

# **CEDAW Alternative Report**

Twins and Multiple Births Mothers' Rights: A Review on CEDAW

Taipei Twins Association (02-27486991)

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**Violation of the provisions of CEDAW:** Article 11, 12, and general recommendation No. 9, No. 17 and No.24

## **Urgent and Priority Issues:**

In facing the risk of low birth rate, the Taiwanese governmental even established one office to tackle this problem. However this approach has limited impact and severe negligence to the needs of mothers of twins or multiple births. They are an invisible population at all.

### ***1. General recommendation No. 9: health data***

Studies showed mothers having twins or multiple births encounter higher risks during pregnancy and needed more supports while raising the children. But there is no national data available on their health needs for resource allocation and to develop welfare policies.

### ***2. CEDAW article No.12 and general recommendation No. 24:***

#### ***Women and healthcare***

“.. resource allocation, postpartum depression, information disclosure, caregivers' physical and mental health, trauma care and counselling and so forth.” According to CEDAW Article No. 12 in Taiwan's (3<sup>rd</sup> Review), (12.5 and 12.9) the rise of hormone treatment during artificial fertility caused higher risk of cancer but this hasn't been track in the major disease monitoring system.

In 12.21, government is obligate to reduce barriers for women to access health services. But in the current health insurance system,

mother with multiple pregnancies need to bear with double to triple the cost of check-ups and amniocentesis.

According to general recommendation no.24, the requirement of states parties to comply with article 12 is of paramount importance to the health and well-being of women. This calls upon all states to eliminate discrimination against women on health care services, especially in the areas of family planning, pregnancy, childbirth as well as during the postpartum period; there is a particular need for policy support. However, in Taiwan the available manuals for pregnant women have hardly any information for multiple pregnancies which provides guidance on self-care, parenting and social resources for mothers.

### **3. CEDAW provisions of Article XI: the right to work, labour equality**

- i. Mothers with multiple births having the same maternity leave, without considering the additional needs to recover, as well as the role adjustment of nurturing their double or triple newborns.
- ii. Mothers with multiple births were forced to quit their job due to no enough money to pay for nanny or baby carer.
- iii. Insufficient supportive services

As stated on article 11.2(c), “provide necessary social service, especially through established child care system for parents to cope with family duties as well as employment”. However, the needs for mothers with multiple births were not included in the Taiwanese Population Action Plan to create twin mothers’ child care friendly environment.

According to general recommendation no. 17, mothers with multiple births face additional challenges which need comprehensive service to support.

### **Recommendations for the authorities:**

1. Establish national health data of mothers with multiple pregnancy (Statistic data on mothers' of multiple birth as well as the child information including mobility, mortality, premature rate and utility of medical services)
2. Addressing the needs of twins mothers and their families
  - Maternity subsidies and parental leave
  - Assistance on caring duty: adjustment on the requirements for childcare subsidies and foreign help application
  - Mental health needs in coping with multiple roles, resource for social groups and supportive services
3. Public awareness
  - Clarifying the concept of multiple pregnancy
  - Embrace the uniqueness of each birth and mainstream the idea through education