

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Shadow report on human rights of women with disabilities

February 2014

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Report Section :

**General recommendation No. 9,
Article 2 (domestic violence),
Article 10 (education equality),
Article 11 (career and employment),
Article 12 (reproduction and health),**

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General recommendation No. 9:

Statistical data concerning the situation of women

General recommendation No.9:

Considering that statistical information is absolutely necessary in order to understand the real situation of women in each of the States parties to the Convention ...

Recommends that States parties should make every effort to ensure that their national statistical services responsible for planning national censuses and other social and economic surveys formulate their questionnaires in such a way that data can be disaggregated according to gender, with regard to both absolute numbers and percentages, so that interested users can easily obtain information on the situation of women in the particular sector in which they are interested.

Responding countries report:

Not mention in National report

Current Status:

Currently, the main source of R.O.C national statistics on persons with disabilities is from “the Report on Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Living and Demand Assessment Survey, R.O.C.” Before 2007, the data collected a report was generated every 3 year by “Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act”. In 2007, “Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Protection Act” has been replaced by “People with Disabilities Rights Protection Act”, which is enforced every 5 years. Data on specific areas including living standard, health and medical treatment, special education, occupation and training, and transportation and benefits are collected. The once every 5 years statistic also raised the issues on desexualized/asexual. Other than the basic information, sub-categories (e.g. type of disability, age) all lack gender-related statistics. Thus, increases the difficulty of understanding the living quality of women and girls with disabilities.

Other than living requirement survey, government departments of different levels provide very limited information of persons with disabilities in their annual surveys. Even though a few of them started providing disabled related statistics (e.g. Domestic violence victim) in recent years, it is still far from detailed. Information such as gender and age are still lacking. The average public can only see the overall condition, but not the actual barriers facing persons with disabilities

of different gender from information made public. It also shows the over generalization of persons with disabilities under our policy making. The many differences between persons with disabilities, such as gender, class, age, and ethnicity, have been ignored. All the above would influence the condition, benefits and services required by persons with disabilities

Specific Recommendation :

1. The State should ensure that statistics and data collected have appropriate disaggregation by gender and disability.
2. The subjectivity of persons with disabilities should be valued by the country. In 2013, international group of independence experts had made a few recommendations after R.O.C. (Taiwan) government implemented “International Human Right Covenants”. In 11th point “...*The Experts also recommend that the Government initiate the necessary processes leading to an early acceptance of the obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, and the Convention against Torture. It should also set up the type of national preventive mechanism envisaged under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.*” All suggestions and recommendations made by international independent experts should be implemented efficiently to ensure comprehensive human rights protection of persons with disabilities.

Article 2

Violence against Women with Disabilities

Article 2:

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:...

Responding country reports:

In article 2.42 to 2.44.16 of the country report, the addressed domestic violence preventive measure including graphs and charts in appendix revealed only the situation children, teenagers, seniors, and spouses from south east Asia or mainland China were in, as well as preventive rules or policies of related organizations; however, the status of how persons with disabilities were suffering domestic violence in this country was not mentioned. Consequently, there is no way of knowing how this country will work out the policies to prevent violence and strengthen the protection of victims.

Current Status

According to the statistics of Department of Protective Services under Ministry of Health and Welfare, there were 98,399 reported cases of domestic violence in 2012. Among the victims, 6,181 were people with disabilities, the percentage is 6%. This ratio is far below that in research reports from other countries. There is no way for us to know exactly how many persons with disabilities are experiencing domestic violence in Taiwan. We can only be sure that till the end of 2012, the total population of people with disabilities is 1,117,518; 4.79% of the total population 23,315,822. According to the percentage of the population, apparently the ratio of people with disabilities who suffer domestic violence is higher than the average people.

Due to their disabilities, people with disabilities are helpless when treated violently; their complaints tend to be dismissed or ignored because of their poor expression or the way they convey their thoughts. According to the survey by Women's Aid Federation of England of 2007, women with disabilities are more violently treated than women with no disabilities. Half of women with disabilities are suffering domestic violence, while only 25% of women with no disabilities experience domestic violence. The number of women with disabilities who are raped is twice as many as women with no disabilities. Since there is no appropriate protective and supportive measures, women with disabilities have to suffer violence for a longer time.

Since there is little disclosed statistics data by gender in Taiwan, it is very difficult to know how women with different disabilities are experiencing violence. The very few surveys available now are mainly targeting people with intellectual impairments only. Ministry of the Interior commissioned a survey in 2005. The result shows that 9% of men with intellectual impairments have experienced domestic violence; whereas 20.8% of women with intellectual impairments shared the same experience. Except for the survey, we can also see people with disabilities, especially those with intellectual impairments, are vulnerable to domestic violence or sexual assault because they are bound by their mobility or limited ability of expressing themselves. (Please see the attached news report for the details).

At present, the disclosed statistics data is very limited; so is the related research report. We only know that women with disabilities are at high risk of becoming the victims of domestic violence or sexual assault because of their disadvantage in physical and mental status, as well as the inequality of the social structure. However, we can't see the whole picture of women with disabilities, nor can we estimate the possible rate of them being exposed to domestic violence or sexual assault. Even under these circumstances, the government doesn't have corresponding policy or service program to prevent and stop violence against women with disabilities.

In the matter of fact, we can see that they are not able to get reasonable protection just because there is no appropriate policy or service program for women with disabilities that are victims of violence. Most shelters for victims of violence are not physically accessible to people with disabilities. Consequently, those women with disabilities that need shelters can't enter the building, nor can they live in it. They would be asked to live in a hotel. To the women victimized by violence, emergent shelter isn't only a temporary living space, but also a place they can get physical care, mental counselling, and legal advises.

Specific suggestions:

The government should provide related sexual education; to help young girls or women with disabilities to be aware of the danger of all kinds of situation. In the meanwhile, the government should also strengthen the sensibility of the service personnel in the front line, to understand the special circumstances the people with disabilities are in, so as to discover and intervene at an early stage, and decrease the possibility of domestic violence against people with disabilities.

Article 10

Education of Girls and Women with Disabilities

Article 10:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: ...

Respond to national report:

It only mentioned the implementation of education rights within the country. The condition and barriers girls with disabilities are facing in education, the lack of accessibility planning and support on all education levels for students with disabilities have yet to be touched on.

Current Situation:

1. Women and girls with disabilities are often labeled weak, helpless, dependent, incapable, and gender-less for their disabilities. Their choice and opportunities are often limited. Men with disabilities on the other hand receive more family resources often times, especially the chance for education. This is due to the stereotype which men are the sole providers of the family. Female is usually seen as the care receiver, who does not need extensive education. According both unofficial and official reports from Africa, Asia Pacific region, Europe, Canada, and Latin American countries, Women and girls with disabilities often have very treacherous path to education for they are discriminated both the gender and disability. The factors preventing their education include: the expected gender roles by society, stigma associated with disability, safety issues related to (sex) violence, the lack of accessible transportation to schools, inaccessible environment in schools, limited special education services, lack of gender awareness classes and career training consultation.¹

According to national statistics, the education levels of women with disabilities are generally lower than males. Based on “Report on Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Living and Demand Assessment Survey, R.O.C.” by Ministry of the Interior in 2011, there were 621, 028 males and 463,973 females among people with disabilities. Among them, 26.43% of women with disabilities and 7.35% of men with disabilities were illiterate. Generally speaking,

¹ Rousso, H., 2003, ‘Education for All: A Gender and Disability Perspective’, Background Paper Prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003/4: Gender and Education for All: The Leap to Equality, Commissioned through the World Bank. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001469/146931e.pdf>

women with disabilities have lower education levels. (refer to chart 1)

Table 1: Education level of persons with disabilities

Unit: Person; %

	Illiterate	Elementary	Junior High	Senior High	Post-Secondary	Grad School
Male	7.35%	29.02%	21.24%	25.49%	12.57%	1.42%
Female	26.43%	29.77%	15.33%	17.99%	6.58%	0.72%

Source : Ministry of the Interior

2. Under advocacy of NGOs, “The Special Education Act” has undergone numerous amendments. The education opportunities for children with disabilities have been drastically improved. However, schools are still inadequate with accessible facilities (stairs, narrow hallways, inaccessible table and chairs). The lacks of supplementary measures also prevent students with disabilities from attending parts of classes and a regular school life experience. Unbalanced distribution of education resources still exists. As a result, some can only attend specific schools, or be home schooled. It also adds to the difficulties of education for women and girls with disabilities. In a recent case, after the father passed away and the mother was diagnosed with illness, a student with disabilities had no choice but to drop out of school due to transportation difficulty.

According to the 2011 statistics from Ministry of the Interior and Ministry of Education for 0-6 year-old disabled individuals, the boy to girl ratio were 65.3% to 34.7%, however, the enrolment ratio were 69.8% to 30.2%. As we can see, boys had higher enrolment than girls. The ratio became even for elementary school as it was mandatory education. The 12-year mandatory education system will be implemented from 2014. For the time being, senior high schools and vocational schools are not part of the mandatory education system. Therefore, we would see a higher enrolment rate of boys than girls at this stage.²

² The data from Ministry of the Interior of living requirement of disabled are not the sole source of age and education statistics. To show the gap between population and enrolment, current statistics were used. The number is then compared with the number of special education students in the same age group.

Table 2: Age and Enrolment status of Persons with Disabilities

Unit: Person; %

	0-6 year-old	Pre-school	6-12 year-old	Elementary	12-18 year-old	(Junior/Senior) High School
Boy	65.3%	69.8%	68.0%	66.6%	59.5%	65.6%
Girl	34.7%	30.2%	32.0%	33.4%	40.5%	34.4%

Source: Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education.

3. Post-secondary education has become relatively accessible in Taiwan. The ratio of university enrolment between female and male is about the same. However, it is not the case for students with disabilities; the post-secondary education enrolment is increasing for male students with disabilities while decreasing for female students. According to statistics of Ministry of Education from 2008 to 2012, the post-secondary enrolment ratio of male to female students drop from 1.04 of 2008 to 1.01 of 2012; whereas the ratio for male and female students with disabilities increases from 1.57 in 2008 to 1.17 in 2012. The post-secondary enrolment of students with disabilities increases every year, however, the growth is slower for female students and the trend is continuing.

Table 3: Number between regular and special education post-secondary students

Unit: person

	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
	RE	SE								
Male	683114	5791	680038	6263	681054	6158	683367	7089	683446	7976
Female	654341	3698	656621	4011	662549	3663	668717	4160	671844	4675
M/F	1.04	1.57	1.03	1.56	1.02	1.68	1.02	1.70	1.01	1.71

Source: Ministry of Education.

Actual Case A (A girl with physical impairments)

11th grader Lee Ya-Chin is paralyzed due to Cerebral palsy, which not only affects her mobility but also her verbal ability. Her mother had been pushing her to school by wheelchair every day from elementary to high school, because there was a lack of accessible transportation and assistance. Recently her father passed away, and her mother was diagnosed with last stage cancer. After extensive chemotherapy, her mother's health is deteriorating and can no longer assist her to school. Even though she had an early-admission to senior high school, she had no choice but to drop out without additional aid. (Further details refer to appendix)

Actual Case B (A woman with physical impairments)

"I hadn't had a chance to go to school until 8, 9 year-old. I walk wobbly and have problem balancing myself due to Muscle Atrophy. At the time, my parents were too busy with work to spare extra attention on me, nor did they send me to school. Once day I was playing by myself in the neighborhood park. A man passed by and thought it was strange I was playing alone in the park while kids of my age were all attending schools. He wondered why I was there and told my parents I should go to school. He also helped to search for some information. However, there weren't any suitable schools close by, nor could my parents assist me to school on a daily basis. In order for me to attend classes, they sent me to a education and nursing institution. My other classmates in the institution also stayed there so they could go to classes. Until then, I was able to attend classes like everyone else. I had been staying in the institution until I graduated from university and moved home. Some of my friends had no one to take care of them at home, so they stayed in the protectorary."

Actual case C (A woman with physical impairments)

"There was no elevator when I started grade one. My mother had to carry me, who was 20kg at the time, to our classroom on the second floor. We changed to wheel chair later on. It wasn't until grade three when my classroom changed to the first floor. During senior years, I was forced to self-taught for some professional courses. For examples, computer lab was on the 5th floor, arts and crafts classrooms were on the 3rd floor, and the table top of science lab was too high for me to reach or perform experiments or observation. I missed a lot of school materials during the process. Going to washroom is the basic need of everyone. I could make it to the washroom by myself in the beginning. But gradually I did not have enough strength to do so. My mother had to come to school at certain time everyday just to take me to washroom. As a result, my mother had to come to my school 5 times a day, and that doesn't include sending and picking me up from school. She couldn't find a job because she needed to take care of me. The accessible washroom in the school was filled with miscellaneous objects and cleaning tools, which made me feel like a inferior student whenever I use the toilet."

Specific Recommendations :

1. The government should eliminate the barriers, which women with disabilities are facing and ensure their rights to education are exercised. That include socially and culturally expected gender roles, personal safety issues related to (sexual) violence, and genderless programs, career training, or consultations.
2. Universal special education resources should be available nationwide. To gain accessible transportation and environment within schools for students with disabilities to attend nearby schools. Female students with disabilities would have greater access to education when the majority students with disabilities have obtained opportunities to equal education rights.

Article 11

Jobs and Employment of Women with Disabilities

Article 11:

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights...

Article 11(2) (b):

To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;

Responding country reports:

Country reports show only average women's participation in labor force, and the related improvement and maintaining measures. As for protection towards the labor right of under-privileged minorities, only migrant women labor protection was addressed. The only issue addressed about women with disabilities is that they are categorized as non-labor-force population.

Current Status

1. In 2011, the employment-population for men with disabilities is 121,492, while the number of women with disabilities is 52,293. The male/female ratio is 2.32:1. At the same period of time, 6,304,000 men with no disabilities were employed, and 4,896,000 women with no disabilities were employed nationwide. The ratio is 1.28:1. The employment-population rate for women with disabilities is far below the rate of average women with no disabilities and men with disabilities. As shown in the following table, disabled female employment rate is almost as low as half of disabled male. While in general female employment rate is ascending year by year, The employment-population rate for women with disabilities falls down to a lower level due to the descending of overall employment rate for persons with disabilities. It may be true that the disabilities are preventing persons with disabilities from finding an appropriate job; however, except for the factor of disabilities, the government completely ignores to take action to increase their employment rate. Persons with disabilities are not mentioned in government report. Even in "White Paper on Female Labor Policy ", the government addresses only the plans for enhancing the employment of minorities such as aboriginals, new immigrants; while persons with disabilities were not mentioned.

Table 4 : Current Status of Employment of Persons with Disabilities by sex unit : person ; %

		2000		2003		2006		2011	
		TOTAL	PWD	TOTAL	PWD	TOTAL	PWD	TOTAL	PWD
Labor Force	M	5,867,000	107,333	5,904,000	148,455	6,056,000	153,043	6,304,000	138,871
	F	3,917,000	40,329	4,172,000	607,56	4,467,000	69,947	4,896,000	59,406
LFP	M	69.4%	29.1%	67.7%	32.4%	67.3%	30.1%	66.7%	23.6%
	F	46.0%	16.5%	47.1%	18.1%	48.7%	17.9%	49.9%	13.3%

Source : Report on Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Living and Demand Assessment Survey, R.O.C.BY MOI (2000, 2003, 2006, 2011)

Note : LFP (Labor Force Participation) , MOI Survey calculation basis: MOI targeted those persons with disabilities who were 15 and older.

- When looking at the employment status of persons with disabilities, 38.45% of women with disabilities are low end technician or physical labor, the ratio is higher than that of disabled male's 34.72% in 2011. The average monthly wages of people with disabilities are significantly lower for both men and women. Women with disabilities receive lower wages than men with disabilities; the average income of men with disabilities is NT\$24,968, while women is NT\$20,360. In 2006, the average monthly wages then for men with disabilities were 29,956, women 22,374. The overall income for the persons with disabilities is decreasing year by year.

Table 5 : The Average Income of the Nation and Persons with Disabilities by sex unit: NT\$

		2000		2003		2006		2011	
		Taiwan	Disabled	Taiwan	Disabled	Taiwan	Disabled	Taiwan	Disabled
M		47,253	27,685	46,691	26,474	48,021	29,956	50,324	24,968
F		35,007	21,172	36,371	22,329	38,035	22,374	40,330	20,360

Source : Report on Physically and Mentally Disabled Citizens Living and Demand Assessment Survey, R.O.C. BY MOI (2000 、 2003 、 2006 、 2011) 、 Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics.

3. While some people with disabilities enter the competitive work place, some with employed willingness but insufficient work capability would join the sheltered employment work place. As for the distribution of sheltered employment by gender, similarly, we can see the number of men with disabilities is more than that of women with disabilities; and the gap is widening. According to the 2011 research report made by Vocational Evaluation Resources Center for Individuals with Disabilities in Northern Taiwan, the number was 1,016; among them 514 were men, and 502 were women. In 2010, the total number of employed increased to 1,452; with 770 men and 682 women. Though the sheltered employment opportunities increased, the main sheltered employees remain to be male; the ratio of male and female widened from 1.2% in 2008 to 6% in 2011.

Table 6 : Sheltered Employees by sex

unit : person ; %

	2008		2009		2010	
	person	(%)	person	(%)	person	(%)
Male	514	50.6	673	52.7	770	53.0
Female	502	49.4	605	47.3	682	47.0

Source: Vocational Evaluation Resources Center for Individuals with Disabilities in Northern Taiwan

4. The jobs opportunities for persons with disabilities are very restrictive and arbitrary; and most of them are non-official or self-employed. One of the examples is that to be a masseur or masseuse is identified as being suitable for people with visual impairments due to the historical factor or stereotype. A lot of people with disabilities are selling lottery or do some odd jobs or short-term jobs. Since these jobs are without steady employer, being constrained by “Labor Insurance Act”, persons with disabilities can only obtain labor insurance through vocational unions. Furthermore, according to “Employment Insurance Act”, one can only be covered by labor insurance if “one’s employer or the organization one belongs to is one’s insurer”. Therefore, none of the above-mentioned temporary labors, short-term labors or self-employed labors can join employment insurance through vocational unions. Consequently, neither “Unemployment Payment” nor “Unpaid Parental Leave for Raising Children” has anything to do with masseuses or those who are in lottery business; none of the above can enjoy the safety net that social insurance offers. To make things worse, the premium they pay is much higher than average people.

Actual Case A (A woman with hearing impairments)

“I was graduated from Fashion Design Department of Shih Chien University. During the interview by the boss, he asked, 'you are deaf, will you be able to do it?' Everyone was very skeptical. He said that this job needs someone who can hear and speak because he/she has to communicate with the designers and he is not hiring deaf people. When I first graduated, I spent very long time trying to find a job. I handed out a lot of resumes but could land no jobs. Even though in some cases I got hired, I couldn't hold down the job for a long time. The job before my pregnancy was a nice one; I got along very well with the co-workers, and I was good at designing and pattern making. But my mother-in-law asked me if I wanted to be pregnant. Though the pay is very satisfactory, I decided to give up the job and have a child. Today, there are more job opportunities, but I can only get lower ranking and laborious jobs such as janitors.”

Actual Case B (A woman with physical impairments)

“As a middle-aged woman with physical impairments, I know very well that after losing my job, it is impossible for me to get back into work place due to the factors of physical endurance and age. The above-mentioned two factors are hard enough for ordinary people, let alone someone with disabilities. My siblings are all married, so taking care of my mother with senile dementia becomes my responsibility. We are qualified for applying for home care service; however, the hours of the service are not enough. So we had to hire foreign nursing worker to help. With the help of foreign nursing worker, the quality of our lives was improved somewhat. But after I lost my job a few years before, the living expenses and fees for care workers had to be covered by the savings from before. That makes me extremely terrified, wondering what I should do for the future.”

Specific Suggestions:

1. The government should plan for measures of promoting employment of women with disabilities.
2. The government should revise regulations on participation of the insurance in “Labor Insurance Act”. For those labors that hold an actual job, joining insurance should be mandatory. In the meanwhile, the applicable targets of “Employment Insurance Act” should be expanded to include self-employed or workers without a steady employer.
3. The government should provide enough and reasonable supporting service, so that the care givers can obtain care services, and the responsibilities of families can be alleviated.

Article 12

The Health and Reproduction of Women with Disabilities

Article 12(1):

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

Article 12(2):

...States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Responding country reports:

In the national report, the hindrance which prevents women from obtaining health is excluded. As for the many services offered by the “People with Disabilities Rights Protection Act” mentioned in 12.57, there is actually no gender differentiation; and the service offered did not meet the needs of women with disabilities.

Current Status

1. The National Health Research Institutes (NHRI) published the “2020 Health White-Paper “which was commissioned by Department of Health (now Ministry of Health and Welfare). In this paper, there are chapters focused on persons with disabilities. However, after studying the details, it is obvious that all the policy goals lack gender statistics and analysis. In addition, after Department of Health published this paper in 2008, none of the medical and health service institutions followed up; and most goals were not carried out. Moreover the body weight survey and health evaluation of persons with disabilities are absent in every survey on population health. Though article 21 of “People with Disabilities Rights Protection Act” clearly indicate that the central competent authority should provide citizens with disabilities with health maintaining and reproduction health services, as well as follow up services; however, in the matter of fact, central competent authority did not follow up nor provide with statistical data, and the health care needs and health rights of the people with disabilities are being ignored again and again.

2. According to World Health Survey, the women with disabilities in countries of higher income will encounter medical equipment related difficulties. For example, women with physical impairments can't get breast cancer and cervical cancer screening program services because the height of the examine table is not adjustable and the mammograms can only be taken when standing. While reviewing if there are any inconveniences for women with disabilities using the related medical equipment in medical institutions, Taiwan doesn't have related survey data, or improvement measures, thus the health risks of women with disabilities are increased. For example, Bureau of Health Promotion conducted a HPV self-examining service on women with disabilities. When BHP surveyed the women with mental impairments in Tai-chung County and I-Lan County, they found that 70% of them had never taken any pap smear test, while overall rate of women who had never had pap smear test was only 12%. It is clear that though BHP promotes the screening tests for women with disabilities, they did not take the factors of the disabilities into consideration; such as simplifying the wordings of the promotional flyers so as to be apprehended by people with mental impairments; or providing a more convenient screening method. And they are the reasons why the screening rate had been low.
3. The needs of getting pregnant of women with disabilities are usually ignored. The government does not provide any adequate examine services or information pregnant women with disabilities. Take spinal cord injured person as an example, female suffers less sexual function problems than male. And in most cases, the capability of bearing children is not affected. However, among them, not many women do actually get pregnant and give birth to children. One of the reasons is that when they look for the assistance from medical resources, medical personnel can't provide the support they need. According to the survey conducted by the League of Welfare Organizations for the Disabled in 2012, only 58% of the 66 mothers agreed that "medical staff in obstetric department has positive attitude towards reproduction". In other words, the sexual needs and reproductive right of people with disabilities are widely ignored.
4. Take the pregnant women with physical impairments as an example, when they have regular checkups for the pregnancy, they often have to deal with the difficulties of mounting the delivery table; and literature on pregnancy in relation to women with disabilities is very limited, the doctors not knowing how to assist a natural birth and tend to recommend Caesarean section. At the same time, in order to meet the National Health Insurance payment requirements, the pregnant women have to bear the pains for at least 24 hours to be admitted into delivery room. Except for the women with physical impairments, women with different disabilities are facing different difficulties; whereas our system overlooks the needs of them.

Actual Case A (A woman with physical impairments)

“I went to a hospital for prenatal checkups. After several visits, the nurse still thought I was there for other obstetric issues instead of routine prenatal checkups. I had to show my New Mother Handbook for them to realize my visit was for prenatal checkup. I thought the obstetric department of Hospital A was more professional. However, they ambiguously declined my request, saying that they did not have the equipment to assist me deliver my child; they suggested me to go to Hospital B instead.

From the very beginning of my pregnancy, the burden for my body became heavier and heavier day by day. Even getting up from bed became a very difficult task for me. We had to go through evaluation to get an electric wheel chair, or personal assistant and etc., if we apply for one. My child would have come before we passed all the evaluations. Nowadays, each hospital has its mothers’ classroom, but none of the participants with disabilities. Therefore, we could not share the same experience. Today, we gather together here to discuss the same issues we face, support each other; this is the very mothers’ classroom for us.”

Actual Case B (A woman with physical impairments)

“While having prenatal examination, I needed to have my pee tested but could not find a restroom for the disabled. Also, the examination table was too high; my husband had to carry me up and down every time I went for a checkup. Weighing is another problem; my husband would carry me and weigh first, then deduct his own weight. We didn’t find out until later that there were scales for wheel chair users in other department. Nobody told us about it; the staff of obstetric department didn’t even know about it. Because at the latter stage of my pregnancy, my husband couldn’t carry me anymore, we always went there to weigh first, and then came here for prenatal checkups.

When I gave birth to my first child, the doctor in outpatient department had never had any experience of deliver a baby of a woman with disability. He did not know which way would be better for me. I asked several moms with disabilities, they all chose caesarean section, so I chose caesarean section, too. I got a shot to induce the baby. After 24 hours of labor pain, I was admitted into the delivery room. For general anesthesia, I got a shot at my spine. I was so terrified that I might become paralyzed from the waist down.”

Specific Suggestions:

The country should survey the needed support for women with disabilities during pregnancy and

labor, and provide adequate environment and services; such as to improve and install adjustable examination table or delivery table, and provide appropriate medical information that every woman with disabilities can comprehend easily. Also, the government should put the needs of woman with disabilities into consideration so as to plan a flawless health policy; and remove the entire environmental barrier for woman with disabilities when they go to see a doctor, and ensure each and every one can get the most suitable medical care service.

Appendix

Without the help of her mother with terminal cancer, girl with cerebral palsy had to drop out from school

(by Tsai Wei-Bin 2013-10-22/UDN/Yulin)

“I really want to go to school, but I can’t do it without my mom,” says Lee Ya-Chi of Shuilin Township, Yunlin County. The mother had been helping Lee, who has cerebral palsy by pushing her in the wheel chair to school and staying with her at school throughout the day. Though they are poor, Lee is a diligent and hardworking student. All her efforts paid off, she got unconditional admission to a high school. Unfortunately, right after she was admitted, her father passed away. And her mother, Chen Guei-Hua, was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Lee Ya-Chi felt that she needed to quit the school for her mother, who’s now under great pain because of chemo-therapy. Any help from the society is urgently needed.

Wu Tzu-Fan, the village head, says, “Lee Ya-Chi is quadriplegic. She can’t walk and can hardly speak. Going to school was much harder for her than others throughout the years she’s been to elementary school and junior high school. It is truly amazing that under these circumstances, she always managed to remain the top student in her class. This is the greatest motivation that encouraged her mother to push her in the wheelchair and walked 5 kilometers to her school rain or shine. The mother is the child’s mouth, ears; as well as her hands and feet. For so many years, all the neighbours have been so touched by the fact that the unfortunate mother -daughter team would fight against all the odds and go to school together every day.

Lee Ya-Chi’s older brother and younger sister managed to afford the school by having part-time jobs. Mrs. Lee says that it was hard to make ends meet; she and her husband could only get odd jobs to live hand to mouth. Because that the children are all very considerate, all the hard work are worth it.

“You have to have something that is better than others,” says Mrs. Lee, “Ya-Chi maybe a quadriplegic, but she is smart and optimistic. As a mother, I will help her with what she is lack of.” She said that if Ya-Chi wants to go to school, she will be beside her as long as she lives.

Last year Ya-Chi got unconditional admission to Beigang High School for her outstanding academic performance. It is over 10 kilometers from Shuilin Township to this high school. Village Head Wu Tzu-Fan helped them by renting a place besides Beigang High School for them to live, so that Mrs. Lee could save some trouble bringing the kid to school. But to everyone’s dismay, the father passed away almost immediately after the school started. The heavy burden was even heavier on the mother’s shoulders.

Suspicious Victim of Domestic violence, a Mentally Disabled Woman Died

(By Yang Si-Ray, 2012-10-19

／CNA／Tainan)

A mentally disabled woman, Sun, was likely beaten to death in Tainan City. After investigation, the police brought back Sun's sister and the sister's boyfriend for prosecutor's further investigation. According to the police, 47-year-old Sun was brought to hospital for emergent treatment in mid-September. She was found by the social workers to have ulcerated wounds and bruises over her head, knees, sides of her chests and etc. It was suspected to be a case of abuse. Therefore, social workers reported to Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Center of Tainan City Government.

According to the police, Sun was diagnosed by the hospital with acute kidney failure, and septicemia and etc. After treatment, Sun was pronounced dead on Oct. 17.

According to the police, based on the wounds on Sun's body, she might have been abused for several months before her death. Sun lived with her 45-year-old sister. It is suspected that her sister or the sister's common law partner Kuo was involved with domestic violence. The pair was asked to come down to the police station for the explanation.

According to the police, during the interview, Kuo told the police that he hit Sun once because she sometimes could not control her bladder or bowl movements. Sun's sister told the police that she did not know if her boyfriend had been abusing her sister. After investigation, the two suspects were transferred to Taiwan Prosecutors' Office.

Female College Student with Aphasia Was Sexually Assaulted by Classmate

(By Yuen Chih-Haw, 2013-10-29/UDN/New Taipei City)

University student Chen found out that one of his female classmates was with hearing and speech impairments. He had targeted her and sexually assaulted her at the pavilion and staircases in the campus for 18 times. The female student texted her classmates to tell them, but couldn't convince them, thus the awful tragedy was not disclosed until one of the senior students found out and helped her to press charges.

The 20-year-old female student had been sexually assaulted for over a year, and suffered both physically and mentally. She had become depressed, feeling self-abased, and even thought about committing suicide. New Taipei District Prosecutors Office ruled that Chen (20) claimed to have had consensual sex with the girl, but his statements were contradictory, therefore indicted Chen for accomplished aggravated sexual assault of 18 times; and unaccomplished of 1 time.

Last April, during the second term of the school year, a student named Chen from a tech college of New Taipei City, asked one of his female classmates who had hearing impairment, and dysphonia to follow him to go upstairs. The female student could read lips, so she followed him after she got what he wanted her to do and went to the staircase at the top of the building.

Chen pushed down the female student's head and forced her to give him oral sex. The girl couldn't ask for help due to her dysphonia at that time. She was in such a great shock that didn't tell anyone else.

Knowing that she did not tell on him, Chen had pulled the girl by force to the staircase and compelled her to give him oral sex or sexually assaulted her for 4 times in 2 months. After summer vacation, by the rate of once every two weeks during the period from last September to this March, Chen had forced the girl to the pavilion at the corner of the campus and sexually assaulted her for 10 times.

One of the nights in April this year, when there was no one else in the classroom, Chen took the opportunity and pushed the girl onto the wall and was about to sexually assault her again. Luckily, someone walked by just then. Chen ran away. However, afterwards, he dragged the girl to the pavilion and assaulted her three times.

The girl refrained from telling others, cried often, and thought of killing herself. She started to text four of her classmates about what had happened to her and she constantly washed her mouth with water. Some thought they should collect more evidence before go to the police. Some were

skeptical about what she said. But none of them took any action.

One night at the beginning of June, a senior student was passing by when Chen was trying to pull the girl by force again. The girl grabbed the hand of the senior student; the motion scared Chen away. The senior student rushed into the classroom to argue with Chen after he knew what had happened. But Chen stayed hiding in the classroom until the police came and apprehended him.