

Domestic Violence in China: Research, Intervention and Prevention

Newsletter

Issue Seven

Contents

(Special Issue on Project Review)

Briefs on Recent Activities

Preliminary Review of the Project

- *Editor's remarks on the Preliminary Review of the *Domestic Violence in China* project
- *Explanations from the Project Management Committee
- *My personal view of the preliminary project review

Domestic and International Exchanges

- *Notes
- *News
- *Report on participating in a seminar in Britain

Suggestions and Responses

- *Rules Regarding Evaluation of Project Achievements
- *Rules Regarding Sharing of Project Information

About the Newsletter

As usual, the present Newsletter is a new issue of the bi-monthly publication of the project *Domestic Violence in China: Research, Intervention and Prevention* (hereafter sometimes referred to as the "anti-domestic violence project"). An abstract of the Newsletter in English is available. Generally, the Newsletter includes:

- 1) Briefings on personnel changes, meetings, seminars, workshops, visits and other events;

- 2) Exchange of experiences; comments and observations of project participants;
- 3) Theoretical reflections upon research methods, concepts and gender-related viewpoints;
- 4) Legislative research, including problems with present legislation and legislative suggestions
- 5) Information and materials from abroad;
- 6) Suggestions, including analysis of problems and recommended solutions;
- 7) Responses to suggestions.

The Newsletter is intended to be a channel through which the project network partners can share ideas and results, take part in decision making, monitor project management, supervise project implementation and urge more participation in project work.

Contribution of papers, ideas, suggestions and other involvement in our project are warmly welcome.

We wish to thank the Ford Foundation, the Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation (NOVIB), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Oslo University in Norway, who have contributed funding for the project, including the publication of the Newsletter.

The Newsletter is distributed among all project participants, relevant organizations, agencies and departments free of charge.

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Research, Intervention and Prevention

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Briefs on Recent Activities

1. On July 5, 2001, at the invitation of the CLS anti-domestic violence project, the chairwoman of the Commission on Domestic Violence of the American Bar Association gave a lecture on multi-agency cooperation and enforcement of laws against domestic violence in the United States.
2. On July 6, 2001, the Third Expanded Meeting of the Project Management Committee (PMC) for the year 2001 was convened. Major issues deliberated at the meeting included: 1) rules regarding sharing of project information and materials and evaluation of project achievements; 2) concrete preparation for the National Conference on Domestic Violence; 3) dates and venues for the training program in cooperation with SIDA; and 4) development of a anti-domestic violence network outside Beijing.
3. At 9:00am on July 11, 2001, five domestic violence social workers from Vietnam met with officials from our project. The purpose of their visit was to learn from Chinese experiences in organizing and managing domestic violence projects. We also learned that the Vietnamese domestic violence program was designed for implementation in two stages, with the first stage implemented during the first two years, and the second stage implemented during the next three years of the project. Our Vietnamese friends briefed us on the project's progress in the province of Xining, Vietnam, where the project had been implemented in one urban area and one rural area where domestic violence was frequent.
4. On July 17, 2001, the Project Participants Meeting & the Fifth Beijing Network Meeting was jointly held. Matters regarding the National Conference on Domestic Violence and financial matters for the first half of the year were deliberated.
5. On July 20, 2001, the Pilot Rural Community Intervention Sub-project held a law examination for job applicants to the anti-domestic violence station affiliated with the sub-project. Two people passed the exam and have been employed by the station. This is a good foundation for opening the domestic violence hotline and handling complaints.
6. On July 23, 2001, the Pilot Rural Community Intervention Sub-project organized its first training course on gender and domestic violence. There were nearly 30 participants, including sub-project workers and female officials, who later said the

course was interesting.

7. At 5:00pm on July 24, 2001, the PMC convened a meeting to discuss the Preliminary Review of the *Domestic Violence in China* project.
8. The project's website is scheduled to be up in September or October, 2001.

Preliminary Review of the Project

Editor's remarks on the Preliminary Review of the *Domestic Violence in China* project

From February 19 to March 2, 2001, an external review commissioned by the Netherlands NOVIB was conducted by two experts, Phyllis L. Chang and Edith Chang. On July 24, 2001, the PMC held a special meeting to discuss the results of the review and decided not to issue a formal response to the review until feedback from project participants had been solicited and sorted out.

The Editors' Committee holds that the review is comprehensive and of high quality. Although it is a preliminary review, it is very beneficial for the smooth operation of the project in future. Upon commission of the PMC, the Chinese version of the Preliminary Review of the *Domestic Violence in China* Project is hereby published with the current issue of the Newsletter. Comments and opinions are encouraged and warmly welcome. To promote responses, some explanations have been given below regarding donor information and project progress.

Explanations from the Project Management Committee

1. Acknowledgements

The PMC unanimously holds that the review conducted February 19 – March 2, 2001 is extremely helpful to the project. The PMC and all Beijing Domestic Violence Network partners are very thankful to Phyllis Chang and Edith Chang for their excellent work. The Preliminary Review and its recommendations are very valuable to the project and will play an important role in the further improvement and smooth operation of the project.

The PMC would also like to express sincere thanks to NOVIB for sponsoring the high quality external review.

2. Publication of the Preliminary Review

The PMC held a discussion and unanimously agreed to disseminate the written review to Oxfam member organizations and other project donors, including SIDA, the Ford Foundation and Oslo University.

The PMC also agreed that the main content and tables of the review should be published with the seventh issue of the Project Newsletter.

3. Increasing funding

a. The Legal Aid Sub-project

In her comments on the review, the NOVIB project official has agreed to the request by the Legal Aid Sub-project and the Oral History Sub-project for additional funding.

b. Employment of a network coordinator and part-time administrative staff

The PMC deliberated over hiring a network coordinator and part-time administrative staff and agreed that it would be appropriate to put forward this request at a later stage (in 2002), when the next phase in the development of network strategy is recommended.

As it is necessary for the operation of the project, the PMC suggested that a professional translator be employed in order to promote efficient communication between project members, donors and other NGOs. An NOVIB project official agreed to this recommendation.

c. Payment to the General Coordinator of the project

The PMC concluded that it is not necessary to pay a salary to the General Coordinator during the first three years of the project.

4. About the Newsletter

In accordance with opinions from project participants, it was agreed that the monthly Newsletter should not be changed to a quarterly publication because it has played an important role in the exchange of ideas and experiences, the dissemination of domestic and international developments and the unification of anti-domestic-violence forces.

5. Stability of the PMC

We completely agree with the reviewers' position that stability and continuity of the PMC is a crucial matter for the present year. An expanded meeting of the PMC (PMC members and all sub-project directors) resulted in the election, through secret ballot, of two new members to the PMC.

6. Financial management

The evaluators put forward very useful suggestions regarding financial management. We have now worked out measures for improving financial management and have organized training for accountants on specific skills, such as design of financial report forms.

7. The expanded PMC meeting on July 6, 2001 adopted the Rules on Sharing of Information and Material and Rules on Evaluation of Project Achievements, both of which are published in the seventh issue of the Newsletter. During the period of the project review, we also made amendments to the diagram explaining the relationship between the domestic violence project and the domestic violence network.

8. In order to make the network meetings professional seminars on special topics, it has been decided, based on the opinions of project participants, that the next network meeting will be jointly held with the National Domestic Violence Conference.

9. Supervision and evaluation

We have already adopted rules regarding evaluation of project achievements, financial affairs and project operations. We will further deliberate over how to improve those supervisory and evaluation systems at the next expanded PMC meeting.

By the PMC , August 10, 2001

My personal view of the preliminary project review

I was asked the following questions by the project reviewers:

- 1) If the Ford Foundation or other donors cannot provide financial support, can the network continue its work?
- 2) Has the network already developed some sort of institutional mechanism or can it be developed into an organization?

I assume that those questions might serve as tests against which international foundations evaluate the sustainability of projects operated in developing countries.

I do not think that those two tests can be used to evaluate project continuity in China. Under present conditions, it is obviously not possible to develop a network or institutional mechanism in China without external financial support and technical assistance. The anti-domestic violence project in fact poses radical changes to the present Chinese situation not only because of the focus of the project but also because of the form; that is, the NGO mechanism by which the project is operated and its specific organizational structure. We would expect too much if we think that by simply introducing one project or some funding radical changes can take place.

In addition, the anti-domestic violence project plays a very important role in changing people's attitudes, particularly those of the network participants. This then influences their work and plans for the future. Most significantly, the project has helped to raise the gender awareness and sensitivity of all participants. Without external funding, no organization could continue to operate similar projects. Still, if the project ended, what would remain are invaluable knowledge resources. Perhaps this might constitute a new test for evaluation. In light of conditions in China, could we suggest the development of a test for evaluating project continuity from the perspective of changes in participants' ideas and behavior?

Domestic and International Exchanges

Notes

The Editors Committee has received contributions from the Media Advocacy Networks Sub-project, the Pilot Rural Intervention Sub-project and network participants outside Beijing. The Committee has also received several papers from those who visited Canada. Due to space limitations, we will publish these contributions and papers in the next issue of the Newsletter.

News

PMC member Professor Huang Lie, upon invitation of the Cultural Section of the British Embassy, attended the seminar, "Violence against Women: From Awareness and Action to Policy Development," from July 17 – 22, 2001. She wrote and submitted the following report.

Report on participating in a seminar in Britain (already submitted)

Suggestions and Responses

Rules Regarding Evaluation of Project Achievements

1. Achievements of all sub-projects should be evaluated by the Project Evaluation Experts Team. Opinions of the evaluation team should be used as a basis for a final report on the sub-project.
2. The Project Evaluation Experts Team should consist of three experts from the anti-domestic violence project group and two experts from outside the project. Evaluation experts should be selected by the PMC from academicians in fields relevant to the specific sub-project. Each sub-project should have a separate evaluation team comprised of qualified professionals.
3. The selection procedure is as follows: candidates should be jointly recommended by relevant sub-project directors and the PMC member who has the most contact with the sub-project. The PMC will determine the final recommendation.
4. A general project report should be evaluated and discussed before a final copy is submitted to the PMC. All project participants should be notified of the report.
5. If publication of a report is part of the program, written achievements of the sub-project should be published according to the sub-project program. Written achievements of those sub-projects without a publication plan should also be bound into book form and printed for distribution. The sub-project is responsible for raising funds for printing, formal publication or additional copies beyond what was initially planned.
6. The copyright of published written reports will belong to the general anti-domestic violence project even if the publication is supported by individual sub-project funding. Acknowledgment of thanks to sponsors should be expressly made.

Rules Regarding Sharing of Project Information

1. All materials and reports, including translations, transcriptions and other material collected or compiled with support of project funds should be given to the Project

Resource Center (or a duplicate copy should be given) so that they will be accessible to all project participants and network partners.

2. Copies of written documents of typical domestic violence cases handled by any domestic violence intervention sub-project (including the Legal Aid Sub-project, Pilot Urban Community Intervention Sub-project, the Pilot Medical Intervention Sub-project and the Pilot Rural Community Intervention Sub-project) should be provided to the Resource Center and other sub-projects for use or analysis after opinions of relevant sub-projects have been taken into consideration. All copies of documents of cases already completed should be provided, free of charge, to the Resource Center and other sub-projects for use when relevant sub-projects have concluded operation of the program.

3. When references are made to research material or written reports of other sub-projects, footnotes should be used to identify the origin of the references.

4. All written reports of any sub-projects, whenever published in magazine or book form, or printed for distribution using self-raised funds, should identify the full name of the sub-project. They should also indicate the reservation of copyright with the general anti-domestic violence project. The individual writer, editor, or associate editor reserves the right to copyright.

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Upon approval of the Netherlands NOVIB, the general project is allowed to employ a translator to handle correspondences, Internet information and daily translations. All sub-projects and network partners are urgently requested to recommend candidates and contact Ms. Liu Xiaojun of the Project General Office if any appropriate candidate is available.