

**Hong Kong Helpers' Food Rights Concern Group  
Caritas Asian Migrant Workers Social Service Project**

**香港外傭膳食權利關注組  
明愛亞洲外地勞工社會服務計劃**

**Survey on the Food Welfare of Hong Kong Foreign Domestic Workers  
香港外傭膳食福利情況調查**

**Survey Background and Objective**

This survey aims to understand the food welfare situation and the impact of constantly feeling hungry on Hong Kong Foreign Domestic Workers (FDWs). The survey results and recommendations will help us to raise awareness of the importance of meal welfare for FDWs among the Hong Kong Government, the general public, FDW employers, and people who are concerned about FDWs' food rights. Hong Kong Helper's Food Rights Concern Group (Concern Group) was formed by a group of FDWs who have experienced or witnessed food maltreatment or hunger among their friends. The Concern Group hopes to improve the public's understanding of FDWs' food needs and rights and advocate for the message of "NO MORE HUNGER" for FDWs.

**調查背景和目標**

本次調查旨在瞭解香港外籍家庭傭工（外傭）的膳食福利狀況和持續飢餓對她們的影響。調查結果及建議有助外傭群體、外傭僱主和公眾正視外傭在膳食上遇到的不合理待遇及對她們身心健康的影響。香港外傭膳食權利關注組（關注組）由一群親身或她們的朋友曾被剝削膳食福利或關注外傭膳食處境的外傭組成。關注組期望透過調查及社區教育提升公眾人士對外傭膳食需要及權利的認識，倡議外傭「不再飢餓」的訊息。

**Data Collection**

Caritas Asian Migrant Workers Social Service Project (AMP) and FDWs Meal Welfare Concern Group collected the data from March to August 2023 through convenience sampling by street interviews by the Concern Group members in the popular gathering spots of FDWs or by online questionnaires filled by FDWs. We obtained 471 completed questionnaires from FDW respondents, mainly Filipinos and Indonesians.

**調查方法**

在本年三至八月期間，明愛亞洲外地勞工社會服務計劃與香港外傭膳食權利關注組於外傭「聚腳點」進行問卷調查，有關問卷亦於網上發佈鼓勵外傭自行填寫。是次調查是以方便抽樣的方法進行，成功完成 471 份有效問卷，主要受訪者是菲傭及印傭。

## I) Respondents' Basic Information 受訪者基本資料

### 1.1 Nationality of respondents 國籍

	No. of respondents 人數	%
Filipino / Philipina / 菲律賓	373	<b>79%</b>
Indonesian / Indonesia / 印尼	95	20%
Other 其他	3	1%
Total 總數	471	100%

Almost eighty percent (79%) of respondents were Filipinos, and twenty percent were Indonesians.

近八成（79%）的受訪者是菲律賓外傭，兩成(20%)是印尼外傭。

### 1.2 Age 年齡

	No. of respondents/ 人數	%
30 or below/ 30 歲或以下	30	6.4%
31-40	218	<b>46.3%</b>
41-50	191	<b>40.6%</b>
51-60	27	5.7%
Above 60/ 60 歲以上	5	1%
Total 總數	471	100%

Most respondents, over forty-five percent (46.3%), were in the age group of 31-40; forty percent (40.6%) were 41-50.

約一半（46.3%）受訪者屬於 31-40 歲的群組；四成（40.6%）屬於 41-50 歲年齡層，這兩個年齡層佔整體受訪者的大多數。

### 1.3 Year of Working in Hong Kong 在港工作年期

	No. of respondents	%
Below 1yr/ 1 年以下	10	2.1%
1yr/ 1 年	27	5.7%
2yr/ 2 年	13	2.8%
3yr/ 3 年	28	5.9%
4yr/ 4 年	51	10.8%
5yr/ 5 年	57	12.1%
6yr/ 6 年	38	8.1%
<b>7yr/ 7 年</b>	30	6.4%
8yr/ 8 年	41	8.7%
9yr/ 9 年	25	5.3%
10yr/ 10 年	43	9.1%
Above 10yr/ 超過 10 年	108	23%

Total 總數	471	100%
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Eight percent (7.8%) of respondents worked in HK for equal to or less than two years (first contract), over twenty percent (22.9%) of the year of working in HK for 4 to 5 years, and 32.1% worked ten years or more in Hong Kong. The median year of working in Hong Kong was seven years.

約一成(7.8%)的受訪者在香港工作時間等於或少於兩年(第一次合約), 超過兩成(22.9%)的受訪者在香港工作四至五年, 有三成(32.1%)受訪者在港工作十年或以上。受訪者在港工作年資中位數為七年。

## II) Situation on FDWS' Meal Welfare 外傭膳食福利的狀況

### 2.1 What does your employer promise to provide to you on the contract?

合約中訂明的膳食安排

	No. of respondents 人數	%
Free Food 僱主提供免費膳食	391	83%
Food Allowance 膳食津貼	80	17%
Total 總數	471	100%

Over eighty percent (83%) of FDWS' employers promised free food, and seventeen percent of their employers provided food allowance, as stated on their contracts.

超過八成(83%)的受訪者, 僱主於合約中訂明提供免費膳食; 17%承諾提供膳食津貼。

### 2.2 What do you actually receive?

實際上, 僱主如何提供膳食安排?

	No. of respondents 人數	%
Free Food 僱主提供免費膳食	381	80.9%
Food Allowance 膳食津貼	41	8.7%
Food Allowance + Free Food 僱主提供免費膳食+膳食津貼	43	9.1%
<b>Nothing 沒有提供</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
Total 總數	471	100%

Eighty percent (80.9%) of FDWS received free food; less than nine percent (8.7%) received food allowance; and nine percent (9.1%) obtained food allowance plus free food together.

**However, 1.3% of respondents indicated their employers provide neither free food nor food allowance.**

八成(80.9%)僱主為外傭受訪者提供免費膳食; 分別不足一成(8.7%)受訪者獲得膳食津貼及(9.1%)同時獲得膳食津貼及免費膳食的安排。值得留意有1.3%的受訪者表示僱主沒有提供任何膳食安排。

## 2.3 For Food Allowance, how much do you actually receive per month in HKD \$?

如僱主有提供膳食津貼，每月提供多少金額的膳食津貼（港元）？

	Food Allowance + Free Food 膳食津貼+免費膳食 N=43	Food Allowance 只有膳食津貼 N=41
\$500 or below/ \$500 或以下	5 (11.6%)	1 (2.4%)
\$501-\$1000	2 (4.7%)	2 (4.9%)
\$1001-\$1100	1 (2.3%)	4 (9.7%)
\$1101-\$1200	22 (51.1%)	27 (65.9%)
\$1201-\$1300	2 (4.7%)	1 (2.4%)
\$1400	1 (2.3%)	1 (2.4%)
\$1500	6 (14%)	5 (12.2%)
\$2000	4 (9.3%)	0
Total 總數	43 (100%)	41 (100%)

### Respondents with Food Allowance only:

#### Less than the amount of the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance

Around seven percent (7.3%) of respondents received less than \$1000 for meal allowance. Almost ten percent (9.7%) received a meal allowance between \$1001 to \$1100. Adding these two groups' percentages, seventeen percent (17%) received a food allowance of less than \$1,196; the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance. (It took effect from 1 October 2022.)

#### Almost the Same or Above the amount of the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance

Sixty-five percent (65.9%) received almost the same amount as the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance. Seventeen percent (17%) obtained a food allowance of more than the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance.

受訪者只有膳食津貼：

#### 低於法定最低膳食津貼金額

不足一成(7.3%)受訪者的膳食津貼不到\$1000。近一成受訪者(9.7%)的膳食津貼在\$1001至\$1100之間。將這兩群組的百分比相加，即一成七(17%)的受訪者獲得的膳食津貼低於\$1,196的法定最低要求。(法定最低膳食津貼金額\$1196於2022年10月1日起生效)

#### 介乎或高於法定最低膳食津貼金額

六成半(65.9%)的受訪者獲得與法定最低膳食津貼相同或接近的金額。一成七(17%)受訪者獲得膳食津貼高於法定最低要求。

### Respondents with Food Allowance + Free Food

More than sixteen percent (16.3%) of respondents received less than \$1000 for meal allowance. Two percent (2.3%) received a meal allowance between \$1001 to \$1100. By adding these groups, more than eighteen percent (18.6%) of them received a food allowance of less than the \$1,196 Statutory Minimum Food Allowance. (It took effect from 1 October 2022.)

More than fifty percent (51.1%) received almost the same Statutory Minimum Food Allowance

amount. Twenty-five percent (25.6%) had a food allowance of more than the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance amount.

#### 受訪者獲得膳食津貼+免費膳食安排

超過 16% (16.3%) 的受訪者收到的膳食津貼不到\$1000。兩個百分比 (2.3%) 的受訪者的膳食津貼在\$1001 到\$1100 之間。將這兩群組的百分比相加，超過一成八 (18.6%) 的膳食津貼低於法定最低要求。(法定最低膳食津貼金額\$1196 於 2022 年 10 月 1 日起生效) 超過一半 (51.1%) 受訪者獲得與法定最低膳食津貼相同或接近的金額。四分之一受訪者 (25.6%) 獲取的膳食津貼高於法定最低要求。

#### 2.4 Without checking, do you know how much the current Statutory Minimum Food Allowance per month in HKD \$?

不經查證，你所知道的法定最低膳食津貼金額為多少 (港元) ?

	No. of respondents 人數	%
Correct amount 正確金額 \$1196	135	28.7%
Wrong answer 錯誤回答 More than \$1196 多於\$1196	58	12.3%
Wrong Answer 錯誤回答 Less than \$1196 少於\$1196	105	22.3%
Don't Know 不知道	173	36.7%
Total 總數	471	100%

Less than thirty percent (28.7%) of respondents got the correct answer of \$1196 without checking. More than thirty-five percent (36.7) did not know the answer, and over twenty percent (22.3%) responded with the wrong answer, which was lower than the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance amount.

少於三成 (28.7%) 的受訪者在沒有查證的情況下能回答\$1196 的正確答案；36.7%的受訪者不知道答案；超過兩成 (22.3%) 的受訪者回答錯誤答案，回答金額是低於\$1196 法定最低要求。

#### 2.5 Do you experience any problem/discontent with your Free Food?

你在獲得免費膳食時有遇到任何問題或不滿意的情況嗎？(僱主提供免費膳食)

	No. of respondents 人數 (N=381)	%
Yes 有	143	37.5%
No 沒有	238	62.5%
Total 總數	381	100%

Over thirty-five percent (37.5%) of respondents experienced problems or discontent with their free food.

超過三成七 (37.5%) 的受訪者表示獲得免費膳食時遇上問題或不滿意的情況。

### 2.5.1 If you receive Free Food, which problem(s) do you experience

有關免費膳食，你遇到的問題是什麼？

	No. of respondents' responses (N=143) 回應數目		
	Every day 每天	1-3 times per week 每星期 1-3 次	1-3 times per month 每月 1-3 次
Food is not enough 免費膳食不足	102 (71%)	10	9
Food is not healthy 膳食不健康	44 (31%)	1	0
Food is in bad condition (e.g. leftover, nearly expired) 膳食條件惡劣（如隔夜菜，過期食品）	41 (28.7%)	7	15
I don't like the food 膳食不合口味	26 (18%)	14	16
The food is against my religion / 膳食與我的宗教有衝突	5 (3.5%)	2	0
The eating environment is not good 進食環境不好	4 (2.8%)	4	0

**More than seventy (71%) of respondents had the experience that food was not enough daily.** More than thirty percent of respondents' food was daily unhealthy (31%); around thirty percent (28.7%) in bad condition. Eighteen percent (18%) of respondents did not like the food, 3.5% said the food was against their religion, and 2.8% said the eating environment was not good. The respondents experienced the above adverse situation daily.

超過七成的受訪者（71%）表示每天也有膳食不足的情況。超過三成的受訪者反映每天的膳食均是不健康（31%）；大約三成膳食條件惡劣（28.7%）；一成八（18%）的受訪者認為膳食不合口味；3.5%表示膳食違反他們的宗教信仰；2.8%的人認為進食環境不好。受訪者每天也在經歷上述的不利處境。

### 2.6 Do you experience any problem/discontent with your Food Allowance? (N=41)

你在獲得膳食津貼時有遇到任何問題或不滿意的情況嗎？（僱主提供膳食津貼）

	No. of respondents (N=41) 人數	%
Yes 有	15	36.6%
No 沒有	26	63.4%
Total 總數	41	100%

Over thirty-five percent (36.6%) of respondents experienced problems or discontent with their food allowance.

超過三成半（36.6%）受訪者表示獲得膳食津貼時有問題或不滿意的情況。

## 2.6.1 If you receive Food Allowance, which problem(s) do you experience

有關膳食津貼，你遇到的問題是什麼？

	No. of respondents' responses (N=15) 回應數目		
	Every day 每天	1-3 times per week 每星期 1-3 次	1-3 times per month 每月 1-3 次
<b>Food allowance is not enough</b> 膳食津貼不足	<b>13 (86.7%)</b>	1	0
I cannot use the kitchen equipment or condiments 不被允許使用廚房工具及調味品 烹煮自己的食物	2 (13.3%)	2	0
My employer monitors the spending 被僱主監控個人膳食開支	2 (13.3%)	0	0

**Over eighty-five percent (86.7%) of respondents indicated that food allowance is insufficient daily.** Almost thirteen percent (13.3%) of them could not use the kitchen equipment or condiments for cooking their own food; and nearly thirteen percent (13.3%) of their employer monitored their spending of using food allowance. The respondents experienced the above adverse situation daily.

超過八成五(86.7%)的受訪者表示每天的膳食津貼也不足夠。約一成三(13.3%)的受訪者指出不能使用廚房裝置或調味品為自己預備膳食; 接近一成三(13.3%)的受訪者指出他們被僱主監控他們的個人膳食開支。受訪者每天也在經歷上述的不利處境。

## 2.7 Do you experience any problem/discontent with your Free Food + Food Allowance?

(N=43)

你在獲得免費膳食+膳食津貼時有遇到任何問題或不滿的情況嗎？(僱主提供免費膳食+膳食津貼)

	No. of respondents (N=43) 人數	%
Yes 有	8	18.6%
No 沒有	35	81.4%
Total 總數	43	100%

Nearly nineteen percent (18.6%) of respondents had problems or discontent with free food plus food allowance.

近兩成(18.6%)受訪者在同時接受免費膳食及膳食津貼出現問題或不滿。

### 2.7.1 If you receive Free Food + Food Allowance, which problem(s) do you experience

有關獲得免費膳食+膳食津貼的情況，你遇到的問題是什麼？

	No. of respondents' responses (N=8) 回應數目		
	Every day 每天	1-3 times per week 每星期 1-3 次	1-3 times per month 每月 1-3 次
Food or Food allowance is not enough 免費膳食或膳食津貼不足	3 (37.5%)	1	0
Food is not healthy 免費膳食不健康	2 (25%)	0	0
My employer monitors the spending 被僱主監控個人膳食開支	2 (25%)	0	0
The food is against my religion 膳食與我的宗教有衝突	1 (12.5%)	0	0

Over thirty-five percent (37.5%) experienced food or food allowance insufficient daily. Twenty-five percent of respondents had problems with unhealthy food (25%), and their employer monitored their spending daily (25%). 12.5% (one respondent) had the problem of food being against her religion daily.

約四成受訪者（37.5%）表示每天的免費膳食或膳食津貼不足；四分之一受訪者反映不健康膳食問題；亦有四分之一受訪者表示被僱主監控他們的個人膳食開支；12.5%（一名受訪者）每天都有免費膳食違反宗教信仰的問題。

### 2.8 Do you constantly feel hungry at work?

你工作時有否持續感到飢餓嗎？

	No. of respondents	%
Yes	169	36%
No	302	64%
Total	471	100%

Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents constantly feel hungry at work.

三成六(36%)受訪者表示工作時會持續感到飢餓。



## 2.9 Have you experienced any of the below when you were constantly hungry?

在你感到持續飢餓時，有否以下的經驗？

	No. of respondents (N=169)	%
No energy 沒有精力	117	69%
Physical discomfort (e.g. Stomach ache, headache, etc.) 身體不適（如胃痛及頭痛）	115	68%
Unable to concentrate 不能集中精神	71	42%
Feeling emotional 感到情緒化（如暴躁或抑鬱等）	61	36%
Forgetful 健忘	57	33%

With the experiences of constantly feeling hungry, seventy percent (69%) of respondents had no energy; almost seventy percent (68%) experienced physical discomfort. Over forty percent (42%) could not concentrate; thirty-six percent (36%) felt emotional, and; thirty-three percent (33%) were forgetful.

由於持續感到飢餓，七成（69%）受訪者變得沒有精力；接近七成（68%）感到身體不適；超過四成（42%）的受訪者不能集中精神；三成六（36%）的受訪者變得情緒化；三成三（33%）出現健忘的情況。

### III) Analysis 分析

Foreign Domestic Workers (FDWs) are under the Standard Domestic Helper Employment Contract protection. The contract stipulates that FDWs' employers need to provide a monthly salary and sufficient food. An employer can provide sufficient food in one of two ways: 1) Pay a monthly food allowance of at least HK\$1,196 (the minimum permitted food allowance) to FDWs for buying their groceries. 2) Share or provide food with FDWs, but the employer needs to communicate clearly with the FDWs how it works. **However, from the survey, we found that FDWs' fundamental right to food cannot be protected in daily practice.**

According to Tables 2.5 and 2.5.1, over thirty-five percent (37.5%) of respondents (143 people) experienced problems or discontent with their free food. More than seventy percent (71%) of these respondents (102 people) had the experience that food was not enough daily. Tables 2.6 and 2.6.1 show that over thirty-five percent (36.3%) of respondents (15 people) experienced problems or discontent with their food allowance, and over eighty-five percent (86.7%) of these respondents (13 people) indicated that food allowance was insufficient daily.

By adding these figures, 158 respondents experienced insufficient food daily regardless of whether they received free food or food allowance, accounting for **one-third (33.5%) of total respondents who experienced hunger daily. This phenomenon deserves attention.**

外籍家庭傭工受標準家庭傭工僱傭合約保障，合約訂明僱主需要向外傭提供月薪和充足的食物，而僱主可以透過其中一種方法向外傭提供充足食物：1) 每月向外傭支付至少港幣\$1,196的膳食津貼（法定最低膳食津貼金額）以購買他們的膳食；2) 與外傭分享膳食或提供膳食，但僱主有責任與外傭清楚溝通膳食的安排。然而，調查揭示在實際工作上，外傭溫飽的基本「食物權利」仍然不能受到保障。

根據表 2.5 和 2.5.1，超過百分之三十五（37.5%）的受訪者（143 人）在免費膳食的安排下遇問題或不滿意，當中超過七成（71%）的受訪者（102 人）是每天也在經歷食物不足夠的情況。

表 2.6 和 2.6.1 顯示，超過百分之三十五（36.3%）的受訪者（15 人）在膳食津貼上遇到問題或不滿意，當中超過百分之八十五（86.7%）的受訪者（13 人）表示每天也在經歷膳食津貼不足夠的情況。

將上述數字相加後，不論外傭是獲得免費膳食安排或膳食津貼，共有 158 名受訪者每天也在經歷食物不足的處境，佔整體受訪者的三分之一（33.5%），情況值得關注。

### Basic information of the FDW respondents

- From Table 1.1, we received 471 completed questionnaires; almost eighty percent (79%) of the respondents were Filipinos, and twenty percent were Indonesians. According to Table 1.2, more than eighty-five percent (86.9%) of the respondents were aged between 31 and 50, which is the age group with “**prime working age**” (age 25-54) labour force participation. Among the respondents, 46.3% were in the age group of 31-40, and 40.6% were in the age range of 41-50.
- Table 1.3 shows that about ten percent (10.6%) of respondents had worked in Hong Kong for less than or equal to two years (first contract). From the focus groups, we learned that FDWs tend to be submissive even if they were **maltreated under the first contract**. It is because they are afraid of breaking the contract and they could not afford to repay the training fee and service charge for working in Hong Kong. Moreover, if they were terminated in the first contract, they might be suspected of “job hopping” and be blacklisted by the Immigration Department. The median year of working in Hong Kong for the respondents was seven years; more than twenty percent (22.9%) had worked in Hong Kong for 4 to 5 years, and twenty-three percent had worked for more than ten years in Hong Kong. These data indicate that the respondents have a stable working experience in Hong Kong.

### 受訪者基本資料

- 從表 1.1，在 471 份完整的問卷中，近八成（79%）的受訪者是菲傭，兩成是印傭。
- 根據表 1.2，多於總數八成半（86.9%）的受訪者年齡介乎 31 歲到 50 歲不等，是最多勞動力參與人數的年齡群（25-54 歲是主要工作年齡）。受訪者當中有 46.3% 屬於 31-40 歲的年齡組別；40.6% 屬於 41-50 歲的年齡組別。
- 表 1.3 顯示，約一成（10.6%）受訪者在香港工作了少於兩年（第一份合約）。計劃從聚焦小組中得知，外傭來港的首份合約，即使在膳食上受到剝削，她們往往因害怕被中止合約而啞忍或順從不合理待遇。她們擔心被終止合約，難以償還來港

工作的培訓費及中介費，更可能被入境處列入懷疑「跳槽」的「黑名單」。受訪者在港工作年資中位數為 7 年；超過兩成(22.9%) 在港有 4 至 5 年的年資；23% 在香港工作超過 10 年。上述數據表明受訪者在香港有持續的工作經驗。

### **The Situations of FDWs receiving food from their employers under the Standard Domestic Helper Employment Contract**

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 show that over eighty percent (83%) of FDWs' employers promised free food, and seventeen percent (17%) provided food allowance under the Standard Domestic Helper Employment Contract. However, only eighty percent (80.9%) of FDWs received free food; less than nine percent (8.7%) received food allowance; and nine percent (9.1%) obtained a mixed mode with food allowance plus free food together. **However, six respondents (1.3%) still indicated that they received no free food or food allowance and solved their hunger by using their own money to buy food.** Also, from Table 2.4, regarding the knowledge of the statutory minimum food allowance, less than thirty percent (28.7%) could answer correctly (HK\$1,196, the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance, which took effect from 1 October 2022), while more than one-third (36.7%) did not know about the amount of food allowance. **This indicated that some employers still ignored the Food Right protection under the Standard Contract, and the FDW community needed to be more familiar with the details of the contract.**

#### **根據標準家庭傭工僱傭合約，僱主為外傭提供膳食的情況**

表 2.1 和 2.2 顯示，根據標準家庭傭工僱傭合約超過八成（83%）僱主承諾向外傭受訪者提供免費膳食，而一成七(17%)是提供膳食津貼。然而，實際上只有八成（80.9%）的受訪者是獲得免費膳食；不到百分之九（8.7%）獲得膳食津貼；亦有百分之九（9.1%）是採用混合模式，即同時獲得食物津貼及免費膳食安排。**值得留意是仍有六名受訪者（1.3%）表示，僱主沒有提供免費膳食物或膳食津貼，她們需要運用薪金購買食物來解決飢餓問題。**此外，從表 2.4 發現，不到三成（28.7%）的受訪者能正確回答法定最低食物津貼的金額，而超過三分之一（36.7%）的受訪者甚至不知道膳食津貼的金額。這顯示仍有僱主無視僱傭合約對外傭最基本食物權利的保障，而外傭群組需增強對合約內容的認識。

#### **Alarming Signal for FWDs experiencing “HUNGER” every day**

According to Tables 2.8 and 2.9, thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents constantly felt hungry at work. Of these 169 FDWs, nearly seventy percent of respondents had no energy (69%) and experienced physical discomfort (68%). Over forty percent (42%) could not concentrate; thirty-six percent (36%) felt emotional, and; thirty-three percent (33%) were forgetful, with the consequences of constantly feeling hungry.

#### **外傭每天經歷「飢餓」的警報訊號**

根據表 2.8 和表 2.9，三成六(36%) 的受訪者表示在工作中持續感到飢餓；這 169 名受飢餓影響的外傭，接近七成（69%）變得沒有精力；約七成（68%）感到身體不適；超

過四成(42%)的受訪者不能集中精神；三成六(36%)的受訪者變得情緒化；三成三(33%)出現健忘的情況。

Constantly feeling hungry not only affected FDWs' physical health (no energy, physical discomfort), but it also had negative impacts on their cognitive performance (inability to concentrate and forgetfulness) and emotional aspects (feeling emotional). All these consequences not only endangered the physical and mental health of FDWs but also directly affected the quality of work provided and hindered the positive employee-employer relationship.

持續感到飢餓的外傭不僅影響她們的身體健康（沒有精力、身體不適），亦會對外傭的認知行為表現（無法集中、健忘）和情感（情緒低落）方面構成負面影響。這些因持續感到飢餓出現的後果不僅危及外傭的身體和心理健康，還直接影響工作質素及僱傭之間的關係。

### **Accepting Culture Difference in Food**

Most of the FDW respondents were in the **“prime working age”** (age 25-54) for labour force participation, so they needed more food to have enough energy to fulfil their daily tasks compared to FDWs' employers, who were elderly, office workers or female employers. FDWs often encountered complaints or doubts about the number of rice bowls they ate per meal. Besides the sufficient intake of carbohydrates, Filipinos and Indonesians are **“Rice Lovers”**; the cultural differences in food must be acknowledged. From our experience, many employers did not intentionally withhold food to make the FDWs hungry or malnourished. However, without clear communication and clarification from employers, FDWs did not know what household food they could eat. Moreover, FDWs were not assertive enough to ask or express themselves when they did not have enough food, possibly due to the power difference between employers and FDWs.

The Standard Contract does not cover explicit guidelines on shared food, so good communication is essential for meal-sharing arrangements between the employer and FDW with the consensus on when, where, what, and how much.

### **承認飲食上的文化差異**

大部份受訪外傭正處於參與勞動力的「黃金工作年齡」（25-54歲），因此她們的日常工作量與長者、文職工作或女性僱主相比，他們需要更多的食物以提供能量來完成家務工作。外傭常常被僱主抱怨或質疑她們每餐吃白飯的數量。除足夠碳水化合物攝取外，菲律賓人和印尼人其實是「白飯愛好者」，我們必須承認飲食上的文化差異。根據我們的工作經驗，許多僱主不是故意扣起食物，令外傭挨餓或營養不良。可是在僱主沒有溝通和澄清下，外傭並不知道允許在僱主家吃哪些食物。外傭甚少「夠膽」向僱主或表達她們吃不飽或僱主提供的食物不足夠，這可能是僱傭間的權力差異所致。

標準家庭傭工僱傭合約沒有涵蓋關於僱主提供膳食的明確指引，因此良好的溝通對於僱主和外傭之間的在膳食安排上至關重要，僱傭間可就何時、地點、具體運作和食物份量達成共識。

### **Problems and Discontent regarding Free Food and Food Allowance**

Referring to Table 2.5 and Table 2.5.1, among the FDWs who received only free food, around forty percent (37.5%) of respondents experienced problems with the free food, of which **71% stated that they always received not enough food**, around thirty percent reflected that the food was not healthy (31%) or in bad condition (28.7%), such as only canned food and leftovers. In addition, free food often refers to shared food with the employers' families, which might not suit the FDWs' taste or religion.

From Table 2.6 and Table 2.6.1, for those who received only food allowance, more than one-third (36.6%) of respondents encountered discontent with the food allowance received, in which **nearly ninety percent (86.7%) received not enough food allowance**, around ten percent (13.3%) reflected the situation of being monitored on their expenses or being forbidden to use kitchen equipment.

### **The amount of Statutory Minimum Food Allowance is Far from Enough**

The amount of Statutory Minimum Food Allowance is HK\$1,196 monthly. Calculated using 31 days a month, it only covers \$38.5 for three meals daily. Adults, especially foreign domestic helpers who need manual labour, need more than \$38.5 per day to eat outside. FDWs use this limited Food Allowance to cook and eat at their employers' homes but cannot afford to buy nutritious food. Therefore, they always buy eggs, noodles, bread, or food that has expired or is almost expired to solve the problem of insufficient Food Allowance. Table 2.3 shows that 17% of the respondents' food allowance was lower than the legal requirement of \$1196. They had to use their salary to purchase food, which violated their right to food (access to adequate food). This also explains why there is a mixed mode of "food allowance and free meals" in actual practice because if the employer does not provide free food support or allow the foreign helper to use the condiments, tableware and cooking equipment in the kitchen, the amount of minimum food allowance is not enough to cope with the daily expenses.

### **就免費膳食及膳食津貼出現的膳食問題及不利處境**

根據表 2.5 和表 2.5.1，只接受免費膳食的外傭受訪者，大約四成（37.5%）的受訪者在僱主提供的免費膳食安排上遇到問題，當中七成(71%)的受訪者表示他們持續沒有足夠的食物，大約三成反映食物不健康（31%）或食物狀況不佳（28.7%），例如只有罐頭食品和剩菜。另外，提供僱主提供免費膳食通常是指與僱主的家庭共享餸菜或食物，中餐往往不符合外傭的口味，或餸內有違背其宗教信仰的食物。

從表 2.6 和表 2.6.1 中，對於那些只領取膳食津貼的受訪者，超過三分之一（36.6%）的

受訪者對領取膳食津貼感到不滿，接近九成（86.7%）沒有領取足夠的膳食津貼，超過一成（13.3%）反映了被僱主監察使用膳食津貼或禁止使用廚房的情況。

#### 過低的法定最低膳食津貼金額

每月膳食津貼的金額是港幣\$1196，用每月 31 天計算，每天僅得\$38.5 應付一日三餐。每天只的得\$38.5 根本不足以讓成年人，特別是需要體力勞動的外傭在外用膳。外傭運用這筆有限的膳食津貼只能勉強在僱主家烹調吃飽，但食物營養欠奉。故此，她們總是購買雞蛋、麵條和麵包，或者已經或幾乎過期的食物以解決膳食津貼不足的問題。從表 2.3 發現有一成七(17%)的受訪者的膳食津貼低於\$1196 的法定要求，他們必須運用薪金購買食品，這違反了食物權(獲得充分的食糧)。這也解釋為何在現實操作中出现「獲膳食津貼及免費膳食」的混合模式，因為僱主如果不提供免費食物的支援或允許外傭使用廚房的調味品、餐具和烹飪裝置，膳食津貼根本不夠應付一日三餐的開支。

#### IV) Recommendations 建議

Foreign Domestic Workers (FDWs) are essential to Hong Kong's local economy – they cook, clean and care for children and the elderly, releasing the workforce in local families. FDWs are laborers under the protection of Hong Kong Labour laws and the Standard Domestic Helper Employment Contract. However, some of the FDWs were maltreated by their employers, especially in the food issue; they experienced free food that was against their religion, insufficient free food and food allowance that caused hunger, and eating leftovers or unhealthy food like canned or salty food. Food allowance was insufficient for having meals outside; thus, they could not cope with the situation without permission to use the employer's kitchen to cook their own food.

Some of the employers did not intend to let their workers be hungry. However, the FDWs did not assert their discontent about their food issue to employers as there is a power difference between them; FDWs are afraid of being “troublesome” in the eyes of their bosses. They were always submissive to the food they did not like, the small portion that was not enough or the lack of breakfast or lunch. FDWs need to have precise meal times as ordinary employees in Hong Kong. Therefore, setting clear meal breaks in a day and clarifications and details for FDWs' meal welfare are essential measures for protecting FDWs. As a result, we have the recommendations below:

- 1) A more explicit explanation and terms on free food and food allowance should be included in the Standard Domestic Helper Employment Contract, in which the contents should be bilingual in both English and Indonesian to ensure FDWs understand the details. The terms should specify that for those who choose free food, their employer should allow them to use the kitchen to prepare their own meals, and for those who receive free food, the food should not be against their religion; the

employers should provide three meals with sufficient portions to prevent hunger.

- 2) Increase the Statutory Minimum Food Allowance from \$1196 to \$1800 monthly, which equals \$450 per week. (The amount of food allowance was \$920 in 2014 and increased to \$1196 in 2021; there was only a \$276 increase over these nine years, which could not keep up with inflation.)
- 3) Provide a total of two hours of meal time/meal break to the FDWs for at least 10 hours of work daily. The clear meal time or meal break gives the FDWs legitimate rest hours for the whole day, like ordinary employees in Hong Kong.
- 4) Provide community education to FDWs and their employers, which allows both sides to have clear understanding and mutual expectations on food issues regarding having free food or food allowance. Community education enables the public to understand the cultural differences in food issues, respect FDWs' religion on food, and accept the difference in food portion and taste.

外傭對香港經濟至關重要，外傭釋放本港家庭的勞動力，代替照顧者煮食、清潔和照顧兒童和老人等工作。外傭是受香港勞工法例和標準家庭傭工僱傭合約保障。然而仍有一些外傭受到僱主不合理的對待，特別是在膳食問題上，例如僱主提供違反她們宗教信仰的食物，膳食或膳食津貼不足、總是吃剩菜或不健康(吃罐頭或醃製食物)的食物。膳食津貼根本不足夠外出用膳，若不被允許使用廚房來烹飪食物根本不能應付上述情況。一般僱主並不是故意讓外傭挨餓，但僱傭間存在的權力差異，往往令外傭沒有向僱主表達對膳食問題的不滿。因為她們擔心在僱主眼中變成「麻煩」，故她們繼續進食不喜歡的食物，對於食物份量太少吃不飽或僱主不提供早餐或午餐等安排，也只會啞忍。外傭需要像香港的普通員工一樣有明確的用餐時間，因此可以訂下外傭一天的用餐時間及明確說明膳食福利和細節是保障外傭的重要措施。因此，我們有以下建議：

- 1) 標準家庭傭工僱傭合約需就免費膳食和膳食津貼作更明確的解釋和條款，以保障外傭。合約可同時包含英語和印尼語的條款，以確保佔香港絕大多數外傭群組(菲傭及印傭)能清楚瞭解細節。我們建議於合約訂明僱主在提供膳食津貼的同時，必須允許外傭使用廚房及相關設備來準備自己的飯菜。對於獲免費膳食的外傭，僱主提供的食物不能違背外傭的宗教信仰、確保足有夠份量的一日三餐提供給外傭，以確保她們不致飢餓。
- 2) 將每月規定的最低膳食津貼水平從現時港幣\$1196 增加到\$1800，即等同每週\$450。2014 年最低膳食津貼金額是\$920，現時為\$1196；這九年期間只增加了\$276，有關增幅完全未能跟上通貨膨脹的幅度。
- 3) 應向外傭提供每日總共兩小時的用餐時間/用餐休息時間，因她們每天的工作時間絕不少於 10 小時。像香港普通員工一樣，清晰的用餐時間/用餐休息時間讓外傭可以安心進食或休息。

- 4) 為外傭及其僱主提供社區教育，促使雙方對膳食福利(免費膳食或膳食津貼)有清晰的認識及澄清期望。社區教育讓大眾了解食物議題上的文化差異，尊重外傭在宗教上對食物的持守，接受對食物份量和食物口味的差異。