

**Media Monitor for Women Network &
Women's Studies Institute of Jiangsu Province**

The Shadow Report of Chinese Women's NGOs
on the Combined Seventh and Eighth Periodic Report
Submitted by China under Article 18 of the *Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against
Women*

**Modification of Gender Stereotypes and
Elimination of Prejudice
(Article 5)**

(For public information)

September 2014

Modification of Gender Stereotypes and Elimination of Prejudice (Article 5)

Media Monitor for Women Network

Women's Studies Institute of Jiangsu Province

I. Efforts and Progress

In recent years, the Government has introduced several laws and policies in favor of the elimination of gender discrimination across media. The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) in conjunction with other government authorities introduced a series of policies and regulations in 2007 and 2008, containing detailed provisions prohibiting the presence of pornographic content in TV programs, movies and online videos. In 2009, the State Council Information Office and other six departments jointly initiated and implemented a special campaign for cracking down upon vulgar productions across the Internet. In the *Administrative Measures for the Broadcasting of Radio and Television Advertisements* and the *Administrative Regulations on the Content of TV Serials* launched in 2010, it is stipulated that commercials and TV serials shall not contain any obscene content.

Multi-sectoral collaboration has been carried out within the Government, with special operations to deal with the unbalanced sex ratio at birth and the convention of preference for boys. In 2005, the National Population and Family Planning Commission in conjunction with other relevant departments issued the *Action Plan Concerning the Initiative of Caring for Girls and Rebalance of Sex Ratio at Birth*. Caring for Girls prioritizes the elimination of gender-based discrimination and promotion of gender equality in childbearing, coupled with a publicity campaign for laws and regulations assuring the rights and interests of women and children. The initiative rolled out in 24 county-level sites respectively under 24 provincial jurisdictions across China, guiding people to change their traditional values, such as "raising sons for old age" and "having a son to bear the family name". In 2008, the National Population and Family Planning Commission and the Central Party School jointly launched a pilot project themed as "strengthening the autonomy of villagers and advancing gender equality," adopting participatory training, local opera and other publicity means to promote modification of village conventions in favor of gender equality. As of June 2011, 320 villages in Dengfeng City, the pilot site in Henan Province, had revised the conventions (accounting for 98% of the total), incorporating 13 new provisions addressing gender equality.

Government's attention to the role of women's organizations has facilitated gender equality internalization into schools and enterprises as well as into the countryside and the media. The National Working Committee on Children and Women under the State Council (NWCCW) has carried out multi-level gender training to strengthen gender mainstreaming education across the NWCCW staff and the liaison teams of NWCCW member units at the county, prefecture and provincial

levels. According to incomplete statistics, from 2006 to 2010, lecture sessions themed on the basic state policy of gender equality were hosted in 15 provincial-level jurisdictions of the country. In a number of provinces, such as Jiangsu, Hunan, Hubei and Shandong, gender equality was included into the general curriculum of party schools at all levels as a compulsory leadership course. China Women's University organized participatory gender awareness training, providing training on gender and women's work for teachers and headmasters of women cadre schools in six provinces of central and western China, respectively Guangxi, Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai and Ningxia. In 2008, Jiangsu Gender Equality Education Center was set up in Jiangsu Province, being China's first government-led professional body taking advocacy of gender equality as its main function.

Multilateral cooperation has been conducted to foster the elimination of gender-based discrimination in the curriculum and in school education. In 2010, the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the UNICEF launched a project named "Child Friendly School", requiring educators to create an educational environment without gender discrimination. Primary and secondary school textbooks covered by the project shall avoid gender stereotypes in an effort to endow students with the concept of gender equality, convincing them that women and men can get equal access to social respect and personal achievements. Currently, more than 4,000 schools in a dozen of provinces are carrying out this project.

II. Gaps and Challenges

Media policies and regulations remain lagging behind in gender-sensitivity. For the time being, the relevant regulations and policies lack a strict, operational definition of pornographic materials, while advertising and promotional materials are not yet categorized for regulation, leaving a gray area for negative and false commercials under weak governance.

Gender discrimination in the mass media is pronounced. With a profit-driven advertising market, a gender-sensitive and technical defect in the editing staff and the negligence of the regulatory authorities, assorted products stressing female features as the chief attraction are prevalent throughout media, while positive images of older, poor and migrant women and their contribution to the society have not been fully presented. Diverse achievements, value and initiative of women have not been sufficiently appreciated, with few topics concerning women's development and gender equality reported in depth.

The mass media sector is still facing the task to enhance the status of women in media players. The number of women has been on the rise across mass media, with licensed female journalists accounting for 42.3% of the total nationwide in 2009. However, the proportion is still lower than the ratio of female students who major in journalism in universities and colleges. Compared to other industries, gender discrimination is not so prominent in the mass media sector regarding recruitment, but the protection of women's rights and interests remains challenging in work positions, assignments, promotion and other aspects, while management positions are still dominated by men.

III. Suggestions in Response

Better-established mechanisms shall be pursued to strengthen publicity for gender equality in media dissemination. Dissemination regulations and policies

should expressly prohibit gender discrimination, with appropriate standards and mechanisms deployed for oversight, complaint and disposal. Attention should be paid to media coverage of women/gender issues, with positive feedback offered to encourage public opinion from a gender perspective. Any media releasing content hostile to women's development and gender equality shall be banned or punished.

Financial and technical support should be provided to ensure more women's access to communication information and resources. Devices, services, training and other necessary resources should be devoted, supporting and enabling rural women, migrant women and other marginalized women to use media and communication technologies so as to enhance their capacity of expressing views and making decisions through the media by new means of communications. When collecting public views via the Internet, we should recognize that participants may not fully represent the public and try to listen to their voices and keep impartial when making decisions related to gender equality and women's rights and interests.

Mass media coverage of women and gender issues should be encouraged and guided towards the right path. In awards and acknowledgements, reports conducive to gender equality and the corresponding authors should be recognized and praised. Meanwhile, the industry associations and the media are urged to develop professional gender-sensitive principles and self-regulatory codes in order to expel violence, discrimination and violations across media.

Publishers should be requested to modify textbooks for primary and secondary school students regarding the stereotypical portrayal of the gender, accepting public criticism, removing false content, rectifying the plots where sacrifice of women is excessively praised as a virtue, and adding content related to gender equality and citizenship consciousness.

Appendix

Catalog of the Organizations

Media Monitor for Women Network

The Media Monitor for Women Network is a Beijing-based civil society organization founded in March 1996. It is the first civil society group focusing on media and media & gender in mainland China. The Media Monitor for Women Network has a mission to foster gender equality and women's publicity rights across media, advocating changes in discrimination against women and gender-based stereotypes to improve the visibility of women and gender issues through media and communications, so that more women can get access to and make use of the media to express and spread their views, while the status of female practitioners in the media can be enhanced.

Website: <http://www.genderwatch.cn:801>

Women's Studies Institute of Jiangsu Province

The Women's Studies Institute of Jiangsu Province, founded in September 1990, is a subsidiary of the Jiangsu Women's Federation. The main tasks of the Institute include studies on the theories, history and current status of women's liberation and development, in-depth survey of women issues at the current stage, extensive contacts with theoretical research institutions of women's federations at all levels as well as groups, experts, scholars and enthusiasts engaged in studies on all kinds of women-related theories, promotion of women's research and information exchange, and compilation of the history and records of women's movement in Jiangsu.

Address: Room 1502, Taiping Business Tower, No.51 North Taiping Road, Nanjing, Jiangsu, China

Tel: 025-84400459