Family Impact Assessment in Policy Formulation –

家庭議會
Family Council
www.familycouncil.gov.hk

The Hong Kong Experience

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Agenda

01 Background

02 Development of Family Impact Assessment (FIA) in Hong Kong

03 Consultancy Study on FIA

04 Implementation of FIA Checklist

05 Q & A

Background

What is Policy Impact Assessment?

Formal and structured procedures that assess the effects of public policy from various perspectives

Cover various aspects ranging from wider angle of **economic, social, environment lens** to the more focused viewpoints on **competition, gender equality, cost-effectiveness**, etc.

Purpose of Policy Impact Assessment

01

Helps policy makers to **examine complex situations**, **gather support for their ideas** and **justify the policy decisions**

02

A process link in the chain between **evidence and decision-making**

Family Impact Assessment ?

- A kind of Policy Impact Assessment
- With relatively short history

Overseas Experience - Application of FIA

- **Announced by the Prime Minister** in 2014
- **No further progress** after the adjournment of the Bill in Dec 2015

Note

No formal FIA mechanism in **other Asian economies**

Development of FIA in Hong Kong

Development of FIA in Hong Kong

2006

- **Government bureaux and departments (B/Ds)** to conduct Sustainable Impact Assessments which **covered a social checklist**

2007

- **Establishment of Family Council** in **December 2007**
- First Family Council Meeting – agreed to **introduce family impact assessment in policy formulation** in the **long run**

Development of FIA in Hong Kong

2009

- Family Council – considerations of family perspective could help the Government balance competing priorities in formulating policies

- Home Affair Bureau (HAB) – issued a **Government circular memorandum** in April 2009 to remind B/Ds to include family perspective as a factor in policy formulation

- **Guiding principles** were set out with reference to the **three family core values**

Family Core Values – Love and Care

01 Reinforce the families and relationship amongst family members

02 Foster mutual care of family members towards one another, including those with special needs

03 Protect family members from abuse, violence or neglect

Family Core Values
Respect and Responsibilities

01 Respect the rights of family members

02 Enforce family members' obligations to provide support to one another

03 Recognise the reciprocal influence of family needs on individual needs and vice versa

Family Core Values
Communication and Harmony

01 Facilitate communication amongst family members

02 Enable family members to better balance work, family and community commitments

03 Strengthen the connection to the wider kin and community/neighborhood networks

Development of FIA in Hong Kong

2012

- **Review** conducted in September 2012 **–** still room for adoption of a **more rigorous approach**

2013

- **Voluntary approach** was **turned to a mandatory assessment of family implications in all policy submissions** including LegCo briefs w.e.f. April 2013

- Apart from three family core values, **B/Ds were explicitly invited to consider** if their policies would have **impact on family's structure and functions**

Examples of Application of FIA

01 **At Family Council level** – e.g. Retirement Protection, Law Reform Commission Report on Child Custody and Access, Hong Kong 2030+, Elderly Services Programme Plan

02 **At the Family Council Sub-committee level** – e.g. Youth Hostel Scheme, Drug situation in Hong Kong

03 **At Family Council Secretariat level –** e.g. technical amendments to ordinances (e.g. Toys and Children Products Safety Ordinance), revision of civil service pay, revision of public transportation fares

Development of FIA in Hong Kong

2014

- Family Council – agreed to commission a **consultancy study** to develop a **more comprehensive and elaborated checklist tool**

2016

- The **University of Hong Kong** was commissioned to conduct the **FIA Study** in June 2016

Consultancy Study on FIA

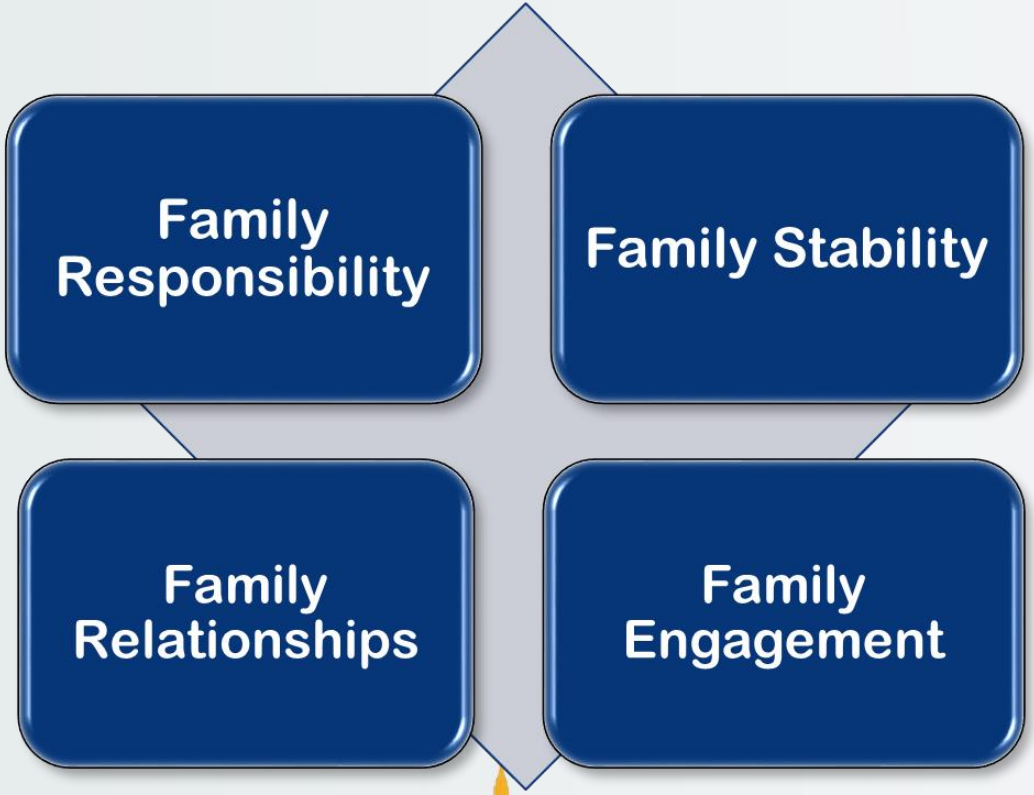
Consultancy Study on FIA

01 Through conducting **literature review and data collection, group interviews** with representatives from B/Ds as well as **public forums**, the Consulting Team prepared a **draft checklist tool**

02 The draft checklist tool was **put into trial from 2 May to 30 Sep 2017**

03 The Consulting Team also developed **training materials** and conducted **training sessions** for users prior to the trial run

Four Basic Dimensions in FIA



Six Basic Principles in FIA

Principle 1: Supporting the functions of families

Principle 2: Strengthening family integrity and stability

Principle 3: Promoting family harmony and better balance between work and family

Principle 4: Connecting families to the wider kin and community networks

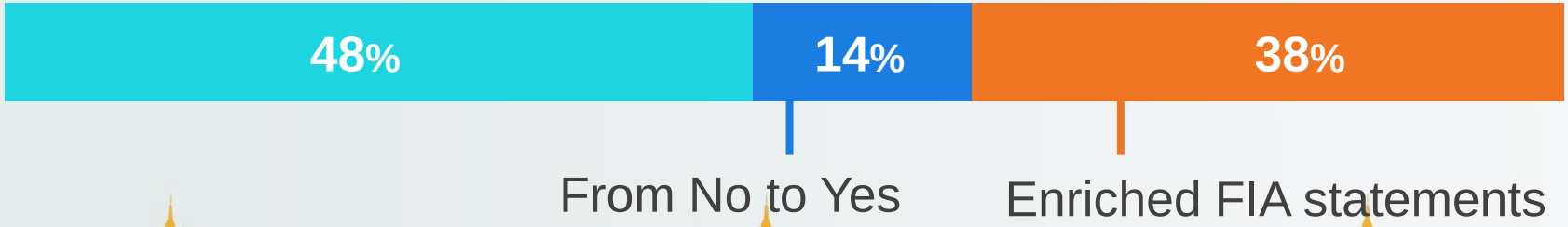
Principle 5: Encouraging families to participate in policy development, programme planning and evaluation

Principle 6: Support vulnerable families

FIA Trial Run Review

- **24 B/Ds** completed **84** draft FIA checklists during the trial run, **29 (35%) were assessed to have family implications**

- Among these **29 cases**, **4 B/Ds (14%)** amended their assessment from no family implications to yes after completing the checklist and **11 (38%)** enriched their FIA statements



Evaluation of the Draft FIA Checklist

01

Collected both quantitative and qualitative data from 84 users by **questionnaire survey, focus group interviews and in-depth interviews**

02

Users' experience was positive:

- Useful in introducing an explicit family perspective to the policy making process
- Providing a clear step-by-step framework for assessing family impacts
- Helping to anticipate intended and unintended effects of public policies on families

Development of FIA in Hong Kong

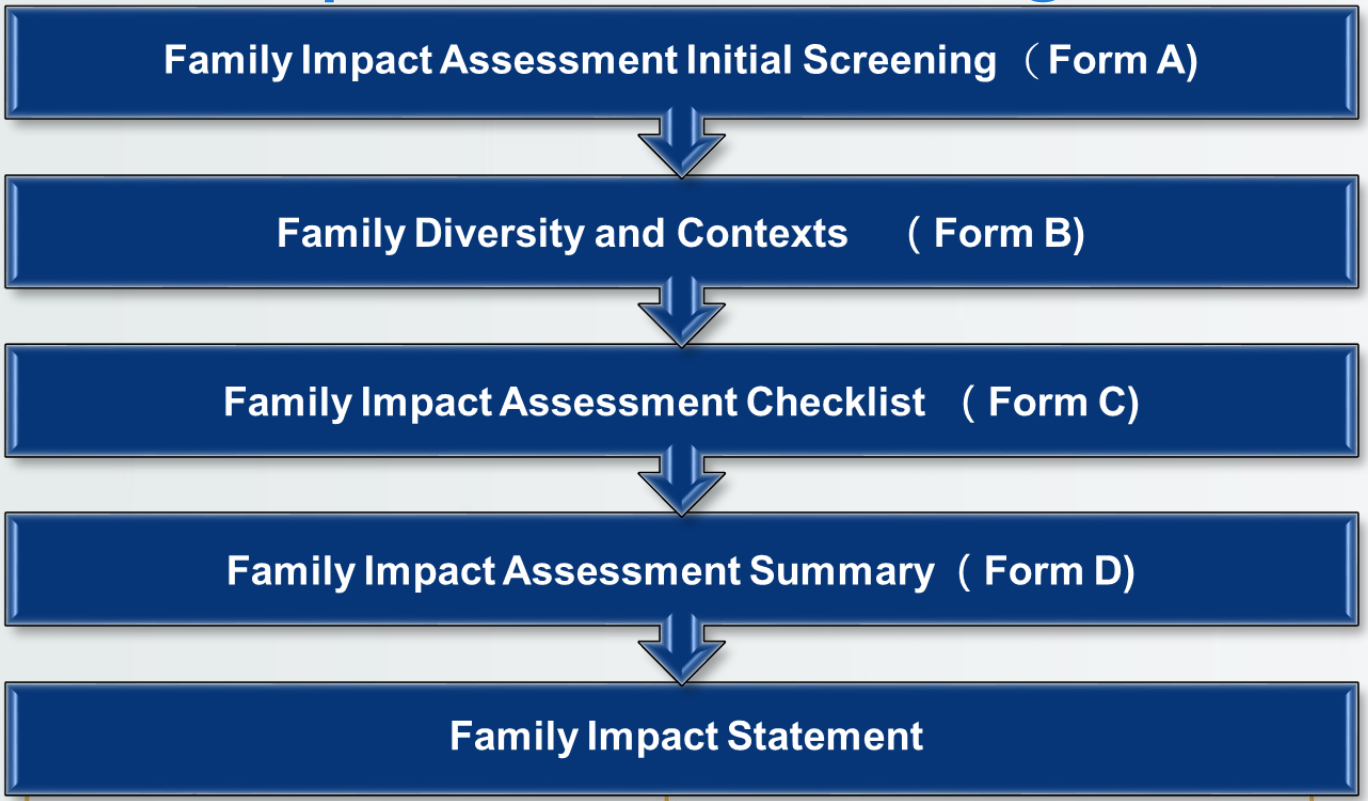
2018

- The Consulting Team fine-tuned and finalised the FIA checklist based on users' comments

- The FIA checklist would be put into **formal use** by the HKSAR Government in **August 2018**

Implementation of FIA Checklist

5-steps in Conducting FIA



3 Major Steps of FIA Checklist

Determining which family type(s) might be affected

Evaluating the family impact alongside 24 questions set under six principles covering four main dimensions (family responsibility, family stability, family relationships and family engagement)

Summarising the assessment and reflecting on appropriate mitigating measures in case negative impact is identified

FIA Checklist – Form A

01

Form A is a **screening tool** – assists B/Ds to conduct initial screening to **determine** if there is any doubt or impacts on family well-being and **any needs to have further assessment**

02

An **exemption mechanism** – for policy proposals with no family impact and involving **routine and technical amendment or updating**, B/Ds may apply for exemption from conducting FIA in the future

Form A

Form A: Family Impact Assessment Initial Screening
The Family Impact Assessment Initial Screening is consistent with the **four dimensions of Family Impact Assessment Checklist** (*User Manual (UM) para 43-49, p.11*)[1]. The four questions can serve to build awareness and provide a framework for a preliminary assessment of how policies bring **intended and unintended consequences for family well-being** (*UM para 31-33, p.9*).

Does the new/revised policy or legislation proposal bring an impact on:		**No impact** on families/ Not relevant	**Yes,** Possible impact on families	**Uncertain,** not sure if there is any possible impact
1	**Family Responsibility:** (*UM para.44, p.12*) Affect families' capacity to fulfil their functions: family formation, partnership relationships, economic support, childrearing, caregiving, reproduction, emotional support, provision of safety, education and socialization.	☐	☐	☐
2	**Family Stability:** (*UM para.45, p.12*) Affect families' capacity to maintain a stable structure and fulfil their marital, parental and family commitments, especially when children are involved and changes or transitions occur, such as aging, adoption or parental separation.	☐	☐	☐

Form A (Cont'd)

3	**Family Relationships:** *(UM para.47, p.13)* Affect work and family balance, family communication amongst members including couples, immediate family members and extended family members.	☐	☐	☐
4	**Family Engagement:** *(UM para.48, p.13)* Affect families' connection with community, families' participation in social development and support of vulnerable families (e.g. ethnic minorities, family with special needs, low-income families).	☐	☐	☐

If there is any check mark in boxes of "***Yes***" or "***Uncertain***", **Form B**: Family Diversity and Contexts and **From C**: Family Impact Assessment Checklist **should be gone through**.

Application for exemption	
☐	We would like to apply for exemption from conducting Family Impact Assessment in the future on similar amendments to this particular **subsidiary legislation or regular review/updating of policy arrangements with no family impact** identified in the screening.
	Justification:

FIA Checklist – Form B

01

Serve as a general reference to trigger the policy makers' consideration of the possible impact of their policy proposals **on diverse types of families in Hong Kong**

02

- **Definition of "family"** – Family Council adopted common sense understanding instead of strict definition

- The **purpose** of FIA is to **instill a family mindset in policymakers** who have a role to **strengthen and stabilise families** in all their diverse forms

Form B

Form B: Family Diversity and Contexts

Many policies targeting at individuals will have a family impact. Impacts can be felt in different ways by different types of families or families of different stages. This tool helps policy-makers to stimulate thought about the diversity of family forms. It is important to capture this in FIA. You may check multiple options in the following table, but not necessarily in all three columns. *(UM para 66, p.24. Glossary of terms)*

Family Structures	Family Life Cycle Stages	Family Contexts
☐ Couple only families	☐ Forming couples	☐ Low-income families
☐ Families with dependent children	☐ New couples	☐ Unemployed families with or without children
☐ Single-parent families	☐ Pregnancy	☐ Families with children or adults with special needs
☐ Step or blended families	☐ With infants and preschoolers	☐ Families from different cultural/ethnic and linguistic backgrounds
☐ Multigenerational families	☐ With school age children	☐ Families caring for a person with a disability or chronic ill health or of frail old age
☐ Foster families	☐ With children in transition to adulthood	☐ Homeless families
☐ Older couple families	☐ Young adult transition and leaving home	☐ Families in which parents have mental health and substance abuse issues

Form B (Cont'd)

☐ Persons living alone with families elsewhere	☐ Midlife adults with both young and old dependents	☐ Families with new arrival members
☐ Cross-border families	☐ With elderly dependents	☐ Families living in particular geographic region (Rural/Suburban/ Urban)
☐ Families with dependent child(ren) solely taken care of by grandparent(s)	☐ Elderly with adult children/grandchildren	☐ Families engaged in a specific type of occupation for their livelihood, including primary economic activities (e.g. fisheries, agriculture, etc.)
	☐ Caring for an ageing partner	☐ Families living in a specific type of accommodation
	☐ Separation or loss of a partner	☐ Families with doubly non-permanent resident children
	☐ Family with no economically active person	
☐ Any types of families other than the above, please specify:		
☐ ALL types of families		

FIA Checklist – Form C

01

Designed to guide the policymakers to **identify the potential impacts, to consider the significance of impact and the types of impacts, to explore mitigation measures** in case negative impact is identified

02

- **24 questions** reinforce and embrace three family core values
- To help **guard against any unintended negative impact** which might otherwise escape the attention of policy makers

Form C (Extract)

Form C: Family Impact Assessment Checklist *(UM Annex 2, p.55. Case examples)*					
Dimension I: Family Responsibility *(UM para.44, p.12)*					
Principle 1: Supporting the functions of families (e.g. family formation, partnership relationship, economic support , child rearing and caregiving, reproduction, emotional support, provision of safety, education and socialization)					
	(UM, para 71, p.29. Levels of impact; para 78, p.33, Examples of impact levels)				
Does the new/revised policy or legislation proposal:	If possible impacts on families, please indicate if it is positive or negative and describe what types and how these families will be affected	**No impact/ Not relevant**	**Slight Impact**	**Some impact**	**Substantial impact**
1.1 provide incentives or support to couples to get married or strengthen marital relationship?	☐ Positive impacts on families ☐ Negative impacts on families Description of impact: Mitigation measure(s) for negative impacts: *(UM paras 72 & 75, p.29 & 31. Negative impact and mitigation measures)*	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐
1.2 provide incentives to give birth to, foster or adopt children?	☐ Positive impacts on families ☐ Negative impacts on families Description of impact: Mitigation measure(s) for negative impacts:	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐	☐ ☐

FIA Checklist – Form D

01 **To summarize the results of Form B and Form C and reconsider mitigation measures** if negative impacts are identified

02 To remind the policy-makers of **going through the whole checklist** with considering different impacts on different types of families **before drawing their conclusions**

Form D

Form D: Family Impact Assessment Summary *(UM para 74, p.31)* ***Please summarize the result of Form B and Form C in the following table.***		
Form B: Diversity of Families	**Form C: Family Impact Assessment Checklist:** Please state the positive/negative impacts on families	**Form C: Family Impact Assessment Checklist:** **Mitigation Measures** (e.g. measures mitigate the risk of significant negative impacts occurring or help counteract the impacts.)

Family Impact Statement

01 To provide a **summary about how the policy may affect families**, in order to **inform the decision making process**

02 The statement, ranging from a few sentences to a page, will be included on all policy papers

Real Life Examples: Usefulness of FIA

Thank you!
Q&A