

Social Affairs Department
Quarterly Statistical Bulletin
Quarter 1 2022

Introduction

This quarterly statistical bulletin aims to present the statistics of the Social Affairs Department for the first quarter of 2022. 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)	35
Alleged sexual abuse(Under investigation)	22
Other Abuse	
Physical	24
Alleged physical abuse	17
Neglect	5
Total Q1	103

Source: Legal Services & Child Protection section

- A total of 103 cases was reported at the Child Protection unit for the first quarter of 2022, with sexual abuse being the main issue reported.
- Compared to the previous quarter, the number of cases reported at the unit remained unchanged.

- Whilst compared to the same period last year, the number of cases reported increased by 46, with the main increase observed in the number of alleged physical abuse cases reported.
- As at the end of March 2022, the total case load of the Child Protection unit stood at 904, with 710 low risk cases, 138 medium risk cases and 56 high risk cases.

Table 2: Number of referral cases in Q1

	Total Q1
Family tribunal referrals	
Custody, access & maintenance	147
Supreme court	
Adoption	2
Interdicted person	1
Guardianship	11

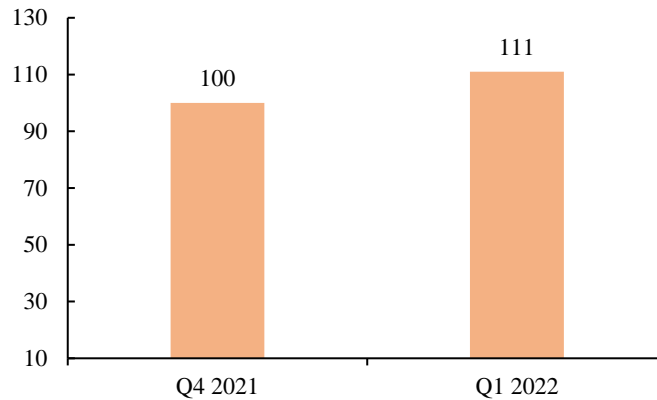
Source: Legal Services & Child Protection section

- Compared to the previous quarter, the number of referrals from the Family Tribunal were more or less the same with a slight increase of 1%
- In comparison to the previous quarter Q4 2021, cases from the Supreme Court increased by 4.
- To note that on a year on year basis substantial increases were observed mainly because of a change in data collection method.
- As at the end of March 2022 the legal services unit had 33 cases related to custody access and maintenance as well as allegation of abuse, care and control and guardianship. There were also 9 cases related to adoption and fostering

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 2021 and Q1 2022



Source: Legal Services & Child Protection section

- A total of 111 cases were referred on Children’s Helpline. An increase of 59 cases was observed when compared to the same period last year.as can be observed in the graph above compared to the previous quarter cases increased by 11.

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	26
Alleged neglect	7
Emotional abuse	3
Alleged Emotional abuse	3
Deviancy	14
Delinquency	1
Alcohol related issues	3
Housing issue	2
Alleged physical abuse	3
Drug related issue	8
Elderly neglect	1
Elderly physical abuse	1
Elderly emotional abuse	1
Elderly financial abuse	1

Elderly health issue	1
Elderly abuse	4
Homeless	11
Access	4
Spousal conflict	62
Family conflict	112
Sexually active	2
Financial issues	5
Truancy	3
Sexual harassment	2
Disability	4
Unemployment	1
Mental health	4
Breach of peace	9
Total Q1	298

Source: Community Social Work section

- A total of 298 new cases were registered in the first quarter of 2022 in the Community Social Work Section compared to 96 cases reported in the same period in 2021. This represents an increase of 202 in the number of cases reported.
- When compared to the preceding quarter, cases reported to the Community Social Work section declined by 19, with the most substantial decrease observed in cases of alleged neglect.
- As at the end of March 2022, the total caseload for the Community Social Work section stood at 855, with 444 low risk cases, 339 medium risk cases and 72 high risk cases.
- The family Support unit within the section had a total of 212 cases related to homelessness, family and spousal conflict, breach of peace, vagrant, housing issue, disability, family tribunal cases and trafficking in persons

Night Shelter

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

Table 4: Night shelter admissions (Q1 2022)

Months	Admission
January	1
February	3
March	5
Total admission	9

Source: Night shelter

- In comparison to the same period last year the number of new admission declined by 5. Whilst compared to the previous quarter the number of admissions increased by 4. Most of the clients admitted to the Night shelter during the first quarter were above 50 years old.