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Handbook on Media Reporting for **Promoting Disability Equality** in China

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UNPRPD

Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Persons with disabilities
face severe challenges
in upholding their rights.
Media reporting on disability
has a huge impact
on public perceptions
and therefore
on the disability community.
Only by reporting
disability issues in conformity
with the purposes of
the Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities
can we build a harmonious,
pluralistic and equal society.

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FOREWORD

Currently, there are approximately 1 billion persons with disabilities in the world. China is home to 85 million persons with disabilities – the largest disability community in the world. China has made great strides in advancing the equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities in recent years. However, like elsewhere in the world, persons with disabilities, especially girls and women, remain one of the most marginalized groups in society. Persons with disabilities face many challenges, such as lower levels of education and a lack of equal economic and social participation. These arise from pervasive barriers, including social stigma, among others. Stigma, compounded by a lack of understanding of the rights and the value of the contributions of persons with disabilities to society, continues to fuel systemic discrimination towards them.

The media can be a vital instrument in raising awareness and countering stigma and misinformation. It has the potential to be a powerful force for changing societal misconceptions and presenting persons with disabilities as individuals who are part of human diversity. Today, however, when persons with disabilities are featured in the media, they are often negatively stereotyped, not fairly represented, treated as recipients of pity,

charity or medical treatment or, alternatively, they are portrayed as superheroes so as to inspire others.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities requires state parties to raise awareness and combat stereotypes related to persons with disabilities, including by encouraging all media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with respect for human rights. With the support of the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) China Programme, this Handbook on Media Reporting for Promoting Disability Equality in China was prepared by, for, and with persons with disabilities. It draws on solid first-hand experience in media research, monitoring and training in recent years by the lead authors, as well as the expertise of media communications and disability experts.

We commend the handbook to a wide global audience, including media professionals, journalism educators, and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs). By increasing awareness and understanding of disability issues and of the diversity of persons with disabilities and their situations, the handbook serves as a valuable tool for media professionals and journalism educators on how to cover stories involving persons with disabilities with a view to promoting their dignity and equal rights. And it provides guidance for OPDs to better advocate through the media.

UNESCO supports journalism education globally, underpinned by a strong conviction that professional journalistic

standards are essential for maximizing the potential of media systems to foster democracy, dialogue and development. We invite journalism educators to explore the UNESCO Series on Journalism Education (https://en.unesco.org/unesco-series-on-journalism-education), which includes model curricula and syllabi on journalism education; a handbook on "fake news" and disinformation; guidebooks on reporting on climate change and sustainable development; and more.

Disability inclusion is central to the promise of the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Together, as we strive to combat stigma and discrimination against persons with disabilities, we can raise awareness and remove barriers for an inclusive, accessible and sustainable world – a world that is better for us all.

Shahbaz Khan

Director of UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office

UNESCO Representative to China, DPRK, Japan, Mongolia, and ROK

Chair of the UN Theme Group on Disability in China

INTRODUCTION

The Second China National Sample Survey on Disability, conducted in 2006, found that persons with disabilities account for 6.34 per cent of the total population in China.[1] This finding was reported in the mass media as 'there is one person with a disability for every 15 people in China'.[2]

In 2012, the China Disabled Persons' Federation estimated that, 'As of the end of 2010, the total number of persons with disabilities in our country was 85.02 million'.[3] This figure was reported as being 'equal to the total population of Germany' in a lot of news articles.

The World Report on Disability, published by the World Health Organization in 2011, stated that 'In the years ahead, disability will be an even greater concern because its prevalence is on the rise. This is due to ageing populations and the higher risk of disability in older people as well as the global increase in chronic health conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer and mental health disorders'.[4] Based on this,

1. Government of the People's Republic of China. Major Statistics of the Second China National Sample Survey on Disability (No.1).
2. This handbook acknowledges the use of the term 'disabled' in official documents and other literature when citing the original text, but uses the term 'people with disabilities'.
3. China Disabled Persons' Federation. 2012. Notice on using the total number of persons with disabilities and the number of persons with disabilities of different kinds and levels in China at the end of 2010, No.25.
4. WHO. 2011. World Report on Disability. Geneva, WHO. p.5.

journalists concluded that persons with disabilities are the largest vulnerable group, and that aging and chronic diseases force everyone to confront the disability issue.

The 'Invisible Rights' publication by One Plus One (Beijing) Disabled Persons' Cultural Development Center and Harvard Law School noted that, 'In countries with life expectancies over 70 years of age, people spend on average about 11.5 per cent of their life span living with disabilities'[5] The mass media has gradually adopted a similar statement in recent years, telling people: All people are people with disabilities.

These reports show that on the one hand, the issue of disability is increasingly described by the media as a pressing crisis and a problem that must be solved due to its huge population base, but on the other hand, because of a change of perception, the media are now realizing that disability is something that will be experienced by everyone instead of being the experience of a special group.

However, even though disability is a status everyone will likely experience if they live beyond 70, it is important to nevertheless recognize that many people with disabilities experience an extremely unfavourable position in various ways. Persons with disabilities face severe challenges in terms of realizing their rights and are often disadvantaged. For example, the literacy rate of adults with disabilities is as low as 3 per cent in some countries, while that of women with disabilities is only 1

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5. One Plus One (Beijing) Disabled Persons' Cultural Development Center and Harvard Law School. 2012. Invisible Rights: A Manual for Persons with Visual Impairment. Cambridge, MA, Harvard.

per cent.[6] Furthermore, more than 90 per cent of children with disabilities in developing counties have never attended school.[7]

Studies have found that mass media, including newspapers, magazines, radio, television and online media, such as websites, blogs and social media (e.g. WeChat) play an important role in influencing public knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. Media reporting has a huge impact on public perceptions and therefore on persons with disabilities, but the issue of lack of access to education for persons with disabilities, particularly women and children with disabilities, is rarely reported on by the mass media.

Based on their respective reporting frames, the media publish articles by choosing specific facts, opinions and using words and pictures to create a pseudo environment between objective reality and the subjective world. Through this, they exercise an invisible but formative influence on our thoughts about disability, about persons with disabilities and about issues related to disability.

It is important to consider the following:

- Do the media report on disability issues?
- Which disability issues are reported on by the media?
- How often do the media report on such issues?
- What frames do the media adopt to report on such disability issues?

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6. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Disability. Fact sheet on Persons with Disabilities. https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/resources/factsheet-on-persons-with-disabilities.html
7. UNICEF. 2007. Promoting the rights of children with disabilities, Innocenti Digest, No.13, p. 7.

Over the years, the mass media in China have played an important role in improving public awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities. But some reports show a misunderstanding of the living conditions and needs of persons with disabilities, and a minority of reports even show discrimination towards disability, giving the public a negative impression of disability.[8] For example, some media reports continue to use words and expressions that are outdated (e.g. dumb; mentally retarded), inappropriate (e.g. patient; risk; illness) and misleading (e.g. portrayals of people who live with a disability but have a strong will.

With the advent of the internet and mobile phones, the influence of social media has become strong with the public, and it is also adopted by persons with disabilities as a means to communicate. However, some of the content shared via social media is incorrect with regard to the rights of persons with disabilities, and can strengthen stereotypes about disability and intensify separation and opposition between groups.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which formally took effect in China following its approval by China's National People's Committee (NPC) Standing Committee in 2008, included in the obligations of the contracting countries the mission for mass media of increasing public awareness. The CRPD not only requires the media to pay more attention to disability and report on it so as to raise

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8. The media should report on persons with disabilities in a normal way https://cul.qq.com/a/20140612/069149.htm

public awareness, but also requires the media to report with a more positive attitude, from a rights-based perspective, and to recognize that disability is a normal part of human diversity. Thus, mass media can make a special contribution to upholding the rights and increasing the welfare of everyone, creating an inclusive and pluralistic society, and contributing towards sustainable development. Accordingly, media can contribute to the process of realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In order to promote fair, accurate and positive reporting on persons with disabilities, from a rights-based perspective, in 2019, the Shanghai Youren Foundation, with the support of UNESCO, facilitated the compilation of this Handbook on Media Reporting for Promoting Disability Equality in China, aiming to provide the media with ideas and resources relating to reporting on persons with disabilities. The handbook also serves as a tool and a reference for organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs)[9] when communicating with mass media. It is clear that only by reporting issues of disability in conformity with the purposes of the CRPD can we establish a pluralistic and equal society, and ensure persons with disabilities are not left behind in the process of realizing the SDGs.

During the process of writing the handbook, the authors referred to, and integrated, the results from previous research

9. An organization of persons with disabilities (OPD) is a self-help organization for persons with disabilities. Such groups are also known as disabled persons' organizations (DPOs). This handbook chooses to use the term OPDs, to reflect the change of vocabulary in terms of the use of the word 'disabled'.

and projects that were conducted to monitor the content of media reports on the topic, as well as experience and the lessons learned from the media trainings, including projects implemented by the local Chinese OPD One Plus One Disability Group[10] in collaboration with the Youth and Media Development Research Center under the Institute of Journalism and Communication of the Chinese Academy of Social Science, UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office, ILO Country Office for China and Mongolia, Humanity & Inclusion Beijing Office. In addition, the handbook benefited from exchanges between OPDs and media reporters in many aspects. The most prominent feature of this handbook is that it was led and developed by local Chinese OPDs. The viewpoints of persons with disabilities were also included in the handbook.

The handbook also received kind guidance from Prof. Zeng Xiangmin, Prof. Zhao Shuping, Prof. Qin Yuming, Prof. Wu Weihua, Mr. Fu Haizheng and Ms. Liu Wen from the Television School of the Communication University of China; Prof. Xu Jinghong of the School of Journalism and Communication of Beijing Normal University; Mr. Mao Zhanwen, Deputy Dean of the School of Journalism and Communication of Minzu University of China; Mr. Chang Xiaoming, Deputy Dean and Associate Professor of the School of Management (School of Accessibility Management) of Nanjing Normal University of

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10. The organization is now called the One Plus One Disability Group (OPO). It is the largest local non-governmental OPD in China. Other names used by the organization are: One Plus One Audio Workshop, One Plus One (Beijing) Persons with Disabilities Cultural Development Center, One Plus One Persons with Disabilities Public Welfare Group. The Handbook calls it One Plus One. Visit www.yijiayi.org for further information.

Special Education; Ms. Tang Jianying, lecturer of the Media and Gender Research Center of Communication University of China, member of UNESCO Chair in Media and Gender; Ms. Yang Liu of the School of Journalism and Communication of Chongqing University; and Ms. Zeng Qingyi, National Professional Officer of the Communication and Information Sector of the UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office. Thanks are extended to all.

Any mistakes or omissions may exist in this handbook due to our limited cognitive level. We kindly request every reader and user of the Handbook to contribute your viewpoints and suggestions. We trust that the handbook will stimulate discussion on how to report on issues relating to disability equality and communication, and will advance cooperation between media practitioners and OPDs. It is hoped that media practitioners will seek new perspectives, viewpoints and resources in the reporting of disability issues, thus enabling the public to better recognize and respect the rights of persons with disabilities, thereby supporting the building of a more equal and pluralistic society together with persons with disabilities, as part of the wider UNESCO goal of building peace in the minds of men and women, as a means to achieving world peace.

CHAPTER ONE
PERSPECTIVES ON DISABILITY

In the past, persons with disabilities were regarded as 'others' and were isolated and excluded from mainstream society. Perceptions have changed in recent years as a result of various efforts and programmes. Nevertheless, many stereotypes and myths about persons with disabilities persist. They are viewed by some as being pitiable, in need of help and/or as having supernormal patience and abilities.

Such perceptions often come down to the fact that people believe 'their' life has no relationship with 'ours'. Therefore, it is said that 'China is still weak in terms of accessibility', but few have explored and analyzed in depth the reasons why persons with disabilities are not widely visible on the streets of China. However, if we want changes, we must understand the reasons for and root causes of these situations and identify any common principles.

This chapter will examine the evolution of public understanding of the concept of 'disability', the principles of the CPRD and the relationship between disability and the sustainable development goals. This will serve as the background and basis on which to reflect on how to improve media reporting on disability in China.

I. EVOLUTION OF DISABILITY MODELS

From the 1980s to the beginning of the twenty-first century, changes were seen in the terms used to describe persons with disabilities. Common terms included: 'crippled', 'disabled' and 'disability' but each has different connotation, reflecting the changing perspectives of persons with disabilities. Those perspectives are called 'models'. The dominant model of disability has penetrated and influenced the world invisibly but formatively for years. 'It exists everywhere and unconsciously produces the dominant effect, influencing every corner, including both theory and practice.'[11]

(I) THE TRADITIONAL MODEL

All societies and cultures have particular attitudes towards physical and mental differences. In the pre-modern era, due to superstition and prejudice, it was generally believed that disability was a sign of evil, and a result of this belief was that persons with disabilities were despised and excluded. Under this 'traditional' model, however, another way of viewing persons with disabilities was to take pity on them and seek to take care of them. Hence, it is also called the 'charity' model. Characteristics of the 'traditional' model are described below.

Perception: Persons with disabilities are regarded as being useless, without any abilities or value. They are perceived as

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11. Cui Fengming. 2016. Preface: Observation of persons with disabilities in China (2014-2015), in Xie Yan, Cai Cong, Fu Gaoshan. Yanshi Press, p. 1.

being a tragedy for themselves and their families.

Appellation: In general, under the traditional model persons with disabilities are referred to using the term 'disabled'. Specific types of disability are referred to using words such as cripple, dumb, mentally retarded and so on, which are also used as terms of abuse.

Attitude: Fear, exclusion, pity, sympathy, and mercy.

Treatment: In general, under this model people think that persons with disabilities cannot work and do not need to work, and therefore think they should be cared for. Meanwhile, others think that persons with disabilities have no value, and should be abandoned or left alone.

Challenges: Persons with disabilities are deprived of opportunities for survival and development, thus strengthening the stereotype that persons with disabilities are incapable.

Under this 'traditional' model, the fate of persons with disabilities is determined by other more 'powerful' people. Persons with disabilities are forced to strive for a small amount of resources by being more pitiable than other people within the disability community and those with no disability. As a result, persons with disabilities are forced to rely on welfare and become used to the idea of 'wait, depend, ask'. While they are often given assistance, the emphasis on pity and care all the time can lead to feelings of numbness, indifference and even disgust among people in wider society, leading to even greater exclusion and isolation of persons with disabilities, and creating a vicious circle.

(II) MEDICAL MODEL

In more modern times, with the industrial revolution, the idea of 'productivity' influenced how we viewed humans. Because persons with disabilities do not conform to particular physical and mental standards, they were thought to be unable to adapt to the production needs of modern society. But the development of medical technology led to the idea that persons with disabilities could be made to be almost 'normal'. Thus the 'medical' model of disability came into being.

Perception: Disability is perceived as an abnormal or defective state caused by disease or accident, which makes people unsuited to the environment. Therefore, the country and society must intervene to change them.

Appellation: The term 'handicapped' is usually adopted. Other appellations generated under the medical model include 'patient with visual handicaps', 'patient with mental disease', "patient with autism" and so on.

Attitude: Otherization and isolation.

Treatment: Under this model, the core to solving the disability 'problem' is to adopt medical means of making persons with disabilities 'normal'. Thus, medical interventions seek to make persons with disabilities acquire the capacities that qualify them to enter 'mainstream society'. Without such intervention, they are isolated and excluded from the system.

Challenges: Intervention carried out by society makes the isolation of persons with disabilities rational and legal. With the rise of eugenics, persons with disabilities, especially persons with mental disabilities, have become the biggest victims.

(III) SOCIAL MODEL

In the twentieth century, especially after the two world wars, people pondered more on the rights, dignity, equality and purpose of humans, and deepened reflection and criticism of technological determinism. Against this background, more people with disabilities gradually awakened to their subjective consciousness. Starting from the relationship between their personal experience and social oppression, they proposed a 'social' model of great revolutionary significance, giving the public a new perspective on disability issues.

Perception: Although persons with disabilities are restricted in some functions, their problems are mainly caused by the social context, which is filled with obstacles, including the discriminatory attitudes of people.

Appellation: Some scholars and actors suggested using the term 'disability', which represents that they have an impairment and face all kinds of invisible and visible barriers in society.

Attitude: Tolerance and acceptance.

Treatment: Eliminate barriers in the social context.

Challenges: People overly focus on barriers in society and pay little attention to the deep influence of attitudes and perceptions.

In recent years the social model has encountered fierce criticisms. While it can assist in defending the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities, from the perspective of anti-discrimination, it cannot help to realize their social, economic

and cultural rights. The differences in physical functions between persons with disabilities and those with no disability means that persons with disabilities indeed need more assistance to get opportunities with regard to the economy, society and culture.

In addition, the social model does not recognize the inherent value of persons with disabilities. Society is directed by people with no disability, and people with disabilities are regarded as objects rather than actors. Therefore, under the social model, in order to eliminate obstacles and integrate into mainstream society, persons with disabilities must meet standards formulated by mainstream society.

(IV) HUMAN RIGHTS MODEL

Drawing on the social model and within the framework of the rights-based approach, the convention proposed the 'human rights' model. It recognizes not only civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights.

Perception: Dignity is at the core of human rights. From this perspective, every person is regarded as having supreme value and no one is of insignificance. Accordingly, people are respected not because of their contributions to the economy or any other achievements, but because of their inherent value. [12]

Appellation: Since the 1960s, respect for individuals was reflected in the idea of advocating for 'people first'. Accordingly, the term changed from 'disabled person' to 'person with disability'.

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12. Degener, T. and Quinn, G. 2002. A Survey of International, Comparative and Regional Disability Law Reform, in M. Breslin and S. Yee (eds.), Disability rights law and policy: International and national perspectives Ardsley, Transnational Publishers Inc.

In the Chinese-speaking world, the wording is contentious. As of 2020, the mainstream view in mainland China is that the word 'Can Zhang (impairment + barriers)' is the appropriate term. To show respect, the term 'Can Zhang Ren Shi', 'Can Zhang Zhe', or 'Can Zhang Ren' (meaing persons with impairment and barriers), should be used. Some other people think the character 'Can (Impairment)' in the term has a negative connotation and believe that 'Shen Xin Zhang Ai Zhe (persons with physical or mental barriers)' or 'Zhang Ai Zhe (persons with barriers)' –terms used by Taiwan Province would be better.

Similarly, recently some people in European and American regions have also contended that the term 'disability' is somewhat discriminatory and believe that the term 'people of difference' should be used to refer to them. But many OPDs disagree and feel that the term 'disability' (as in 'persons with disabilities') should be retained since it is part of the identity and culture that has been formed through long-term oppression in the past. If this identity is lost and the scope of disability is further expanded, this will lead to the elimination of the group's sense of culture and cohesion.

Following lengthy consideration, the authors of this handbook decided to adopt the terms 'disability' and 'persons with disabilities' , which have a progressive meaning. Nevertheless, the authors recognize that terms and usage change over time and these terms may therefore not be appropriate for use in future.

Attitude: Accept diversity, respect the intrinsic dignity of persons with disabilities, emphasize their position as both subjects and participants.

Treatment: Having absorbed the medical and social models, the human rights model does not exclude medical means and it focuses on removing contextual barriers and improving access for persons with disabilities, ensuring and advancing access to all human rights and basic freedoms, based on the principle of equality for all by law, keeping respect for intrinsic dignity foremost.

Challenges: It is extremely difficult to realize, through laws, the rights of persons with disabilities, as laws are heavily influenced by culture, and can be obstructed by it.

Conclusion:

People's opinions and perspectives on disability are complex, so it is difficult to formulate a single model. The distinctions between the various models and the descriptions presented above serve as an attempt to assist users of this handbook who are unfamiliar with the disability field to gain a better understanding of the multiple perspectives of disability, enabling them to better identify and analyze specific problems facing persons with disabilities.

II. DISABILITY AND THE 2030 AGENDA

In 2015, all of the United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda), which set out a plan for achieving 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including 169 targets, aiming to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere.

Underlying this process is the recognition that personal dignity is fundamental. Based on the principle of 'leaving no one behind', the 2030 Agenda emphasizes that it is necessary to focus efforts on the most marginalized populations, including persons with disabilities. Accordingly, many of the SDGs seek to enhance the participation and support the development of persons with disabilities.

The 17 SDGs are as follows:

Goal 1: No poverty. Eliminate poverty in its all forms for all people, including for persons with disabilities, 80 per cent of whom live in developing countries.

Goal 2: Zero hunger. Ensure access by all, in particular people in vulnerable situations to safe, nutritious and sufficient food.

Goal 3: Good health and well-being. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Rather than focus on recovery,

recognize the relationship between disability and health.

Goal 4: Quality education. Guaranteeing inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, including for persons with disabilities

Goal 5: Gender equality. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, including women and girls with disabilities.

Goal 6: Clean water and sanitation. Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, paying special attention to those in vulnerable situations

Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy. Ensure that everyone has access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy.

Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, decent work for all, which calls for special attention towards inclusive employment and supported employment for persons with disabilities.

Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure. Establish resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. Take into account

the needs of persons with disabilities for accessibility and the needs of persons with disabilities.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries. Empowering and promoting the social, economic and political inclusion of all, and irrespective of age, sex, disability, etc.

Goal 11: Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable while giving special attention to the requirements of persons with disabilities for accessibility, so as to ensure their equal participation.

Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production. Pay attention to the accessibility and universal design

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Raise capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management focusing on marginalized communities.

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems,

sustainably manage forests, combat
desertification, and halt and reverse land
degradation and biodiversity loss.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies,
provide access to justice for all and build
effective, accountable and inclusive
institutions at all levels, payment special
attention towards the rights of persons
with disabilities to equal recognition
before the law and the support they may
require in exercising their legal capacity

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation
and revitalize the global partnership for
sustainable development. Enhancing
capacity-building support to developing
countries, to increase the availability of
high-quality, timely and reliable data
disaggregated by gender, income race,
disability, etc.

Disability is referenced in various parts of the SDGs and
specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment,
inequality, accessibility of human settlements, as well as data collection
and monitoring of the SDGs. Overall, the SDGs illustrate that in order
to achieve inclusive sustainable development, it is necessary to foster
an enabling environment for persons with disabilities and ensure that
they are fully and equally engaged in all aspects of society.

III. BACKGROUND

(I) HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

In 1997, the United Nations Secretariat called on all departments of the United Nations (UN) system to be guided by human rights principles in implementing all routine duties and projects. Between 1997 and 2003, the United Nations agencies began to use the human rights-based approach (HRBA) in their daily work and accumulated rich experience in the process. However, each organization had its own understanding and application experience of HRBA and had not reached an agreement on how to adopt HRBA in practice. Therefore, in 2003 the UN announced an agreement on the application of the HRBA in projects, titled the 'Common Understanding on a Human–Rights-Based-Approach (HRBA) to Development Cooperation'.

In 2005, all member states of the UN declared that 'We resolve to integrate the promotion and protection of human rights into national policies and to support the further   mainstreaming of human rights throughout the United Nations system'.[13] Accordingly, the HRBA today underpins development projects and the activities of governmental and non-governmental institutions across the world.

The HRBA takes human rights as the core of project development and recognizes that realizing the human rights

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13. United Nations General Assembly. 2005. *2005 World Summit Outcome*. Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005. A/RES/60/1.

of all is the key to overcoming poverty, inequality, conflict and marginalization. Representing a shift away from the welfare approach, the HRBA emphasizes the need to develop the capacity of communities and individuals to realize their rights. Moreover, the HRBA also emphasizes the need to enhance the capacity of governments as the obligation holders to fulfil their obligations relating to human rights, and to increase opportunities for governments to have constructive conversations with power holders.

Against this background, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) became the first comprehensive human rights convention approved by international society in the twenty-first century, and marks a paradigm shift in people's attitudes and the methods used when dealing with issues affecting persons with disabilities. [14]

The aim of the CRPD is to ensure that persons with disabilities can enjoy the same intrinsic rights and basic freedoms that all other humans enjoy, can achieve equality to people with no disability, live as responsible citizens, have equal opportunities, comprehensively participate in various affairs and contribute to society.

The CRPD does not aim to elaborate new rights for persons with disabilities, but rather to reassert the basic rights shared by them and all others, and to clarify the particular obligations of Member States and effective means of realizing the rights of persons with disabilities.

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14. United Nations General Assembly. 2007. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106.

China signed the CRPD on 30 March 2007, the first day the convention was opened for signing. Approved by the NPC Standing Committee, the CRPD formally took effect in China on 31 August 2008.

(II) PRINCIPLES OF THE CONVENTION

Although no model can cover, explain and solve all problems related to disability at present, humanity has reached a consensus on the idea that everyone is equal, as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The CRPD proposes eight guiding principles for achieving equality and upholding the rights of persons with disabilities, as described below.[15]

1. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons.

This principle emphasizes that dignity is 'inherent', in that it is something one is born with and that cannot be denied or withdrawn. It also emphasizes 'choice' and 'independence', recognizing that persons with disabilities are automatically deprived of autonomy under the 'traditional' and 'medical' models of disability; a deprivation that serves to erode the dignity of persons with disabilities. The terms 'autonomy' and 'independence' should not be understood to mean that a person should complete all tasks on their own. Instead, the terms indicate the need for

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15. United Nations General Assembly. 2007. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106

persons with disabilities to have self-determination. For example, while paraplegic people are not able to meet all their daily needs independently, they still retains the right to decide where and with whom they will live.

2. Non-discrimination.

'"Discrimination on the basis of disability" means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.' [16]

This type of discrimination is experienced not only by persons with disabilities but also by their relatives. For example, some employers think that families of persons with disabilities need to spend a lot of time with their families and are therefore not suitable candidates for workplace development. Such discrimination is also experienced by people who once had a disability but no longer do. For example, a person with a history of mental disabilities may be denied a job interview. Furthermore, there is discrimination against people studying disability. For example, people who apply to study a major related to disability abroad may be declined and told that 'disability is not worthy of research'.

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16. United Nations General Assembly. 2007. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106. Article 2.

Multiple and intersectional discrimination: "Multiple discrimination" refers to a situation where a person suffers discrimination on the basis of two or more grounds, resulting in such discrimination being deepened or aggravated. [17] "Intersectional discrimination" refers to a situation where two or more grounds of discrimination operate and interact with each other at the same time in such a way that they are inseparable. [18] Two or more grounds of discrimination result in a change in or worsening of the nature of such situation. [19] Among all people with disabilities, women with disabilities, sexual minorities with disabilities, children with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS and disabilities, ethnic minorities with disabilities are more likely to experience multiple and intersectional discrimination.

3. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

This principle emphasizes the need to enable persons with disabilities to participate more extensively in public life and play a part in decision-making on the issues that affect them, as well as on other issues.

Full participation is a principle contained in all human rights documents and is also the foundation for realizing rights. The core spirit of the CRPD is reflected in the idea that

17. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. 2004. General recommendation No. 25, on article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on temporary special measures.
18. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. 2010. General recommendation No. 28 on the core obligations of States parties under article 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
19. Crenshaw, K. 1989. Demarginalizing the intersection between race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and anti-racist politics.

decision-making about matters that affect the lives of persons with disabilities must include their participation. This idea, expressed as 'nothing about us without us', was proposed by the organization 'Disabled Peoples International' (DPI) in 1981 and their motto became the theme of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities in 2004. It is the most important slogan of the international disability rights movement.

'Participation', which people with no disability take for granted, is proposed and generally put into practice in the written form with various aspects of strength promoting disability rights protection and social integration, and the joint efforts of people of several generations.

The four elements of full participation are:

Support: Full participation is often only possible if specific support is given to ensure accessibility. An example of such support is the provision of information in Braille, in sign language and in pictures.

Freedom of expression: All individuals must have opportunities to express themselves.

Monitoring: Monitoring mechanisms can identify which measures are effective in achieving full participation and can help to ensure that persons with disabilities get effective feedback.

Capacity building: The provision of capacity building can enhance opportunities for the participation of persons with disabilities. With such

assistance, persons with disabilities cannot be deprived of their right to participation in decision-making on the grounds of having insufficient capacity.

4. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity.

'Different' means there is a discrepancy, but it is neither good nor bad, neither noble nor humble. Likewise, while it is a feature, 'disability' is by no means a tragedy or a defect, as it was viewed under the traditional and medical models. It is a different experience and way of perceiving the world. Ways to acknowledge difference include 'non-visual photography', which was initiated by the organization 'One Plus One'.

5. Equality of opportunity.

Equality of opportunity does not always mean that the same opportunities are made available to all, but rather it recognizes that there are physiological and psychological differences between people and it seeks to ensure that everyone has the same opportunity to enjoy their rights despite these differences. It is closely related to accessibility and to non-discrimination. In certain cases, positive discrimination is needed in order to ensure equal opportunity. For example, the duration of an examination may be extended for students with writing difficulties or with visual impairments.

6. Accessibility.

Specific remarks on accessibility can be found in Article 9 of the CRPD. Accessibility is a fundamental requirement if persons with disabilities are to enjoy all their rights, including participate fully and live independently in the community.

'Accessibility' covers the removal of barriers in four areas: the physical environment and transportation, information and communications, systems and policy. It aims to guarantee all rights of persons with disabilities, and includes the process of media interaction with persons with disabilities.

Based on the idea of equality, accessibility ensures that persons with disabilities are able to move within the physical environment without any barriers, obtain information, communicate and enjoy all measures for other facilities and services open to and provided for the public in both urban and rural areas. [20]

To ensure accessibility, it is necessary to identify and remove barriers. This should be applied to buildings, roads, transportation and facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces. In addition, it is necessary to remove obstacles to 'information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services'.

7. Equality between men and women.

Inequality exists between the sexes in our society. Given this inequality, women with disabilities face two types of

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20. United Nations General Assembly. 2007. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106. Article 9.

discrimination and therefore face a greater challenge. Similarly, the female relatives of persons with disabilities also suffer from discrimination based on both disability and gender, but their situation is often ignored. Regrettably, the CRPD only expressly includes equality between men and women instead of gender equality.

8. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

Children with disabilities face challenges because their development does not meet the standard of children's 'normal' development. Under the traditional and medical models, society tends to not respect their individual characteristics, and forces them to aim to be 'normal', with the focus being on resolving 'problems'. Under these approaches, the particular physical and mental characteristics of children are not recognized, and children are expected to conform to what is considered normal. New approaches promote the participation and engagement of children in life and encourage children with disabilities to participate in whatever ways are optimal for them. Some contradictions of this principle exist, such as excessive speaking training for children with hearing impairments and standardized rehabilitation training for autistic children.

The following section discusses in more detail the issues of barrier-free communication, reasonable accommodation and gender.

(III) REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Both accessibility and 'reasonable accommodation' are necessary means of ensuring that persons with disabilities can realize their inherent rights. Accessibility is macroscopic, standardized and fixed, while 'reasonable accommodation' is individual, specific and flexible. They complement each other and jointly promote the equal participation of persons with disabilities.

According to the CRPD, 'reasonable accommodation' means 'necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms'. [21]

In the traditional anti-discrimination approach, people paid attention to equality in form and made efforts to eliminate discrimination through a variety of measures. However, 'reasonable accommodation', is based on the principle of ensuring equal participation and on upholding the rights of persons with disabilities. Under this approach, differentiated treatment (positive discrimination) is required in order to account for physical and mental differences and therefore realize the rights of persons with disabilities.

With the advent of the concept of reasonable accommodation, people have gained a deeper understanding of anti-discrimination measures and the essence of equality. Thus, it is essential for us to

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21. United Nations General Assembly. 2007. *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 24 January 2007, A/RES/61/106. Article 2.

understand reasonable accommodation in depth and use it well if we hope to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in media reporting and make their viewpoints fully respected. Some key concepts of 'reasonable accommodation' include:

Necessary: Reasonable accommodation aims to provide persons with disabilities with the things they need so as to uphold their equal right of participation. It does not seek to satisfy personal preferences; it involves sensible measures to meet people's needs and ensure their rights are upheld. For example, 'reasonable accommodation' would involve ensuring diabetics have access to sugar-free food, but would not involve ensuring they have access to gourmet delicacies.

Appropriate: Reasonable accommodation does not ask persons with disabilities to change for themselves, but to do appropriate things in order to ensure they can participate in social life on an equal basis with others. For instance, if a house is being repaired, it is a reasonable accommodation to install an access ramp or other facilities to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities at the same time.

Modifications and adjustments: Reasonable accommodation means making changes on the basis of the things you are doing right now. No extra reasonable accommodation is needed if an organization has premises, services, plans and activities that are already accessible to persons with disabilities. Such a situation is the best outcome generated from integrating disability issues into mainstream life.

Inappropriate or excessive burdens: It is not essential to undertake measures related to reasonable accommodation if such measures could lead to bankruptcy. Reasonable accommodation measures are expected from large and well-endowed organizations, but not from small or underfunded ones. However, a majority of reasonable accommodation measures do not cost any money, or only cost a little. According to a study by the United States Office of Disability Employment Policy, 58 per cent of measures cost nothing, while the rest of such accommodations had a cost of US$500, on average. [22]

All human rights and basic freedoms: Reasonable accommodation applies to all aspects of life for persons with disabilities in order to ensure their rights are realized. Reasonable accommodation should not only be provided in education and be denied in judicial litigation, for example.

Moreover, when there are people with different disabilities accessing the same service, all of their needs should be satisfied through reasonable accommodations. For instance, although the needs of people with visual impairments may be contrary to those of people with hearing impairments, it is necessary to fully consider the needs of both groups and take reasonable accommodation measures for both. It is not acceptable to satisfy the needs of one group and deny the needs of the other.

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22. United States Department of Labor. Investing in People: Job accommodation situations and solutions. Office of Disability Employment Policy.
https://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/misc/invest.htm Accessed 10 December 2009.

(IV) DISABILITY AND GENDER

As discussed above, women with disabilities suffer from two forms of discrimination in society, based on disability and gender. When advocating for women's rights, however, the experiences of women with disabilities is too easily ignored. Similarly, the voices of women are often not heard when discussing disability rights. With this in mind, this section expounds on the relationship between disability and gender.

There are three types of disparity between the living status of women with disabilities and that of others in society.

- A disparity between women with disabilities and women with no disability.
- A disparity between women with disabilities and men with disabilities.
- A disparity between rural women with disabilities and urban women with disabilities. [23]

The movement to uphold the rights of women with disabilities is delayed in two areas:

- *It is behind the movement to uphold women's rights.*

Women with disabilities are often ignored by the mainstream women's rights movement because women with disabilities may not conform to the concept behind the initial women's movement, which sought to break the stereotype that women are weaker or more delicate than men.

- *It is far behind the movement to uphold the rights of all persons with disabilities.*

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23. Liu Bohong, Guo Li,Xin Yuan, Zhao Yun, Hao Rui. 2013. Research on the development difficulty, interest demands of Chinese women with disabilities and the solutions. No.2, pp. 13-19.

The existing pattern of gender inequality is reflected in persons with disabilities. Men with disabilities initially dominated the disability rights movement. As a result, the concept of gender inequality was ignored.

At the same time, disability, when seen as a 'defect', tends to be a single label applied to all persons with disabilities and it masks their individual identities and experiences. This makes it difficult to focus on the multiple oppressions faced by women with disabilities when engaging in the disability rights protection movement.

Women affected by disability

As observed when introducing the concept of disability-based discrimination earlier, it is not only persons with disabilities who suffer from disability-based discrimination, but also their relatives. And it is not only women with disabilities who are disadvantaged by both disability and gender, but also the mothers, sisters, wives, daughters and other female relatives of persons with disabilities. These people also confront discrimination, obstacles and disadvantages. For example, under the Chinese cultural norm of 'the domestic wife and the social husband', the mother of a child with a disability is more likely than the father to be blamed for the child's having a disability. Moreover, many people take it for granted that the mother should take care of the child. As a result, women affected by disability are more likely than men to be responsible for caring for a child with a disability. And this type

of discrimination against women is easily ignored. It is therefore important to pay attention to the rights of these women.

(V) RAISE AWARENESS

As noted above, persons with disabilities have been isolated from mainstream society for a long time. People tend to hold out-dated ideas and negative attitudes and also attach a negative label to persons with disabilities; they therefore discriminate against them.

At the same time, the disadvantaged conditions of persons with disabilities further deepen negative attitudes that people may have, so that a vicious circle is formed. In this regard, the CRPD notes that social attitudes significantly influence people's opinions of persons with disabilities and their contributions to society. Thus, Article 8 of the CRPD stipulates that each country has an obligation to put an end to outdated opinions, prejudices and harmful actions related to persons with disabilities.

Given the significant role of media in reflecting and influencing public opinion, the CRPD asks all countries to take measures to encourage media to shape the image of persons with disabilities in conformity with the principles of the CRPD, and the convention emphasizes the importance of monitoring social attitudes to understand the human rights status of persons with disabilities.

The concept of 'awareness-raising' encompasses the

following ideas:

- Inform everyone in society of the facts, so that they are better able to understand and recognize persons with disabilities, and respect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.
- Eliminate stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination against persons with disabilities in all aspects of life.
- Raise awareness of the abilities and contributions of persons with disabilities, including their skills, talents and contributions to social development, in order to reshape their image, gradually eliminate social i solation and speed up the formation of an equal, pluralistic and harmonious society.

CHAPTER TWO

MEDIA REPORTING OF DISABILITY

As noted in the introduction to this handbook, the CRPD conveys a new paradigm and seeks to empower persons with disabilities, an approach that is in stark contrast to earlier ideas about persons with disabilities. This paradigm requires a messenger to convey the ideas of the CRPD to the public; the media is this messenger.

According to Todd Gitlin, the media form 'frames', which are explanations and interpretations of reality that support a certain viewpoint and hold the elements of that view together like the frame of a building. Journalists do this through the selection of information; emphasizing some points while excluding others. [24]

In order to change the 'frame', it is necessary to identify the existing reporting frames pertaining to news concerning disability, and then identify ways to promote learning among journalists about disability issues so that these 'messengers' are equipped to promote disability equality through reporting.

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24. Gitlin, T. 1980. The whole world is watching. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, p.7.

This chapter introduces common frames in mass media reporting and analyzes the influence of these frames on the full participation, integration into society and realization of the equal rights of persons with disabilities. In addition, this chapter discusses mass media reporting related to disability in China, thus increasing understanding of the impact of mass media in various areas, from the macroscopic to the microscopic levels, and lays a foundation for making changes.

I. COMMON FRAMES OF MEDIA REPORTING CONCERNING DISABILITY

Based on the four models of disability described earlier, with 'how persons with disabilities are regarded vs how we should regard them' as the structure, eight kinds of media frames concerning disability issues can be identified. Within the traditional model there are three frames: the exclusion frame, the charity frame and the motivation frame. Within the medical model there is one frame: the correction frame. Within the social model there are two frames: the benefit frame and the win-win result frame. Within the human rights model there are two frames: the inspection frame and the empowerment frame. Each of the frames will be examined individually.

(I) EXCLUSION FRAME (THREAT-CONTROL)

Image: Within this frame, the media presents persons with disabilities as a threat and a burden to those with no disability and to society as a whole.

Perception: The media presents disability as contagious and as bringing bad luck and terrible things, and presents disability as a heavy burden to families and to society.

Attribution: Disability is portrayed as meaning 'worthless' and 'incapable'.

Orientation of action: The type of action promoted by this frame is to oppress or avoid persons with disabilities, even abandon and destroy them.

Impact: As a result of this media frame, the public's fear of disability is deepened.

【Case study】 **Autism puts a huge burden on the family** [25]

This news article cites a doctor talking about the general situation of Chinese families that have children with autism, and the doctor observes that, in his opinion, autism puts a heavy burden on the families both in terms of a financial burden and a mental one, because getting treatment for the child costs a lot of money and energy; also, if the family members have insufficient understanding of the child's condition, they will argue with each other, thus leading to conflict within the family.

25. Zhang Yuxin. 2017. Zhang Jishui: Autism Will Bring The Family A Huge Burden, Xinhua, 12 April, Xinhuanet.com, http://www.xinhuanet.com/gongyi/2017-04/12/c_129529574.htm

(II) CHARITY FRAME (TRAGEDY-CARE)

Image: Under this frame, the media portrays persons with disabilities as objects of pity who need to be saved and helped, and who are the target of others to offer care. Persons with disabilities also act as a passive backdrop.

Perception: Disability is a tragedy for individuals and their families.

Attribution: Within this frame, the media portrays persons with disabilities as being worthless and incapable.

Orientation of action: The type of action promoted by this frame is for society to, for the sake of morality and civilization, have concern for, help and care for persons with disabilities.

Impact: While this media frame does not seek to insult persons with disabilities, it causes the public to look down on them and see them as objects of charity. Although charity can, in the short term, meet the urgent needs of some persons with disabilities and ensure survival, charity is not a sustainable solution in the long term. Treating persons with disabilities as objects of charity focuses on the incapacity of individuals with disabilities and therefore deepens discrimination against them and exclusion.

【Case study】 Students of a middle school help their classmate with a disability: 'We are his legs'. [26]

This article describes the actions of two children who get up early in the mornings and wait for a classmate, a child with a disability, outside their classroom. They then carry him into the classroom, help him to take notes, hand in his homework and assist him with his food and water requirements. During the break, they carry him to the toilet and the place him in the sun. They also carry him upstairs and downstairs for multimedia lessons, etc. Thus, at almost every step at school, the child with a disability is assisted by his two classmates. The article reports that the two classmates have, as a result of their actions, been given several awards, including the 'Star of Self-improvement' and 'Kind and Noble Person', and have been awarded honorary titles, such as 'Triple-A Student of the County' and 'Outstanding Communist Youth League Member' by the relevant departments of their county.

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26. Di Haoran. 2018. Students from Tang County No.2 Middle School Stick to Help His Classmate With A Disability. *Hebnews,* 1 June 2018. Hebnews.cn..

(III) MOTIVATION FRAME (MODEL-ADMIRATION)

Image: Persons with disabilities are inspirational. They possess special abilities or extraordinary perseverance.

Perception: Disability can cause severe difficulties in a person's life; consequently society has low or zero expectations of persons with disabilities.

Attribution: This frame is based on the idea that persons with disabilities have overcome difficulties brought about by disability through their talent and continuous efforts. They have made achievements that are difficult to match by ordinary people. There is a huge contrast between the limitations posed by the disability and the extraordinary talent and effort of individuals.

Orientation of action: Under this frame, the media encourage the public to admire and learn from persons with disabilities who have made extraordinary achievements, and encourage the public to take them as examples and also seek to inspire and encourage other persons with disabilities to improve themselves and become independent.

Impact: This frame reveals the abilities and achievements of a minority of individuals with disabilities, and has a certain positive impact, but it originates from a negative and narrow perception of persons with disabilities, and ascribes their achievements to individual talents and efforts. As a result, this frame makes it easier for the public ignore the inequality of opportunities and structural barriers confronted by persons with disabilities.

【Case study】 With disabilities, yet spirited!
These artists with disabilities may paint better than you [27]

This article presents an interview with a painter, Liu Shutao, who expressed that although certain artists have physical disabilities, 'they have a strong will', and who remarked that 'artists with disabilities have done a good job indeed, and some works are superior to those created by ordinary people'.

(IV) CORRECTION FRAME (DEFECT- REMEDY)

Image: According to this frame, persons with disabilities benefit from the development and implementation of medical technology and rehabilitation measures, and some are waiting for developments in technology to save them.

Perception: Persons with disabilities do not conform to society's standards in terms of efficiency, aesthetics and ability.

Attribution: Because persons with disabilities have physical and mental 'defects' and they do not conform to normal standards, they should be assisted to meet those standards. But society lacks the required medical and rehabilitation resources and advanced technology to assist them. Therefore, it is difficult for many people with disabilities to 'recover' or become 'normal' and lead a 'normal' life.

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27. Song Yusheng. 2018.With disabilities yet spirited! These artists with disabilities may paint better than you, China News, 8 September.
http://www.chinanews.com/cul/2018/09-08/8622044.shtml

Orientation of Action: Under this frame, the emphasis is on developing new and affordable technology to correct the 'defects' of peoples with disabilities and on ensuring widespread application of new and affordable medical technology.

Impact: Although the development and widespread implementation of medical and rehabilitation technology can have significant benefits and improve the situations of persons with disabilities, putting an emphasis on technology ignores the dilemmas faced by persons with disabilities, and ignores the internal and external structural inequalities, leading to lost opportunities for resolving these issues. Moreover, persons with disabilities who have no hope of treatment at present or can only expect a small curative effect, are excluded from mainstream society in the long term.

【Case study】 **Exoskeleton robot independently developed by China enables paraplegic people to walk freely** [28]

This newspaper article notes that while standing up and walking is quite simple for ordinary people, it is an impossible dream for people with spinal cord injuries. The article describes how five years ago a young man from Zigong in Sichuan Province fell from the fourth storey while working, and consequently sustained a

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28. Wu Xiaoying. 2018. Robotic exoskeleton developed by China enables paraplegic persons to walk freely, Xinhua News Agency, 20 August.
http://www.xinhuanet.com/science/2018-08/20/c_137402263.htm

spinal cord injury and paralysis of his legs. The article explains that the man has been equipped with a robotic exoskeleton that enables him to walk and to go upstairs and downstairs freely. The article also explains that the 'Iron Man' that enables the man to move his arms and legs is the fourth generation robotic exoskeleton researched and developed by the team of Cheng Hong, the executive director of the Center for Robotics of the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China.

(V) BENEFIT FRAME (RESOURCE – ACTIVATION)

Image: Under this frame, persons with disabilities are human resources and consumers who have been neglected and are yet to be developed.

Perception: Persons with disabilities have a certain potential and can make contributions to society.

Attribution: The value of persons with disabilities has been neglected for a long time because there is no context suitable for them to develop their potential, so various measures need to be taken in order to enable persons with disabilities to contribute to society.

Orientation of action: The government and market should change their perspective and recognize the potential value of this group of the population, and assist persons with disabilities to develop their potential through investing in resources, improving the working environment, providing support and exploring the market.

Impact: This frame encourages people to see concern for disability issues as something that can bring great benefits to society, particularly economic benefits. However, this frame values persons with disabilities only for their contribution to consumer economy. As a result, this frame can lead to the exclusion of the persons with disabilities who are considered as being 'incompetent' or 'useless' to society.

【Case study】 The support to entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities means charity, also investment [29]

This newspaper article discusses improvements in the education level of persons with disabilities, and remarks that these people have therefore become human resources with huge potential and value. The article notes that Guangdong Province began providing college entrance examination papers in Braille for the first time in 2019. It also reports that the city of Shenzhen places a great emphasis on the education of persons with disabilities and that twenty-seven persons with disabilities were enrolled in regular higher education institutions in 2018.

The article observes that persons with disabilities who have competencies and ideas should not be forced to remain in obscurity for reasons such as the cost of

29. Wang Sen. 2019. The support to entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities means charity, also investment, Shenzhen Newspaper, 10 July.
http://www.sznews.com/news/content/2019-07/10/content_22245757.htm

rehabilitative treatment. The article cites the slogan: 'you don't know which child will become the leader in the future', which is used in the West when advocating for the rights of children, and the author of the article suggests that this logic should be used to uphold the rights and interests of persons with disabilities. The article notes that if governments assist persons with disabilities, these people could develop into entrepreneurs and industry leaders like Ma Huateng and Ren Zhengfei.

(VI) WIN-WIN RESULT FRAME (THE SAME SPECIES - INCLUSIVENESS)

Image: Everyone could become a person with disability.

Perception: Disability is a common and shared experience, therefore support and investment by people with no disability in people with disabilities is also an investment in themselves, without any extra effort.

Attribution: According to this frame, disability is a status that everyone will experience at some point in their life, and the needs of persons with disabilities are not special. Under this frame, persons with disabilities are only marginalized because society has failed to realize the fact that everyone will experience disability eventually.

Orientation of action: We should actively focus on improving accessibility because helping persons with disabilities is helping ourselves.

Impact: This frame arises from a perception of aging as being similar to disability. This viewpoint also compares the experience of a disability with the experience of having a disease or an injury. With the idea of disability being a universal experience as the starting point, this frame encourages people to see a connection between disability and themselves, instead of focusing on the special care and extra efforts needed to assist persons with disabilities. However, this frame does not help persons with disabilities to get support to uphold their rights to independent living, education and employment because society marginalizes the elderly and people with injuries and diseases.

【Case study】 Bi Feiyu: We are all persons with disabilities [30]

This article presents the view that bringing about inclusive education relies not only on the government, but requires that everyone change their perceptions and actions. Moreover, the article quotes Bi Feiyu as saying that people may have a blind spot in our understanding because we all think we are healthy as long as we have no physical disability, but we all have defects in cognition, ability and morality, so we are all 'persons with disabilities' and we all belong to the same the group.

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30. Wang Lihua. 2017. *Bi Feiyu: We are all persons with disabilities, China Youth.* Originally published in the *Jinling Evening Post,* 8 June 2017.
http://news.youth.cn/jsxw/201706/t20170608_10007364.htm

(VII) INSPECTION FRAME (RESPONSIBILITY - EXECUTION)

Image: Persons with disabilities are a vulnerable group in society.

Perception: Similar to the view under the charity frame, in which disability is seen as an individual tragedy. Under the inspection frame, disability is viewed as a problem that an individual cannot change. However, the inspection frame emphasizes the lack of social support, especially the lack of a relevant policy for persons with disabilities as a vulnerable group.

Attribution: The precarious situation of persons with disabilities means that society must provide them with extra support through social policies.

Orientation of action: This frame focuses on accountability of government and society, and demands more external support for persons with disabilities and improvement of the social system.

Impact: This frame has led to the removal of barriers in society and has enabled advancements in accessibility in the physical and information contexts at the system level by focusing on inspection and advancement of policy to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities. However, under this frame, persons with disabilities may still be the object of policy, rather than actors themselves, and under this frame it is difficult for society to see the problems of how prejudice towards persons with disabilities denies them equal opportunities for development.

【Case study】 The party and government institutions should not be exempt from recruiting persons with disabilities [31]

This article describes changes in recent years as a result of policies in support of persons with disabilities. It notes that Shanghai and Beijing have seen practical action. For example, in Shanghai more than forty posts were provided for persons with disabilities, a result that has become institutionalized. Moreover, institutions that have the conditions required to provide posts to persons with disabilities but do not recruit them are penalized. The article also reports that in Zhejiang, organizations and departments of human resources and social service issue a unified recruitment plan every year, setting up posts in public services institutions for persons with disabilities, and making accommodations and allowances to assist them in taking the public service examination. Likewise, Anhui Province requires that organizations give priority to the employment of persons with disabilities. The article also notes that all provincial party and government institutions must ensure they employ at least one person with a disability.

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31. Tang Yue. 2015. The party and government institutions should not be exempt from recruiting persons with disabilities, *Xinhua Daily*, 23 January.
http://js.xhby.net/system/2015/01/23/023451356.shtml

(VIII) EMPOWERMENT FRAME (SUBJECT - PARTICIPATION)

Image: Persons with disabilities have rights.

Cognition: Persons with disabilities shall equally take part in their affairs.

Attribution: The source of so many dilemmas faced by persons with disabilities is that they are not accorded the status as the subject of rights and they are deprived of opportunities for equal participation.

Orientation of action: The contribution and value of persons with disabilities to the external society shall not be taken as a reference for protecting their rights. Society shall take all kinds of action to publicize the rights and the equality of persons with disabilities, oppose behaviour that violates those rights and their inherent dignity, and eliminate stereotypes. In addition, it is necessary to empower persons with disabilities, and assist them to take part in decisions on their own affairs.

Impact: This frame encourages people to consider persons with disabilities as having the same rights and dignity as others, and as being equal. Society should give them assistance not because of the utility of persons with disabilities, but because of their inherent value. This frame also encourages the public to ponder on the significance of equal rights for all. The implementation of this frame requires a sound educational foundation for all citizens, otherwise it is easy to fall into disputes over what is 'politically correct' and 'non-politically correct', causing confrontation and battles that can

lead to persons with disabilities, who are already marginalized, encountering a new wave of exclusion and isolation.

【Case study】 "Shrimp balls" advertisement by Pizza Hut gives rise to disputes, Yum Brands Apologizes [32]

This article reports on a video advertisement by Pizza Hut for shrimp balls that shows shrimp balls wearing sunglasses and holding a cane, subtitled with the word 'xia', a derogatory term for "blind" in Chinese, and accompanied by the sound of mocking laughter. The article presents the views of people who dislike the advertisement, with one person saying that the advertisement would make people with visual impairments extremely sad and a man with a visual impairment saying that the advertisement was mocking persons with disabilities and that the advertisement made him very angry. This man told the reporter that as a person with a visual impairment he felt his rights and interests had been attacked so he spoke out to uphold his rights. He explained that his protest against the advertisement had the aim of requesting that Pizza Hut stop infringing on human rights in advertisements, and requested that Pizza Hut make a formal and public apology and invest as much money as they paid for

32.   Men Jiedan. 2013. 'Shrimp balls' advertisement of Pizza Hut gives rise to disputes, Yum Brands apologizes. *China News*, 5 June.
http://www.chinanews.com/sh/2013/06-05/4898951.shtml

> the advertisement into publicity to raise awareness of disability equality, eliminate the negative influence of such discrimination on persons with disabilities and end such discrimination.

While the eight frames were presented separately, it is important to note that it is very common for media reports to contain multiple frames. Like the models discussed earlier, the frames described in this handbook aim to provide users a tool for thinking and analysis so as to understanding the impact of disability reporting. The roots of reporting cannot be separated from the four models of disability and the perceptions of disability.

II. MASS MEDIA REPORTING OF DISABILITY IN CHINA

Between March and December 2013, with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO), two organizations jointly implemented a research project on the reporting of disability issues by Chinese print media. This project, 'Promoting the employment of persons with disabilities through communication', was part of a larger project about the characteristics of communication and social development' in China, and was implemented by the Journalism Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the One Plus One (Beijing) Disabled Persons' Cultural Development Center. The findings of

the study are described in the following sections.

(I) SITUATION AND TRENDS IN MEDIA REPORTING

Types of reporting: Nearly half of the reports covered special topics, communication and stories, which were beneficial for discussions of the development of persons with disabilities. The next most common areas of reporting were news, commentaries and information, and pictures.

Themes: The (overlapping) themes concerning disability issues that were included in the media reports included: situation and policy (29 per cent); governmental assistance (28.3 per cent); non-governmental and social assistance (24.4 per cent); health, medical services and rehabilitation (23.4 per cent); personal stories of struggle (22.6 per cent); laws, including crime reporting (21 per cent); rights (20.2 per cent); employment and skills training (17.3 per cent); education (16.4 per cent); funding (8.7 per cent); accessibility (3 per cent); social and family support (3 per cent) and sports (2.8 per cent).

Of the 1,468 reports examined, forty-two were about sports, but almost all of these sports and disability articles concentrated on the Paralympic Games; only one media report mentioned daily sports activities of persons with disabilities. Of all the reports, twenty-one were about the culture of persons with disabilities and a further thirty-five reports were about family, school and social support. The latter rarely mentioned the rights of persons with disabilities. Instead, most expressed support for persons with disabilities through the charity frame

or the motivation frame, with an emphasis on emotions such as caring, filial affection and dedication.

Sources: According to the study, almost half (42.8 per cent) of the information in the media reports was from governmental institutions, followed by the public (23.7 per cent); persons with disabilities (17.4 per cent); specialists (6.8 per cent); businesses (3.2 per cent); OPDs (2.4 per cent); and others (3.2 per cent).

Over the five years prior to 2013 there were few changes in the sources of information. Most came from the government, between 14 per cent and 23 per cent came from persons with disabilities, and only a small percentage came from OPDs.

(II) CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Gender and age: Of the reports about persons with disabilities, 40.7 per cent did not include their gender. Of those in which the gender was mentioned, 38 per cent of the persons with disabilities were male and 20.6 per cent were female. Almost half (48.9 per cent) of the reports did not list the ages of the persons with disabilities. In the reports in which the ages of the persons with disabilities were listed, almost a third (28.5 per cent) were aged between 15 and 55 years old, while 11.7 per cent were children under 14 years of age, and 6.5 per cent were aged over 56 years old. In the important features in general news reports, the gender and age is noted in the reports.

Location: Just over half (52.6 per cent) of the reports were about urban areas in mainland China; almost a third (32.3 per cent) did not mention the location; 9.6 per cent were about rural areas in mainland China; and 5.4 per cent were reports about events overseas. Given that the number of persons with disabilities living in rural areas is far greater than the number in urban areas, with rural persons with disabilities making up 75 per cent of the total population of persons with disabilities, the figures indicate that media reports tend to ignore the situation of persons with disabilities living in rural areas of China.

Subject and object: News reports often distinguish between a subject and an object of features being reported. A subject is often the main character, whose actions, language and feelings are valued, described and recognized by reporters, and whose expression is autonomous. An object, however, is relatively silent, the thoughts of which are usually expressed by others, and the object serves a minor role in the news article. The study of the news articles found that around two thirds (61.4 per cent) of the reports placed persons with disabilities as an object, while only around one third (35.7 per cent) placed persons with disabilities as a subject. In 2.8 of the articles it was unclear.

(III) EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The study found that over a third (35.6 per cent) of the news reports did not mention the employment status of the person/

people with disabilities and 39.4 per cent did not mention their occupation.

Most (78.6 per cent) of the news reports did not mention barriers to employment. Articles that mentioned the barriers listed, among others: disability itself (11.5 per cent of articles); social misunderstanding and discrimination (5.5 per cent); national policy (5.2 per cent); insufficient ability of persons with disabilities (4.4 per cent); insufficient barrier-free facilities (2.3 per cent).

Over three quarters (77.2 per cent) of the news reports did not mention any solutions to eliminating barriers to employment. In articles that did mention solutions, these included: changing systems or regulations (10.4 per cent of the articles); enabling persons with disabilities to learn to be independent and self-reliant (6.3 per cent); eliminating discrimination (5.2 per cent); advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities (4.6 per cent); better care (4.6 per cent); improving barrier-free facilities (3.7 per cent); and administration of justice (2.5 per cent). In addition, 13.8 per cent of the reports mentioned improving domestic and international experience in promoting employment for persons with disabilities.

Generally speaking, the employment of persons with disabilities is not a key topic in media reports despite the vital importance of promoting the employment of persons with disabilities as it enables the development of these people and of society.

(IV) RIGHTS CONSCIOUSNESS IN DISABILITY-RELATED ISSUE REPORTING

Equality

The core of the rights movement is that all people, whether with disabilities or not, should be treated equally; they should not be treated differently, belittled or discriminated against because of their disabilities or for any other reason. Experience has shown that misunderstanding, prejudice and discrimination against persons with disabilities are the largest obstacles to their employment, integration and participation in public life.

The study found that media reports still use discriminatory terms such as 'simpleton', 'cripple" and 'dumb' to describe persons with disabilities. Around 15 per cent of the news articles depicted people with no disability in an antithetical manner to those with disabilities, and divided people with no disability and those with disabilities into opposing groups, such as 'healthy' and 'unhealthy', 'competent' and 'incompetent', 'normal' and 'abnormal'. The articles tended to imply that people with no disability have a higher social status than people with disabilities, and that people with disabilities are less valuable than those with no disability. A typical example of an antithetical description is 'You are blind to the truth', which is often used figuratively, and 'the residential surveillance cameras were blind because the alarm system failed to work properly'. Other examples included, 'the technical defence system became semi-disabled'; 'like a cripple losing his stick'; 'an uncultured man is like a person with a congenital mental disability'; and 'the blind lamp in the yard lit up'.

Legal obligations and the public participation of persons with disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) emphasizes that one of the obligations of governments worldwide is to promote the integration and participation of persons with disabilities into society and in public life through legislation. The study of news articles found that around 59 per cent of the articles discussed legal policies and measures to improve policies, but provided little information on how adults with disabilities, children with disabilities and OPDs can participate in discussions of legislation and policy.

Gender equality

The study examined whether the news articles addressed the issue of gender equality among persons with disabilities and found that most articles (95.8 per cent) failed to mention it.

Accessibility

As noted earlier, one of the eight principles of the CRPD (also one of the standards of human rights) is 'accessibility', which refers to the ease with which persons with disabilities can live independently and participate fully in all aspects of social life.

Empowerment ensures that persons with disabilities are able to access, on an equal basis with others, the physical environment, means of transport, information and communications (including information and communication technologies and systems) and other facilities and services available to the public, both in urban

and rural areas, and in public and private areas. Accessibility means that persons with disabilities can access buildings, roads, transportation and other facilities, both indoors and outdoors (including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces); and can access barrier-free devices that are suitable for various types of disabilities, and persons with disabilities can engage in barrier-free information exchange. Empowerment can be achieved by persons with disabilities when physical and information facilities are available to them and enable them to act independently and enhance their autonomy. This is in strong contrast to previous top-down approaches which emphasize 'caring' or 'showing love'.

Accessibility is a key aspect in supporting the development of persons with disabilities, so it was important to examine the extent to which accessibility is mentioned in news reports. The study found that about over three-quarters (76.4 per cent) of the news articles failed to mention accessibility. The articles that mentioned accessibility (23.6 per cent) covered three main aspects, described below.

Facility accessibility: Articles noted a need for accessible facilities and services open or provided to the public, including tactile paving, ramps, accessible sports venues, barrier-free bus transport, voice notifications in elevators, accessible toilets, high-low combined workbenches, barrier-free taxi transport, barrier-free bath chairs, accessible parks and scenic spots, accessible libraries, accessibility services in post offices and banks, visual doorbells for families with hearing disabilities, voice intercom systems for families with visual impairments, accessible classrooms, barrier-free reservation systems, etc.

Barrier-free devices: These included wheelchairs, cochlear implants, magnifying glasses, guide dogs, hearing aids, tactile sticks, etc.

Information accessibility: These included television subtitles and sign language, screen readers, Braille printers, reading for persons with visual impairments, barrier-free maps and special keyboards.

Among the news articles that mentioned accessibility, few introduced important concepts and relevant information on 'reasonable accommodation' and 'universal design'. Overall, the study findings provide data to support advocacy for improved media reporting on disability.

CHAPTER THREE

PROMOTING DISABILITY EQUALITY IN MEDIA REPORTING

As stated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), persons with disabilities have the right to fully and effectively participate in social and public life on an equal basis with others. The convention requires that Member States examine how social prejudice, discrimination and physical barriers affect the rights of persons with disabilities and to identify what actions should be taken and policies implemented to eliminate those barriers. This chapter examines the monitoring of attitudes by the media and OPDs and offers recommendations for promoting equality for persons with disabilities in media reporting.

I. MEDIA MONITORING

As noted in Chapter One, gathering information published by the media helps to monitor social attitudes towards persons with disabilities. Given that social attitudes affect perceptions of persons with disabilities and their social contributions, the CRPD states in Article 8 (1) (a) - (b) the obligation of countries to combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices concerning persons with disabilities. In view of the important role of the media in reflecting and influencing public opinions, Article 8 (2) (c) of the convention requires countries to take measures to encourage all kinds of media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with the purposes of the convention. Accordingly, the United Nations publication 'Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Guidance for human rights monitors' lists the following questions to guide media monitoring. [33]

- Do the media report on persons with disabilities?
- If so, which media do that, in which sections of their [news] products?
- Are persons with disabilities portrayed as victims or rights-holders?
- Do the media represent the point[s] of view of persons with disabilities?

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33. OHCHR. 2010. *Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Guidance for human rights monitors.* New York and Geneva, OHCHR. p. 45

- Are the language and images appropriate?

- Does the media's message reinforce or counter stereotypes?

- Has there been a change in media reporting on persons with disabilities over time? If so, in which way (e.g. more or less reporting, different approach)? Which factors contributed to the change[s]?

- Is it an accurate representation of real life [of persons with disabilities]?

- Are the media accessible to persons with disabilities?

These monitoring guidelines allow a broader perspective, which enables one to judge whether and to what extent media reports promote or hinder equality for persons with disabilities. Thus, one does not have to assess whether the dominant frame of a report is the 'charity frame' or the 'human rights frame, in order to identify the trends in the socio-cultural context, and rationally orient work to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities.

II. ELIMINATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED MYTHS

Often people with no disability do not thoroughly understand disability because they do not have much contact with people with disabilities. Their perceptions are often shaped by the traditional and medical models, which lead to prejudices,

stereotypes and myths about disability. Many such stereotypes and myths are imaginary, without any scientific evidence, while others stem from over-generalizations and misunderstandings. In any case, such stereotypes and myths are incompatible with the development of persons with disabilities, and it is important that they are addressed by the media and OPDs.

The process of overcoming myths involves first understanding them, then breaking them down and addressing them based on facts, and then monitoring change. The next section describes some common myths and assists in breaking them down and identifying the reality.[34] It is hoped that this will guide reporters in subsequently finding and breaking down more myths.

MYTH ONE: THERE ARE NOT MANY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, SO DISABILITY-RELATED PROBLEMS DO NOT MATTER MUCH.

Reality: Persons with disabilities live in all countries and societies, but many of them are hidden or excluded from society, either in their homes or in institutions, often trapped there because of social discrimination and exclusion. These barriers, related to physiology, attitudes, laws, regulations and lack of information in accessible formats, limit their opportunities to participate in a variety of social activities. Besides, some people may have some barriers, but they may not think of themselves as disabled.

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34. International Labour Organization. 2010. *Media guidelines for the portrayal of disability.* Geneva, ILO.

It is important to note that the number of persons with disabilities should not determine whether or not they are worthy of attention. Instead, their status as humans, with the same rights as everyone else, is the most important consideration.

MYTH TWO: DISABILITIES ARE CONTAGIOUS, SO WE MUST STAY AWAY FROM PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

Reality: Persons with disabilities cannot transmit their disability to anyone physically or culturally, nor can they transmit any 'bad luck' to anyone. Disability reflects human diversity and persons with disabilities are part of the human family.

MYTH THREE: MOST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES HAVE LIMITED ABILITIES AND LOW INTELLIGENCE.

Reality: Since the advent of industrial society it has become common to assess people based on their 'intelligence quotient' (IQ) and abilities, and many people have come to equate IQ with ability and therefore falsely associate disability with low IQ. This assumption has been proven to be false through scientific studies. In addition, the idea that a person's abilities and IQ are inherently fixed has been criticized. In fact, a person's abilities are subject to gradual development, and a person's level of ability in a certain area depends on one's access to education and support in line with one's development characteristics. In the absence of such education and support, nobody can reach their full potential and develop abilities.

MYTH FOUR: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE A TRAGIC LIFE. DISABILITIES WILL DOMINATE THEIR LIVES AND PREVENT THEM FROM ACHIEVING THEIR AMBITIONS AND SUCCESS.

Reality: Disability does not have to dominate the life of a person with a disability. The disability is merely a feature of their lives. Whether or not persons with disabilities develop their talents and achieve success depends on whether the society they live in provides enough support to them.

In the eyes of many people, persons with disabilities are inferior because of their disabilities, and they can be made to feel inferior as a result of long-term negative social attitudes, and this restricts their development. However, if persons with disabilities have access to equal education opportunities, they are often able to develop their talents, achieve their ambitions and succeed as well as anyone else.

MYTH FIVE: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES IN SOME ASPECTS. FOR EXAMPLE, PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS HAVE AUGMENTED HEARING ABILITY AND PEOPLE WITH AUTISM ARE PARTICULARLY GOOD AT PAINTING AND MUSIC.

Reality: Every one of us has strengths and weaknesses. While some people have above-average abilities in some areas, this does not mean that it is true for everyone. Likewise, while some people with disabilities have above-average abilities

in some areas, that does not mean the whole group with disabilities has that same above-average ability.

Moreover, many of the so-called 'superpowers' possessed by people with disabilities are actually compensations developed as a result of the constraints they face. If we excessively focus on these 'superpowers', it can lead to the creation of new stereotypes and myths. Moreover, this focus on talents of some people with disabilities ignores the barriers they face and the difficulties they face in achieving their human rights. For example, media reports on the calculation abilities of a man called Wei Zhou named him the 'Rain Man of China', but never paid attention to his needs in terms of upholding his right to live as a dignified person.

MYTH SIX: DISABILITY IS JUST A HEALTH PROBLEM.

Reality: The medical model is responsible for the perception that disability is a just a health problem. While health is very important for everyone, whether they are with a disability or not, health is not the only or the most important issue for people, and certainly not for people with disabilities. The quality of life, personal development and achievements of persons with disabilities are also important, as are the various other aspects of their lives, including self-perception, education, social support, skills development and participation in civil society.

MYTH SEVEN: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES DO NOT NEED SEX

Reality: Like people with no disability, people with disabilities have sexual desires, fantasies and expressions. Sometimes they can't express their sexual desires, but this does not mean that they know nothing about sex. Society ignores or suppresses their needs, believing that such needs do not exist among this group. Also, many people with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities, are treated as though they were children (lacking in maturity) and therefore should be shielded from information about sex.

MYTH EIGHT: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES CANNOT ENJOY REAL SEX

Reality: Many people have misconceptions about sex, believing that sex can only be in the form of penile insertion into the vagina. This perception has led some persons with disabilities to think that they cannot ever enjoy real sex. However, when the definition of 'sex' is expanded to include other forms of sexual activity, including touching, kissing and oral sex, it is clear that many persons with disabilities are capable of engaging in it. Since sex has diverse forms, the sexual practices of persons with disabilities are not defective or incomplete. For example, although persons with visual impairments cannot see, they are still able to experience sexual pleasure.

MYTH NINE: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES SHOULD NOT HAVE CHILDREN.

Reality: Because some people hold misconceptions about persons with disabilities, there are misconceptions about the reproduction of persons with disabilities. Despite the prevalence of assisted reproductive technology in society today, myths abound about the fertility and genetic inheritance of persons with disabilities. Some people think that disability is inherited, so persons with disabilities should never have children; others think that persons with disabilities lack the ability to have children. However, even when a disability is hereditary, persons with disabilities should not be deprived of their fundamental right to have children, as this fundamentally denies the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities as part of the human family. From the perspective of the human-rights based approach, if a person with a disability chooses to have a child, they should receive sufficient information and, if required, reproductive health service support.

MYTH TEN: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE AT RISK IF THEY TRAVEL ALONE AND ENGAGE IN SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

Reality: There is no evidence to suggest that persons with disabilities are more vulnerable to danger when they travel and engage in social activities. Indeed, people who walk while looking at their phones or who drive drunk and do not follow the traffic rules are far more vulnerable to harm. The reason many people believe that persons with disabilities are at risk is that it is widely

believed that persons with disabilities face multiple barriers. While this is true to an extent, the reality is that persons with disabilities tend to be more cautious and prepared than other people because they are more aware of the barriers and risks.

In any case, even if persons with disabilities may encounter dangers while travelling or socializing, we must not deny their participation in daily life, but instead seek ways to make their travel and participation in social activities safer by removing obstacles.

MYTH ELEVEN: SOME PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE CAPABLE OF ATTENDING REGULAR SCHOOLS, BUT OTHER PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SHOULD ATTEND SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

Reality: Abilities develop in the process of education. The perception that ability is a distinguishing criterion for access to education is contrary to the original intention of education for children. Children with disabilities can achieve good results in integrated education.

MYTH TWELVE: INTEGRATED EDUCATION USES RESOURCES AND IS A BURDEN ON SOCIETY.

Reality: This myth ignores the costs of segregated special schools. Empirical studies have shown that integrated education is not more costly than segregated and dual-track education, but instead costs less in the long term. Furthermore, if the calculation extends to include the contributions of persons with

disabilities when they enter society, the benefits of integrated education are much higher than the costs.

MYTH THIRTEEN: BARRIER-FREE FACILITIES SUCH AS TACTILE PAVING, RAMPS AND WHEELCHAIRS ARE ONLY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

Reality: Everyone will face both physical and attitudinal obstacles in their life. Accessibility should take into account the needs of everyone, whether they have disabilities or not. For example, voice signals at crossing points, ramps, elevators in airports and train stations, and barrier-free toilets in public places can be used by everyone and can provide benefits for everyone. In addition, accessibility is not only related to physical facilities, but also to attitudes, information and policy. It is important to note that accessibility is a prerequisite for enabling persons with disabilities to fully participate in society and integrate into society on an equal basis.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDIA PRACTITIONERS

This handbook encourages the media to promote disability equality in their reports, rather than report on disability in a prejudiced way, as this violates the right of persons with disabilities to equality. The next section offers some recommendations, which are applicable to all forms of media, for promoting equality for persons with disabilities, based on

the frame analysis and on the findings of the media monitoring research project described above.

(I) Sixteen recommendations for the media

In recent years, several media monitoring and research projects have been implemented by UNESCO Beijing Cluster Office, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Country Office for China and Mongolia, the Handicap International Federation (France) Beijing Office, Youth and Media Development Research Center of the Institute of Journalism and Communication of the Chinese Academy of Social Science, and the One Plus One Disability Network. The United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) China Programme summarized the achievements of these projects, and launched the sixteen recommendations for the media on 3 December 2016.

The recommendations cover the principles of communication and collaboration between media practitioners and persons with disabilities, and include tips on the production and use of reports on disability by the media. The recommendations are expected to be useful in guiding the work of both individuals and organizations.

The sixteen recommendations are as follows:

1. Respect the dignity and rights of every person with disability in all circumstances. Use the social/rights model advocated by the CRPD as the

basis for media reporting on affairs related to persons with disabilities. At the same time, considering the existence of multiple and intersectional discrimination, reporters should adopt gender perspective and children's rights perspective when reporting on cross-cutting issues such as women with disabilities, sexual minorities, and children.

2. Raise awareness among the public of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and provide the public with as much practical information as possible, rather than compiling inspirational stories or emphasizing those stories.

3. Employ more positive titles to address persons with disabilities and describe their lives. Avoid discriminatory language, including that which diminishes the dignity and value of persons with disabilities.

4. Pay special attention to the fact that every person with disability has the right to protect their privacy, including about their health. Only identify a person as having a disability if that information is relevant to the report content or subject. If it is irrelevant, do not mention it.

5. When interviewing with persons with disabilities on topics involving private matters, consider the rights and wishes of the persons with disabilities

and their relatives or guardians. Moreover, take into consideration ideas and opinions of the persons with disabilities, not only those of their companion.

6. Present the diverse political, social and cultural environments in which persons with disabilities live, respect their opinions and do not arbitrarily make value judgments on the premise of providing them with sufficient information.

7. Make a particular effort to seek out the opinions of persons with disabilities rather than only those of people with no disability, especially when it comes to reports about persons with disabilities. Encourage persons with disabilities to express themselves.

8. Treat persons with disabilities as equals, rather than expressing sympathy, regret or pity or using a condescending tone. Any unequal attitude imposed on persons with disabilities, even in the interests of concern or care, can be regarded as discrimination against them.

9. Ensure that the persons with disabilities who participate in interviews and reports have been informed and have given consent. Reporters should not assume the consent of persons with disabilities, but should obtain their explicit consent. Confirm that persons with

disabilities freely consent and are not
interviewed under duress or by deception
(insufficient information).Ensure that persons
with disabilities know they

are talking to a reporter. Explain the purposes
o the interview, the intended use of the content,
and the impact that the report may have on
their lives afterwards. Confirm that the decisions
of the persons with disabilities to participate in
interviews were made after they had a clear
understanding of the various possible outcomes
of the report, including that they will be part of
news that is published or broadcast, and that
information about them may be disseminated
regionally or even globally.

10. Avoid old-fashioned and sensational
approaches to reporting on persons with
disabilities. Do not exaggerate the heroic
deeds or difficulties of persons with disabilities.
Conversely, seek ways to convey the obstacles
facing persons with disabilities and how they
are adversely impacted by stigmatization.

11. Avoid using pictures that convey persons with
disabilities as being poor or marginalized. Do
not closely photograph them or focus particularly
on partsof the bodies of persons with disabilities.

12. Do not create scenarios in which persons with

disabilities are forced to complete actions that they would not normally be able to do or do very often.

13. Obtain the consent of persons with disabilities before taking photos of them. Before taking any photographs, explain how the photos will be used.

14. Communicate with persons with disabilities and OPDs on a regular basis.

15. Avoid merging the characteristics of individual persons with disabilities to make them conform to a classification of persons with disabilities.

16. Do not limit reports about persons with disabilities to special dates such as the 'International Day of Persons with Disabilities' and the 'Chinese National Day for Persons with Disabilities', or the Spring Festival and volunteer days.

These recommendations are based on core human rights principles that we suggest that media practitioners adhere to them. Only when the media understand didsabiltiy as a feature and difference that should be respected, can they write news reports from the perspective of disability, a perspective that will bring unique contributions to media reporting.

(II) ADOPT RESPECTFUL WORDING

Words play a key role in shaping and reflecting our thoughts, beliefs, feelings and ideas. Many people may not be aware that the words they use in relation to persons with disabilities have an impact. It is therefore important for media practitioners to note that certain words convey a sense of belittling persons with disabilities, and practitioners should adopt appropriate words and terminology when reporting on persons with disabilities. The following table of terms to avoid and terms to use reflects the views of persons with disabilities and will help media practitioners to select appropriate and respectful words.

Table 1. Terms to avoid and use in media reporting of disability

Avoid	Use
Cripple, disabled	Disability, persons with disabilities, people with disabilities
Able-bodied person, non-disabled people, ordinary people	People with no disability
Patient	People, man/woman, child, person
Deformed people, cripple	People with physical disabilities, persons with mobility difficulties
Deaf person, dumb person, deaf-mute person	People with hearing disabilities, person who is hard of hearing, person who is deaf, people with speech disorders, people with speech and hearing disorders
Paraplegic patients, paralysed people	People with spinal cord injuries
Patients with spastic paralysis, patients with cerebral palsy	People with cerebral palsy
People confined to a wheelchair, persons in wheelchairs	Wheelchair users
Simpletons, fools, idiots	People with intellectual disabilities, people with developmental disabilities
Psychiatric patients, sickos, mad persons	People with mental health difficulties
Persons who can't learn, learning-disabled people	People with learning disabilities
Angels, snails, autistic children	Children/people
Persons who are broken in body but firm in spirit, persons who have persevering spirits with handicapped bodies	People
Handicapped persons, folding-winged persons, persons with hyperplasia	People
Risk of ...	Probability of ...

(III) WAYS OF INTERACTING WITH PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND ACCOMMODATING THEIR NEEDS

In general, media practitioners have very few opportunities to interact with persons with disabilities as the latter are generally excluded from society. For this reason, media practitioners may ask themselves many questions when preparing to interview a person with a disability. Such questions may include:

Will I get along with them?

Is there anything I should pay special attention to?

Will I accidentally offend or even hurt them?

Media practitioners should be aware that there is no universal etiquette for dealing with persons with disabilities, as each person is different, but it is necessary to show respect to persons with disabilities and make them feel appreciated just like with anyone else.

While advance preparation will show your good intentions, it is more important to be honest and sincere and to listen to the people you are interviewing. Instead of worrying about how to communicate with the person you are interviewing, it is better to explain your concerns directly to them and inform them that they have the right to end the conversation if they feel any discomfort.

Below are some suggestions and reasonable accommodations that could assist reporters when communicating with people

with disabilities, particularly in interviews. These tips are based on feedback from reporters who are experienced in interviewing persons with disabilities. Media practitioners must not feel obliged to follow the suggestions strictly; instead, it is best to adapt to the preferences of the interviewees themselves, as they can offer the most candid and professional feedback.

Interviews with people with visual impairments

- Avoid touching them before introducing yourself.
- Introduce yourself and tell each interviewee what you are doing or are going to do, before filming, photographing and recording an interviewee.
- Avoid assuming that the interviewees are unable to see you or deliberately wiggling your finger or other objects in front of the interviewees to ascertain if they really have a visual impairment.
- Use a normal voice and pace; avoid talking in a high key or deliberately speaking slowly.
- If the interviewees have a service animal (such as a guide dog), ensure that the animal can accompany them at all times.
- Do not remove the tactile stick or other tools from the interviewees and do not move them from their original position at any time.
- Inform the interviewees before you walk away or leave.
- Provide information, including the interview outline and the final draft of the news report before

publication, to the interviewees in large-font, audio format or in Braille. The specific format of the information should be determined by the interviewees, and feedback on the news report should be sought from the interviewees before publication.

Interviews with people with hearing disabilities

- Attract the attention of the interviewees before speaking.
- If the interviewees are not facing you, gently tap them on the shoulder to get their attention.
- Do not shout or use exaggerated tones or lip movements.
- Look directly at the interviewees and avoid covering your mouth.
- Do not be surprised or annoyed if the interviewees stare at you; remember that your facial expressions and body language are very important in communication and will help the interviewees to understand you.
- Find out in advance the communication methods (writing, sign language, lip reading, etc.) that the interviewees prefer to use.
- Speak clearly to facilitate lip reading for interviewees who use that method of communication.
- Provide any required text translation equipment or a sign language interpreter, including remote online personnel, when interviewing people who use such equipment or sign language.

Interviews with people with physical disabilities

- If possible, place yourself at eye level with the interviewees.
- Avoid moving any equipment (e.g. walking stick, walking aid or wheelchair) of the interviewees without their permission.
- Avoid leaning on or touching a person's wheelchair.
- Ensure the interviewees can easily access the location of the interview. Follow the advice of the interviewees on how to ensure they can access the interview location.

Interviews with people with intellectual disabilities

- Remain patient.
- Treat the interviewees as you would any other person.
- Use simple words and short sentences.
- Rephrase your questions and repeat important information in various ways to help the interviewees understand you.
- Talk directly to the interviewees, rather than to their companion or personal assistant. Provide phone numbers and other contact information directly to the interviewees rather than to their companion.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MEDIA INSTITUTIONS

While the efforts and changes made by reporters, editors and other media practitioners are very important, media institutions also play an important role in guiding media reporting to promote equality. As the managers, regulators and leaders of media practitioners, media institutions play a crucial role in promoting public awareness of disability and diversity and the full inclusion of persons with disabilities. Below is a list of recommendations for media institutions.

FORMULATE ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS FOR REPORTING ON DISABILITY WITHIN EACH MEDIA INSTITUTION

Although this handbook offers recommendations in terms of principles and practical applications, media institutions are advised to formulate guidelines and regulations themselves as these would be more binding for their staff, and staff would take those guidelines and regulations more seriously.

ESTABLISH AN ETHICAL MONITORING MECHANISM WITHIN MEDIA INSTITUTIONS

Ethical monitoring would assess reports for their coverage of topics such as gender, children, disability and race to avoid reporting that entrenches stereotypes, myths and prejudices, and to handle related disputes and complaints.

REGULARLY ORGANIZE TRAINING TO RAISE AWARENESS OF DISABILITY RIGHTS WITHIN MEDIA INSTITUTIONS

Provide information and training about the ethics of reporting on disability as part of induction training for new recruits and as part of regular training. Since change and internalization of concepts and consciousness is a long-term process that needs continuous support, the training should be ongoing and involve knowledge-based learning as well as discussions with persons with disabilities. Discussions of reporting on disabilities should be a principal component of the training.

IMPLEMENT PLURALISTIC AND INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT POLICIES WITHIN MEDIA INSTITUTIONS, ACCESSIBLE VENUE USE, BARRIER-FREE INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND COMMUNICATION

Communication and cooperation with persons with disabilities can achieve more dramatic results and change than any training or handbook. When people are able to have contact with persons with disabilities, this breaks down stereotypes on disability. Additionally, when you afford persons with disabilities equal opportunities, they can serve as experts to promote innovation and diversity in media reporting.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Rights never emerge out of the void, but are obtained as a result of persistent efforts and timely actions. In addition to monitoring media reporting, it is necessary for OPDs, which advocate for equal rights for persons with disabilities, to create and seize opportunities to collaborate with the media so as to convey the image of persons with disabilities in an equal, accurate and diversified manner. Below are some recommendations to assist OPDs to fulfil their missions.

LEARN ABOUT THE MEDIA

The media exists in a variety of forms. The various forms (newspaper, radio, television and internet) have similarities and differences in terms of focus areas, styles and submission deadlines, with different technical characteristics and different subjects (e.g. Xinhuanet, China Development Gateway, China Disabled Persons' Federation). Therefore, OPDs need to cooperate with different media according to their respective characteristics.

ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN SOUND RELATIONS WITH THE MEDIA

OPDs should recognize the requirements of reporters and talk with them in a friendly manner. Additionally, these organizations should understand that not all reporters are

aware of the issues relating to disability and not all reporters are able to understand disability as deeply as the organizations do because those reporters are often subject to internal constraints within their organizations. Relations with the media should be based on a long-term commitment. Moreover, OPDs should understand and respect those who work with the media and request partners to cooperate on an equal and respectful basis.

OPDs should try to proactively establish contact with various media channels and practitioners at the local or community level and maintain this contact. Specifically, these organizations should establish relations with the social section of the media, and should contact media organizations that have previously reported on disability directly, and develop communication strategies and gather information about certain issues. Only in this way can these organizations gradually build up their own media resource pools and keep in regular contact with the media.

In addition, OPDs should seize every opportunity to convey information about their organizations to the media. For example, send brief work reports to the media periodically, inform the media of major events in advance, and invite the media to participate in activities to raise public awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities. OPDs should also transmit information to the outside world continuously and indirectly through social media, and gradually form their own media resource pools.

IMPROVE PERSONAL MEDIA LITERACY AND PROFESSIONAL ATTAINMENTS

Improve the media literacy of OPD staff members. In addition, strengthen understanding among staff of the laws relating to media operations, and develop communication capacities and skills, including in interviewing. OPDs should take the initiative to approach media partners, give the media relevant reports, provide interview resources and help them to describe new issues and reporting perspectives. Furthermore, OPDs could set up news events, such as performance art, to attract media attention. At the same time, however, OPDs should pay attention to the development of new media forms, and also build and operate their own media and expand their influence, so as to be in a position to communicate directly with the public and become important partners of mainstream media.

It is important to note that OPDs should ensure that cooperation with the media is professional and that professional relations between organizations and the media are maintained. To achieve this, OPDs must fully understand the CRPD and seek to enhance understanding of the convention among media practitioners, rather than relying solely on the status of persons with disabilities, because OPDs can also be influenced by social stereotypes.

IDENTIFY THE NEEDS OF OPDs AND OF AUDIENCES

During the reporting process, OPDs should identify their priorities and report content that increases public awareness of the equal rights of persons with disabilities. This requires that OPDs plan, organize and deliver organization-related messages that are appropriate for each of the target audiences, and employ techniques to assist the audiences, readers and listeners, to better understand the issues. For further information, refer to chapters three to six of the From impossibility to difference: A Handbook for DPO leaders.

FAMILIARIZE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF JOURNALISM

OPDs should fully communicate with the media and reach agreements before initiating cooperative efforts. It is important to ensure that OPDs fully understand the angle of the story, the length and when and where it will be published. Media practitioners must clarify whether and how the names of individuals and organizations will be used, how the organizations' data will be used, and should understand the organizations' expectations and needs and obtain the approval of the mentioned OPDs before a report is published. If time pressures make this impossible, the media practitioners should prepare an agreement in advance with OPDs to confirm the terms of cooperation, which can be retained by the organizations for future use.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

The advent of the internet has brought new media forms that allow everyone to publish information and speak to the outside world rather than relying on mainstream media. This presents an opportunity for OPDs because social media enables them to directly disseminate information. In addition, it provides a way for these organizations to gradually establish a professional image and attract the attention of the mainstream media. However, it should be noted that social media should not be used only to discuss the activities of the organizations; the media and the public prefer to see stories about issues and opinions, especially ones that are new.

CHAPTER FOUR

BARRIER-FREE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION, AND ISSUES RELATED TO MEDIA REPORTING

Access to Information can be defined as the right to seek, receive and impart information held by public bodies. It is an integral part of the fundamental right of freedom of expression, as recognized by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom to "to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers". Access to information is essential for full participation in society, access to education and employment. It is recognized as a basic human right and is supported by law.

The global development and local application of information and communication technology (ICT) in recent decades have promoted the emergence of various media products and diverse media organizations, and the continuously developing media technologies and functionality have created new opportunities for promoting

disability equality. The integration and reorganization of various types of information and services by various media channels caters for different sensory preferences, which enables people with disabilities to respond more flexibly to obstacles. At the same time, new ICT media platforms (websites, social media, video-sharing platforms, etc.), digital applications (e.g. screen reading software, voice control, hearing aids, touch control, etc.) and diverse media products (accessible movies, television series, games, etc.) have laid a technical and cultural foundation for deeper and wider access of persons with disabilities to content creation based on ICT, and for information sharing by them.

Access to Information legislation reflects the fundamental premise that all information held by governments and governmental institutions is in principle public and may only be withheld if there are legitimate reasons, such as typically privacy and security, for not disclosing it. Over the past 10 years, the right to information has been recognized by an increasing number of countries, including developing ones, through the adoption of a wave of Access to Information laws. As of 2021, there are at least 128 countries that have ratified such laws and enacted implementations that render the right to information possible.

In April 2007, the State Council of the People's Republic of China promulgated the "Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Open Government Information", which came into effect on 1 May 2008. Such regulations are key in

guaranteeing universal access to information, including for persons with disabilities.

Information accessibility is a basic human right principle respected and guaranteed by Chinese law. Article 52 of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities provides that: "The State and society shall take measures to gradually improve barrier-free facilities, promote barrier-free information exchanges, so as to create a barrier-free environment for persons with disabilities to participate in social life equally. The People's governments at all levels shall formulate overall plans for the construction of barrier-free environment, coordinate comprehensively and strengthen supervision and administration."

The Regulations on the Construction of Barrier-free Environment took effect on 1 August 2012. Article 26 of the Regulations states that "telecommunications terminal equipment manufacturers should provide technologies and products that are compatible with barrier-free information exchange services."

This chapter discusses barrier-free access to information and communication and key issues related to media reporting.

I. FOUR LEVELS OF BARRIER-FREE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The concept of 'accessibility' was developed in the 1950s to support equality of opportunity and equal rights for persons with disabilities. It derived from the principle of 'normalization' proposed by N. E. Bank-Mikkelsen, which held that persons with disabilities have the same rights as their peers without disability. The application of the principle of 'normalization' in practice advocates for the construction of a normal human living environment that is accessible to all.[35]

'Living environment' not only refers to the physical environment, but also includes the information and cultural environment. The term, 'accessibility' was initially used only to refer to the accessibility of the physical environment, but was later expanded to include information sciences; thus leading to the emergence of the concepts of 'information accessibility', 'media accessibility' and the like. Accessible communication is the embodiment of how the concept of 'accessibility' is applied to the human communication activities. Specifically, accessible communication refers to the information communication status when information can reach the target audience unhindered and be accurately received by the target audience. To put it

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35. Perrin, B. 1999. The original 'Scandinavian' normalization principle and its continuing relevance for the 1990s. in R. J. Flynn, and R. A. Lemay (eds), A quarter-century of normalization and social role valorization: Evolution and impact. Ottawa, University of Ottawa Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1cn6s45.10.

simply, it is a communication state in which media is accessible to all and information reaches everyone.

In real life communication activities, however, there are various inequalities and barriers. For example, persons with visual impairments (blind persons, near-sighted persons, and older persons) encounter obstacles in receiving visual information; persons with hearing disabilities (deaf persons, hard of hearing, and older persons) encounter obstacles in receiving auditory information; persons with physical disabilities encounter obstacles in operating media tools; people with intellectual disabilities encounter obstacles in understanding media information; people with one native language encounter barriers when presented with information in other languages; and people of a certain cultural circle encounter barriers when presented with information from outside their cultural circle. Perhaps, many people have heard complaints from their parents and grandparents that the television remote control is too complex to use, the television host is speaking too quickly, the screen of their mobile phone is so small that it is hard for them to see the words on their screen clearly, it is hard to learn the various functions of mobile phones, internet technology is developing too quickly, and there are too many new internet-related things emerging. Every time we hear these complaints, we judge the subject of the complaint based on their personal abilities to manage that item. We tend to focus on the lack of abilities that our parents or grandparents may have for using media technologies or receiving information, which

is the perspective of the traditional model and the medical model, instead of considering the ways in which information technologies could be changed to be more accessible.

Barrier-free access to information and communication requires that the development and promotion of technology and the production and transmission of content fully consider the diverse needs of different groups and meet those needs as far as possible. Only in this way can we break down the technical barriers and user privileges in information and communication and build a pluralistic information communication environment. In response to the different causes of the barriers to information and communication, accessible communication has four aspects: barrier-free access to technology, accessible use of technology, accessible content, barrier-free comprehension.[36]

(i) Barrier-free access to technology

This refers to full coverage of ICT equipment and individual access to ICT tools and equipment. This is related to the economic situation of persons with disabilities and the condition of local internet infrastructure, and is often dependent on people's perceptions and beliefs about whether people with disabilities can access the Internet in the same way as people without disabilities. For example, if decision-makers do not know that people with visual impairments can

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36. Li Dongxiao. 2013. Hear and See: Accessible Communication in Film and Television Media, Zhejiang University Press.

use screen reading software to operate ordinary computers and smartphones, they may assume that they cannot use such equipment and must instead use special equipment, which is often very expensive. In such cases, they will not consider the needs of persons with disabilities and promote access to everyday ICT.

(ii) Accessible use of technology

This refers to the ability of persons with disabilities to use ICT equipment, such as radio, television, computer, mobile phones, projectors, etc. Accessible use of technology has two aspects: the ability to use ICT and the inclusiveness of ICT itself. On one hand, a person's ability to use ICT is determined by many factors, such as age, education level, occupation and so on. If we want to bridge the obstacles to the use of equipment caused by a lack of skills, we need to improve the users' education levels and/or increase relevant training activities. Given the differences between people with disabilities and those without disability, a computer expert without disability may not be fully competent to provide this type of training. Therefore, persons with disabilities should be invited to take part in such training.

On the other hand, the inclusiveness of ICT itself is equally important. For example, for persons with visual impairments and persons with physical disabilities, the touch screen controls of smartphones, the windowed operation mode of computers, and the embedded (or tablet) buttons on media devices,

etc., may become barriers to the use of such devices. Making technologies inclusive, following the principle of universal design, and providing alternative ways of operation to different users (e.g. keyboard and mouse alternatives that assist persons with disabilities to complete operations independently) are key ways of overcoming barriers to the use of technology.

(iii) Accessible content

This refers to how accessible information (content) is to people. There are two levels in accessibility of content: Firstly, users' skills to receive content, for example, persons with visual impairments encounter obstacles when information is only presented in visual formats and persons with hearing impairments encounter obstacles when information is only provided in audio formats; Secondly, whether specific content provides a variety of ways that can be obtained, for example, pure auditory information may bring obstacles to people with hearing disabilities and pure visual information may bring obstacles to people with visual impairments.

(iv) Barrier-free comprehension

This refers to whether information conveyed by the media can be fully and accurately understood by all audiences. This concerns the effectiveness of the coding and decoding of information. Accessible comprehension is the highest level and the ultimate goal of accessible communication. Various factors affect comprehension, including mental state, educational level

and psychological mood. First and foremost are the barriers that persons with mental disabilities face in comprehending information.

Although media organizations are increasingly improving content diversity and access to content, such as by adding audio descriptions to videos, converting pictures into touchable versions and captioning news, these methods are not always successful in ensuring that persons with disabilities fully understand the information conveyed. For example, when persons with visual impairments listen to movies with audio descriptions, it is unclear whether they can fully understand the stories and the emotions expressed in the movies, and get rich and unique experience through body and mind. This area therefore requires further consideration and research.

II. KEY CONCEPTS IN BARRIER-FREE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

According to Article 2 of the CRPD, "communication includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology". To help readers better understand the accessibility of information communication, we will introduce some key

concepts before giving specific recommendations, to break through stereotypical mindsets in information communication.

1. Braille

Braille is a tactile system of reading and writing in which text, letters of the alphabet, numbers and musical and mathematical symbols are conveyed as raised dots arranged in different ways. Modern Braille, invented by Louis Braille, French teacher, musician and inventor and also a person who was blind, is a six-point matrix. Chinese Braille is presented as a phonetic representation of the sounds of the language, with different arrangements of Braille characters representing initials, finals, tones and so on. If people use separate components of Chinese characters to communicate information, for example, using 木 + 子 = 李 to introduce the character 李, in daily communication, it may cause obstacles for people with visual impairments who have never been exposed to this form of understanding this character. Another example is that homonyms and polyphones are common in Chinese characters. If, due to lack of accessibility awareness, inexperienced people with visual impairments are told that the character 汗 is the same as that in 阿富汗, they will not be able to know which character it is. These problems cannot be attributed to the inability of persons with visual impairments to see or to understand, but rather are a result of the failure by persons with no visual impairments to take the needs of persons with visual impairments into account and present information in ways that are accessible to all.

A further issue is that not all persons with visual impairments have learned Braille and not all of those who have learned Braille are proficient in it. It should be recognized that Braille is only one way for people with visual impairments to obtain information, not the only way.

2. Screen reading, screen enlargement, and colour inversion

With the development of technology, people with visual impairments can operate standard desktop computers, laptops and smartphones autonomously by installing screen reading software, or by using screen enlargement and colour inversion tools that come with devices, instead of using special equipment. The screen reading function can transform textual information into audio messages, thus providing persons with visual impairments with the information. With this function, persons with visual impairments can operate computers, such as accessing the Internet, sending and receiving emails, posting on social media, writing and typesetting documents, and both receiving media information and participating in content production. The software Magnifixer can zoom in on the system display as a whole or the content of the mouse pointer, which is useful for people with low vision. Screen colour inversion tools display the colour on the screen with high contrast to improve clarity for people with low vision, and make sure their eyes will not be overly tired due to the screen display.

These new technologies are not without fault. They require

product designers and content producers to comply with relevant standards for accessible information, otherwise they can present new obstacles for persons with visual impairments, such as the need to identify graphic verification codes when logging-in to content publishing platforms, and the lack of text descriptions for long images.

3. Audio description

Audio description (AD) is a technology that converts images and films into audio descriptions. It provides 'narrated descriptions of the key visual elements of a (…) program, inserted into the program during pauses in the regular dialogue'.[37] The visual elements that require explanation include 'descriptions of time and space situations, character relationships, scenes, scenery and the body language of characters'.[38] In short, some descriptions related to the situational structure and text information are added at appropriate times, without interfering with the original sound, to help people with visual impairments better understand the overall content.

In China, AD is currently most widely used to describe movies for persons with visual impairments, for instance, Bright Theatre (光 明 影 院), Love Theatre (至 爱 影 院), Heart and Eyes Theatre (心 目 影 院). Other audio description services

37. Cronin, B. and King, S. 1990. The development of the descriptive video service. Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness, pp. 503-506.
38. Packer, J. and Kirchner, C. 1997. Who's watching? A profile of the blind and visually impaired audience for television and video. New York: American Foundation for the Blind.

are hard to find, let alone talent training programmes and the formulation and implementation of relevant standards.

4. Sign language

Sign language is recognized by the CRPD. Many people with hearing impairments not only use sign language for communication, but also have deep feelings and identities attached to this form of communication. Therefore, it is of significance to respect this language and provide translations wherever possible. This is equivalent to providing Chinese-English translations for English speakers at meetings that are held in Chinese. However, at present, the construction and study of sign language is at an early stage in China, faced with problems such as confusion in the use of sign language and lack of participation of the hearing-impaired, as well as conflicts between standard sign language and natural sign language, with the result that sometimes persons with hearing impairments cannot understand the sign language being used. In visual presentations on screens, the position and size of the sign language interpreter in the screen are important factors. In some programmes, sign language interpreters are placed in the corner of the screen, but these are often too small and can sometimes create obstacles for persons with hearing impairments.

As with Braille, not all people with hearing impairments have learned sign language, so attention should be paid to synchronizing sign language with other accessibility support.

5. Subtitles

Teletext, subtitles and closed captions are all represented by the Chinese word 字幕 [39], but there are differences in the meanings of the three terms.

The term 'teletext' refers to a television providing pictures and accompanying text, which is not quite the same as the general understanding of the term. It was designated by the British Independent Television Commission in the 1970s with the aim to provide information for persons with hearing impairments. It relies entirely on text to deliver national and international news, sports news, weather forecasts, and television program forecasts to the audience. A Chinese example was the China Disability Services Network's first attempt to provide a live teletext broadcast of the CCTV Chinese New Year Gala on New Year's Eve 2011.

Subtitles usually appear at the bottom of the screen, and are usually the dialogue of the programme, either in the original language of the programme or in another language. Sometimes, subtitles are explanatory information to help the audience understand the plot. Subtitles were not originally designed for people with hearing impairments, but they can help them understand the content of programmes. In general, subtitles provided with visual programmes in many countries only convert the audio information such as dialogue or narration into text, they are not prepared based on the

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39. Li Dongxiao, 2013. Hear and See: Accessible Communication in Film and Television Media, Zhejiang University Press.

information-receiving habits and special needs of persons with hearing impairments, which makes them significantly different from subtitles specifically prepared by persons with hearing impairments.

Closed captions (CC) can be understood as 'hidden subtitles'. They are 'hidden' in the sense that they cannot be seen by everyone and can be turned on and off. CC for persons with hearing impairments are designed based on the information-receiving needs of people with hearing impairments and aim to assist them to understand the content of films and television programmes. CC convert audio information in films and television into text or image information, and possess unique features in presentation, transformation of spoken and written language, human voices and non-human voices, background music, etc. Both CC and AD require professional systems to prepare and support them.

6. Easy Read[40]

Easy Read is a way to make information more accessible to people with learning disabilities by using plain language, symbols, pictures, etc. It can serve to convey key information. Instead of simply translating existing documents into supposedly more understandable words, Easy Read focuses

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40. For more information, please see: Department of Health. 2010. Making written information easier to understand for people with learning disabilities. London, Government of the United Kingdom.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-written-information-easier-to-understand-for-people-with-learning-disabilities-guidance-for-people-who-commission-or-produce-easy-read-information-revised-edition-2010

on capturing the gist of documents so that those with learning disabilities can understand the main concepts, and make decisions when necessary. Easy Read is not a panacea, and some persons with learning disabilities and other groups may still require assistance in reading text that has been presented this way, especially if it contains complex or sensitive information. Easy Read can be used as a tool for supporters to help those in need to understand the key issues of a topic. Easy Read is also a useful format for other groups of people, such as ethnic minorities for whom Chinese is a second language, as well as sign language users.

III. PROMOTION OF ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION IN MEDIA REPORTING

In Chapter Three, recommendations were given for improving media reporting to promote disability equality. To ensure that persons with disabilities have unhindered access to the content produced by the media, we underline the following principles in the context of accessibility in information and communication:

• **Raise awareness.** Media reports should encourage each and everyone to know about the needs of persons with disability and adopt an inclusive and comprehensive attitude and assist the public (including persons with disabilities and their

relatives) to understand information accessibility technologies and standards, and raise awareness of information accessibility in general. In this way, people can learn that persons with disabilities who have access to ICT are able to enjoy the same conveniences brought by ICT as people with no disability, can learn how persons with disabilities can access information through accessible technology, and can strive to eliminate the barriers for persons with disabilities at all levels.

• **Abide by standards.** When producing and distributing content, the media should abide by standards of accessibility, train personnel (including training that covers the concepts discussed in this handbook) and formulate internal review standards and procedures to ensure that content can be accessed and understood by persons with disabilities.

• **Ensure participation.** The participation of persons with disabilities is one of the most important principles in promoting and ensuring disability equality. Therefore, it is essential to introduce and attach importance to the participation of persons with disabilities and their organizations in the process of ensuring accessible communication of media information.

CHAPTER FIVE

CASES OF IMPROVING EQUALITY BY MEDIA COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Although media communication plays an important role in promoting equality for persons with disabilities, the media needs assistance to actively and positively promote such rights in conformity with the purposes and principles of the convention. The participation of persons with disabilities and of OPDs is essential in upholding the rights of persons with disabilities and they should play a leading role. Their active participation not only encourages the media to learn more about disability and realize the significance of disability-related issues and perspectives, but also assists them to create the conditions that enable persons with disabilities to participate in media communication.

This chapter introduces domestic and foreign cases from the perspectives of the establishment of independent media for persons with disabilities, non-governmental media monitoring, active contributions to the media, promotion of media participation, initiatives organized by OPDs, comprehensive

actions by media institutions and media training, for the future reference of media institutions and OPDs. It is expected that all parties will develop communication strategies to promote disability equality both internally and externally.

I. MEDIA APPLICATION BY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND DISABILITY-RELATED INDEPENDENT MEDIA: ONE PLUS ONE AUDIO WORKSHOP

In 2006, Qingfeng Yang, Gaoshan Fu and Yanshuang Li, three people with visual impairments, and Yan Xie, a person with physical disabilities, convened a One Plus One audio workshop in Beijing to train people with visual impairments to produce radio programmes, with the support of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).

The workshop aimed to encourage people with visual impairments to explore new enterprises and expand their opportunities beyond working as massagers. The people with visual impairments who were trained in the workshop went on to produce a series of programmes, to the standards of commercial programmes, that have nothing to do with disability, and provided this content to radio stations. The programmes met the requirements of commercial broadcasting and even won several awards (e.g. one programme won the Best Creative Award of the sixth 'Oriental Dr' national radio programme

innovation competition). However, such radio programmes did not serve as a sustainable way to earn a living for the participants due to the economic limitations of the commercial broadcasting environment.

Recognizing the opportunity presented by the Shanghai Special Olympics World Summer Games in 2007 and the Beijing Summer Paralympic Games in 2008, One Plus One contacted the organizing committees and offered the services of the members of One Plus One (who are all persons with disabilities) to report on the games. With few reporters with disabilities in the mainstream media at that time, the organizing committees accepted the offer of One Plus One to cover these two events and granted the organization permission to broadcast the events on mainstream radio stations countrywide. The reporting by One Plus One members revealed that reporters with disabilities had their own unique perspectives in covering disability-related affairs, and fully demonstrated their exceptional value.

In 2008, One Plus One was authorized by the Olympic organizing committee to produce public service announcements titled 'Love for the Paralympic Games' ahead of the 2008 Beijing Summer Paralympic Games. In the process of discussing the production form of the announcements, One Plus One members pointed out that previous stories about persons with disabilities were usually told by a third party and were presented as 'their stories', which was disappointing. The One Plus One reporters therefore decided to report stories of persons with

disabilities in the first person, 'I', and invited various athletes with disabilities to tell their stories directly. When One Plus One members became aware of the CRPD, they realized that their approach was in line with the convention and was an expression of the awakening of simple subjective self-consciousness and self-dignity.

Based on this experience, in 2008 One Plus One began to ponder the direction its future development should take. At first, the members sought to prove themselves and focused on radio production rather than on disability rights. But later they gradually realized that disability, in all its diversity, can sometimes be a unique advantage.

At the same time, they realized that, as persons with disabilities, One Plus One members should also use the media to give a voice to other people with disabilities. As a result, One Plus One gave up the production of commercial programmes and launched a programme titled 'China Disability Observation', which presents stories, investigates events and comments on news for persons with disabilities. Although this programme was no different to programmes produced by mainstream media, One Plus One knew very well that its perspectives were rather unique. The radio programme came to the attention of the editor of the 'Friends of persons with disabilities' programme of the Voice of China of the China National Radio, and the programme was then broadcasted by the Voice of China. Since 2011, One Plus One has produced the 'Friends of persons with disabilities' programme, and this has become a long-term

commitment based on mutual trust.

Considering the needs of those people in the audience with disabilities, particularly the needs of persons with disabilities in remote areas, in early 2011 One Plus One launched a radio programme hotline for people with visual impairments that enables persons with disabilities to share their experiences of independent life and other information, and also offered hotline services to allow interaction and connection for persons with disabilities across the country.

As part of its ongoing development, One Plus One realized that as a media organization for persons with disabilities, it should provide important information, introduce new concepts and serve as a means for persons with disabilities to share their experiences and express their opinions.

During this process, One Plus One found that the audio media had certain restrictions and that it was often easier for audiences to receive words and images. In view of this, in 2013 One Plus One set up the first paper-based magazine for persons with disabilities in China, YOUREN, with funding from the Beijing Office of Humanity & Inclusion (then called Handicap International). The magazine enabled the sharing of visual information and expanded the audience. With the rapid spread of the internet in China, in 2014 One Plus One established a social media (WeChat) official account and became an important voice for persons with disabilities on social media. As of the end of 2019, One Plus One had separate WeChat pages for the promotion and advocacy of the CRPD, experiences of

independent life and information sharing by people with visual impairments, research on disability, advocacy for women with disabilities, integration of disability into employment, etc. In recent years, other social media sites focusing on disability have emerged and have had quite an influence, with each playing a role in the community.

Summary:

One Plus One has explored a development path based on establishing relationships with communities and the media. Initially, One Plus One viewed the media as a potential new profession for persons with disabilities and consciously used the media, then combined its characteristics with the media, and eventually developed independent community-based media with the purpose of facilitating the expression of the opinions of persons with disabilities and advocating for their rights.

One Plus One has found that independent media can serve to express a wide range of perspectives and ideas beyond those expressed through official and commercial media. In addition, independent media can serve as a means to promote social equality and justice. At the same time, independent media also function as community media to serve the needs of certain groups. In this way, such media can increase community cohesion while also enabling members of the community to understand their rights, actively participate in public life and address community concerns.

II. NON-GOVERNMENTAL MEDIA MONITORING: THE ANNUAL TOP TEN EVENTS OF RIGHTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

One Plus One has promoted and implemented the CRPD in China since 2008, and has used the media as a tool in their work. It has also monitored the media to identify instances of the various models: the traditional, medical, social and human rights models. Media monitoring has enabled the organization to identify current social attitudes towards persons with disabilities and how those affect the lives of persons with disabilities and other stakeholders, and One Plus One has sought to change those attitudes through media reporting.

In interviews with the media before 2011, One Plus One sought to change the attitudes of reporters and tried to break through the pre-set conceptual frames and interview outlines of the media, but these efforts were in vain in most cases. One Plus One therefore felt confused and helpless. In 2011, One Plus One began publishing quarterly reports of media monitoring of disability-related affairs[41] that aimed to discuss with the media about how to improve media reporting, so as to shape positive images of persons with disabilities, and began to advocate for the establishment of non-discriminatory environment and equal opportunities for persons with disabilities at all levels of society.

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41. Social Sciences Academic Press. 2017. *Annual observation report on disability, Appendix 1*, pp. 359-402

One Plus One initially titled their reports as being 'incomplete' because its members were extremely confused about how to proceed in the face of a variety of factors, media forms and regional disparities, and the members lacked confidence in the organization's capacity to monitor the media effectively. The report was initially designed to describe the quarterly monitoring and trend analysis of media reporting of disability and disability-related wording. In addition, the report covered influential figures, key words and overseas news, microblogs and other column content as supplements to cases presented in the report.

In 2012, One Plus One changed the name of the report to the 'Media reporting of disability-related issues: Observation and review report of One Plus One'[42]. The focus of the report changed to descriptions of cases, and also included changes in perspectives and content to highlight the views of One Plus One and increase the weight of comments. The report had the following components:

Typical cases: These were selected cases (real media reports), supplemented by comments and information. Some of the cases portrayed negative images of persons with disabilities, while others ignored or violated the principles of the CRPD in terms of the ideas presented in them or the reporting perspectives. However, other cases included in the report were selected because they were in line with the spirit of the CRPD.

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42. Social Sciences Academic Press. 2017. *Annual observation report on disability, Appendix II,* pp 403-65

Cases of reports of disability-related affairs: Comments were made on these reports and they were supplemented with related information.

One Plus One's reports: These were selected news events reported by various media outlets that reflected the One Plus One rights-based reporting perspective.

At the time, One Plus One did not have an extensive following or industry influence, and it was difficult for One Plus One to evaluate media reports and present the various perspectives of disability. The organization then prepared an observation report on disability reporting in print media covering the period between 2008 and 2012. This report was prepared in cooperation with Wei Bu, professor and doctoral supervisor from the Youth and Media Development Research Center of the Institute of Journalism and Communication in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, and her research team.

With the support of Professor Wei Bu, One Plus One initiated the 'Annual top ten events of rights for persons with disabilities' in 2013. Over the years, the methods of appraisal and selection of the top ten events changed. While they were initially selected by One Plus One and experts, the selection was later made only by invited experts, and subsequently the selection involved votes from persons with disabilities, and selection was made following in-depth discussions and votes from OPDs. Most recently, the recommendations of influential social media sites and public voting were used to select the top ten. In addition, One Plus One issued release forms, both offline

and online, and changed the event structure to focus more on analysis from the perspective of provisions in the CRPD.

In 2017, One Plus One created the 'Annual top ten events of rights for people with mental disorders' based on the 'Annual top ten events of rights for persons with disabilities'. The changes that had been made for the original top ten evaluation process were reflected the monitoring process and results of the new top ten, and laid a solid foundation for future monitoring. The 'Annual top ten events of rights for people with mental disorders' had the following components and changes over its development:

Subjectively-produced events. Initially, persons with disabilities and OPDs merely participated in the selection and transmission of the annual event, but later they became advocates for the rights for persons with disabilities and actively produced related events for transmission. For example, on 29 August 2019, five people with disabilities protested at the headquarters of Missfresh in Beijing against advertisements that were discriminatory against persons with disabilities. [43]

Connection to stakeholders. Every year, the process of appraisal and selection of the annual top ten events of rights for persons with disabilities provided an opportunity to strengthen connections and cooperation between persons with disabilities, OPDs, parents, reporters and the public. This led to wider media awareness of disability rights. For example, after the completion of the selection of the annual top ten rights for persons with

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43. WeChat. Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. *Cases of protests against the advertisements of Missfresh by five persons with disabilities.*
https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/T7TLixRYYcGn_jMfFavc8Q

mental disorders in 2017, a publication titled Narada Insights invited the participants to write about why we should pay attention to the rights persons with mental disorders.

Record of the history of advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities in China. Prior to the work by One Plus One, there was a lack of systematic recording of the history of the movement to advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities in China. While some research had been undertaken, it was often from the perspective of people with no disability. The selection, release and review of the annual top ten events of rights for persons with disabilities can be regarded as a recording of the history of advocating for the rights for persons with disabilities by OPDs, and could serve to attract and inform more people with disabilities in future.

III. ACTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MEDIA: TWO COMMENTS BY ONE PLUS ONE

In recent years, some mainstream media organizations have become more open to public input, taking advantage of the rise of social media. Interaction with non-professional media commentators and support from the public welfare field has led to more opportunities for persons with disabilities to express their opinions in mainstream media. As a result, in addition to the media monitoring and rights advocacy and the establishment of the self-owned voice-production platform,

OPDs were in a position to contribute to reports in mainstream media and negotiate with reporters and editors, and respond in a timely manner to events, conveying the voices of persons with disabilities to a wider audience rather than within their own small circle or waiting for the mainstream media to come to them. The following two cases illustrate this point.

【Case 1】Interaction between a wheelchair user from Gansu Province and Tsinghua University [44]

In late June 2017, Xiang Wei, a wheelchair user from Gansu Province wrote to Tsinghua University about his situation after receiving a tentative admission from the university. He was hoping to take his mother with him to Beijing and his request was supported by the university. The letter written by Xiang Wei quickly dominated the headlines after being published by a WeChat account titled 'Beautiful Gansu'. Tsinghua University's rapid response to Xiang Wei, a letter titled 'Life is really hard, but please choose to believe', was also published. The letter agreed to Xiang Wei's requests and also demonstrated the compassion of the university. The reply from Tsinghua University elevated the event to a new height in terms of media coverage. The 'touching' interaction between Xiang Wei and Tsinghua University became a media sensation and attracted many reporters.

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44. http://t.m.china.com.cn/convert/c_m4BYOiYe.html

Despite the wide media coverage, many reports focused only on the charity of the university and the inspiring nature of the story, and lacked discussion of the systematic lack of support faced by many people with disabilities and the need to improve the system so as to uphold the right to education of persons with disabilities. In particular, there was a lack of discussion within the frame of investigation and change. In response, a group of OPDs submitted a letter to the editors of China.org.cn titled 'What else can we do about accessible education in colleges and universities?' This letter analyzed and interpreted the situation from a different perspective.

【Case 2】 A candidate with visual impairment got 623 points in the college entrance examination [45]

On 24 June 2018, Yun Wang, a student with visual impairment from Shanghai, got 623 points in the college entrance examination, a score only 37 points below the full number. News about this achievement spread widely on major media outlets and became an inspirational story. But the student was unable to enter Fudan University even with such a high score, so the student took the individual enrolment examination specially for persons with disabilities. Some media followed up and questioned why such an excellent student had not been given an equal chance to access higher education.

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45. https://ipaper.oeeee.com/ipaper/A/html/2018-06/26/content_35081.htm

This news report had a sense of inspiration. And although it seemed to describe a situation in which there was equal access to education for persons with visual impairments from the perspective of educational equity, the initial media reporting failed to discuss the enrolment examination for persons with disabilities and the education system for people with visual impairments, which misled readers in comparing the academic performance of students with visual impairments to that of students with no disability. The subsequent complete and formal explanation was only the private special treatment based on the above misleading situation, rather than a systematic reflection on the protection of human rights. In fact, it failed to break away from the framework of efforts of individuals with disabilities and social special care. Based on this, members of domestic OPDs commented on the article and also published an article requesting that exaggerated reporting about 'inspirational' people with visual impairments be eradicated, and which analyzed the frame of media reporting used in this case.

Summary:

In the process of improving contact with mainstream media, it is important to provide them with reporting resources and perspectives to build mutual trust, but also ensure timely contact and carry out discussions and cooperation at critical moments. Although both articles were disseminated via social media platforms of OPDs, the versions of those two articles published in mainstream media caused extensive discussion

due to the differences in their audiences. While social media now plays an increasingly important role in disseminating information, mainstream media remains a dominant form of communication, with vast audiences, so cannot be ignored in terms of its influence on public opinions on issues. Therefore, in addition to operating social media accounts, OPDs should try to cooperate with mainstream media.

IV. PROMOTING MEDIA PARTICIPATION: 'PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS TAKE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION' AND 'TANGIBLE ACTIONS'

OPDs can play various roles in promoting media reporting of disability rights, such as by providing information about disability-related issues and resources, and partnering with others on disability-related issues to strengthen their positions. They can also promote the integration of disability perspectives into common issues. This requires establishing solid mutual trust and cooperation with the media, as seen in the following two cases.

【Case 1】Serial public-service reporting by The Beijing News on participation in college entrance examinations by people with visual impairments [46]

In 2014, people with visual impairments made a breakthrough in terms of taking the college entrance examination. From 2011 onwards some students with visual impairments registered for the college entrance examination and requested accessibility and reasonable accommodation as part of their equal right to education. However, despite media reporting and appeals, no breakthrough was achieved until 2014 because it was difficult for many people to understand why people with visual impairments would want to take the college entrance examination.

At the time, the members of One Plus One observed that there was not enough background information on the topic of people with visual impairments taking the college entrance examination and their equal right to education, which hindered public discussion of the matter and hindered widespread understanding of the situation and the needs of people with visual impairments. Therefore, in early 2014 One Plus One took the initiative and contacted reporters from The Beijing News to provide them with information on the situation, informing them that people with visual

46. http://epaper.bjnews.com.cn/html/2014-04/15/content_506038.htm?div=-1

impairments were only able to go to special colleges and only by participating in individual examinations specially designed for persons with disabilities. Also, the members of One Plus One contacted students enrolled in schools for students with visual impairments to get their opinions. In response, The Beijing News agreed to launch a series of public-service reports covering the issue proposed by One Plus One, in view of its freshness and social value.

In late March and early April 2014, The Beijing News sent reporters to interview and photograph students attending a school for students with visual impairments in Qingdao. The reporters also interviewed and photographed students sitting the individual enrolment examination held by the Special Education College of Beijing Union University. The newspaper subsequently published the series of reports under the broad title: College entrance examination by people with visual impairments. This series of reports laid an important foundation for a follow-up discussion on why people with visual impairments wanted to take the college entrance examination.

Summary:

The action taken by One Plus One, an OPD, in cooperation with the media was effective in spreading their ideas to the public. The OPD provided resources (including information,

perspectives, interview subjects, etc.) and the media organization carried out the reporting. Other ways that organizations can collaborate with the media is by sending them e-mails with news ideas and press releases.

Although the reports were in the hands of the media and the results were unpredictable, it was gratifying for the OPD to see positive outcomes of their contact and cooperation with mainstream media in promoting information sharing towards upholding the rights of persons with disabilities. This initiative by One Plus One was the beginning of a deeper, long-term relationship with the media.

【Case 2】 The 'tangible actions' rendered by thetechnology channel of iFeng.com [47]

In late November 2018, the Technology Channel of iFeng.com and the Beijing Soundwave Social Service Center for Persons with Visual Impairments launched an evaluation of mobile phones and applications to identify the top seven mobile phones and the best accessible mobile apps for people with visual impairments. The evaluation process lasted for thirty-three days and was undertaken by thirteen people with visual impairments. On 22 December that year, they announced the results.

At the same time, the Technology Channel of iFeng.com began a cooperative effort with the Beijing

47. http://tech.ifeng.com/a/20181220/45265802_0.shtml

Soundwave Center to continuously evaluate major mobile phones and monitor them daily throughout 2019.

Because the evaluation of the applications was based on the experiences of people with visual impairments, the results of the evaluation were considered to be very valuable to many people with visual impairments. The evaluation process was also valuable as it offered a different experience and understanding of mobile phone evaluations to the public.

Summary:

In this campaign, the Beijing Soundwave Center not only acted as a resource provider, but also as an equal partner and content controller, while the Technology Channel of iFeng.com mainly served as a professional supporter of media platforms and content production. The two parties engaged in a long-term cooperative relationship, which serves as a good example for cooperation between OPDs and mainstream media organizations.

The cooperation between the Beijing Soundwave Center and the Technology Channel of iFeng.com came about because of the significant experience of the Beijing Soundwave Center. The organization has focused on the rights of persons with visual impairments for a long time and has a professional background in the field of disability rights. In addition, the organization has several community media channels, including a WeChat account called 'Do a Favour for

People with Visual Impairments (Sheng Bo Bang Bang Mang)', and an audio community under Shengbo.org. Furthermore, the Beijing Soundwave Center has previously contacted and cooperated with mainstream media organizations. The combination of these three areas of experience enabled the Beijing Soundwave Center to become an equal partner with mainstream media for this initiative.

V. ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS BY OPDs: PERFORMANCE ART AND IMPACT LITIGATION

OPDs can take various types of advocacy actions towards achieving change. Such actions include performance art and strategic litigation. When OPDs engage in such advocacy, however, it is important that they work closely with the media in a planned way and interact with them in a timely manner, because publicity via mainstream media reporting is an important way to gain legitimacy for an issue, especially in Chinese society. When awareness is raised through mainstream media, this can lead to an increase in public concern and social pressure that expands the discussion space and leads to greater dialogue and to the desired changes.

(I) PERFORMANCE ART

Performance art emerged in Western countries in the late 1960s, and is characterized by its openness, liveliness, action and public nature. Performers usually achieve publicity through performance art as a result of such factors as performing in a public space and engaging the audience on a particular social issue. Because of its popularity, performance art is naturally suitable as a means of public advocacy. Generally, performers express themselves by using themselves as the medium and adopting exaggerated forms to attract media and public attention quickly and on a broad scale.

On 20 October 2009 a group of people with disabilities protested against a sign by the Parkson in Fuxingmen, Beijing, that sought to prevent persons with disabilities from entering the mall. *YOUREN*,[48] a magazine for persons with disabilities, described the protest as the first performance art event focusing on discrimination ever conducted by persons with disabilities in China.[49] Over the past decade, a series of performance art shows have been presented by persons with disabilities on various issues, including about the college entrance examination, barrier-free railway transportation, equal employment opportunities and the need for bus stop announcements in an electronic form.[50] With the rise of the internet and more widespread access to the internet, there

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48. Youren Magazine. www.youren.org.cn
49. *YOUREN*. 2013. *List of outstanding persons with disabilities - Performance art by persons with disabilities,* Vol. 2, pp. 20-26.
50. *YOUREN*. 2013. Kanjian column, Vol. 2.

have been an increasing number of performance art events to promote equality. Such displays include an event involving a group of thousands of people with visual impairments jointly sending a letter to Huawei to request barrier-free mobile phone use[51] and a display that gave a one-star rating to the Uber app in an Apple store.[52] Another case is described below.

【Case study】Protest by people with visual impairments against Pizza Hut [53]

Background: In April 2013, Pizza Hut China placed an advertisement on its online platform about its shrimp balls product. The advertisement depicted a shrimp wearing sunglasses, holding a cane and rolled into a ball, with the word 'xia', a derogatory term for 'blind' in Chinese, written in brackets next to the word 'shrimp' ('xia' is homophonic to 'shrimp' in Chinese). When told about this advertisement, many people with visual impairments were offended.

Performance protest: On 4 and 5 June 2013, groups of people with visual impairments protested in front of Pizza Hut restaurants in several places around the country, including in Shijiazhuang, Qingdao, Beijing, Zhengzhou and Guangzhou at a set time, holding up banners and performing. In Beijing the protesters held

51. WeChat 'Do a favour for persons with visual impairments'. Fault finding for barrier-free use of EMUI. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/9jfjP2sbveBpDpi78jxo2Q
52. WeChat 'Do a favour for persons with visual impairments'. Initiative of one-star negative rating for Uber. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/InpHfYiGKQ01tpBPdPvjOw
53. http://china.caixin.com/2013-06-05/100537895.html

up a banner saying 'sheng', which means leftovers, and depicting a mouldy pizza. A phonogram of 'sheng' means 'victory'.

Request: The protestors requested that Pizza Hut China remove the advertisements and publish an apology letter in mainstream media across the country as well as in prominent places in its restaurants. The protestors demanded a sincere apology to people with visual impairments for the mocking and insulting advertisement.

Results: Following numerous media reports of the protest, Pizza Hut posted two letters of apology on its website and its official Weibo account, and promptly removed the advertisements. The event was listed in the top ten events to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities of 2013.

Summary:

Like other performance art, this event was a joint action by a group of people, but it was conducted simultaneously in many places, which caused it to have a greater impact. In addition to leading to several news stories locally, the action led to discussion and pressure at the national level, and provided mainstream media with several different angles and spaces from which to report.

(II) IMPACT LITIGATION

To some extent, performance art is mainly designed to expose the absurdity of reality, but it nevertheless supports advocacy campaigns by persons with disabilities, which usually seek positive changes in policies as well as increased public awareness. Such campaigns attach great importance to final results. In addition to efforts focusing on participation in drafting legislation and amendments to the law, another area of action is litigation, which also relies heavily on mainstream media reporting to have an impact. Litigation seeks to bring about positive changes in policies during the process of inspecting outcomes, rather than just evaluating the exhaustiveness of impacts, so some organizations call it strategic litigation. It is not easy to achieve a substantial impact on policies in the current context, so organizations should seek to increase public discussion of the issues and cases as much as possible.

In recent years there have been many influential litigation cases in the field of the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. One such case involved a person with visual impairment who sued China Railways for discriminating against persons with disabilities.[54] Another case involved a man with visual impairment in Shenzhen who was refused permission to register his residence after failing a physical examination.[55]

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54. A person with a visual impairment lost the lawsuit regarding discriminating against persons with disabilities.
http://legal.people.com.cn/n1/2016/1005/c42510-28756915.html
55. The application for registering his residence by a person with a visual impairment was rejected for five years: The life of his child will be affected. http://news.jstv.com/a/20170710/1499698810408.shtml

Given that there is no public data about planned and systematic strategies used by activists and OPDs, and many lawsuits in the disability field have not achieved significant policy changes, it is impossible to systematically analyze the impact of litigation. Examples of cases can be found in the advocacy Handbook published in collaboration with UNESCO, titled 'Making Yourself Heard/Getting Your Message Across: A Handbook for Civil Society Organizations'.

VI. COMPREHENSIVE ACTIONS OF MEDIA INSTITUTIONS: BBC'S PROJECTS FOR PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Statistically, around one in five people in the United Kingdom (UK) live with some form of disability. They are by no means a homogeneous group, however. Instead, they have different needs and views. Recognizing the various needs of persons with disabilities, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) promised its viewers that the opportunity to demonstrate value would be provided to everyone in the UK, regardless of their background. Accordingly, in December 2006 the BBC launched its first disability equity plan, with the aim of meeting the diverse needs and expectations of persons with disabilities and improving their lives. The plan was part of the BBC's overall commitment to equality and diversity, and specified how the BBC would develop, implement, monitor and review its framework for achieving

equality for persons with disabilities (and their companions) in relevant public functions. This plan was revised in 2007 and 2010.

The framework was a tool to place the promotion of disability equality at the centre of the BBC's work, particularly in fields such as television licensing, digital conversion and the BBC trust fund. On the one hand, the plan sought to provide equitable, convenient and appropriate services and to identify and eliminate existing gaps and barriers; on the other hand, it was also committed to protecting the rights of persons with disabilities at work and in the wider community, and to reaching out to persons with disabilities in order to understand their concerns and meet their needs to the greatest extent possible.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission of the BBC proposed five key elements on which the disability equality plan should be based, and there were various ways in which the BBC strove to deliver on its commitments under each element. These are described briefly below. Please refer to the references section of this handbook for links to further information.

(I) PARTICIPATION OF MULTIPLE PARTIES, ESPECIALLY PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The BBC consulted fully with all stakeholders, including with persons with disabilities before it began designing the plan, and invited all parties to participate in the subsequent implementation and adjustment process, particularly persons with disabilities and staff in key functions in the BBC. [56]

56. BBC. 2006. Focus group results.   https://www.bbc.co.uk/diversity/strategy-and-reports

(II) ACTION PLAN

The public functions of the BBC's action plan consisted of three parts: the television (TV) licensing function, functions of the BBC Trust and functions of the BBC under the BBC agreement, including digital conversion and assistance to users facing obstacles in the conversion process.[57] In each section, key goals were identified. The results the goals corresponded to were identified by persons with disabilities and their companions, ensuring the promotion of equal rights for all.

'TV Licensing' is a trade mark of the BBC and is used under licence by companies contracted by the BBC to administer the collection of the television licence fee in the UK and enforcement of the television licensing system. The BBC is a public authority with regard to its TV licensing function. The BBC Trust is committed to ensuring diversity in participants in public meetings, including persons with disabilities, and conducts studies to monitor audiences and compiles online feedback, seeking to ensure that anyone can express their opinions on the BBC's work.

(III) PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In the summer of 2007, the BBC's organizations specializing in persons with disabilities and the elderly, as well as voluntary

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57. In September 2005, the British government announced that it would conduct a digital switchover between 2008 and 2012. The switchover is a process by which analogue terrestrial television in the UK was replaced with digital terrestrial television. It is has also been referred to as the 'analogue switch off'.

sector development, conducted focus group discussion with over thirty organizations. Later, after gaining an understanding of the services of the BBC organizations, 150 people participated in the development of standards to monitor the quality of services. These standards serve to ensure the provision of high-quality services, to meet the requirements of all users within the scope of services and to ensure accessibility.

At an online meeting on disability-friendly and barrier-free access in October 2009, all of the participants with disabilities expressed satisfaction with the services, but some of them pointed out that many of the activities promoted were temporary and had no mechanism to ensure an ongoing guarantee of quality. However the feedback about the achievements was useful in assessing the performance of past projects and to develop plans, and could influence more sectors to make required changes.

(IV) ASSESSMENT

The BBC developed an equality impact assessment (EIA) template for each area of its public functions to ensure that existing or potential implementation differences and impacts were systematically and consistently assessed. Moreover, assessment is carried out for each action plan. Through such assessments, each subject can examine their development and areas for improvement in promoting disability equality, so that work is carried out transparently and the impacts can be measured.

(V) REVIEW AND EXAMINATION

The BBC carried out a comprehensive review of the plan in the third year of the plan's operation. The subsequent expansion of the disability equality plan in its corporate diversification programme further strengthened the BBC's focus on disability equality and the mainstreaming of disability.

VII. TRAINING FOR THE MEDIA: UNESCO

Since 2014, multiple United Nations agencies, including UNESCO, through the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD), have carried out initiatives in China to promote disability equality and integration. UNESCO is particularly committed to building the capacity of media institutions.

With the aim of promoting balanced, diversified and rights-oriented media reporting of persons with disabilities, the UNPRPD designed Media Communication and Disability Equality Training modules, aiming to provide media workers and disability-rights activists with ideas and communication resources from the perspective of disability rights and gender rights. The resources are based on the belief that a pluralistic and equitable society and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals are achievable only when reporting of disability issues is conducted in a manner consistent with the purposes of the CRPD.

Since 2015, the project has organized training workshops

in Beijing, Lanzhou and Chengdu, and has trained over 100 media practitioners from across China. The training has raised awareness of disability equality, and led to follow-up cooperation with 20 per cent of the participants to report on issues. The project also established a network to facilitate exchange between media practitioners and OPDs.

At the same time, One Plus One also carried out media literacy training for persons with disabilities, and face-to-face consultation and cooperation training for persons with disabilities and reporters, with the support of Professor Wei Bu from the Institute of Information and Communication of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

In 2019, with the support of UNESCO and based on experience gained through previous studies and projects, the Shanghai Youren Foundation launched a training programme focusing on media communication and advocacy based on the United Nations Disability Equality Training (DET). The programme is open to certified DET facilitators free of charge and can be used by OPDs and media practitioners to promote disability equality. For more information, please visit the UNPRPD Disability Resource Hub (http://www.canzhang-hub.com/).

CHAPTER SIX

REPORTING OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY AND DISABILITY EQUALITY

A 'public emergency' is an emergency that occurs suddenly and that can cause heavy casualties, property losses, ecological damage and/or serious social harm, endangering public health and safety. Public emergencies have multiple causes and are characterized by such things as universality of impact, complexity of harm and comprehensiveness of governance. In China, public emergencies are divided into the following categories: natural disasters, accidents, public health incidents and social safety incidents, according to their development, nature and mechanisms, and are classified into four levels: (i) extremely serious, (ii) severe, (iii) major and (iv) ordinary.[58]

Beginning in late 2019, COVID-19 has since spread around the world. It is the most serious public emergency of the twenty-first century so far; it has not only been a health crisis, but has also sent a shock to the core of human society,

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58. Ministry of Emergency Management of the People's Republic of China.2006. National General Emergency Plan for Outburst Public Accidents, Feb 20.
https://www.mem.gov.cn/xw/jyll/200602/t20060220_230269.shtml

and has exacerbated disability-related economic and social inequalities.[59] This chapter will examine how COVID-19 has affected persons with disabilities and will explore disability equality in reporting on public emergencies, taking the COVID-19 pandemic as an example.

I. PUBLIC EMERGENCIES AND THE IMPACT ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Public emergencies tend to increase the vulnerability of persons with disabilities, beyond normal times, and further test their resilience. Knowing and understanding the situations of persons with disabilities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic is an important prerequisite for reflecting on and improving reporting of public emergencies and promoting disability inclusiveness and equality including universal access to information.

(I) Impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities

Almost everyone has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but marginalized groups, who can be categorized in terms of: disability, gender, age, ethnicity and socioeconomic status, have borne more intense and longer-lasting shocks. In May 2020, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

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59. United Nations. 2020. Shared responsibility, global solidarity: Responding to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/SG-Report-Socio-Economic-Impact-of-Covid19.pdf

remarked in a policy brief titled 'A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19' that the COVID-19 pandemic is deepening inequalities.[60] He noted that the one billion persons with disabilities worldwide are one of the most marginalized groups in society. Even under normal circumstances, it is difficult for them to access health services, education and employment, and participate in community life, and they are more vulnerable to poverty, violence, neglect and abuse. Persons with disabilities are more affected by the pandemic and have among the highest number of deaths from COVID-19 compared to other groups. The impacts COVID-19 has upon persons with disabilities are outlined below.

1. Health-related impacts

- **Higher risk of infection and death.** There have been high rates of COVID-19 infection and mortality in psychiatric hospitals, social care institutions (orphanages, day care centres, rehabilitation centres) and institutions for the elderly.[61]

- **Greater discrimination in access to medical care and rescue opportunity.** Given the shortage of medical resources due to COVID-19, in some cases persons with disabilities and their families, affected by the traditional and medical models (see Chapter One), can face pressure

60. United Nations. 2020. A Disability-Inclusive Response to COVID-19.
https://www.un.org/en/coronavirus/disability-inclusion
61. Comas-Herrera A, Zalakaín J, Lemmon E, Henderson D, Litwin C, Hsu AT, Schmidt AE, Arling G, Kruse F and Fernández J-L (2020) "Mortality Associated with COVID-19 in Care Homes: International Evidence". Article in LTCcovid.org, International Long-Term Care Policy Network, CPEC-LSE, 1st February 2021.
https://ltccovid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/LTC_COVID_19_international_report_January-1-February-1-2.pdf

to give up their treatment and medical equipment, even when they rely on that equipment to survive, for example, breathing apparatus, which were in short supply in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pressure from medical staff and/or family members of persons with disabilities may be due to their perception that the treatment has a low success rate or that the persons with disabilities have only a short remaining lifetime and cause heavier burden for daily living support.

- **Limited access to medicines.** During lockdowns and when roads are closed, some persons with mental disorders or rare diseases who depend on an uninterrupted supply of medication, can be severely impacted. In some cases, a lack of timely access to medication can negatively affect their health and even threaten their lives.

- **Physical and logistical obstacles to health services and medical care.** Health code systems that lack features to ensure accessibility for all and online appointment booking systems could both hinder access to medical care for persons with visual impairments. Suspended public transport systems and blocked hospital facilities can hinder access to care for wheelchair users.

- **Difficulty in obtaining information about epidemic dynamics and prevention.** The lack of sign language interpreters at press conferences that provide information about the pandemic and the lack of Easy Read and voice-

assisted versions of Covid-19 prevention guidelines hinder access to important information for persons with disabilities.

2. Impacts related to daily life

- **Difficulty in obtaining necessary supplies.** During lockdowns and quarantines, persons with disabilities can face more difficulties compared to others when purchasing food and other necessities for daily life, due to mobility-related issues and barriers to online shopping systems, if those systems are not made accessible for persons with disabilities.

- **Difficulty in obtaining adequate life or psychological support.** Affected by measures such as city lockdowns and road closures, some persons with disabilities living in communities have difficulty in receiving timely and appropriate life or psychological support from relatives or service providers. People with mental disorders and autism spectrum disorders are sometimes unable to cope with rigorous quarantine measures and can find it difficult to ease their emotions, even with remote psychological support from professional staff.

3. Education-related impacts

- **Barriers to online learning.** Local education departments and institutions have arranged online courses during the COVID-19 pandemic to avoid educational disruption.

However, students with disabilities can encounter obstacles in all four aspects of access to communication (see Chapter Four). Such obstacles include: an inability to purchase the necessary equipment, a lack of access to online classrooms, learning materials and course support, as well as substantive exclusion.

- **Slower process of returning to offline education.** As the COVID-19 pandemic has been brought under control, education institutions of all levels have gradually resumed offline education, but persons with disabilities are considered to be a high-risk group and therefore generally have longer quarantines and they return to education later than persons with no disability.

4. Employment-related impacts

- **Higher risk of unemployment.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, persons with disabilities have had less access to employment and related social insurance compared with persons without disabilities. They are more likely to be employed in the informal sector and concentrated in one industry and, therefore, are more likely to be unemployed and vulnerable to risk in public emergencies.

- **Heavier economic burden.** Families of persons with disabilities often face expenses associated with disabilities, such as barrier-free housing, auxiliary equipment and specific commodities, medicines and services. The COVID-19 pandemic and related response

measures (e.g. delayed resumption of work) may also affect long-term career development of persons with disabilities and their families, and reduce the overall income of families of persons with disabilities, making them more vulnerable to poverty and indirectly affecting their livelihoods.

5. Gender-related impacts

- **Higher risk of gender-based violence.** Gender-based violence (GBV) increases during every type of emergency. Pre-existing toxic social norms and gender inequalities, economic and social stress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with restricted movement and social isolation measures, have led to an exponential increase in GBV.[62] Many women are in 'lockdown' at home with their abusers while being cut off from normal support services. During the pandemic, "reports of increased violence against women around the world, with surges being reported in many cases of upwards of 25% in countries with reporting systems in place. In some countries reported cases have doubled."[63]

Persons with disabilities living in institutions are more vulnerable to neglect, restraint, isolation and abuse than those with no disability. Whether in the early prevention, the medium-

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62. https://www.undp.org/publications/gender-based-violence-and-covid-19
63. Ibid

term response or the recovery and reconstruction stage of COVID-19, persons with disabilities face not only existing inequalities but also new threats, and their situations are closely related to disability-based attitudinal barriers, physical and information barriers and institutional barriers.

(II) Persons with disabilities' actions to combat COVID-19

An easily neglected fact is that persons with disabilities are not only a vulnerable group heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but are also activists who support and participate in the fight against the disease in various ways. During the pandemic, many organizations of persons with disabilities actively participated in information accessibility, psychological support, resource coordination and public advocacy, contributing to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Guarding persons with hearing impairments in the pandemic with sign language

When public emergencies occur, persons with hearing impairments often encounter various obstacles due to a lack of barrier-free information services. For example, persons with hearing impairments have delayed access to information; they are slower at pandemic-related responses than people without disabilities; the help-seeking process for them can also be very difficult. If they need to be quarantined in a designated place and are not accompanied by people they are familiar with, it is difficult for them to communicate smoothly with others. In

response to this situation, members (majority of the members are people with hearing or speaking disabilities) of a support group for persons with hearing impairments in Wuhan, Hubei Province took action and established a sign language support group in early February 2020, to carry out sign language support through remote video, which assisted people with hearing impairments communicate with doctors and couriers and accompanied them during quarantine by providing psychological support, helping them collect various resources for COVID-19 prevention and daily living, and focusing on supporting the difficulties and needs of middle-aged and elderly people with hearing impairments.[64]

2. Developing easy-to-read manuals for people with intellectual disabilities

The pandemic exacerbates the vulnerability of people with intellectual disabilities. They are often targets of alternative policies and even violence. They encounter difficulties in participating or taking ownership of their own lives when they have difficulties in accessing information in plain language or easy-to-read version. In order to provide easy-to-read information for people with intellectual disabilities, promote their families and service providers' respect for their own decision-making, and ensure the full participation of people with intellectual disabilities in pandemic prevention activities

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64. Wei Furong, The silent war against pandemic: People with speech and hearing disorders in Wuhan, The Beijing News, February 20, 2020. https://www.bjnews.com.cn/detail/158212350715422.html

and post-pandemic community recovery process, One Plus One developed the *Handbook for Supporting People with Intellectual Disabilities during the Pandemic*[65], and disseminated it to families of people with intellectual disabilities and social workers for advocacy. In view of the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic is a public emergency, based on the lessons learned, One Plus One has also developed the *Handbook for Supporting People with Intellectual Disabilities in Emergencies*[66] to promote the protection of the rights of people with intellectual disabilities in various emergencies.

3. 'Heartwarming' support and voice of women with disabilities

Affected by disabilities and gender, women with disabilities are more vulnerable during a pandemic. Based on the difficulties women with disabilities face during the COVID-19 pandemic, Beijing Enable Sister Center (an organization of women with disabilities) initiated the 'Caring for Sisters with Disabilities Heartwarming Pack' fundraising and distribution campaign[67], providing adult diapers, pull-up pants and other daily necessities for women with disabilities, and launched a "Women with Disabilities during the Pandemic" story series through remote interview and call for stories, to provide psychological support for women with disabilities quarantined

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65. The brochure can be downloaded by visiting: http://www.crpdlife.cn/page/4614
66. The brochure can be downloaded by visiting: http://www.crpdlife.cn/page/4615
67. Women's Day Special: Caring for Sisters with Disabilities 'Heartwarming Pack', Love Makes Us Not Afraid of Being Forgotten, BEST, March 7, 2020. https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/n7t-9Uh5F-Ap3v7FMycrQg For more information please visit WeChat public account BEST

at home and also spread their voices to the general public.

4. Volunteers with disabilities network join efforts to combat COVID-19 in various ways

On 2 February 2020, several organizations of persons with disabilities and netizens with disabilities launched the Network of Volunteers with Disabilities for Combatting COVID-19[68], calling on people to participate together through WeChat groups, WeChat public accounts and other channels. Through these channels, they released timely information on pandemic-related information and resources, and provided remote support services for people with disabilities affected by the pandemic including accessibility support, psychological counselling, home rehabilitation and exercise, purchasing daily necessities, and special educational resources. They cooperated with local public welfare organizations during quarantine times to provide support for people with mobility difficulties in Wuhan and Hubei. Once the volunteer network was launched, many organizations of persons with disabilities responded by disseminating relevant information through their social media, providing assistance and services through the network, and compiling relevant information and experiences they gathered into *No One should be a Lonely Island - Handbook for Disability Support in the Fight against the Pandemic.*

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68. "The Anti-Epidemic Disability Support Network was established! We invite you to come together to help people with disabilities in the epidemic", Disability Support, February 4, 2020.
https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/ABXzipB1x1Kq-geMu-I1Pg For more information please visit WeChat public account "Disability Support (残障支持)".

II. PUBLIC EMERGENCY REPORTING AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

In reports of public emergencies, persons with disabilities could be producers of reports, objects of reports and users of reports, categories that correspond to equal participation, equal coverage and equal reception and use of reporting, respectively. So far, we have not found any scientific literature in English or Chinese academic databases on media reporting produced by persons with disabilities during the pandemic. The following section focuses media reporting in which persons with disabilities are objects and users of reports in China.

(I) Persons with disabilities in COVID-19 pandemic reporting

"Persons with Disabilities in COVID-19 Pandemic related News: A Media Reproduction Perspective"[69], a study conducted by Peking University, provides a comprehensive and systematic analysis on how the mass media reported on persons with disabilities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on ownership type and focus area, the researchers selected a total of 23 WeChat public accounts of 4 types of media, including: 4 official integrated media (People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency, CCTV News, Network News Broadcast); 3 official industry-focused media (Health News, Life Times, Health Times); 14

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69. Xiong Ying and Wang Xiuli. "Persons with Disabilities in the News of the COVID-19 pandemic: A Media Reproduction Perspective", Disability Research, Vol. 4, 2021 (in press)

market-oriented integrated media (Southern Metropolis Daily, Southern Weekend, Freezing Point Weekly, Beijing Youth Shenyidu, The Paper, Phoenix, Jiemian News, China News Weekly, Renwu, Sina News, Yicai, Caijing Magazine, 21 Jingji, Caixin); 2 market-oriented industry-focused media (Ding Xiang Yuan, Tencent Healthcare). From 30 December 2019 to 10 March 2020, these 23 media agencies reported a total of 67 news articles on people with disabilities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. The number and themes of reports

The content analysis of news reporting on persons with disabilities found that news about persons with disabilities accounted for only 0.46 per cent of a total of 14,449 COVID-19 related news, which is significantly lower than the proportion of persons with disabilities in the total population of China, and far lower than the proportion of persons with disabilities in the world's population estimated by WHO. Among the news reports on persons with disabilities, were three about individual cases: Zhang, Yan and Li, which accounted for two-thirds of the total, representing highly-concentrated reporting topics. Moreover, these 23 Chinese media's reporting on persons with disabilities affected by COVID-19 is mainly based on typical figures, casualties, and commemorations, which shows a lack of sufficient, steady, and sustained attention to the impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities.

2. The image and situation of persons with disabilities in reports

Overall, reports in Chinese media present a neutral or positive image of persons with disabilities, with only 5.97% of people with disabilities in the news appearing as lawbreakers or rule violators. The most prominent image that persons with disabilities appeared in pandemic-related news is medical personnel who "does not leave the frontline with minor injuries", with all of the subjects appeared to be male medical staff with mild physical disabilities. People with disabilities rarely appear to be figures that have a strong voice in pandemic-related news, such as experts, scholars, and community workers, and none of them appeared to be government officials in any media reports. People with physical disabilities are the main or secondary news figures (76.12%), followed by people with multiple disabilities (23.88%), people with intellectual disabilities (22.39%), people with mental disorders (11.94%); while people with hearing impairments (5.97%), speech impairments (2.99%), and visual impairments (1.49%) are rarely reported on. In terms of sources, in addition to news figures with disabilities (44.78%), government officials (44.78%), media professionals (37.31%), and medical professionals (25.37%) are more frequently cited as sources in discussions about disability-related issues. Public welfare workers (5.97%) and community organizations (4.48%) who are familiar with the situation of people with disabilities or have extensive expertise were not given enough opportunities to speak.

Among the reports analyzed, 98.51% of the reports

mentioned the difficulties faced by people with disabilities, including problems that existed before the pandemic, problems that appeared after the COVID-19 outbreak, and new problems that emerged based on the existing problems. Physical difficulties were the most frequently reported, followed by living difficulties. None of the reports addressed issues regarding education or other rights-based issues. 53.70% of the reports attributed the main cause of the difficulties people with disabilities face to the pandemic; 70.37% to people, objects, and events at the micro level, such as misbehavior of people with disabilities, quarantine of guardians, inadequate care by relatives, and uncomfortable protective clothing; 31.48% to various organizations at the meso level; and only 1.85% to socio-cultural factors at the macro level. In the COVID-19 pandemic, people with disabilities are not only recipients of social support, but also support providers (including self-help and helping others). However, in terms of the level of frequency and depth of support, support given by others to people with disabilities is much higher than support given by people with disabilities to themselves and others. Moreover, support given to persons with disabilities is depicted as giving executive orders, social assistance, professional quality, or ethics rather than as constructing barrier-free environments.

3. Reporting perspectives

The reports of the 23 Chinese media examined in this study did not adopt the rights-based perspective of persons

with disabilities, but instead adopted the 'charity frame' or the 'motivation frame' (see Chapter Two), stereotyping persons with disabilities as 'poor under-achievers' or 'respectable super-achievers', respectively. The internal logic of both stereotypes is shaped through devaluing the identities of persons with disabilities. The former is used to explain the weakness of the 'incompetent', with negative stereotypes attached to persons with disabilities repeatedly solidified, while the latter uses the disability identity to contrast the strength of 'super-achievers'.

The researchers found no overtly discriminatory expressions, but some of the reports used terms that are considered, in certain contexts, derogatory (such as limping, cerebral palsy, etc.). Some reports adopted the 'exclusion frame' and established unnecessary or inadequate associations between individual deviant behaviour and the identity of persons with disabilities. Such reports depicted persons with disabilities as 'terrible wrongdoers', which may deepen the stigma attached to persons with disabilities and reinforce behaviour of control, isolation and social exclusion, which undermine their dignity and rights. In summary, these 23 media's reporting on people with disabilities affected by the pandemic is overall neutral and positive. They mainly focus on the challenges people with disabilities face, and there is no explicit discriminations. However, they still tend to describe persons with disabilities affected by COVID-19 as 'others' from the perspective of ableism, which is manifested as severe marginalization, moderate stereotyping and mild stigmatization.

(II) Access to information by persons with disabilities during COVID-19

The right to access information is a basic human right. In public health emergencies, the dissemination and acquisition of health information is particularly important. A study supported by UNESCO[70] shows that public health emergencies may lead to logistical obstacles in processing information applications, such as being unable to obtain physical documents or providing information to applicants with insufficient digital ability. Globally, only a few countries took the lead in disclosing epidemic information during the COVID-19 pandemic, not to mention actively disclosing relevant information to people with disabilities, people living in poverty, ethnic minorities, women or other people with special needs or difficulties in obtaining mainstream information in "easy-to-understand format", minority languages, or other accessible forms.

In June 2020, the United Nations Secretary-General launched the *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation*[71], which emphasized the key role of digital technology in the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic world. During the pandemic, it is a matter of life and death to ensure that everyone can have access to free-flowing digital information at any time and anywhere, which is related to whether people can obtain key epidemic information and reliable information in a wider

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70. Li Xuehui and Cai Cong, "The impact of epidemic on disability groups: An empirical study", in The Protection of Disability Rights in Public Health Emergencies (Zhang Wanhong, ed.), Wuhan University Press (in press).
71. United Nations. Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, May 29, 2020. https://www.un.org/zh/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/

sense. Globally, compared with people without disability, people with disabilities face inequality and various obstacles in using the Internet and other information and communication technologies and assistive technologies, including affordability obstacles (due to low income and disability-related expenses) and limited accessibility of information and communication technology equipment, programs and websites. The outbreak of the epidemic has made the digital divide problem faced by people with disabilities even more severe.

In April 2020, with the support of UNESCO, researchers from Zhejiang Normal University and One Plus One Disability Group conducted a survey and found that the majority of the surveyed persons with disabilities had received sufficient information during the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to the concerted efforts of the government and social groups in China.[72] The study found that the main means of accessing relevant information for persons with disabilities is the Internet, followed by television. However, there is a digital divide in internet use among persons with disabilities; those with intellectual disabilities and mental disorders face a greater information gap than others. When acquiring information, a large number of persons with disabilities have accessibility requirements, which are associated with disability categories and levels, such as demand for Braille and large-font versions by persons with visual impairments, demand for Easy Read options by persons with intellectual

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72.Li Xuehui and Cai Cong, "The impact of epidemic on disability groups: An empirical study", in The Protection of Disability Rights in Public Health Emergencies (Zhang Wanhong, ed.), Wuhan University Press (in press).

disabilities, and so on. The responses to the survey indicated that 18.7 per cent of respondents were unable to obtain information because of lack of access to these services. The study found that government departments provide inadequate accessible versions and offer insufficient synchronized sign language during national and provincial press conferences. Although the organizations and government departments that work with persons with disabilities, such as the China Disabled Persons' Federation (CDPF) and the Ministry of Civil Affairs, have issued guidelines on COVID-19 prevention for persons with disabilities, these guidelines are not systematic, and accessible versions are incomplete.

Overall, the findings of the two studies described above indicate that although persons with disabilities affected by COVID-19, whether as objects or users of the reports, have received social assistance and although attempts have been made to ensure disability-inclusive responses, reporting of public emergencies still marginalizes, stereotypes and stigmatizes persons with disabilities. Furthermore, persons with disabilities are particularly impacted by the digital divide, and access to information falls far short of the disability equality stipulated and expected in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It is therefore important to reflect on and improve disability-related public emergency reporting.

III. HOW TO PROMOTE DISABILITY EQUALITY IN PUBLIC EMERGENCY REPORTING

Inclusive public emergency reporting of public emergencies makes visible the difficulties and actions of persons with disabilities during the crisis, and meets their information needs, which not only helps to increase their resilience, strengthen society-wide and joint efforts to prevent and control the public emergencies, and limit the negative impacts of public emergencies, but also helps to raise their social status and create a more equal communication environment and society. In contrast, reporting that is not inclusive not only leads to gaps in response efforts but also deepens social divisions.

On the basis of the various stages of public emergencies, the impacts on persons with disabilities, and the status quo of reporting related to persons with disabilities, this handbook suggests ways of promoting disability equality in public emergency reporting, as follows.

(I) Early prevention stage

A public emergency is a special and even extreme situation imposed on society suddenly. Adequate preparation in normal times lays a solid foundation for improving the management of the impacts of such an emergency.

1. Develop communication plans for public emergencies targeted at persons with disabilities

A cornerstone of public emergency reporting based on disability equality is to establish and consolidate alliances between organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) and the media, construct technical support networks, and develop a targeted joint communication plan that ensure information is accessible to all. The communication plan should be devoted to: on one hand, facilitate OPDs to integrate disability-related policies, community conditions, and requirements for accessibility into reporting topics and material; on the other hand, advocate for media organizations and practitioners to integrate into reporting the situations and perspectives of persons with disabilities, while taking into account the political climate and communication orientation. While Government departments at all levels, as well as businesses, public welfare organizations and other social groups, should work closely with OPDs and media to ensure communication of information related to public emergencies is accessible to all.

2. Implement training on inclusive public emergency reporting

When a public emergency occurs, media organizations and practitioners are often required to respond quickly and devote a large amount of reporting resources to emergency follow-up and response information, which can make it challenging for inexperienced practitioners to pay special attention to a

particular group in a timely, accurate, and adequate manner. To address this, OPDs and the media should carry out relevant training in the prevention stage, rehearse and optimize their communication plans in advance, and at the same time, raise awareness of disability equality and related reporting literacy, and develop sensitivity to disability issues and disability equality as early as possible.

(II) Medium-term response stage

In Chapter Three we offered suggestions for media institutions that are applicable to all reporting scenarios, such as the sixteen recommendations for the media, adopting respectful wording, providing reasonable accommodation, formulating ethical guidelines and regulations for reporting on disability, and establishing an ethical monitoring mechanism. In addition to these recommendations, given that reporting on public emergencies is done in conditions with a short response time, and such situations are prone to heavy casualties and emergency social support mobilization, as well as secondary disasters and complex mechanism for responding, and taking into consideration Chinese media's suggestions and problems, we suggest the following:

1. Increase the number of reports on disability, enrich the topics of such reports, and encourage the voices of persons with disability.

As explained in the first part of this chapter, public

emergencies impact on persons with disabilities in various ways and at several levels. In addition to reporting on role models and casualties, the media should report on disability issues, which deserve attention and in-depth coverage. The media should strengthen both the quantity and quality of disability-related reporting, both by focusing on persons with disabilities as the main news figures and describing their situations and by incorporating the experiences and perspectives of persons with disabilities into the coverage of events and using them as sources.

2. Report on the various subgroups and cross-groups of persons with disabilities, placing emphasis on the multiple forms of discrimination faced by persons with disabilities, reinforcing depth of attribution and highlighting the resilience of persons with disabilities.

In public emergency reporting, the media should pay more attention to persons with disabilities, including those with hearing impairments, visual impairments, mental disorders and speech disorders, and should highlight the particular difficulties faced by females, children, the elderly and rural residents with disabilities. In addition to reporting on physical and life issues, it is important to report on psychological issues, employment issues, and other issues related to the rights and interests of persons with disabilities in public emergencies. At the same time, we suggest the media to place these problems in a broader social context, dig deeply into the formation mechanism of the issues and stimulate thought and public

discussion on the issues. The media should also pay more attention to subjective initiatives by persons with disabilities in responding to public emergencies and report or analyze the social support provided to persons with disabilities from the perspective of barrier-free environment construction.

3. Strengthen rights-based perspective, eliminate implicit discrimination.

When reporting on people with disabilities affected by public emergencies, we recommend that the media portray people with disabilities as subjects of their own rights, rather than merely portraying them as 'positive and optimistic'. We also recommend that the media advocate for all actors in society take action to promote and protect the rights of people with disabilities, oppose actions that violate their rights and inherent dignity, support empowerment of people with disabilities, and assist them in making decisions on issues related to them. If an individual with disabilities' wrongdoings during public emergencies are not necessarily related to their disability status, disclosure of information on their disability status should be avoided in order to eliminate implicit discrimination. In addition to the disability rights perspective, the media should also take into account elements such as gender equality, children's rights, and active aging when reporting on a diverse marginalized population, adopting a people-oriented perspective into journalism practices.

4. Break stereotypes, enrich reporting frameworks.

We recommend media workers to pay special attention to reporting ethics and be wary of stereotyping persons with disabilities with pejorative terms 'poor under-achievers', 'terrible wrongdoers' or 'respectable super-achievers'. Accordingly, the media can try to break stereotypes and report related events focusing on empowerment, inspection, win-win, and benefits from the perspective of the social model and human rights model (see Chapter Two), which not only increases the depth of reporting, but also refreshes perspectives of the readers.

5. Maximize the strength of media professionals with disabilities and provide reasonable accommodations for their reporting .

We encourage the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all types of media organizations to bring more fresh experiences related to disability into the news industry. When reporting on public emergencies, media organizations should take into account the obstacles that arise in emergency situations and make reasonable accommodation for journalists, editors, and other staff with disabilities.

6. Recognize the important role of We Media managed by organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs).

During public emergencies, mainstream mass media often have tight deadlines and heavy workload, organizations of persons with disabilities and their We Media should give

full play to their unique advantages. On one hand, OPDs can increase mainstream mass media's understanding and acceptance of the experiences and the rights of persons with disabilities, monitor whether the rights of persons with disabilities have been violated, for example through prejudice, discrimination, and secondary damage, and whether reports contain disinformation or rumours, and if such situation exists, whether the inappropriate content can be corrected or deleted through barrier-free reporting and feedback channels, thereby eliminating negative impacts in a timely manner. On the other hand, OPDs can also focus on the requirements of their groups, screen for disinformation or rumours, make their voices to be heard, and become an important part of media reporting during public emergencies.

7. Pay attention to the individual needs of persons with disabilities and improve barrier-free communication.

Ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to information related to public emergencies is not only the responsibility of the media, OPDs, and relevant governmental departments, but also an indispensable part of social mobilization, reducing primary and secondary disasters, and elimination of the existing information gap. Therefore, we recommend that the media, OPDs, and governments pay attention to particular and diverse individual needs of persons with disabilities, and provide accessible and diversified information carriers and channels, which include ensuring

reports of public emergencies have options for closed captions, audio, Braille, large-font, Easy Read, and sign language versions as well as accessible web content.

(III) Recovery and reconstruction stage

While lives during major public health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic will eventually become normal again, such emergencies continue to affect human society in the post-emergency era. All of the various stakeholders, including media organizations, media professionals, OPDs, government departments, research institutions, businesses, and the public, must reflect on through a perspective of persons with disabilities and discuss lessons learned, shortcomings, and positive aspects of public emergency reporting after the emergency is over. Only by constantly promoting disability-inclusive reporting in everyday life can we fundamentally guarantee disability equality in public emergencies. Relevant inclusive reporting is not only a mirror for reflection but also a key driving force in accelerating the process of ensuring disability equality.

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