

2020

LAW FOR CHANGE STUDENT COMPETITION

TEAM 7	PROJECT TITLE WeDoCare
MEMBERS	Fung Sze Wing, Esther Lee Ka Hey, Linelle Lo Kwan Yee, Jessie Mok Kai Hin, Matthew Wong Chi Long
SCHOOL	The University of Hong Kong

INTRODUCTION

WeDoCare aims to provide assistance for domestic abuse victims and raise general awareness towards the issue of domestic violence in light of the escalated occurrences since the outbreak of COVID-19. Our project is specifically structured in accordance with this year’s themes of “community” and “resilience” - we hope to create a strengthened community for people who have experienced domestic violence in which they can receive long-term support for recovering from their unpleasant experiences. Currently, people who have

gone through domestic abuse are either not aware of the support platforms available to them or reluctant to voice out their experiences, which is why we want to let them know that they are not as isolated as they thought through this project. We also want to make the general public part of their community to diminish any prejudice our society might have towards domestic violence. Ultimately, we hope to develop our project into one that could alleviate the problem of domestic violence in Hong Kong in the long run.

BACKGROUND

Domestic violence is a long-existing problem in the Hong Kong community. Statistics from the Social Welfare Department shows there were 2920 reported cases of domestic abuse cases in 2019, in which almost 80% are physical abuse cases.¹ Moreover, there are some hidden cases in which victims of domestic violence fail to report. There are also cases that involve multiple types of abuse such as physical, verbal, psychological, and sexual abuse. Among the reported cases, 84.2% involve female victims, comprising the overwhelming majority of victims.

An escalation of domestic violence has been observed since COVID-19. Studies have shown that the loss of employment or financial stability amid COVID-19 contributes to a greater likelihood of three times as many domestic violence-related inquiries than before quarantines were in place. The Hong Kong Federation of Women’s Centre (HKFWC) and other help centres have reported a sharp rise in domestic violence cases since the start of the pandemic. The Harmony House,

the city’s first shelter for abused women and their children, received more than 900 hotline calls in March alone. According to HKFWC, only 30% of people seeking help from domestic violence cases in the epidemic were reported to the police for help, and no abuser was ultimately prosecuted.

Victims of domestic abuse often do not know what kinds of behavior amount to abuse. Even for those who do, a lot of them would feel too ashamed or embarrassed to tell anyone that they are suffering from abuse. As stated by the HKFWC, in 2011-2016, 85% of the domestic violence cases were classified as “domestic incidents” by the police, oversimplifying the severeness of the problem. Very often, victims did not receive a clear explanation from law enforcers on how to assess the situation even after contacting the police. Hence, it is essential to address this current issue and prevent neglecting recessive domestic violence in Hong Kong.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Victims' Lack of Knowledge of the Issues and Their Rights

Victims often lack the understanding towards domestic violence and are incapable of identifying the possible solutions when they encounter such difficulties. Through interviews with the domestic violence victims and social workers, misconceptions are remarkably prevalent. Often do the victims identify themselves as one, especially for non-physically abused victims, who nevertheless need equal help and support. Many of them neither know the rights they enjoy, nor how to handle abusive situations as they do not know the spectrum of solutions they can choose from and often believe that they must resort to litigation which triggers high financial causes and deterioration of familial relationship or even drastic consequences towards their children's future, thus reluctant to seek help. While other victims are unfamiliar with the legal procedures, hence pacified in reaching out.

Limited Legal Capacity within NGOs to Maximise Their Aid for Victims

Social workers play a decisive role in aiding and providing supporting services to domestic violence victims because they are those who have direct access and close contact with the target group that needs legal support. It is raised by social workers we interviewed that there is a lack of internal legal expertise and capacity, causing difficulty for them to adequately assist the victims with their legal issues and impeding from personalized follow-up of legal advice provided by lawyers. In most scenarios, they are unable to address the victims' elementary legal questions and can only refer such inquiries to legal professions or NGOs with more established legal networks. Higher proficiency in relevant legislation and legal procedures is required among social workers in order to save manpower and increase efficiency in providing aids for victims. In a specific case, if social workers are able to acquire basic legal knowledge, thus assisting the victim in explaining the case facts to the lawyer, or even conduct basic legal research and explain rudimentary legal concepts to victims.

Amplified Problems amid COVID-19

The problems of domestic violence have been amplified since COVID-19. Most citizens are encouraged to work-from-home and avoid constant outdoor exposures during the pandemic. With the significant increase of time where (potential) victims and abusers stay under the same shelter, the frequency of domestic abuse increases correspondingly. Lastly, as female victims seldom leave their homes during the pandemic, limited individualised services and support is provided for them, thus deteriorating their mental health and resulting in inability for them to seek help.

Lack of Interactive Platforms

For many victims of domestic violence, they lack platforms on which they can voice out the issues they are facing and receive help or advice accordingly. In many cases, people can only browse through various websites and informative pages to access resources related to domestic abuse. For example, there are many websites that provide information on the legal and social aid available for domestic abuse victims. However, one of the biggest drawbacks of using such methods is the lack of interactive elements. Victims cannot communicate their problems to people such as social workers and lawyers. In other words, they cannot receive advice that is customized to their needs and concerns.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Empowering the Victims through the Knowledge

The blogs and community outreach activities ensure victims are well-aware of the aid and legal rights that they can rely on, facilitating their crisis management on their own. For instance, it essentially educates people about the acts that contribute to abuse, both physically and psychologically, thus prevent or/and identify mishappenings. This project also suggests and offers subsequent measures for victims to protect themselves, achieving the legal empowerment of the vulnerable individuals who lack resources and legal knowledge. Particularly the online platforms serve as a medium for victims to have a more thorough comprehension related to the types, causes and solutions of domestic violence.

Introducing Platforms for the Victims to Seek for Help

Under our project, other than providing ample information and empowering them, practical aid will also be provided. We aim to provide the victims a platform to seek help from the social workers and the lawyers. We understand that, in most of the time, the victims may not know what they can do and what they should do, and we believe that it would be better if there is a platform for them to seek practical aid. Law students will voluntarily assist victims-in-need to apply for legal aid services, otherwise, contacts of professionals will be provided. Additionally, a two-way spontaneous communication platform is introduced in our project, such as online blogs and interactive workshops where victims can share their queries, concerns and experiences.

Provide Legal Training for Social Workers

Social workers are often the first contact-point of domestic violence victims, thus basic legal knowledge of social workers is crucial. As highlighted, the majority of them lack the legal capacity regarding the rudimentary legal questions that might be raised by victims or any follow-up support after lawyers' services. Nowadays, there are a lot of victims who seek help from the social workers, but the social workers are not able to tell them what to do, the biggest reason behind this is that the social workers do not have constructive legal knowledge in addressing the problems of the victims. By providing

legal training to social workers regarding the legal problems that might be faced by domestic violence victims, a wider scope of victims can be benefited from the knowledge of each social worker, alleviating the current pressures of unmet legal needs. It also better connects relevant stakeholders such as social workers and lawyers, which facilitates NGOs in finding legal support when needed.

Raising Awareness of the Public Towards Domestic Violence

By raising awareness among the general public on the topic of domestic violence, we hope to build up a support network for victims in the community which would make them feel less deserted and helpless. Under the current societal norms, victims are taught not to report the abuse that they are receiving since it was shameful to do so. We would like to make people realize that instead of encouraging them to stay silent, it is important to create an atmosphere where they can easily seek help whenever needed. The online blogs, social media posts and workshops/ talks are effective means for the general public to have access to related information. Not only will they have a more comprehensive understanding towards this issue, they can also be able to potential victims around them.

Interactive Engagements of the Public and Target Group

One of the key features of our project components is to introduce hybrid sharing sessions and interactive social media updates to optimize the engagement of the target group and victims. There will be Q&A and sharing sessions in our workshops, which will be held both online and in person. For people who attend our face-to-face or even through virtual workshops, they can interact with our guests such as social workers and lawyers to learn more about domestic violence. This provides channels for livelier interactions and ample feedback or responses. Also, through inviting people who have experienced domestic violence and recovered to share their experience on social media platforms, it empowers other people who had similar experiences to speak up and create a community among them. By enabling opportunities for victims to share their own stories, it has a restorative impact, not letting their abusers define them.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

Online Victim Blog

Purpose and Intended Outcome

Currently, victims of domestic violence usually do not have enough knowledge of what they can do to fight against domestic violence, they do not even know about their own rights. Therefore, the best way to improve the current situation is to educate them. And we hope that they can empower themselves to fight against domestic violence.

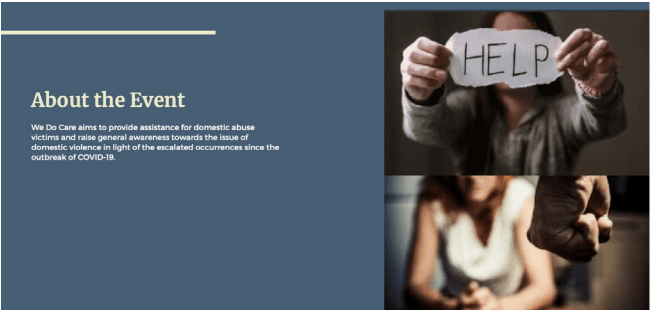
Strategy and Component

The online blog is set up in cooperation with HKFWC and pro-bono legal advisors, where a column in HKFWC's newly established website will be operated by our law student volunteers. The online blog serves as a platform for student helpers to upload their articles. The student helpers will be responsible for conducting legal research and blog writing. A wide range of articles regarding domestic violence will be uploaded to this website. We will include different legal topics, for instance: (1) What amounts to domestic violence, (2) Potential legal actions that may be taken by the victims, (3) How can they apply for legal aid. Furthermore, more legal information will be posted on the column, such as case summaries and legal reports of local and overseas judgements related to domestic violence. The starting point of the blog will be on different categories of domestic violence and an introduction to the Domestic and Cohabitation Relationships Violence Ordinance.

Apart from conducting legal research, our online blog also serves as a platform for student helpers to communicate with the victims of domestic violence. We understand that in order to help the victims of domestic violence, a better way would be two-way communication, instead of just giving them tons of information. Therefore, we welcome the victims of domestic violence to send their problems or concerns anonymously to us. And our student helpers will be responding to their concerns, we will reply to their problems in our article. If they need further help, they are always welcome to contact us through our online chat function, the identity of the victims will be kept strictly confidential.

Last but not least, our blog will also include some articles that are written by social workers. The social workers are a group of people with professional skills in handling victims of domestic violence, we believe that they are in the best position to offer some insights or advice to the victim.

Preview of our online blog (still in development):



Future Development of the Online Victim Blog

In the future, we plan to add a forum for the victims of domestic violence to express their thoughts, where victims of domestic violence can set up anonymous accounts. They can freely open the posts in the forum with statuses about their encounters with domestic violence. In addition, they can respond to other people’s posts with one of five emoticons that best represent their emotions that day (Happy, Neutral, Sad, Angry, Scared). Users’ statuses are chronologically ordered on their feed, so the admins of the platform can trace the development of the violence easily.

Law students will monitor the forum closely. Law student volunteers are equipped to categorize what constitutes illegal acts in relation to domestic violence cases after conducting legal research, and shall reach out to the victims via direct message if they identify (potential) illegal conducts against the victims and believe the situation has worsened to the extent it warrants intervention (e.g. if the victim expresses on the forum that he/she has been beaten, or if he/she feels “scared” for many consecutive days).

Intervention from student volunteers should be specific, personalized and respectful. They should not take action without the victim’s positive consent. For example, if the victims express that they merely want emotional support in the conversation, student volunteers can formally pair them up with social workers, or informally offer a listening ear. If they express that they wish to communicate on this matter with the abuser, the law student can advise them to opt for mediation. After they have given consent, the law student can pair them up with volunteer mediators which will oversee and guide the dialogue. If they express they want legal support, the law student volunteer is responsible for providing a basic explanation on the relevant legal procedures or options that the victim can opt for. If victims would prefer professional legal expertise, or if their demands are beyond the volunteers’ legal knowledge, victims may also be paired with legal practitioners/ specialist family mediators or social workers. A contact list consisting of legal practitioners/solicitor firms, mediators, and social workers will be prepared and will be provided to victims if they wish to seek further assistance from professionals.²

Domestic Abuse Workshop

Purpose and Intended Outcome

Lack of knowledge among different stakeholders is one of the causes of domestic violence. NGOs, particularly social workers, and victims are two main target groups of the workshops. Through organizing multiple workshops with a wide coverage of topics, the intended outcome is to expand their relevant knowledge, such as assisting the victims to identify the type and causes of domestic violence thus empowering them to protect themselves, and strengthening the legal capacity of social workers to address related issues.

Strategy and Components

Online or physical workshops will be held coupled with social media awareness. Workshops cover different topics and different experts (eg. lawyers/ social workers/ NGOs) will be invited to deliver the content. Some NGOs, such as HKFWC and TWGHs CEASE Crisis Centre, have shown interest in co-hosting talks and workshops related to this issue. The topic, content, guests invited and detailed planning of workshops will be done by us, while different NGOs will provide venues for our workshops if available and occasionally volunteer social workers as the guest speakers of our workshop.

General informative workshops for social workers

Social workers play an essential role in providing for the vulnerable target group whom they have long-term personal contact with. Through referral from government agencies and receiving direct calls, social workers often become involved in domestic violence cases at an early stage and continue following up by counselling, assisting them in sourcing assistance needed and even providing basic legal support. Through workshops and talks, this project can help build up the NGO’s capacity in handling domestic violence cases. The content of each workshop varies and covers a wide range of topics. Mainly short talks held by legal professions to enhance social workers’ understanding in legal service provision and detailed knowledge towards the legal procedures at court or in applying for pro-bono legal services.

Through multiple workshops discussing various legal issues which potential victims might have to encounter, social workers are more capable in assisting and answering the inquiries of different victims in the long-run. Furthermore, they can even provide specific case management support to victims such as solving minor legal problems at a preliminary stage, and helping them liaise with lawyers/ relevant parties if further actions are involved. For instance, most female victims are worried about custodial issues while current social workers are not familiar with this topic. Related topics, including the rights of victims and possible processes that have to be gone through for litigation, can assist social workers in explaining relevant concepts to the victims. Each social worker is responsible for several cases and often the key contact person of the victims. Therefore, empowering social workers is the most direct and sustainable method in benefiting a larger group of victims.

Workshops for victims / potential victims cohabitating with aggressive spouses and general public

Knowledge and ability of victims to identify and solve issues related to domestic violence is also inevitable in alleviating the problem. This can be addressed by inviting NGOs, social workers and lawyers as guests for the workshops, victims/ potential victims and general public.

Firstly, legal experts and lawyers are invited to share what possible solutions, such as litigation and mediation, available for them. The experts are also encouraged to share some previous experiences working with domestic abuse victims, including what were their experiences and how were their cases handled. This provides a large spectrum of possible solutions for victims to resort to, instead of merely remaining silent or necessarily bringing a legal action. Furthermore, Q&A Sessions are included within workshops for the audience to raise questions depending on that specific topic, such as divorce, custody, injunction, etc. for more interactive communications.

Secondly, interactive workshops will demonstrate what constitutes domestic abuse, including physical, verbal, sexual and psychological. Short comparative skits of similar but different scenarios are performed, after

which participants are asked to vote (either physically or through a social media poll) which scenario they believe constitutes domestic abuse, and explanations will be provided after the skit. Thirdly, social workers will explain the common problems and situations identified among victims, as well as ways to protect themselves, minimizing the chance of mishappenings. Emotional therapy workshops are also introduced to relieve victims and provide emotional escape. Victims are divided into groups for discussions to form a two-way dialogue between participants and therapists, providing a grievance channel for victims while promoting their mental well-being.

Social Media Dialogue

Purpose and Intended Outcome

Currently, lack of interactive platforms for victims to seek aid is one of the issues. Information is usually displayed on various websites where browsers cannot communicate effectively with the people providing such services or information. This ends up in a relatively inefficient exchange of information where domestic violence victims cannot get help according to their needs. By creating a social media account for our project on platforms like Instagram and Facebook, we can make use of interactive features such as Instagram stories and polls. Followers can communicate their concerns or queries to us through direct messaging and we can address them either publicly or in private soon after we revived their questions. An instant and two-way communication method can be created.

Furthermore, compared to conventional methods such as websites, social media platforms outreaches to a broader audience. We hope to reach a larger audience, especially the younger generation using social media as one of our publication platforms so that not only will people affected by domestic abuse be able to access related information, but the general public who are frequent visitors of these platforms could also be educated on the issue of domestic violence. This way, we can achieve both the aim of providing assistance to domestic abuse victims as well as raising public awareness on the issue.

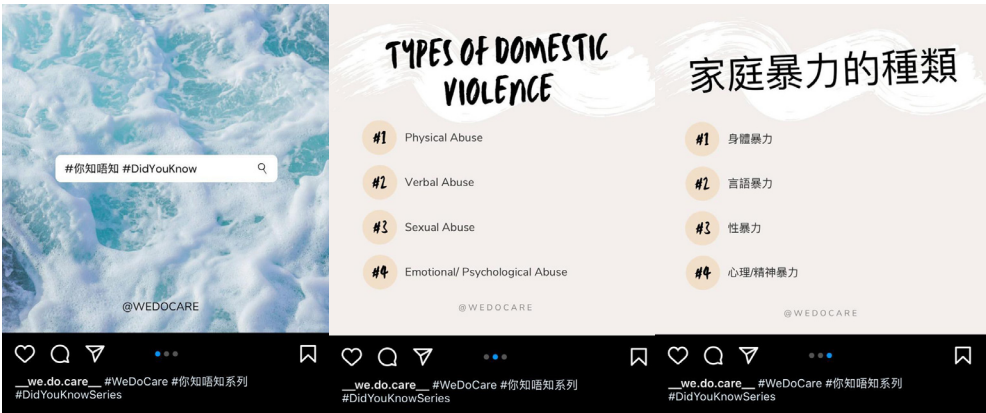
Strategy and Components

Social Media Posts (Facebook / Instagram)

There are a few main features of our social media platforms. Firstly, we will publicite video sharings or written posts of people who overcame domestic violence. The victims may come from different backgrounds and experienced different hardships. Through the genuine and personal sharings, more insights and encouragement can be brought to existing or potential victims to overcome their difficulties. Secondly, there will also be Q&A platforms (e.g. on Instagram stories, FaceBook Messenger, or Instagram direct messages) to collect common concerns, questions and misconceptions raised by the public or victims about domestic violence. These posts focus

less on delivering legal information, and more on sharing personal experiences. The format is more comprehensible, such as posting checklists, useful information, etc. We will also create content about the myths on domestic abuse and correct any common misconceptions people may have. Various related issues shall be covered such as concepts of domestic violence, information related to the victims rights, preparation and court procedures for litigation, possible help from integrated family services centres, and other related queries will be addressed. The social media posts address and answer common questions in a simpler way with the use of graphics and non-technical wordings to ensure the messages are readily conveyed to the target audience.

Example of Instagram Posts:



we.do.care #WeDoCare #你知唔知系列 #DidYouKnowSeries

Physical abuse is only one type of abuse. There are several categories of abusive behavior, each of which has its own devastating consequences. The long term destruction of personhood that accompanies the other forms of abuse is significant and cannot be minimized.

Types of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse**
Physical abuse is any physically aggressive behavior, withholding of physical needs, indirect physically harmful behavior, threatening with a weapon, or threat of physical abuse. Examples such as hitting, pushing, pulling and threatening to physically assault.
- Verbal Abuse**
Any abusive language used to denigrate, embarrass or threaten the victim. This includes threatening to hurt or kill the victim or her children, family, property or reputation.
- Sexual Abuse**
Using sex in an exploitative fashion or forcing sex on another person. Having consent to sexual activity in the past does not indicate current consent. Sexual abuse may involve both verbal and physical behavior.
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse**
Emotional abuse is any behaviour that exploits the victim's vulnerability, insecurity or character. Such behaviors include continuous intimidation, manipulation, or control of another to the detriment of the individual.

提起家庭暴力，很多人的認識仍然停留在身體暴力的認知層面：覺得愛人和自己沒有「動過手」，自然就不存在家庭暴力行為了。事實上，家庭暴力的種類很多，而且都會導致長遠的負面影響。

- 1 身體暴力**
身體暴力舉凡指肢體虐待。虐待的動作包括有推、拉、扯、攞、使用器械威脅、或威脅攻擊等方式。
- 2 言語暴力**
精神暴力是指經常侵犯他人的人格尊嚴。用言詞、語調予以脅迫、恐嚇，以企圖控制被害人。像謾罵、吼叫、侮辱、諷刺、恫嚇、威脅傷害被害人或其親人、揚言使用暴力等。例如辱罵三子經、謾罵對方的無能愚蠢、恐嚇殺死全家、威脅再也見不到小孩等語言。
- 3 性暴力**
性暴力一般是指丈夫在違背妻子意願的情況下，強行與之發生性關係。同時亦包括強迫性幻想或特別的性活動、逼迫觀看性活動、展示色情影片或圖片等。
- 4 心理/精神暴力**
精神暴力如監視、冷漠、鄙視、羞辱、不實指控、破壞物品、試圖操縱被害人等，足以使對方畏懼或心生痛苦的各種舉動；另外，不當的過度關愛，給對方的生活帶來嚴重的困擾，也可能造成心理的虐待。

Assistance for Victims in Legal Aid Application

Purpose and Intended Outcome

We noticed that a number of victims encounter difficulties when they apply for Legal Aid to bring an action against the abuser. They may not be familiar with the eligibility and application procedures of Legal Aid service. It is also common that people find the application forms lengthy and complicated. All of the above may hold the victims back from applying for financial assistance from the Legal Aid Department and thus hindering the commencement of legal proceedings to seek relief. By offering assistance to victims in Legal Aid applications, we hope that Legal Aid service will be more accessible and victims will not be impeded from bringing actions to court to seek relief because of inadequate financial resources. As a result, legal measures can be more effectively pursued by victims for protection and relief.

Strategy and Components

Recruitment of student helpers

We will recruit around 10-12 law students as student helpers for this service. We are recruiting law students as student helpers because they are more familiar with legal procedures and terminologies. Less time is needed for them to familiarize themselves with the necessary details of Legal Aid application.

Training session for student helpers

After the recruitment of student helpers, all student helpers will attend a training session to introduce them to the essentials of a Legal Aid application. During the training session, student helpers will gain

an understanding of general application procedures of Legal Aid, eligibility criteria under the Legal Aid Ordinance, relevant application documents and forms, necessary supporting documents, common queries of applicants, and basic concepts on matrimonial case procedures. This training session will equip student helpers with the necessary knowledge required in providing assistance in Legal Aid application.

Assistance provided to Legal Aid applicants

Student helpers will be divided into groups of 2 and each group will assist 4 applicants with their Legal Aid application. The contact information of the student helpers will be given to the applicants and they can reach out to the helpers when they have any questions regarding the application or encounter difficulties when they are preparing for the application. If the applicant has an urgent case or wishes to visit the Legal Aid Department office to apply for Legal Aid in person, she can make an appointment with the student helper and the helper will accompany her to the LAD office and assist her, mainly on filling out application form. The student helper will also provide a basic explanation on the relevant legal procedures that are likely to occur after the application of Legal Aid. This service will come to an end when the applicant has successfully submitted the application for Legal Aid, but student helpers will continue to answer questions regarding the Legal Aid application procedures if they do arise.

Implementation

This service will be implemented when the COVID-19 pandemic has alleviated and it is safe for student helpers and applicants to meet.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND TIMELINE

Stage	Tasks	Period
1	1. Online victim board 2. Online workshops 3. Social media dialogue 4. Recruiting student helpers	Covid period (Jan - Jul 2021)
2	1. Assistance to legal aid and application 2. Face to face workshops with the social workers	
3	1. Face to face workshops with the victims 2. Update the online victim board - forum	Post Covid period (Jul 2021 - Jul 2022)
4	1. More promotions on social media 2. More student helpers will be recruited	
5	1. Reach out to more NGOs	Final Stage

PROPOSED BUDGET PLAN

Revenue	(in HK\$)
Funding from PilNet	50,000
Government/NGOs sponsorships	10,000
Total services revenue	60,000
Services Costs	(in HK\$)
Website set-up costs (e.g. setting up domain, and hosting)	20,000
Design fee	10,000
Promotional material fee (e.g. banners, leaflets, souvenirs, etc.)	5,000
Website developer cost	10,000
Advertising expenses (\$100 x 24 months)	2,400
Total Services Costs	47,400
Net Income	12,600

EVALUATION

Potential problems	Solutions
<p>Reluctance to reach out for help</p> <p>More often than not, victims of domestic violence are reluctant to seek help since they are either under the pressure of their abuser to remain silent or unaware of the aid available to them. There are also cases in which victims were misled by misconceptions such as filing a lawsuit against their abuser, who presumably is one of their family members, would affect future prospects of their children. All these would stop the victims from speaking up and reaching out for help.</p>	<p>Anonymous question board</p> <p>One of the biggest concerns of domestic violence victims is their identity being revealed and letting people around them know that they are domestically abused. Therefore, in order to communicate with them and provide them with the help that they need while protecting their identity as much as possible, we can make use of anonymity on online platforms. There will be an option on our blog for browsers to hide their profile and post questions anonymously. We hope to encourage victims to reach out for help knowing that their identity will be protected.</p>
<p>Lack of sustainability</p> <p>Due to time and resources constraints, as well as the social distancing policies under COVID-19, we are not able to hold regular workshops frequently, which made the impacts of them less sustainable.</p>	<p>Long term empowerment</p> <p>By holding a few sharing sessions featuring past domestic abuse victims, professionals such as social workers and NGOs working with domestic violence, we can raise people’s awareness and their knowledge on the issue would be long-lasting.</p> <p>By holding workshops for social workers, they will be more educated on methods to help domestic violence victims. They can make use of such knowledge and help victims who are seeking help. In other words, although we are planning workshops for a small scale of audience, the outreach of impacts cover a large group of potential victims which made the project more sustainable.</p>
<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>Victims may be identifiable through their comments on the blog and through the online chat. Victim’s personal particulars may be exposed when student helpers assist them in their Legal Aid application.</p>	<p>Confidentiality measures</p> <p>To ensure that the personal particulars of victims are kept strictly confidential, disclaimers will be added to our website stating that personal information on the website will only be made available to admins of WeDoCare and will be destroyed immediately upon closure of each case. Law student volunteers of our project will also have to sign a confidentiality agreement constructed according to the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.</p>

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Our project is sustainable on three levels:

1. Continuous Flow of Human Resources

Law Students

In view of the busy schedules of working barristers and legal professionals, our project's main source of volunteers will come from law students. We have taken into consideration that our student volunteers will no longer be free to assist when they have graduated. Some law students may also halt their commitment after 1-2 years due to personal issues. Thus, we will recruit new volunteers for our online blog and workshop at the start of every new university school year. We will set up information and recruitment booths in the 10 university campuses of Hong Kong, and cooperate with student groups (e.g. University Law Associations) to help us promote this project. Similar to the recruitment process of university Executive Committees, interested law students can sign up and undergo several rounds of interviews, before they are selected as one of our qualifying student volunteers.

Legal Advisors

As our project aims to offer professional legal advice to victims with specific legal needs, we will have to rely on pro-bono legal advisors to cater to those demands since they are much cheaper and free to help. We will reach out to pro-bono legal advisors either through directly contacting law firms or chambers, or asking our supporting NGOs (i.e. HKFWC, TWGHs CEASE Crisis Centre) for referrals. To increase convenience, the pro-bono legal advisor may directly log in to our online victim blog to offer legal assistance where

needed (student volunteers will send a direct message or flag the advisors when it is noticed that a victim requested for legal advice). This will decrease the hassle and potential loss of information in the process of transferring their advice to the victims through a middleman volunteer.

2. Sustainability of NGO support

NGOs have their internal timelines and considerations, so we cannot rely on one NGO to offer endless and unconditional support. To ensure sustainability of our project, we will reach out to multiple NGOs and try to promote to them our case through social media. For the first phase of our project design, we have designated and made links with HKFWC and TWGHs CEASE Crisis Centre as our core NGO assistance. In the long run, we will be actively seeking cooperation opportunities with more NGOs.

3. Financial Sustainability

The initial budget is used to support the administrative cost for our project. In the long run, our project is largely self sustaining. The workshops are conducted by non-profit organizations on a charitable basis, whilst the online victim blog does not entail additional variable costs once it is set up. However, to meet any possible additional financial needs we will seek for a diverse source of fundings in the future. We will reach out to multiple parties such as the public, NGOs, or even universities (possible coordination with law departments or social work departments).

ENDNOTES

1. Social Welfare Department (2019), Statistics on newly reported child abuse, spouse / cohabitant battering and sexual violence cases in 2019, retrieved from [https://www.swd.gov.hk/vs/stat/stat_en/201901-12/Statistics%20on%20CPR%20CISSCBSV%20\(Jan-Dec%202019\)%20\(EN\).pdf](https://www.swd.gov.hk/vs/stat/stat_en/201901-12/Statistics%20on%20CPR%20CISSCBSV%20(Jan-Dec%202019)%20(EN).pdf)
2. Our contact list currently includes three legal practitioners (Ms. Cordelia Yeung, Ms. Charlotte Chan, and Mr. Wesley Wong) and social workers from HKFWC and TWGHs CEASE Crisis Centre