



Equality and Non-discrimination

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

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THE NCHR INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT

Education for Equality

Mission and Objective

We support efforts to achieve the realisation of equality and non-discrimination and promote that human rights should be enjoyed by everyone without discrimination of any kind. We cooperate with academic institutions, professional groups and civil society organisations in Asia to enhance their knowledge and practical capacity when faced with different aspects of unequal and discriminatory treatment.

Background and Challenges

Equality and non-discrimination principles can be found in all instruments of the International Bill of Human Rights and appear in a number of specialised UN human rights treaties. Reduction of inequality, promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women is recognised by the UN as crucial to accelerate sustainable development

and fulfilling the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. In spite of the protection and prohibition these instruments offer, discriminatory attitudes and practices are abundant. Historical and structural patterns of discrimination are the biggest obstacles to the protection of equality and non-discrimination. We believe that human rights education and capacity building are important measures to promote awareness and inspire change.

Intersectional approach

People can experience layers of inequality and cumulative discrimination based on multiple identities, for example both disability and gender at the same time. It is necessary to explore and take into account the interdependence and complexity of identities in our projects in order to effectively combat prejudice and intolerance.

The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR) is a part of the University of Oslo, Faculty of Law. The NCHR's **International Department (ID)** has an extended network of cooperating partners around the world including academic institutions, UN organs and civil society organisations. Our activities are supported by the Norwegian MFA.

We promote human rights through international competence building, knowledge enhancement and dialogue in the countries we cooperate with. We aim to apply a gender sensitive approach across our six thematic areas of commitment:

- Human Rights Education
- Rule of Law
- Freedom of Religion or Belief
- Business and Human Rights
- **Equality and Non-discrimination**
- Human Rights Mechanisms

CONTACT

Elisabeth Bjørnstøl Head of Equality and Non-discrimination at the NCHR International Department

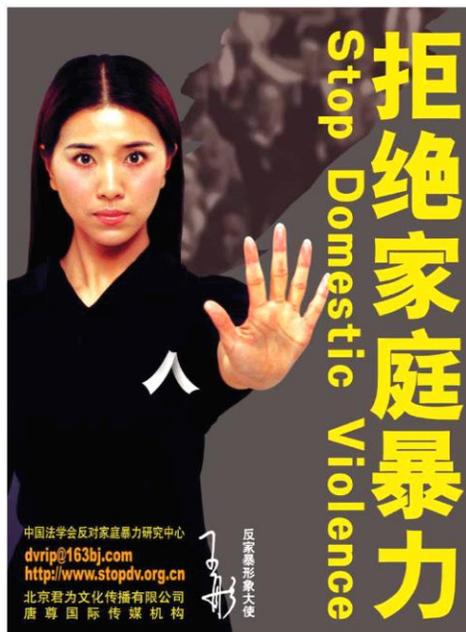
Email: e.p.bjornstol@nchr.uio.no

Office: +47 22842074

For more information, please visit:

www.jus.uio.no/smr/english/about/id/equality/

Selected Results



Domestic Violence

According to the All China Womens Federation, more than one third of women in China may have suffered from domestic violence. To raise awareness about this we supported the Network Against Domestic Violence (ADV N) for 10 years. ADV N was one of the most important voices arguing for better protection for women, children and men suffering from domestic violence. As a result of continuous efforts and involvement of civil society movements like ADV N over the past two decades, **China's first anti-domestic violence law entered into force in 2016.**

Equality issues in media

In order to promote knowledge about equality and non-discrimination issues in Chinese media, we supported a 5-year training project for 140 Chinese journalists and media workers from 2009-2014. Topics included international and domestic legal frameworks on equality and non-discrimination, employment discrimination, gender discrimination, discrimination against persons with disabilities and discrimination against the LGBTI community.

Employment discrimination

To raise awareness about employment discrimination issues in China we supported the book *Employment Discrimination: International Standards and National Practice* (2005). It was the first book in this field in Chinese and for many years the book has been used both by the ILO Office in Beijing and by the NCHR in education of Chinese government officials, journalists and academics.

Key Ongoing Projects

We aim to enable and support Asian academics, professionals and NGO staff to promote equality and non-discrimination in their own work. Empowerment of local actors is key to our success and our projects target the rights of persons with disabilities, gender equality, sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI).

Disability: Multiple identities, cumulative discrimination

Many local Asian NGO's working on disability issues lack a general human rights framework and are often unaware of the layers of additional inequality that a person with disability can experience because of their sex, age, race, color, beliefs, sexual orientation and/or gender identity etc. We work to increase the local NGO's knowledge of human rights so that they are able to protect and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities in a more comprehensive way. A particular focus will be on women with disabilities and on sexual minorities with disabilities.

China's new domestic violence law in practice

China's new anti-domestic violence law marks a milestone in combating domestic violence in China by offering protection against physical and psychological violence of both family and cohabiting non-family members. The law allows not only the victims but also close relatives and organisations to report abuse and to file a case, but the implementation of the new law takes time since many professional groups are not yet familiar with the provisions of the law. We work with scholars in China to develop handbooks for Chinese professional groups like social workers, local women's union staff, health workers and teachers on how to effectively use the law to protect victims of domestic violence.

Education on Gender equality and Human Rights

The NCHR has educated Chinese law teachers from more than 100 universities on how to teach international human rights law. Many of these universities now offer courses in human rights law, but there are only 3 universities in China that offer separate courses on women's rights and gender equality. The NCHR offers trainings for Chinese law teachers on gender equality and human rights in order to bring attention to these issues in Chinese legal education. We aim to enhance the awareness about gender issues among Chinese law teachers so that a greater number of universities will offer courses on gender and human rights in the future.

"..the term 'discrimination' as used in the Covenant should be understood to imply any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing, of all rights and freedoms."

- UN Human Rights Committee General Comment 18 on the ICCPR