

**Refugee Review Tribunal
AUSTRALIA**

RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE

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Questions

- 1. Please provide brief information on village committees in relation to family planning activities and whether committee members are paid and if so how much?**
- 2. How do women's organisations inter-relate with village committees in connection with family planning?**

RESPONSE

- 1. Please provide brief information on village committees in relation to family planning activities and whether committee members are paid and if so how much?**

Information for this question has been provided under the subheadings: [Village Committees and Family Planning](#) and [Payment of Village Committee Members](#).

Village Committees and Family Planning

Available information indicates that village committees are responsible for the promotion and implementation of national family planning policies at the village level. Sources report that a female village committee member is often responsible for the family planning functions of the village committee (*Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province* (Promulgated 26 July 2002, Effective 1 September 2002), UNHCR website, Article 5 – Attachment 1; *Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of The Peoples Republic of China* (Promulgated & Effective 4 November 1998), Asian Legal Information Institute website, Article 9 & 22 [http://www.asianlii.org/cgi-bin/disp.pl/cn/legis/cen/laws/olotvcotproc607/olotvcotproc607.html?query=title\(organic%20aw%20of%20the%20villagers%20committee%20](http://www.asianlii.org/cgi-bin/disp.pl/cn/legis/cen/laws/olotvcotproc607/olotvcotproc607.html?query=title(organic%20law%20of%20the%20villagers%20committee%20) – Accessed 23 June 2009 – Attachment 2;

Bernstein, T.P 2006, 'Village Democracy and Its Limits', The German Journal on Contemporary Asia website, pp.33 & 35
http://www.asienkunde.de/content/zeitschrift_asien/archiv/pdf/bernsteina99.pdf – Accessed 23 January 2009 – Attachment 3; Benewick, R., Tong, I & Howell, J. 2004, 'Self-Governance and Community: A Preliminary Comparison between Villagers' Committees and Urban Community Councils', *China Information*, vol, 18, no.11, pp.- 13 & 17 – Attachment 4; He, Baoyang. 2003, 'How Democratic are Village Elections in China', National Endowment for Democracy website
<http://www.ned.org/forum/fellows/presentations/hepresentationssummary.pdf> – Accessed 21 January 2009 – Attachment 5).

The 2002 *Population and Family Planning Regulations of Fujian Province* indicate that village committees must undertake family planning duties "within their scope of responsibility". The regulations state that village committees should "urge" those who have become pregnant in violation of the family planning regulations "to take remedial measures" and must also provide compensation to villagers who undergo sterilisations. The relevant sections of the legislation are provided below:

Article 5 People's governments of townships, or towns and urban neighbourhood administrative offices shall be responsible for the work of population and family planning in their administrative jurisdictions and shall thoroughly carry out the implementation plan for population and family planning. **Villagers' committees and urban neighborhood residents' committees shall do a good job of family planning work within their scope of responsibility**

Article 18 The couple that are capable of giving birth to a child should take one of the long-term effective contraceptive measures and accept the examination and inspection of pregnancy and childbirth. Specific measures shall be formulated by the family planning administrative department of the province and submitted to the provincial people's government for approval and then put into practice. **Those who have become pregnant in violation of this Regulation should take remedial measure in time. Villagers' committees or the resident's committees or their units should urge them to take remedial measures in time.**

Article 21 Those who still can not normally perform labor after treatment of the complication of sterilization operation shall be given appropriate allowance and relief by their units and the local people's government

Those who meet the requirement to have sterilization operation after giving birth to a child under the Regulation shall be given adequate compensation by their units. **Villagers or residents who have such operation shall be adequate compensation by the villagers' or residents' committees or township people's government or urban neighborhood office.**

Article 27 Population and family planning work in the rural area is an important work of villagers' self-government. The management shall be open and democratic. Villagers' committees and urban neighborhood residents' committees and grass-root units may, under the principle of citizens' being voluntary, enter into a family planning contract according to the law with citizens of child-bearing age setting out rights and obligations of both parties and breach liability (*Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province* (Promulgated 26 July 2002, Effective 1 September 2002), UNHCR website, Article 5 – Attachment 1).

The *Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China*, also states that village committees have a role in the implementation of family planning programs. Article 12 of the 2002 *Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China* states that

Villagers' committees and residents' committees shall, in accordance with law, make a success of the family planning programs ('*Population and Family Planning Law of the People's Republic of China*' (Promulgated 29 December 2001, Effective 1 September 2002) Chinese Government official web portal (English language version) http://english.gov.cn/laws/2005-10/11/content_75954.htm – Accessed 2 April 2007 – Attachment 6).

The *Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of The Peoples Republic of China 1998* states that village committees must publicise “plans for implementing the State policy for family planning”. The legislation also states that village committees must include the “appropriate number” of female members:

Article 9 A villagers committee shall be composed of three to seven members, including the chairman, the vice-chairman (vice-chairmen) and the members.

The members of a villagers committee shall include an appropriate number of women.

...Article 22 The villagers committee shall apply the system of open administration of village affairs.

The villagers committee shall accept supervision by the villagers through publicizing the following matters without delay, of which the matters involving financial affairs shall be publicized every six months at least:

(1) matters decided on through discussion by the villagers assembly as provided for in Article 19 of this Law, and implementation of the decisions;

(2) plans for implementing the State policy for family planning;

(3) handing out of relief funds and goods; and

(4) collection of charges for the supply of water and electricity, and other matters that involve the interests of the villagers and that all the villagers are concerned about.

The villagers committee shall guarantee the truthfulness of what is publicized and subject itself to inquiry by the villagers (*Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of The Peoples Republic of China* (Promulgated & Effective 4 November 1998), Asian Legal Information Institute website, Article 9 & 22 [http://www.asianlii.org/cgi-bin/displ/cn/legis/cen/laws/olotvcotproc607/olotvcotproc607.html?query=title\(organic%20law%20of%20the%20villagers%20committee%20](http://www.asianlii.org/cgi-bin/displ/cn/legis/cen/laws/olotvcotproc607/olotvcotproc607.html?query=title(organic%20law%20of%20the%20villagers%20committee%20) – Accessed 23 June 2009 – Attachment 2).

The US Department of State's (USDOS) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2007* reports that in many village committees a seat is reserved for a woman and that the female committee member is generally allocated responsibility for family planning. The USDOS reports that:

The government encouraged women to exercise their right to vote in village committee elections and to stand for those elections, although only a small fraction of elected members were women. In many locations, a seat on the village committee was reserved for a woman, who was usually given responsibility for family planning (US Department of State 2008,

A 2006 journal article by Dr Thomas Bernstein, Professor of Political Science at the East Asian Institute, Columbia University, briefly describes the responsibility of village committees in implementing government policies including family planning and the “administration of family planning quotas”. The report also states that a village committee is “evaluated by its superiors” regarding the meeting of targets. The article reports that:

Townships are the lowest level of state power – **the village committee is legally a mass organization responsible for implementation of numerous tasks handed down from above, such as development plans, tax collection, promotion of education, family planning, etc.** Its performance in meeting targets is evaluated by its superiors, with points being awarded for the completion of assignments.

...Village committees and the village assembly to which they report are empowered to take charge of village-level affairs, such as the allocation of village funds, e.g., in-come from collective property, fund-raising for projects such as schools or road repair, compensation for cadres, the distribution of taxes and fees among house-holds, **administration of family planning quotas** (Bernstein, T.P 2006, ‘Village Democracy and Its Limits’, The German Journal on Contemporary Asia website, pp.33 & 35
http://www.asienkunde.de/content/zeitschrift_asien/archiv/pdf/bernsteina99.pdf – Accessed 23 January 2009 – Attachment 3).

A 2004 journal article, which compares village committees with urban community councils, reports on the role of these organisations in “ensuring compliance with national and provincial laws and regulations” including “family planning targets and payment of fees and levies”. The report also notes that female members of village committees are largely elected to take responsibility for family planning. The following are extracts of the article:

Both village committees and residents’ committees are supposed to be self governance organizations at the grassroots level for ‘self-management, self education and self-service’. They are responsible for mediating disputes, maintaining public order and social stability, developing public services and reflecting opinions and suggestions to the people’s government. **They should assist the work of government in all ways. That includes: enforcement and monitoring functions such as ensuring compliance with national and provincial laws and regulations; family planning targets and payment of fees and levies; and monitoring those who are deprived of political rights.** Upper levels of government, namely towns and townships and municipal governments, are to guide, help and support, but not intervene, in the work of the committees.

...**The Organic Law on Village Committees made deliberate provisions for women to be present ‘in a certain proportion’ in village committees while no such provision was made with regard to urban residents’ committees.** A major reason for this discrepancy could be the aforementioned over-representation of elderly women in residents’ committees. A secondary reason could be the relative ease in implementing family planning in the cities compared to the villages. **After all, it was quite obvious that the purpose of electing women into village committees was to have them in charge of birth control.** Third, women in the rural areas were seen to be less educated, less knowledgeable about economic matters, and therefore less competitive than men in rural elections. Some affirmative action was therefore deemed necessary (Benewick, R., Tong, I. & Howell, J. 2004, ‘Self-Governance and Community: A Preliminary Comparison between Villagers’ Committees and Urban Community Councils’, *China Information*, vol, 18, no.11, pp.- 13 & 17 – Attachment 4).

A 2004 report in *Xinhua*, the official Chinese news agency, reports on the creation of a government document seeking to improve the “openness” and “democratic management of village affairs”. According to the report village authorities are required to make villagers aware of government policies, including how family planning is implemented. The report states that:

China’s central authorities have called for nationwide efforts to further promote the coordinated development of socialist material civilization, political civilization and cultural and ethic progress in the countryside.

In a joint document, the General Offices of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and of the State Council called on the nation to understand fully the significance of further promoting openness and improving the democratic management of village affairs.

... Village authorities are required to maintain the policy of telling villagers how the family planning policy is carried out, how relief funds and goods are distributed, how the land designated for residential housing is used, how the returns from the income of village collective economy are used and **how much villager cadres are paid for their work** (‘Party, Government Promote Rural Democracy’ 2004, China.org.cn website, source: *Xinhua News Agency*, 12 July <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2004/jul/101027.htm> – Accessed 23 January 2009 – Attachment 8).

A 10 June 2003 summary of a public presentation by Dr Baoyang He, Senior Research Fellow at the East Asian Institute National University of Singapore, reports that when a woman is elected to a village committee they are often responsible for family planning:

Women, however, do not seem to have improved their status as a result of these elections. Women’s issues have been absent from campaigns in Zhejiang province, and the number of women elected to village committees has been low and decreasing. Even if a woman is elected to a village committee, she is often relegated to a secondary position, usually dealing with family planning policies (He, Baoyang. 2003, ‘How Democratic are Village Elections in China’, National Endowment for Democracy website <http://www.ned.org/forum/fellows/presentations/hepresentationsummary.pdf> – Accessed 21 January 2009 – Attachment 5).

Though dated, a 1996 report by the Hangzhou City Family Planning Commission provides more detailed information regarding the official role of village committees in promoting and implementing family planning. According to the report along with family planning “education and publicity” village committees can also implement “village rules and public contracts” which involve “stipulating rewards and punishments”. The report states that:

The role of the village committee in rural Population control mainly takes the following forms:

- 1) Changing the masses’ perception of reproduction through day-to-day publicity and education. Although the village committee does not participate directly in government administration, it is free to guide and educate the villagers in a variety of ways to comply with the party’s family planning policy and related laws and regulations on their own initiative. Family planning legislation is backed up by coercive force. Within this coercive framework, noncoercive methods such as publicity and education emanating from the village committee are relied upon to reinforce the masses’ population awareness, their per capita consciousness, and their self-discipline in marriage and reproduction. Such publicity and education acts as double insurance for the implementation of the family planning policy and legislation and helps improve cadre-mass relations.

2) By encouraging self-education among the masses, the village committee guides the public to look at the national picture instead of just one's family or village and consider everybody instead of just oneself and fosters a climate where people practice family planning on their own initiative. It can do so, first of all, by launching bottom-line comparison activities vigorously. Fully utilize statistics on tangible things that have to do with people's vital interests such as the birth rate, the amount of land available per capita, per capita income, national consumption, and the number of dependents per family to enhance the masses' sense of urgency and sense of responsibility about limiting population growth. Second, the village committee should organize competitive activities including the "three-good couple in their child-bearing age," "five-good family," and "law-abiding household" competitions to develop among members of the public a set of moral values that would encourage them to subordinate the individual to the whole and to society. The goal is to have the masses educate themselves.

3) Rely on social opinion, mobilize mass supervision, and develop self-management and self-service in family planning. The village committee is a self-organization per se. Accordingly, it is uniquely placed to carry out its special functions. Village cadres live among the masses and have the best knowledge of what is happening among the people, good and bad, major and minor. For instance, village committee members know whose daughter is getting married and which woman is pregnant like the palms of their hands. They have timely and full access to all sorts of accurate information. For this reason, the village committee is in a position to take the pulse on events at all times and uncover problems and respond promptly. By establishing such organizations as family planning associations and family planning central households, it can network with the vast number of women in the child-bearing age and turn self-management and self-service into reality.

4) It can guide and regulate the public's marriage and reproductive behavior by formulating and implementing "village rules and public contracts." In family planning work, self-education and self-management by the masses to a large extent is effected through the enforcement of "village rules and public contracts." As behavior standards that every member in the village must live up to, "village rules and public contracts" inevitably involve the marriage, reproductive, and contraceptive behavior of all villagers by laying down guiding and binding rules and stipulating rewards and punishments. The "village rules" are drawn up based on the family planning policy and legislation. Those who violate them will be punished and those who observe them properly will be commended and rewarded. The village committee helps the masses develop the notion of complying with family planning as a matter of law and ensures that their behavior does not depart from the norm. In so doing, it ensures the implementation of the family planning policy and hence the achievement of the goal of population control (Qingguo, B. 1996 'Declining Role of Village Committees in Population Work', Hangzhou City Family Planning Commission, 15 February – Attachment 9).

Payment of Village Committee Members

Available information indicates that the payment of village committee members is dependent upon the economic resources of the village. Reports state that village committee members in less economically developed areas will receive lower salaries and that only committee heads may receive a salary. A 2006 article titled *Village Democracy and Its Limits* also reports on the introduction of government allocated funds to "compensate village cadre" (Hu, R. 2005, 'Economic Development and the Implementation of Village Elections in Rural China', *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol.14, no.44, pp.441-442 – Attachment 10; Jinhua, W. 2002 'Village Autonomy: A Quiet Revolution in Rural China', *Human Rights*, China Society for Human Rights Studies website, September, no.1, <http://www.humanrights.cn/zt/magazine/20040200485102453.htm> – Accessed 27 January

2009 – Attachment 11; Bernstein, T.P 2006, ‘Village Democracy and Its Limits’, The German Journal on Contemporary Asia website, pp.37 – 38
http://www.asienkunde.de/content/zeitschrift_asien/archiv/pdf/bernsteina99.pdf – Accessed 23 January 2009 – Attachment 3).

A 2005 journal article titled *Economic Development and the Implementation of Village Elections in Rural China*, states that the salary of village committee members is dependent upon the collective revenue of the village. The report states that in developed areas committee members have higher salaries and all committee members may receive a salary. In poorer villages however, salaries are lower and may only be paid to the village committee chairman. The following is an extract of the report:

Collective revenue comes from enterprises owned by villages, rent of collective owned workshops, or appropriations from higher authorities. Usually, villages in more developed areas have higher collective revenue. **Cadres in rich villages can benefit from high collective revenue in the following ways. First, cadres from developed areas have higher salaries. For example, the monthly salary for each of the village committee members in Heshan Township of Xiamen is 1,000 yuan, while in poor mountainous villages of Shouning, only the village committee chairman and the Party branch secretary receive a subsidy of 200 yuan from township government each month.** Second, village cadres in rich areas have more chances to run their own profitable enterprises. The social networks and ties with government developed during their term of office are helpful to their own business. Third, there are more resources controlled by village committees in rich areas and village cadres are more powerful. And finally, it is much easier for village cadres to implement some unpopular policies of higher authorities, such as family planning and levying of agricultural tax. For example, in Heshan Township of Xiamen, village committees pay agricultural tax for every household with collective revenue. Although it is more time-consuming and demanding to hold a position on the village committee in rich areas, the above rewards related to high collective revenue make the elections in developed areas highly competitive (Hu, R. 2005, ‘Economic Development and the Implementation of Village Elections in Rural China’, *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol.14, no.44, pp.441-442 – Attachment 10).

A 2002 magazine article on village committees by the China Society for Human Rights Studies, reports that the salaries of village committee members are extracted from a village fund which is dependent upon the ‘contributions’ of villagers. According to the report the salaries of committee members vary depending on the economic position of the village:

A village committee comprises a few to a dozen members, depending on the size of the village’s population. Households in the village are obliged to contribute, on an annual basis, a fixed amount of money to the village fund in exchange for services rendered by the committee. The contributions vary from village to village, and so do the salaries of the committee members, which are deducted from the village funds. The committee head, or “village chief, in a prosperous village may earn 10,000 yuan or even more a year. If the village happens to be poor, the “village chief would make no more than 1,000 yuan or even less. At any rate, the sum of the contribution for each household and the salaries are fixed with the consensus of opinion of the villagers.

...The incomes of each and every committee member, including his or her salary and, in some cases allowances given by local governments, are open to public scrutiny (Jinhua, W. 2002 ‘Village Autonomy: A Quiet Revolution in Rural China’, *Human Rights*, China Society for Human Rights Studies website, September, no.1,
<http://www.humanrights.cn/zt/magazine/20040200485102453.htm> – Accessed 27 January 2009 – Attachment 11).

Dr Thomas Bernstein in his 2006 journal article *Village Democracy and Its Limits* reports on the lack of funding within some villages due to “the abolition of local fees and of major state taxes”. According to Bernstein the abolished levies were previously used for village expenses including the “compensation for cadres”. Bernstein reports that in order to offset losses from tax reforms the central government allocated new funds “with which to compensate cadres and maintain basic services”. The report provides the following information:

As the rural scholar Xu Yong points out, “democracy without funds is an empty shell.” Except for villages whose VCs receive a share of the profits of collectively owned non-agricultural enterprises, funding of village operations has recently become an even more acute problem than in the past, because of the abolition of local fees and of major state taxes. These reforms, eminently helpful to China’s farmers, have left a major hole in local budgets that threatens the most basic administrative functions. Before the tax and fee reforms, both the village and the townships were partially funded out of peasant levies that were to pay for essential public goods. **The portion that accrued to the village, “the collective retention” (*jiti tiliu*), paid for collective investments, welfare expenses and compensation for cadres.**

...Several years ago, the central government began allocating new funds to offset losses resulting from tax and fee reform and especially to fund rural education, which had been a major source of financial burdens. This represents a major initiative. It is recognition, as a Chinese scholar put it, that “In the past, the state took much from the countryside; now, it should give more and take less” (*zijin qu duo yu xiao; duo yu xiao qu*), a reference to the long era of pro-urban-industrial exploitation of the agricultural sector that began with the First Five-Year Plan in 1953. **Villages are now supposed to receive subsidies with which to compensate cadres and maintain basic services** (Bernstein, T.P 2006, ‘Village Democracy and Its Limits’, The German Journal on Contemporary Asia website, pp.37 – 38 http://www.asienkunde.de/content/zeitschrift_asien/archiv/pdf/bernsteina99.pdf – Accessed 23 January 2009 – Attachment 3).

The *Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of The Peoples Republic of China 1998* states that villagers committee members “may be provided with appropriate subsidies, where necessary”. Article 9 of the legislation states that:

A villagers committee shall be composed of three to seven members, including the chairman, the vice-chairman(vice-chairmen) and the members.

The members of a villagers committee shall include an appropriate number of women. In a village where people from more than one ethnic group live, they shall include a member or members from the ethnic group or groups with a smaller population.

Members of a villagers committee shall not be divorced from production but may be provided with appropriate subsidies, where necessary (*Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of The Peoples Republic of China* (Promulgated & Effective 4 November 1998), Asian Legal Information Institute website, Article 9 & 22 [http://www.asianlii.org/cgi-bin/disp.pl/cn/legis/cen/laws/olotvcotproc607/olotvcotproc607.html?query=title\(organic%20law%20of%20the%20villagers%20committee%20](http://www.asianlii.org/cgi-bin/disp.pl/cn/legis/cen/laws/olotvcotproc607/olotvcotproc607.html?query=title(organic%20law%20of%20the%20villagers%20committee%20) – Accessed 23 June 2009 – Attachment 2).

2. How do women’s organisations inter-relate with village committees in connection with family planning?

No information was found in the sources consulted as to how village committees relate with women’s organisations in relation to family planning matters. General information has however, been provided on the following categories: [Women’s Organisations and Village Committees](#) and [Women’s Organisations and Family Planning](#)

Women's Organisations and Village Committees

The 2008 Annual Report by the US Congressional Executive Commission on China, provides an example of a county women's federation negotiating with a local village committee on behalf of a villager. The report states that:

A Heilongjiang province village leader told a woman who had married someone with a Sichuan *hukou* (household registration) that their son could only have a local village *hukou* if she signed an agreement to never seek land in the village. After the woman sought their assistance, the county women's federation, along with other local officials, worked with the village committee to reach a solution. The women's federation pointed out to village members that such action violated the PRC Law on Land Contracts in Rural Areas and the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests (LPWRI). Finally, the village committee and village representatives agreed to give the woman's son local *hukou* status and consideration for land allocation (Congressional-Executive Commission on China 2008, *Annual Report 2008*, 31 October, p.117 – Attachment 12)

A 2006 journal article titled *Women's Political Participation in China* reports on efforts by the national and local Women's Federations in promoting women's participation in village committee elections. This involved specialised training of women for committee member positions and liaising with village committee heads about ways to increase female representation (Howell, J 2006 'Women's Political Participation in China: in whose interests elections', *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol.15, no.49 <http://web.rollins.edu/~tlairson/china/womenchielec.pdf> – Accessed 27 January 2009 – Attachment 13).

A 2000 report by Human Rights in China suggests that local Women's Federation groups may be able to influence village committees through their position on village representative assemblies. According to the report village representative assemblies involve "basic level organisations" including the local Women's Federation. The report states that "the village representative assembly serves essentially as a legislature, making the major decisions governing the villager's everyday lives. The village committee is responsible for executing those decisions". The report also states that the village representative assemblies have the power to "veto decisions made by village committees". The following outline of village representative assemblies is provided by Human Rights in China:

By law, the village assembly, consisting of either all adult members of the village or of one representative per family, is the supreme decision-making body at the village level, voting on all major village affairs. But because villages generally range in size from some 1,000 to 4,000 people, decision-making through such large gatherings is time-consuming and unwieldy.

Thus, from 1990, village representative assemblies came to be promoted as more realistic decision-making bodies for most issues affecting village life. While official reports say that representative assemblies are elected by "all the people of a village," the method clearly varies considerably from place to place. Outsiders have yet to observe elections of this body, but the varying nature of its makeup suggests that members are often chosen by traditional means of appointment rather than election. In some villages, representative assemblies seem to consist largely of heads or deputy heads of the village small groups (former production teams) and/or senior male members of the village, respected for their experience, age and wisdom. In others, younger, more entrepreneurial types seem to dominate. **Most representative assemblies also include members of the village committee and delegates from other basic level organizations, such as the local Women's Federation, the Youth**

League, the militia and representatives of the elderly. Representative assemblies have more power than village committees, and they often have more moral authority. They have the right to decide important village affairs and participate in their management, to oversee and vote on major expenditures, and, most notably, to supervise village heads and to veto decisions made by village committees.

Chinese descriptions of these assemblies suggest that the body is ordinarily viewed positively by villagers. Its members are presumed to be deeply imbedded in village life and in intimate contact with the popular will. Their decisions are presumed to have the good of the villagers at heart. Thus the village representative assembly serves essentially as a legislature, making the major decisions governing the villagers everyday lives. The village committee is responsible for executing those decisions. Oddly, foreign researchers have generally failed to notice the potential importance of representative assemblies, focusing their research instead on the village committee ('Rural grassroots organizations' 2000, Human Rights in China website, 27 July

http://www.hrichina.org/public/contents/article?revision_id=2452&item_id=2451 – Accessed 27 January 2009 – Attachment 14).

Women's Organisations and Family Planning

Limited recent information was found regarding the family planning functions of women's organisations in China.

On 6 June 2008 *China Daily* reported on Wang Shufang, the head of a village women's federation who was responsible for family planning among other responsibilities. The report states that "as head of the village women's federation, Wang is also responsible for promoting local environment protection, family planning and preserving folk culture" (Xiaorong, C. 2008 'Folk artist aces 'two strong men' wrestling', *China Daily*, 6 June – Attachment 15).

Research Response CHN34327, dated 3 November 2005, provides useful information on the role of women's organisations in China in the implementation of family planning policies (RRT Country Research 2005, *Research Response CHN34327*, 3 November – Attachment 16). Several sources from this may be of relevance. In particular a 2001 report by Susan Greenhalgh (Professor of Anthropology, University of California) and Edwin A Winckler (Research Associate, East Asian Institute, Columbia University) reports on the role of Women's Federations in implementing and enforcing family planning within villages. The report provides the following information:

The public has been involved in the birth planning program not only as "targets" of intervention, but also as informal and even formal implementers of state policy.

...The key actors have been employees and "activists" under the authority of basic-level administration and the mass organizations, in particular the **Women's Federation, whose members have been responsible for carrying out birth planning work at the grass-roots level**. Ordinary citizens have also been expected to promote the policy by such means as attending mass meetings and political study groups focusing on birth planning and monitoring their neighbours for possible violation of the rules. At least theoretically, the public has also had an indirect influence on the birth policy through the operation of the "mass line" (*qunzhong luxian*). Under the mass line, a fundamental party doctrine, local leaders should canvass the views of the masses and then convey them up the administrative system to the top, where policy is revised in accordance with the masses' needs (p.77)

Particularly at the basic levels, government line administration is supplemented by party “mass organizations.” In the early years of the PRC, the party established mass organizations to promote its goals and policies among specific population groups, such as women, workers, students, and youth. While the Women’s Federation has had the most important role in birth planning, virtually all the mass organizations have been called upon at times to enforce the birth policy. In the early 1980s, the party created a new mass organization, the Birth Planning Association (BPA), to promote birth planning among the population at large. Of all these mass organizations, only the Birth Planning Association belongs to the birth planning system.

By far and away the most important mass organization involved in birth planning is the Women’s Federation (*fulian*). In the villages, where the great majority of the population still lives, the women in charge of women’s affairs, known as “women’s heads,” have had the duty of enforcing the policy throughout their villages, which means imposing birth restrictions on their neighbors and even relatives. Given the unpopularity of the policy and the drastic measures sometimes ordered from above, enforcing the policy has been an onerous and unpleasant task at best. While grass-roots Women’s Federation cadres have been responsible for the day-to-day work of birth planning, during birth planning campaigns all the major mass organizations including those for workers, youth, and students have been enjoined to contribute to the effort to mobilize the population to achieve population-control targets (Greenhalgh, S. & Winkler, E. 2001, *Chinese State Birth Planning in the 1990s and Beyond*, Resource Information Center, Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), US Department of Justice, Perspective Series, September, pp.77-79 –Attachment 17).

Beyond this, several other additional sources describe the role of women’s organisations in family planning. The *Population and Family Planning Regulations of Fujian Province 2002* note the role of Women’s Federations in family planning:

Article 7 The whole society should actively support population and family planning work. Such social organizations as Trade Unions, Communist Youth Leagues, Women’s Federations, and Family Planning Associations, as well as business and public-service organizations and citizens, should assist the people’s governments in carrying out population and family planning work.

...**Article 26** Government departments in charge of family planning, propaganda, education, science and technology, culture, public health, civil affairs, press and publication and radio and television, as well as such social organizations as Trade Unions, Communist Youth Leagues, Women’s Federations, and Family Planning Associations, should organize publicity-and-education for developing population and family planning, set up new reproduction culture, guide citizens to establish scientific, civilized and progressive concept on marriage and childbirth (*Population and Family Planning Regulation of Fujian Province* (Promulgated 26 July 2002, Effective 1 September 2002), UNHCR website, Article 5 – Attachment 1).

A March 2005 report from the Flinders University website, cited in Research Response CHN34327, notes that the All China Women’s Federation (ACWF) “has been one of the main vehicles for implementation of the one-child policy” (‘China’s legal aid is multiplying, but it’s still best to stay out of court’ 2005, Flinders University website, 2 March <http://www.flinders.edu.au/news/news-article.cfm?newsid=e0d7ee74-e0b5-1b0e-9489-eea37b5c6360> – Accessed 31 October 2005 – Attachment 18).

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Non-Government Organisations

Amnesty International website <http://www.amnesty.org/>

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