers to enhance their

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awareness of the characteristics of EM communities and cultural sensitivity in handling cases involving EMs. A total of 59 relevant training courses were conducted by SWD between 2012-2013 and 2014-2015, with over 2 500 attendees. The Equal Opportunities Commission ("EOC") and NGOs serving EMs had been invited to provide training related to EMs. SWD had also organised training programmes on EMs in collaboration with the Support Service Centres for EMs run by HAD. The training programmes covered a wide range of topics, which included, among others, understanding of the service needs of EMs, counselling skills for handling family disputes, marital problems and domestic violence (including child abuse) of EMs, as well as existing legislation on equal opportunities and anti-discrimination. Other NGOs who might come across cases involving EMs, such as Multi-purpose Crisis Intervention and Support Centre operated by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals and Po Leung Kuk Tsui Lam Centre, had also provided their front-line personnel with the relevant training on EMs;

- (b) having regard to the specific needs of EM communities, the regular training provided by the Police for its front-line police officers had incorporated relevant topics on EM communities, racial equality and equal opportunities. The Police had also been keeping in touch with EOC in enhancing front-line police officers' awareness of anti-discrimination legislation and related issues. Relevant sensitivity training had also been provided to strengthen police officers' professionalism in dealing with domestic and sexual violence cases (including those involving EMs). The Police would review and update its training programmes on a regular basis having regard to the professional advice and the latest development;
- (c) the Hospital Authority ("HA") organised various seminars on the cultural characteristics of EMs for its staff through hospital clusters. On-line training was also provided to strengthen communication skills with EMs and enhance awareness of EM culture. HA had developed clinical guidelines on the provision of medical care to victims of domestic violence and sexual violence, which had been

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incorporated in the training for healthcare personnel of the Accident and Emergency ("A&E") Department. From April 2011 to March 2015, over 7 300 HA staff members of various levels received relevant training in serving EMs;

Interpretation and translation services for EMs

- (d) SWD would, according to the needs of individual EM service users, arrange interpretation services, such as those of the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents ("CHEER") operated by the Hong Kong Christian Service and part-time foreign language interpreters registered with the Court Language Section of the Judiciary Administration. Since March 2011, SWD had installed web-cam facilities in 10 service units for conducting tripartite video conferencing among service users, staff of service units and interpreters when needed. With respect to the under-utilisation of the interpretation and translation services currently provided for EMs, in particular video conferencing, as pointed out by some deputations, although the Administration had not maintained statistics on the usage of the relevant services, it would study the matter thoroughly and make improvements to the provision of interpretation and translation services for EM service users where necessary;
- (e) the Police provided necessary interpretation services to EMs through different means. In general, when a police officer on duty needed interpretation service in dealing with a case involving EMs, the respective Regional Command and Control Centre would invite part-time foreign language interpreters of the Judiciary Administration to assist and such interpretation service was provided round-the-clock. In end 2014, the Police, in collaboration with CHEER, launched a pilot project named "TRANSLINK" in police report rooms in Sham Shui Po, Tsim Sha Tsui and Yau Ma Tei. The project provided instant telephone interpretation services in seven common EM languages through teleconferencing to help non-ethnic Chinese ("NEC") persons communicate with police officers. With favourable comments received from the NEC communities, the project had been extended to 10 police report rooms;



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- (f) to cater for the needs of EM patients, interpretation services, which covered 18 languages (including some common EM languages), could be arranged in HA's hospitals and clinics through a service contractor. To ensure the quality of interpretation services, HA provided, through its service contractor, training on medical-related knowledge and communication skills for all interpreters;

Promotion of support services for EMs

- (g) SWD had produced information leaflets on mainstream welfare services, including the Family and Child Protective Services Units and Integrated Family Service Centres ("IFSCs"), as well as promotional leaflets on prevention of child abuse and support services for victims of spouse/co-habitant battering in six EM languages. To cater for the needs of EMs, a "Family Support Service Information Card", which had been translated into 12 languages (including EM languages), had been prepared by the Police in collaboration with SWD for distribution to those in need. Besides, SWD had set up a dedicated webpage to provide information on support services for EMs, including those facing domestic violence and sexual violence;
- (h) SWD had launched a trial programme to engage EMs as Contract Welfare Support and Liaison Assistants in IFSCs with a view to facilitating EM service users in accessing social welfare services. EMs had also been employed to assist in the work of IFSCs run by NGOs. SWD would continue to work in close collaboration with NGOs serving EMs to strengthen the out-reaching service for needy EMs. Besides, various Police Districts, having regard to their respective circumstances, had organised different types of activities such as talks and promotional activities to foster communication and mutual trust between EM communities and the Police; and

Medical support for EM victims of sexual violence

- (i) when a victim of sexual violence attended A&E Department for emergency medical treatment, a nursing staff of the same

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sex as the victim would be assigned as the coordinator for the case. The nursing staff would assist in arranging for medical examination or interview of the victim at a place that could ensure privacy. In addition, welfare services would be introduced to victims of sexual violence so that they could receive appropriate assistance and support services as soon as possible.

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5. The Subcommittee requested -

- (a) SWD and the Police to review their respective procedural guidelines for handling cases of domestic violence (including child abuse) and sexual violence involving EMs, particularly the provision of interpretation and translation services, to meet their specific needs and circumstances;
- (b) the concerned government departments, including SWD, HAD and the Police, as well as HA to maintain statistics on the utilisation of translation and interpretation services by EMs, especially EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence;
- (c) the Police to provide the statistics relating to training for police officers on handling cases involving EMs in the past years, such as the number of training programmes, number of participants, course subjects, etc; and
- (d) the Administration to consider providing dedicated refuge centres for needy EMs (including EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence).

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6. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Subcommittee should write to -

- (a) HAB and HAD conveying members' request for a review of the provision of translation and interpretation services for EMs, particularly EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence, so as to standardise the training for interpreters in EM languages from different service providers and the evaluation of their qualifications; and

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- (b) the Security Bureau and the Immigration Department relaying members' concerns about spousal sponsorship required for applying dependant visa, which would deter EM women suffering from domestic violence from seeking assistance. The Administration should review the relevant immigration legislation and exercise discretion when considering applications for dependant visa from EM victims of domestic violence.

**II. Any other business**

7. The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Subcommittee should discuss and receive views from deputations on the support services for victims of sexual violence at the next meeting scheduled for 10 November 2015.

8. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:56 pm.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
5 November 2015

**Proceedings of meeting of the Subcommittee on Strategy and Measures to  
Tackle Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence  
held on Tuesday, 6 October 2015, at 10:45 am  
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action Required</b>
<i>Agenda item I - Support services for ethnic minorities facing domestic violence and sexual violence</i>			
000000 - 000957	Chairman	Opening remarks	
000958 - 001409	Chairman Miss Lynn LAW, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)35/15-16(01)]	
001410 - 001738	Chairman Miss Farah Begum, HKSKH Lady MacLehose Centre	Presentation of views	
001739 - 002209	Chairman Ms Karrie CHAN Chung-ho, Hong Kong Christian Service ("HKCS")	Presentation of views	
002210 - 002556	Chairman Mr LI Ka-shu, Catholic Diocesan Pastoral Centre for Workers (Kowloon)	Presentation of views	
002557 - 003027	Chairman Mr Raymond HO, Equal Opportunities Commission	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)2172/14-15(02)]	
003028 - 003457	Chairman Ms Linda WONG, Association Concerning Sexual Violence Against Women	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)2177/14-15(01)]	
003458 - 003958	Chairman Ms Puja Kapai Paryani, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, The University of Hong Kong	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)2184/14-15(01)]	
003959 - 004435	Chairman Ms Phyllis CHEUNG	Presentation of views	

Time marker	Speaker(s)	Subject(s)	Action Required
004436 - 004826	Chairman Miss Mandy CHEUK, Hong Kong Unison	Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(2)35/15-16(02)]	
004827 - 005145	Chairman Ms Janice CHAN, RainLily	Presentation of views	
005146 - 005341	Chairman Mr M.B. Thapa, Nepali Social Service Hong Kong	Presentation of views	
005342 - 011834	Chairman Admin	The Administration's response to the views and concerns expressed by deputations/individuals at the meeting	
011835 - 012631	Chairman Mr CHAN Chi-chuen Admin	<p>Mr CHAN Chi-chuen's strong call for the provision of dedicated support services for EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence to cater for their special needs and circumstances.</p> <p>Mr CHAN pointed out that there was a lack of statistics on domestic violence and sexual violence cases involving EMs, as well as utilisation of related support services by EMs.</p> <p>Mr CHAN's enquiry about the procedures and criteria for arranging interpretation service for EM victims and the Administration's response.</p> <p>At the request of Mr CHAN, the Police agreed to provide after the meeting the statistics relating to training for police officers on handling domestic violence and sexual violence cases involving EMs in the past years (such as the number of training programmes, number of participants, course subjects, etc.).</p>	<b>Admin</b>
012632 - 013506	Ms Emily LAU Admin Chairman	Ms Emily LAU urged the Administration to require the provision of qualified interpreters as a standard arrangement when providing service to EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence. More resources should be devoted to the training of professional interpreters in EM languages.	

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		<p>The Administration responded that SWD would review the relevant procedural guidelines to facilitate needy EMs in accessing the interpretation service, if so required. Moreover, interpreters arranged by the Centre for Harmony and Enhancement of Ethnic Minority Residents ("CHEER") operated by HKCS had already received appropriate training and were committed to providing professional service.</p> <p>Noting that the interpretation service for EMs was currently provided by three different service providers, namely the Judiciary Administration, CHEER and the Hospital Authority's service contractor, the Chairman cast doubt on the consistency in the service standards. He asked about the policy bureau or department that held responsible for the provision of translation and interpretation services for EM communities.</p> <p>The Administration advised that support services for EMs (including translation and interpretation services) fell within the purview of the Home Affairs Department ("HAD"). Members' concerns over the provision of interpretation service for EMs would be conveyed to HAD.</p>	
013507 - 014127	<p>Chairman Mr Albert HO Ms Karrie CHAN Chung-ho, HKCS</p>	<p>Mr Albert HO called for a comprehensive review of the language policy for EMs with a view to eliminating racial discrimination.</p> <p>In response to Mr HO's enquiry about engaging EMs who were well-versed in Cantonese as interpreters, Ms Karrie CHAN of HKCS explained that while locally-born EMs could speak fluent Cantonese, they were incapable of reading and writing Chinese. At present, service providers were facing considerable difficulties in the recruitment of qualified interpreters in EM languages. Mr HO called on the Administration to allocate adequate resources to address the shortage of professional interpreters in EM languages.</p>	

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014128 - 014904	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che Chairman Admin Ms Karrie CHAN Chung-ho, HKCS	<p>Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che was strongly of the view that SWD should require its service units to arrange for a specified percentage of staff members to attend dedicated training courses on EM-related issues, so as to ensure that appropriate assistance could be rendered to needy EMs.</p> <p>Responding to Mr CHEUNG, Ms Karrie CHAN of HKCS advised that the low usage of tripartite video conferencing for providing interpretation service was possibly due to low awareness of the service and inconvenience in accessing the equipment.</p>	
014905 - 015444	Mr TANG Ka-piu Admin	<p>Mr TANG Ka-piu held the view that front-line social workers should take the initiative to provide translation and interpretation services for EMs seeking assistance.</p> <p>Mr TANG asked whether SWD would, by making reference to the experience of the Police and the Labour Department, consider engaging EMs in its social and community work. The Administration advised that SWD had since August 2014 launched a trial scheme and hired an EM as Contract Welfare Support and Liaison Assistant ("CWSLA") in an Integrated Family Service Centre ("IFSC"). Another EM was expected to be employed as CWSLA by late 2015. EMs had also been employed to assist in the work of IFSCs run by NGOs.</p> <p>Mr TANG enquired whether language barrier was the main difficulty encountered by the Police in providing support for EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence. The Police responded that apart from language barrier, cultural differences and lack of confidence or fear of law enforcement agencies were major obstacles to police intervention in cases involving EMs.</p>	

<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action Required</b>
015445 - 020043	Mr LEUNG Che-cheung Chairman Admin	<p>Mr LEUNG Che-cheung pointed out that the Home Affairs Bureau ("HAB") and HAD, which were the policy bureau and department responsible respectively for promoting the value of cultural diversity and co-ordinating the support services for EM communities, should send representatives to attend this meeting. He took the view that proactive cross-departmental efforts should be made to enhance public education among EMs for the prevention of domestic violence.</p> <p>The Administration advised that SWD worked in close collaboration with HAD's Support Service Centres for EMs and non-government organisations serving EMs to provide social welfare services for EMs at the district level.</p>	
020044 - 020900	Chairman	<p>The Chairman suggested and members agreed that the Subcommittee should write to -</p> <p>(a) HAB and HAD conveying members' request for a review of the provision of translation and interpretation services for EMs, particularly EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence, so as to standardise the training for interpreters from different service providers and the evaluation of their qualifications; and</p> <p>(b) the Security Bureau and the Immigration Department relaying members' concerns about spousal sponsorship required for applying dependant visa, which would deter EM women suffering from domestic violence from seeking assistance. It was suggested that the Administration should review the relevant immigration arrangements and exercise discretion when considering applications for dependant visa from EM victims of domestic violence.</p> <p>The Chairman requested -</p> <p>(a) SWD and the Police to review their respective procedural guidelines for</p>	<p><b>Clerk &amp; Admin</b></p> <p><b>Admin</b></p>



<b>Time marker</b>	<b>Speaker(s)</b>	<b>Subject(s)</b>	<b>Action Required</b>
		<p>handling cases of domestic violence (including child abuse) and sexual violence involving EMs to cater for their specific needs and circumstances;</p> <p>(b) the concerned government departments, including SWD, HAD and the Police, as well as the Hospital Authority to maintain statistics on the utilisation of translation and interpretation services by EMs, especially EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence; and</p> <p>(c) the Administration to consider providing dedicated refuge centres for needy EMs (including EM victims of domestic violence and sexual violence).</p>	
020901 - 021108	Chairman Ms Emily LAU	Issues to be discussed at subsequent meetings, continuation of work of the Subcommittee and date of next meeting.	