

**Network (Research Center) for Combating Domestic Violence of China Law Society.**

**Self-evaluation of the Phase Two**

**Report submitted by External Collaborator**

**Dr Hung Suet-lin**

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#### **A Brief Background to the Self-evaluation Exercise**

The second phase of the Network (Research Centre) (thereafter Network) lasted from May 2003 to April 2006. There was an organizational restructuring at the beginning of the second phase with the formation of eight subprojects, set up of an office and an Executive Council. Leaders of subprojects in the First Phase were very active members of the Network. The External Collaborator was informed that in the restructuring exercise, most of them were elected into the Executive Council who were then not allowed to serve as responsible persons of the subprojects, according to regulation. This is to prevent a conflict of interests and to formalize the structure of the organization differentiating clearly the management and operational levels. According to Executive Council members, this has greatly affected the communication between the Executive Council and leaders of the subprojects.

In the past three years, the sub-projects were launched under the leadership of core Network members, many of them have also been very active in the First Phase. The External Collaborator came into the scene in early 2006. While the normal sequence expected is from evaluation to planning, however, due to external factors, the internal self-evaluation was conducted after (1) the funding organization has completed an impact study and (2) a strategic planning exercise to work on proposals for the third phase was conducted at the end of 2005. It was understood that the Executive Council of the Network who insisted in launching the self-evaluation exercise of the Second Phase was because of a strong will to strive for excellence by identifying areas for improvement, consolidating experiences as well as cultivating an organizational culture characterized by commitment to sharing, openness, reflective learning and accountability.

While wife abuse is an issue that worth extensive concern in itself, feminists have made domestic violence and violence against women a central issue in the women's movement around the world. In the context of China where the development of non-governmental organizations and bottom-up efforts initiated from the community have been recent, the Network represents a significant move in these directions and also plays a pioneer role in promoting women's movement. A project on anti-domestic violence is significant in it

and is also a strategic entry point for a wider women's movement to eradicate gender inequality in the country. It is, therefore, significant to ensure there is an alignment of the subprojects with the intended mission of the Network and the goals of women's movement at large.

To summarize, the overall objectives of the Network as stated in the Proposal for the Second Phase are as follows:

“The purpose to establish the Network of Combating Domestic Violence in China is to further develop NGO network of combating domestic violence in China; strengthen training on gender and domestic violence for legislators and law enforcement personnel; support activities carried out in various provinces in the field of combating domestic violence; stimulate in-depth research on the theoretical framework of combating domestic violence in China; promote government's measures and actions; facilitate the setting up of multi-agency cooperation and coordination in combating domestic violence at local levels and push the making and promulgation of the law on domestic violence and execution of laws and regulations in China forward, on the basis of experience of carrying out the Project of Domestic Violence in China: Research, Intervention and Prevention.”

The specific objectives are:

1. To establish Documentation and Database of Combating Domestic Violence on the basis of the original Documentation Center, so to further develop the use of the database for persons at home and abroad in the field of combating violence against women and children.
2. To expand the network of combating domestic violence to form a more extensive NGO network covering major provinces and cities all over China.
3. Training for trainers involving in gender and domestic violence issues and for legislators and law enforcement personnel as well as for organization members of the network.
4. To publish the achievements in research of the first phase of the Project, training materials on combating domestic violence and on gender, with persons listed in item 3 as targets for training.
5. To continue with the research in localization of theories of domestic violence, with an aim to (a) improve the model of multi-agency cooperation in intervention in domestic violence and spread to network provinces and municipalities,(b) to promote the making of law on domestic violence at local levels, (c) to push the national legislative organs to bring the enactment of law on domestic violence into the national proposal

of legislation and urge governments at all levels to bring the task of fighting against domestic violence into their duties.

Apart from what have been stated, in discussions, the Executive Council and also core members have expressed their strong mission to experiment and pioneer a new way to run non-governmental organizations in China which actualizes the spirit of equality, participation and public welfare. They were identified with the direction of pursuing women's movement beyond domestic violence. Against this backcloth, the External Collaborator has always bore in mind that an internal review of each sub-project, the Office and the Executive Council is to be conducted with reference to the overall objectives and direction of the Anti-domestic Violence Network. The Network is an integrated whole and is also a part of the macro NGO movement and women's movement in China.

### **Roles of the External Collaborator**

With reference to the agreement between the External Collaborator and the Network Office, signed in a formal contract, there are four tasks to be accomplished:

1. To understand the operation of the Second Phase;
2. To design an evaluation framework and develop assessment indicators;
3. To participate in the participative self-evaluation exercise as a collaborator;
4. To submit to the Network a Second Phase Self-evaluation Report.

It was agreed later between the two parties that the second task would be postponed till round about the end of June and early July, to be prepared for Phase Three of the Network instead of Phase Two which has already been completed.

The position of the external collaborator as an outsider to the organization needs to be highlighted here. While the merit of having someone from the outside to be a collaborator in the evaluation process is bringing in knowledge and increasing rationality, an evaluation performed by an External Collaborator invited by the Executive Council of the Network, the top level, might be viewed as a top-down performance appraisal of the subprojects and also the individuals involved. Such an outside-insider position is special and may not be easy to comprehend particularly when the practice is new to members. The External Collaborator, therefore, has to clarify her roles and reiterate the objectives of the self-evaluation exercise from time to time to encourage openness and genuine reflection.

### **Specific Objectives of the Self-evaluation**

Based on the understanding of the background, mission and objectives of the Network and the tasks assignment to the External Collaborator, specific objectives of the self-evaluation exercise have been developed as follows:

1. Revisiting the aims and operational aspects of each subproject, the Network Office and the Executive Council;
2. Reviewing communication, collaboration and inter-connectedness among the sub-projects, the Office and the Executive Council;
3. Examining how internal evaluation has been conducted by the sub-projects, the strengths and limitations of existing practices;
4. Reviewing issues related to sustainability;
5. Recommending areas of improvement at operational level, measurement of achievement and overall administration.

It is worth mentioning here that the identification of achievement or impact has not been a major objective of this internal evaluation exercise. The reason may lie in the fact that an impact study has just been conducted by the funding body and also areas of improvement are of the greatest concern of the Executive Council. However, it would be against the principle of evaluation based on the strength approach, which emphasizes that achievement and success is a driving force for continuous commitment. The subjective views of the stakeholders, including the users and core members who implement the projects are also valuable when applying participatory approach of evaluation. Major achievements identified by the stakeholders would, therefore, also be included in this report.

### **Review Methodology**

Participatory approach has been adopted in this internal review exercise. It is expected that all stakeholders are to be involved in the process in an equal footing, are fully informed and have equal opportunities to share facts and views. During review, it is significant to make it clear to all people involved the roles of the External Collaborator, the evaluation approach and to ensure transparency.

The process is crucial in implementing participatory approach of evaluation. It can be summarized as follows:

1. A Working Group on Self-evaluation was formed by the Executive Council

composed of three Council members;

2. The External Collaborator has clarified with the Working Group members and the Office expectations of her roles and duties.
3. An initial assessment framework was prepared by a Working Group member and then sent to responsible persons of each sub-project.
4. An initial report based on the initial assessment framework was submitted by subprojects to the Working Group and then sent to the External Collaborator via the Office.
5. Stake holders for each sub-project were identified and invited to participate in evaluation meetings. One internal collaborator was assigned for each sub-project to work together with the External Collaborator to facilitate the evaluation process.
6. Evaluation meetings were conducted with stakeholders of each sub-project, the Office and the Executive Council. For the sub-project on urban and rural communities, review visits have been arranged to meet representatives of collaborating organizations such as district Women's Federation, district court, district public security bureau, tribunals, etc., at You An Men District and Yanqing County respectively.
7. Meeting minutes were prepared by the Office with additional comments/ observations made by the responsible internal collaborator. They were then circulated to core members of each sub-project to collect feedback.
8. Initial observations were shared by the External Collaborator with the Executive Council and also the Director of the Network.
9. A draft report was completed by the External Collaborator which was sent to the Office and Executive Council with a view to facilitate further discussion at various levels of the organization.
10. Self-evaluation Report was finalized.

### **Structure of the Report**

This Self-evaluation Report is structured as follows:

1. A brief background to the self-evaluation exercise
  1. Roles of the external collaborator
  2. Specific objectives of the self-evaluation
  3. Review methodology
  4. Structure of the Report
  5. Reports on each sub-project which include evaluation meeting(s) conducted, stakeholders involved, major achievements, general observations, collaboration

within, evaluation of the evaluation, sustainability concerns and recommendations

6. Report on the Office which include evaluation meeting(s) conducted, stakeholders involved, major achievements, general observations, collaboration within, evaluation of the evaluation, sustainability concerns and recommendations
7. Report on the Executive Council which include evaluation meeting(s) conducted, stakeholders involved, major achievements, general observations, collaboration within, evaluation of the evaluation, sustainability concerns and recommendations
8. Overall observations and recommendations
9. An epilogue

## **Reports on Subprojects**

### **The Documentation Centre**

#### **Stated objectives of the Second Phase**

According to the Proposal for the Documentation Centre, the Second Phase, the overall objective of the Subproject is to develop the Centre into an information and reference backup for researches and actions of the Network. The specific objectives are:

1. to improve the administration;
2. to establish standard and systematic categories of books and materials;
3. to cooperate with the network of the Project and further benefit the public through books and materials in the reference center;
4. Based on the reference center, to establish a close and interactive relationship among subprojects.

Major tasks for the Subproject are first, the collection of local and overseas reference materials, its administration, and second, publication of the Network Newsletters once every two months.

#### **Evaluation meetings**

1. A focus group was conducted with three regular users of the Centre in the presence of the full time staff, leader of the Sub-project and also an internal collaborator.
2. Right after the focus group meeting, a meeting was conducted with the staff, leader of the Sub-project while facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator.

The meetings were held at the office of the Research Centre.

#### **Stakeholders involved:**

- users
- staff of the centre
- leader/responsible person of the Subproject
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

#### **Significant achievements**

Not only that major tasks have been accomplished by the staff of the Centre and core members of the Subproject, as affirmed by users in the focus group meeting, the Documentation Centre has served the role of enlightening users in feminism, women's studies and domestic violence. The Centre has been highly commended for being the only reference centre in China, up to the present, with a concentration of materials on domestic

violence and high professional quality of the materials. Also, in Phase Two, the Subproject has successfully extended its target from Network members to the general public.

### General observations

1. It has been quite obvious that the core group members of the Documentation Centre as well as the staff have been very conscious of implementing the centre efficiently, particularly in relation to the first and second stated objectives of the Subproject. Areas of improvement identified by the core group in the initial assessment report were more of a technical nature which included the administration of the centre, categorization of books and materials, budgeting for downloading on-line materials, space of the Centre, and translation of materials in other languages and also development of an on-line system. These were also echoed by users in the focus group meeting and certainly deserve continuous attention and effort.
2. Regarding collecting books and materials, the Centre has been encountering difficulties in acquiring references outside China. Cost and accessibility are the major obstacles. For materials in foreign languages, lacking manpower and resources for translation is critical.
3. In the evaluation meeting, however, several areas emerged to be major concerns of equal if not more importance. Publicity and promotion of the Documentation Centre is considered critical not only to benefit more people (re stated objective 3) but also as a contact point of the Network for the public, to promote the Network and mobilize participation of individuals. Utilization rate of the Centre was considered not very satisfactory at present in view of the fact that the capacity can accommodate a greater demand. Being the one and only one documentation centre on domestic violence in China is certainly a good point of promotion in itself and for the Network as a whole.
4. At present, main users identified are members of the Network, research students studying domestic violence in China, individuals who need to prepare speeches, meetings or conduct research on the issue. Little has been collected about the background of the users, types of materials they used and the purposes.
5. For Objective 4 “based on the reference center, establish a close and interactive relationship among subprojects”, the Network newsletters certainly play a significant role. However, core members of the Subproject shared that effect has not been obvious. Though some subprojects did provide information for the newsletters, little was known about how it has helped to facilitate interaction among them. Feedback on newsletters has not been collected actively either.
6. It is also observed that materials collected by the Documentation Centre have not been fully utilized to serve purposes including encouraging wider use of the materials,

cultivating interest in domestic violence and gender issues among users, and becoming the backup for researches and actions of the Network.

#### Collaboration within

Little sharing of information and references has been observed with other subprojects except that lists of newly collected materials are published in newsletters for information of Network members' and so, members of other subprojects.

#### About evaluation

As mentioned above, little was known about users of the Documentation Centre, readers of Network newsletters and the use of the materials. Regarding users' feedback, existing practices include feedback forms given out directly and printed in Network newsletters. Feedback was also invited during Network annual meetings. However, number of forms collected has been very few and these methods are considered largely passive relying much on the initiative of the users. In addition to collecting quantity of output, qualitative methods such as focus group meetings and individual interviews have not been conducted to collect information about output and feedback.

#### Sustainability concerns

About manpower, there is only one full time staff that has to take care of the whole administration and operation of the Documentation Centre. At the time of the self-evaluation exercise, there is a volunteer, who is also a regular user, helping out actively. The recruitment of this volunteer, however, was accidental rather than intentional. As a student studying overseas, she would leave Beijing in a half-year time. Sustainability concern is mainly seen in manpower for the Sub-project.

#### Recommendations

1. To improve the publicity of the Documentation Centre and update public knowledge of newly collected materials by:
  - collaborating with the Subproject on Website, the Training Department and making use of Network newsletters;
  - actively networking with universities, public libraries and other target organizations;
2. To build up networks internal to China to facilitate collection of reference materials including publishers, universities and research centers;
3. To establish network overseas to facilitate exchange/ collection of overseas materials at a lower cost;
4. To actively input updated references to other subprojects, particularly the Training

Department, Subproject on Theoretical Research, Subproject on Mass Media as well as the Office and Executive Council;

5. To make full use of the references proactively such as submitting book/article reviews and recommendations by scholars in Network newsletters and website, organizing readers' groups and thematic seminars with or without collaborating with other subprojects;
6. To accord user participation a higher priority, not only to collect feedback in order to improve the administration but also as a strategy to mobilize participants for the women's movement in view of the fact that the first contacts with the Network always take place at the Centre;
7. To make evaluation more rational and evident based on a systematic collection of data on users and the use of materials such as background of users, frequencies of use, for what purposes, the way the materials are utilized; data collection methods can also include regular focus groups and interviews with regular and occasional users in addition to forms and questionnaires; on the whole, users' participation in evaluation can be strengthened;
8. To improve sustainability, consider recruiting volunteers who are interested in managing documentations and/or using the materials to help run the Centre.

## **The Website**

### Stated objectives of the Second Phase

According to the Proposal for the Subproject, the objectives are as follows:

1. to develop an interactive cooperation between website and mass media;
2. to provide journalists and media agencies with information resource about anti-domestic violence against women under gender perspective and women rights perspectives;
3. to technically support a national network for anti-domestic violence against women, and promote the communication among network members;
4. to develop an interactive mode between website and stakeholders of domestic violence.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

A meeting was held with the responsible person of the Subproject and three volunteers while facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator.

### Stakeholders involved:

- responsible person of the sub-project
- three volunteers
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

### Significant achievements

The website has been very impressive, rich in information and materials and being users-friendly. As shared in the evaluation meeting and also in written reports on the Subproject, major achievements included offering resources support to media workers and a platform for sharing among victims of domestic violence. In fact, articles uploaded have been adapted by other mass media.

### General observations

1. The website is a window of the Network to the outside. From the understanding of the core members, including the responsible person and the volunteers, many people came to know about the Network via the website. Promoting the website therefore becomes primary not only in itself but a promotion of the Network. Stakeholders have shared their difficulties in this aspect. One major target of the Sub-project is Network members. Following expansion of membership in and outside Beijing, it is expected that increasing number of people would get an access to the website. Despite of the fact that a set of computer has been provided to each project outside

Beijing, it was discovered that using internet has not been developed into the local culture and become a living style in those places. Though similar phenomenon was observed in Beijing among Network members, the problem was less serious. While it is understood that changing culture is by no means easy and fast, the lack of budget and opportunities for training has made it difficult to promote the use of the website within the Network.

2. While the core group believes that frequent users of the Website are mass media workers, there is a lack of data about visitors, whether they are frequent, occasional or one-time user, their background, what materials they have used and for what purposes, which make it difficult to identify major targets for promotion and publicity. There is also a lack of information about ways Network members have used the website. No feedback has been collected from users either.
3. There has been aspiration among group members to further develop the website into full functions including adding a chat room/ discussion forum, conducting on-line surveys, setting up the English version and also collaborating with other forms of mass media. However, the risk incurred, particularly in setting up a chat room and the immense resources needed were insurmountable obstacles up to the present.
4. The core group with four members has been responsible for the whole operation and development of the website, taking up a variety of roles including collecting and producing materials, promotion and publicity and also overseeing the technical and directional development of the website. While it is not difficult to realize the lack of manpower being a reason behind the “one-foot-kick” approach, prioritizing the roles may help focusing effort and prevent overloading.
5. In addition to materials provided by various subprojects to be posted, website reporters also produced materials by doing direct reporting. This is an area that deserves further examination because at present, the Subproject on Mass Media is also doing similar work. The role of this Subproject and division of work among subprojects is the central issue here.
6. In fact, core group members have also shared their feelings of uncertainty regarding the role of the Subproject in relation to the Network, whether it is the media providing professional resource or a platform for mobilization and advocacy, whether the role is to process or to produce information such as by doing research.

#### Collaboration within

One objective of the Website is to promote interaction among Network members. However, despite of the fact that subprojects are expected to supply information for posting and sharing, it was regarded as not satisfactory. Relations with subprojects have not been developed though continuous efforts have been made.

### About evaluation

Other than hit rates, little has been known about the visitors of the Website. No on-line feedback form has been set up. The only responses from users are emails received most of which were enquiries about the Network or social services. It is recommended that the emails can be analyzed systematically, which may shed light on the characteristics of the users and their needs. Procedures to handle emails can also be developed.

### Sustainability concern(s)

Sustainability concern is also mainly seen in manpower for this Sub-project. As mentioned earlier, a core group of four has been responsible for the operation and development of the Website. It is not a surprise that they felt over burdened. The responsible person of the Subproject is a professor in mass media while the three volunteers were/are her research students. Given the heavy workload of these core members and also the composition of the group confining to the professor and her students, it is anticipated difficult to expand the source of manpower and reform the operation of the Subproject. In fact, the three volunteers have expressed their difficulties to continue their commitment due to further study or work.

### Recommendations

1. To promote the use of the Website to members of the Network by planning for training in collaboration with the Training Department and the Executive Council, and via Network newsletters;
2. To actively collect background information about users and their feedback on the Website, for example, by setting a simple on-line feedback form, on the technical design, operation and content of the Website; to explore how media workers have been using the Website since it is believed they are the major users;
3. To closely collaborate with other subprojects which can input information such as those on urban and rural experimental projects on multi-organizations collaboration in combating domestic violence, the Training Department, Subproject on Theoretical Research as well as the Office and Executive Council;
4. Regarding collecting and producing materials, it was revealed that both this Subproject and the Subproject on Mass Media have also identified reporting as one of their major tasks. Collaboration with division of labour and complementary functions can be developed.
5. To build up linkage with various types of mass media such as linking websites with those of newspapers, offering website materials for radio broadcasting;
6. To build up a network of mass media workers via the Website, in collaboration with

the Mass Media Subproject;

7. To improve sustainability, consider recruiting volunteers who are either interested in running websites and/or domestic violence. It is hoped that young people who are interested in technical operation of websites could be attracted via this Subproject and interests in domestic violence could then be gradually developed. In this way, the Subproject also helps to mobilize participation;
8. To ensure sustainability, there is an urgency to recruit and mobilize core members/ volunteers for the Subproject while in the long run, restructuring the core group in terms of composition and operation, expanding the source of manpower and resources is also necessary;
9. To consider developing tailor-made websites/sub-websites for various target groups such as young people and survivors;
10. To consider a member registration system for on-line chat room/ discussion forum, if possible, to reduce risk and increase sense of security among participants;
11. To review the positioning of the Website, whether it is a resource and service media or a platform for advocacy and mobilization. In addition to media workers, the Website may need to expand its major targets to the general public and stakeholders and the website become more interactive if it is for the latter.

## **The Mass Media**

### Stated objectives of the Second Phase

According to the Proposal for the Mass Media Subproject, the Second Phase, the objectives are:

“to further develop and amplify the national network of media for fighting against domestic violence, monitor the report on the issue of domestic violence in China and launch publicity of knowledge of fighting against domestic violence in order to promote the sense of the public to combat domestic violence.”

To achieve the objectives, a work plan has been developed:

1. Further develop and amplify the national network of media for fighting against domestic violence and carry out training in social gender and fighting against domestic violence.
2. Monitor reports by the media nationwide on the issue of domestic violence in China from year 2003 to year 2006.
3. Sponsor the gathering of sudden severe cases of domestic violence or crime committed by women victims of domestic violence.
4. Publish special editions and make special programs through the mainstream media and relevant media on women such as Chinese Women, Chinese Procuratorate, and so on, with a plan of 10 times every year constantly for three years.
5. Publish articles on the media according to the requirements of the Project of fighting against domestic violence.
6. Take charge of the management of the finance of this Sub-Project, writing of report and translation work.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

A meeting was held with one responsible person of the Subproject and one core member while facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator. Another responsible person, who was absent for the evaluation meeting, has shared with the External Collaborator an article she has written on the subject of mass media and domestic violence.

### Stakeholders involved:

- responsible person of the Sub-project
- core members
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

### Significant achievements

At the beginning of Phase Two, funding and opportunities were secured to promote anti-domestic violence to the general public using road boards, flags and pamphlets which have produced impressive publicity effect. A network of media workers has been formed with members meeting every two months. The strategy of making use of influence and network of Network members who are media workers has proved effective. Against domestic violence has become a theme regularly promoted in some media.

### General observations

1. It was revealed that members did not see an obvious differentiation between Phase One and Phase Two of the project. While from a positive point of view, it could be regarded as an evidence of smooth transition between phases, it might, however, reveal a less conscious sense of stage development which can be strategic.
2. Community education on anti-domestic violence and publicity of the Network are closely related. In this respect, mass media is a means of which the effective use is a concern. Despite of the fact that the Subproject has spent considerable effort to make use of the mass media to promote the cause of anti-domestic violence in Phase Two, core members queried that publicity, promotion and public relations alike should not be taken up by the Sub-project but the Network as a whole. They proposed that trainers of the Subproject could provide training to facilitate effective use of the mass media by staff and members of the Executive Council.
3. The in-depth knowledge that members have in mass media was impressive which has allowed them to be able to identify newspapers, TV channels of great influence or emerging to be for effective publicity. This was reflected in the shift from mainstream media to market oriented newspapers as major targets over time. The ability to use these media, however, rests upon the capability of the Network/ Subproject to identify topics or themes that media workers are interested in. Core members of the Sub-project, however, shared that it has become increasingly difficult when the anti-domestic violence movement is no longer new to the community.
4. Item One in the Work Plan, that is, providing trainings to mass media workers in order to influence their analysis of and attitude towards domestic violence is what core members identified as the core task. However, members have encountered difficulties in providing training including the inadequate number of trainers who are of the background of mass media, the need to develop mass media specific training, limited financial and manpower resources. Training outside Beijing has been conducted in Phase One but not in Phase Two though districts such as Yun Nan, Chang Sha have been considered.

5. Training and networking mass media workers has been closely related. The effectiveness of organizing media workers through training was also hampered by high turnover in the occupation and difficulty to recruit those who are interested in domestic violence amongst a wide variety of themes that media workers have to work on. This is particularly the case for mainstream media. The insurmountable hierarchy in media organizations has also made it difficult for frontline media workers to exert influence.
6. Sponsoring the gathering of sudden severe cases of domestic violence, particularly outside Beijing, has been considered a strategy to promote reporting of the issue and so public concern. Little has been done in this area. While how and the extent of the sponsorship being promoted among media workers was not explored during the evaluation meeting, the under use might be explained in its heavy reliance on the initiation of individual reporters and feature writers. Such initiation requires a certain level of gender consciousness which is an obvious lack in general among media workers.
7. In Phase Two, core members have also done the reporting directly and then supply information to the Network website and/or newsletters. As discussed in the part of this report on the Mass Media Subproject, both the subprojects are engaged in similar activities. Differentiation in terms of focus may need to be reviewed.
8. Monitoring the media has been sporadic in the past three years. In some occasions, members have made phone calls to newspaper editors expressing views of the Network and requesting amendments. Members shared the difficulties in finding people who can keep an eye on all mass media at all time. More targeted media watch has been implemented such as the study on advertisement the result of which has been announced in March 2006. Effect was encouraging and the press conference attracted media workers who were then invited to join the network.
9. Overall speaking, the Sub-project considered a lack of clear priorities in Phase Two and has called for a review of its role. Core members proposed to focus more on networking, training of media workers and media watch and they aspired for having a full time staff to work for the Subproject in the future.

#### Collaboration within

Core members of the Subproject have conducted direct news reporting related to domestic violence and then supplied reports to the Website and the Network newsletters. While the Subproject on Website has identified media workers the main users, there is little collaboration between the two subprojects in networking them. Regarding trainings for media workers, the Training Department has been involved but experiences revealed that practical issues in media work have to be addressed and skills in reporting imparted,

implying a need to modify trainings.

#### About evaluation

Evaluation of training provided for media workers can be more systematic.

#### Sustainability concern(s)

Sustainability concern is again seen in manpower for this Subproject. About four core members have been responsible for the operation and development of the Subproject and they found it difficult to recruit new core members.

#### Recommendations

1. To reposition the Subproject in relation to Network functions, whether the focus should be using the mass media for promotion, servicing the media workers by providing training and supplying information, monitoring media reports or networking media workers for the sake of advocacy; clear priorities and strategies have to be developed with respect to different focus;
2. To identify major targets to be influenced and utilized among newspapers, TV channels, etc., based on analysis of the changing trend in popular media;
3. To collaborate with tertiary education institutions to provide students studying mass media with training in gender perspective and domestic violence; it is considered more basic and easier to target university students than media workers;
4. To mobilize volunteers who are not of the profession of mass media but interested in media watch is a possibility not only to overcome manpower problem but also safeguard neutrality and avoid embarrassing media workers who may monitor reports published by the organizations they belonged to;
5. In media watch, in addition to identifying problematic reports, promoting outstanding reports is also an effective strategy to change the culture in mass media;
6. To identify and mobilize core members among media workers, university students is urgent to ensure sustainability concern;
7. To develop TOT in the long run in views of the lack of trainers and also a media kit for the use of media workers;
8. To collaborate with the Subproject on Website to provide on-line training and network media workers through promoting activities and/or establishing virtue network(s);
9. To explore collaboration with the Documentation Centre which may be able to provide support in media monitoring;
10. To network media workers outside Beijing by matching the districts that Network subprojects have been launched, e.g. Inner Mongolia, Shan Xi and Jiang Xi.

## **The Training Department**

### Stated objectives of the Second Phase

As stated in the initial assessment report submitted by the Subproject, the overall objectives are to integrate gender perspective into anti-domestic violence practices through training with a view to localize feminist theories in China and mainstream gender in practices of government and non-governmental organizations on domestic violence. Concrete objectives described in the Proposal for the Subproject are as follows:

1. To continue with the training for subproject members both in and outside Beijing;
2. To continue with the training for people of networks in and outside Beijing; and,
3. To train network members in ways and skills to combat domestic violence including conscious raising the public to combat domestic violence and mainstream gender perspective in the process of governmental actions and social activities against domestic violence.

Training target and beneficiaries include medical intervention workers (organizers and doctors), abusers, abused women, police, legal workers (including judges and procurators). Train the trainers (TOT) has been adopted as the main strategy.

### Evaluation meetings

1. A focus group was conducted with three participants in trainings conducted by the Department in the presence of the responsible person of the Sub-project, core members and also an internal collaborator.
2. Right after the focus group meeting, a meeting was conducted with the responsible person of the Sub-project, six core members while facilitated by one internal collaborator and an external collaborator.

The meetings were held at the office of the Network.

### Stakeholders involved:

- Participants of trainings
- Responsible person of the Subproject
- Core members of the Subproject who are also trainers
- A member of the Executive Council who acted as an internal collaborator

### Significant achievements

The three participants, who have joined the focus groups, coming from outside Beijing, have received trainings including those on TOT and subsequently became trainers. They have highly commended the effort of the Training Department in providing various training during the past few years which has helped them to start anti-domestic violence

work in the provinces they came from. They were particularly impressed by the ever new contents and the strong spirit of the trainers who taught from heart. Trainings have been designed appropriate to their levels and gradually became more in-depth. Participatory training approach, new and unique to the local contest, was met with unfamiliarity in the start and excitement and appreciation over time. According to these participants, effectiveness of training was evidenced in behavioral changes in frontline police officers, district judges and procurators.

Through TOT, impact has been magnified which was evidenced in places outside Beijing, in direct handling of domestic violence cases and beyond. Gender and development, women's political participation and women's right are areas that arouse attention among Network members, participants from district All-China Women's Federation.

### General observations

1. In the focus group meeting of participants, they have also shared their views on the inadequacy of the training, particularly in training materials which they considered too theoretical with insufficient operationalization of concepts, referencing to local case examples and applications in real life situations, which called for a need to improve training content.
2. As a result of the said inadequacies, participants, when becoming trainers in their work place, developed their own training materials from localized materials and case examples. They named this process indigenization. In fact, core members of the Subproject shared their knowledge about district offices of the All-China Women's Federation developing training manuals and there have been incidents in which obvious deviation from the gender perspective was evidenced. The concern of the how and what aspects of indigenization become acute.
3. Developing and updating training content in accordance with trends in the community, for example, the emphasis on mediation was proposed by trainees which deserve further exploration.
4. Participatory approach, central to feminist methodology, which emphasizes equality, participation, active learning through sharing and interaction, has been new to the local contest. The commitment and enthusiasm of core members to the approach was impressive and participants were encouraged to practice the approach in trainings they provide. Demonstration and practice of the approach has become part and partial though not the main focus of training. However, despite of the centrality of the approach, little effort has been evidenced in developing and consolidating it in the contest of China, NGOs and trainings in anti-domestic violence. The application of it in training offered by participants of TOT has also not been explored.
5. On the whole, there has been little study on the effectiveness of training other than

immediate pre-and post tests. To improving training, research can be conducted to consolidate effective approaches, methods and design.

6. According to planning, a wide variety of people were targets of training including medical intervention workers, police, legal workers, abusers and abused women. Though not included in planning, trainings were also provided to volunteers at community levels where multi-organizations collaboration in combating domestic violence was launched. Priorities and strategies of targeting became a concern in view of resources constraint in terms of manpower.
7. Training for victims and abusers is particularly a concern in positioning the Training Department. Different from training for other target groups which are change agents, service providers and law implementers, training for the abused and abusers is a kind of direct intervention on individuals. It is recognized that experimenting with these trainings can help to develop intervention which is significant in itself and is providing knowledge base for TOT and advocacy. In this consideration, developing training and intervention models for victims and abusers become a strategic move to ensure the movement is closely tied with the abused, for and with them.
8. It is noticed that victims have been involved on a voluntary basis in some training outside Beijing. However, it is significant for trainers to be sensitive to privacy, confidentiality and respect issues.
9. A series of training manuals have been published by the end of Phase One and then the responsible working group was dissolved. It was revealed that the manuals have not been widely publicized nor utilized in trainings offered by the Training Department. Some participants simply did not know about them. Reasons for the phenomena could be explained partly because some of them, for example, the TOT manual for police, has been developed far ahead of time and need. Members also regarded the lack of conscious efforts to promote these manuals, not even to participants of training courses, a significant factor.

#### Collaboration within

Cooperation was seen between this Subproject and those developing multi-organization collaboration by offering trainings to the personnel involved. Regarding the publicity of the published training manuals, more concerted effort needs to be developed with these subprojects and the Office.

#### About evaluation

It has been a practice of the Department to distribute evaluation questionnaires to participants before and after training. While this could help to collect immediate feedback on its content and format, it is considered insufficient to measure changes in values,

attitude and perspectives over time. Detail information about participants has not been analyzed with an intention to increase the understanding of targets of change including number, backgrounds, the subsequent use and development of training materials. Effectiveness of TOT deserves a greater concern in view of its significant function in the movement. Behavioral changes, relationship between consciousness raising and action are areas to be explored.

#### Sustainability concern(s)

While the initiation of trainers to develop their own training materials is encouraging and appreciated, there is a doubt in the consistency of values, perspectives and analysis transmitted. Sustainability concern for the Training Department is not so much in manpower and resources but the consolidation of gender perspective, NGO spirits and participatory approach in training in the process of indigenization by trainers. Information about these trainings would inform whether there has been a well integration of the gender perspective in those offered by government and quasi-government organizations.

#### Recommendations

1. To strengthen the operationalization of concepts, application and the use of typical case examples in developing training content; to integrate the how aspect into TOT; to update training content in accordance with trends in the community;
2. To further develop and consolidate the participatory model of training in the contest of China, NGOs and trainings in anti-domestic violence;
3. To ensure that the participatory approach is applied in trainings offered by participants of TOT to the greatest possibility and study the modifications;
4. To conduct research to evaluate the effectiveness of training approaches, methods and design; changes in values, attitudes and perspectives over time;
5. To study the indigenization of training, consolidate the knowledge and skills in developing localized materials for training;
6. To develop clear priorities and strategies in targets of training with community leaders and top level officials the higher priority in views of their high position power and therefore critical influences at community levels;
7. To be conscious about the role of trainings for victims and abusers in providing knowledge base for TOT and advocacy; to consider developing effective models of intervention and training to work with the groups;
8. To increase trainers' sensitivity in involving abused women and abusers in trainings to safeguard the principles of personal privacy, confidentiality, self-determination and respect of individuals;
9. To promote the published training manuals.

## **The Theoretical Research**

### Stated objectives

Quoted from the Proposal for Phase Two:

“The Research Department is supposed to concentrate on the four sub-projects of research on theory, on the comprehensive models of urban and rural community intervention and on the model of medical intervention on combating domestic violence.”

“Continuing the research on the theory and the practical subprojects of combating domestic violence, further improving and promoting the research on the intervention models of urban and rural community, and push forwards the theory research to build the framework of Chinese theory against domestic violence.”

This is a new subproject in Phase Two. To summarize the objectives, two areas are to be researched on, that is, theoretical framework and intervention models.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

A meeting was conducted with the responsible person of the sub-project, three core members, two researchers while facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator.

### Stakeholders involved:

- responsible person of the sub-project
- core members
- researchers invited to conduct research
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

### Significant achievements

A framework of the research report to be published has been worked out which includes both review of theories/perspectives and intervention targeted at different systems such as the community, judicial, medical, legislative and mass media systems.

### General observations

1. In the detail accounts of the leader of the Subproject, the establishment and operation has been far from smooth. Unlike other subprojects, its formation was characterized by a top-down process with proposals passed down from the Executive Council. The leader then had to recruit interested members who could contribute to theoretical research, the process of which was by no means easy. With considerable effort, the Subproject was launched by a few core members and two professors from the China Women’s College were invited to conduct a research. The

enthusiasm and perseverance of the leader of the Subproject was impressive.

2. Though the objectives of the Subproject has been stated clearly as conducting research to consolidate theoretical framework of understanding domestic violence and intervention models, expectation from the Executive Council was not clear about the final product, particularly the scopes and levels of knowledge to be developed. Though the lack of specific requirement has endowed the research group with autonomy, the mission of the Subproject to work for the Network has obliged the group to seek advice and instructions from the Executive Council. In this respect, directives and support from the Council were expected. While there was a prevailing climate of doing an assignment appointed from the top among group members, the perceived insufficient support from the Executive Council and the Office has caused frustration.
3. In fact, the functions of research and position of the Subproject in relation to the Network have not been worked out satisfactorily. The nature of theories and intervention models developed as descriptive or prescriptive, the status as official and representing, endorsed by Network members or a research owned by the researchers has not been made clear. While there is no doubt that academics from universities can contribute their knowledge and expertise, a shared mission and values is considered a pre-requisite for effective collaboration. Expectations from the Network and differentiation between academic research in education institutes and action research in an NGO have to be made clear.
4. In the original planning, the Subproject was to research on the theory and practice of multi-organizational collaboration experimented by subprojects launched in urban and rural communities and on medical intervention. Members then found out that these subprojects also have put research on intervention models into their planning. Division of labour among subprojects regarding research was not clear and there has not been any settled view on it.
5. When request to conduct research directly on the work of other subprojects was met with resistance, the researchers opted for a meta-analysis of intervention models based on secondary information provided by subprojects. While this is acceptable in view of the situation, participation of Network members and core members of other subprojects have to be involved to the greatest possibility. It is observed that there has been a lack of participation of stakeholders in consolidating the models on multi-organization collaboration.
6. In principle, a department on research can serve to provide theoretical and research backup for the Network as a whole, in support of advocacy and practice. Issues can be identified and action research conducted to reveal problems and inadequacies in combating domestic violence.

### Collaboration within

Great tension has been experienced between the Subprojects on Theoretical Research and subprojects that it would like to study. Communication with the Office and Executive Council was considered far from satisfactory.

### About evaluation

Detail progress reports have been drafted by the responsible of the Subproject. In view of the top priority of the group to complete a research report/ book, little attention has been paid to the issue of evaluation.

### Sustainability concern(s)

For this Subproject, clear definition of roles and functions, relationships with other subprojects are considered paramount rather than sustainability issue. Regarding manpower, members suggested the lack of a full time staff has hampered the progress.

### Recommendations

1. To learn from this experience, planning and forming sub-projects is critical to success. Involving potential members and leaders in the early stage would help developing clear expectations and cultivating sense of commitment and responsibility;
2. To work out concrete expectations on the Subproject and devise clear division of labour regarding research among subprojects; to reposition the Subproject in relation to Network objectives and functions;
3. To involve stakeholders in consolidating experiences and developing models of intervention; participatory approach can be adopted particularly when it involves experiences gained in other subprojects;
4. To review the role and function of research for the Network as a whole;
5. To explore collaboration with academic institutions and individual researchers which share the mission of the Network to combat domestic violence, its core values and ideologies anchored in feminism, its pioneer roles as a women's organization and an NGOs in the China contest.

## **Research in the Mode of Comprehensive Intervention in Domestic Violence by Multi-Organizations in Urban Communities and Spreading of Relevant Experiences**

Stated objectives of the Second Phase

A Pilot Subproject on the Comprehensive Intervention in Domestic Violence in Urban Communities” was started in 1999. By the end of the First Phase, a network was established at You An Men, a sub-district in Feng Tai District, with the participation of government, Party’s Committees, Women’s Federation, law execution bodies and others at sub-district level. Based on this achievement, the overall objectives of the Subproject for the Second Phase were developed which were stated in the Proposal are as follows:

“Explore effective mode of comprehensive intervention in domestic violence by urban community multi-organizational collaboration through this research and spread the relevant experiences in Feng Tai District according to well-planned proposals so that a theoretical and practical framework with special Chinese features to prevent and control domestic violence can be eventually worked out.”

The specific objectives are:

1. To further consolidate and improve the pilot sub-project on comprehensive intervention in domestic violence against women in urban communities and the network of community multi-organizational intervention in domestic violence in You An Men Sub-district, and promote the institutionalization and standardization of the work mode of urban community comprehensive intervention in domestic violence;
2. To carry out systematic assessment on the function and results of the network of urban community comprehensive intervention in domestic violence in You An Men Sub-district;
3. To spread the mode of urban community comprehensive intervention in domestic violence in other sub-districts in Feng Tai District and examine the feasibility of the spreading of the mode;
4. To make theoretical summarization on the mode of the pilot sub-project on comprehensive intervention in domestic violence against women by multi-organizations in urban communities in You An Men Sub-district;
5. To work out proposals of social policies to the government on the prevention and control of domestic violence in urban communities on the basis of the results of research.

To summarize, there are three closely related major focuses for the Subproject in the Second Phase including (1) consolidating experiences of the Pilot Project, (2) extending the application of the model to other sub-districts in Feng Tai, and (3) developing theoretical and practice models of multi-organizational collaboration in combating domestic violence in urban communities.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

1. A visit was made to You An Men meeting eight representatives from various organizations at sub-district level including the police, judicial court, street government office, street industrial office, street office of Women's Federation, residents' committee and a school together with five volunteers.
2. A short interview was conducted with a volunteer who was an abuser.
3. A meeting was held with two responsible persons of the sub-project facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator.

### Stakeholders involved:

- representatives of collaborating organizations
- volunteers
- abuser
- responsible persons of the Sub-project
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

### Major achievements

Though the development of the You An Men Project was no longer a focus of the Subproject in Phase Two, multi-organization collaboration has gathered great momentum and development continued on its own. Upon request, TOT has been provided to volunteers who were then involved in providing community education, organizing support groups for women victims and treatment groups for abusers, which was a new attempt not included in the planning.

In the meeting with collaborating organizations, representatives have highly valued the experience and achievement of the Pilot Project which has given them a great impetus. Training using participatory model provided by the Network was particularly appreciated. A three-fold strategy to combat domestic violence has been clearly identified including prevention, education and mediation. Participating organizations had a clear understanding of their roles and the objectives to be achieved and have developed concrete plan of further action, for example, the civil court has planned to collect written materials in corroboration in the next stage and the police to strengthen training on early identification. Volunteers have reported the educational activities and support groups they have organized. A shelter was set up in the community while transient population in the community has also become a target of intervention.

In order to consolidate experiences for the development of theoretical and practice models, leaders of the Subproject have conducted focus groups and participatory workshops with stakeholders from intervention organizations. It was envisaged that

materials collected could be analyzed further and publication would come out a few months later. Trainings for police, judges, officials of the judicial court and Women's Federation were also conducted at Feng Tai, Zhao Yang and Shi Jing Shan though a multi-organizational collaboration model was not yet set up.

#### General observations

1. It was revealed that the You An Men pilot project has been developed successfully with multi-organizational collaboration institutionalized and organizational inertia evidenced. The Pilot Project has also earned You An Men a great reputation which was a positive reinforcement. Commitment of the personnel involved in publicizing and promoting the experience has been confirmed which has become a valuable resource in promoting the model definitely.
2. While against domestic violence is regarded a strategy of women's movement to pursue gender equality, it has gradually become a point of intervention for community building and promoting harmonious community, themes advocated by the government recently. In handling domestic violence, mediation was emphasized. While it is encouraging to see domestic violence well integrated into the community, possibility of displacement of goals and core values promoted by the Network needs to be safeguarded against. Though leaders of the Subproject has perceived a room to redefine and develop understanding of mediation, harmonious family and community in the light of gender perspective, little discussion has been undergone among various parties.
3. The core Network members taking up a leading role in the Subproject, when collaborating with other organizations, have been conscious of the need to guarantee the implementation of core values and perspectives of the Network. It was revealed that disagreements between core members and partners of collaborating organization(s) might have greatly affected working relationships among leaders and imposed difficulties in achieving the objective of spreading the model to other sub-districts at Feng Tai. The Executive Council has played an active role in conflict resolution. Reviewing the incident objectively, core members opined that the role of keeper is significant while at the same time, a viable strategy can be worked out to achieve collaboration.
4. The significant role of Women's Federation at district, sub-district and street levels was fully recognized. Being a leading organization in the protection of women's right in China, mainstreaming anti-domestic violence in the All-China Women's Federation is definitely critical to the development of the movement. Regarding collaboration with the Women's Federation, learning from experiences, core members have proposed ways including (a) fostering mutual understanding in the

process of discussion, particularly in the early stage of working relationship building, (b) developing strategies of collaboration with increasing understanding of its operation, (c) identifying win-win intervention points, and (d) facilitating more communication about intervention methods.

5. An understanding of the power relationship among various organizations, their organizational structure and practices, for example, among Party, Government and Women's Federation, is essential to work at the community level;
6. Leadership in collaborating organizations is also critical to success and sustainability. Despite of the fact that multi-organizational collaboration has been largely institutionalized, people involved are critical. Commitment to combat domestic violence and understanding of the issue has been hampered by ongoing changes in personnel on the top and high turnover of staff at the frontline.
7. When a multi-organizational collaboration project on combating domestic violence has developed into an integral part of community intervention and become inertia, resources support is generally expected from the street level governments. However, in view of the fact that some communities are relatively deprived, funding support from the Network would certainly help to sustain effort and demand accountability.
8. The mobilization of volunteers at community level to combat domestic violence was new in the Second Phase of the Subproject. In fact, extensive participation of volunteers, most of them retired officials, is a Chinese characteristic. While their great effort and enthusiasm have been impressive, effectiveness of the activities and groups organized could be examined in order to foster improvement and further mobilization. Their relationship with the Network could also be strengthened so as to cultivate commitment and identity in a movement beyond community level.
9. Attempts to provide TOT to volunteers, for example, training in organizing support groups for the abused and abuser, was new also. Integrating social work methods in working with victims and abusers is a direction to be explored. The experience could be examined in order to pave the way for further development.
10. It was made clear in the planning that the development of the You An Men Project was no longer a focus of the Subproject in Phase Two but the spreading of the model to other sub-districts of Feng Tai and districts in Beijing. It was revealed that achievement in this aspect has been far from satisfactory due to unforeseeable obstacles in gaining support of personnel in other sub-districts/districts. Intensive effort would have to be made in order to mainstream the collaboration model in urban communities across Beijing which was considered beyond the capacity of the Subproject in Phase Two.

#### Collaboration within

Close collaboration was evidenced between this Subproject and the Training Department which provided TOT trainings to volunteers and the Subproject on Mass Media producing reports on activities organized. The assistance of the Executive Council was considered critical when problems came up in collaboration. Difficulties were experienced in the relationship with the Subproject on Theoretical Research due to a lack of clear division of work and coordination on research work.

#### About evaluation

In the evaluation meeting, responsible persons of the Subproject shared that in focus group meetings conducted with stakeholders of the collaboration project, evaluation of effectiveness has not been an emphasis. It was agreed that assessment of TOT and volunteer work could be strengthened.

#### Sustainability concern(s)

In view of the strong street level commitment at You An Men to keep things going and the mainstreaming of against domestic violence in various government organizations, sustainability of the project would not be a problem except that funding support for community programmes was considered critical. The possibility of spreading the urban collaboration model to other sub-districts/districts would be very much depended on the continuity of this Subproject in Phase Three.

#### Recommendations

1. To delineate clearly expectations towards the roles of core members who lead a subproject and their roles in liaising with collaborating organizations;
2. To develop viable strategies to establish collaboration with the Women's Federation, the chief partner in combating domestic violence, by consolidating experiences gained in this Subproject and other projects on community intervention in the past six years;
3. To build in a system of training and influences at community level to mitigate the negative effect of ongoing personnel changes on the top and high turnover of staff at the frontline level in order to ensure sustainability;
4. To examine the effectiveness of activities and groups organized by volunteers in order to foster improvement and further mobilization; to consolidate the experiences of extensive volunteer participation in combating domestic violence at community level;
5. To facilitate discussion to redefine and develop understanding of mediation, harmonious family and community in the light of gender perspective in order to strengthen and update training contents in accordance with new trends in the

- community; collaboration with the Training Department would certainly be helpful;
6. To secure funding support for multi-organizational collaboration projects at community level, particularly for those launched in deprived communities;
  7. To strengthen the relationship between the Network and volunteers in order to cultivate commitment and identity in a movement beyond community level;
  8. To examine the experience of integrating social work methods into TOT for volunteers in order to pave the way for further development;
  9. To complete the work on developing theoretical and practice models for multi-organizational collaboration in urban communities;
  10. To develop effective strategies of spreading the model in the China context based on an understanding of power relationships among organizations and community dynamics; working models of mainstreaming can be developed with experiences accumulated and strategies and steps conceptualized;
  11. To determine the roles and responsibilities of subprojects regarding research in the planning stage and to coordinate research efforts in relation to Network functions as a whole.

**Project of the Model of Rural Community Intervention  
and Prevention Against Domestic Violence  
With the Cooperation of the Multi-Organizations in Yanqing County, Beijing**

Stated objectives of the Second Phase

Similar to the Urban Subproject, a pilot project on multi-organizational collaboration in combating domestic violence was launched in a rural community in the First Phase, which was then extended to Phase Two. As stated in the Proposal for the Second Phase, the overall objective of the Subproject is “to further perfect the rural county-level model of community intervention against domestic violence in China, pushing the concept of illegitimacy of domestic violence and respecting women deep into people’s mind through the way of multi-organs cooperation, training, propaganda and handling the typical cases, finding out timely and efficiently prohibit and prevent domestic violence happened in the countryside. The model is due to be spread in Beijing first.”

The specific goals are as follows:

1. Further strengthening the close cooperation between the Women’s Federations and the legal organizations as well as various departments of the government, trying to establish a more fixed coordinating system.
2. Gradually expanding the scope of experiment on the basis of perfecting the two-level working stations of fighting against domestic violence, establishing working stations in the most villages of the county, forming a working network of anti-domestic violence covering the whole county.
3. Continuing to organize training on multi-subjects surrounding anti-domestic violence, expanding the types and numbers of the people benefited, in order to obtain more efficient training results.
4. Further strengthening the power of propaganda, adopting various ways in order to make more people aware of the harmfulness of domestic violence, learn how to prohibit and prevent it so as to form a good atmosphere of public opinion.
5. Handling the typical cases through the way of receiving, counseling and multi-organs cooperation, to protect the lawful rights and interests of the women abused by domestic violence.

The Project was conducted at Yanqing County, a typical agricultural community in Ba Da Ling Special Zone. The rural context is unique, characterized by deeply rooted traditional gender ideologies associated with relatively low education level and poor economic situation of residents. The county covers 15 townships across a vast mountain area with sparse population which has made public education and intervention to combat domestic violence difficult.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

1. A visit was made to Yanqing County meeting eight representatives from various organizations at district level including the office of Women's Federation, judicial court, public security office, procuratorate, a staff of a workstation on domestic violence set up under Women's Federation and a primary school teacher.
2. A short interview was conducted with a woman victim of abuse.
3. A meeting was held with two responsible persons of the sub-project facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator.

### Stakeholders involved:

- representatives of collaborating organizations
- staff of a work station
- an abused woman
- responsible persons of the Sub-project
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

### Major achievements

Similar to the You An Men Project where multi-organization collaboration has gathered great momentum, it was evidenced in the Yanqing County the expansion of work, strengthening of working relationship among organizations and formalization of collaboration in Phase Two. In the meeting with collaborating organizations, representatives have shared the effort they have made to strengthen their work on domestic violence with increasing understanding of their roles in collaboration. The sharing of the primary school teachers revealed a strong commitment to promote the cause via children which is a good entry point but has met with some structural constraints in the education system. Cognitive changes in frontline officials who have received training in Phase One and Phase Two were also reported including seeing relevancy of the issue to their work, changing perception of causes and increasing sensitivity in early identification.

Achievements in Phase Two, as shared during the site visit, were summarized in three major areas - training, publicity and handling of domestic violence cases. Launching extensive educational campaigns in remote mountain areas using a great variety of lively promotion strategies, expanding target of education to youth and students in addition to women and family and increasing the number of work station under the Women's Federation from three in 2002 to fifteen covering all counties which provides hotline, consultation and counseling services were some outstanding tasks. Trainings on gender and domestic violence, the new marriage law, women and laws or counseling have been provided for police, frontline officials of Women's Federation and courts, medical

workers, village government officials and abusers. Collaboration has been institutionalization into the work of these organizations.

### General observations

1. While it is encouraging to see domestic violence well integrated into the practice of multiple organizations, it was observed that some officials still regarded anti-domestic violence an additional task outside normal duties. This could be explained in the fact of actual increase in workload because their original work assignment has not been reduced accordingly. Mainstreaming, however, involves more than accepting additional work but integrating the concern into every aspects of work, for example, being sensitive to identify crisis in regular duties of the police or judicial court. Combating and handling domestic violence would gradually become part of their normal duties.
2. Leaders of the Subproject admitted that gender perspective has been less consciously applied in the operation among collaborating organizations. They went further to sound out that the application of gender concepts and theories, as demonstrated in trainings, has not been satisfactory. It could be more indigenized and more tailor made for different professions/disciplines. Specifically, trainings have not covered direct intervention in the community to work with residents, abused and the abusers.
3. As revealed in the interview with a woman victim, support and services provided by the Women's Federation has been received with gratefulness. However, it was also evidenced that there is still ample room for improvement particularly at the frontline level of the police. Handling cases of domestic violence requires great sensitivity and empathy to the needs and situation of victims.
4. It was encouraging to see victims who were willing to share their experiences for public welfare. However, in the process of mobilizing victims of abuse to expose themselves for the sake of training, publicity and/or reporting, it is significant for officials to be sensitive to privacy, confidentiality and respect issues.
5. The roles of responsible person/ leaders of subprojects and their working relationship are critical, particularly when they come from different background like the Network (an NGO) and Women's Federation (a quasi-government organization) in the case of this Subproject. It was found that the two leaders, one from the Network and another being a high level official of the Women's Federation, has developed a very close working relationship, which they agreed a factor of success for the Subproject. Trust and shared goals are identified basic to the relationship.
6. The significant role of Women's Federation in promoting and implementing the multi-organizational collaboration model has been fully demonstrated in this

Subproject. The County Women's Federation has shown a strong sense of ownership of the project in taking the lead. Though the leader of the County Women's Federation considered multi-organizational collaboration nothing new because joint meetings of representatives from various organizations have been a regular practice in the past working on women's protection and promotion of women's rights, she admitted that domestic violence is a new agenda and regular meetings on domestic violence specifically are held after the establishment of the Subproject. It has become a core concern which was not the case in the past.

7. The pairing up of leaders from the Network and a leading collaborating organization respectively, for example, Women's Federation in this case and the Tie Ying Hospital for the Subproject on Medical Intervention, is a practice to promote joint ownership, shared power and greater participation of leading collaborating organizations. Leaders from the Network are expected to play an active role to link the subprojects to the Network for the sake of communication and accountability, to be conscious of the need to guarantee the implementation of core values and perspectives of the Network and play the role of keeper in collaboration. It was revealed that collaborating relationship between this Subproject and the Network was relatively weak in Phase Two, characterized by basic administrative and financial reporting. Leaders have identified changes in organizational structure and manpower shortage in the Office the major causes. The roles of the leader from the Network, however, could also be strengthened.
8. Similar to the Urban Subproject, leadership of collaborating organizations is critical to success and sustainability. Despite of the fact that multi-organizational collaboration has been largely institutionalized, people involved are still critical. Commitment to combat domestic violence and understanding of the issue has been hampered by ongoing changes in personnel on the top and turnover of staff at the frontline which was also evidenced in rural communities. Core members had to pay continuous effort to influence the new personnel. However, there was an up-side to this issue. Staff, through transferring to other places, helped spreading the collaborative model of practice.
9. The establishment of working stations in all villages of the County was encouraging. Staff have been employed by the Women's Federation to operate the working stations. Handling typical cases through the way of receiving, counseling and multi-organizational cooperation is an objective of the Subproject in Phase Two. Experiences of all working stations are valuable and could be consolidated to further service development.
10. In Phase Two, little has been done to consolidate the experiences of multi-organizational collaboration in order to build up theoretical and practice

models for rural communities. Leaders of the Subproject proposed that a researcher could be assigned by the Network to study the intervention model of subprojects.

11. Resources for training were considered inadequate. Support in legal knowledge and operationalization of legal theories and concepts was also expected.
12. The County Women's Federation has expressed a strong will to continue the Subproject and to further develop and promote multi-organizational collaboration in rural communities. Better coordination in administrative work is requested such as work schedule and budgeting. At present, financial year for the Network, from April to March, is different from the dominant pattern of January to December. Longer time of notice for task completion would also be better.

#### Collaboration within

Close collaboration was evidenced between this Subproject and the Training Department, which provided trainings for the various target groups in the County. Relationship with the Office and Executive Council was relatively weak in Phase Two.

#### About evaluation

In the evaluation meeting, responsible persons of the Subproject shared that little effort has been spent on systematic evaluation of the intervention model in the Second Phase.

#### Sustainability concern(s)

In view of the strong commitment of the leader of Women's Federation and the mainstreaming of against domestic violence in various government organizations, sustainability of the rural project at Yanqing County is definitely not a problem. The spreading of the model to other rural communities has also been started off. However, it was revealed that in some areas, for example, the Hai Dian County, top-down approach with command from the top was adopted instead of participatory approach promoted by the Network. Again, the sharing of core values and perspectives is critical in ensuring sustainability of the spirit of the Network.

#### Recommendations

1. To mainstream domestic violence into the practice of collaborating organizations by integrating the concern into every aspect of their work;
2. To consolidate experiences of various organizations such as mediation conducted by the judicial bureau, collecting corroborative evidence by the judicial court; in fact, theoretical and practice models consist of two parts: collaboration among organizations and actual implementation in individual organizations;
3. To strengthen the operationalization of gender and legal concepts and their

application in multi-organizational intervention at community level; to ensure resources for training are adequate; to strengthen TOT trainings which is particularly effective in view of the vast geographical areas of rural communities;

4. To collect and analyze systematically service details, information of users of working stations which are providing direct intervention; to develop procedures of case handling and referral and to consolidate experiences of counseling and consultation in handling cases;
5. To clarify expectations on leaders of subprojects, their roles in communication with the Network, implementation of core values and perspective and accountability; relationship between subprojects, the Office and the Executive Council is a central concern of the Network as a whole;
6. To build in a system of training and influences at community level in order to mitigate the negative effect of ongoing personnel changes on the top and high turnover of staff at the frontline in order to ensure sustainability, the same as the Urban Subproject;
7. To increase officials' sensitivity, in mobilizing abused women and abusers victims of abuse to expose themselves for the sake of training, publicity and/or reporting, to safeguard the principles of personal privacy, confidentiality, self-determination and respect of individuals;
8. To provide research support for subprojects not intended to or do not have the capacity to conduct research; to delineate clearly division of role and responsibilities between subprojects and the Subproject on Theoretical Research;
9. To develop strategies of spreading the model to other sub-districts, attending to both the process of setting up the model and substantial issues of operation;
10. To explore further possibility to revise administrative arrangements such as work schedule and budgeting in order to facilitate smooth collaboration.

## **Project on the Research in the Model of Intervention in Domestic Violence by the Medical System**

### Stated objectives in the Second Phase

The Subproject was started in May 2000 with strong support from leadership of the Feng Tai Public Health Bureau. A pilot project was set up at Tie Ying Hospital through training of doctors, nurses and management personnel, to experiment a multi-organizational collaboration model of intervention in a medical service setting. According to the Proposal for the Second Phase, the overall objective of the Subproject is “to further explore and research in the feasibility of medical intervention in domestic violence in China and expand and develop the achievements in the first phase.”

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Make through quantitative and qualitative research in the achievements of the first phase of the Project within a larger range and draw a conclusion on the necessity and feasibility of intervention by the medical system in domestic violence against women in China.
2. Develop a team of trainers that consists of medical workers and social workers to carry out intervention in domestic violence by the medical system.
3. Spread the experience of Tie Ying Hospital of medical intervention in domestic violence and conduct training on the medical workers of the relevant consulting rooms in district hospitals within the health system of Feng Tai District of Beijing in medical intervention in domestic violence against women.
4. Select proper hospitals and networks of combating domestic violence out of Beijing and conduct training in medical intervention in domestic violence on them.
5. Conduct training on the trainers (project members) outside Beijing and set up a team of trainers.
6. Further improve the training manual of medical intervention in domestic violence.
7. Have the video made for broadcasting in the waiting halls in hospitals to spread the knowledge of medical intervention in domestic violence and other publicity materials.

Medical system is perceived as an effective contact and intervention point on domestic violence. The benefit of victims of domestic violence is the ultimate concern. The context of medical system reform is also relevant. Responsible persons of the Subproject and the Tie Ying Hospital experimental project perceived domestic violence an entry point to reform the medical system from the dominant biological model to a more comprehensive biological-psychological-social intervention model which is more in line with contemporary medical service development.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

A meeting was held at Tie Ying Hospital with the President as chairperson and six core group members who were doctors. Two representatives from Zhang Jia Kou of Hebei Province also joined the meeting, one from the Jian Guo Hospital and another from Zhang Jia Kou Women's Federation. The focus of evaluation was the Tie Ying experimental project and the extension of its work outside Beijing. The Feng Tai medical system as a whole was not examined due to the absence of responsible persons but the Tie Ying experience certainly could shed light on the operation of the Subproject and its achievement. The meeting was facilitated by an internal collaborator and the External Collaborator.

Stakeholders involved:

- President of Tie Ying Hospital who is also the responsible person of the experimental project
- core members of the Tie Ying Project who are volunteer medical professionals
- representative of the Jian Guo Hospital at Zhang Jia Kou
- representative of Women's Federation of Zhang Jia Kou
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

Major achievements

Under the leadership of the President, a core group was set up. Members meet regularly to monitor work on domestic violence. Significant achievements have been attained in Phase Two which included the followings:

1. publishing a simplified version of manual on medical intervention for easy carry and referencing;
2. developing an indigenized training manual drawing references from overseas materials;
3. improving the design of registration cards and consultation record; developing a simple questionnaire to collect background information of users and an application form for assistance;
4. integrating into the hospital administration system the handling of domestic violence cases; institutionalizing the concern and formalizing procedures and requirements;
5. setting up a Help Centre for Victims of Domestic Violence by mobilizing voluntary participation of doctors who take turn during off-duty hours;
6. creating awareness among medical professionals the need for multi-organizational collaboration in order to provide comprehensive assistance to abused women;
7. providing fee assistance for victims who are deprived;
8. conducting follow-up phone interviews of women victims to identify service needs;
9. analyzing cases information to foster a greater understanding of domestic violence in

the community;

10. launching extensive pre-employment training for university doctor graduates;
11. extending work procedures and formalized practices to seven hospitals in the district;
12. producing materials for publicity;
13. providing support in training for a pilot project outside Beijing;

The strong commitment and enthusiasm of the leaders as well as a group of fifty volunteer doctors, 10% of the total number, explained the magnificent work. Social responsibilities of medical professionals have been fully realized in the project. Radical changes in mentality were evidenced among medical professionals such as taking on concepts of holistic health and humanistic approach in intervention.

#### General observations

1. The ability to mobilize doctors to be volunteers to implement the Help Centre and provide training is a critical factor of success for the pilot project. The capacity to recruit and sustain the motivation of committed volunteers is strength unique to the Tie Ying Hospital which may not be replicable. Also, actual operation of hospitals may vary. The model, when extending to other hospitals, may need to be modified according to their characteristics.
2. Relying on voluntary manpower may limit the possibility of promoting the model beyond the hospital, given all their other commitments.
3. Medical professionals have been performing the role of social workers when providing support services for women victims. While their contribution was greatly appreciated, mobilizing the support of social work professionals in collaboration with social service organizations and social work training institutes can be explored.
4. There has been inadequate number of trainers and resources for training, particularly in providing support to pilot projects outside Beijing.
5. Among targets of trainings, core members agreed that leaders and officials of the public health system are of higher priority in view of their critical influence in the medical system.
6. Similar to the subprojects on intervention model in urban and rural communities, changes of personnel at top level of the Public Health Bureau and district government offices as well staff turnover in the hospital demanded continuous effort in training and establishing collaborative relationship.
7. Follow-up phone calls have been conducted by doctors exploring service needs of service users. Feedback on services was not a focus.
8. As learnt from the Tie Ying model, a strategy to start off an experimental project was to identify and confirm the commitment of passionate individuals in the system, for example, the former President of the Hospital. Researching on development strategies

and effective model of intervention was in the strategic plan of the Subproject in Phase Two. However, little has been done in this area.

9. In the evaluation meeting, participants opined that the lack of overseas exchange in Phase Two has deprived them opportunities to gain new insight for further development of intervention model;
10. A negative experience with the mass media has taken place some time ago. This painful experience has served to heighten the awareness of medical professionals the need to use the mass media effectively.
11. The core group members were very much conscious of the application of gender perspective, for example, in directing questions to be asked during patient consultation, and have been sensitive to issues of confidentiality and respect of individuals. Gender sensitivity can be further strengthened by attending to subjective feelings and views of victims.
12. Resources support for spreading the model outside Beijing was considered inadequate.
13. To summarize the uniqueness of the medical intervention model experimented by Tie Ying Hospital, comprehensive pre-employment training, establishing a core working group, integrating intervention on domestic violence into the hospital administration system and providing holistic intervention beyond medical care are the main features.

#### Collaboration within

Though communication between the Tie Ying experimental project and the Network was mainly informational, the responsible person of the project regarded it appropriate in the context of a medial service setting where autonomy of medical professionals is needed while a responsible person of the Subproject has been closely communicating with the Network. After the incident of misleading reporting by mass media, core members were also alert of the need to learn more about effective media advocacy. This is an area that collaboration with the Subproject on Mass Media can be explored. More support from the Network on resources and opportunities for overseas exposure was also requested.

#### About evaluation

It was revealed that there has been little effort in systematically evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention model in Phase Two.

#### Sustainability concern(s)

The leadership of the Public Health Bureau of Feng Tai district of Beijing Municipality has been fully supporting the Project throughout the two phases. Given also the enthusiasm and commitment of the medical professionals involved and the

institutionalization of the concern of domestic violence into hospital administration system, capacity for sustainability was strong at Tie Ying Hospital except that the sole reliance on doctor volunteers could become a factor of uncertainty. Capacity to promote the model to other hospitals at Feng Tai as well as outside Beijing would be determined by the availability of resources, effective strategies of implementation in different contexts and also commitment of leadership.

### Recommendations

1. To consider recruiting volunteers such as youth to help organizing community education programmes;
2. To strengthen TOT in order to develop manpower resources for trainings both at Feng Tai and outside Beijing;
3. To explore collaboration with social welfare organizations and social work training institutes in order to tap resources of social workers;
4. To conduct research on development strategies in a hospital setting and integrate it into trainings for other hospitals;
5. To study the process of service delivery in the Hospital and Help Centre in order to develop a model of multi-organizational collaboration with medical services being the centre point;
6. To explore the possibility of giving women victims the choice of sex of medical doctors providing consultation;
7. To provide training support for medical professionals in order to strengthen their capacity in media promotion and advocacy;
8. To explore resources for overseas exchange in view of the newness of medical intervention on domestic violence in China;
9. To develop resources support for spreading the model outside Beijing.

## Reports on The Office

### Role and functions of the Office

Stated in the Phase Two Proposal:

“The Office for the Project of Domestic Violence in China - Research, Intervention and Prevention plays a pivotal role for this Project and act as a service unit and is responsible for the administration of the whole Project, organization, communication and coordination with the network members of the Project both in and outside Beijing in order to accomplish all the predetermined plans and achieve the objectives of the Project.”

The specific work plan is as follows:

1. On the basis of the achievements of the first phase of this Project, we will further develop the whole network of the Project and try to amplify the Office.
2. Launch activities in fighting against domestic violence for the Project and sponsor a workshop or meeting for the exchange of experience at the end of year 2003.
3. Sponsor the publication of all the achievements in the work of fighting against domestic violence by the Project and its sub-projects.
4. Assist each and every sub-project in their organization of various activities and liaison with other parties concerned.
5. Properly manage the financial work of the general Project and every division.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

A meeting was conducted with all staff including the Director, administrative assistant, financial assistant, two temporary staff and the responsible staff of the Documentation Centre, facilitated by an internal collaborator and the external collaborator.

### Stakeholders involved:

- Staff
- an internal collaborator who is also a member of the Executive Council

### Major achievements

Key roles of the Office have been identified as servicing, administration, communication and coordination in relation to Network members and subprojects in and outside Beijing. It was revealed that despite of manpower shortage and unstable leadership caused by staff turnover, the Office has managed to maintain a smooth functioning in administrative work. Servicing members and subprojects was performed upon requests while some coordination work was evidenced, for example, in conducting evaluation, annual meetings and activities.

### General observations

1. While the Office has been expected to play a pivotal role in accomplishing the objectives of the Network, it has been very much hampered by ongoing manpower shortages and changes, particularly at the directorate level, in Phase Two. Negative effect was evidenced in the delay of tasks and also inability to implement work for improvement. Contingency plans have been developed under the directive of the Executive Council, for example, employing an Assistant to Director instead of a Deputy Director for capacity building of staff. However, they have not been proved effective.
2. The terms of reference of the Director, as stated, dictated responsibilities “in propaganda and popularization of the Network, execution, management and development of the Project, supervision and assessment.” It was all too obvious that these responsibilities are beyond the capacity of one Director. In view of heavy workload, the Director has identified public relations as the mostly affected area which included expressing official views of the Network and also liaison with the funding body.
3. The lack of manpower and high turnover of leadership has brought difficulties to other staff in the Office who is responsible for general administration and finance. Though a management system has already been set up, actual implementation was affected by style of leadership. Ever changing instructions and expectations from leaders has deprived them a sense of achievement in their work.
4. The shortage of manpower has also affected the work of the staff responsible for the Documentation Centre who has to share the workload of the Office. Processing of materials for the Centre might be delayed.
5. It was revealed that the Office has to perform a great volume of communication and coordination work both external and internal to the Network which was very time consuming and inefficient. While this is a must cost to pay with an aim to facilitate participation, the workload incurred might not have been realistically anticipated, resulting in overloading and shifting of priority.
6. The Office has also taken up the role of public relations in entertaining visitors to the Network which might not have been expected. This has added to the strain of manpower shortage.
7. There is a lack of personnel who are competent in foreign language while at the same time familiar with the work of the Network. Communication with the funding body has been hindered, as a result.
8. Induction of new staff was made difficult by the short of manpower which might aggravate and perpetuate the problem.

9. Relationship between the Office and subprojects was identified a problematic area. The authority of the Office in relation to subprojects has not been made clear, whether it is a supervising, monitoring, servicing or simply a channel of communication with the Executive Council. Administrative staff have encountered difficulties in coordinating and asking for compliance from subprojects, for example, in financial reporting. There have been occasional challenges from responsible persons of subprojects to the authority of the staff.
10. The structure of having an Executive Council supervising the Office is new in Phase Two. In this structure, relationship between the Office and the Executive Council has to be differentiated clearly in lines of authority, accountability and division of responsibilities. Though a framework of administration has been worked out by the Executive Council, staff shared that problems came up during implementation were numerous which called for ongoing support and directives from the Executive Council. Division of work was not clear either, for example, whether self-evaluation should be led by the Director or the Executive Council. For external relations, since both the Office and the Executive Council have been involved, differentiation in levels and targets needs to be worked out.
11. Technical difficulties in personnel management have been identified, for example, purchase of employment insurance and design of employment contracts.
12. The Office has called for a review not only in its operation but also its composition, structure and functions. In the evaluation meeting, a preliminary idea about structure was proposed which include two directors overseeing administration/management of subprojects and external relations. Division of work among the two can be based on nature of tasks, whether they are standing or temporary, or subprojects. Number of administrative assistant was suggested to be increased to two.
13. On the whole, staff of the Office appreciated and enjoyed very much the team spirit characterized by both cooperation and division of labor. Experimenting and setting up a model of NGO administration is also a clear mission of the Network. It is encouraging that staff shared the commitment and excitement to explore possibilities to run the Office in ways different from that of conventional bureaucratic management.

#### About evaluation

Due to manpower shortage, it is observed that staff have been tied up with unforeseeable/unplanned tasks and those urgently required with little room to review what has been taking place. In order to understand the functioning of the Office, duties of and division of labor among staff can be recorded and analyzed to review the actual implementation. Similar to subprojects, output can be measured by collecting data about

tasks while quality of service and operation can be assessed by involving stakeholders in focus group meetings or interviews.

#### Sustainability concern(s)

Commitment and stability of leadership and staff is crucial to the effective functioning of the Office. The Executive Council has encountered difficulties in recruiting personnel who are committed to both the cause of anti-domestic violence and the spirit of non-governmental organizations and at the same time, possesses the capability to lead. This is not difficult to understand in view of the newness of the Network to the local context but there is a hope that situation would improve with time. Also, induction of new staff including an orientation to the cause, core values and culture of the organization is also critical for sustainability.

#### Recommendations

1. To solve the problem of manpower shortage and high turnover, an overall review of the Office, not only in its operation but its composition, structure, functions and authority would be fundamental;
2. To delineate clear division of work, authority and responsibilities among the Office, subprojects and the Executive Council;
3. To realistically assess the workload of the Office in communication, coordination and public relation work;
4. To manage with a perspective of human resource development; staff, volunteers and core members are valuable human resources to be developed, sustained and managed;
5. To perform ongoing review of the operation of the Office by studying output measured by collecting data about tasks and quality of service and operation;
6. To explore and experiment a culture of administration coinciding with that of NGOs and women's organization.

## **Report on the Executive Council**

### Role and functions of the Council

As mentioned above, the Executive Council-Office structure implemented in Phase Two was new to the Network. The restructuring was launched with an aim to prevent a conflict of interests and to formalize the structure of the organization differentiating clearly the management and operational levels. According to the Proposal,

“The council is the organ of decision-making and supervision which is to be elected by all the sub-projects and network members in Beijing in April, 2003. The candidates will be recommended by all the leading persons of each sub-project and the Management Committee.”

The Executive Council consists of seven members, one chairperson and six members. Chairperson and vice-chairperson are elected by the Council. In addition to decision making and supervision mentioned in the Proposal, the Council is also responsible for the survival of the Network, which is, fund-raising.

### Evaluation meeting(s)

An evaluation meeting was conducted with six members of the Executive Council facilitated by the External Collaborator.

### Stakeholders involved:

- Chairperson and vice-chairperson
- members

### Major achievements

Facing the problem of manpower shortage and high turnover in the Office, the Executive Council has been heavily involved in personnel issues and also devising contingency plans to handle the situation throughout the three years of Phase Two. A committee on recruitment was established. Monitoring and supervision of the Office was accomplished by reporting from the Director in Council meetings. The Council has also been initiative in identifying issues/ themes for discussion.

### General observations

1. Being the top level of the Network, the performance of the Executive Council is extremely critical to the success of the Network as a whole. The External Collaborator is greatly impressed by the commitment and enthusiasm of the members and their great effort in running, developing and perfecting the Network.
2. Some problems were identified in the evaluation meeting, mainly related to

delegation of authority to the Office and also relationship with subprojects. While the idea of separating decision making and management levels to ensure rational administration was well recognized and appreciated by Council members, it was revealed less so among core members of subprojects. Some of them failed to use proper channel to communicate with the Executive Council. Tension was also aroused because the Office was not be given full authority in managing the subprojects on the one hand, accountability of subprojects has not been clearly defined on the other. As a consequence of all these, relationship between subprojects, the Office and the Council was fraught with difficulties.

3. Recruitment and selection of staff for the Office has been a difficult job for the Council. Members admitted the lack of a great care in selecting staff has in a way caused a high staff turnover.
4. Preventing interest conflict and corruption of power/ resources is the major concern in organizational restructuring at the beginning of Phase Two. The move has been fully endorsed by Executive Council members. However, the consequence in weakening relationship with the subprojects was unexpected.
5. The Executive Council is supposed to monitor direction in order to ensure the Network is progressing towards desirable ends. However, it is not entirely a matter of administrating tasks and managing the Office. Integrating core values, feminist ideologies and gender perspective into every aspect of the Network including the design of organization structure, recruitment of staff, formation of subprojects and mobilizing active and committed participants, is crucial. The leading role of the Executive Council is best seen in building in a structure that sustains and implements values, perspectives and direction of the Network.
6. While seeking funding support is essential for survival, agenda of the Network can be developed beyond. Positioning the Network as a women's organization pursuing gender equality and an NGO actualizing principles of equality, participation, public interest and accountability, against domestic violence is perceived as a starting point. Promoting the movement requires more conscious effort in mobilizing participation, organizing groups and platforms for broader concerns.

#### About evaluation

In order to understand fully the performance of the Executive Council in relation to its roles and functions, agenda items and time use in Council meetings are materials revealing the actual implementation. Similar to subprojects, output can be measured by collecting data about tasks, issues discussed and handled while quality of work can be assessed by involving stakeholders in focus group meetings or interviews.

### Recommendations

1. To improve the operation and increase efficiency of the Executive Council by forming work groups or committees responsible for specific tasks such as personnel and financial management;
2. To review the overall structure of the Network with an aim to delineate clearly roles and responsibilities of subprojects, the Office and Executive Council and their interrelationships;
3. To encourage or arrange Council members to join and become active members of subprojects in order to strengthen communication between Executive Council and subprojects;
4. To review the procedures/ process that responsible person/ leaders of subprojects are appointed; democratic participation is to be facilitated as much as possible;
5. To build in a structure that facilitates sustaining and implementing core values, perspectives and direction of the Network, for example, regular sharing meetings for leaders of subprojects, staff and Executive Council members;
6. To make conscious effort in mobilizing participation, organizing groups and platforms for broader concerns in line with the positioning of the Network being a women's organization pursuing gender equality and an NGO actualizing principles of equality, participation, public interest and accountability; capacity for action is a significant concern;
7. To plan for a move beyond the agenda of against domestic violence, for example, concern of violence against women, gender equality in development and political participation, in the long run by exploring funding support and making small steps further.

## **Overall Observations and Recommendations**

It is evident from documentations, field visits, focus group meetings with stakeholders as well as evaluation meetings with all sub-projects, the Office and Executive Council, that the Network Combating Domestic Violence has done a brilliant work in promoting women's welfare through changing dominant gender oppressive views on family relationship in general and wife abuse in particular which has been core to traditional Chinese culture. Not only have those ideologies been radically altered but mainstreaming of gender perspective and institutionalizing multi-organizational collaboration practice in combating domestic violence has been promoted widely in and outside Beijing with a remarkable success. The success can be attributed to two factors: 1) the clear mission of the Network and 2) the internalization of the gender perspective by active members which is widely promulgated among collaborating partners. The active participation of members who are amateurs has provided vitality to the movement.

To reiterate the understanding behind this self-evaluation exercise, the Executive Council of the Network has determined to launch it out of a strong will to strive for excellence by identifying areas for improvement, consolidating experiences as well as cultivating an organizational culture characterized by commitment to sharing, openness, reflective learning and accountability. Reviewing the operation of the Network as a whole in Phase Two, a few issues that are worth further examination are summarized as follows:

### 1. Sustainable development of the organization

Organizational development in terms of sustainability has been examined for each subproject. Manpower is a common problem encountered by a number of the projects including the documentation centre, mass media, website and urban communities which were led by a few dedicated volunteer members who have been responsible for nearly all aspects of the projects, ending up very much overloading.

In addition to manpower, the transmission and sustaining of commitment to the cause of anti-domestic violence, identification to a movement informed by the gender perspective and other core values is another concern particularly in projects involving many collaborating organizations and among TOT participants who are to provide training on their own. Surprisingly, resources have not been a major issue of concern among subprojects except that an aspiration for a full time staff for subprojects was shared by some. Among a few projects such as that on urban communities, rural communities and medical intervention, their continuity in Phase Three was considered critical for further spreading the multi-organizational collaboration model.

Recruiting full time staff, given that resources are available, is without doubt an easy

remedy for manpower problem. However, the Network must not lose sight of its mission and nature as promoting a social movement in which mobilizing active involvement of volunteers is paramount. The roles of staff and members have to be carefully worked out in order not to stifle the enthusiasm of the latter.

## 2. Collaboration within Network

As observed, collaboration among subprojects was not largely satisfactory except for some which have had specific roles to play in relation to others, for example, the Training Department. Ample potentials and possibilities of collaboration revealed in the evaluation exercises have not been well aware and made use of by subprojects. Amidst pressured task schedules, it was easy for subprojects to have strayed from the overall picture of the Network and what other subprojects have been performing. In view of this, strengthening communication among them is a practical way to improve but visualizing the different roles of various subprojects in relation to the overall functions and mission of the Network would fundamentally alter the way subprojects are designed and implemented.

## 3. Implementing organizational restructuring

Organizational restructuring is inevitable to a new organization which is also a pioneer in its cause. In view of the characteristic of the Network as an NGO which promotes bottom-up participation and equality, the process of restructuring including that of establishing subprojects - formulating objectives, setting priorities and appointing leaders - has proven critical. Not only that participation opportunity is to be opened to all Network members, leadership of subprojects and governing committees is best elected given ground rules guarding against interest conflicts are clear. There is a principle that democratic participation is to be facilitated as much as possible. It is also significant to design a framework for each subproject/ unit which covers roles and responsibilities, priorities of work, evaluation and accountability in relation to the overall objectives of the Network in the early stage of formation, best contributed by a great majority, if not all, Network members. Participation of subproject members in working out execution plans has to be facilitated to the fullest extent.

## 4. Administering an NGO

As a movement organization and also an NGO managing a sizable funding to implement services of a wide scope, the Network has experienced tension in its administration, rejecting conventional bureaucratic style of management which is considered inappropriate to the nature of organization but experiencing difficulties in requesting compliance from subprojects when experimenting alternative ways. Despite of any struggle, administrative requirements have been imposed by the funding body which the

Network is obligated to fulfill. Accountability of subprojects was an issue raised in evaluating the operation of the Office and the Executive Council. In this respect, functions and authority of the Office and the Executive Council, and their inter-relationship, have to be clearly delineated. As revealed in Phase Two, the lack of these has proved detrimental to the operation of the Network on the whole. Defining roles of the Office, in particular, is significant, whether it is servicing, monitoring and/or supervising. Regarding subprojects, both service accountability and administrative accountability can be imposed. The former is implemented in re-elections of leadership based on performance while the latter requires clear instructions on reporting and line of authority.

#### 5. Integrating gender perspective

Among feedback from stakeholders, particularly participants of trainings and also officials of collaborating organizations, inadequate operationalization of concepts, theories application and referencing to local case examples in training contents are common. Integrating the how aspects such as the participatory training approach and mainstreaming strategies into TOT, updating training contents in accordance with trends of development in macro policy and the community are also areas proposed. Though combating domestic violence has been largely institutionalized into practices of organizations at community level, it was observed that there is still room for mainstreaming targeting at its full integration into the system of work and daily operation. Gender sensitivity can also be strengthened in services delivery by paying greater attention to feelings and views of women victims. In collaborating with the abused and abusers in training, safeguarding the principles of personal privacy, confidentiality, self-determination and respect of individuals is also a must.

Being an organization promoting mainstreaming of gender perspective, its role in experimentation and demonstration is beyond doubt. Integrating feminist ideologies and gender perspective into every aspect of the Network including the design of organization structure, recruitment of staff, formation of subprojects and mobilizing active and committed participants, is crucial. The leading role of the Executive Council is best seen in building in a structure that sustains and implements values, perspectives and direction of the Network.

#### 6. Functions of research

A clash was evidenced when there was a subproject exclusively set up to conduct research on the works of other subprojects but at the same time, target subprojects have had integrated research into their work plan. Being a pioneer project on combating domestic violence in China, building up theories and practice models with Chinese

characteristics is definitely tempting and worth attempting. However, the functions of research in relation to the overall objectives of the Network have to be worked out strategically. This is particularly true when the Network has identified advocacy its principal role in the future for which theoretical and action research can be essential backup. It is a part of the overall strategy of the Network to determine the number, types and levels of research, and the scopes and levels of knowledge to be developed which would provide the necessary support to the Network in achieving its desirable ends.

#### 7. Multi-organizational collaboration model

Three experimental projects on multi-organizational collaboration in combating domestic violence have been conducted in an urban community, a rural community and also a medical service setting for nearly six years. Reports are expected from the Subproject on Theoretical Research and also the Subproject on Urban Communities very soon which would provide concluding evaluation of the experiences with a view to build up theoretical and practice models. In the self-evaluation exercise, several issues common to the three projects have been identified including the role of leadership as a keeper in collaboration with partner organizations, the need for resources and expertise support in community intervention, the need to strengthen accountability and the potential to expand the contribution of volunteers and the support needed from the Network. Consolidating effective ways to collaborate with Women's Federation is also an area of concern. Though differences are expected among the three projects, commonness can be identified in a hope to develop an overall framework of collaboration across different types of communities.

#### 8. Institutionalizing evaluation

In order to strive for excellence, and also fulfill administrative need of accountability, evaluation is regarded an integral part of any practice. Evaluation is, therefore, always both idealistic and political. The lack of an overall assessment framework and measuring indicators for Phase Two was considered an obstacle to evaluate effectiveness objectively. In fact, this self-evaluation exercise was conducted under the constraints of limited information about characteristics of users and their feedback in some subprojects such as mass media, documentation centre, website, training and the three projects on community intervention. It follows that a more systematic review with clear indicators and evaluation methods stipulated has to be built into planning. It is also a must to develop an understanding among stakeholders the rationale behind the evaluation practice, particularly when it is sensitive in a perceived unequal relationship between subprojects and the governing committees/ bodies.

#### 9. Overseas networking

Establishing overseas network would be facilitating several ends. It would help exploring funding support, collecting overseas materials, exchanging knowledge and skills in intervention, learning from other countries experiences in promoting a movement against domestic violence/ violence on women. This is emphasized in view of the newness in many aspects of the Network as an organization - its nature, objectives, central values and core perspective of gender, in China.

#### 10. Positioning the Network

Ultimately, positioning the Network is the most important task for all members and also the Executive Council, after experimenting it for six years. Clear positioning, not only would govern the design of organizational structure, setting up of subprojects/units, networking strategies, etc but also involve identification of core values, to name a few proposed by core members during evaluation: equality, participation, mutual sharing, transparency, accountability, public welfare not personal interest, democracy and shared power. It is essential to build in a structure that facilitates sustaining and implementing core values, perspectives and direction of the Network, for example, regular sharing meetings for leaders of subprojects, staff and Executive Council members.

Positioning the Network as a women's organization pursuing gender equality and an NGO actualizing principles of equality, participation, bottom-up, public interest and accountability, against domestic violence is perceived as a starting point. Promoting the movement requires more conscious effort in mobilizing participation, organizing groups and platforms for broader concerns. Developing capacity for action by mobilizing a wide participation of empathetic individuals and groups is significant. In the long run, in order to plan for a move beyond the agenda of against domestic violence, for example, concern of violence against women, gender equality in development and political participation, strategies have to be developed to explore funding support and establish/ network sister organizations.

## **An Epilogue**

Thank you very much for inviting me to be an external collaborator in the self-evaluation exercise, and so, granting me a valuable opportunity to participate in the women's movement in China. In accomplishing the task, I am greatly indebted to the Office and also the Executive Council for all their support in sharing with me important information, arranging all the meetings, visits and interviews. I have met more than eighty persons, participated in eleven meetings, two visits and two individual interviews during the two field trips I made to Beijing. It turns out to be an amazing experience to me! In less than a month's time, from knowing very little about the Network, I have gained a thorough understanding of it. Drawing reference from my experiences in the women's movement and working experiences in NGOs for more than twenty years in Hong Kong, I have attempted to share with all the participants genuinely my views, thoughts, feelings of joy and worries. This wonderful experience, again, proves the virtues of authentic sharing and collaboration in an equal footing.

Looking back at the self-evaluation exercise, however, I am obliged to highlight the constraints that would remind us the limitation of its findings. Though participation has been facilitated to the fullest extent, due to tight schedules of the two field trips, only limited time for discussion was allowed for each unit and some core participants were not able to join the meetings for various reasons. Also, because of time constraint, I could not go directly to the participants to collect feedback on the evaluation process and the findings but have to rely on internal collaborators and the Office. Finally, as a collaborator being an outsider to the context of Beijing and China, though I have been very much conscious of the centrality of localization, there is no excuse that my experiences and analysis being shaped by the social and political context of which I come from might have colored my observation. In light of this, a critical reading of this report is invited. Developing indigenized and locally specific knowledge is, above all, essential and critical to the Network.

Last but not least, I must acknowledge the participation and contribution of all the people who have been involved, who have been whole heartedly committed to a participatory approach of evaluation by genuinely sharing their gains, difficulties and queries. Their modesty and sincerity has clearly revealed a proven potential of the Network to develop an organizational culture characterized by a strong commitment to sharing, reflective learning and accountability. My special thanks also go to Marjorie who has devoted her precious time to do the English editing of part of this report. It again demonstrates that it is always the mission for betterment of the world that drives.