

2020

LAW FOR CHANGE STUDENT COMPETITION

TEAM

5

PROJECT TITLE

Homecoming

MEMBERS

Chan Kwan Wing, Candace Lau Ka Yu, Angel
Chan On Ying, Angel Wan Wing Yau
Cheng Cheuk Nam, Jason

SCHOOL

The University of Hong Kong

OVERVIEW

Background

In August 2020, a group of 12 homeless from Tung Chau Street Park and their representatives from the non-profit Society for Community Organisation made a claim against the Leisure and Cultural Services Department at the Small Claims Tribunal in relation to street cleaners clearing the Tung Chau Street Park in Sham Shui Po without prior notice, which was contended to be in violation of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132) (“PHMSO”).¹ This was a milestone where the homeless utilised the law to protect themselves. At the same time, it draws our attention to the plight of the homeless. Many more who suffer similar problems do not enjoy such an opportunity of legal protection as they are not aware of their legal rights due to insufficient legal assistance for the homeless.

The number of the homeless in Hong Kong is on the rise. According to the Social Welfare Department, the number of registered homeless has doubled from 780 in 2013 to 1423 in 2019.² With the strike of the coronavirus pandemic, the rise in unemployment rate has further led to a surge in the number of the homeless, and this trend is expected to continue. Meanwhile, with social distancing policies, there has been less support from NGOs and volunteers to the homeless. This unprivileged group is one of the most vulnerable groups in society that deserves urgent attention.

Tension Between Homeless Reality and Legislation

For decades, tensions between the homeless and the Government have been a thorn in the public health management policy.

On the one hand, the homeless are generally ignorant about their legal rights. They recognise themselves as the most vulnerable group of the society and are usually inferior in asserting their rights when they face disputes such as property clearance. Even if they do recognise their legal rights and responsibilities, they

have no choice but to live in public spaces due to the lack of residential support for them which results in public obstruction.

On the other hand, inconsistencies can be found in the law enforcement action. Cleaners may clear the homeless’ property without prior notice with the Police informally cooperating with them during clearance activities.

This evolves into a situation which results in the homeless coming into conflicts with the law, while the lack of legal support further magnifies the impact of their legal troubles.

Project Homecoming

To strengthen the homeless’ rights, this proposal puts forward a project with three phases:

Phase I – a storage gift voucher scheme for the employed homeless who cannot stay with their property during the daytime or are actively seeking jobs. This reduces the disincentive for certain homeless who refuse to work because they are afraid of losing their property if nobody takes care of it when they work;

Phase II – a legal consultation scheme with tailor-made leaflets addressing the homeless’ questions, with follow-up by student volunteers and pro bono lawyers on their specific legal issues; and

Phase III – an online social media promotion platform to extend the impact of phases I and II through promotion, fundraising, and raising public awareness of the plight of the homeless.

Synergy is created among the three phases since we aim to leverage the connections we built and exposure gained from phase I to promote phase II, and vice versa. The homeless who benefited from either of the phases are more likely to be willing to accept our services for the other phase or to promote our entire project to their friends. We also plan to leverage phase III to continuously promote phases I and II to increase exposure and reputation, and seek for more financial support to sustain phases I and II.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

Homeless Typically Face Property-Related Issues

The homeless' property is constantly subjected to the risk of clearance actions by the Government. For example, over 100 homeless were forced to leave during the 2019 Tung Chau Street and 2018 Yen Chow Street clearance actions. They had no choice but to relocate to nearby parks, subways or more inconspicuous places.

In addition, cleaning works are often conducted without prior notice³ with the homeless' belongings being removed and disposed of. Our interview results show that there is hardly a proper channel for them to retrieve their belongings.⁴ The homeless also do not know who to look for when there is a dispute. They lack knowledge of their legal rights and interests they have, and may be unfairly exploited. There are also thefts and vandalism. They hope to have a storage system where they can store their property safely, especially for the employed homeless who cannot take care of their belongings when they are out for work.⁵

Loopholes in Current Legislation that Fail to Protect Homeless' Property Rights

There is currently no comprehensive legislation in Hong Kong for protecting the rights of the homeless. In fact, many provisions regarding public health and environment cleanliness appear to be highly unfriendly to them. Under PHMSO, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department ("FEHD") (a) may serve a notice upon the owner of any object that is likely to cause obstruction to any street sweepers or scavenging operation and (b) has the power to remove the obstructed object within a period of 4 hours after the notice is so served or attached.⁶ The owner of the object may recover the same by paying FEHD within 7 days, failing of which would result in the object becoming the property of the Government. However, the PHMSO⁷ and Waste Disposal Ordinance (Cap. 354)⁸ allow FEHD to remove and destroy waste or litter 24 hours after issuing such notice. The literal meaning of waste or litter in law is ambiguous. Because of the ignorance, property of the homeless may be caught under this provision. For example, in Tung Chau Street Park, a homeless couple were asked by the Police officers to leave the park, who then witnessed their property being thrown away.⁹

Moreover, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has the discretion to close public pleasure grounds, many of which are places where the homeless place their property and reside, from time to time without issuing any notice.¹⁰ With the prevalence of non-homeless friendly regulations, the lack of protection of the homeless' property has resulted in conflicts with governmental authorities and the homeless' insecurity for leaving their property unattended when they work or attend job interviews.¹¹

Although the Sham Shui Po District Council has proposed to offer bags to be put in public spaces near where the homeless reside for the homeless to store their property safely, this proposal has not been approved by the Government.

Lack of Access to Information and Legal Awareness

The Government and NGOs have collaborated to help the homeless. There are currently 3 Integrated Services Teams, 65 Integrated Family Service Centres and 2 Integrated Services Centres in Hong Kong. They provide employment guidance, emergency funds, personal care and referral services (e.g. application for CSSA).¹² The homeless may also approach the Hospital Authority for medical health services.

Around 34% and 29.2% of the homeless have never heard of the medical services and emergency shelter services respectively.¹³ The current government homeless registration system is one-sided and relies heavily on the homeless' initiative in approaching Service Centres for application. 85.6% of the homeless believe that they do not receive sufficient assistance and services from the society.¹⁴ Our interviews with the homeless also reflect their need and desire to access legal services.¹⁵ All these suggest rooms of improvement regarding communication between service providers and the homeless, by allowing the homeless to know exactly what services they are entitled to and for the service providers to accurately identify those most in need.

Social Justice and Awareness

The homeless are often discriminated against and treated disrespectfully by others. For instance, “McRefugees” are complained about by other customers in McDonald’s and are unwelcomed by the staff there.¹⁶

Most of the homeless in Hong Kong fall through the cracks of Hong Kong’s obsolete housing policy. Statistics from LegCo demonstrate that around 60% of the homeless are unable to afford the high rent of private housing.¹⁷ Some are unwilling to reside in a subdivided flat where the environment is inferior and the hygiene is poor. It also takes a long time to successfully apply for public housing. The Society for Community Organisation opined that while rent level in Hong Kong has risen by more than 90% over the past two decades, the standard of welfare policies for the homeless remains the same.

There are currently around 1348 homeless on record, yet the number of temporary dorms for the homeless is far from enough. The number of government-funded dorms is only 222, in addition to the 400 dorms offered

by NGOs, the total number of dorms available is only half that of the homeless. Meanwhile, 60% of the dorms allow a maximum stay period of six months, with the rest being even shorter. This is not enough for the homeless to accumulate sufficient savings to find a new home. What is more, dorms for the homeless usually forbid the homeless to stay in the dorms during the daytime as a means to encourage them to go to work. Some homeless who are unable to find a job due to mental health issues cannot adapt to such policy and live in the streets again.

Gaps in the pension, poverty and housing policies create social injustice. Homeless are forced to live in the streets which are public spaces, causing an inevitable obstruction to public space with insufficient recognition of private property rights. The homeless also have little protection and awareness of their rights and interests.

Project Homecoming aims to engage the community and create links to the social and legal services for **local homeless in Hong Kong** (i.e. those with permanent HKID) such that the abovementioned social exclusion can be mitigated.

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PROJECT PROPOSAL

Phase I: Providing Safe Property Storage During Work

Objective and Target Group

Phase I aims to provide timely and temporary support to the homeless with employment or who are actively seeking jobs by securing their property in a safe place in the daytime. Our primary targets are the homeless who are permanent Hong Kong residents residing in or near Lei Cheng Uk Playground in Cheung Sha Wan as they mostly share the characteristics below in *italics*.

Issue to be Addressed

The prevalence of clearance actions and theft among the homeless have aroused public attention regarding the insufficient protection of the homeless' property rights. In 2017, district councillors in Sham Shui Po passed a bill to offer large bags with name tags to the homeless and to gather all bags in a corner in Tung Chau Street Park during the daytime under the supervision of NGOs. Yet, according to our interview with chairman of the Sham Shui Po District Council, Mr. Yeung Yuk, the proposal has not yet been implemented. The delay is primarily owing to prolonged negotiations among major stakeholders and administrative delays of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department who is responsible for the maintenance of Tung Chau Street Park.¹⁸

The abovementioned proposal only covers Tung Chau Street Park and not the other areas. Meanwhile, a considerable number of homeless residing in or near Lei Cheng Uk Playground are in urgent need of safe places to store their property since many of them share these characteristics:

- *Hong Kong permanent residents;*
- *employed or are capable for working due to relatively young age (in their 30 - 50s) and without disability;*
- *become homeless only recently due to sudden changes in own circumstances; and*
- *lack trustworthy acquaintances residing nearby who may be willing to help temporarily store their property.*

Owing to a lack of support, certain homeless faced thefts or have their properties vandalised when they leave for work in the daytime. This accumulates pressure and some even feel disincentivised to attend job interviews or make valuable purchases which is useful for employment-seeking, e.g. suit jacket and backpack.¹⁹ Therefore, service for securing the homeless' property would be crucial to relieve those employed of their pressure when leaving for their job, and to encourage more homeless to take up employment opportunities.

Strategy

Phase I has 3 stages:

- (a) identifying and approaching the homeless who fall within our target group;
- (b) offering pre-paid gift vouchers or means of redemptions for the homeless to claim the locker fees afterwards; and
- (c) continuous monitoring and evaluation of locker usage and effectiveness (which can be found below in **Section Project Monitoring and Evaluation**).

For stage (a), our aim is to ensure our limited resources are used on those who value our services the most. We wish to limit our service target to those who meet most of the above characteristics in *italics*. To benefit from free locker services, the homeless must voluntarily submit personal information, including HKID copy, phone number, resume, contact information of current employer if any, career plans for the next 2 years, and average monthly returns and spending.

Once we accept a homeless as our service target, we will issue him or her a "service target card" and store his or her information in an encrypted document in the cloud under Homecoming's domain. The personal information will only be accessible by team members of Project Homecoming for the purpose of project evaluation and contact. Each eligible homeless can enjoy free locker services for 2 months, subject to violation of locker usage rules and submission of fraudulent information. They may renew the services twice so long as they abide with the rules in the following paragraph and subject to certain extension requirement. The maximum duration for each homeless is 6 months.

Each service target shall sign a declaration that they shall not share the locker with anyone else, will use it over 15 days a month, will abide strictly with the rules of storage and fill in our periodic questionnaires timely. Details of the questionnaires can be found below at **Section Project Monitoring and Evaluation**. We will hand out a booklet in Chinese with pictures for the homeless to understand what types of goods can and cannot be placed, and the procedures of placing and retrieving goods. To prevent any abuse of the services, we are planning to communicate with the storage provider to require the homeless to follow certain procedures, e.g. signing at the storage or publishing a membership card to ensure the users of the lockers are the registered and qualified homeless whom we got in touch with. Penalties, e.g. fine and cancellation of services, would be imposed on the homeless should they fail to abide with the abovementioned rules.

For stage (b), we obtained the endorsement from CSW Storage, a mini storage provider located near Lei Cheng UK Playground. The storage is likely able to set up around 10 lockers (approximate size: 300Wx1800Hx450D) for the homeless. Once the lockers are set up, we can prepay for their usage and present gift vouchers to **10 homeless** for the first 2 months so that they can use the storage services for free. Alternatively, eligible homeless who have used the services can claim fees from Homecoming upon showing their receipts.

In the long run, synergy is created among the 3 phases since the effectiveness of phase I will continuously be reported on social media under phase III. This enables us to seek for more support, in forms of financial funding, time and advice, from other potential volunteers and corporates. In this way, we are likely able to extend our scheme beyond the initial 6-month period. The effectiveness and success of our storage gift voucher scheme can further reinforce the proposed effectiveness of the bag proposal that the Sham Shui Po counsellors have been planning, and encourages the implementation of similar storage services for the homeless.

Possible Partnership

1. CSW Storage
2. The University of Hong Kong (“HKU”)
3. Baker McKenzie and other corporates interested in funding and supporting CSR projects

Phase II: Outreach Free Legal Consultation

Objectives and Target Group

Phase II targets the homeless who are permanent Hong Kong residents residing in the Sham Shui Po district, primarily in Tung Chau Street Park and Lei Cheng UK Playground. It has the following two objectives:

1. **Educate the homeless:** to heighten awareness and knowledge of the homeless regarding their own rights through outreach programme and leaflet distribution. This will include their:
 - rights to social welfare, e.g. right to public housing, CSSA etc.; and
 - legal rights, such as right to legal aid and right to reclaim property seized by FEHD.
2. **Promote access to justice:** to provide necessary legal advice and assistance for legal disputes that the homeless commonly faced or individual legal issues.

Issue to be Addressed

We had 2 observations from our visits and interviews. First, some of the homeless are not identified by social workers and hence are not receiving any regular assistance.²⁰ Second, most of the target group do not have access to the internet.²¹ This means they can hardly access information and seek help when they need it. Therefore, we aim to launch a series of outreach legal consultation with the help of the following stakeholders.

Stakeholders

1. University student volunteers

Their main duty is to design, distribute and explain leaflets to the homeless in outreach sessions. They are also responsible for conducting research and seeking advice from pro bono lawyers if follow-up is needed. Law students are preferred, but other students are welcomed.

2. Social workers from NGOs

They will train the volunteers during workshops and can help breaking the ice between volunteers and the homeless. Their advice would also be sought for follow-up actions of the homeless' cases.

3. Pro bono lawyers

They can help in giving legal advice to the homeless through the student volunteers or, if necessary, taking up the case.

Strategy

There are five stages to phase II: (1) recruiting and training volunteers, (2) initial visit to understand the homeless' typical legal concerns, (3) design and production of leaflets, (4) outreach visit to distribute leaflets and conduct private consultation sessions, and (5) follow-up work with pro bono lawyers.

For stage (1), we will recruit university law student volunteers who are bilingual (i.e. Cantonese and English speaking) to work with us. A workshop will be conducted to train the volunteers, in which we invite social workers from NGOs to share their experience.

For stage (2), Team Homecoming along with the student volunteers will visit Tung Chau Street Park, Lei Cheng Uk Playground and places nearby **in groups**, in a bid to establish a relationship of trust with the target group and identify their individual needs.

Questionnaires in Chinese will be distributed to the homeless so that we can have a better understanding of the issues that they are most concerned about, especially those with a legal nature. We have chosen Tung Chau Street Park, the area in Hong Kong with the highest concentration of homeless and the highest number of needy.

We will communicate with NGOs beforehand and make our visits when NGOs and social workers distribute materials to the homeless (e.g. meal boxes and tissues). This enables us to break the ice and increases the possibility of the homeless to communicate with us.

For stage (3), volunteers will produce and design leaflets in Chinese with easy-to-understand illustrations to provide useful information to the homeless. The content of the leaflets will include current available

resources and services to the homeless, typical legal concerns and problems faced by them as well as ways for them to seek help such as phone numbers of NGOs and social workers. The volunteers will begin to draft the leaflets before the workshops in stage (1). After the initial visit in stage (2), they will finetune their leaflets according to the collected information about the homeless' actual concerns through surveys.

For stage (4), the same groups will then revisit Tung Chau Street Park to distribute and explain the leaflets to the homeless. If the homeless raise legal questions, such as specific property issues and disputes, a mini-legal consultation will be held. The outreach activity along with consultation provides a channel for the homeless to better understand their rights and seek complimentary legal assistance.

For stage (5), follow-up work will be conducted for the homeless who are facing more complicated legal problems, especially problems that the respective student volunteers are unable to provide instantaneous response. These homeless can voluntarily leave their contacts for a future follow-up and the volunteers will then refer the homeless cases to pro bono lawyers. The volunteers will be responsible for consolidating the facts of the case, conducting preliminary legal research, and other tasks that would facilitate the free legal consultations, subject to pro bono lawyers' requests. The pro bono lawyers and the student volunteers may then discuss the cases together, after which the pro bono lawyers will be accompanied by the respective groups to provide legal advice to the homeless. For the homeless who have enquiries or updates, they are free to contact their respective groups through calling or sending WhatsApp messages to a central phone number managed by Team Homecoming or partnering NGOs. Office hours will be held four times a week from 18:00 to 21:00 when we will respond to the enquiries through phone calls. The homeless are welcome to send WhatsApp messages anytime throughout the day.

Possible Partnership

1. Sunshine Action
2. ImpactHK
3. The Salvation Army Social Services Department
4. Christian Concern for the Homeless Association
5. Society for Community Organisation
6. Faculty of Law, HKU

Phase III: Calling for Support through Social Media

Objective

Phase III aims at promoting our schemes under phases I and II on social media to gather more support and funding from other NGOs, corporates, social workers, etc. In the long run, we aim at enhancing public awareness regarding insufficient legal protection of the homeless' rights and call for a change.

Stakeholders

1. Student volunteers from HKU

Their main duty is to collect the homeless' stories, edit the stories and the captions for the sharing in social media.

2. Social workers from the NGO

They can provide us (1) information about the homeless, (2) useful comments on our plan, (3) platform to share the homeless' stories or other legislative protection information regarding the local homeless.

Issue to be Addressed

Phase I is capital-intensive while Phase II is labour-intensive. To promote sustainability, i.e. gathering sufficient funding from corporates and individuals to continue purchasing gift vouchers for the homeless and to attract more volunteers, promotion plays a significant role.

Further, according to our interviews with the homeless, NGOs²², social workers²³, street cleaner²⁴ and a district councillor²⁵, discrimination against the homeless remains prevalent in Hong Kong. Some look down on the homeless and perceive them as uneducated and of disgrace. Some blame the government and NGOs for "wasting resources" in providing support to them.²⁶ Extreme cases include residents living near Tung Chau Street Park complaining to local councillors that the homeless are causing hygienic problems.²⁷ Some public officers have also employed excessive force against them. Meanwhile, many of the homeless are willing to share their personal stories with us and hope more people can understand how desperate their situations are. All the above calls for actions to increase public awareness and understanding of their plights.

Strategy

The student volunteers recruited in phase II will revisit and interview the homeless they served, and write an article with several photos regarding the process and effectiveness of the outreach activities. These articles will mainly focus on how the homeless and students benefited from the schemes. They may also include some personal stories of the homeless, e.g. why they became homeless and the difficulties they have.

Furthermore, we will compile some of our legal research findings regarding the lack of legal protection of the homeless' rights into editorials and commentaries. References will be made to other countries' legislation and suggestions of legal reform will be made.

Official Facebook and Instagram accounts will be created to disseminate all these articles and photos. We have chosen to utilise social media given its convenience, affordability and wide reach to a broad range of audience. In addition, we will communicate with some local newspapers and magazines which are willing to publish some of our editorials.

In order to encourage more storage providers and corporates to support our project, we will produce articles and take photos to promote and commend their goodwill. For example, upon project launch (i.e. on the first day the homeless store their property), we will interview the storage provider and take photos of the responsible personnel. All such information will be posted on our social media accounts to express our deepest gratitude for their support upon their approval. The names and/or logos of Homecoming's partners and sponsors will also be produced in the distribution materials of Homecoming.

Possible Partnership

1. Sunshine Action
2. ImpactHK
3. The Salvation Army Social Services Department
4. Christian Concern for the Homeless Association
5. Society for Community Organisation

WORKPLAN AND BUDGET

Phase I

Components	Activities	Immediate result indicators and targets	Responsible parties	Resources	Estimated cost (HK\$)	Duration
Project Planning	Identifying, approaching and registering target group	Find 10 eligible homeless	Team Homecoming	N/A	0	2 months
	Due diligence	Confirm identity of the homeless and avoid abuse	Team Homecoming	N/A	0	
Project Initiation	Confirming deal with CSW Storage or any other partners	Reach a finalised agreement of the mode of cooperation	Team Homecoming, legal mentors	N/A	0	
	Filling in the agreement	Request the targeted homeless to sign the agreement of usage	Team Homecoming	Written agreements	10/round; 10x3=30 in total	
	Designing, printing and distributing booklets and service target cards	The targeted homeless would understand the terms and conditions of using the service	Team Homecoming	Booklets and cards	5x10=50/round; 50x3=150 in total	
Project Implementation	Prepaying locker fees	N/A	Team Homecoming	N/A	200x10 = 2,000/month; 2,000x6=12,000 in total	1 week
	Handing over gift vouchers	Targeted homeless could use the vouchers for lockers	Team Homecoming	Voucher	0	2 months/round; 6 months in total
	Monitoring and evaluating the usage	CSW Storage helps monitor the usage by asking the homeless to sign usage record; distribute monthly questionnaires to the homeless for evaluation	Team Homecoming, CSW Storage helper(s)	Usage records, evaluation forms	50	6 months

TOTAL: 12,230

Phase II

Components	Activities	Immediate result indicators and targets	Responsible parties	Resources	Estimated cost (HK\$)	Duration
Project Planning	Contacting partners	Establish partnership with NGOs, social workers and pro bono lawyers	Team Homecoming	N/A	0	2 months
Project Initiation	Recruiting volunteers	Recruit 10 volunteers from the faculty of law; form 5 groups	Team Homecoming	N/A	0	3 weeks
	Training workshops	Volunteers learn the necessary communication skills and have a general picture of the difficulties of the homeless	NGOs, Team Homecoming, university student volunteers	Venue for workshop	0	3 weeks
	Visits	Establish relationship with the homeless; identify their issues	Team Homecoming, university student volunteers, partnering NGOs	Supplies for the homeless (e.g. meal boxes, tissues)	500	1 month
	Designing leaflets	Design leaflets for distribution during free legal consultation	Team Homecoming, university student volunteers	N/A	0	3 weeks
	Printing leaflets	N/A	Team Homecoming	N/A	100	1 week
Project Implementation	Distributing leaflets	Explain the leaflets to the homeless and conduct legal consultation	Team Homecoming, university student volunteers	Leaflets, supplies for the homeless	400	2 weeks
	Follow-up	Refer the homeless' cases to pro bono lawyers for follow-up advice; allow the homeless to contact their respective groups through WhatsApp	Team Homecoming, university student volunteers	Contact number card (including add-value)	300	2 weeks

TOTAL: 1,300

Phase III

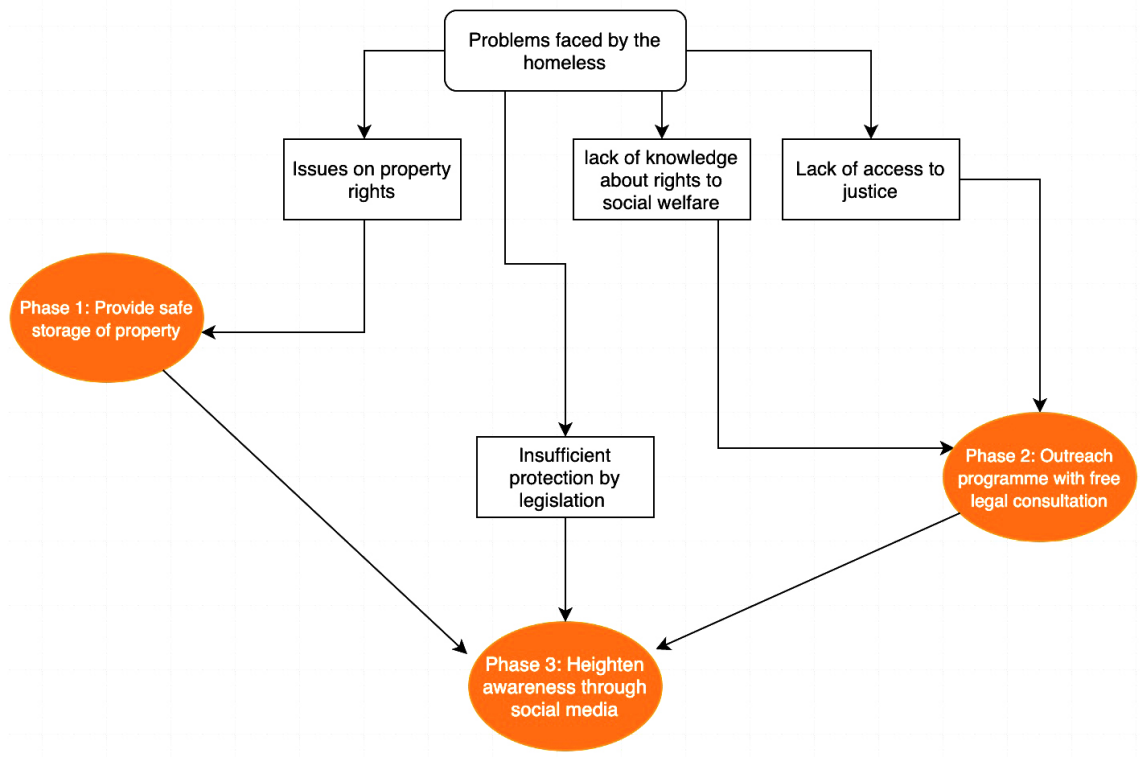
Components	Activities	Immediate result indicators and targets	Responsible parties	Resources	Estimated cost (HK\$)	Duration
Project Planning	Contacting partners	Same as phase II				
Project Initiation	Recruiting volunteers					
Project Implementation	Visits and collecting the stories and feedback	Interview the homeless for their feedback and personal stories with their approval	Team Homecoming, university student volunteers, partnering NGOs	Equipment for recording (paper, pen etc.)	0	6 months
	Designing, producing and editing articles	N/A	University student volunteers	N/A	0	2 months
	Finalising the articles	Finish drafting	University student volunteers, Team Homecoming	N/A	0	1 month
	Publishing the articles and photos to social media (Facebook/ Instagram)	Post the articles; Contact the NGOs, student volunteers and friends to help promote the articles	Team Homecoming, university student volunteers	/	0	5 months
TOTAL:					0	

TIMELINE AND FLOW CHART

Project Timeline 2021-2022

Task	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Phase I: Implementation	Planning and initiation											
Monitoring and evaluation												
Phase II: Recruitment												
Workshop												
Visiting and designing leaflets												
Leaflets distribution												
Phase III: Stories collection												
Editing												
Publishing												

Flow Chart



PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We will conduct periodic review to evaluate whether the targets of output as listed in the workplan were met. Relevant information of the following stakeholders will be collected by the respective means:

Target group feedback: Both online and hardcopy questionnaires will be distributed to the homeless to evaluate quality and the effectiveness of our activities and communication for further improvement and sustainment of our project. Where the homeless cannot read or write, live or phone interviews will be conducted so that the homeless can verbally answer our questions.

For phase I, monthly questionnaires will be distributed to the homeless to ask about their job prospects, frequency of locker usage, and satisfaction of our phase. For phase II, the homeless may be required to evaluate the usefulness of our legal advice, the proactiveness of the students, and offer suggestions for improvement. For phase III, the interviewees will be invited to fill out questionnaires to offer suggestions for improvement and the friendliness of the volunteers.

Volunteers' feedback: Student volunteers will be asked to evaluate the project, their performance and our arrangements after each training and outreach phase.

Partners' feedback: We will keep in contact with all corporates who provided support, in forms such as monetary, material, time and promotion. In particular, for phase I, we will continue to communicate with CSW Storage and check the usage rate of each locker and address other issues, e.g. improper usages if any. These data will be analysed to evaluate the effectiveness of our phase and identify areas of improvement.

Lawyers' feedback: Pro bono lawyers who cooperated with the students to provide legal advice will be asked for suggestions and feedback.

NGO's feedback: NGOs and social workers will be asked for provide suggestions for improvement and whether the information on the leaflets in phase II are helpful. Social workers who guided student volunteers in phases I and/or III will also be asked to evaluate the volunteers' performance and proactiveness.

PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Low Operation Costs

The operation cost of phases II and III is nominal. Regarding phase II, we plan to partner with NGOs so that the meal boxes distributed by the NGOs can serve as an incentive for the homeless to participate actively in our consultation sessions. As phase III involves student volunteers producing articles that will be posted on social media, only minimal, if not nil, cost will be incurred.

It is anticipated that phase I will be the most capital-intensive in our project. Yet, the cost incurred is well-spent to create a long-lasting and maximized impact. The rationale of phase I is to support and encourage employment of the homeless by protecting their property rights, which would help the homeless to be self-sufficient. In addition, by raising social awareness of the homeless in phase III, it is believed that more funds can be raised, from corporates and law firms that are committed to fulfilling corporate social responsibilities, individuals who are enthusiastic about the rights of the homeless, and other seed funds, to continue or even expand the operation of phase I to benefit more homeless, thereby making it sustainable.

CONCLUSION

In Hong Kong, there is a severe lack of legislation and community support for the homeless. A concerted effort to protect the rights and empower the homeless is underdeveloped. Discussion around policy remains undeveloped, disintegrated, while service models remain ad hoc and peripheral in nature. Also, advocacy focus has been placed on the moral aspect of the issue,

Multiplier Effect

Through raising public awareness of the homeless with the use of social media, a multiplier effect can be achieved. Apart from the above-mentioned advantage it can bring to phase I, phase III can also mobilise more public support for the enhancement of legal protection for the homeless, which will be a good start for putting forward legal reform for the protection of the homeless in the long run.

Potential Growth

Although the execution of phases I and II may be restricted geographically, as the focus will be on Tung Chau Street Park and Lei Cheng Uk Playground, the phases can serve as a pilot scheme that can easily be promoted to and replicated in other districts to create greater impact.

ignoring the legal needs of empowering the vulnerable group. Although we recognise that this proposal could not address the root of the homelessness issue - such as poverty and housing policy, it is necessary to consolidate the foundation for addressing their potential legal problems and offering help as much as possible.

ENDNOTES

1. Ho K. (2020). In pictures: Hong Kong street sleepers demand compensation after possessions thrown away. Retrieved from: <https://hongkongfp.com/2020/11/15/in-pictures-hong-kong-street-sleepers-demand-compensation-after-possessions-thrown-away/>
2. HKSAR Government (2020). Press Release: LCQ7: Support provided for street sleepers. Annex Retrieved from: https://gia.info.gov.hk/general/202006/10/P2020061000398_343137_1_1591765001351.pdf
3. RTHK News (2020). 稱遭康文署棄置家當 一批露宿者入稟索償. Retrieved from: <https://news.rthk.hk/rthk/ch/component/k2/1543677-20200814.htm?spTabChangeable=0>
4. Interview with 珍姐, a homeless in Happy Valley on 14 Sep 2020
5. When they are out for work and Interview with 高佬, a homeless in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020, 珍姐, a homeless in Happy Valley on 14 Sep 2020, and 阿泉 and Mr Szeto, homeless in Tung Chau Street Park on 15 Nov 2020
6. Section 22(2)(a) of the PHMSO
7. Section 20 of the PHMSO
8. Section 9 of the Waste Disposal Ordinance
9. Ho K. (2020). In pictures: Hong Kong street sleepers demand compensation after possessions thrown away. Retrieved from: <https://hongkongfp.com/2020/11/15/in-pictures-hong-kong-street-sleepers-demand-compensation-after-possessions-thrown-away/>
10. Section 108 of the PHMSO
11. Interview with 高佬, a homeless in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020
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18. Interview with Mr. Yeung Yuk on 18 Nov 2020 and with 蔡姑娘, a social worker from The Salvation Army SSD YFC on 14 Dec 2020
19. Interview with 高佬, a homeless in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020
20. Interview with 青山, a former homeless in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020, and 高佬, a homeless in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020
21. Interview with 阿泉, homeless in Tung Chau Street Park on 15 Nov 2020, and 香哥, homeless in Tung Chau Street Park on 15 Nov 2020
22. Interview with S, Founder of an NGO (anonymity preferred by the interviewee) on 15 Nov 2020
23. Interview with 李姑娘, a social worker from St. James' Settlement on 14 Sep 2020
24. Interview with an FHED outsourced cleaning worker in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020
25. Interview with Mr. Yeung Yuk, chairman of Sham Shui Po District Council on 18 Nov 2020
26. Interview with an FHED outsourced cleaning worker in Lei Cheng Uk Playground on 18 Sep 2020
27. Interview with Mr. Yeung Yuk, chairman of Sham Shui Po District Council on 18 Nov 2020