

Written Statement about China Federation of Internet Societies  
(CFIS)' Efforts on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and  
Gender Equality

-By China Federation of Internet Societies (CFIS)

As the world still battles the COVID-19 pandemic, we must acknowledge that there is gender blindness in the measures regarding social protection, labour market, and economic recovery that countries have adopted to deal with the pandemic. Therefore, it is particularly necessary for us to discuss the theme: "Investing in sustainable recovery, advancing gender equality and strengthening partnerships – Towards a renewed social contract anchored in human rights". NGOs, as a bridge between the government and society, should lead societal forces to contribute to social welfare undertakings and the realization of 2030 SDGs. China Federation of Internet Societies (CFIS) is China's first NGO formed voluntarily by civil societies and institutions in the field of cybersecurity and informatization technology. Together with other NGOs, CFIS organizes and guides social forces to fulfill the SGD 2030 commitment with information technology, having achieved positive results.

We highly focus on the overarching promise of the *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*: “not to leave any one behind and to reach those furthest behind first”. By the end of 2020, China had lifted all impoverished rural population out of poverty according to the current poverty threshold and eradicated absolute poverty and regional poverty, which is a great victory for China's state-led development strategy and poverty reduction model. China's 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline of 2035 Vision calls for accelerating digital development and building a digital China. In fact, networking, informatization, and digitization have played a role in agriculture and rural areas' economic and social development, while agriculture and rural areas are experiencing modernization and transformation thanks to the improvement of rural residents' IT skills. Under these circumstances, building digital villages has become China's strategy to consolidate and expand the achievements in poverty alleviation and vitalize the rural areas. It is also included in the larger blueprint of building a digital China. To promote digitization in rural areas, CFIS went to Xuanjiashan Village for research twice with Baidu and Qidi Digital and exchanged ideas with the local government departments on issues regarding platform construction, public services, e-business and live streaming. They have actively devoted themselves to the construction of a pilot digital

village characterized by an innovative model of “Xuanjiashan village+digital space” to meet local needs and prepare for promotion nationwide. In addition, CFIS summarized its practice experience in a research report, which practical basis for the decision-making of Chinese government departments.

The role of women in fulfilling the UN 2030 SDGs cannot be ignored. The Chinese government attaches great importance to the improvement of women's rights and interests. UN Women highly spoke China’s tremendous progress in promoting gender equality and women's all-round development, especially in women's education, their full integration into economic development, and legislative reform on women's issues. According to the final statistical monitoring report of the " *Outline for Women's Development in China(2011-2020)*" released by the National Bureau of Statistics of China on December 21, 2021, the proportion of female employees in the whole society remains above 40%. Data from a joint study by the School of Applied Economics of Renmin University of China and the School of Economics of the University of New South Wales shows that due to the pandemic, the unemployment rate in many countries has increased, and the labour rate of Chinese women has also declined but it still ranks among the top in the world. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many NGOs in China, including CFIS, are also actively

working towards SDG 5: "to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". As it is hard for rural migrant workers to work in cities during the pandemic, we provided training courses on e-commerce, short video, and live streaming for rural women in order to help them promote sales of agricultural products and boost rural tourism. We also organized unemployed rural women to participate in the production of high-quality agricultural products, aiming to guarantee a sustained and stable increase in the earnings of rural families. These training programs have continuously improved women's education level, allowed more choices for rural women to start their own businesses, and steadily increased the proportion of women in employment in the whole society.

Our survey shows that most school-age children in Xuanjiashan Village have to go to school in Zhaojia Town, which is far away from their home, as their village has no schools. There is an urgent need for high-quality education and teaching resources. In order to ensure the education of rural children left behind by their migrant parents , we mobilized our member unit to help improve education services and enrich online learning resources for local children. The main measures include: providing rural children with courses recorded by urban teachers and live-streaming classes taught by urban teachers;

providing free online learning resources; providing Internet literacy courses for children, especially girls, including humanities, history, science, and art, helping girls establish self-protection awareness and master necessary self-protection skills. At the same time, based on the WeChatWork (mainstream social media platform in China), CFIS developed a "home-school connecting" platform, enabling schools, students and parents to communicate conveniently and timely, which improves parents' involvement in their children's education, care and supervision.

It is reported that there is still a significant gender gap under SDG 17: "strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development". Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also challenged men to champion the cause for gender equality by saying that " I believe that unless you change mentality and behaviour of men, it will be very difficult to change this situation ". To ensure all girls have access to education, more women have jobs and gain higher position, we hope governments, academia, companies and civil societies could improve gender equality consciousness, understand that development is the key to realizing people's happiness, implement the "Global Development Initiative" and build a "Global Development Community with a Shared Future"

with practical actions, and jointly promote global development to a new stage of balance, coordination and inclusiveness. Countries should establish and maintain effective and inclusive mechanism, assist women integrate into the sustainable economic development, support capacity-building of women and end all forms of violence against women.

China will continue to promote the simultaneous development of women with economic and social development, actively protect women's rights and interests, and create an environment conducive to women's development. We recommend NGOs continue to serve as a bridge and support the fulfillment of 2030 SDGs. And CFIS will actively promote multilateral development cooperation in areas such as poverty reduction, digital economy, and connectivity, carry out internet-related research and provide government departments with high-quality, timely, reliable, and gender-disaggregated statistical analysis as a reference for decision-making.