



## Policy Address 2019 Submission by The Zubin Foundation

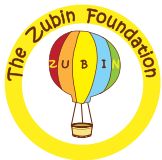
### A Liveable City for all starts with our Government

#### 1.0 Building an Inclusive Society - Imagery, Training and Representation

1.1 “**Embracing Diversity and Inclusion**” needs to be embedded into Hong Kong in order to foster a culture of people who are inclusive of others views, beliefs and backgrounds. The Hong Kong SAR government should take a leadership role in fostering diversity and nurturing inclusion with the objective of making HK a ‘livable city for all.’ The following recommendations are made in light of this:

#### 1.2 Policy Recommendations:

- 1.2.1 To make mandatory for all Bureaux and Department Heads to **undertake Diversity and Inclusion Training** as is the case in other countries in order to foster an inclusive mindset and address unconscious bias. This should be in addition to the current cultural sensitivity/equal opportunities training for civil service. This training will not just help in managing differences and bias that arise from different races but also make the civil service generally more inclusive.
- 1.2.2 **Increase representation of ethnicities on government department websites and government imagery** in order demonstrate Hong Kong’s commitment as an international and inclusive city.
- 1.2.3 In light of 1.2.2 above, to **produce an Inclusion Best Practice Checklist** for public messages so that announcements, advertisements and other public messages by the HKSARG consider using imageries and languages that are inclusive.
- 1.2.4 To include **the views of ethnic minority and non-Chinese community in policy by engaging a non-Chinese policy advisor(s)** who will report directly to the Chief Executive.
- 1.2.5 It is commended that since 2016, the government has considered Diversity List candidates and has onboarded ethnic minorities as members in at least 25 advisory and statutory positions.
  - 1.2.5.1 We ask that the HKSAR government **continue to onboard ethnic minority members for government advisory and statutory bodies from varied backgrounds** who meet the criteria required, to sit on HK government advisory committees. This is particularly important in those departments that provide core services to Hong Kong people and include Housing, Health, Education and Labour and Welfare as examples.
- 1.2.6 To include English subtitles on all daily Cantonese news, updates and current affairs programmes on all free to air channels. This would allow the ethnic minorities to access information about current affairs in English. This would also help students, particularly DSE exam students to understand current affairs. There is limited English language news that goes into in depth Hong Kong and Mainland affairs.



## Education

### 2.0 Changing attitudes of Teachers and Schools

2.1 The Zubin Foundation's research has found that management of kindergartens, teachers in kindergartens and Chinese parents play a role in exclusion of ethnic minority students in kindergartens. While we recognize that exclusion this may not be intentional, it has a detrimental impact on learning and self-perception of ethnic minorities. Unless ethnic minorities are not in CMI kindergartens.

#### 2.2 Policy Recommendations:

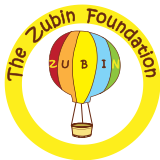
- 2.2.1 EDB to develop a **code of conduct** and an **inclusive checklist** for kindergartens.
- 2.2.2 EDB to ensure that all kindergarten teachers and teacher assistants, as part of their teacher training qualifications undergo mandatory **cultural sensitivity training**.
- 2.2.3 EDB to **review of school resources** (including commonly used reading books and other materials) and remove negative stereotypes of ethnic minorities. In addition, to encourage the use of positive ethnic minority role models in printed resources.
- 2.2.4 EDB to request that all kindergarten, primary, secondary, vocational and tertiary and special schools' **websites are also in English**.

### 3.0 Kindergartens

- 3.1 It is encouraging to see that in Policy Address 2018 the government has enhanced the subsidy for kindergartens admitting NCS students with a **5-tiered subsidy for different levels of NCS student admission**.
- 3.2 However, there are still some major issues remain that remain unsolved. In light of The Zubin Foundation findings from "*Securing a Good Start for Students of Chinese as an Additional Language in Kindergartens*", [07 May 2018]<sup>1</sup> a number of challenges face kindergarten principals who admit ethnic minority children into their kindergartens. Many of these principals wish to onboard such students but face pressure from teachers who prefer not to work with ethnic minority children, Chinese parents who threaten to take their children out of kindergartens if their child has ethnic minority classmates, and the massive amount of time required by teachers to produce resources for such children. Good hearted teachers spend time pasting 2romanisation on school books (using their own form of romanisation) and developing resources for ethnic minority children because resources do not exist for teaching non-Cantonese speakers. Many principals bow to parent pressure and chose not to bring on ethnic minority children because it is just too difficult- and ethnic minorities who sense this go elsewhere, generally to an EMI kindergarten or a CMI kindergarten that segregates the NCS children into a different classroom. It is in light of these findings that the following recommendations are being made:

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<sup>1</sup> Securing a Good Start for Students of Chinese as an Additional Language (CAL) in Kindergarten, The Zubin Foundation, 7 May 2018, [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17\\_b42292daf5124ff6bbdd963df27cd732.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17_b42292daf5124ff6bbdd963df27cd732.pdf) and Exec Summary in Eng: [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17\\_2f61643eb176495fb2f1e8788ffa0dc5.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17_2f61643eb176495fb2f1e8788ffa0dc5.pdf) and Chi: [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17\\_8eafbcdbf6d5434597af3cc036d6e300.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17_8eafbcdbf6d5434597af3cc036d6e300.pdf).



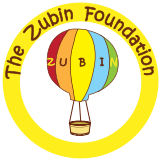
### 3.3 Policy Recommendations:

- 3.3.1 EDB to work with Social Welfare Department to **increase messaging to ethnic minority parents** on the importance of Chinese language learning at a young age, from kindergarten.
- 3.3.2 EDB to commission research on Romanization, and specifically:
  - 3.3.2.1 **A review of kindergartens and Primary schools** that teach NCS students to understand the extent to which some form of romanization is being used currently (even though they may not follow any formal use of romanization).
  - 3.3.2.2 **What parents and NCS students say about romanization** as a tool to learn Cantonese (for example, *Jyutping*) and if they use any form of romanization already.
- 3.3.3 EDB to develop or support the **development of materials** for kindergartens to use for teaching NCS kindergarten children Chinese.

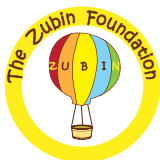
### 4.0 Non-Chinese Speaking (NCS) Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- 4.1 The numbers of ethnic minority children with special needs is on the rise. Having worked with 220 ethnic minority parents with SEN in Hindi and Urdu, as well as our research at The Zubin Foundation, "*Landscape Study: Primary School Education for Non-Chinese Speaking children with Special Education Needs*", [27 November 2017]<sup>2</sup> the following:
  - 4.1.1 Many families that have one child with a behavioral disorder is likely to have at least one other with such a disorder (such as ADHD and autism).
  - 4.1.2 With the rise of the population in the Pakistani community and the practice of cousin marriage, there may be a rise in the numbers of children with development delays in some ethnic minority communities.
- 4.2 The additional funding support for NCS students with SEN introduced in the Policy Address 2018 was an important big step for NCS students with SEN.
- 4.3 However, it is important to recognize that the needs of children from NCS families are still not being adequately addressed. As a result of this, a downward spiral has manifested for many ethnic minorities with SEN children. Many of these families suffer shame and pain when they have a child with special needs and coupled with their inability to speak Chinese and their lack of knowledge about how they can be helped, this has resulted in the breakdown of family units, mental health problems, large amounts of stress, as well as the splitting of families where one parent will leave Hong Kong with their NCS SEN child.
- 4.4 NCS children are not able to access public resources. Specifically:
  - 4.4.1 Early interventions for mild and moderate needs children under 6, in Early Education Training Centres (EETCs) are very limited. Those who are more "serious" in nature with their special needs tend to be prioritized. Although this may seem like a good idea, we know that early intervention is key and the "mild" cases, are unlikely to receive support which means they are unlikely to improve with early intervention.

<sup>2</sup> Landscape Study: Primary School Education for Non-Chinese Speaking children with Special Education Needs, 27 November 2017, [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/5242b7\\_389718f03a5d4d56b5f299ee24df12dc.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/5242b7_389718f03a5d4d56b5f299ee24df12dc.pdf)



- 4.4.2 Those with severe special needs below age 6 are not able to access (Special Child Care Centres) SCCCs because of the language barrier. Currently all SCCCs offer education and interventions in Cantonese.
  - 4.4.3 In primary schools, school principals require assistance to engage directly with parents of NCS SEN children.
  - 4.4.4 In primary schools, NCS SEN children receiving an assessment later than their Chinese counterparts because teachers are ill-equipped to identify the child as SEN child (often delaying the assessment because of perceived speech delay as a result of learning Cantonese).
  - 4.4.5 Therefore, primary school NCS SEN children suffer too from not receiving early intervention.
  - 4.4.6 There is no EMI primary special school for English speakers.
- 4.5 In addition, NCS children are not currently receiving assessments in their native tongue, which is recommended international best practice. Currently assessments are conducted in English (mostly) and Cantonese and even with a translator, this is far from effective. This may be partly because the professional may not speak English to a high level either and both parties are not comfortable in the language in which the assessment is being done. In order to ensure that assessments are of use to all parties, this problem needs to be rectified.
- 4.6 Policy Recommendations:
- 4.6.1 For children under 6 years old with mild and moderate special needs, to increase the existing number of places for children in the **Early Education Training Centres (EETCs) in English. We note that govt has provided additional subsidies in the 2018 policy address, however what we need is an increase in spaces as well.**
  - 4.6.2 Support EETCs and SCCCs to **employ specific English language resources** for NCS children.
  - 4.6.3 To develop **a list of psychologists who are able to assess the NCS SEN children in Hindi, Urdu and Nepalese.** If these resources do not currently exist, the government should explore how to develop these. This is essential with the rise of NCS SEN children in Hong Kong.
  - 4.6.4 In public ordinary schools **to extend the funding** under the new 3-tiered structure **to cover suspected** plus already diagnosed **NCS SEN children.** This is particularly important in light of 5.4.4 above and the time lag in having an ethnic minority child assessed.
  - 4.6.5 There is no English language classroom in any Special School in Hong Kong. As such an ethnic minority child with severe special needs, has to learn in Chinese which is both difficult and unfair given the severity of a child's special needs. The EDB should consider the setting up of **English language resources and classrooms in selected existing Special Schools** to onboard NCS speaking children.
  - 4.6.6 Alternatively, the HKSAR government should consider **subsidising NCS SEN children in the private sector as current public schools are not able to cater to them.**
  - 4.6.7 We commend SWD for the setting up of specialised EM units in in 5 parents/relatives resources centres for persons with disabilities. We



recommend that:

**4.6.7.1 Staff are from ethnic minority communities.**

**4.6.7.2 Staff receive training and training materials in Hindi and Urdu** on SEN and how to communicate with EM parents.

4.6.8 Private and international schools are found to not admit children with special needs and exclude them through the admission process through activities and exercises that would be difficult with children with certain behavioural issues in particular. As such NCS children who would like to be in private schools are coming to public schools- or leaving Hong Kong. Our recommendations are:

4.6.8.1 The EDB to **reinforce messaging to private and international that discrimination on the grounds of special needs is unlawful** and to require them to review admission policies to ensure that this is so.

4.6.8.2 To ensure that as part of all land leases, private and international schools are required to **accept at least 8% of all children with SEN.**

4.6.8.3 To produce a **Code of Practice for Private and International Schools on Accepting Children with SEN.**

4.6.8.4 **Annual Reporting Requirement of children with special needs per year by gender, type of special needs and provisions provided.**

## **5.0 Exploring Alternative Education Pathways for Ethnic Minorities**

5.1 In 1997, the EDB made the firm decision to move to mother tongue of instruction (MOI). This was premised on the notion that learning in mother tongue is better for the learner and has higher outcomes in education. See *“Missed Opportunities for English Language Education for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong”*, [16 May 2019]<sup>3</sup>,

5.2 Cantonese is not the mother tongue of the ethnic minorities. In fact, only 46.1% of them speak Cantonese and 84% of them speak English.

5.3 Cantonese is required for social inclusion and employment.

5.4 Less of Hong Kong’s ethnic minorities, are becoming lawyers, doctors and engineers since the change to MOI learning because of their language deficiency.

5.5 In light of the above, an alternative pathway may include:

5.5.1 Learning from the age of 6 to 18 in English language, with Chinese a strong language subject so that they are able to speak Cantonese in particular to a very high level.

5.5.2 Post age 18, intensive Cantonese learning including Chinese reading and writing

5.6 If we were able to give ethnic minorities an option of this pathway in 6.5.1 above, where they would receive an excellent English language education (so we could give the doctors, lawyers and engineers required in Hong Kong), we could utilise the

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<sup>3</sup> Missed Opportunities for English Language Education for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong, 16 May 2019, [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17\\_c8ecab02832b4759aaee6076e9ed371c.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17_c8ecab02832b4759aaee6076e9ed371c.pdf)



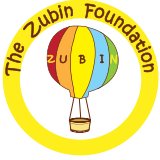
unused scholarships in the 64 Private and International Schools and 72 DSS Schools.

- 5.7 Some of these schools are required by their service agreements with the government to reserve 10% of income each year for financially needy students. If they are unable to, they are supposed to accrue these amounts. However, according to The Zubin Foundation's recent research "*Missed Opportunities for English Language Education for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong*", [16 May 2019], much of this money is not used. It is estimated that each year up to a total worth of HK\$121,851,026, approximately benefiting 800 students. This is a massive and a missed opportunity for ethnic minority children to access stellar English medium of instruction education.
- 5.8 The following recommendations are being made in light of the research "*Missed Opportunities for English Language Education for Ethnic Minorities in Hong Kong*", [16 May 2019].
- 5.9 Policy Recommendations:
- 5.9.1 EBD to define what is meant by "**scholarship and/or other financial assistance for deserving students**" in the lease agreements, ServAs, for both international and private schools as well as DSS schools.
  - 5.9.2 EBD to require that all private, international and DSS schools **to have a designated page on their website in both Chinese and English language to make scholarship information available.**
  - 5.9.3 EDB to require that private, international and DSS schools, **make public on their websites, the amount of funding available each year for scholarships** and the **number of scholarship** places available as well as the total amount accumulated still outstanding. Also to be included is the timeline, process and requirements.
  - 5.9.4 EDB to ensure that the scholarship requirements are fully met by each school and are used as a basis for determining the renewal of their leases and other licenses.
  - 5.9.5 The Audit Commission to conduct a **full review of the extent of compliance** by the relevant international, private and DSS schools with their requirement to provide scholarship and financial assistance to deserving students.
  - 5.9.6 EDB to **follow up** on the findings of the Audit Commission (in light of 6.9.5) **enforce the conditions in the ServAs.**

## **Women and Girls**

### **6.0 Ethnic Minority Women and Girls:**

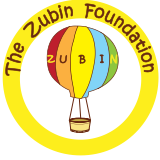
- 6.1 Women are often the most vulnerable group in the ethnic minority community, particularly in those sub communities that are more conservative. This community is also the poorest in Hong Kong.
- 6.2 The Pakistani community is the fastest growing community in Hong Kong because of the following reasons:



- 6.2.1 Families are having many children.
- 6.2.2 It is the practice of many Hong Kong Pakistani families when the son gets married, to arrange the marriage with a woman in Pakistan. Therefore women from Pakistan are brought into Hong Kong to marry to our Hong Kong Pakistani men.
- 6.3 In order to break the cycle of poverty which is a key social objective of the HKSAR government, **focus must be on the education of girls**. All international research points to the education of girls as a key determinant to breaking the cycle of poverty.
- 6.4 Through our research of Pakistani girls, “Dreams of Pakistani Children – In-depth conversations with 22 girls and 3 boys”, [21 February 2019]<sup>4</sup> we found that:
- 6.4.1 Girls are likely to be engaged to be married from
- 6.4.2 the age of 10 upwards, and are encouraged/forced to marry at 18 or before.
- 6.4.3 Girls who opt to study post age 18, most often do so without their parents’ moral support.
- 6.5 In addition, based on our experience from Call Mira – an English/Hindi/Urdu helpline dedicated for South Asian women and girls in need in HK:
- 6.5.1 Over half of the callers (over 200 calls from over 60 callers in the past 10 months) has reported some form of domestic violence.
- 6.5.2 The majority of callers are suffering from mental health issues.
- 6.5.3 However, they are not able to find suitable (linguistically and culturally) and timely treatment from the public sector nor affordable treatment from the private sector.
- 6.6 The following recommendations are being made in light of the research of “Dreams of Pakistani Children – In-depth conversations with 22 girls and 3 boys”, [21 February 2019]<sup>5</sup> and the project of “Call Mira – a helpline in Hindi/Urdu and English for South Asian women and girls in distress”.
- 6.7 Policy Recommendations:
- 6.7.1 Critical to girls education is being in **all-girls secondary schools**: girls are more likely to be able to continue their education in an all-girls school environment.
- 6.7.2 Track all children leaving and entering Hong Kong and when there are **long absences**, these should be **investigated**.
- 6.7.3 Commission NGOs with sufficient resources to set up dedicated **EM women and girls centre** to provide a safe space for women and girls only environment and to provide emotional support and training for employment. Health-related topics will also be discussed at the centre.
- 6.7.4 Provide **stipends** or equivalent to NGOs who provide **mental health assistances** (especially on one-on-one counselling sessions) to ethnic

<sup>4</sup> Dreams of Pakistani Children – In-depth conversations with 22 girls and 3 boys, 21 February 2019, [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17\\_63dd2923ca7f412b9e3a2c4a24baf58b.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17_63dd2923ca7f412b9e3a2c4a24baf58b.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Dreams of Pakistani Children – In-depth conversations with 22 girls and 3 boys, 21 February 2019, [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17\\_63dd2923ca7f412b9e3a2c4a24baf58b.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/da2d17_63dd2923ca7f412b9e3a2c4a24baf58b.pdf)



minority suffers of mental health issues.

- 6.7.5 Set up **helplines targeting ethnic minority women and girls only**. Train responders and build a whole support system for the helpline.
- 6.7.6 Provide extra funding resources to strengthen services of NGOs in providing support for **domestic violence victims**.
- 6.7.7 Ensure the newly formed EM outreaching team members are staffed by professionals in the ethnic minority community and **trained on how to handle sensitive topics** like domestic violence and forced marriage.
- 6.7.8 Provide **cultural sensitivity training** to all frontline staff in Hospital Authority hospitals and Department of Health clinics.

## **Funding Schemes for NGOs**

- 7.0 The HKSARG has a number of funding schemes, set up with very specific intentions, to reduce poverty and create social inclusion. The Zubin Foundation has been the recipient of some forms of these funding and is grateful for the funds received.
  - 7.1 The process of applying for some government funds is incredibly arduous for an NGO. There is plenty of paperwork and often many phone calls and meetings necessary.
  - 7.2 Whilst the due diligence of the NGO and the project are critical and the accountability for use of public funds is important, the current processes are a barrier for smaller agencies.
  - 7.3 Policy Recommendations:
    - 7.3.1 To consider how NGOs who have already been through a **due diligence process** with one government scheme **may not have to go through this again for a defined period of years**, say every 3 years.
    - 7.3.2 To consider **reducing the numbers of people required on the decision making committee** of the funding schemes.
    - 7.3.3 To ensure that **the requirements of the NGO are commensurate with the funds they require**. For example, an NGO asking for \$100,000 would have a simpler process than an NGO requesting \$1,000,000.
    - 7.3.4 To look at **other ways of streamlining the process for smaller NGOs**.

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