

# Responses to the Questionnaire on China's Implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action

April 1999

## Part one Overview of trends in achieving gender quality and women's advancement

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Chinese Government has conscientiously carried out its promises to incorporate gender perspective into the state policies, plans and programmes and make reinforced efforts to establish mechanisms for women's advancement, and further improved laws and regulations on the protection of women's rights and interests by means of legislation and introduced practical and strong measures to ensure the execution of policies, plans and laws.

• What have been the major achievements and/or breakthroughs in concrete terms in implementing the national action plan and/or policies and programmes for gender equality and advancement of women?

The Government has incorporated gender perspective into the state policies, plans and programmes

1. The national plan for the development of women has been formulated

In the light of the new situation in China in the course of the reform and opening-up and the new issues emerging in the development of women and by reference to the framework of the draft Beijing Platform of Action, the formulation of the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women was completed in July 1995 with the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children taking the lead and with more than 10 ministries or commissions of the State Council participating in the work.

It marks that the Chinese Government has entered into a new stage in incorporating gender equality into the plans for social development.

2. Local governments have been urged to formulate plans for the development of women

In 1996-early 1997, 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government of the whole country formulated their respective plans for the development of women, making them more orientational and operational.

3. Corresponding bodies have been set up in provinces, prefectures and counties

They are responsible for carrying out the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women and co-ordinating local governments at all levels and the

relevant departments and non-governmental organizations for doing a good job in the work on women and children.

4. Publicity has been given to the Programme and decision-making leaders have been well mobilized and trained

The idea of equality between men and women has been disseminated to the whole society and publicity has been given to the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women.

An all-round mobilization has been conducted for top-level leaders, asking the chiefs of the concerned government ministries and commissions to study the Programme and in accordance with the specific targets set forth in the Programme and the Beijing Platform for Action to formulate departmental plans and policies for the development of women.

Training courses for county magistrates have been conducted to study the Programme for the Development of Women and the Programme for the Development of Children and to integrate the economic and social development with the development of women and children and the protection of their rights and interests. The chiefs in charge of 2,600 counties of the whole country have participated in the training.

5. The implementation of the Programme has been monitored and the questions emerging in the course of implementation have been studied

The monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme has been listed as a priority in the work and for this reason monitoring and appraising mechanisms at different levels have been established and plans for the monitoring and appraisal have been formulated and a Technical Guide for the Monitoring and Appraisal of the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women has been published.

212 counties have been selected as experimental units for monitoring and appraisal on account of the different levels of development in various regions.

54 training courses on monitoring and appraisal have been conducted at various levels in provinces, prefectures and counties.

From the end of 1998 to the beginning of 1999, four regional working conferences on monitoring and appraisal were convened respectively to study and analyze the progress in the implementation of the Programme.

• Is the situation of women and girls in sectors not covered by the national action plan better or worse than in 1995? Why?

The situation of women and girls has greatly improved along with the rapid development of the national economy and the formulation and implementation of the Programme.

The programmes for the development of Chinese women and children have covered main areas of the development of women and girls.

The Programme for the Development of Women sets 30 specific targets in 11 areas such as women's participation in politics, employment, protection of right to labour, education, health care, family rights, opposition to violence against women, shaking off poverty, improvement of the social environment, promotion of peace and establishment of classified women's statistics and analysis, and puts forth 46 policies and measures.

The Programme of the Development of the Children sets 29 specific targets for the subsistence, protection and development of children in 8 areas such as mother and child health care, education, drinking water, environmental hygiene, extracurricular activities, disabled children, development of children in poverty-stricken areas and protection of children's rights and interests, and puts forth 39 strategies and measures.

The targets and measures of the above-mentioned two programmes have covered main issues that confront Chinese women and girls in their development at the present stage.

\* Are the goals of gender equality and advancement of women being pursued as a priority in relation to other public policy goals? Please explain.

The Government has listed the promotion of gender equality as a basic national policy. In the period when the Fourth World Conference on Women was in session, Jiang Zemin, President of China, pointed out in his speech that "We pay great attention to the development and progress of women and take the equality between men and women as a basic national policy in promoting the social development in China."

Also listed as basic national policies are the reform and opening up, environmental protection and family planning.

To place the equality between men and women on the top priority position demonstrates the Government's attention and support to the equality between both sexes.

\* Please illustrate with examples of legislation, policies, best practice and lessons learned.

In carrying out the follow-up actions, the Government has paid attention to the mobilization of social forces.

China's national organ for the advancement of women – the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children – is composed of 23 government departments and 5 most influential national non-governmental organizations.

The Government and non-governmental organizations have established a good and sustained co-operative partnership, and as a result, the relevant policies, plans and schemes formulated have become an extensive expression of the opinions and demands of the public.

In the course of formulating the Programme for the Development of Women, the views of the relevant non-governmental organizations were solicited and many proposals were adopted, making the programme more orientational and workable.

For example, in regard to facilitating girls to go to school, the Government, aside from increasing investment in education, has encouraged the whole society to participate in the input of human, financial and material resources, and publicized the idea of the equality between men and women. And through the activities of the "Hope Project", "Spring Bud Plan" and "Hand in Hand", it has launched social donations to increase the resources, which are limited, so as to sweep away the obstacles for girls to go to school. As a result, the attendance rate of girls has apparently risen and the drop-out rate has dropped.

The working team for monitoring and examining the implementation of the programmes for the development of women and children and the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women and the Law on the Protection of the Minors is participated jointly by the Government and non-governmental organizations, which collects information and opinions widely.

\* Has attention to gender equality and advancement of women changed since 1995 – in Government policies, in public perception, in the media, in academic institutions? Please explain concretely the nature of the change.

President Jiang Zemin's important remark to "take the equality between men and women as a basic national policy for promoting the social development in China" has given impetus to the enhancement of gender consciousness of the governments at all levels and the whole society.

#### 1. Public consciousness

The social gender concept has been linked with the idea of the equality between men and women which has been publicized and practised for decades in China, and has been made concrete by combining it with the Chinese theory and practice.

More attention has been paid to the gender equality and the development of women in the society and to the rights and interests of women.

#### 2. The mass media

The Government demands that the mainstream media give publicity to the idea of the equality between men and women and report on positive images of women.

- (1) Reports about women in the media have increased. The programme "Half the Sky" run by the China Central Television has become an influential regular programme about the special topic on women. According to statistics, up to 1997, there were more than 80 women's journals. Up to October 1998, of the 32 television stations at the central, provincial and municipal levels, 7 television stations ran women's programmes, accounting for 22% of the total.
- (2) The social gender consciousness in the media has been heightened. Some media workers for women's programmes have received different forms of training on social gender.

Analysis has been made and discussions conducted from the angle of social gender. In the programme "Half the Sky", many special topics have been broadcast such as the reproductive health of women, violence against women, sexual harassment, women's images in the mass media, opposition to reduce women to periodical employment when there is an surplus of social labour force

The Chinese Women Weekly has opened a special column on social gender since the Fourth World Conference on Women, giving publicity to and organizing discussions on the mainstreaming of social gender.

### 3. Academic research

The Government has encouraged the admission of women's studies and social gender studies into the scientific researches and teachings of social science and has given financial support in this connection.

In institutions of higher learning such as Beijing University, courses on women's studies and social gender studies have been offered and master degree on women's studies has begun to be conferred.

Activities of women's studies are unprecedentedly active and varied in forms and there is a new development of the contingent of women's studies. In the academic circles (institutions of higher learning and the departments of the Academy of Social Sciences and its affiliated organizations) only, newly formed bodies on women's studies have numbered over 30. Remarkable achievements have been scored in women's studies. More than 2,000 books on the studies have been published and over 23,000 articles of various kinds have been issued publicly.

\* How has the global situation, for example, structural adjustment, the global financial crisis and/or globalization of markets affected women and girls in your country?

The economic reform in China has exerted an influence on women and girls.

In the economic reform:

The state is adjusting the industrial structure. The planned economy is being gradually transformed into a market economy. The socialist market economy with public ownership retaining a dominant position and diverse forms of ownership developing side by side has begun to take shape.

Because of the adjustment of the industrial structure, some workers have been laid off. According to statistics of labour departments for 1998, the laid-off women workers in state-owned enterprises numbered 2.89 million, accounting for 40% of the total number of workers in state-owned enterprises.

In the political reform:

The state has strengthened the establishment of the democratic legal system and formulated more than 7,000 laws and regulations.

Direct election of deputies to the people's congresses have been held at county and township levels. An autonomous system has been put into practice, whereby rural villagers and urban residents carry out democratic election, democratic policy decision, democratic supervision and democratic management.

The system of making public the prosecutorial affairs of procuratorates and the trials of courts has been put into practice so as to promote judicial justice and increase the transparency of administration.

The influences produced by the reform and opening up in China on the broad masses of Chinese women are mainly as follows:

In the political field:

1. The broad masses of women have obtained more information and widened their field of vision. They are more concerned about state affairs and peace and development of the world.
2. The legal sense has been greatly strengthened. 80% of women in the whole country have benefited from the drive to disseminate an elementary knowledge of law. They have strengthened the sense of administrating the country in accordance with law and learnt to apply law to protect their own rights.
3. The consciousness of equality, self-support and participation has been enhanced. They have actively participated in such activities as the elections, community construction, environmental protection, wiping out illiteracy, aiding the poor, scientific and technological training, cracking down on pornography and creating civilized families. Women deputies to people's congresses and women members of the people's political consultative conferences at all levels have fully performed the functions of participation and supervision, and their capability of participating in consultations and discussions of state policies has been obviously enhanced.

4. The long-time drive to disseminate an elementary knowledge of law has resulted in the enhancement of the understanding of the idea of equality between men and women in the whole society. The conventional idea of preferring men to women has been widely abandoned, the education for girls has been increasingly given importance, and it has become a common practice that men and women in the family are equal in handling family affairs and sharing household chores.

In the field of the economic reform:

1. The incomes of the urban and rural residents have generally increased.

The net income of farmers has been raised from 133.6 yuan in 1978 to 2,090 yuan in 1997 and that of the urban residents from 343.5 yuan to 5,160 yuan. On an average, the growth rates are 8.1% and 6.2% each year respectively. People's living standard has been raised remarkably. Changes have taken place for women in managing family money matters, consumption and the way of life, the time for cultural activities, sports and recreation has increased and the input for children's education has also increased.

2. The area of women's employment has been expanded.

The overall educational level of women has risen. In some newly developed trades and in the scientific and technological field, the number and proportion of employed women have apparently increased. For example, women working in such fields as computer, electricity and gas, communications, environmental protection, aviation, project designing, real estate development, finance and insurance have increased by a great margin, and women scientists and technicians have increased from 2.17 million in 1983 accounting for 31.6% of the total to 11 million in 1997 accounting for 38% of the total.

3. The proportion of women's participation in the management and decision making has risen.

The reform and opening up have created a relaxed environment for the flow of talented people and the choices of employment, which has provided women with opportunities to display their capabilities. Women entrepreneurs, women managers and professional women have come to fore in large numbers. In 1997, women enterprise management staff accounted for 35.7% of the total, an increase of 0.8 percentage point from 34.9% in 1995.

4. Women are faced with challenges in employment.

In the adjustment of the economic structure and the reform of enterprises, there has appeared the question of a great number of laid-off women workers and re-employment. The competition of the labour force has sharpened, and women are faced with challenges and opportunities. Most of women have strengthened the sense of competition and risks and appeared bold in innovative progress in choosing employment again. In Fujian Province, the rate of re-employment of laid-off

women workers has reached 71.7%, but as the minority of them cannot fit in with the needs of the market, their re-employment has been affected.

In order to ensure the basic needs of the laid-off workers and re-employment, the state has formulated relevant policies. The "re-employment project" has been instituted since 1993 to protect the right of employment of workers including women.

## **Part two: Financial and institutional measures**

\* Discuss how equality and women's advancement are addressed in the national budget. This could include an indication of the percentage of the overall budget that is allocated for women-specific policies/programmes, and any increases/decreases since 1995.

In China, the promotion of gender equality and women's advancement has run through all aspects of social development and the financial budgets for that have been merged with those of the relevant departments and projects.

Take education as an example. The educational input in China is divided into educational undertaking expenditure (including elementary, secondary, higher and adult education), capital construction expenditure, supplementary expenses for urban and rural education expenditure and educational fund for poverty-stricken areas, all of which include budgets for women. There is not yet a unified international standard for budget classified by sex and therefore there is no separate classification in the national budget.

Along with the social and economic development in China, the input in this field has increased year after year. For instance, the state undertaking expenditures for culture, education, science and public health were:

1,467,060,000 yuan for 1995;  
1,704,250,000 yuan for 1996; and  
1,903,590,000 yuan for 1997.

The budget of the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children is allocated directly by the state finance. The budgets for working bodies for women and children at provincial, prefecture and county levels are allocated by the financial departments at the same levels.

\* Discuss structures and mechanisms that have been put in place to institutionalize follow-up to, and implementation of, the Platform for Action. Describe whether similar mechanisms have been established for follow-up to other conferences, such as the World Summit for Social Development or the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.

In China, the national organ for the advancement of women is the State Council Working



Committee on Women and Children. Its functions are:

to bring about co-ordination between governments and discuss official business;

to be responsible for co-ordinating the government departments concerned and non-governmental organizations for doing a good job in the work for women and children and for promoting the development of the undertaking of women and children;

to protect the rights of women and children; and

to supervise the implementation of the relevant laws and regulations for the protection of the rights and interests of women and children and the programmes for the development of women and children.

**Body:** The State Council Working Committee on Women and Children, which was founded in 1990, is currently composed of 23 government departments and 5 non-governmental organizations. The chairperson of the committee is State Councillor Wu Yi and its members include vice ministers of the ministries and commissions concerned and the leaders of non-governmental organizations. Its members are as follows:

The State Development and Planning Commission

The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Science and Technology

The State Nationalities Affairs Commission

The Ministry of Public Security

The Ministry of Civil Affairs

The Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Personnel

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security

The Ministry of Water Resources\*

The Ministry of Agriculture\*

The Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Co-operation\*

The Ministry of Culture

The Ministry of Public Health

The State Family Planning Commission

The National Bureau of Environmental Protection\*

The National Bureau of Radio and Television

The National Bureau of Sports

The State Statistical Bureau\*

The Press and Publication Administration of China\*

The State Bureau of Forestry\*

The Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council\*

The All-China Women's Federation

The All-China Federation of Trade Unions

The All-China Youth Federation

The China Association for Science and Technology

The China Disabled Persons' Federation\*

Notes: The sign \* denotes newly accepted members after the Fourth World Conference on Women.

At present, trans-department working bodies on women and children have been set up in the 31 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions of the whole country, over 80% of the prefectures (or cities) and the majority of the counties. Those working bodies are directly under the leadership of the heads of government at the same level, making it possible to use the working network from higher levels to the grass roots in exercising their functions.

The executive body for the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Social Development: It is composed of more than 20 relevant government organs and some non-governmental organizations with the State Development and Planning Commission taking the lead to execute the Plan of Action by integrating it with the state plan for the economic and social development.

\* Describe the role of non-governmental organizations in planning and shaping the follow-up activities. Do members of NGOs participate formally in the mechanisms established to follow up the Beijing Conference?

Many Chinese non-governmental organizations have carried out active activities to support the Government in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women.

The All-China Women's Federation and other four non-governmental organizations are members of the national body for the advancement of women.

In order to put the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women into effect, the All-China Women's Federation in 1995 put forward "a series of five women's actions" for 1996-2000, namely:

Women's Action to Help Poor Women out of Poverty: In 1996-1998, it helped 580,000 women to get out of poverty, conducted training on new agricultural technologies for 23.10 million rural women and organized 660,000 well-off women to pair off with poor women.

Women's Action to Assist Laid-off Women Workers to be Re-employed: In 1996 and 1997, with the assistance of women's federations at various levels, 480,000 women have found re-employment and one million laid-off women have received training.

Women's Action to Wipe out Women Illiteracy: In the past few years, 15 million illiterate women have been helped to get rid of illiteracy. 96 million women have scoured training in applied technologies, of whom 510,000 women have been conferred the title of farmer technicians. The "Spring Bud Plan" has been put into practice. A total of over 200 million yuan of donations has been collected to save and help a total of 750,000 non-attendance girls, of whom

150,000 girls have graduated from primary or junior middle schools.

**Women's Action to Help Women Become Competent and Talent Persons:** Training of various types has been conducted to increase the women's sense and capability of participating in the government. A women's talent bank has been set up to recommend women cadres to the relevant government departments.

**Women's Action to Promote Cultural and Ethical Progress:** The whole society has been mobilized to participate in the activity of creating "civilized families of five virtues", initiating the whole society to cultivate the social and family morality of gender equality, respecting the old and cherishing the young, observing law and discipline, being civilized and courteous and protecting environments, and thus promote the creation of civilized and harmonious families with gender equality.

The drive of women's series actions has obtained the support of the Government and has been welcomed and supported by the broad masses of women and is being launched throughout the country.

The All-China Federation of Trade Unions is also a member of the national body for the advancement of women.

In order to maintain women's right to employment and help to find re-employment for laid-off women workers, the Federation has done the following things:

1. It has carried out investigations and researches on the issue of laid-off women workers and kept abreast of the situation of laid-off women workers.
2. It has participated in the formulation of re-employment schemes on behalf of women workers and for maintaining their rights, and submitted motions to the National People's Congress and the National People's Political Consultative Conference and put forward proposals for solution.
3. It has conducted technical training on re-employment for laid-off women workers. According to incomplete statistics, 1.1 million laid-off women workers have received such training.
4. It has recommended laid-off women workers to jobs. According to incomplete statistics, 900,000 laid-off women workers have been recommended for jobs and arrangements have been made accordingly.

Apart from that, the Government has co-operated with the All-China Women's Federation, the China Association for Science and Technology and some research institutions and women's organizations in holding symposiums and making special-topic researches. Some other organizations have opened up a hot-line or set up a legal aid centre to safeguard women's rights

and interests.

## **Part three Implementation of the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

### **I. Women and poverty**

#### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

The Programme for the Development of Chinese Women has listed helping women out of poverty in the main areas for the development of women and put forth four concrete targets, including conducting scientific and technological training for women, model households for shaking off poverty through aid and establishment of aid-the-poor economic entities mainly for women.

The poverty-stricken population in China has dropped from 65 million in 1995 to 42 million in 1998, and the poverty-stricken women population has decreased correspondingly, approximately accounting for 60%.

The main measures taken by the Government are:

Formulating preferential policy in favour of poverty-stricken areas;

Increasing the input in infrastructure construction and in scientific and technological development;

Encouraging prosperous developed areas to unite with poverty-stricken areas and assist in helping the poor;

Removing people from areas where the conditions for subsistence do not exist and the natural environment is extremely bad; and

Extending small-sum loans, making it possible for poverty-stricken households to get

In order to help poverty-stricken women to get rid of poverty, special measures have been formulated, including:

1. To incorporate the effort to help poor women into the overall plan for helping the poor through development, to propose that the organizational network of rural women be used for mobilizing poverty-stricken women to learn to read and write and learn technologies, and to develop household economy.
2. To run courses for poverty-stricken women to acquire literacy and to learn technologies in rural areas all over the country. In recent years, more than 10 million women have participated in the technical training every year.

3. To conduct training on organizational management and provision of services for the working personnel of women's organizations and the backbones of women's activities. For example, since 1995, the State Council Helping-the-Poor Office, together with the All-China Women's Federation, has convened many aid-the-poor working conferences to study the aid-the-poor strategy, introduce successful experiences and train cadres of women's federations and backbones for the aid-the-poor drive.
4. To help poverty-stricken women to shake off poverty by means of granting small-sum credit loans. The work has been launched in all poverty-stricken areas throughout the country. The funds used for small-sum loans every year total several billion yuan. Take Yunnan Province as an example. In recent years, governments at provincial, prefecture and county levels have raised funds totalling 350 million yuan and extended loans to 190,000 farming households in 410 townships in 113 counties.
5. To mobilize social forces extensively in organizing social salvage activities for poverty-stricken women. The Government has encouraged and supported social forces in all fields to make use of their superiority for carrying out social salvage activities for poverty-stricken women, for example, the "Happiness Project" for salvaging poor mothers, the "Hope Project" for helping children who are obliged to discontinue their studies, the "Spring Bud Plan" for financing girls who are unable to go to school and the "Hand-in-Hand" activity for aiding poverty-stricken areas. Specialized personnel in the fields of science and technology, culture and education and public health have been organized to go to the rural areas and poverty-stricken areas to disseminate cultural, scientific and technological knowledge and provide medical service.

### **Obstacles encountered**

The majority of the poverty-stricken population live in the areas with extremely bad natural conditions. To completely change the look of these areas requires large-scale infrastructure construction, such as building roads, bridges, water conservancy projects and electric power projects so as to provide those areas with transportation, energy, communication, and drinking water for people and animals.

People in poverty-stricken areas generally have fairly low cultural qualities, particularly women. Women illiteracy rate is very high (40%-70%), and therefore, their sense of participation is poor and their production capacity is weak. Moreover, the extreme disagreement among the population, natural resources and economic development in poverty-stricken areas has also become an obstacle constraining people from shaking off poverty.

Because of the above-mentioned reasons, plus China's difficulty to put in sufficient human, material and financial resources in a short period of time, there still exists a certain difficulty in resolving the problem of adequate food and clothing for all people by end of this century.

## **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

Measures to be taken by the Government: to carry out open-type aid-the-poor activities on the basis of the present ones; to increase the input in the construction of infrastructure in poverty-stricken areas and to develop the economy energetically; to improve people's qualities in poverty-stricken areas and raise their cultural, scientific and technological levels; to mobilize the whole society to help and support the development and construction of poverty-stricken areas.

### **II. The education and training of women**

#### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

The Programme for the Development of Women points out that the education of women should be developed energetically and that women's scientific and cultural levels should be raised. It has put forth four specific targets, including the increase of the percentage of females in receiving education in all categories, the popularization of the nine-year compulsory education, the elimination of illiteracy among young and middle-aged women and the development of vocational education and training in all categories.

In carrying out the follow-up actions of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Government has given priority to the popularization of the nine-year compulsory education and the elimination of illiteracy among young and middle-aged women.

Since 1995, the number and percentage of females in China in receiving education at all levels have increased year after year. The number has increased from 91.568 million persons in 1995 to 99.452 million persons in 1997, and the percentage has increased from 46.5% to 46.7%. The sex difference of the attendance rates of boys and girls in primary schools has dropped from 2.91 percentage points to 0.21 percentage points, and the drop-out rate has dropped from 1.49% in 1995 to 1.01% in 1997.

In 1995-2000, the central finance specially allocated 3.9 billion yuan as funds for the compulsory education project in poverty-stricken areas, and at the same time asked local finances to effect financial input correspondingly, so as to reinforce the infrastructure construction for the compulsory education in the poverty-stricken areas.

The main measures taken to promote the education for girl children are as follows:

1. More publicity has been given to relevant laws to change the conventional idea of preferring boys to girls.
2. Equal education for girls has been listed as a priority in the work, examination and appraisal have been carried out, and special measuring standards have been established.

3. Conditions have been created for girls to attend schools, the contents of courses have been made to combine with realities in life and production, and training of women teachers have been strengthened.
4. Flexible and diverse forms have been adopted for running schools in poverty-stricken areas. In terms of the educational system, convenience has been provided for girls to attend schools and the time of teaching has been reasonably arranged.
5. Special funds such as subsidies for compulsory education, aid funds from the Hope Project and the Spring Bud Plan have been used to help and support non-attendance girls.
6. Promotion of the education for girl children has been combined with the elimination of illiteracy among women.
7. The international co-operation in, and the scientific research on the education for girl children has been strengthened.

In recent years, five million illiterates have been eliminated each year on an average, among whom 65% are women. Up to 1997, there were 148 million illiterates in the population of 15 years old and upwards (the illiteracy rate here refers to the percentage of illiterates or similliterates of 15 years of age and upwards among the total number of people of the same age), of whom women accounted for 70%. Female illiterates have dropped from 90% in the early period of the founding of the People's Republic to 23% in 1997.

The Government has carried on an anti-illiteracy drive in varied forms by laying stress on the rural area. The concrete measures have been as follows:

1. Extensive publicity has been given in order to mobilize the broad masses of women to take an active part in the elimination of illiteracy.
2. The elimination of illiteracy has been combined with the study of agricultural science and technology and with the effort to get rid of poverty and become better off.
3. The elimination of illiteracy has been combined with the dissemination of an elementary knowledge of law, making it possible for women to receive legal education while learning to read and write.
4. People in all walks of life in the society have been mobilized to participate in the elimination of illiteracy, and the outstanding individuals and collectives in the work have been commended. From 1990 to 1997, China eliminated 37.73 million illiterates in the 15-45 age bracket, of whom 23.37 million were females.

In 1997, the illiteracy rate of the young and middle-aged people was 5.51%. By making efforts, it is possible to attain the target of basically wiping out illiteracy among young and middle-aged

people by the year 2000 set in the Programme.

### **Obstacles encountered**

In the mountainous, border and remote and poverty-stricken areas, to popularize the nine-year compulsory education requires huge input in the educational facilities. At the same time, the boarding for children in nomadic and sparsely-inhabited areas is a problem needing solution.

The slow economic development in those areas and the existing poverty have constrained the input of human, financial and material resources for education.

As the base number of women illiterates is big, most of them are middle-aged and old women and live scatteringly, and some of young and middle-aged illiterates are trying to find jobs out the native places and move widely, it is uneasy to organize them for study in groups.

The elimination of illiteracy needs a fairly long cycle (1-2 years). While illiterates are wiped out, new illiterates and recurrent illiterates may emerge. This will add to the difficulty in eliminating illiteracy.

In terms of education funds, the Government places emphasis on regular education. Its input for the elimination of illiteracy is limited. If divided to individuals according to the number of illiterate people, the funds are very insufficient.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

The measures to be taken by the Government are as follows: to increase the educational input in poverty-stricken areas and establish a special fund for education in poverty-stricken areas; to realize step by step the plan for popularizing the nine-year compulsory education; to give extensive publicity to the laws on equality between men and women and to compulsory education and encourage girls to attend schools and decrease the drop-out rate; to continue to mobilize social forces to take part in the anti-illiteracy drive; to combine the anti-illiteracy drive with the efforts to aid the poor and to conduct technological training and with the education on population, public health and law; and to advance women's capability to improve their qualities in an all-round way and to participate in social development.

## **0E. Women and health**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

Both the programmes for the development of Chinese women and children set many concrete targets on mother and child health care, such as to decrease the maternity mortality rate and the infant mortality rate, to raise the coverage rate of health care for pregnant and lying-in mothers, the rate of practising new midwifery and the rate of women's hospitalization for child delivery,



etc. China promulgated the Law on Mother and Child Health Care in 1994. The law explicitly stipulates that medical and health care institutions should provide pre-marital health care service to citizens and the health care service in gestation and lying-in period.

In carrying out the follow-up actions of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the main measures taken are as follows:

1. The Law on Mother and Child Health Care has been put into effect in an all-round way.
2. The statistical indexes on the information on sanitation and health care and the monitoring and appraisal have been standardized and the developments of the implementation of the Programme on the Development of Chinese Women have been kept abreast of.
3. The new midwifery has been powerfully introduced and the infection of tetanus among new-born babies has been eliminated. In the 542 counties all over the country where the incidence of tetanus among new-born babies is higher than 1‰, women of child-bearing age have been inoculated against tetanus toxoid. And in rural area, midwives have been trained and clinics and medical stations have been set up to raise the rate of women's hospitalization for child-delivery in rural area. In 1997, the counties where the incidence of tetanus among new-born babies exceeded 1‰ have dropped to 179.
4. The publicity to and the service for reproduction health have been strengthened and the management and service network has been improved to achieve a co-ordination between the development of the population and the development of the economy and the undertaking of women and children.
5. Community services have been developed and the community services network has been established. Departments of public health have conducted experiments on urban community health service in 164 communities in 82 prefectures in 16 provinces and municipalities. And experiments on community service on rural maternity and child hygiene have been conducted in 105 counties.
6. Iodine has been supplemented in a scientific way to eliminate iodine deficiency. By adopting such preventive and control measures as taking iodized salt by the entire people and taking iodized oil pills by some special human groups such as pregnant women, the general level of the health of women and girls has been raised.
7. The quality of the environment has been improved by making changes in the supply of drinking water and by improving lavatories. Up to the end of 1997, the changes in the supply of drinking water had benefited 848.43 million people in the rural area throughout the country, accounting for 88.9% of the total rural population. The people who use tap water constitute 48% of the total rural population. In 1998, a total of 83.4334 million households in the rural area had transformed lavatories, accounting for 35.03% of the total number of rural households. The rate of treatment of decontamination of faeces was 28.48%.

8. The projects of co-operation in the maternity and child hygiene have been launched by putting stress on poverty-stricken areas. The Ministry of Public Health and the United Nations Children's Fund have co-operated in launching integrated projects on maternity and child hygiene in 405 counties in old revolutionary base areas, poor border areas and areas inhabited by minority nationalities. The Ministry of Public Health and the World Bank have co-operated in carrying on the work of maternity and child hygiene in 295 counties in 9 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government. The State Family Planning Commission and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities have co-operated in the project of giving publicity to and providing service for reproductive health.

### **Obstacles encountered**

The unbalanced development of the urban and rural areas, the insufficiency of sanitary facilities and medical personnel, and particularly the large requirements for input in infrastructure cannot be fundamentally changed in a short period of time.

In the mountainous areas, border and remote areas and fairly poor rural areas, the rate of hospitalization for child-delivery by pregnant and lying-in women is still rather low (45%-65%) and the maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate thus caused are rather high, which fail to meet the targets set in the Programme.

Poverty has also caused malnutrition to women and children which is expressed as developmental retardation, pathologic leanness, iron-deficiency anaemia, iodine deficiency and some endemic diseases. It remains to be solved along with the fundamental improvement of the living environment and the overall raising of the living standard.

The phenomenon of whoring and prostitution which has appeared after the reform and opening up has resulted in the spread within a certain scope of the venereal disease which has been eliminated for a long time and AIDS which has been transmitted from abroad.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

Measures to be taken by the Government: to increase the input in sanitation and health care simultaneously with the economic development; to conduct education on hygiene and on population among the entire people energetically; to disseminate and popularize hygienic knowledge extensively; to strengthen the training of rural medical personnel and the construction of medical facilities; to continue the reform of the medical system, whereby the state, the collective and individuals jointly bear medical expenses; to work out by the state a plan to treat and control AIDS and to train a professional contingent for the prevention and control of AIDS; to publicize sexual hygienic knowledge and conduct legal and moral education, and to set up more medical networks and cure venereal disease.

## IV. Violence against women

### Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices

It is stipulated in the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women that violence against women, criminal acts of abduction and trafficking of women and illegal acts of prostitution shall be banned effectively. While opposing violent acts against women in general, the illegal acts of abduction of women and prostitution appearing in the period of social reform have been singled out for severe blows and treatment.

Main measures taken by the Government are as follows:

1. Laws and regulations have been formulated or revised to strengthen the protection of women's rights.

In 1996 and 1997, China revised the Criminal Procedure Law and the Criminal Law. Important supplements and revisions were made in regard to crackdown on the illegal criminal activities of abducting women and children and compelling women to prostitution, raising the sentencing criteria and augmenting the provisions on administrative penalty and economic punishment.

The governments at all levels, in co-ordination with the revision of the Criminal Law, have intensified the crackdown and adopted the method of combining special-case struggle and concentrated salvage with daily investigation and apprehension and thus effectively kept down the criminal activities of abducting women and children.

2. Special organs for crackdown on abduction of women and children have been set up. With concerted co-operation among the relevant departments of public security, public prosecution, court, civil administration, publicity and education and some popular organizations such as the women's federations, they have fully mobilized the social forces to take part in the activity of cracking down on the abduction.
3. A good job has been done in the work of recovery, replacement, education and precautions for the salvaged women, so that they will not be discriminated and will enjoy all rights as equals.
4. Media publicity has been strengthened on the crackdown on the criminal activities of abduction of women and children. Legal education has been conducted for the public to consolidate the social effects on the crackdown.

### Obstacles encountered

Criminal activities of this kind still exist in a considerable scope. In particular, they have

certain market in poverty-stricken and less-developed areas. The main reason is that people's eagerness to shake off poverty and the weakness of legal sense have provided a handful of criminal elements with readily exploitable opportunities. They cheat people under the cover of finding jobs for them or of marriage introduction to carry out the abduction of women.

The cases of family violence against women are on the rise. The main cause lies in the fact that the conventional male-domination idea of regarding women as men's private property is still prevalent in some areas especially in poverty-stricken areas, the changes in status and ideology brought along by the social and economic changes have caused instability in marriage and families, and the bad habit of arranged marriage and mercenary marriage exist in some border, remote and poverty-stricken areas – these are often the factors leading to family violence.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

Measures to be taken by the Government: to conduct energetically the education on the legal system in the whole society to heighten the sense of legal system of the entire people; to increase the publicity to the relevant laws such as the Law on the Protection the Rights and Interests of Women, the Marriage Law, the Civil Law and the Criminal Law and conduct the education on marriage morality; the National People's Congress is revising the Marriage Law, intending to lay down in detail the rights, responsibilities and duties among family members. Before the state completed the revision of the Marriage Law, many localities have formulated laws, regulations and rules for banning family violence in the light the local circumstances.

## **V. Women and armed conflict**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

The Chinese Government adheres to an independent foreign policy of peace, and sticks to principles and upholds justice in international affairs. It stands for mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence among all countries. It maintains that disputes between countries should be settled through peaceful consultations and opposes to resort to force or threat of force. China is a major force for safeguarding world peace and regional stability.

Chinese women's organizations are concerned about the life of the people in the areas of chaos caused by war and support the Government and popular organizations in providing humanitarian assistance within their power to the countries and areas in war or in conflict.

### **Obstacles encountered**

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, conflicts triggered by racial, religious and territorial disputes have occurred time and again, and some countries have interfered in the internal affairs of other countries under different pretexts. This has produced negative

consequences to the amicable living together of the people of all countries and brought along unfavourable influences to the progress of women.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

China will, as always, persist in pursuing an independent foreign policy of peace and holds that all countries should strictly observe the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law and opposes the use of force or the threat to use force by any country in international affairs.

China will, together with relevant countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, work to strengthen the protection the rights and interests of women affected by armed conflicts, urge women to take part in the settlement of disputes and defend peace and promote the implementation of the International Humanitarian Law.

## **VI. Women and the economy**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

The Programme for the Development of Women has defined five concrete targets for women to take part in the economy, i.e. to increase the number of women in employment, guarantee women's right to employment, provide labour protection, carry out equal pay for equal work and cover child-bearing expenses by a collective social fund.

In the period from 1995 to 2000, the cities and countryside in China are faced with tremendous pressure for employment. In 1995-1997, with the powerful support of the Government, the proportion of urban and rural women workers in the total number of workers maintained a growth at a speed of 0.1%, realizing the target that the growth rate of employment for the female will not be lower than that for the male.

The Government has taken some policy measures to resolve women's employment.

1. Laws guarantee that women enjoy equal opportunities for employment with men, and labour supervision has been strengthened.

The newly promulgated Labour Law points out that "in employing staff and workers, it is not permitted to refuse to employ women on account of sex, or to raise the employment standards for women, with the exception of those jobs and posts unsuitable to women as stipulated by the state."

The Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women points out: "No unit may dismiss woman staff and workers or unilaterally terminate labour contracts with them by reason of marriage, pregnancy, maternity leave or baby-nursing."

Violation by an employing unit of the relevant provisions of law on women's employment shall be set right by the government labour administrative departments; the damages caused to women's interests shall be compensated by the employing unit; if the circumstances of the infringement on women's rights and interests are so serious as to constitute a crime, the judicial departments shall investigate into the criminal responsibility of the employing unit in accordance with law.

2. The areas for employment have been expanded, providing more employment opportunities for women.

The Government has paid attention to the development of the tertiary industry and newly emerging trades in order to provide more employment opportunities for women. Except for such areas as industry, transportation, trade, finance, insurance, commerce, public health and education, the number of women in employment in some newly emerging trades (such as electric power and coal gas, communication, computer, real estate development, insurance and community service) has increased by several times, even by tens of times.

3. Professional training has been intensified to raise the level of women's professional skills.

All staff and workers irrespective of sex must participate in and complete designated training and the educational reform has been carried out with respect to vocational education so as to strengthen middle and higher vocational education. At present, girl students in the skilled workers' schools hold a proportion of close to 50%.

4. Nursery undertaking has been developed to support women in a sustained and steady employment.

The Government has taken the development of the nursery undertaking as a strategy for realizing the equality between men and women, encouraging women to take part in the social development in an all-round way and strengthening the pre-school education, and encouraged the running of nurseries in diverse forms and through many channels. At present, facilities such as the clinics for women staff members and women workers, pregnant women's lounges, nursing rooms, nurseries and kindergartens have been set up in most of enterprises with substantial number of women staff and workers. This has made it possible for women staff and workers after reproduction to obtain the support of convenient nursery service. In addition, the state has also encouraged individuals to run nurseries.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, in 1998, the rate of going to nurseries for children three years before school age in the whole country was 47.2% and that for children one year before school age was over 60%, of which the rates in large and middle-sized cities reached more than 90%.

5. The reform of the reproduction insurance system has been carried out vigorously, and the

child-bearing expenses have been covered by a collective social fund.

The Proposed Methods of Child-bearing Insurance for Enterprise Staff and Workers have been put into trial implementation from January 1, 1995. The child-bearing insurance expenses will be covered by a collective social fund. The enterprise will pay child-bearing insurance premium to the social insurance institution by a certain proportion of the total sum of salaries for the staff and workers in the enterprise to set up a child-bearing fund. The benefits of child-bearing insurance are composed of child-bearing allowance, paid holidays and medical service. At present, the reform of child-bearing insurance system has been introduced gradually in 26 provinces one after another in the whole country and 26.02 million staff and workers have participated in the collective social fund. Together with the women staff and workers for whom the employing units will bear child-bearing expenses, a total of 148 million women staff and workers are covered.

This measure has listed women's reproduction into the social reproductive system and the labour value of women's reproduction and the baby nursing for a certain period is expressed in the standard of social labour. This has to a certain extent identified the value of part of women's unpaid labour.

In recent year, the Government has found jobs for over 7 million people every year, of whom 40% are females.

The aim of the Government in resolving the question of laid-off workers is to guarantee the basic needs of all the laid-off workers, provide them with free professional training and vocational guidance and bring about re-employment.

1. Re-employment service centres have been set up. All the laid-off workers, irrespective of sex, should join the centres, where the basic living expenses will be paid to them and the standards for minimum living expenses will be set.
2. It has paid for them the endowment, medical and unemployment insurance premiums.
3. Laid-off workers have been organized to take part in vocational guidance and training for re-employment.

The special policies executed by the Government to help laid-off women workers for re-employment are as follows:

1. Major efforts have been devoted to developing the tertiary industry. Community services have been developed to increase posts for employment suitable for women to take and create job opportunities. In 1997, 3.7 million laid-off or unemployed women found jobs on the recommendation of labour departments.
2. In the light of the demands in the market for labour, free technical training and vocational

information and guidance have been provided to laid-off women workers. In 1997 labour departments organized 2.08 million laid-off or unemployed women to receive training on professional skills and the re-employment rate after training reached 70%.

3. Preferential policies have been formulated to encourage laid-off women workers to organize themselves for employment or to seek self-employment.

### **Obstacles encountered**

As the laid-off workers are in fairly large numbers, there are great difficulties in seeking re-employment. Some women workers have difficulties in getting re-employment because their skills are of one type, or they are older than average, or they rely on the "big rice bowl" system, or they have narrow choice of jobs. As a result, their livelihood and families have been affected to a certain extent.

In state-owned enterprises, the provisions on labour protection for women workers have been better carried out. But in some private enterprises and some Sino-foreign joint ventures, co-operative businesses and exclusively foreign-funded enterprises, disregard of interests of workers, negligence in the protection of the rights and benefits of women workers, even violation of the relevant regulations by asking workers to work over time and quota have occurred from time to time. Moreover, some enterprises are in short of labour safety and protection measures. The labour circumstances are adverse, causing damages to the health of women workers.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

The measures to be taken by the Government are mainly as follows: to develop the economy and create employment opportunities; to guarantee the basic needs of the laid-off workers and to provide training guidance on re-employment; to give more publicity to labour laws and regulations so as to increase the sense of legal system of the employers and workers and to operate business in accordance with law; to strengthen labour supervision especially the supervision and management over private enterprises and Sino-foreign joint ventures, co-operative businesses, and exclusively foreign-funded enterprises; to encourage and support the establishment of trade unions and women's organizations in enterprises in all categories to raise the capability of workers to participate in the management.

## **VII. Women in power and decision-making**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

In the Programme for the Development of Women, women's participation in politics ranks first among the foremost priority areas and two concrete targets have been put forth, requiring that there should be women's participation in the leading posts at all levels. Four policy measures



have also been worked out, including: to enhance the awareness of women in power through different channels; to formulate favourable policies, concrete plans and necessary indexes to guarantee the proportion of women's participation in the government; to conduct training for women cadres to increase women's capability to participate in the government and raise the level of leadership.

To fix a proportion of women's participation in the government within a time limit is a workable measure to guarantee women's right to participate in the government. And the Government has written in the training and selection of women cadres to the Constitution.

At present, the proportion of women's participation in the election reaches over 95%. In the Ninth National People's Congress in 1998, there were 650 women deputies, accounting for 21.81%. And in the Ninth National People's Political Consultative Conference, there were 341 women members, accounting for 15.54% of the total. These represent an increase of 0.78 and 2.02 percentage points respectively in comparison with the Eighth Congress and Conference.

At present, There are 18 ministers or vice ministers in the 29 ministries and commissions of the State Council, including two ministers. Close to 400 women have been elected as mayors or vice mayors in over 680 cities throughout the country. Women working in government departments make up approximately 33.8% of the total staff, a rise of two million persons compared with the figure before the formulation of the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women, or an increase 2.3 percentage points.

In working out relevant policies and plans, the Chinese Government has paid attention to soliciting opinions from women's organizations. Women deputies in the people's congresses and the women members in the people's political consultative conferences at all levels have taken active part in the administration and discussion of state affairs and exercised their right by putting forward many motions and proposals in connection with the protection of the rights and interests of women, female employment, the retirement age for senior women intellectuals, and job assignment for women university graduates. Some of them have been adopted and put into practice.

The All-China Women's Federation and women's federations at all levels have taken 36 women's institutes and schools all over the country as training bases to open study classes in various forms to raise the leadership skill and management level of the female leaders, and have set up talent banks to recommend excellent women talents to governments and enterprises at all levels. For example, the vice minister of civil affairs, the deputy governors of Shandong, Liaoning and Jiangsu provinces, the director of the organizational department of Jilin Province, the vice mayors of Guangzhou city and Dalian City have all been assigned on the recommendation of the women's federations. Women's federations have also set up talent banks. For example, in the five years from 1992 to 1997, women's federations above county levels in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region recommended a total 1,710 women cadres to the governments at all levels and 714 of them have been appointed.

In recent years, the number of women in the government leading bodies at all levels has increased gradually. Five years ago, there was no female among the leading cadres in 8 provinces and autonomous regions. Today, there are female leading cadres in all the provinces of the country, and in 11 provinces among them, there are more than one female leading cadres, an increase of 46.5% compared with the figure five years ago. The rates of increase of female leading cadres at prefecture, county and township levels are 42.5%, 88.4% and 80% respectively. There are female leading cadres in all counties (or county-level cities) and in over 50% of villages and townships.

### **Obstacles encountered**

Part of the leading cadres in some government departments still entertain to a certain extent the conventional idea of looking up to men and down on women and do not have sufficient understanding of gender equality. In selecting and appointing cadres, there exists the phenomenon of setting too high a demand for women and choosing the male rather than the female with same qualifications. This has affected women's participation in the government.

Influenced by the conventional male-domination concept, part of women have a very weak sense of participating in decision making. They lack the confidence to develop their own potentials to take part in the competition. In terms of social public opinion, the conventional idea has produced some negative effects in identifying the female role, restricting the development of women.

Now, 50% of the townships and towns have women leading cadres. But because the base number of leading cadres at township and town levels is big (there are more than 63,000 townships and towns in the whole country), it is really difficult to hit, in the short period of time, the target of having women leading cadres in all the townships and towns.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

Measures to be taken by the Government are as follows: to give publicity and conduct education extensively so as to enhance the awareness of the whole society with regard to gender equality and women's participation in the decision making; to actively cultivate and select women cadres.

## **VIII. Mechanisms for the advancement of women**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

China set up a national mechanism for the advancement of women in 1990, i.e. the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children. Its structural set-up and main functions have been specially presented in Part one and Part two.

The Working Committee has played a leading role in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and in hitting the targets set forth in the Programme. It has made concrete arrangements in the formulation of policies, plans and programmes and in the execution, monitoring and appraising. It has exerted a tremendous influence in incorporating gender consciousness into state policies, plans, and programmes, especially in urging the state to collect and disseminate classified statistical indexes by sex.

In the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women, the establishment of a mechanism of trend studies of women's status, data collection and information spreading is taken as a separate priority area, and two specific targets have been set, i.e. to establish a national women's data bank, and to set up classified women's statistical indexes in the state statistics system. The Government has given importance to the trend studies of women's status, data collection and information spreading, and carried them out step by step under the present conditions.

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children has admitted the State Statistics Bureau as a new member, asking it to augment as far as possible some classified statistical indexes by sex in conducting the sample survey and the survey by localities on the change of population, and assigning the monitoring of the implementation of the programmes for the development of women and children as an important task to the State Statistics Bureau. Aside from compiling classified statistics on population, employment, education, health care and sports by sex, the Bureau has, under the leadership of the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children, worked out a guidance for monitoring and appraisal and an index system for the programmes on the development of women and children.

### **Obstacle encountered**

The central and local working committees on women and children do not have sufficient human, financial and material resources.

In terms of classified data statistics by sex, there is a shortage of funds; and in terms of statistical indexes, there is not yet a unified international standard.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

The measures to be taken by the Government are as follows: to strengthen the structural set-up of the working committees on women and children and enhance their capability in urging the Government and the whole society to implement the laws and the programmes for the development of women and children; to increase the input of human, financial and material resources to those organizations on the basis of the integrated development of the economy and the society of the country; to further increase classified statistics by sex and reinforce the gender analysis and the studies on the status of women; to hope that the international

community will provide technical and financial assistance in compiling the classified statistics by sex.

## IX. Human rights of women

### Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices

The Programme for the Development of Chinese Women has defined targets and measures for the protection of women's rights in 11 areas of concern, including the shaking off of poverty by women, education, health care, employment, participation in the government and opposition to violence against women. It has effectively promoted the governments at all levels to combine the protection of women's rights with the promotion of women's participation in the development, to do solid things for the development of women and to further guarantee the materialization of the legal provision on the equality of men and women and the rights of women.

Since the convening of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the Chinese Government has adopted a series of new measures.

1. In its report submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women on the country's implementation of the convention, the Chinese Government has presented the situation about the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

In 1996, the State Council Working Committee on Women and Children took the lead in writing the third and fourth national reports on China's implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. In May 1997, the Chinese Government submitted the third-fourth combined report and in August 1998, it submitted supplementary materials for the combined report. The report and supplementary materials gave special presentation on the follow-up actions for the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action carried out by the relevant government departments.

2. The existing laws have been revised or supplemented to reinforce legal protection of women

In 1992, China promulgated the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women. In 1996, China promulgated the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly. In 1996 and 1997, revisions were made to the Criminal Procedures Law and the Criminal Law, laying down a series of new provisions for protecting the rights and interests of women and children. All provinces have worked out implementing rules on the basis of the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women, making the law more operational. At present, the people's congresses in the 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government have mostly worked out implementing measures for the Law and paid attention to the inclusion of the contents about the protection of the rights and interests of women when formulating other laws and

regulations and rules.

3. The education on disseminating an elementary knowledge of law has been launched to reinforce the legal sense of the whole society

In 1996, China began to execute the third five-year plan for the publicity and education on the legal system (1996-2000). The main contents are: the Constitution and laws and regulations concerning the market economy and the publicity and education for women on disseminating an elementary knowledge of law, especially with regard to the laws and regulations closely related with the interests of women and children. For example, the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women, the Marriage Law, The Law on the Protection of the Minors, the Labour Law and the Compulsory Education Law have been given concentrated publicity to reinforce women's legal consciousness and legal sense and enhance the capability of the broad masses of women to defend their own rights and interests in accordance with law.

4. Training has been conducted for law enforcers to intensify law enforcement

In some public security, procuratorial and court departments, the study and training on the laws on women and children have been conducted to enhance the gender consciousness and intensify the impartiality in the law enforcement and the crackdown on criminals. The public security organs, the relevant social organizations and non-governmental organizations have jointly convened national or key-area co-ordinating conferences with the crackdown on criminal activities in infringing upon the rights of women and children as the main topic for discussion, sharing information with each other, exchanging experiences and studying policy matters.

5. Examination on law enforcement has been strengthened

The State Council Working Committee on Women and Children and people's congresses at various levels have conducted regular examination on the law enforcement so as to bring about a proper execution of the laws. The National People's Congress and the other departments concerned have jointly set up inspection teams and organized three inspections in 1993, 1995 and 1997 respectively on the enforcement of the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women and carried out eight investigation activities. The working committees on women and children at various levels have also listed the supervision and inspection of the enforcement of the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women and the Law on the Protection of the Minors as its regular work, and inspection has been conducted regularly.

6. The Chinese Government signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1997 and the International Covenant on Citizens' Rights and Political Rights in 1998. The Chinese Government has acceded to as many as 17 international documents on human rights.

## **Obstacles encountered**

The survival and development are the most fundamental rights of the people, and Poverty is the main obstacle to the realization of women's fundamental rights. In China it manifests itself strikingly in the contradiction between the population and the resources. The limited land resource and the rapid development of the population have made some rural women lose land due to marriage or divorce. The failure of the pace of economic development to keep abreast with the rapid increase of the population of labour force has made it hard to provide sufficient employment opportunities in the labour force market, resulting in a more tense competition in the market and in bringing pressure on women in employment. The rights of education and health care of women in the poverty-stricken areas are constrained by economic conditions.

Violence against women and the criminal activities of abducting women and girl children have occurred from time to time.

## **Commitment to further actions and initiatives**

The measures to be taken by the Government are: to promote the social and economic development in an all-round way so as to lay the foundation for protecting women's rights; to continue to give publicity to gender equality and conduct the legal education throughout the country to reinforce the gender and legal consciousness of the entire people and to further eliminate the discrimination against women; to strengthen the education and training on gender consciousness for law enforcers; to improve and develop the system of people's mediation and assessors; to increase the transparency in law enforcement and promote the construction of a democratic legal system.

## **X. Women and the media**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

In the course of formulating the Programme for the Development of the Chinese Women, the Government, proceeding from the actual national conditions, identified the area of improving the social environment for the development of women, in which concrete demands to the media were put forth. They are: to give publicity for the whole society to the great role played by women in creating human civilization and propelling social development; to give publicity to the idea that women have equal personality and dignity and equal rights and status with men; to give publicity to women with the spirit of self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-improvement; and to ban disparaging and humiliating portrayals of the female images in the films, televisions, books, newspapers and periodicals. It is aimed at changing the social discrimination and bias against women and enhancing the understanding of the entire citizenry on the protection of the lawful rights and interests of women.

Following the Fourth World Conference on Women, the main media of the country have implemented the above-mentioned measures and actively incorporate the idea of gender equality into the media work.

In 1995, the Central Television opened a special female programme "Half the Sky", and up to now it has broadcast 740 programmes; in 1997, People's Daily, a newspaper with the largest circulation in the country, opened a special women column to give publicity to the status and conditions of women from different angles and change the traditional mode of gender role; and Radio Beijing in its 43 language programmes has opened a special project to present the progress and development of Chinese women.

The relevant non-governmental organizations have also participated in the supervision over media. The Beijing Women Journalists Association set up "the Women's Media-monitoring Network of the Beijing Women Journalists Association" in 1996, with an aim of monitoring the female images in various broadcast media, urging the media to present women in their integrity and changing the social discrimination and bias against women. The network has opened two special columns in the Chinese Women Weekly entitled "How we see the media" and "Media observation". It has also established a media-monitoring hot-line.

The newspapers, periodicals and magazines which give attention to questions about women have kept increasing in number. According to incomplete statistics, the number of women's magazines at present has doubled the figure in early 1990s.

The media has played a positive role in eliminating the conventional ideas and cultivating the image of new-type women.

### **Obstacles encountered**

Restrained by the level of economic development, the cultural undertaking in China are at a level of limited development, which is equivalent to the average level of developing countries. In 1996, in China every million people had 93 kinds of books, lower than the world average level of 160 kinds; and every thousand people had 41 copies of daily published newspapers, which was lower than the world average level of 96 copies. In part of rural areas, the scientific and technological, cultural, broadcasting and television undertakings are undeveloped and the energy supply is insufficient, and thus the channels for the public to receive the media programmes are fairly narrow.

In part of the people, there still exists a conventional idea that men are superior than women and the gender role is fixed and unchangeable. In some film and television programmes, advertisements, books, newspapers and periodicals, there are still some distorted, disparaging and even humiliating portrayals of the images of women, which have produced negative influence in the society. The public do not have sufficient sensitivity to and capability for criticizing the phenomenon of gender discrimination in the media.

Actuated by commercial motives, some people one-sidedly pursue profits and broadcast, publish and distribute some pornographic books, periodicals and cinematographic and television products, and some foreign film and television programmes often play up pornography and violence. All these have poisoned young boys and girls, indirectly giving rise to crimes of violence against women.

Because of the restraints of economic conditions and scientific and technological levels, women have only limited opportunities and capabilities to apply new communication technology and to participate in the policy making of the media.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

The main measures to be taken by the Government are: to actively develop the scientific, cultural, broadcasting and television undertakings and to raise the rate of media coverage; to continue to give publicity to positive images of women through the media, bring about a change of the discrimination and bias against women in the society and enhance the understanding by the entire citizenry of the lawful rights and interests of women; to continue the campaign against pornography and ban the dissemination of pornographic products; to criticize the infringements on the rights and interests of women through the media and mobilize people in all walks of life to cultivate a good social mood of equality, civilization and democracy; and to encourage and support women to apply new communication technology and participate in the decision making of the media.

## **XI. Women and the environment**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

China is the most populous country in the world. It is a tremendous challenge for China to feed one fifth of the world population with one twenty-second of arable land of the world. In order to correctly handle the relationship between the economic development and the population, resources and environment, China defined the protection of the environment as its basic national policy in 1982 and executed the strategy of sustainable development. In formulating "the Agenda for China in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" in 1994, there was a special chapter called "women's role in the sustainable development". And in the Programme for the Development of Women, the contents about women and the environment were respectively incorporated into such areas as economy, the labour protection for women, health care and the improvement of social environment.

The main measures adopted by the Government are:

1. It has promoted women's participation in the environmental protection and sustainable development and increased the proportion of women's participation in the decision making



and management.

In 1997, women working in the environmental protection departments numbered 24,000, accounting for 38% of the total staff, a moderate increase compared with the figure in early 1990s.

The "March 8 Green Works" campaign has been launched jointly by the Chinese Government and women's organizations for 10 years. The broad masses of women have taken part in the campaign for reforestation, creation of shelter forests, and soil and water conservation in arid areas all over the country. Following the Environment and Development Conference and the World Conference on Women, close to 100 million women have taken part in the activity every year. Urban women have also taken an active part in such activities as classification of garbage and recovery of used goods and materials.

2. Education on the environment has been launched for the entire citizens

The Government has launched an education on the environment in a variety of forms for the entire citizens to enhance the consciousness of the whole nation on environmental protection. Some women's organizations and environmental protection organizations have actively participated in it. For example, in 1997, the State Bureau of Environment Protection and the All-China Women's Federation jointly carried out a publicity activity with "Women, Home and Environment" as the main theme in more than 20 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government, and close to 190,000 copies of the pamphlet entitled "100 questions about the knowledge concerning women and the environment" were distributed.

3. Women have been encouraged and supported to learn scientific knowledge to enhance their capability to protect the environment.

The government departments concerned and women organizations have jointly spread the scientific and technological knowledge about environmental protection in various forms such as radio broadcast and television, books, newspaper and periodicals, agro-technical stations, vocational training and running training courses. Training has been conducted on cultivation of trees and fruit trees, soil conservation, biogas, making changes in the supply of drinking water and improving lavatories, ecological agriculture, health care for women and children, processing of agricultural produce and raising green crops. 90 million women have participated in the training on forestry technology only. The broad masses of women have acquired new knowledge for promoting environmental protection and sustainable development, reinforced their consciousness and enhanced their capability for environmental protection.

### Obstacles encountered

China is a developing country with a large population and relatively insufficient resources.

Under the circumstances of the not-high-enough level of productivity and science and technology, it is an arduous task to develop the economy and to make rational use of and protect the resources.

The consciousness of the entire nationals on environmental protection is not strong enough. In particular, people in the undeveloped and poverty-stricken areas, for the purpose of shaking off poverty as soon as possible, have disregarded the long-term interests and caused certain degree of environmental pollution and disruption in the course of economic development.

In terms of accession to resources, information, scientific and technological training and service, because of the restraint by the economic, cultural and educational levels, women have not sufficiently participated in the environmental protection and management.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

The measures to be taken by the Government: to facilitate more women to receive vocational education, higher education and scientific and technological training, in order to promote women's participation in the management and policy decisions on environmental protection; to continue the education on the environment in the whole country in order to heighten the consciousness of the whole nation on the environmental protection and the sustainable development; to strengthen the supervision over the enforcement of laws concerning environmental protection and the management of the environment.

## **XII. The girl child**

### **Innovative policies, programmes, projects and good practices**

While promoting the social and economic development in an all-round way, the Chinese Government has paid full attention to the subsistence, protection and development of girl children. In 1989, the Chinese Government signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children, and in 1991, its accession to the convention was approved. After that, it successively formulated the Law on the Protection of the Minors and the Outline of the Plan for the Development of Chinese Children in 1990s, to provide safeguards, in terms of state policies, plans and laws, for the subsistence, protection and development of children.

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Government has integrated the implementation of the programmes for the development of women and children. In the light of the existence of such questions as non-attendance, dropout, malnutrition, child labours and abandonment of female babies, the government departments concerned and the relevant research institutions and non-governmental organizations held a symposium on the strategy for female children in poverty-stricken areas in 1997 to analyze and study the existing questions and work out proper measures.

1. Laws have been improved to intensify law enforcement and strengthen the protection of girl children. In 1996 and 1997, the Criminal Law and the Criminal Procedure Law were revised and supplemented to give severer punishments to the abduction of women and children and indecent assault on young girls. At the same time, the law enforcement was intensified to strengthen the investigation into and settlement of the cases on the abduction of women and children, the indecent assault on young girls and the abandonment and maltreatment of children.
2. More publicity has been given to the relevant laws and regulations and the equality between men and women to enhance the consciousness of citizenship of the whole nation of "loving children, educating children, setting a good example to children and do solid things for children".
3. Social forces have been mobilized to promote the development of girl children. The Government has supported organizations and individuals to take part in such social activities as helping poverty-stricken families to shake off poverty, giving financial support to children to go to school and to see doctors, helping disabled children to rid of the trouble, and adopting orphans and disabled children.
4. International co-operation has been developed. In the course of implementing the Programme for the Development of Children and the Convention on the Rights of Children, the Chinese Government and the relevant non-governmental organizations have co-operated closely with the United Nations Children's Fund in launching co-operative projects throughout the country, powerfully promoting the subsistence, protection and development of children.

### **Obstacles encountered**

Because of the influence of the idea of male superiority over female left over by the long feudal society in China, the concept of valuing the male child only still exists in the minds of some people. Particularly in some undeveloped rural areas, due to shortage of resources, some girl children in poor families are unable to get the opportunity for education and health care.

### **Commitments to further actions and initiatives**

The measures to be taken by the Government: to promote the all-round development of the social, economic, cultural, educational, and public health undertakings, which is the crux to the resolving of those questions; to continue the publicity in the whole society on the knowledge of law and the equality between men and women and further eliminate the discrimination against women.

- List any further actions and initiatives which your Government believes should or could be taken to fully implement the Platform for Action beyond the year 2000. Among these,

identify which ones your own Government intends to take and when.

The monitoring and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women show that the main targets of the Programme and the plans for the development of women in various localities have been met fairly well and most of the indexes have been close to the targets for the year 2000, and the subsistence, protection and development of women have been improved step by step. At the same time, it has been noted that there are still difficulties and obstacles to hit all the targets in the Programme by the year 2000, and the task is very arduous.

In order to further promote the development of women, the Chinese Government is prepared to work out a plan for the development of women for 2001-2010. The general objective is to further implement the basic national policy on the equality between men and women, and in view of the existing obstacles and problems, while accelerating the social and economic development in an all-round way, to place emphasis on resolving such questions as the elimination of poverty, the education for everybody, the protection of the rights and interests of women, the elimination of the conventional idea of discriminating against women, the intensification of law enforcement and the enhancement of the gender consciousness of the whole society.

**Women and poverty:**

**Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- Helping women to shake off poverty has been incorporated into the general programme for helping the poor by means of development
- Rural women have been organized to learn to read and write, to learn technology, and to develop production and household economy
- Training on organizational management and provision of services has been conducted for the staff of women organizations and the backbones of women's activities
- Help has been given to poverty-stricken women to shake off poverty by means of extending small-sum credit loans

**Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

- Funds for the construction of infrastructure to improve the look of poverty-stricken areas are insufficient
- The cultural quality of the people in poverty-stricken areas is low and the illiteracy rate among women is high

The growth of the population is too rapid and the resources are relatively poor

- Backward conventional ideas

**Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

- To launch an open-type programme for helping the poor on the basis of the programme for helping the poor by means of development
- To improve the population quality in poverty-stricken areas and raise their cultural, scientific and technological levels
- To mobilize the whole society to support the development and construction of poverty-stricken areas

**Education and training of women**

## **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- More publicity has been given to the relevant laws to change the conventional idea of preferring men to women
- Equal education for girl children has been listed as a priority of the work, and examination and appraisal have been conducted with the raising of the attendance rate of school-age girl children as the measuring index
- Conditions have been created for girl children to attend schools, the contents of courses have linked with the life and production, and training of female teachers has been strengthened
- Flexible and diversified forms have been adopted to run schools. In view of the actual needs in the poverty-stricken areas, half-day primary schools, part-time primary schools and girl's primary schools have been run. Convenience has been provided for girl children to attend schools in terms of the teaching system and the time for teaching has been rationally arranged
- Social forces have been mobilized to salvage and help non-attendance girl children
- Promotion of education for girl children and learning scientific and technological knowledge has been combined with the elimination of illiteracy
- International co-operation and scientific research on the education for girl children have been strengthened
- Extensive publicity has been given for the mobilization of the broad masses of women to take an active part in the anti-illiteracy campaign
- The elimination of illiteracy has been combined with the efforts to learn agricultural science and technology and to shake off poverty and become prosperous
- Elimination of illiteracy has been combined with the dissemination of the elementary knowledge of law

## **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

- The rural poverty-stricken areas are in short of basic educational facilities
- The base number of women illiterates is large, a great number of them are middle-aged and old women and they live scatteringly. Illiterates among the young and the prime are often on the move in different places.

• The cycle for eliminating illiteracy is fairly long, and there exists the phenomenon of newly emerging illiterates and recurrent illiterates

• The input of funds for the elimination of illiteracy is insufficient

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

• To increase the educational input in poverty-stricken areas and to set up a special education fund for poverty-stricken areas

• To carry out the plan of popularizing the nine-year compulsory education by stages

• To give extensive publicity to the equality between men and women and the Law on Compulsory Education so as to encourage girl children to attend schools and decrease the dropout rate

• To mobilize the social forces to take part in the elimination of illiteracy

• To combine the elimination of illiteracy with the programme for helping the poor, the technical training and the education on population, hygiene and law, so as to promote women to improve their equalities and enhance their capability to participate in social development

#### **Women and health**

#### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

• The Law on Maternal and Child Health Care has been put into force in an all-round way

• The statistical indexes on information about health care and the work of monitoring and appraisal have been standardized to keep abreast of the developments in the implementation of the Programme for the Development of Chinese Women

• In rural area, midwives have been trained, the new midwifery has been introduced emphatically, and the infection of tetanus by new-born babies has been eliminated

• The publicity and services on reproduction health have been strengthened and the network of management and services has been improved

• The community services have been developed and the network of community services has been established

• Scientific way of supplementing iodine has been adopted to eliminate iodine deficiency

• The facilities for drinking water and for lavatories have been restructured to improve the quality of the environment

• Co-operative projects on maternity and child hygiene have been launched with the poverty-stricken areas as the priority

#### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

• The basic sanitary facilities in the rural area is insufficient

• Medical personnel are in shortage

• The rate of rural women's hospitalization for child delivery in the rural area is low and the maternal and infant mortality rates are fairly high

• Malnutrition of women and children in poverty-stricken areas

• Venereal diseases and AIDS are spreading in a certain scope caused by prostitution

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

• To increase the input on hygiene and health care

• Major efforts to be made to launch education on hygiene and population for the entire people, and to spread and popularize hygienic knowledge extensively

• To strengthen the training of the medical personnel in rural area and the establishment of medical facilities

• To continue the reform of the medical system

• To work out a plan for preventing and controlling AIDS and train a professional contingent for preventing and controlling AIDS

• To give publicity to sex hygienic knowledge and conduct legal and moral education, establish more medical stations and treat venereal diseases

#### **Violence against women**

**Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**



• Laws and regulations have been formulated and revised to intensify the crackdown and strengthen the protection of women's rights

• Special organs have been established for the crackdown on abduction of women and social forces have been fully mobilized to take part in the crackdown

• A good job has been done in the work of the recovery, replacement, education and precaution for the salvaged women, so that they are not be discriminated and enjoy all rights as equals

• Legal education has been strengthened and mass publicity and education has been launched

#### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

• Conventional male-domination mentality

• Changes in the marital relation caused by the changes in the status and thinking brought along by the social and economic changes

• The corrupt customs of arranged or mercenary marriage existing in some border and remote or poverty-stricken areas

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

• To strictly enforce the relevant laws and regulations on the protection of women's rights and interests

• To make major efforts to disseminate elementary knowledge of law in the whole society to reinforce legal sense of the entire people

• To give more publicity to the law, and conduct education on marriage ethics

• To revise the Marriage Law, normalizing in detail the rights, responsibilities and duties among family members and formulating regulations and rules on banning family violence

#### **Women and armed conflict**

#### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

• The Chinese Government persists in following an independent foreign policy of peace and adheres to principles and holds justice in international affairs. It maintains that all countries should stick to the principles of mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and

peaceful co-existence.

- China stands for settlement of disputes between countries through peaceful consultations and opposes the use of force or the threat to use force.

- Chinese women's organizations are concerned about people's livelihood in war areas and support the government and popular organizations in providing humanitarian assistance within their power to the countries and areas in war or conflict.

#### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

Since the Fourth World Conference on Women, conflicts have taken place from time to time in many areas of the world triggered by racial, religious and territorial disputes, and some countries have kept on interfering in the internal affairs of other countries by a variety of excuses. This has brought along negative consequences to the living together in harmony of the people of all countries and harmful influence on the progress of women.

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

- China will, as always, persist in following an independent foreign policy of peace, maintains that all countries should strictly observe the aims and principles and the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law, and opposes the use of force or the threat to use force in international affairs by any country.

- China will, together with the countries concerned, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, strive to strengthen the protection of the rights and interests of women affected by armed conflicts, encourage women to participate in the settlement of disputes, defend peace and promote the execution of the International Humanitarian Law

#### **Women and the economy**

##### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- Laws protect women in enjoying equal employment opportunities and strengthen labour supervision

- The area of employment has been expanded to provide women with more employment opportunities

- Vocational training has been strengthened to improve the professional skills of women

- Nurseries have been developed to support women in taking part in social and economic

## construction

- The reform on the child-bearing insurance system has been carried on vigorously and women's child-bearing expenses have been covered by a social fund
- Re-employment service centres have been set up to provide free vocational training for laid-off workers
- Preferential policies have been put into practice for the re-employment of women

## Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned

- As there are numerous laid workers, there is a great difficulty in arranging re-employment
- Some women workers' skills are good only for a special type of work and some of them are older than average and the scope for selecting jobs is too narrow, and therefore, it is difficult to secure re-employment
- Conventional idea for selecting jobs
- Some private enterprises and Sino-foreign joint ventures, co-operative businesses and exclusively foreign-funded enterprises are short of guarantees for labour rights of women workers

## Commitment to further action/new initiatives

- To develop the economy so as to create employment opportunities
- To provide laid-off workers with basic needs, training and guidance for re-employment
- To change the conventional idea of selecting jobs so as to expand the scope the selecting jobs
- To give publicity to the relevant labour laws and regulations in order to reinforce the legal consciousness of employers and workers
- To strengthen labour supervision, especially the supervision and management over private enterprises and Sino-foreign joint ventures, co-operative businesses and exclusively foreign-funded enterprises
- To encourage and support the establishment of trade unions and women's organizations in all enterprises to enhance the capability of workers to participate in management

## Women in power and decision-making

## **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- The understanding of women's capabilities has been enhanced through different channels
- Preferential policies, specific plans and necessary indexes have been worked out to guarantee the fixed percentage of women's participation in politics
- Training of women's cadres has been conducted to increase women's capability to participate in politics and raise their leadership level
- Women's talent banks have been set up

## **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

- The conventional idea of preferring men to women still exists among a part of leaders who do not have sufficient understanding of equality between men and women. In selecting and appointing cadres, there still exist the cases of setting too high demands for women and selecting men rather than women with equal qualifications, affecting women's participation in politics
- Influenced by the conventional male-domination concept, some women have dim consciousness of participating in decision making. They are in short of the self-confidence to develop their own potentials and participate in the competition
- In the aspect of public opinion, the conventional ideas have produced some negative effects in identifying the women's role, thus restricting the development of women

## **Commitment of further action/new initiatives**

- To launch publicity and education extensively so as to heighten the consciousness of the whole society with regard to equality between men and women and women's participation in decision making
- To cultivate and select women cadres actively
- To recommend women talents from all sectors of the society

## **Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women**

### **Example of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- An inter-departmental national mechanism for the advancement of women – the State Council

Working Committee on Women and Children – has been established

- Gender perception has been incorporated into the state policies, plans and programmes
- The Programme for the Development of Chinese Women has been formulated
- Training on reinforcing the consciousness of sex equality has been conducted for decision-making leaders
- Monitoring mechanisms at all levels have been set up to monitor and appraise the implementation of the Programme
- A national women's data bank has been established and the classified women's statistics index has been set up in the state statistics system
- The Government has given importance to the establishment of a mechanism of trend studies of women's status, data collection and information analysis and spreading and has carried it out step by step

#### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

- Working committees on women and children at central and lower levels are in short of human, financial and material resources
- In terms of gender statistics indexes, funds are insufficient; in terms of statistics indexes, there is no unified international statistical standard

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

- To reinforce the establishment of the organs of working committees on women and children at all levels to raise their capability to urge the Government and the whole society to implement laws on women and children and the programmes for their development
- To increase the input of human, financial and material resources to the organs on the basis of the integrated development of the economy and the society of the country
- To further increase statistics by sex to strengthen gender analysis and the studies on the status on women
- To urge the international community to provide technical and financial assistance in statistics by sex

#### **Human rights of women**

### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- The Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women has been carried out conscientiously and local governments at all levels have formulated detailed regulations to implement the law, making it more orientational and operational
- The existing laws have been revised and supplemented to strengthen legal protection for women
- Education for dissemination of an elementary knowledge of law has been conducted to enhance the legal sense of the whole society
- Training has been conducted for law enforcers to intensify law enforcement
- Examination on law enforcement has been strengthened

### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

- Poverty is the main obstacle to the realization of human rights
- In the face of a population of 1.2 billion, the publicity and education of the relevant laws and regulations and sex equality is insufficient
- Because of the idea of male superiority and female inferiority formed in the long feudal society, some women, especially women in rural area, are in short of the knowledge of law and unable to apply law to defend their own rights

### **Commitment to action/new initiatives**

- To promote social and economic development in an all-round way so as to lay the foundation for the promotion and protection of human rights
- To continue the publicity on sex equality and the legal education throughout the country so as to enhance the gender and legal sense of the whole people and further to eliminate the discrimination against women
- To strengthen the education and training on gender for law enforcers
- To improve and develop the system of people's mediation and jury, increase the transparency in law enforcement and promote the construction of a democratic legal system
- To mobilize all social forces to protection the rights and interests of women, especially to give play to the role of non-governmental organizations

## **Women and the media**

### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- Publicity has been given in the whole society to the great role played by women in creating human civilization and propelling social development
- Publicity has been given to the idea that men and women enjoy equal personality, dignity, rights and status
- Publicity has been given to women who possess the spirit of self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-improvement
- The practice to portray the images of women in television, movies, books, journals and the press in an insulting and depreciating way has been banned, so as to promote the understanding of the legitimate rights and interests of women
- Supervision over the media has been strengthened

### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

- Restricted by the level of economic development, the development of the national cultural undertaking is limited. Part of rural people have narrow channels in receiving the media
- The conventional ideas of men superiority and women inferiority and fixed gender roles have given rise to some distorted, disparaging even insulting portrayals which still exist in the media and produce negative effects in the society
- Constrained by the economic conditions and the scientific and technological level, women have limited opportunities and capabilities in applying new communication technology and participating in the decision making of the media

### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

- To make vigorous efforts to develop scientific, cultural, broadcast and television undertakings and to raise the coverage rate of the media
- To continue giving publicity to positive images of women so as to change social discrimination and bias against women and promote the understanding of the entire citizenry of the legitimate rights and interests of women

• To continue the campaign against pornography and ban pornographic products

• To repudiate the infringements on the rights and interests of women through the media and mobilize people of all walks of life to establish a good social mood of equality, civilization and democracy

• To encourage and support women to apply new communication technology and participate in the decision making of the media

#### **Women and the environment**

#### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

• Environment protection has been fixed as a basic national policy of the country

• Women have been urged to participate in the environmental protection and sustainable development to increase the percentage of women in participating in the decision making and management in the field of environmental protection

• Education on the environment has been launched among the entire nationals

• Women have been encouraged and supported to learn relevant scientific knowledge to enhance their capability in protecting the environment

#### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

• China is a developing country with a large population and relatively insufficient resources. Under the conditions of not-high-enough productivity and scientific and technological level, it is an arduous task to develop the economy and to rationally use and protect resources.

• People's consciousness of environmental protection is poor, particularly the poverty-stricken areas, in the economic development, pollution and damage to the environment are serious

• Women are restricted by the economic, cultural and educational levels in gaining the access to resources, information, scientific and technological training and services and thus their participation in the environmental protection and management is insufficient

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiative**

• To promote more women to receive vocational education, higher education and scientific and technological training so as to promote women to participate in the management and decision making of environmental protection



• To continue the education on the environment throughout the country so as to enhance the consciousness of the entire nation on environmental protection and the sustainable development

• To strengthen the supervision over the enforcement of the relevant laws on the protection of the environment and the management of the environment

### **The girl child**

#### **Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action**

• Publicity has been given to the relevant laws and regulations and equality between men and women to heighten the consciousness of the whole people of “loving children, educating children, taking a lead for children and doing solid things for children”

• Laws have been improved and law enforcement intensified to strengthen the protection of girl children

• Social forces have been mobilized to promote the development of girl children

• International co-operation has been carried out

#### **Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned**

• Education and nutrition for girl children in poverty-stricken areas have become pressing questions

• The idea of preferring men to women still exists in the minds of some people in the public

#### **Commitment to further action/new initiatives**

• To promote an all-round development of the social, economic, cultural, education, and public health undertakings at the places in question

• To continue the publicity on the elementary knowledge of law and equality between men and women in the whole society so as to further eliminate the discrimination against women

## ANNEX II

## Common Data Sets/Indicators for Measuring Development Progress

## Population and fertility

\* Population (10,000 persons)

year	population at end of year	sex			
		male		female	
		population	percentage (%)	population	percentage (%)
1997	123626	63131	51.07	60495	48.93

Note: Data source: *Yearbook on China Statistics 1998*

\* Population aged 0-4; 0-14; 15-49; 60+

## (1) Population by age and sex of 1997

Unit: person

sex	age	0-4	0-14	15-49	60+
	total population	79751	310403	693133	133956
	female	36228	146232	342092	69298
	male	43524	164172	351041	64656

Data source: *Yearbook on China Population Statistics 1998*

\* Population by Urban/Rural Distribution

## Urban and Rural Population Distribution by Age in 1995

age	urban area		rural area	
	female	male	female	male
0-4	5.7	6.3	7.3	8.3
5-9	8.1	8.7	11.3	11.9
10-14	7.2	7.6	9.2	9.5
15-19	6.8	6.9	7.5	7.7
20-24	9.2	8.6	8.9	8.5
25-29	10.6	10.2	10.3	9.9
30-34	10.1	10.2	8.5	8.1
35-39	8.3	8.6	6.3	6.4
40-44	8.1	8.1	7.2	7.1
45-49	5.9	5.9	5.4	5.4
50-54	4.6	4.5	4	4.2
55-59	4.4	4.3	3.5	3.8
60-64	3.8	3.9	3.3	3.3
65-69	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.6

70-74	2.0	1.8	2.1	1.8
75-79	1.2	1.0	1.4	1.0
80-84	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.5
85+	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2
Total	100	100	100	100
population (10,000 persons)	1753132	1780844	4318930	4514058

Data source: 1% census in 1995 by State Statistical Bureau

• Population Growth Rate and Total Fertility Rate

Population fertility rate, natural growth rate and mortality rate in China

Unit: ‰

	fertility rate	growth rate	mortality rate
1990	21.06	14.39	6.67
1991	19.68	12.98	6.70
1992	18.24	11.60	6.64
1993	18.09	11.45	6.64
1994	17.70	11.21	6.49
1995	17.12	10.55	6.57
1996	16.98	10.42	6.56
1997	16.57	10.06	6.51

Data source: *Yearbook on China Statistics 1998*

• Fertility Rate for Women Aged 15-19

Fertility rate for women aged 15-19

Unit: person, ‰

fertility rate for women aged 15-19

1996.10.1—1997.9.30

2.73

Data resource: *Yearbook on China Population Statistics 1998*

### Mortality Rate

- Life expectancy at birth
- Infant mortality rate
- Under-five mortality rate
- Maternal mortality rate

### Mortality

	female	male
average life expectancy 1997	73	69
infant mortality rate	36.04	30.45
under-five mortality rate 1997	9.59‰	7.83‰
maternal mortality rate /100,000	58.72	

### Reproductive health

Contraceptive prevalence rate (Unit: person)

Data resource: Population statistics data from State Statistical Bureau

Under-five mortality rate from *Yearbook on China Population Statistics 1998*

Maternal mortality rate from *Data of Annual Report on Health Statistics 1995*

national	221,007,079
male sterilisation	21,625,973
female sterilisation	86,372,764
intrauterine device	96,494,694
hypodermic embedding	961,929
oral and injection contraception	5,588,834
condom	8,470,464
drugs for external use	919,724
others	572,697

- Percentage of babies delivered by trained midwives: 93%

## Gender Equality In Education

- Percentages of boy students in primary and junior middle schools

Percentages of boy students in primary and junior middle schools for 1997

	Unit: 10,000 persons			
	number of students in primary schools		number of students in junior middle schools	
		percentage of boys		Percentage of boys
1997	13995.4	52.4	5167.8	53.7

Data source: *China Statistics Year Book 1998*

- Ratio of literate females to males at ages 15-24

Above-15 sex composition of population with different educational status (%)

education level	Unit: %	
	1997	
	female	male
illiteracy	71.4	28.6
primary school	51.2	48.8
junior middle school	42.3	57.7
senior middle school	42.4	57.6
specialized middle school		
college-level technical school	36.7	63.3
population (10,000)	463482	468910
Number of students (10,000)	463485	468910

Data source: statistical data from State Statistical Bureau

## Economic activities

- **Unemployment ratio:** Registered unemployment rate in urban areas in 1997: 3.1%
- **Employment-population ratio:** Labour participatory rate in 1997: 82.3%  
(labour participatory rate = employed population/labour resources)
- percentages of labour force engaged in agriculture, industry, and services

Unit: 10,000 persons

	employees	by three industries			composition		
		1 <sup>st</sup> industry	2 <sup>nd</sup> industry	3 <sup>rd</sup> industry	1 <sup>st</sup> industry	2 <sup>nd</sup> industry	3 <sup>rd</sup> industry
1997	69600	34730	16495	18375	49.9	23.7	26.4

Data source: *China Labour Statistics 1998*

### • Employment status of labour force

Unit: 10,000 persons

	total	urban	rural
<b>1. groups by identities in employment</b>			
(1) all employers	14668	14668	
(2) private enterprise owners	204	133	71
(3) individual operators	2851	1024	1827
(4) employees in private enterprises and individual business operators	6791	2669	4122
(5) employees in township enterprises	9158		9158
(6) rural labour force	34215		34215
(7) others	1713		
<b>2. Groups by economic sectors</b>			
(1) state-owned sector	11044	11044	
(2) collective-owned sector	46256	2883	43373
(3) private sector	1349	750	600
(4) individual sector	5442	1919	3522
(5) joint operation sector	43	43	
(6) share-holding sector	468	468	
(7) foreign investment sector	300	300	
(8) sector with investment from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan	281	281	
other sectors	18	18	

Data source: *Yearbook on China Labour Statistics 1998*

## Economy

- GNP
- GNP per capita
- GDP per capita

Unit: billion yuan

Year	GNP	GDP	GNP per capita	GDP per capita
1990	1859.84	1854.79	155.9	163.4
1991	2166.25	2161.78		187.9
1992	2665.19	2663.81		228.7
1993	3456.05	3463.44	266.3	293.9
1994	4667.00	4675.94		392.3
1995	5749.49	5847.81		485.4
1996	6685.05	6788.46		557.6
1997	7345.25	7477.24	597.1	607.9

Data source: *China Statistics Yearbook 1998*

## Income and poverty

- Household income per capita (US\$1 is equivalent to approx. 8.3 yuan RMB)

year	household pure income per capita in rural areas (yuan)	disposable household income per capita in urban areas (yuan)
1996	1926.1	4838.9
1997	2090.1	5160.3

(Data source: *China Statistics Yearbook 1998*)

- % of population below poverty-line (poverty line shown)

Rural population in poverty: 49 million (poverty line: annual income per capita below 640 yuan) (1997)

(Data source: China State Statistical Bureau)



## Education

### • Adult literacy rate

(1) Composition of illiterate and semi-illiterate people aged 15+ in 1995 and the illiteracy rate

Unit: %

area	composition of rural and urban population		gender composition		illiteracy rate		literacy rate	
	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male
urban	18.6	15.5	75.6	24.4	16.1	5.2	83.9	94.8
rural	81.4	84	71.3	28.7	31.3	12.4	68.7	87.6
total	100	100	72.3	27.7	26.6	10.1	73.4	89.9
population (10,000 persons)	12003.8	4597.42						

Data source: Relevant data from State Statistical Bureau

(2) Gender composition of population aged 15+ with different educational status

Unit: %

educational status	1997	
	female	male
illiteracy	71.4	28.6
primary school	51.2	48.8
junior middle school	42.3	57.7
senior middle school	42.4	57.6
specialized middle school		
college-level technical school	36.7	63.3
university		
population (10,000 persons)	463485	468910

Data source: Relevant data from State Statistical Bureau

Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds

(3) Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds and gender composition of educational status

Unit: %

15-24 year-olds	above college-level technical school		senior middle school		junior middle school		primary school		illiteracy rate		literacy rate	
	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	male
26.5	16	33.1	27	36.6	31.1	20.4	15.5	4.3	4.6	95.7	95.4	

Data source: Relevant data from State Statistical Bureau

Net primary school enrolment ratio

(4) Primary school enrolment ratio of school-age children

Unit: person

	total number of school-age children for primary schools	number of enrolled children of school age	total number of school-age children of	enrolment ratio of school-age children
total	133466545	132025465		98.92
cities	17564430	17477977		99.51
county towns	24729571	24570083		99.36
rural area	91172544	89977405		98.69
of the total: female children	63915897	63157236		98.81

Data source: Yearbook on Statistics of China educational undertaking in 1997

XI. Housing and environment

	1985	1990	1995	1997
arable land per capita (ha.)	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.08
% urban population access to tap-water	81	89.2	93.0	95.2
% urban population access to gas	22.4	42.2	70.0	75.7
average living area per person in urban area (m <sup>2</sup> )	5.2	6.7	8.10	8.8
average housing area per person in rural area (m <sup>2</sup> )	14.7	17.8	21.0	22.4

Data source: China Statistics Yearbook 1998

Situation of rural population with access to safe drinking water

total population	population with access to safe drinking water			tap-water			deep-well water			
	accumulative total	% of accumulative total to population	current year	accumulative total	% of accumulative total to population	current year	accumulative total	% of accumulative total to population	current year	
rural area	91773.34	79879.22	87.04	2402.24	40086.23	43.68	3188.54	20498.32	22.34	69.83

Data source: Annual Report on National Health Statistics 1995