

主旨: Views on Population Policy
附件: CA Response to Population Policy 20140223.docx

Dear Sir/ Madam

Thank you for inviting views on the captioned subject.

Christian Action is a Hong Kong registered charitable organization (Charity no. 161383), established in 1985. Our Mission is to serve those who are poor, disadvantaged, marginalized, displaced or abandoned, aiming to give them hope, dignity and self-reliance. Our clients include the unemployed adults and youth, new arrivals from Mainland China, ethnic minorities, refugees, asylum seekers and migrant domestic helpers, orphans and abandoned children in Qinghai. We also provide social enterprise services.

We are pleased to provide our views as detailed in the attached Response to the Consultation Document on Population Policy.

Should you have any queries or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours faithfully

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Response to the Consultation Document on Population Policy

1. Primarily, we agree with the Hong Kong Council of Social Services (HKCSS) response to the Consultation Document on Population Policy to place emphasis on making Hong Kong a preferred choice of residence for the population.
2. An integral part of this population is the Ethnic Minorities (EM) and their number has been on significant rise of over 30% from 344,000 in 2001 to 451,200 in 2011. This is a good source of population growth providing a much-needed boost to the labour force in Hong Kong.
3. Around 70% of this EM population are foreign domestic helpers from Indonesia and Philippines. Needless to say, this vulnerable group of workers need to be highlighted as they form the workforce of people without whom much of Hong Kong's own labour force, particularly those with children and elderly, would not be able to go out to work. They need to be protected just like any other EM. The government needs to do more in respect of monitoring of agencies' tactics and charges, the helpers' work conditions as well as reconsidering policies such as the two-week rule and live-in rule to prevent any kind of abuse of this important group of our EM community and labour force.
4. If the city is to retain current EM in Hong Kong and attract new EM from overseas, something needs to be done to help the EM feel a sense of belonging to Hong Kong.
5. Various factors have been enunciated as hindrances in that respect. Some of these such as high housing and education prices as well as cramped living areas and unhealthy environment are issues faced not only by EM but by local community. Other reasons such as communication issues resulting from language barriers and lack of cultural sensitivity, lack of high-skilled jobs, job mismatching, no or limited prospects of career advancement, racial discrimination, limited access to government services and facilities, lack of EM family-friendly services such as child care and elderly care support, are superficial.
6. The deep-rooted cause for EM feeling that Hong Kong is not their home or could not be a residence where they would consider forming or raising families is the ignorance of the culture and psychology of the local and various EM communities in Hong Kong. The EM feel that the locals do not take them as an important part of their society. No matter how many remedies are given – e.g. employers ready to employ EM or mainstream school ready to accept EM – these EM students/ workers still feel alienated and unwanted. Some locals do not approach them for fear of having to communicate in English or they don't want to be troubled. If they speak to the EM, they may have more responsibility in their hands and it is too much effort. On the other hand, EM must make their own efforts to integrate into the society having made a conscious choice to come and live in Hong Kong and make it their home.
7. This intermingling of cultures needs to be ingrained from a very early age and at all levels and aspects of life in Hong Kong. We therefore suggest **multi-cultural education / training and civic education** be imbibed into the life cells of Hong Kong starting from the



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governmental policy level trickling down to the whole spectrum of services – education, social welfare, hospital, etc. This has to be made compulsory.

8. The Hong Kong government as the city's leader and a role model for its population needs to set a good example in the integration of its people – local, EM and others -into its each and every aspect of governance and operation. Some suggested measures are:
 - a) Recruitment of more EM into its departments and services to ensure that services provided are readily accessible and made use of by all Hong Kong people including the EM. Currently, one cannot see a multi-cultural environment in government offices such as the Labour Department or the Social Welfare Department. The only field where some EM staff are spotted is in the police. Perhaps the government can consider imposing a quota system as an affirmative action whereby a prescribed percentage of jobs are allocated for employing EM and in turn imposing the same on the private sector with incentives or subsidies provided.
 - b) The government could facilitate such recruitment by deleting or reducing the Chinese language requirements for its jobs and/or simplifying accreditation process or recognition of EM overseas qualifications.
 - c) Provision of multi-cultural education or cultural sensitivity training to its staff at all levels across the board.
 - d) Provision of orientation programs including a tour of not just the local culture or attractions but those of other cultures and not just to new arrivals but to implement as ongoing programs for those already living in Hong Kong so that everyone gets a chance to know more about each other's culture. These tours to be guided by persons of different backgrounds and race, e.g. local guide plus EM guide.
 - e) Public housing is to form 60% of the total housing target for the government. In that respect, the government could promote and encourage more culturally diverse and EM-friendly establishments to be set up in other areas and not just in the concentrated EM areas such as Tin Shui Wai, Tuen Mun, Jordan and the like.
 - f) Through the mass media, the government could promote integration of locals and EM, for instance, the government could present on TV a culturally diverse environment interacting harmoniously in a school, neighbourhood, at work and/ or socially and encourage this to be turned into reality not just in government contexts but all over Hong Kong.
9. In order to preserve Hong Kong's reputation as a world city, the government needs to encourage its citizens and the private sector in the integration exercise by:
 - a) Providing multi-culture education/ training for the locals and for the EM to understand the importance of integration into the Hong Kong society, particularly EM leaders, so that they can relay such knowledge on to the masses.



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- b) Some businesses do hire EM because of a need to do so because of doing business with international markets e.g. lawyers, or particular products or services catered to the EM community e.g. Standard Chartered Islamic Fund. However, other businesses may not find it necessary that they hire EM or find it troublesome to provide an EM-friendly workplace environment in which case the government could provide some incentives/ subsidies to those businesses who employ EM and if necessary, to impose quotas on employment of EM.
 - c) Encouraging the establishment of more social enterprises projects for EM.
 - d) Encouraging existing social welfare agencies to provide more children and youth, family, elderly and community support services to EM families.
 - e) Providing EM-staffed and equipped family-friendly services and work environment like child care service, after school care services and neighbourhood support service to EM children and families so that the EM women feel at ease to leave their children to join the work force.
10. Language barrier is one of the main concerns for EM living or considering living in Hong Kong. Undoubtedly, therefore, provision of appropriate Chinese language education/ training at schools and vocational training or even to non-school goers would alleviate to a certain extent the problem. The government has taken a step forward by way of its Chinese as a Second Language framework but there appears to be a lack of details and many gaps hence the seeming non-commitment from the government. These are:
- a) No concrete measure for pre-primary or kindergarten educational support for EM;
 - b) No monitoring or evaluation of this measure/ curriculum has been formulated therefore no idea about its effectiveness and no reasonable prospects seen for its continuous improvement;
 - c) No guidelines or initiatives by the government to support communication between schools and EM parents. Currently, some teachers and staff members in school are unwilling to communicate with EM parents regarding their children. This would require some encouragement or incentives from the government. More appropriate teacher training would be required not just to teach students but to communicate with parents;
 - d) Lack of resource support for schools – for example, currently, notices given to parents in mainstream schools are only in Chinese. As these same notices are used every year with slight modifications, government should ensure schools provide all notices in both English and Chinese to ensure EM parents are made aware of their child’s progress and school happenings;



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- e) Lack of courses appropriate for EM to take whether it is through VTC or other educational institutions;
 - f) Lack of education support for those already in the labour force and other non-school goers;
 - g) Lack of support for EM parents - they need to be educated to understand that there is no conflict in integration and that in fact, there needs to be a balance between adapting to the local culture and retaining their culture. Schools, friends and local communities can help in the former role while parents and family can assist in the latter;
 - h) Lack of multi-cultural education in the curriculum which is imperative not only for students but is necessary for teachers and parents too.
11. Hong Kong has many positive factors going for it and is highly capable of sustaining not only its population but also its reputation as a world city. It just needs to take appropriate and effective measures to do so in consultation with the community. The government needs to ensure effective cross-Bureau and cross-departmental collaboration and resolve because this multi-cultural education/ training involves many cross-cutting issues that cannot be handled by one department/ Bureau alone. Currently there is a Race Relations Unit under the Home Affairs Department. However, we suggest that be stepped up to form a Commission or Special Committee on Race Relations made up of experts from different race, background, professions who will look into these issues as a whole for the multiple cultures that are in Hong Kong.