

Social Affairs Department
Quarterly Statistical Bulletin
Quarter 1 2021

Introduction

This quarterly statistical bulletin aims to present the statistics of the Social Affairs Department for the first quarter of 2021. Information is gathered from the Legal Services and Child Protection section, Community Social Work section and the Night shelter.

Social Services

Legal Services & Child Protection Section

The Child protection unit deals with any cases related to children aged between 0-14 years old. As part of the investigating process and intervention plan, the unit undertakes home and school visits as well as counselling sessions.

The Legal Services Unit's main responsibility is to handle cases referred by the Supreme Court and Family Tribunal for investigation and submission of reports to address children related issues of custody, access, maintenance, adoption, guardianship and mediation for reconciliation in divorce matters.

Table 1: Number of abuse cases reported in Q1

| Categories | Total Q1 |
|---|-----------------|
| Sexual related cases | |
| Sexual abuse (confirmed) | 22 |
| Alleged sexual abuse(Under investigation) | 9 |
| Sexual play | 1 |
| Indecent act | 1 |
| Other Abuse | |
| Physical | 18 |
| Neglect | 2 |
| Alleged neglect (deceased) | 2 |
| Threatening violence | 2 |
| Total Q1 | 57 |

Source: Legal Services & Child Protection section

Compared to the previous quarter, the total number of reported cases declined by 74. The most substantial decline was observed in alleged sexual abuse cases, sexual abuse cases and physical abuse cases.

Table 2: Number of referral cases in Q1

| | Total Q1 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Family tribunal referrals | |
| Custody, access & maintenance | 30 |
| Supreme court | |
| Adoption | 1 |
| Guardianship | 1 |

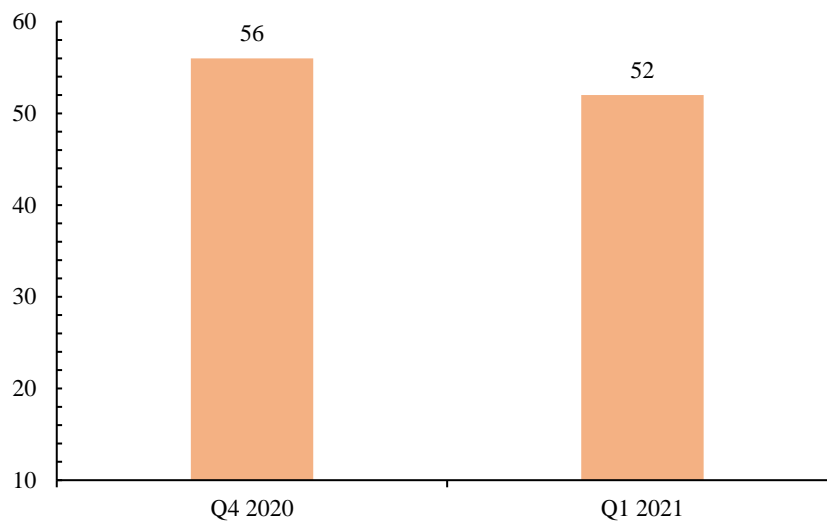
Source: Legal Services & Child Protection section

Cases from the family tribunal declined by 31 when compared to the previous quarter. Likewise, adoption cases from the supreme court decline by 4.

Children’s Helpline

Social Services introduced the 3-digit helpline operated on a daily basis up to 11.00pm. The helpline is manned on a rotational basis by social workers of the two main sections, Community Social Work Section and Legal and Child Protection Section.

Figure 1: Number of cases referred through helpline in Q4 2020 and Q1 2021



Source: Legal Services & Child Protection section

The number of cases referred through the helpline remained more or less the same in the first quarter of 2021 compared to the previous quarter with a slight reduction of 4 cases.

Community Social Work Section

Community social work promotes the wellbeing of the community. It encompasses a variety of components focusing on economic needs, educational concerns, family challenges, collaborative and creative solutions at community level. It further emphasizes on advocacy, analysis planning and implementation of activities to support families and alleviate the difficult situation they are going through.

Table 3: Number of cases reported at the Community Social Work section in Q1

| Categories | Total Q1 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Neglect | 9 |
| Alleged neglect | 1 |
| Alleged emotional abuse | 3 |
| Deviancy | 7 |
| Alleged deviancy | 1 |
| Semi orphan benefit | 1 |
| Housing issue | 5 |
| Alleged physical abuse | 1 |
| Behavioural issue | 1 |
| Alleged elderly neglect | 1 |
| Homeless | 8 |
| Access | 1 |
| Spousal conflict | 25 |
| Family conflict | 18 |
| Domestic violence | 2 |
| Approved scheme benefit | 6 |
| Mental health | 5 |
| Property dispute | 1 |
| Total Q1 | 96 |

The total number of cases reported in Q1 2021 decreased by 82 when compared to Q4 2020. The decline was mostly attributed to a substantial fall in the number of alleged neglect cases reported and the number of family conflict cases.

Night Shelter

The mission of the night shelter is to cater for those individuals identified as being homeless due to their dysfunctionalities. The main aim is to provide psychosocial support and skills thus promote reintegration within their families and society.

Table 4: Night shelter admissions (Q1 2021)

| Months | Admission |
|------------------------|------------------|
| January | 4 |
| February | 2 |
| March | 8 |
| Total admission | 14 |

Most of the night shelter clients in the first quarter were between the age range 30-49. When compared to the previous quarter admissions increased by 3.